

REGIONAL MEETING ON PROMOTING SERVICES SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE-LED GROWTH IN AFRICA

organized by UNCTAD in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the UN
Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - 12-13 September 2013

Draft Agenda

Thursday 12 September 2013	
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:15	<p>Opening Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming remarks by Government of Ethiopia • Opening remarks by UNCTAD, AUC, and UNECA
9:15-10:30	<p>Session I - Achieving sustainable development and job creation through the services sector</p> <p>This session will focus on the development gains which can be enhanced from the development and expansion of countries' services sector. It will discuss in particular the preconditions that will enable services to play their role as catalyst for economic growth and as key inputs into the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. The importance of access to basic services for progressing in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including through the provision of services such as potable water and sanitation services, energy, health, education and environmental services, will also be highlighted. Finally, the importance of the services sector and of services trade for national strategies for promoting job creation will be debated.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What trends are we seeing across the services sector? Where are the emerging growth centres? • What are the key transmission channels of economic growth in various services sectors? • To what extent are services contributing to poverty reduction and increased welfare? • Is the role of services as inputs into the agriculture and manufacturing sectors increasing? • To what extent are services contributing to job creation? What are the skill sets required for the development of a vibrant services economy?

10:45-12:00	Coffee break
	<p>Session II - Services trade across Africa: main opportunities and challenges</p> <p>This session will discuss the opportunities and challenges of services trade across Africa. In addition to presenting data on existing flows in services, the session will describe the role of factors such as regional integration initiatives and global value chains on such flows. Particular attention will be devoted to the importance of specific modes of supply in services trade flows.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the state of services in Africa? • What share of Africa services trade occurs with third countries and how has this share evolved over the years? • What are the main trends of extra- and intra-African services trade? • What are the main opportunities for expanding African services trade, including in services value chains? • How do the challenges faced by exporters vary with respect to extra- and intra-African services trade? • How can African countries exploit services trade opportunities through the various modes of supply?
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	<p>Session III - The SPRs of Lesotho, Rwanda and Uganda</p> <p>This session will present the main findings of the SPRs for the three African countries. The experts will describe the review of the economic, regulatory and policy issues, and institutional frameworks which was undertaken for each country. The presentations will highlights some of the commonalities in the sector-specific issues faced by these countries, particularly in those sectors covered by more than one SPR (e.g. financial and insurance services, ICT services and tourism services). The recommendations developed in consultation with the stakeholders to address gaps and inadequacies identified by the SPRs as well as to further promoted reform in the services sectors will be presented.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main policy, regulatory, and institutional challenges faced by the three beneficiary countries with respect to their services economies? • What are the emerging trends and challenges in specific services sectors? • What have these countries learned from the review of best practices and developments in other countries? • What are key recommendations for improving the services sector's contribution to the attainment of the MDGs and increased services trade? • What can we learn from the SPRs in term of how to manage the interface between trade policy, sector policy and more general economic and social policies?
15:00-	Coffee break

15:15	
15:15-16:30	<p>Session III (ctnd) - The SPRs of Lesotho, Rwanda and Uganda</p> <p>This session will discuss how to promote an enhanced and holistic understanding of the services sector and the capacity to identify and take advantage of services trade opportunities as means of promoting sector development. Particular focus will be put on the importance of the establishment of policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks, as well as strategies for services sector development. Representatives of Lesotho, Rwanda and Uganda will share their experiences in undertaking SPRs.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are countries' strategies for coordinating trade policies with regulatory reforms and other policies objectives? • What part did the SPRs play in beneficiaries' overall services strategies? How well is this tool and others promoted by development partners working in practice? • What are the challenges stemming from the diverse nature of services sectors and complex web of institutions involved in services policy-making?

Friday 13 September 2013	
9:00-10:30	<p>Session IV - Tackling the challenges of policy formulation and implementation</p> <p>This session will focus on the concrete process of translating countries' trade and development policies relating to the services sector into concrete measures. It will discuss the multiple reasons (including mismatch between the selected policies and the country situation, limited human, institutional and financial resources, etc.) behind the gaps that are often observed between what was planned and what actually occurred as a result of a policy. It will focus <i>inter alia</i> on the extent to which stakeholders are successfully involved in policy-making and preparations for trade negotiations relating to services. Participants will discuss examples of successful collaborations but also shortcomings and suggest innovative ways to further strengthen the role of multi-stakeholder consultations in services-related policy formulation, implementation and review. Some suggestions will be made on how countries can improve policy implementation.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key factors and tools essential to ensuring the success and sustainability of policy implementation? • How have countries overcome resource constraints to successfully implement policies? • Are African stakeholders sufficiently involved in services policy-making and services trade negotiations? Are there differences between their involvement in policy-making vs. their involvement in negotiations?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there successful/innovative initiatives that could be replicated? • What tools can be used to promote trust among the various actors involved? • Are there any specificities of policy implementation for the services sector?
10:30-10:45	Coffee break
10:45-12:00	<p>Session V - An African agenda for services sector development and services trade?</p> <p>This session will present a vision for the development of services and services trade in Africa. The related specific needs of the continent, particularly in terms of infrastructure, investment and human resources, will be outlined. Also, suggestions on how to address these needs and promote services supply and export capacities will be discussed.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the underlying causes for success or failure in services development? • Are the services development challenges and opportunities in Africa similar to those in other developing regions? • What is the continent's vision for intra-African services trade? • Is the CFTA/BIAT process adequately accounting for services issues? • How can negotiators ensure trade agreements facilitate and strengthen domestic and regional services reforms rather than hinder them? • What is the role for African institutions in promoting services sector development and services trade?
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	<p>Session VI - The role of development partners and donors, including the promotion of coherence and cooperation</p> <p>This session will discuss the role of development partners and donors in promoting economic growth and sustainable development through the services sector at national and regional levels. Also, their role in supporting the increased participation of African developing and least developed countries in services trade will be presented. In particular, the presentation and following discussion will seek to suggest mechanisms for ensuring coherence in cooperation both among stakeholders involved in activities supported by development partners and donors as well as coordination among the latter so as to maximize the benefits of the support provided.</p> <p>Questions for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is donor/development partner support to services sectors considered to adequately address needs? • What are the pre-conditions for technical assistance and donor support to promote development through the services sector? • Are domestic structures needed to coordinate the receipt of services trade-related technical assistance? • Are coordination mechanisms among donors necessary and feasible?

15:00-15:15	Coffee break
15:15-16:30	<p>Session VII - Closing session</p> <p>This session will propose some recommendations for participants to consider when seeking to promote services sector development and trade-led growth. So as to assist all participants in identifying areas in which they would have a particular role to play these recommendations will be categorized in three categories, namely: i) topics for further research and analysis, ii) areas for consensus-building at regional or continental levels, and iii) technical assistance needs.</p>