The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the framework of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.

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ABOUT CBI

The Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries is an Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. CBI contributes to sustainable economic development in developing countries through the expansion of exports from these countries. This is done through sustainably strengthening the competitive capacity of SME exporters and producers in developing countries, focusing mostly on European markets.

ABOUT NITA-U

The National Information Technology Authority-Uganda (NITA-U) is an autonomous statutory body established in 2009, to coordinate and regulate Information Technology services in Uganda. NITA-U is under the general supervision of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MoICT).

ABOUT ICTAU

The ICT Association of Uganda is a multi-stakeholder initiative formed by private individuals from Uganda, with the vision of providing professional guidance to individuals and organizations in the private sector, as well as offering advisory services to government on policy-based issues.

ABOUT UBPOA

The Uganda Business Process Outsourcing Association (UBPOA), the umbrella association for the BPO/ITES Industry in Uganda. UBPOA serves as an advocacy platform for the Industry. With approximately 60 Industry companies registered as members, UBPOA plays a pivotal role in implementing sustained growth for the BPO/ITES Industry in Uganda.

UGANDA

Information Technology (IT) and IT-Enabled Services Sector

For more information on our project, visit our page on the internet: http://www.intracen.org/itc/projects/ntf-3/uganda
IT\&ITES is a relatively new sector in Uganda. Yet, the country has been making progress in the industry over the last ten years particularly in terms of mobile, internet and personal computer penetration. It is remarkable that the Ugandan ICT sector has been contributing about 3.4% to GDP annually over the past few years.

There are several positive attributes which can further be used to credibly establish the country as a provider of IT\&ITES services beyond its borders:

- Strong political will to promote its IT\&ITES industry.
- The required IT\&ITES infrastructure is being deployed (the "National Backbone" project).
- Fundamental building blocks of IP protection and cyber law are enshrined in the legal system.
- Young and eager population.

The project seeks to create and support jobs in the IT\&ITES sector in Uganda, by enhancing the export competitiveness of the country’s IT\&ITES sector, which will lead to increased export revenues for SMEs.

The expected targets of the project are:

- At least 5% more jobs created in 18 of the beneficiary small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- An increase of 15% in the value of IT\&ITES exports as reported by participating SMEs.
- 3 new export markets entered by beneficiary enterprises.
- SMEs met 55 new potential buyers through the project.

The project developed an export plan and country marketing plan by building on existing development strategies, and by organizing inclusive stakeholder consultations in the plan formulation process.

**PROJECT OUTPUTS**

**OUTPUT 1: Validated export plan for the IT and ITES sector in place**

In the past, several development strategies for the sector have been devised. Nonetheless, there has not been a single export related plan, which could guide the sector and provide a road map for development and expansion in foreign markets.

The project developed an export plan and country marketing plan by building on existing development strategies, and by organizing inclusive stakeholder consultations in the plan formulation process.

**OUTPUT 2: Export capacities of SMEs in the IT and ITES sector improved**

Export capacities of 30 selected SMEs is being improved by:

- Enhancing their business and marketing capacities
- Branding and sales negotiation training
- Improving access to finance for the SMEs
- Developing an e-commerce directory on which SMEs display their products and services

**OUTPUT 3: Capacity of partner TSIs in providing services to SMEs in the IT and ITES sector improved**

The capacities of three beneficiary sector trade support institutions, namely the National Information Technology Authority Uganda (NITA-U), the ICT Association of Uganda (ICTAU), and the Uganda Business Process Outsourcing Association (UBPOA), are being improved in the fields of market intelligence and analysis, as well as in the organization of B2B matchmaking services.

**OUTPUT 4: Business linkages and technical partnerships created and/or expanded**

The project connects Ugandan companies in the IT and ITES sector with global markets by facilitating their participation at international conferences and B2B events. Strong synergies are also being sought among the three NTF III projects that focus on the IT and ITES sector, namely: Bangladesh, Kenya and Uganda. This includes regular meetings to exchange lessons learned and share experiences, and to promote joint south-south cooperation activities.

**WOMEN in IT**

Women are underrepresented in the IT and ITES sectors, even though these industries offer significant employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. In recognition of this fact, NTF III Uganda focuses specifically on increasing the number of women working in the Ugandan IT and ITES industries.

According to the gender-related development index (GDI) published by UNDP, Uganda ranks 164th out of 187 countries.

Project activities include:

- Women in IT synergy workshop held in Dubai, October 2014.
- PR outreach and showcasing of female leaders in IT through social media and YouTube.
- Sponsorship of women-led companies to attend “Connected East Africa”, Kenya’s largest IT summit.

Other project activities include the sponsorship of women leaders to ITU’s Women Vendors Exhibition and Forum, the support of the ZambiaWomen « Tech for Business » Summit, and the nomination of women leaders for ITU’s GEM-TECH Awards. A specific focus is moreover to synergize with project efforts in Bangladesh and Kenya.

Sherifah Tumusiime, CEO, Zimba Group Ltd.

On the whole the experience was wonderful, as I was able to make business linkages that provided leads that will translate into more business for my company. I was able to meet business leaders who actually referred an SME owner to my company to provide my services.'