COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)

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Submissions from entities in the United Nations system and elsewhere on their efforts in 2013 to implement the outcome of the WSIS

Submission by

International Trade Centre

This submission was prepared as an input to the report of the UN Secretary-General on "Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels" (to the 17th session of the CSTD), in response to the request by the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2006/46, to the UN Secretary-General to inform the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS as part of his annual reporting to the Commission.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY 2013

Brief overview

Throughout 2013, ITC remained strongly involved in the multi-stakeholder follow-up process to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in the framework of the C7 e-Business action line, alongside with UNCTAD and UPU.

Together with the latter, ITC co-organized a session on "Facilitating e-Business – lessons from first 8 years" during the WSIS+10 Review Meeting at UNESCO in Paris on 25-27 February 2013. During this session, ITC presented the results of an open on-line consultation on e-business[1], which it conducted during the last quarter of 2012. A wide range of stakeholders, such as trade bodies, international organizations, businesses, governments and civil society across the globe took part in the consultation. Moreover, the session was used by the president of BASIS, the Bangladeshi IT association, to promote their local industry in the framework of ITC's NTFII Bangladesh project, making the link between a vibrant ICT sector and a strong usage of ICTs by the various stakeholders in developing countries and developed economies alike.

The online consultation was also presented during the WSIS meeting in May 2013. Chaired by Ms Aicha Pouye, ITC's Director of the Division of Business and Institutional Support, the e-business session of the WSIS Forum on 14 May 2013 focused on "E-Commerce and Development".

Projects undertaken

Fiji and Kenya: ITC uses a combination of mobile and Web-based applications to facilitate its activities in improving key services, supply capacities, market linkages and value chain performance in the agricultural sector.

In Fiji:

- *mAlerts* is a Web-to-SMS tool used for improved coordination along the supply chain;
- mPrices sends timely agriculture market prices delivered through SMS to beneficiaries;
- *AgriTips* messaging service, addressing punctual technical needs of TSI members;
- A CRM with mobile-based membership application service for the Fiji Food and Livestock Council (FCLC); and
- *Fiji Makete* links farmers to traders and exporters via mobile and web solutions;

In Kenya, *Soko Hewani* also links farmers to traders and exporters by using mobile (interactive voice response), Web, mobile payment solutions and radio broadcasting. It is one service among others provided by a network of local Market Resources Centres.

Cote d'Ivoire: in the framework of PACIR programme led by UNIDO and ITC, two exporter consortia active in the ready-made garment industry took part in a training session on export-oriented web marketing organized by ITC in July 2013. Individual members of the beneficiary consortia were advised on their web strategy, with a particular focus on their social-media activities, which are particularly relevant in the fashion industry.

Kuwait: ITC's WEB MARKETING & E-COMMERCE training portfolio was deployed in September 2013 in Kuwait. With the support of the Public Authority for Industry (PAI), ITC provided training to

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[1] http://www.intracen.org/open-consultation/

beneficiary SMEs in the agro-food sector with a view to increasing their export-oriented web presence and visibility to access larger pool of customers. The training event service focused on such topics as effective web design, website developing, social marketing, e-commerce techniques, on-line advertisement, and website traffic monitoring. In addition, ITC provided a diagnostic of the web presence of the participating SMEs and suggested related action plans and a list of local IT service providers for their implementation.

Future actions and initiatives to be taken

Despite existing challenges in developing countries, i.e. poor access to internet, the lack of online payment solutions and of consistent e-commerce regulations, SMEs are increasing using the Internet to promote their offering and find leads and clients, resorting to local ICT companies, and sometimes with the support of organizations like ITC.

To go to the next leel, ITC aims to invest in understanding the evolution and potential application of technologies that are relevant to our mission, and make some significant steps forward in our ability to innovate as an organisation. In particular, ITC is working on:

- **Online diagnostic tools**: enable self-evaluation and remote diagnostic of the effectiveness of websites, social media and other e-Commerce platforms used by SME's
- **Cloud based mobile solutions platform**: creating an online tool that will radically improve the speed and cost effectiveness of implementing market information systems in developing and least developed countries.

We foresee an evolution in the requirements of our beneficiaries:

- **Business process solutions**: beyond 2015 we envisage a capability to support beneficiary SME's with advisory services in a broader range of e-Business solutions, covering the use of relevant technologies in the support of the supply chain and logistics and other business processes that impact export effectiveness

In order to properly anticipate these needs and define our support we plan to conduct a broad and detailed **needs survey** in 2014 on the requirements of stakeholders for support in implementing ICT's (where relevant to ITC's mission).

There is still significant room for improvement. ITC does not sufficiently answer to the growing need of beneficiary country SME's to be supported in upgrading their use of ICT's for efficiency in the supply chain. We need to invest in our capacity to understand and answer to the rapidly evolving needs of our beneficiaries, and to innovate our support offering. And we need to pursue the private sector partnerships that we have begun to establish, and demonstrate their value through larger scale collaborative projects.