



DRAFT PROGRAMME

MULTI-YEAR EXPERT MEETING ON

Trade, Services and Development

18–20 July 2017

TUESDAY, 18 JULY 2017

Session 1. Services economy and trade for development

Services economy and trade are central to structural transformation in support of sustainable development. Such a multi-dimensional importance of services has been recognised under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as under UNCTAD's Nairobi Maafikiano mandate. Services, including infrastructure services, disruptive technology and the digital economy, contribute to economic upgrading, diversification, productivity and enhanced competitiveness of the entire economy. They provide the backbone for the economy and, together with business and professional services, health, distribution and tourism services, can be job creators and act as a key enabler for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This session will examine the major trends and issues in services for a balanced and inclusive growth strategy, trade and sustainable development.

Issues for discussion

- What are the salient trends and their key development implications characterizing today's services economy and trade?
- In which way can the direct contributions of services and the servicification effects contribute to development objectives?
- How can the services economy and trade maximize their contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through job creation and strengthened supply capacity?
- What are the effects of new technologies and the digital economy in services' business models and tradability, and in the direct and indirect role of services for economic and sustainable development?
- What are the services related and induced trends in labour markets, including in respect to digitization, shared services and innovative business models, and implications for SDGs?

Session 2. The role of services in structural transformation

The session will consider how services have a linkage-creation and coordination role of production processes, with a focus on how infrastructure services provide the means for different activities to interact. It will also examine the services-led structural transformation as well as the role of services as input providers in every stage of value chains, such as pre-production, production, and post-production activities, leading to a servicification of the economy. In addition, the session will reflect on the increasing tradability of services, of their imports and foreign content to improve productivity and productive and export capabilities. It will further delve on how this can promote changes in the economic structure and expand supply capacity, including of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and promote diversification, upgrading and participation in global value chains (GVCs).

Issues for discussion

- What are the contribution of services economy and trade for structural transformation?
- What role do services play in global value chains (GVCs)?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for developing countries in harnessing gains of services for structural transformation?
- In which way can services-led structural change be oriented towards formal and higher productivity activities?
- How are policies and regulations needed to enhance services performance and their contribution for a structural transformation consistent with development needs?

WEDNESDAY, 19 JULY 2017

Session 3. Services policies and regulations for structural transformation

Harvesting the potential benefits of a trade and services-led structural transformation requires sound and evidence-based policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks. These are necessary to address domestic supply-side constraints, externalities and coordination issues in services, particularly in infrastructure services, and to favour the services-led structural change towards sectors with higher productivity and value-added. This is facilitated by regulatory best practices, services standards, a multi-stakeholder approach and public-private partnerships. It is critical to have coherence between policy areas, between these and trade liberalization, and between policy and regulatory goals such as universal access, competition, enabling productive environment, skills development and improved data for evidence-based policymaking. The session will seek to draw lessons drawn from regional and national experiences, with some sectoral focus such as financial services, telecom and ICT, energy, and transport services. It will particularly examine how to build on the services digital economy to achieve SDGs, inclusive growth, and promote job creation and trade finance. This includes the affordable access to quality and competitive financial services through digital financial services for inclusion of firms, particularly MSMEs, and households, and ICT services-enabled trade and e-commerce.

Issues for discussion

- What policy, regulatory and institutional approaches are warranted in maximizing the contribution of services, particularly infrastructure services, for structural transformation?
- How can multiple regulatory goals, such as market growth, universal access, competition and consumer and data protection, be addressed in an integrated and coherent manner by services policies and regulations?
- In which way can regulatory cooperation and use of new technologies best contribute to a coherent and fit for purpose policy, regulatory and institutional framework?
- What policies are needed to strengthen financial services as well as to promote access to them, including through digital financial services?
- How to harness the potential of e-commerce and ICT-enabled trade for development, including by coherently removing barriers to telecommunication and ICT services, avoiding overly aggressive trade provisions, and fulfilling legitimate regulatory objectives of data and privacy protection and cyber security?
- What lessons can be learned from experiences in pursuing coherence between trade and regulation in services, at regional and national levels, and including effects at subnational level?

Session 4. The role of services-related trade policies and trade negotiations for structural adjustment

Progressive services liberalization has been pursued at the multilateral, plurilateral and regional initiatives. Recent proposals on domestic regulation, transparency, administration of measures, temporary movement of persons and of a Trade Facilitation in Services Agreement will be discussed to the extent they can influence the role of services for structural transformation and development. The session will address the implications of these different levels of the trading system on services and related structural adjustment, including in terms of how various provisions of trade agreements can influence the linkages between services and economic transformation.

Issues for discussion

- What is the potential impact of domestic regulations on international trade, and how can trade strategies influence domestic regulatory and institutional frameworks?
- How to ensure coherence and coordination between trade policy, trade liberalization and regulatory objectives?
- How can one facilitate trade in services in different modes of supply and services?
- What are the particular challenges of new-generation and mega-regional trade agreements for national regulatory efforts, including through the different approaches on regulatory coherence?

THURSDAY, 20 JULY 2017

Session 5. Towards a coherent services regulation and trade policy for structural transformation: New research and capacity building agenda

Active services policies to enhance supply capacity and coherence between regulatory and trade agendas and between regulatory authorities, sectoral and trade ministries is crucial for services economy and trade to play its full part in promoting structural transformation and sustainable development. This session will consider lessons learned from practices and experiences, including cross-cutting and sectoral lessons from services assessments through UNCTAD's Services Policy Reviews (SPRs) and Trade Policy Framework Reviews (TPFs) as well as from other organizations and development partners, in enabling services and a resulting structural transformation to better contribute to development objectives, and identify areas for further research and capacity building needs.

Issues for discussion

- What are the required policy, regulatory and institutional approaches to enhance the contribution of services to a structural transformation consistent with development objectives?
- What are lessons and experiences learnt in this regard, including from UNCTAD's SPR and TPFs?
- What tools are available or can usefully be developed to help countries identify coherent, integrated, best-fit and evidence-based policy, liberalization, regulatory and institutional frameworks? What is the role of UNCTAD in this regard?
- What are the areas of further research in improving the understanding on the contribution of services and services trade to structural transformation and SDGs?
- What capacity building support could be useful for countries wishing to draw effective benefit from services economy for structural transformation and SDGs?

Roundtable on the way forward roadmap and recommendations

Concluding remarks