

STRENGTHENING EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS OF SMES IN THE TEXTILE AND CLOTHING SECTOR AND ENHANCING TRADE SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES IN TAJIKISTAN

April 1, 2015. Dushanbe city

DUSHANBE'S FIRST CULTURAL TOUR GUIDE AVAILABLE FOR CITY RESIDENTS AND GUESTS

What is the true age of Dushanbe? Where to see the Declaration of Cyrus the Great and the Buddha Statue in nirvana? For what has the capital of Tajikistan entered Guinness Book of Records? Where to buy high quality and cheap handmade national clothes, jewellery, and souvenirs? What are Dushanbe gardens and parks known for? The first Dushanbe Cultural Tour visual informational brochure answers all these questions.

The brochure, available online in English, has been developed jointly by the "Tourism Development Center" NGO and the Tajikistan Union of Craftsmen under the International Trade Centre project funded by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

The brochure includes detailed information, descriptions and pictures of museums, theatres, art galleries, parks, and main sightseeing places of Dushanbe. Its authors, ITC national consultants Bakhridin Isamutdinov and Abdurakhmon Nazirmatov, believe that this brochure will fill in the information gap, which is one of the weaknesses identified in the study on tourism sector opportunities in Tajikistan prepared by ITC last year.

Mr. Isamutdinov says that one of the main ideas of the ITC project is to link the tourism sector with the handicraft sector. - *"Both tourism and handicrafts sectors are essential for the Tajik economy. Crafts produced in national styles are the hallmark of the country. Patterns, clothing styles and colors become recognizable and increase the popularity of the country"*.

In the framework of this initiative Tajik tourism companies were guided to the Dushanbe sightseeing places and art-galleries to build connections between two sectors this February.

The present project is component FOUR of the Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan and aims to increase the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing (T&C) sector, by providing sector specific support to SMEs and relevant trade support institutions (TSIs), as well as supporting respective stakeholders in taking a strategic approach to the sector's development. It will also explore the challenges and development potential of the tourism and handicraft sectors in Tajikistan, outlining relevant trade related technical assistance priorities.

Swiss support: Within its Cooperation Strategy for 2012-2015, Switzerland focuses on four sectors in Tajikistan; Health, Rule of Law, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, and Private Sector Development. The overall goal of Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan is to support the transition process in the country through contributing to economic development and by helping build institutions and systems which are responsive to the population's needs. www.swisscoop.tj, www.deza.admin.ch, www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

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