



Transparency in Trade

IN BRIEF

The ITC Transparency in Trade Programme aims to improve the trade and investment decisions of companies, notably small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), trade and investment support institutions (TISIs) and policymakers. In particular, it assists SMEs in better targeting their products towards the most promising markets, in diversifying their products and in investing in value addition.

THE PROBLEM AND ITC SOLUTION

Low-income countries – and their SMEs in particular – are at a disadvantage when it comes to access to affordable trade and investment-related information and analytical support for researching trade opportunities and designing trade strategies. This programme helps to level the playing field for companies, institutions and policymakers in developing countries.

The programme ensures the continuous collection, processing and free online dissemination of current trade and investment-related data and analytics through a set of user-friendly market analysis tools, among them the ITC Trade Map, Market Access Map, Standards Map, Investment Map and Procurement Map. It also builds the capacity of end users to utilize the tools to improve their international business and trade policy decisions, ITC makes the data easy to search, compare and analyse with trade performance indicators, interactive tables and charts, free multimedia learning material and other analysis support services.

The programme supports ITC beneficiaries' needs in various ways, including by enabling:

- Exporting companies to screen and compare export markets, assess mandatory and voluntary market requirements, conduct competitor analysis and research procurement notices and the contact details of possible importers;
- Global sourcing and procurement managers to identify new suppliers and link up with small traders by analysing supplier country capacity and performance;
- TISIs to identify national trade and investment potential between countries and regions in order to focus promotion activities and advice;
- Sector associations to identify opportunities to move up the production value chain as well as diversification opportunities in related product clusters;
- Governments and policymakers to compare and rank national trade performance, monitor regional integration, prepare and assess the effects of trade agreements, monitor market access issues and better orient trade strategy and trade policy;
- International media to analyse trade and market access issues and report on opportunities and trends in trade relationships between countries and sectors.

The programme also supports the customization of the tools for a country's or a region's needs. For example, the EuroMed Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism is a solution developed under the Transparency in Trade programme which sets out to improve awareness of trade-related information and helps beneficiaries take better informed decisions. The

EU-funded project, delivered by ITC, aims to promote economic integration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region by making essential market information readily available online together with helpdesk support from institutions across the region. The platform will be launched in the first quarter of 2016.

IMPACT

By October 2015, the suite of ITC market intelligence tools (Trade Map, Market Access Map, Standards Map and Investment Map) had reached 500,000 registered users.

The 2014 survey of users of ITC's market intelligence tools showed that:

- a representative sample of SMEs had generated trade deals worth US\$ 126 million over the previous 12 months;
- 94% of TISIs said the tools had helped them provide better trade advisory services; and
- for 92% of government officials, the tools had improved their trade policy decisions.