



CÔTE D'IVOIRE:

Improving the competitiveness of Ivorian enterprises in non-traditional export sectors

Context

The industrial sector in Côte d'Ivoire suffered from the politico-military crisis in the 2000s, which led to an increase in production costs and the closure of more than the half of enterprises. In 2009, Côte d'Ivoire adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), which provides a framework for the intervention of donors. The private sector development, as a driving force for growth, is one of the strategy's 6 priorities.

Furthermore, in the context of negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), Côte d'Ivoire has initiated in December 2007 an interim agreement with the European Union (EU) to support the economy's transitional period toward free trade.

In 2010, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the EU have signed an agreement for the implementation of the "Programme d'Appui au Commerce et à l'Intégration Régionale" (PACIR) in the framework of the EPA. The PACIR involved several implementation agencies, including UNIDO, which has been identified for the implementation of the component related to "enhancing the competitiveness of export enterprises and improving quality standards".

Main approach

UNIDO was requested by the Country and the donor to focus on non-traditional export sectors (other than coffee, cocoa, bananas and pineapples) to contribute to improving their competitiveness and support their access to regional and international markets. Based on the national priorities and an in depth field analysis of main non-traditional sectors and a representative sample of their enterprises, 3 industrial sectors have been selected by UNIDO and the National stakeholders to benefit from the project assistance: cashew, cereals-cassava and textiles-garment. UNIDO has addressed the needs of the beneficiaries through an integrated approach combining enterprise upgrading, quality infrastructure and export consortia.

UNIDO was also requested to formulate and implement on pilot basis a National Upgrading and Restructuring Programme which has addressed all industrial sectors.

Impact and results

- 54 training activities have been carried out, strengthening the skills of 1,764 participants, representing 263 manufacturing enterprises, 5 laboratories, 70 other institutions (public, banking and other private institutions) and 150 consultants;

- 7 export consortia have been formally established in the textiles-garment clothing, cereals, cassava and cashew sectors;
- 30 export consortia member firms (MSME – Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises) have improved their productivity and competitiveness through capacity-building and technical assistance actions and some of them have already exported to international markets;
- 246 standards, covering textiles-garment, cereals, cassava and cashew, have been approved and published in the official journal;
- 4 laboratories were supported in the implementation of their quality management systems and 2 of them were assisted for the accreditation of their tests;
- 2 laboratories were strengthened through the provision of equipment including one for dimensional metrology and one for the analysis and testing of textiles-garment products (the first laboratory in Côte d'Ivoire to provide tests in this sector).
- A National Restructuring and Upgrading Programme covering all industries was formulated, validated by local authorities and initiated on a pilot basis;
- 25 structured industrial companies from different industrial sectors benefited from global strategic diagnostics, development of restructuring and upgrading plans, from technical assistance to implement the priority actions set in their plans;
- 4 strategic positioning studies have been carried out and validated by the national stakeholders.

At a glance

Project title: Improving the competitiveness of Ivorian enterprises in non-traditional export sectors
Donor: European Union
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Country coverage: Côte d'Ivoire
Thematic area: Trade capacity-building
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