

a) *Provision of additional information to companies willing to define business and export marketing plans*

b) *Provision of self-teaching material to exporters to design business plans*

The "Trade Secrets" package will contain technical material and methodological guidance to lead exporters in the formulation of export approaches and business plans. The package, which will be adapted to Uganda business conditions, will be made available to exporters involved in this exercise in addition to the advice of specialized consultants.

c) *Technical advice provided to selected exporters in the formulation of company-specific strategies*

5. Output 3.5 Effective Trade Information System established

Trade information is one of the basic tools of competition on international markets, that should be readily available to Uganda exporters. The availability of trade information, as a management tool, is currently very limited in Uganda, where small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) cannot access fresh and useful information to conduct their business and draw advantage from opportunities in the global and regional markets. An effective Uganda Trade Information System (UTIS) should be established among all local information producers, intermediaries, distributors and users. The Project will help in making UTIS operational, with the aim of collecting and disseminating data that would be useful to Uganda enterprises for investment and export operations. A network will be established among its different components, to be defined in a feasibility study.

The System would comprise information on marketing opportunities, elements on physical distribution, including transit, transport and packaging, quality requirements in the target countries, training opportunities and market research, etc. When established, the system will be part of the Uganda Trade Point and should fulfil the function of information collection and dissemination in a coordinated manner.

The Project will assist Ugandan enterprises and institutions in operating the UTIS, through provision of documentation, training of personnel and networking to the appropriate databases and sources of information worldwide. The financial and infrastructural conditions for this networking will vary, according to the needs and costs. Generally, the Project will ensure the availability of current technical documentation, prepared by the three partner organizations to the Project, and support the cost of certain subscriptions to online databases and documentation, to be specified in the feasibility study.

The access to worldwide networks, including Internet, that will be provided by the Project for the establishment of the Reference Centres will also be used to operate connections of UTIS with other regional and worldwide networks and systems. The Reference Centres will be part of the information system, to the extent that they provide a specified type of information, namely, about the multilateral trading system.

A non-profit association will be formed from the members of UTIS, to manage the system. This association will partially benefit from the proceeds of the marketing of information to users. It will take over the subscriptions and recurrent charges of UTIS after the technical assistance has come to an end. A specific fund might also be constituted to support this endeavour.

UTIS will be part of the Uganda Trade Point planned by the Uganda authorities, with UNCTAD support. Its realization will achieve the trade information leg of the Trade Point. The trade facilitation component will be achieved at the end of the current project, in a separate provision.

The following activities will be undertaken to reach the indicated goals:

a) *Feasibility study for the establishment of an effective Trade Information System in Uganda*

A study of the Uganda market for trade and economic information will be undertaken to determine the volume of demand for information and the possible configuration of a trade information system. All producers, distributors and users of market information will be surveyed and their current infrastructures and needs assessed. On the basis of this assessment of needs, a feasibility study will determine the configuration of the Uganda Trade Information System, to be organized and consolidated.

This System should be set up in Uganda, allowing information consumers to have access to the requested information wherever it would be available, through various nodes. The system would function on a commercial basis. It might be difficult to make this System self-financing, but economies of scale could be reached when information facilities currently operating or planned by the various information distributors, such as the UEPB, the Chamber of Commerce, PSF, UMA, and the specialized boards and associations, will be networked, as already described.

The UTIS would be linked with ITC supported subregional trade information systems being operated in the COMESA, such as TINET, and other similar facilities in the EAC.

b) Workshop on trade information

The feasibility study will be proposed to the future partners during a Workshop in which participants will discuss production and distribution of information and adopt an agreement on the exchange of information among themselves.

The following institutions will participate in this Workshop, under the auspices of the Private Sector Foundation:

- Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Export Promotion Board
- Uganda Manufacturers' Association
- Uganda Women's Entrepreneurs Association
- Bureau of Standards.
- Coffee Development Authority
- Coffee Trade Federation
- Silk Exporters Association
- and other professional organizations.

These institutions will be the initial members of the Uganda Trade Information System.

c) Formation of a non-profit association to manage the Uganda Trade Information System

For the establishment and full operation of the Trade Information System, a non-profit association will be formed by the different participants in the System, to manage the System and maintain its coherence. The association will be financed by its members without any financial inputs from the Project budget, except for technical advice on its organization and methods. The Project will contribute to this activity by the drafting of the charter and rules of operation of the association.

- d) Provision of additional equipment to enable connectivity and multimedia operation, where necessary*
- e) Establishing connections between participating members of UTIS*
- f) Subscription to selected databases*
- g) Connection to GTP Net*
- h) Training trade information managers*
- i) Provision of selected documentation, written and electronic*
- j) Creation of a "Uganda Business" Web-site*
- k) Organization and design of a "Uganda Business" home page*
- l) Advisory services to the UTIS member organizations*

The Project will help in the setting up of the Uganda Trade Information System, through training activities and specific support to the various nodes. This assistance will take into consideration the existing infrastructure and provide equipment and written or multimedia documentation (CD-ROMs), as well as access to Internet and relevant international databases. This specific assistance will address, in particular, the trade information facilities in the following organizations, which will be the cornerstones of the System:

- Uganda Export Promotion Board
- Chamber of Commerce

- Uganda Manufacturers' Association
- Private Sector Foundation

Adequate resources in terms of infrastructure, human and financial resources, will have to be allocated by the participating organizations, but the Project will be available to assist those organizations to take the appropriate decisions. Project inputs will take the form of advisory missions, by specialized consultants on a roving basis, adequate computer equipment and access to online databases at ITC, UNCTAD and WTO headquarters or elsewhere, according to priority needs expressed by Uganda enterprises and identified in the feasibility study.

Technical assistance should remain available for an extended period of time (two to three years after the establishment of the System), to assist the member organizations in taking the appropriate decisions, and in troubleshooting in relation to the System's operation, to avoid the collapse of the whole setting because of any eventual mismanagement. The inputs in this respect will be in the form of advisory missions by specialized consultants on a roving basis.

m) Establishing coordination links with counterpart information systems

In addition to information flows to be secured through the participation of UTIS in the GTP Net, formal ties will be institutionalized at EAC level, to exchange information among foreign trade enterprises and public sector entities, through the connection of UTIS to similar facilities in Tanzania, Kenya and other COMESA countries. This will not only facilitate communication of data on trading opportunities in the subregion, but it will also allow exchange of ideas and experiences among private sector institutions and business people. For an appropriate interaction with the COMESA TINET, where information on trading opportunities and other market data could be exchanged, activities will be fully coordinated with those activities of the ITC-implemented regional project in favour of COMESA.

6. Output 3.6 Trade efficiency enhanced, through the setting up of a full-fledged Trade Point

A Trade Point is a unique combination of practical tools available to local enterprises and government agencies to lower the cost of their import and export transactions. It combines three main functions: trade facilitation, trade information and global networking. The facility offers to SMEs access to business opportunities worldwide, ways to collect and transmit information, the use of advanced communication techniques, market research, and facilitation of customs and financing procedures, banking, transport, and insurance services.

The establishment of the Uganda Trade Point (UTP) will be operated progressively. UTIS with the three Reference Centres established under Output 1.3 will constitute the first phase of implementation of UTP. This Uganda Trade Point (UTP) will be established in the framework of the UNCTAD/ITC executed programme initiated in 1991, which is aimed at establishing the Global Trade Point Network (GTP Net).

The approach proposed here will help in setting up the UTP progressively. It is believed that the operation of UTIS will give the opportunity to the various stakeholders of private sector development in Uganda to appreciate the usefulness of coordination and easy access to trade support services, thus justifying the usefulness of a Trade Point site. By that time, and after more reforms have taken place in the field of trade facilitation and investment promotion, the Project will undertake a feasibility study to define the contours of the Uganda Trade Point and to establish it at a selected location, well accessible to private sector enterprises, including the possibility of establishing provincial antennas

a) Feasibility study of a full-fledged Uganda Trade Point

The study should envisage establishing provincial Trade Points, in selected sites.

b) Formation of a Trade Efficiency Association:

There will be a possibility to upgrade the UTIS managing non-profit association into a Trade Efficiency association, although keeping them separate would be preferable. The feasibility study will determine the best options.

c) Establishing the Trade Facilitation component of a Uganda Trade Point in Kampala

7. Output 3.7 Guide to "Trade Secrets - the Export Answerbook " adapted to the Ugandan context

ITC has developed the generic version of a Guide entitled "Trade Secrets - The Export Answerbook", together with guidelines for its adaptation to the national context in developing countries. The Guide, customized to local situations, will be a business improvement tool and reference source for export management by SMEs and business support organizations. It will contain a complete package of readily accessible information, that managers would find useful for day-to-day operation of their export businesses. One hundred frequently asked questions (FAQ) are answered in clear, concise and user-friendly terms. The answers are supplemented by appropriate references to additional information resources. Technical assistance will secure the customization of the generic version of "Trade Secrets - The Export Answerbook", through the production of a country-specific Guide for Uganda. This will be done in partnership with interested local or subregional counterparts, who will co-sponsor the production of the adapted version.

a) Advice on the preparation of the Guide to Trade Secrets

An ITC consultant will undertake a mission to train a local team of the counterpart organizations and those responsible for the adaptation process, on how to prepare the draft of the customized version of the Guide.

b) Realization of the Guide to Trade Secrets in Uganda

The customization will be carried out, under ITC's technical guidance, by a national / subregional subcontractor. The counterpart organization will be directly involved in the implementation of the process, in accordance with a "joint publication arrangement" with ITC, and will benefit from the proceeds of sales. The subcontractor will elaborate the draft for each country covered, on the basis of the process manual. ITC will perform a quality check before publication. The Guide will be printed using local or subregional facilities.

c) Distribution of the Guide to Trade Secrets

The Guide will be distributed on a commercial basis, in accordance with the "joint publication arrangement" by the counterpart organization, which could be one of the following: UEPB, PSF, UMA, or a consortium of them. The proceeds of sales will be retained by the counterpart organization or consortium, to recover their expenses and to finance the preparation of subsequent updated versions.

8. Output 3.8 Capacity of the Uganda Bureau of Standards, strengthened in quality management

Quality will become the main platform of competition in the future, with sophisticated notions such as eco-labelling, organic products, environment-friendly technologies and processes, being more and more discussed and taken into consideration. The Project will help Uganda enterprises and authorities to improve their capacity to understand and implement these concepts.

a) Advisory missions in quality control issues

Apart from the specific training to be provided to the Uganda Bureau of Standards (UBS) in matters of quality control and to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) inspection bodies at the Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Marketing concerned with SPS issues, a consultant mission will advise the Customs Department and the Bank of Uganda on how to improve quality inspection at entry points and on the management of phytosanitary inspection (PSI).

b) *Operating the Enquiry point on technical barriers to trade and sanitary and phytosanitary measures*

UBS will also be assisted in the establishment and operation of the Uganda enquiry points on technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS). A national capacity to monitor other enquiry points in selected markets should be built, to allow Uganda's exporters to defend their interests, when necessary, in relation to technical barriers to expanding trade abroad.

c) *Database on international quality requirement in target markets for Uganda products*

ITC's Qualidata database will be partly copied to the UBS and training provided to help its use for the benefit of Ugandan enterprises. Progressively UBS should build up an information base to respond to Uganda exporters' enquiries on the technical and legal specifications required in their different target markets.

d) *Database on quality requirements and regulations in Uganda*

Presently, there is no computer database on Ugandan standards and quality requirements. Such a database is necessary to be accessible in the framework of UTIS and has to be available for the full implementation of the Enquiry point on TBTs. The project will support the subcontracting of the realization of such a database if UBS commits itself to its regular updating. An ITC consultant will advise on its setting and management.

e) *National Seminar on quality management for export*

A national seminar on quality management and practices in export enterprises will be held in Kampala, in conjunction with UBS and UMA.

f) *Local seminars on quality management and control for export*

A series of local seminars will be held at production sites in the countryside to sensitize smallholders and traders to international standards and quality requirements in international markets. They will address products relevant to Uganda, such as coffee, tea, tobacco, hides and skins, silk, fruits and vegetables.

These seminars will be held under the supervision of UBS with the participation of UEPB and the professional associations in their respective subsectors.

V. INPUTS, AND MANAGEMENT

A. PROJECT STRATEGY

1. Priorities

The Project takes into account the following priorities:

It will first focus on capacity building at national level for the understanding of the rules of the multilateral trading system and the management of Uganda's membership of the WTO. This priority is manifested through:

- The training of an important number of trainers in MTS matters (four generalists and nine in specialized matters) who will be trained to interpret and explain MTS rules and regulations.
- The introduction to a thorough information on the rules of international trade, and the opportunities created through improved market access. This will be achieved through the setting up of Reference Centres and direct institutional support to private sector institutions and enterprises, as well as through dissemination seminars and workshops.
- The provision of assistance in policy and export strategy formulation and in conforming local laws and regulations to Uganda's undertakings as a WTO member.