Export consortia activities in Morocco and Kuwait

Context

Morocco has put in place, over the last few years an export promotion strategy and in this framework several Free Trade Agreements have been signed. The opening up of the Moroccan market represents a unique opportunity for Moroccan SMEs, but also a considerable threat. As it often happens SMEs are not always ready to face neither the complexities that export triggers nor the high risks involved in it.

Strategy

To tackle some of the issues linked to export promotion involving SMEs and small producers, UNIDO has been implementing a project for the development of export consortia. This specialized model of an SME network can significantly improve SMEs export potential and reduce the costs and risks involved in penetrating foreign markets, by combining companies’ market knowledge, products, human and financial resources. In Morocco, the project, funded by the Italian Government, started in 2003 and is implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Trade. The project strategy focuses both on training national export consortia promoters and brokers and on establishing export consortia in various sectors.

Current Status

- In total 134 participants have been trained in export consortia development in key institutions at the national and local level;
- 21 export consortia are operational in 11 sectors and covering 8 regions of the Kingdom of Morocco;
- A Moroccan Association of Export Consortia (AMCE) has been formed and has signed a partnership agreement with FEDEREXPORT, the Italian Federation of Export Consortia;
- A website (www.marocconsortium.com) is operational and regular communication on export consortia is ensured through a quarterly newsletter.

Impact / Outlook

Export consortia development has become part of the national Moroccan strategy for promoting exports and the Moroccan Government has established a fund for export consortia promotion. A new interregional project covering Morocco and Egypt has just been approved aiming at promoting the valorisation of typical regional and handicraft products.

Strengthening Export Capacities of Manufacturing SMEs in Kuwait

The Public Authority for Industry in collaboration with UNIDO has launched a project to increase the export competitiveness of Small and Medium-sized Kuwaiti companies (SMEs) from the “Chemicals, Rubber and Plastic Sector”. A competitive positioning study will be prepared to analyze the export constraints faced by the sector and recommend ways to overcome them. Ten SMEs belonging to the above sector will be coached to implement their own enterprise export plans and get a foothold on foreign markets as well as assess the feasibility to form an export consortium. To ensure sustainability and upscaling, staff of the Kuwaiti Export Development Centre will be trained to improve service provision to SMEs interested in exporting.