



Improving trade integration of Haiti through quality and standards

Context

Following the earthquake in 2010, the poor quality of the construction of many buildings in Haiti came under the spotlight, encouraging the government to tackle the issue of standards. In common with a lot of other countries in the Caribbean region, Haiti had no national regulations on quality. It was also the only country in the CARICOM region without a national standards bureau. Haiti had neither internationally recognized laboratories for testing food safety or other products, nor did it have any sound metrology facility to check weights and measures against international standards.

Main approach

Setting standards that are comparable with international ones, such as those of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), is vital for Haiti's ability to compete on international markets. In this context, UNIDO is involved in a European Union-backed programme to strengthen Haiti's export capacity and improve its competitiveness in regional and international markets.

The main focus of this project is to set up a Haitian Bureau of Standards or Bureau Haïtien de Normalisation (BHN), to help create an environment that will support the reconstruction process, encourage exports, and protect consumers from poor-quality products.

Impact and results

This project will help build a vibrant national quality infrastructure that will enable Haiti's enterprises to meet international market requirements and contribute to the country's better integration in regional and international trade.

UNIDO is supporting the establishment of a strong BHN, under the auspices of Haiti's Ministry of Trade and Industry or Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie (MCI). The BHN now has an operational metrology laboratory with well-trained and qualified staff to

deliver the basic quality services that enterprises need. With international support, the staff is providing training courses to develop competencies vis-à-vis quality in a first batch of 18 enterprises and six laboratories in the country. A culture of quality is starting to be promoted in Haiti among economic actors, as well as among government bodies.

UNIDO has also been working with the government to prepare a National Quality Policy, which is pending official approval and will soon be published. The Haitian Ministry of Trade and Industry has shown great interest in and commitment to participating in international standardization activities and ensuring the establishment of regional and international standards that meet the needs and specifications of Haiti and that follow market trends. Haiti – through the BHN – is now a member of ISO and the Réseau Francophone de Normalisation (RNF) and has also set up its own National Electrotechnical Committee.

Haiti's industrial and agricultural products have entered the era of quality and competitiveness. Efforts have to be made to promote and further develop quality and competitiveness of Haitian products so that both producers and consumers can benefit.

At a glance

Project title: Programme d'appui au Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie (MCI) : soutien aux infrastructures de qualité/Renforcement du Bureau Haïtien de Normalisation
In English: Programme to Assist the Ministry of Trade and Industry: support quality infrastructure/strengthening the Haitian Bureau of Standards

Donor: European Union

Budget: EUR 1,000,000

Country coverage: Haïti

Thematic areas: Quality policy, standardization, competitiveness and exports, quality infrastructure, metrology and testing laboratories, consumers' protection.