

ENHANCED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK

SUPPORTING LDCs IN TACKLING CONSTRAINTS TO TRADE

GLOBAL CONTEXT

The least developed countries (LDCs) represent the poorest and most vulnerable segment of the international community. They comprise more than 880 million people, about 12 per cent of world population. Yet they account for less than 2 per cent of world gross domestic product and about 1 per cent of global trade in goods. Against this backdrop, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, known as the Istanbul Programme of Action, recognized the critical importance of implementing “effective trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building in least developed countries on a priority basis, including by enhancing the share of assistance to least developed countries for Aid for Trade and support for the Enhanced Integrated Framework” (paragraph 66, section 3 (e)).

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is a multi-agency and multi-donor programme for the coordinated delivery of trade related technical assistance and institutional capacity-building for LDCs. It aims at enabling LDCs to mainstream trade into their national development plans, so that countries can mobilize the potential of trade to promote economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction at the domestic level and to become more active players in the multilateral trading system. In particular, the programme serves as a platform for LDCs to build productive capacities and start engaging in trade policymaking, among other activities, that can lead to creating employment and reducing poverty.

As one of the six core EIF partner agencies, UNCTAD’s focus and support is on contributing towards strengthening the capacities of LDCs in trade policymaking and thus improve ownership of the EIF process. Specifically, UNCTAD supports LDCs under the EIF programme through the formulation of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies and their updates, and by drafting technical cooperation projects for implementation of the action matrix of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies, particularly with regard to tier 2 projects funded by the EIF Trust Fund. The six core partner agencies that support the EIF programme are UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre, United Nations Development Programme, International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization, with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and World Tourism Organization as observers.

WHAT KIND OF ASSISTANCE DOES UNCTAD PROVIDE?

UNCTAD provides tailored assistance in response to specific requests from EIF participating countries. Such requests can result in the updating of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies. Assistance can also focus on mainstreaming trade policy issues that are identified in countries’ trade diagnostics and preparing tier 2 projects drawn from action matrices of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies. In providing such assistance, UNCTAD uses a mix of national and international expertise to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and maximize results – the approach also contributes to national capacity-building.

PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Programme start date: 2012

Number of countries assisted:
8 (Diagnostic Trade Integration
Study updates)

Number of countries
assisted per year: 5 (average)

Programme website:
unctad.org/EIF

RESULTS AND IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- A number of LDCs – for example, Benin, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger and Senegal – have made progress, with support from UNCTAD, in mainstreaming trade policies into their national development plans, identifying trade-related priorities and implementing the action matrices of Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies.
- Senegal completed and validated its Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies update in July 2013. UNCTAD then assisted the Government in preparing a tier 2 project on transforming and commercializing fruits from the Casamance region and organized a workshop on the subject in January 2014. A follow-up workshop on trade mainstreaming, held in February 2014, led to the identification of multiple constraints to mainstreaming trade. Together with the Government, a mainstreaming proposal was elaborated and shared with the EIF secretariat in 2014.

Results in-depth

Strengthening productive and trade capacities

Benin. UNCTAD, together with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the International Trade Centre, is implementing a tier 2 project aimed at strengthening the productive and trade capacities of Benin. The project focuses on cotton, agro-industries and fisheries – three priorities identified in Benin's EIF-sponsored Diagnostic Trade Integration Study. As part of the project, UNCTAD is responsible for elaborating a national trade policy document and will provide technical assistance in building capacities of governmental entities, private sector and civil society and non-governmental organizations in the areas of trade integration, negotiations, rules of origin and market access. In response to a request from the Government of Benin, additional support will be provided on geographical indications.

DONORS/ FUNDING SOURCE

Current: EIF

Past: Trust Fund for Least Developed Countries; Core Project (multi-donor: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the Holy See and Common Fund For Commodities)

“UNCTAD presented the report on its work [the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study of Senegal] to all the stakeholders during a validation workshop on the [Diagnostic Trade Integration Study] update [...]. I take this opportunity to commend the quality of collaboration between our two institutions and to express the gratitude of the Government of Senegal for the quality of the results achieved.”

Representative of the Ministry of Commerce, Informal Sector, Consumption,
Local Product Promotion and SMEs, Senegal

2013