

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

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TAJIKISTAN WILL DEVELOP A NEW TEXTILE AND CLOTHING SECTOR STRATEGY

The Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of Tajikistan and the International Trade Centre jointly start a series of stakeholders' consultations to develop a new five-year Textile and Clothing Strategy for the country. The first consultative technical workshop gathering the related governmental agencies, international organizations, and the private sector will be held on January 27-28, 2015 in Sheraton Hotel in Dushanbe. This initiative is funded by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

In 2009, the International Trade Centre (ITC) assisted the Republic of Tajikistan to elaborate its Textile and Clothing Export Development Strategy for 2010-2013. Mr. Shavkat Bobozoda, the Minister of Industry and New Technologies of Tajikistan, evaluating the previous strategy's results as successful, underlines the high implementation rate achieved and notes the necessity to build on this experience and draw lessons for the next five-year period. Mr. Bobozoda says: *"The previous strategy provided a vital roadmap to align efforts and ensure a coordinated approach to address the identified orientations. Thanks to the international assistance, we improved quality management systems, raised Tajik specialists' awareness of the modern market requirements, developed new markets and suppliers, as well as improved our market presence and reputation"*.

Mr. Eric Buchot, Senior Officer, Export Strategy Section, ITC Geneva, says: *"Having in mind successes and shortfalls from the previous strategy, the challenge that stands before us is to ensure that the Textile and Clothing industry of Tajikistan is strategically positioned and adequately capacitated to face the constantly evolving competitive landscape that characterizes this sector. During this first consultation stakeholders will be called upon to reach consensus on the industry's current performance, key competitiveness issues, as well as the strategic orientations required to achieve a decisive competitive edge. Investment in advanced technologies and enhanced efficiency through training and development of human resources are some of the means towards this objective."*

The International Trade Centre has carried out a preliminary industry assessment, results of which will serve as a baseline to identify the competitiveness constraints and opportunities for the sector through a market-led approach. During the first consultation preliminary results of the assessment of the Tajikistan textile and clothing sector carried out by the ITC will be reviewed and validated, priorities and untapped opportunities for the sector will be identified, and a strategic implementation plan will be drafted. The new strategy is expected to cover a wider range of issues, such as addressing the limitations on the supply side, business environment and market entry, reinforcing institutional structure and capacities, diversifying the implementing partners, and etc.

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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