



Trade Promotion East Program

The Trade Promotion East Program aims to enhance competitiveness and sustainable export growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) engaged in agro-processing in SECO's Eastern partner countries.

Rationale

In SECO's Eastern partner countries agro-processing represents an important sector of the economy, contributing significantly to trade, economic growth and employment. However, SMEs engaged in the sector generally lack competitiveness and diversification in the products they offer as well as the markets they sell to. Sector-specific business support services and coordination between stakeholders are inadequate. Therefore a need exists for increasing the share of processed and added-value production and strengthening the access to more diversified global markets.

The project will focus on the subregions of the Western Balkans (Albania and Serbia) and Central Asia (Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). Agrobusiness was identified as a viable priority sector for assistance across all four countries as it additionally provides significant potential for the social inclusion of vulnerable groups and plays a particular role in meeting the SDGs. The selection of specific value chains in each country (fresh and processed fruits, aromatic plants, and vegetables) is based on the potential to export to global markets, the export readiness of SMEs, ongoing in-country trade support by other donors, the public sector and the private business commitment.

Objectives and activities

The Program aims to improve the capacity, support system and regulatory environment of export-oriented enterprises in the agro-processing sector of the four countries. Essentially, entrepreneurs and institutions are envisaged to be better capacitated and connected, thus creating sustained export growth of SMEs and more decent jobs.

The Program will work on micro, meso and macro level with the following expected outcomes:

- Micro: Strengthened competitiveness and internationalization of SMEs in the sector. This is achieved by enhancing their understanding of market requirements, introducing quality standards, improving the social and environmental performance of their operations and establishing new business linkages to increase value added production and expand sales.

Country/region

Albania, Serbia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

Executing agency

International Trade Centre
ITC

Duration

2022-2026

Total budget

CHF 5,500,000

SECO contribution

CHF 5,500,000



International
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- Meso: Improved performance of business support organizations in the sector (e.g. sector associations, training institutes, private consultants, public service providers). This is done by capacity building of these organizations such that they offer services demanded by SMEs, including market analysis and research, e-commerce, corporate social responsibility, or resource efficiency.
- Macro: Better framework conditions and collaboration in the sector. This is achieved by the promotion of regulatory improvements and sector-specific exchange between public and private actors.



Governance Structure

The ITC HQ will be responsible for the overall global Program Management. At the country-level the intervention will be managed by small teams of locally based National Project Managers.

The Global Program Steering Committee consists of SECO HQ and the ITC global Program Manager and will meet once a year. Further Country Project Steering Committees comprising SCO representatives, ITC, the responsible ministry, chambers of commerce and industry, and other key partners and stakeholders will meet at least once yearly.


How to get involved

ITC is the main entry point to the Trade Promotion East Program. The Swiss Cooperation Offices of the respective countries can also provide information on local contacts.

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Rules-based trade system



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