



WTPO AWARDS 2020

14 October 2020

World Trade Promotion Organizations Awards

Excellence in Export Development Initiatives



Shortlisted Applicants



International
Trade
Centre

TRADE IMPACT
FOR GOOD

WTPO AWARDS 2020

EXCELLENCE IN EXPORT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

WTPO AWARDS 2020 SHORTLIST

Best use of a partnership	
Colombia	ProColombia
Egypt	Engineering Export Council of Egypt (EECE)
Sweden	Business Sweden
The Netherlands	Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO)
United Republic of Tanzania	Tanzania Trade Development Authority (TANTRADE)
Viet Nam	Vietrade
Zimbabwe	ZimTrade
Best use of information technology	
Brazil	ApexBrasil
China	China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)
Georgia	LEPL Enterprise Georgia
Malaysia	Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE)
Portugal	Portugal Global - Trade & Investment Agency (AICEP)
United Arab Emirates	Dubai Exports
Best initiative to ensure that trade is inclusive and sustainable	
Austria	Advantage Austria
Costa Rica	Export Promotion Agency of Costa Rica (PROCOMER)
Lithuania	Enterprise Lithuania
Saint Lucia	Export Saint Lucia
Spain	ICEX Spain Exports and Investments

PROFILES – SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS

AWARD CATEGORY: BEST USE OF PARTNERSHIPS



COLOMBIA - PROCOLOMBIA

FACTORIES FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION

The Colombia Exporta programme connects hundreds of small firms to global markets through training and counselling

The challenge

Almost 60% of exporting SMEs send just one product to one destination. None export more than 10 products to more than 10 destinations.¹ The country is looking to boost non-mining exports, promote an export culture and expand the export business network.

The solution

ProColombia is increasing the number of companies that improve their processes to connect to global markets. This is part of the *Colombia Exporta* policy of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism.

Companies benefit from:

- Tailored business models;
- Diversification advice, through analysis of new marketing channels;
- Export consortia, to promote strategic alliances;
- Access to a knowledge transfer programme;
- Training targeted to indigenous groups, women and farmers to develop trade skills;
- Receiving guidance for international expansion.

There are three keys to how ProColombia delivers the programme. First, partnership is the cornerstone. ProColombia engaged other departments within the organization and developed strategic partnerships with national and international partners to successfully implement the programme, reach and impact more regions and companies, and generate more business.

Second, ProColombia offers co-financing to reimburse participating SMEs for up to 50% of the cost of the service line and/or the activities.

Third, regional tours publicize the programme's benefits to local businesses, unions, and chambers of commerce, among others.

ProColombia's customer relationship management system records each company's progress. The system uses monitoring and evaluation tools to measure performance and impact. A company's progress in its work plan is recorded, which provides data to measure the impact of each service line. These tools create periodic reports of the actions carried out, which provide a baseline to define the state of a company when it enters the programme and tracks its progress.

Outcomes

In 2019, the programme reached 350 companies in prioritized sectors: agribusiness, chemicals and life sciences, industries 4.0 (services), metalworking industries, and fashion. In 2020 the programme is reaching 400 companies, and in 2022 it will reach an anticipated 500 companies.

www.procolombia.co/en
www.fabricasdeinternacionalization.com.co

¹ The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean provides this information.

EGYPT – ENGINEERING EXPORT COUNCIL OF EGYPT

WORK FOR EXPORT

Engineering industries are a key driver of Egypt’s industrial and trade development. However, there is a significant need to expand the exporter base – only 13 from 240 companies are contributing to about 70% of the total value of exports.

The Engineering Export Council (EEC) determined that innovation and product adaptation are key to meet the requirements of international markets. In April 2017, EEC launched the Work for Export initiative to support exports by new companies.

Addressing obstacles to export readiness

The objective is to contribute to boosting engineering exports through three pillars – the market, company and product. The initiative is leveraging the expertise of local and international partners to support small and medium-sized enterprises and to address major obstacles to export readiness.

Another objective is to align EEC’s and its partners’ efforts to ensure effective support to increase the growth rate of industrial exports. The initiative included a pilot phase that involved 22 companies and succeeded in boosting their competitive advantage. In 2019, 44 companies and partners collaborated in Work for Export.

Transforming innovative product ideas into reality

Support was provided by international expertise to guide companies through the innovation process and to apply technologies that could help transform innovative product ideas into reality.

Work for Export has engaged in a partnership with the European Union (EU)’s Inclusive Growth Programme, which provides grants for projects focusing on innovation.

The results

One hundred companies are being supported that are innovating, adapting technologies and developing improved products to compete in international markets such as the EU.

An export-marketing plan manual was produced as a tool for knowledge transfer. A value chain analysis of the products has been concluded, as well as a product commercialization roadmap.

www.ecegypt.com
www.engexportdirectory.com

SWEDEN – BUSINESS SWEDEN

HIGH POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

In dialogue with industry, Business Sweden determined that larger firms and SMEs could better collaborate on highly competitive bids for sizable infrastructure projects.

The challenge

The export potential of larger and smaller firms in major international infrastructure projects was suffering due to the relatively few opportunities for SMEs to participate in the export activities of larger companies. This was revealed in 2013 when Business Sweden conducted an analysis of exports showing diminishing growth and declining market shares.

Another analysis in 2014 showed that large international exporting companies and SMEs were active in the same industry sectors, but had little access to conglomerates and other potential for collaboration.

The solution – impact through participation

Business Sweden's objective was to support the development and international expansion of SMEs. The prevailing principle was that this support should be provided directly to SMEs. However, this meant that resources were channelled only to those opportunities that SMEs could target themselves. Interviews with industry leaders confirmed these conclusions.

The High Potential Opportunities (HPO) trade promotion programme is supporting companies to participate in major international infrastructure projects. HPO offers SMEs the opportunity to participate either through direct exports or as sub-suppliers to larger Swedish companies.

Business Sweden assists companies to form clusters and informs buyers, financiers and other decision makers with a comprehensive view of Sweden's contribution to the projects.

Results and the way forward

HPO is engaged with 20 projects globally in the energy, transportation, mining, and information and communication technologies sectors. Measures of success include:

- Contract wins of an estimated value of EUR 4.7 billion.
- Strong SME inclusion – more than half participating companies are SMEs.
- Positive feedback from Swedish companies and stakeholders.

www.business-sweden.com

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
TANZANIA TRADE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BUSINESS CLINIC DELIVERS SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS

TanTrade coordinated efforts to establish Business Clinic, a one-stop centre and platform that brings together stakeholders to address the challenges faced by businesses.

The government's Blueprint for Regulatory Reforms to Improve the Business Environment in Tanzania identified several challenges, including business registration (permits, licences and inspections) and operation (taxes, levies and registering products).

These challenges lead to high costs of compliance and cumbersome procedures. They also facilitate the informal operation of business and a loss of revenue to the government.

Providing end-to-end support services

To address these challenges, TanTrade coordinated efforts to establish Business Clinic in July 2018. Business Clinic provides end-to-end business support services, including coaching and mentoring. It also provides support, training and consultancy for established businesses and startups. Targeted clients also include micro, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

TanTrade facilitated the collaboration of the National Bank of Commerce to be a partner for Business Clinic operations and to provide financing solutions to enterprises. Business Clinic has offered services to more than 1,603 businesses – 1,583 business challenges were presented; 967 challenges have been addressed. There are long-term plans in place to address those that require policy and structural changes.

Producer associations have been formed to mobilize efforts to meet market demand. These include the Tanzania Cassava Producers and Processors Association, involving more than 300 cassava producers, and the Tanzania Leather Producers Association, with more than 150 members. Other SMEs are being encouraged to join sector associations.

Sharing market information and networking

TanTrade is facilitating social media networks engaging groups for grains, cashew nuts, pulses, fruits and vegetables, as well as honey producers. These groups are producing valuable input to share information, market prices and opportunities.

www.tantrade.go.tz

THE NETHERLANDS – NETHERLANDS ENTERPRISE AGENCY

PARTNERS FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Meeting challenges in foreign markets often demands expertise and integrated solutions rather than individual product or service offerings. It requires cooperation with government bodies and institutes. Groups of companies and knowledge institutes are benefiting from the Partners for International Business (PIB) programme delivered by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).

PIB is a public private partnership programme engaging the Netherlands' government, a group of companies and knowledge institutes. The programme supports participants by helping to remove possible trade barriers, accessing complex markets and developing solutions to address local challenges.

A structured, long-term approach to trade

PIB's approach to trade can be replicated in all countries, except those restricted by international sanctions. It is a demand-driven programme that starts with a company identifying a need and an opportunity, and a request for partnering with the government.

RVO engages in fact-finding missions to better understand the needs and the opportunities in the target market, which enables it to design an effective public-private action plan.

Together with companies facing the same market challenges, RVO develops a two-to-three year action plan outlining strategic activities designed to strengthen market access and the positioning of the cluster of companies. Dutch entrepreneurs benefit from RVO's worldwide diplomatic network, involving embassies, consulates, Netherland Business Support Offices and international organizations. This local expertise is a key asset to achieving the cluster's business goals.

Supporting sustainable trade

The programme is promoting sustainable trade and supporting the positioning of Dutch businesses and key sectors. The aims are to close new deals for companies participating in the cluster, improve the competitiveness of Dutch companies in the sector and to make a positive contribution to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Results

More than 100 PIB programmes have been launched since 2012, which have contributed to an estimated EUR700 million in new deals for the participants. Often these are important first business orders to build up a company's trade record in a new market.

www.business.gov.nl/partners/netherlands-enterprise-agency/

ZIMBABWE – ZIMTRADE

THE BEST MODEL FARM PROJECT

Zimbabwe produces a wide variety of horticultural products and has supply windows into key markets. The sector has been on a positive trajectory and realized a growth of 25% in export revenues between 2017 and 2018. However, export growth has not been inclusive, as it has excluded smallholder farmers.

The challenge

Smallholder farmers lacked export awareness, possessed limited technical skills, and did not have access to infrastructure for export or markets. Other challenges included lack of access to appropriate agriculture extension services² and affordable finance.

ZimTrade partnered with PUM, an organization based in the Netherlands with 180 representatives working across 35 countries. PUM volunteers support entrepreneurs in developing countries and emerging markets to grow their organizations sustainably with the objective to create a positive impact on the economy, environment and society.

The Best Model Farm (BMF) concept

ZimTrade's partnership with PUM was already delivering technical support, which led to the co-development of the Best Model Farm (BMF) concept. BMF won ZimTrade's global trading award. The Netherlands is Zimbabwe's biggest horticultural import partner. The embassy of the Netherlands has been facilitating several business linkage initiatives and is supporting horticultural development.

With support from the government of the Netherlands, the BMF project was initiated in 2019 and will run until 2022. It has identified three exporting farms in three provinces across the country to be developed into BMFs.

An export readiness assessment was carried out. These three model farms will be centres of excellence and will support smallholder farmers within their regions. Produce from smallholder farmers will be sorted, graded, packed, stored and dispatched from these hubs to export markets.

On-going improvements

There have been improvements in agronomical practices, product quality, cold handling and engaging new buyers. New products have been adopted, such as fine beans and sweet potatoes.

www.tradezimbabwe.com/

² Agricultural extension is the application of scientific research and new knowledge to agricultural practices through farmer education.

PROFILES – SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS

AWARD CATEGORY: BEST USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



BRAZIL– APEXBRASIL

MAP OF OPPORTUNITES

Analysts were using an “opportunity identification methodology” to provide direct assistance to companies searching for potential markets. It proved limited and inefficient, as it was extremely time consuming for the analysts and clients. However, it enabled Apex-Brasil to determine the needs and wants of its clients.

A self-service digital solution

Map of Opportunities, introduced in 2015, addressed these challenges, offering a self-service digital solution that can be customized to meet SME specific needs. Filters enable users to define the parameters of each search. With this tool, companies are better able to assess potential markets.

This tailor-made tool is assisting companies to identify key markets and diversify export products and destinations. It does not recommend which markets to access, but makes an invaluable contribution to the decision-making process of companies looking to begin exporting or wanting to reach other markets.

The Map has also increased the efficiency of the workflow of Apex’s Market Intelligence Department, allowing it to better allocate its limited resources.

An intelligence portal and market place

What began as a digital platform is now a one-of-a-kind, integral tool for the exporting community’s decision-making processes, particularly for companies with less exporting maturity wanting to enter foreign markets.

The Map is a portal and marketplace for all Apex-Brasil’s intelligence products. After an update in March 2020, there are more than 47,000 opportunities mapped in 101 countries, classified in five categories.

It is Apex’s intelligence product with the most significant user base and reach. From the second trimester of 2018 to the last trimester of 2019, 11,000 new registered users accessed the platform and there were more than 45,000 views. The Map is responsible for more than half of the users registered on Apex’s Market Intelligence website.

www.apexbrasil.com.br/en/

CHINA– CHINA COUNCIL FOR THE PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

TRUSTED TRADERS ONLINE

CCPIT developed the Trusted Traders Online initiative, a platform that enables SMEs to break down information barriers and access real and reliable data concerning active traders.

Over the past 40 years, numerous enterprises with entrepreneurial spirit and international vision have emerged in China. Many are SMEs that are not as well equipped as large or transnational corporations, which have overseas channels, marketing campaigns and brand awareness.

With the aim to better connect domestic and overseas SMEs, CCPIT in 2018 carried out a nationwide survey. It involved 20 physical visits to SME headquarters and a questionnaire on trade service requirements for importing and exporting activities. This resulted in 7,459 responses.

Trusted Traders Online

Based on these results, CCPIT developed the Trusted Traders Online initiative, a recommendation platform for SMEs on the basis of their credit assessment, which was launched 1 May 2019. The platform:

- Integrates enterprises' information and product data;
- Provides global Chinese trade operators with one-stop services, including standardized credit assessment;
- Answers enterprises' queries;
- Offers customized image displays of Chinese enterprises;
- Identifies trade opportunities;
- Provides brand support.

The platform confirms an SME is running a reliable business, which boosts confidence to contract with the SME. It also helps forge new global trade links, creating higher contracting possibilities and lowering marketing costs.

Breaking down information barriers

Available in Chinese and English, Trusted Traders Online brings together information on about 300,000 importers and exporters. All information comes from official records or is reported by the trader and manually checked. This enables SMEs to break down information barriers and access real and reliable data concerning active traders.

Standardized assessments enable a comprehensive evaluation of the business credit of trade operators. As of December 2019, about 300 SMEs had submitted credit assessment applications.

www.ccpit.org

GEORGIA – LEPL ENTERPRISE GEORGIA

ONLINE TRAINING ON EXPORT BASICS

Georgian SMEs needed remote access to learning materials concerning export operations. Online training delivered by the Governing for Growth Programme aims to improve their performance in international markets by offering them an e-learning platform on exporter-related issues.

Deepening knowledge

Most Georgian SMEs lack effective export strategies – some cannot determine whether they are export-ready. Marketing and branding are not emphasized and international sales remain a key challenge.

The Governing for Growth programme offers free online training programmes for young professionals and SMEs. This training on export basics enables companies to better plan and carry out their economic activities. Fifteen events and workshops were organized to promote the online courses to target groups.

Enterprise Georgia engaged with customers, consumers, suppliers and other stakeholders to identify the needs and objectives of export-related companies aiming to develop sustainable and effective tools to support their activities.

Enhancing decision-making

Enhancing the decision-making process is another objective. Identifying challenges and barriers as well as recognizing strengths and opportunities is enabling enterprises to better plan and executive their economic activities.

The result is online training that benefits both existing and potential export-oriented companies. Existing exporters can become more informed about complicated issues such as diversifying or entering new markets. Potential exporters can determine whether they are ready to export.

The results

The online training reaches a wide audience. The training is available on four platforms and is also available to educational institutions and their students.

The Bank of Georgia has decided to integrate Enterprise Georgia's online training modules in its online learning platform. This enables millions of customers to have free access to online learning materials.

www.enterprisegeorgia.gov.ge/en

MALAYSIA – MALAYSIA EXTERNAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MATRADE)

MY EXPORT

MyExport, an online service, gives exporters access to information developed through MATRADE's efforts to enhance and complement online delivery of trade promotion services. It provides Malaysian exporters access to real-time trade information.

MyExport's up-to-date trade information includes:

- Alerts on market conditions, trends, policies regulations and opportunities;
- Product market studies of prospects, potential products, standards, distribution channels and potential buyers;
- Leads from foreign importers; and
- Trade performance statistics on specific products and markets, tender notices, materials from MATRADE seminars, exporter profiles, listing of trade promotions and seminars, and online versions of MATRADE's publications.

MyExport's objectives include enhanced service delivery; efficiency through real-time access to trade information, undated exporter profiles and event application statuses; increased productivity through use of mobile devices; connecting exporters with external markets and giving them essential and timely trade information to permit exporters to respond quickly to current and changing global market situations.

MyExport is continuously updated with new features such as enabling exporters to check their event participation statuses and their export readiness. With feedback from stakeholders and clients, MyExport can be expanded to include success stories, more trade and industry reports and video content.

New features will include customized trade leads and reports based on subscriber profiles; discussion fora; foreign buyer directories; webcasts and podcasts, and e-learning

Benefitting Malaysian exporters

On average, 1,000 items of trade information are distributed annually to more than 15,000 subscribers. In 2019, MyExport disseminated 4,157 trade leads and 880 market alerts.

Using innovative ICT solutions, MyExport has benefitted Malaysian exporters through improved efficiency, increased productivity by providing information on mobile devices, and cost savings by eliminating the need to subscribe to commercial market reports.

www.matrade.gov.my/myexport

PORTUGAL – PORTUGAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT AGENCY (AICEP)

PORTUGAL EXPORTA

AICEP supports the export growth of more than 3,000 companies. An estimated 10,000 more are preparing to enter international markets. They all need customized information about markets, business opportunities, training events and workshops.

Exports play an increasingly important economic role – Portugal aims to have exports contribute to 50% of GDP by 2025.

AICEP has little proximity to companies and associations and has a reduced physical presence in national territories. There was a delay in its response time and a rotation of AICEP client managers per company.

SMEs also face challenges. There is a lack of tax incentives for start-up companies. SMEs have little financial capacity for internationalization and face high risks if they do.

Overcoming challenges

AICEP developed a platform connected to third party public platforms that feed company profiles with dynamic data. By signing into the private area, companies access a profile page to trigger automatic responses or on-demand services.

Companies can access needed information, artificial intelligence based suggestions, and online training to support them in starting or expanding global activity.

When a company starts an Action Program aimed at a specific market, physical or digital, it receives multi-channel support, including online training, coaching and comprehensive market information.

A roadmap for 2020

The platform has been open to all sectors since April 2020. Portugal Exporta's roadmap for 2020 is to reach 10,000 companies and sign them up to the platform; ideally, 5% of these companies will initiate an Action Program.

AICEP client managers are recruiting new companies to register on the platform. These targeted users are active SMEs with exporting potential.

www.portugalexporta.pt/

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES – DUBAI EXPORTS

THE EXPORTERS GATEWAY

The Exporters Gateway aims to solve the lack of comprehensive and integrated economic, trade and statistical information by providing this information on key trading partners enabling exporters to easily identify export opportunities.

An information platform, the Exporters Gateway uses an innovative mix of digital content and technical solutions to support exporters raise their competitiveness and motivate and stimulate growth of UAE enterprises towards a more diversified economy.

It provides a range of services helping exporters identify relevant markets and sectors and access needed information including key economic indicators, a ports and airport directory, export opportunities, doing business, trade statistics, news and events, trade agreements, export guides, shipping routes and rates, importers and a virtual exhibition.

The Exporters Gateway provides trade information and services in a simple and user-friendly manner. The target audience is the exporter community in Dubai specifically and the UAE in general.

Increased exports and economic growth

Through the Exporters Gateway, services provided by Dubai Exports have shifted from a manual, non-automated system to a fully automated system. This has resulted in many positive changes. Specific impacts from the initiative include:

- Increasing the numbers of exporters using the platform;
- Decreasing the numbers of manual inquiries; and
- A significant reduction in response time, which has been reduced from three to 15 working days to three to five minutes.

The net effect has been increased exports and overall economic growth.

Positive feedback

Feedback from stakeholders indicates significant improvement in services and client satisfaction. This feedback is driving both real-time refinements and refinements based on annual reviews.

Since inception in September 2019, the Exporter Gateway has assisted 316 users.

www.exportersgateway.com

PROFILES – SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS

AWARD CATEGORY:
BEST INITIATIVE FOR INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE



AUSTRIA – ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA

THE DUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR AUTO MECHANICS, AUTO BODY PAINTERS & WELDERS THE GREEN GROWTH PLATFORM

Advantage Austria Bucharest has established dual education programmes to provide youth with professional education, encourage them to stay in their country and increase Austrian exports to and business in Romania

Advantage Austria Bucharest set up dual education programmes in Romania. The objectives include:

- Focusing on professions with massive skill labour shortages and reducing those shortages;
- Providing high-quality education to young Romanians;
- Providing skilled labour force to Austrian subsidiaries in Romania;
- Providing young Romanians with prospects of professional futures in their country;
- Slowing migration of Romanian youth to Western Europe;
- Enhancing the image of Austrian companies with a view to increasing Austrian exports to and business in Romania; and
- Providing career opportunities for Romanian youth.

The target audiences include Austrian subsidiaries in Romania, Romanian youth seeking professional education, Romanian parents, public authorities, and schools.

Beginning in 2017, the Advantage Austria Bucharest initiative was created through a five-step process including demand assessment through a survey of Austrian subsidiaries in Romania, developing a strategy based on survey results, formulating a project and organizing a team of experts, approaching Austrian subsidiaries for participation, and implementing a 13-month project plan.

Four dual education programmes underway

Since inception, four dual education programmes have been implemented, 16 companies are involved as hosts for apprentices, 215 apprentices are currently in the programmes, 42 apprentices have graduated, and one new project is underway.

Recently implemented dual education programmes include sales staff for Austrian retailers in Romania, auto mechanic and auto body painters for Austrian subsidiary car garages in Romania, and welder and metal workers in Ploiest for suppliers to the oil and gas industry.

www.advantageaustria.org

COSTA RICA – PROCOMER

THE GREEN GROWTH PLATFORM

Building on Costa Rica’s reputation for sustainability and social welfare, in 2018 PROCOMER, together with the Costa Rica-USA Foundation for Cooperation, established the Green Growth Platform. In 2019, the Inter-American Development Bank joined this public-private partnership.

An exportable offer

The platform is supporting the green productive transformation of SMEs by providing seed capital for process and product innovations that will enable them to be more sustainable, productive and competitive.

The objective is to benefit 260 exporting or potentially exporting Costa Rican SMEs over four years. Funding for the platform now totals US\$4.5 million. Currently, 105 SMEs will receive a total of US\$1.3 million. Of these companies, 36% are located in less developed regions and 40% are women owned.

Green results and impacts

The 26 companies, selected in October 2018, have completed their green transformations; 100% of these projects have been fully executed. These companies together have reduced their carbon footprint by 405.81 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. They have realized US\$ 57,000 in savings, which is recovery of 20% of the investment in just two months.

Between 2017-2018, these companies increased exports by 23.3%. Exports are expected to continue to rise because companies now offer higher quality products to the global market. One participating female-owned SME obtained the Rainforest Alliance certification, allowing access to the European market; exports increased by 35% in one year.

A successful trade model

The Green Growth Platform allows PROCOMER to continue strengthening an efficient, sustainable and inclusive foreign trade model that enables 2,500 exporters to place about 4,500 products in more than 155 destinations.

www.procomer.com

LITHUANIA – ENTERPRISE LITHUANIA

DIGITAL EXPLORERS PROGRAMME

Enterprise Lithuania’s Digital Explorers brings young Nigerian ICT specialists to Lithuania to enhance their skills, address labour shortages and foster growth of the digital economies in both countries.

Digital Explorers facilitates temporary legal migration to Lithuania of young Nigerian information and communication technology (ICT) specialists. The programme aims to enhance their skills, address labour shortages in the Lithuanian ICT sector and contribute to the growth and development of the digital economies in Lithuania and Nigeria.

The Lithuanian ICT sector faces an estimated shortage of 13,300 specialists. To fill this shortage, young Nigerian ICT specialists come to Lithuania for a paid training programme. Lithuanian companies employ them for six to 12 months. When they return to Nigeria they receive reintegration support to use their skills.

Laying the groundwork

Digital Explorers is being implemented by a consortium of public and private entities in Lithuania and Nigeria. It involves:

- Pre-departure assistance for work placements in Lithuania;
- Skill enhancement through a customized training programme;
- Mobility through support of temporary migration, their integration in the participating companies and Lithuanian society;
- Capacity building through sharing Lithuania’s experience in creating a digital entrepreneurship ecosystem to support the returning Nigerian professionals to use their acquired skills in Nigeria through employment and entrepreneurship. This also boosts the capacity of Nigerian public institutions to gain maximum benefit from the programme.
- Reintegration of the participants, assisting them to re-establish themselves in Nigeria through a tailored programme that considers their personal and professional needs and stakeholder interests in economic partnerships between Lithuania and Nigeria.

Positive results

Fifteen Nigerian professionals were selected and matched with seven Lithuanian ICT companies. Migration procedure bottlenecks for ICT talent have been identified. A business mission of five Lithuanian ICT companies to Nigeria’s capital Abuja was undertaken.

www.enterpriselithuania.com/
www.digitalexplorers.eu

SAINT LUCIA – EXPORT SAINT LUCIA

EXPORT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME, PRASLIN SEAMOSS ASSOCIATION

The livelihood of farmers and their families was adversely affected when Santa Lucia lost market access preference for the banana industry. Numerous attempts by the Ministry of Agriculture to diversify into new areas of agriculture produced mixed results.

One attempt was to introduce sun-dried seamoss cultivation in Praslin, a small coastal community. Seamoss is surging in popularity because of its powerful immune-boosting nutrients. It is rich in natural minerals, as well as high in iron and antioxidants; it contains more than 90% of the nutrients people need and is often called “nature’s multivitamin”.

Initial attempts by Export Saint Lucia captured the interest of 157 farmers – 81 men and 76 women – who formed an association aimed to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty and unemployment. But failure to develop sustainable markets domestically and internationally jeopardized this initiative and many abandoned their seamoss farms.

Strengthening the capacity of farmers

Export Santa Lucia launched an Export Development Assistance Programme to strengthen farmers’ capacity by improving quality, post-harvesting techniques, branding and packaging. The objective was to increase exports through foreign market access, create employment, and empower women and vulnerable youth.

The initiative also focused on obtaining a Geographical Indication (GI) – a name or sign used on products that identify their geographical location – for Saint Lucian Sun-Dried Seamoss.

A surge in exports

Target niche markets were characterised by consumers keen on healthy eating from fair trade producers. In 2018, exports of sun-dried seamoss totalled US\$54,912.38. The impact of EDAP boosted exports to US\$557,453 by year-end 2019.

These exports were a direct result of opportunities identified during promotional activities such as trade missions and shows in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Increased market access and opportunities encouraged farmers to re-establish their farms. As a result, employment of active farmers increased from 43 to 157.

www.exportsaintlucia.org

SPAIN– ICEX SPAIN

ICEX IMPACT + PROGRAMME

This initiative helps Spanish exporters profitably address new markets in emerging countries while promoting sustainable development and social inclusion.

ICEX IMPACT + supports Spanish exporters to diversify into new target markets that meet the needs of low-income populations in emerging countries with high growth potential. The goal is to implement innovative import solutions that are profitable and promote sustainable development and social inclusion.

ICEX IMPACT + offers Spanish exporters an array of services:

- Information access including a toolkit, a guide to strategies for serving new markets through sustainable and inclusive business models, and self-diagnostic tools for companies to determine their potential to serve new markets;
- Business cases of successful Spanish exporting companies;
- Specific business opportunities published on its online marketplace where supply and demand can meet; and
- Workshops focusing on ways to approach these markets and design sustainable and inclusive business models.

A sharp focus

Boot camps accompany Spanish companies for one week. This involves:

- Prospecting new markets to gain knowledge of business opportunities;
- Establishing contacts with local organizations;
- Presenting ideas and business models to potential investors, public finance entities and multilateral and cooperative organizations;
- Network exchanges of good practices and successful experiences; and
- Structuring business models that are economically viable, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

Success leads to new projects

ICEX IMPACT + began in 2017 with a project in Colombia involving six pilots and 12 Spanish companies. After the success of that pilot, ICEX IMPACT + has expanded with 20 projects involving over 30 Spanish companies in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Morocco and Mexico.

Sectors include agribusiness, information and communications technology, renewable energy, tourism, health and textiles. Partners include Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, United Nations Development Programme and BBVA Microfinance Foundation.

www.investinspain.org

For further information and to learn more about the WTPO awards please visit www.tponetwork.com, or contact



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