



Global Textiles & Clothing Program GTEX

A value-chain program focusing on improving the Textiles and clothing competitiveness of SME

The main goal of the GTEX Program is to increase export competitiveness of SME in the textile and clothing sector in five selected countries to ensure greater employment and income along the textiles and clothing (T&C) value chain. To achieve this long-term objective, the program aims to reach two outcomes 1) Improved business environment and Trade Support Institutions performance in the T&C sector and 2) Improved competitiveness of SMEs in the T&C sector.

Rationale

T&C is one of the most dynamic product sectors in global trade and a key sector for many developing countries in terms of employment, income generation as well as foreign exchange earnings. However, the competitive landscape for the sector has been changing since 2008. Several challenges affect the sector and increase the pressure for more competitiveness, notably the continued consolidation in the T&C sector, the preference for market proximity as result of fast fashion, the impact of new technologies, the importance of trading regimes (which can provide countries with advantages over competitors) and the emergence of South-South trade.

SECO has been collaborating with ITC as an implementing partner of T&C sector development projects. The GTEX program bundles activities in different countries, underlining the need for a more systemic approach for T&C sector. This is done by linking work on the policy framework (macro level) and supporting functions (meso level) with a better definition of roles, rules and relationships among actors. Filling the gap between the skills supply and the industry needs, as well as diversification of input sourcing and markets are other themes GTEX seeks to address.

Objectives and activities

The program will follow a value chain approach, from the production until the market access. Particular emphasis is placed on the meso level comprised of Trade Support Institutions (TSIs). The main geographical focus lies on Central Asia and Northern Africa.

The first outcome will improve performance of T&C-related Trade Support Institutions at national or, if existing, at regional level. TSIs will be coached to implement performance improvement roadmaps. Regarding skills development, academia and vocational training institutes are linked more sustainably

Country/region

Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan,
Tajikistan, Egypt and
Morocco

Executing agency

International Trade
Center ITC

Project duration

2017-2021

Total budget

CHF 11.4 mio

SECO contribution

CHF 9.8 mio

to the industry by developing closer partnerships with enterprises. This includes the design of industry-specific curricula and regular internship placement programs. Moreover, policy aspects at macro level are addressed in which TSI play a leading role.

The second outcome will focus on enterprise's needs. Capacities of SMEs will be enhanced to improve critical functions along the value chain (technical skills at production level, design and stylist training, new sourcing destinations, marketing, quality management, participation in trade fairs, customs procedures, etc.), including social and environmental standards.

On the global level, a component on Knowledge Management and Policy Dialogue will complement and foster country level interventions, as well as facilitate peer learning and networking at regional and global scale. Synergies with Swiss and international T&C networks shall be strengthened, ensuring exchanges of good practices between selected countries.

Governance Structure

At Geneva ITC HQ, the Project Management Team is composed of one global manager (GPM) and of project managers (PM) responsible at regional and/or country level. National Project Coordinators (NPCs) ensure the implementation of the GTEX program at national level. A field-based Project Steering Committee (PSC) guides the on the ground the monitoring of all projects. At the program level, a GTEX Steering Committee (GTEX-SC) comprising ITC and SECO is established.

Fostering the global perspective, a T&C Expert Forum will be created as well as a Swiss T&C-related sustainability network facilitated to discuss global T&C trends, T&C sustainability issues and provide recommendations to the Program Steering Committee on the approach taken.

Results so far

The results of previous interventions are tangible. Exporters were able in Central Asia to benefit from the market potentials in the neighbouring countries such as Russia and Kazakhstan, companies found new suppliers in China and Turkey and were able to maintain jobs during the overall economic downturn (2008-12) compared to other sectors. Besides, a pool of qualified local experts was created. In Tunisia, an innovative approach has been developed in the first phase of the program by providing effective training to selected firms, developing two new curricula with local universities and new sourcing contracts with Egypt and Spain. The strengthening of Tunisian trade support institutions associated to T&C was e.g. highlighted by the creation of an international show room. As a first result of cooperation between enterprises (coastal based versus remote regions), a collective platform for T&C has been launched in November 2017 in order to publish and share international orders between Tunisian SMEs.

How to get involved

ITC will be the main entry point to the GTEX Program. In the five countries, the Swiss cooperation offices (being part of the Swiss Embassy) can also provide information on local contacts.

Further information and contact details

ITC : www.intracen.org –Matthias Knappe, knappe@intracen.org

GTEX at SECO:

Email: info.wehu.cooperation@seco.admin.ch