

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

25 February 2014, Dushanbe city

BRIDGING BIO-COTTON WITH TEXTILES & CLOTHING

The results of the ITC study on “Organic cotton production and processing in Tajikistan: an assessment of the current situation and future potential” will be presented and discussed at a roundtable today, on February 25, involving all key stakeholders.

The organic-cotton producers, clothing and handicraft companies, government agencies, and international organizations are brought together by the International Trade Centre (ITC) to be acquainted with the key initial findings of ITC study on bio-cotton production and discuss the potential of its integration into the textile and clothing sectors' value chain. The study and assessment have been conducted under the new ITC project on “Strengthening export competitiveness of SMEs in the textile and clothing sector and enhancing trade support institutional capacities” financed by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

The feasibility study was conducted by ITC international consultant on organic cotton, Mr. Simon Ferrigno analyzing the current status of organic cotton industry, identifying needs of the Tajik textile and clothing sector for organic-cotton and their use of organic cotton, alongside with assessing their ability to market and sell textiles and garments made from organic cotton. In the round table Mr. Ferrigno will present his study highlights, possible strategies, and provide practical recommendations on market opportunities for the organic and in-conversion cotton products in Tajikistan.

Mr. Ferrigno says, “Organic textiles industry is a growing business with global market value in US\$ 8.9 billion, where Tajikistan contribute a very small percentage of the current supply of organic cotton and none of demand. Although, the current volume of organic cotton in Tajikistan is not significant for the global organic cotton market, from the quality point of view Tajikistan cotton is however rated as higher than global averages, and Tajik cotton is in demand by European spinners in the conventional market. From the research, we can conclude that Tajikistan can both increase production of organic cotton fibre, and find an industry that could process it. For the first, we know the limitation is the possible size of the market, while for the latter we know that it is not yet aware enough of certification and market demands, and buyers have unanswered questions over real quality”.

The round table participants will be divided into groups to discuss each suggested strategy and provide feedback with action points. Based on the results of the study and taking the national stakeholders' feedback into consideration, the ITC will elaborate recommendations on the most suitable sales channel for Tajik producers of organic and in-conversion cotton, including possible integration into local and international handicrafts and textile value chains provide realistic and practical suggestions from a market perspective.

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.

About Swiss support: Within its Cooperation Strategy for 2012-2015 Switzerland focuses on the four sectors in Tajikistan, such as Health, Rule of Law, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, and Private Sector Development. The overall goal of the Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan is to support the transition process in the country through contributing to the 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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