

Concept Note

Capacity Building Program for Women Led SMEs in Morocco

ECA-North Africa in partnership with EBRD

Context:

Women's participation in the North Africa labor market in 2022, at an average of about 19.8% of population aged 15 years and above, remains the lowest in Africa (according to ILO). In Morocco, the participation rate for women is slightly higher at around 21% of population aged 15 and above but the employment rate among women in the formal sector has declined from 30% in 1999 to 18.6% in 2019, according to the HCP. These figures highlight the urgent need to promote women's inclusion in the business sector and entrepreneurship.

The objective of the North Africa Sub-regional Office is to enhance the employment creation environment in North Africa by supporting micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) as drivers of sustainable development. This includes a particular focus on promoting female and youth entrepreneurship.

The UN Economic Commission for Africa - Sub Regional Office for North Africa (ECA-SRO-NA) has partnered with EBRD Morocco to implement a program supporting women-led businesses in Morocco aiming at enhancing their resilience and economic integration through capacity building workshops.

The program will implement five capacity building workshops in 5 different regions of Morocco (Rabat, Marrakech, Agadir, Casablanca, and Tangier), for about 200 women-led SMEs with the objective to strengthen their export and digital capabilities aiming at increasing Moroccan trade with the Continent and promote structural changes.

Each workshop will be organized around four topics as:

- Access to finance: how to make use of the available continental and international finance initiative to help women-led SMEs expand to African markets, and on what are the finance options available for SMEs.
- Product development: how to produce an exportable product. This will include various tips on quality, packing, packaging, and other product specific tips.
- Market development strategies: How can Moroccan women-led SMEs identify export opportunities and potential targeted markets. A special focus will be given to the available and existing trade agreements with Morocco and how to maximize the benefit from these agreements.
- Digitalization of SME's export activities: a focus will be given to the ways of digitalizing exporting activities through digital platforms, digital marketing, digital tools to improve export products....,

Objectives:

- Improving SME's contribution to inclusive growth
- Enhancing female productive employment through entrepreneurship dedicated program, focused on green, digital, and export-oriented entrepreneurship.
- Enhance export capabilities of women led and managed enterprises in Morocco
- Enhance digital skills and capabilities of women led and managed enterprises in the region

Public Stakeholders:

- The Moroccan private sector women-led SMEs: All exporting or potentially exporting women led companies, of the General Confederation of Morocco, (CGEM), AFEM (Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Morocco; and other women entrepreneurs associations.
- Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Handicrafts and Agriculture
- Representatives of Min of Industry, Min. of Small Enterprises
- Cooperatives of small producers

Agenda of the Workshops:

Workshops on Capacity building program for women led SMEs in Morocco	Date	Venue
1 st Workshop	15-20 June 2023	Rabat
2 nd Workshop	22-27 June 2023	Marrakech
3 rd Workshop	04-07 July 2023	Agadir
4 th Workshop	10-13 July 2023	Tanger
5 th Workshop	17-20 July 2023	Casablanca

Working languages: French and Arabic

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