



Trade Development Strategies

IN BRIEF

The goal of the ITC Trade Development Strategies Programme is to support developing countries in identifying priorities for trade-led development through the design and implementation of sectoral, national and regional trade-related strategies and roadmaps that have a sustainable economic, social and environmental impact.

THE PROBLEM AND ITC SOLUTION

Trade drives a significant portion of economic growth globally, but the share of trade of developing countries, especially least developed countries (LDCs), remains significantly low. These countries often lack the institutional and business capacity at the regional, national and sectoral levels necessary to reach their full trade potential.

The ITC Trade Development Strategies Programme provides a wide array of strategy solutions for developing countries and partners in their efforts to make trade happen. The programme puts particular emphasis on supporting partner countries' ability to foster sustainable development through increased trade opportunities.

ITC's toolkit includes two categories of strategy solutions:

- Comprehensive regional, national, sectoral and functional trade development strategies; and
- Fast-tracked national, sectoral and functional trade development roadmaps.

Trade Development Strategies

An ITC-facilitated trade development strategy is comprehensive in scope, addressing supply-side capacity, the business environment and entry to regional and international markets, while also ensuring that inclusive development dividends are fully captured. A National Export Strategy (NES) forms part of the suite of strategy solutions. The scope can be regional, national, sectoral or functional and it can pursue national or region-specific development goals (related to economic growth, diversification, youth, gender or the environment).

Trade development strategies deliver in-depth value chain diagnostics for all priority sectors and trade support functions, as well as detailed plans of action that outline specific activities, targets and impact measures.

Governments, the private sector and civil society are brought together to identify, prioritize, plan and implement targeted, market-led solutions that maximize sustainable commercial and social benefits through trade. To ensure ownership beyond the strategy development process, a self-sustained national coordination model is established as a means to oversee the overall implementation of the trade development strategy, including effective monitoring and result measurement. ITC provides direct coaching and regular field support for the initial one to five years after the adoption of the strategy.

Trade Development Roadmaps

Trade development roadmaps are ITC's fast-tracked strategy solutions. Typically completed in three to four months, ITC-facilitated roadmaps establish a clear national outlook, outlining priorities for trade development and enhanced competitiveness of SMEs. Roadmaps are designed to rapidly identify the most binding constraints to a country's trade competitiveness, as well as tangible opportunities, while maximizing impact. They provide developing country partners with a

three-year detailed action plan to help resolve the most significant and pressing challenges faced by a sector, country or region.

Roadmaps can be tailored to specific partner needs, from increased employment to export diversification and regional integration, as well as broader development goals such as gender inclusiveness, youth employment and environmental sustainability. Finally, roadmaps can be expanded and evolve into comprehensive trade development strategies.

IMPACT

Examples of ITC's interventions include the following.

Cameroon: Since 2012, the government of Cameroon invested US\$ 48 million in a multi-year programme to support the implementation of a coffee sector strategy facilitated by ITC. The programme provides funding for a 'new generation' of coffee producers. Each year, 250 young men and women farmers are supported to become coffee producers, thus contributing to securing incomes for thousands of households and re-establishing Cameroon on the international coffee scene.

Kyrgyzstan: The NES was developed with ITC's assistance in 2013 and led to a home-grown blueprint for competitiveness and export development. The government is taking the lead on implementing activities outlined in selected priority sector areas. The cost of implementing the strategy is integrated into the national budget.

Regional cotton-to-clothing strategies: Three regional strategies were developed and endorsed under the EU-funded All Africa Caribbean Pacific Commodities

Program (AAACP). ITC focused on strengthening the implementation capacities of three regional economic communities (RECs): the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The regional framework for public/private dialogue in the three regions was strengthened and refocused on the needs of sector and development priorities. Policies and approaches for the cotton-to-clothing sector were also harmonized in priority areas such as breeding and quality.

Myanmar: Myanmar adopted its NES in December 2014 to guide efforts to improve socioeconomic conditions through increased and sustainable trade. ITC has established an online platform that allows stakeholders to monitor and track trade development initiatives, spearheaded by various development partners, contributing to the implementation of the NES.