Export consortia development in Morocco and Peru: two good examples of public-private partnerships

The case of Morocco

Starting in 2004, UNIDO has supported the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Moroccan Exporters Association (ASMEX) to establish an export consortia initiative with funding by the Italian Development Cooperation. The first step has been the organization, jointly with sectoral associations and chambers, of a national awareness raising campaign for SMEs. As a result 20 export consortia have been legally formalized and 13 are under development. More than 120 enterprises, accounting almost 14,000 jobs, covering 9 different sectors in 10 cities of the country are actively involved in the project.

All consortia have developed their promotional image (logo, catalogues, web sites), negotiated preferential tariffs with service providers (logistics, banks, insurance, etc.), and participated in trade exhibitions and commercial missions.

Export consortia are considered by the Moroccan authorities to be an effective tool not only for market access but also for SMEs upgrading and modernization. Important results have been obtained thanks to the efforts undertaken to create an export consortia support scheme:

- Set up of an export consortia support scheme by the Ministry of Foreign Trade: this fund mainly co-finances promotional activities of consortia during the first three years. It is an excellent example of public-private partnership: the fund management is actually entrusted to ASMEX and its management board.

- Maroc Export offers consortia a preferential rate for the participation at trade fairs and commercial missions in comparison to those granted to individual companies.
- SMAEX (Moroccan Export Insurance Company) has established a preferential premium for insurance policies issued to export consortia and offers them wider coverage for the participation at fairs.
- ANPME subsidizes consultancy costs for group-based modernization and upgrading activities.
- The consortium concept is listed under the priorities and in the action plans of private sector organizations, particularly of the Moroccan Garment Association (AMITH). This association represents 25% of Moroccan exports and has included export consortia development explicitly in its development strategy. Furthermore, it has created a specific consortia promotion unit. AMITH organizes periodically events for the promotion of the concept among its member companies.
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The case of Peru

Peru has a dynamic economy that displays high growth rates. In recent years exports have been playing a key role in the positive development of the Andean country. However, SMEs' participation is still limited; this poses a major challenge to the equitable development of the country.

In response to a request by Peruvian authorities, UNIDO started in 2006 an export consortia development project financed by the Italian Development Cooperation with the objective to tackle the problems faced by SMEs when trying to export.

Nowadays there are already 30 operational export consortia in Peru; these have been created in eight different regions and belong to a wide range of sectors including jewellery, information technologies and tourism, among many others.

The success achieved by this project also owes to an approach that promotes sustainability and fosters the capacity of local stakeholders to keep the initiative running after project end.

To start with, UNIDO refrains from subsidizing the expenditures of consortia in order to avoid market distortions and dependence. On the contrary efforts are devoted to improve the institutional and regulatory framework in which SMEs develop.

Consequently, UNIDO collaborated with its official counterpart, the Ministry of Production, to forge a public-private alliance that involved around 20 local entities of different types; the Chamber of Commerce of Lima played hereby a central role.

Six training workshops for future consortia promoters have been organized to allow for broad capability building. 293 participants have been trained. The impact achieved by these courses is due to a large extent to the training methodology that was tailored by UNIDO for the Peruvian context and to the project efforts aiming at the inclusion of the consortium concept into national export promotion policies.

Moreover, thanks to the commitment of different Peruvian actors, financial supports and resources from various institutions were channeled through the UNIDO project and made available to support export consortia, in their upgrading and quality improvement processes. In the near future, the establishment of a national revolving fund earmarked for export consortia will further enhance the sustainability of the approach.