



AID-FOR-TRADE CASE STORY

SPAIN

**SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL INDUSTRIAL CENTRES
SIDI MAAROUF, MORROCCO**

CASE STUDY TEMPLATE: SUPPORT FOR TECHNICAL INDUSTRIAL CENTRES; SIDI MAAROUF, MOROCCO.

Duration: First period (2003-2008); second period (2008-2011). The project is expected to end on June 5th 2011.

Objectives:

In 2003, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) started funding a Project on “Support for Technical Industrial Centres of the industrial complex of Sidi Maarouf in Morocco” in association with the Moroccan Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies.

Its initial objectives were: 1) the spreading of standardization measures, 2) quality certification of laboratories, 3) training of directors of Sidi Maarouf’s Technical Industrial Centres, 4) and the development of new services for supporting companies. On the other hand, the priority sectors were housing, textile, metallurgy, mechanics, electronics, chemistry and agribusiness.

Due to the positive outcome of the first stage of the program (2003-2008), the Moroccan Ministry asked the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation for its continuation in order to strengthen centres in other sectors which had not been supported previously and which were capable of absorbing technology transfer.

Consequently, in 2008 the second stage of the program started. Its main objective is to modernize and to strengthen the capacities of Sidi Maarouf’s Technical Industrial Centres by means of training courses, advice, technical assistance, equipment and sectorial partnership meetings. These actions will be concentrated on the following sectors: wood, furnishings, plastic and rubber, motor industry and leather, together with specific accompanying actions to the sectors of the first program. It is also foreseen to create a network of interdisciplinary centres.

Financing:

The first period of the program received from Spain (AECID) a state grant of 759.600 € addressed to the Moroccan National Agency for the Promotion of Small and Medium sized Enterprises.

During the second period, Spain (AECID) has granted a total amount of 900.000 €, divided into the following chapters:

- Technical Assistance and Training 670.000 €
- Running expenses 50.000 €
- Equipment 180.000 €

The grant has been disbursed during the first two years of the project (2008: 350.000€ and 2009: 550.000€). This project is classified within the CAD-CRS code number 25010 -business support-.

Description and Results:

The Moroccan Ministry of Industry, Trade and New Technologies has firmly supported with an estimate of 5M€ per year the creation and consolidation of Technological Centres which provide SME with tools that increase their competitiveness. The final goal of this policy is the

improvement of trade with the European Union (eventually reaching free trade). In this respect, it's worth saying that these centres have also been funded by MEDA programs of the EU.

The activities report of this program made in September 2010 by the Technical Cooperation Office of Spain in Morocco specify some of the latest activities which have been implemented this year:

- The Technical Industrial Centre of Morocco for motor industry and its counterpart in Galicia –Spain- have reached an agreement in order to develop common activities. That centre has also held a meeting with Tecnalía (a specialized Spanish Technological Centre).
- The Technical Industrial Centres for Leather and Plastic have also started a consultation process with some of its Spanish counterparts to exchange views and practice.