The 2nd Phase of Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States (AfTIAS 2.0 Program) and Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

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Brief introduction of the ITFC
about ITFC

- ITFC member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group
- Became operational in January 2008

- **Purpose**: Advancing trade to improve the economic condition & livelihood of people across the world.

- **Trade financing Amount**: More than US$ 55 billion of to Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Member Countries since 2008.
ITFC is the leading provider of trade solutions for OIC member countries' needs.

ITFC is a catalyst for trade development among OIC member countries and beyond.
improving lives

advancing trade
Financial Sustainability

Balancing financial sustainability with development impact

improving lives
Development Impact
Where we operate

Member Countries

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The 2nd Phase of The Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States:
AfTIAS 2.0 Program
Background:

- **AfT**: WTO Initiative / MC6 (2005) / strengthen the capacity of developing countries to benefit from International Trade.

- **ITFC**, on behalf of IsDB Group, has been following AfT since the very beginning alongside other MDBs.

- **For ITFC**: AfT is a partnership between recipient countries, partner countries, UN Agencies, & International Financial Institutions.

- Since 2012, ITFC has supported the Arab Region: AfTIAS 1.0 Program.
AfTIAS 1.0 Program Journey

**Launch of AfTIAS 1.0 Program**
- 2014

**AfTIAS 1.0 Budget**
- USD 10.5 Million
- KSA, Kuwait, Egypt, Swidden, UNDP, ITFC, and IsDB

**AfTIAS 2.0 Mandate**
- Beirut Arab Economic Summit (2019)
- League of Arab States (LAS) Request
- COVID-19 was considered by AfTIAS 2.0

**Completion of AfTIAS 1.0**
- 2018
- 28 Projects for 19 Arab Countries

**Evaluation**
- July 2019 - April 2020
- Independent evaluation
AfTIAS 2.0 Program in a nutshell

- **Design**: Lessons learnt in AfTIAS 1.0 Program
- **Overall objective**: “The environment for international trade in the Arab region is more efficient and inclusive, creating opportunities for employment and contributing to sustainable development”.
- **Pillars**:
  1. Improving market access
  2. Removing supply side constraints
  3. Enhancing inclusivity of trade for disadvantaged groups.
- **Beneficiary Countries**: 22 Arab countries (Members of LAS)
- **Anticipated budget**: USD 40 million over 5 years
- **Launching date**: October 2021
- **COVID-19**: AfTIAS 2.0 offers a platform to accommodate COVID-19 economic recovery plans in the Arab Region.
About AfTIAS 2.0

Objectives & Areas of intervention

The environment for international trade in the Arab region is more efficient and inclusive, creating opportunities for employment, and contributing to sustainable development.

- Increased level of intra-regional trade
- Increased Arab integration in Global Value Chains

- Improved market access
  - Arab exports do not face intra-regional tariff barriers
  - Arab exports face fewer non-tariff barriers
  - Availability of trade finance is improved

- Increased demand for the products and services of the region
  - Products and services of the region are more competitive
  - Infrastructural costs of intra-regional trade are reduced

- Products and services of the region are more effectively promoted within the region & globally

- More products and services of the region are healthy and safe to use

Disadvantaged groups (the poor, youth and women) benefit from international trade.
In terms of the implementation approach, AfTIAS 2.0 will operate on the basis of 5 facilities:

01 Trade development & competitiveness facility
02 Inclusivity Support Facility
03 Regional Investment Proposal Preparation Facility (RIPPF)
04 Reverse Linkage Facility
05 Research and Surveys Facility
AfTIAS 2.0
Program Structure

01
AfTIAS Trust Fund: to administer donor contributions

02
AfTIAS Board: Main governance & oversight body

03
AfTIAS Secretariat in charge of AfTIAS 2.0 management

04
National Focal Points (NFP) from each Arab Country
Background: Developed under AfTIAS 1.0 by ITC in collaboration with IsDB, ITFC and Trade Facilitation Office Canada (TFO) to increase the participation of women-owned businesses in trade by improving their competitiveness and strengthening their market linkages.

Strategic objective: Increase participation of 25 women-owned SMEs in the processed food sector export-oriented value chains by enhancing their competitiveness and their capacity to access local, regional & international markets.

Specific objectives:
1) Reinforcing the capacity of TPOs and women associations to provide better business services to Moroccan SMEs.
2) Enabling 25 women-owned SMEs to offer goods that meet buyers’ requirements.
3) Linking 25 women-owned SMEs with targeted buyers.

Expected Results: 25 women-owned SMEs in the processed foods sectors will benefit from higher incomes to strengthen and grow their businesses and a better livelihood for the community in general.
**Background:** Developed under AfTIAS 1.0 by ITC in collaboration with IsDB & ITFC.

**Strategic objective:** Mainstreaming gender and economically empowering women in Egypt, in line with the new Egyptian constitution: Full and unconditional equality between men and women in all rights and responsibilities.

**Objectives:** Supporting 50 businesswomen in the handicraft sector to sustain and grow their business and to participate actively in the development and welfare of their families, and the society in general.

**Expected Results:** 50 beneficiary women-owned SMEs in the handicraft sector will benefit from higher incomes to strengthen and grow their businesses and a better livelihood for the community in general.
Sample of the beneficiaries companies: Gi Designs

The company

Gi Designs for handcrafted pottery and wood tableware is inspired by the concept of creating designs that tend to present innovative handmade artwork using the art direction of 'EXPRESSIONISM'

Company Founder
Gehad Saafan
Sample of the beneficiaries compagnies : SAROUCHA For Authentic Hand Painted Fabrics

The Company
SAROUCHA is Rasha & Sara's Brand name was launched in 2015 specialized in traditional textile products.

Company Founder
Rasha Abd El Gawad

CoFounder & Art Directo
Sara Abd El Gawad
Under AfTIAS 1.0
Promotion of Equal Opportunity and Woman Entrepreneurship in Support of Cross Border Trade in the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

Background:
The project was designed in collaboration with UNDP to carry out a number of awareness raising activities in promotion of equal opportunities and their entrepreneurship in collaboration with AMU.

Overall Result:
In 2018 the project completed a number of desk research to identify a suitable approach to promote gender equality, particularly in entrepreneurship in local economies, particularly those related to cross border operations.

Expected Results:
Strengthened skills and abilities of key national partners to mainstream gender equality priorities into cross border trade policies in the AMU region.

Expected impacts:
Enhanced awareness on woman entrepreneurship and woman participation to the policy making process for Arab economic integration.
AfTIAS 2.0: Inclusivity Support Facility - will focus on the support of women to participate in value chains and international trade.

Expected Projects will cover a wide spectrum of different types of innovative interventions encouraging greater inclusivity of trade: Support to export sectors/value chains that favour higher women’s employment; or development of women skills to provide greater flexibility and power to negotiate wages and better working conditions;

Horizontally, AfTIAS 2.0 interventions will prioritise actions supporting women. E.g. in the project selection criteria, a focus on women support carries a weighting of 30% in the total.
Under AfTIAS 2.0
Through the Inclusivity Support Facility

- AfTIAS 2.0 actions responding to covid-19 also have a focus on women, e.g.: identify and support the removal of legal, regulatory, financial, institutional and other barriers to the involvement of women in key intra-regional value chains particularly affected by the pandemic.

- Some project concepts are currently being discussed with organisations across the region: demand is huge, but AfTIAS 2.0 funding at present is limited.

- Recognizing the joint interests and objectives, we invite out partners in Europe and globally, and the donor community at large, to join AfTIAS 2.0 Program and contribute to the formidable task of supporting Arab women to trade.

- AfTIAS 2.0 offers the possibility for donors to provide earmarked funding, such as specifically for the Inclusivity Support Facility (or for specific projects), which ensures that funds are used specifically to support women (and other disadvantaged groups).
thank you.