

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

**UNCTAD**



# UNCTAD TOOLBOX

DELIVERING RESULTS  
THIRD EDITION



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Geneva, 2020

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# UNCTAD TOOLBOX

Since its foundation more than 50 years ago, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD – has been a key partner supporting countries in meeting their development objectives. UNCTAD has helped countries in the pursuit of shared prosperity by backing policymaking with sound research and analysis, providing a forum for open and constructive dialogue on development issues, and providing technical support to make a difference on the ground.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals aim to ensure dignity for all, prosperity for all and a sustainable planet for all. Sustainable development is at the heart of the work of UNCTAD. UNCTAD provides high-quality and evidence-based analysis that feeds national, regional and international policies with the aim of generating inclusive sustainable development. Based on such analysis, UNCTAD technical assistance builds the capacities needed in developing countries and countries with economies in transition for equitable integration into the interconnected, global economy and to improve the well-being of their populations. It does so in a non-standardized, flexible and customizable way. UNCTAD technical cooperation is tailored to the needs of its beneficiaries; involves donors, partners and other stakeholders; and aims to achieve concrete, measurable results, to be disseminated and shared with stakeholders from different countries.

The technical cooperation products presented in the *UNCTAD Toolbox* aim to multiply the intended effects by adopting integrated approaches and coordinating technical cooperation operations both internally and with other stakeholders.

The *UNCTAD Toolbox* contains information on our technical cooperation products that can assist countries in putting in place the policies, regulations and institutional frameworks and in mobilizing the resources needed to fulfil the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNCTAD stands ready to help developing countries and countries with economies in transition achieve the world we want by 2030.

UNCTAD delivers results. We count on our partners to help bring about the ambitious transformations that, together, we can deliver.

**To learn more about UNCTAD, visit [unctad.org](https://unctad.org)**

*Dignity for all, prosperity for all and a sustainable planet for all*

# PRODUCTS IN THE *UNCTAD TOOLBOX*

## EMPOWERING PEOPLE, INVESTING IN THEIR FUTURE

- Trade, gender and development
- Entrepreneurship for sustainable development
- TrainForTrade



## FOSTERING ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY, IMPROVING GOVERNANCE

- Voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection law and policy
- Competition and consumer protection policies and frameworks
- Business facilitation
- Trade facilitation
- ASYCUDA – Automated System for Customs Data
- Statistics
- Enabling accounting and reporting on the private sector's contribution to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Investment and public health
- International investment agreements



## TACKLING VULNERABILITIES, BUILDING RESILIENCE

- Support to graduation from least developed country status
- DMFAS – Debt Management and Financial Analysis System
- UNCTAD contribution to the Enhanced Integrated Framework
- Market access, rules of origin and geographical indications for the least developed countries
- Breaking the chains of commodity dependence
- Sustainable and resilient transport and logistics services



## TRANSFORMING ECONOMIES, FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Investment policy reviews
- Services policy reviews
- Trade policy framework reviews
- Science, technology and innovation policy reviews
- E-commerce and the digital economy
- Non-tariff measures
- Trade negotiations and the international trading system
- Sustainable trade and the environment
- Investment promotion and facilitation
- Investment guides



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



End poverty in all its forms everywhere



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



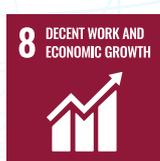
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



Reduce inequality within and among countries



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

# PARTNERING WITH UNCTAD

Governments, international institutions – including international and regional development finance institutions – and other public and private entities wishing to become a partner of UNCTAD and provide funding for its technical cooperation activities are welcome to contact the Technical Cooperation Section of UNCTAD. The Technical Cooperation Section can provide further information on technical cooperation work and funding needs and can organize meetings, and/or correspond in writing as necessary, in order to define the scope and areas of an eventual agreement with a partner.



## Contact details

Technical Cooperation Section  
UNCTAD  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
Tel: 41 22 917 5594  
Fax: 41 22 917 0043  
Email: [tc@unctad.org](mailto:tc@unctad.org)  
Website: [unctad.org](http://unctad.org)

The annual reports on UNCTAD technical cooperation work, as well as up-to-date information on publications, technical cooperation projects and meetings, can be found on the UNCTAD website at [unctad.org](http://unctad.org).

# HOW TO REQUEST TECHNICAL COOPERATION

A State member of UNCTAD or a regional institution wishing to obtain technical cooperation from the UNCTAD secretariat should submit a formal request. Formal requests refer to official letters, or emails in exceptional cases, from relevant authorities in beneficiary countries or regions, addressed to the UNCTAD secretariat and requesting UNCTAD technical cooperation.

## Key elements in a formal request

A formal request for UNCTAD technical cooperation should include the following key information:

- Requesting country or regional institution.
- Requesting authority and contact details.
- Request date.
- Main areas where UNCTAD technical cooperation is requested or main *UNCTAD Toolbox* product(s) requested.
- Reasons for which UNCTAD technical cooperation is requested.
- How UNCTAD technical cooperation can contribute to the national development strategy.
- Source of funding.

Member States and regional organizations are requested to provide complete information with respect to the above-mentioned elements. If necessary, the Technical Cooperation Section can provide further information on the technical cooperation work of UNCTAD, including its technical cooperation products, and can organize meetings to provide advice on the preparation of formal requests.

## Clearance and uploading of a formal request

Upon receipt of a request, the UNCTAD secretariat will verify whether all the key information has been provided, designate the responsible division(s), ensure that the scope of UNCTAD technical cooperation is clearly defined and clarify the budget information and funding status. In consultation with the requesting country or organization, the UNCTAD secretariat may consider organizing additional meetings and/or sending a fact-finding mission, if funding is available, in order to better define its technical cooperation activities.

Upon clearance by the UNCTAD secretariat, the request will be uploaded to the online request database on the UNCTAD website, at [unctad.org](http://unctad.org) under “Projects”. If there are requests for which funds are not fully secured, UNCTAD will seek to support beneficiary countries in their efforts to mobilize the funds necessary for implementation of the project.

### Contact details

Technical Cooperation Section, UNCTAD  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland  
Tel.: 41 22 917 5594 - Fax: 41 22 917 0043  
Email: [tc@unctad.org](mailto:tc@unctad.org)

# EMPOWERING PEOPLE, INVESTING IN THEIR FUTURE

The transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity. It aims to end poverty in all its forms and improve human well-being. The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals require, on the one hand, sound strategies and policies by Governments and, on the other hand, the active participation of all people from different sectors of society, including local authorities, farmers, business and industry and non-governmental organizations. To support policymaking and the effective participation of people in this new development process, it is essential to strengthen their skills and update their knowledge bases through capacity-building activities. UNCTAD has developed well-targeted technical assistance programmes, including training, to build capacity for various stakeholders. For example, it promotes entrepreneurship through practical programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises and support to Governments in formulating national entrepreneurship strategies. It strengthens the knowledge and skills of developing countries on port management, e-commerce and trade statistics through blended learning. Furthermore, UNCTAD supports developing country policymakers in mainstreaming gender equality in trade policy and empowering women in trade.





# TRADE, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING: A PATH TO INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Economic growth, as well as inclusive sustainable development, requires women's empowerment. Globalization through increased trade and investment has been associated with rising employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for women. In some cases, however, it has exacerbated existing gender inequalities and worsened women's economic and social status. One key reason for this is that trade policies, as well as economic policies more generally, have long been gender-blind – they do not factor in the effects of different policies on women as a distinct and often disadvantaged group in the economy and in the society.

Mainstreaming gender in trade policy means ensuring that due consideration is given to gender inequalities and implications at every stage of the trade policy process: generating relevant evidence to inform decisions on trade policy; designing policies based on such evidence; and, later, supporting interventions on the ground to enable their successful implementation. Such an assessment helps to better understand the specific challenges and opportunities that women face from markets, to design and implement complementary policies aimed at maximizing opportunities for women and to facilitate women's access to more competitive markets.

UNCTAD has been conducting analytical work on gender and trade policy since the early 2000s. This extensive experience in accompanying and monitoring the gender dimension of trade led to the establishment in 2010 of a dedicated work programme on trade, gender and development.



### WHAT ARE SOME STEPS TOWARDS MAINSTREAMING GENDER?

Programme activities are aimed at building the human and institutional capacities of key national stakeholders – policymakers and trade practitioners – to mainstream gender in trade policies. Activities encompass country and regional studies, micro-level interventions on specific issues, such as cross-border trade, a teaching package, and a trade and gender toolbox.

Country and regional studies contain an analysis of the country's or region's trade flows that identifies sectors that have been positively or negatively affected by trade and market opening, their repercussions on women, especially in the labour market and the existing scope for using trade policy – and complementary policies – as a tool for gender equality and women's empowerment. The studies also consider the bilateral, regional and multilateral agreements to which a country is a party. Country and regional studies are initiated at the request of Governments. The counterpart ministry or agency is involved throughout the process and takes ownership of the policy recommendations.

New expertise has been developed in the area of informal cross-border trade to address the challenges of women who engage in small-scale informal trade activities across borders. Through new analysis and capacity-building activities, UNCTAD has been supporting selected countries to leverage informal cross-border trade for the empowerment of women, raising informal traders' awareness about trade procedures, their rights and obligations, and the benefits of formalization, and equipping them with skills and knowledge aimed to improve their business, and ultimately, to boost trade and economy-wide development.

The teaching package on trade and gender aims to strengthen understanding of the links between trade and gender and the capacities to formulate gender-sensitive trade policies. It targets academics, policymakers and representatives of civil society involved in research, teaching, policy formulation and implementation and advocacy work on trade and gender. The teaching package consists of a training manual and online courses, namely a standard course addressed to stakeholders in all developing regions, and region-focused courses that address trade and gender issues within a specific economic grouping. The standard course contains three modules and spans seven weeks; the regional courses contain an additional teaching module and span eight weeks. UNCTAD has developed regional courses for the member countries of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community and Southern African Development Community. It is developing additional courses for the Southern Common Market – MERCOSUR – and Central America regions, and a topical module focused on the impact on women of technological upgrading in agriculture.

The trade and gender toolbox is the first attempt to provide a systematic framework to evaluate the impact of trade reforms on women and gender inequalities prior to their implementation. The methodology has been applied to date



to a specific trade agreement, namely the Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the East African Community, and is used to assess the likely impact of the Economic Partnership Agreement, mainly through employment, on gender equality and the well-being of women in Kenya, a partner country in the East African Community. The same methodology can be used to assess the gender-related impacts of any other trade agreement or trade reform in other countries. This form of ex ante gender analysis aims to answer the question: what may happen to women if a given trade policy were implemented?



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

The UNCTAD programme on trade, gender and development has been under way for almost 10 years, supporting countries in finding ways to use trade as a tool for empowering women and reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. Referring to UNCTAD activities on cross-border trade, Ambassador Margret Mary Lungu Kaemba of Zambia said: *“This project is critical in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals of alleviating poverty and improving the livelihoods of the women traders in our countries – and not just the women but the livelihoods of their families as well. My Government is committed to addressing the challenges these women face and working with UNCTAD on this issue.”*

UNCTAD work on the analysis of the multifaceted gender ramifications of trade has contributed to raising awareness of the importance of conducting ex ante gender impact assessments of trade agreements. Since the launch of the Trade and Gender Toolbox, the methodology has been applied by the European Commission in the sustainability impact assessments in support of the modernization of the trade pillar of the European Union–Chile Association Agreement and in the free trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand to gauge the possible impacts of the agreements on women.

Recent capacity-building activities in the Pacific region have drawn stakeholders’ attention to how the technical cooperation provisions included in trade agreements – in particular of the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus – can be used to strengthen women’s role in the economy. *“I am now aware that the Agreement can provide support for women to start their business and get engaged in trade”*, said a participant in the national workshop on trade and gender held in Tarawa, Kiribati, in October 2019.

Six iterations of the standard online course on trade and gender (five in English and one in French) have been offered since 2015. Iterations of region-specific courses were conducted for stakeholders in the East African Community and Southern African Development Community in 2018 and in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa in English and French in 2017 and 2019. To date, over 900 stakeholders in 138 countries have received training through UNCTAD online courses on trade and gender. Starting in 2020, the courses will also be available in Spanish.

Most participants agreed that the courses had met or exceeded their expectations and enhanced their knowledge of trade and gender links. According to the feedback received, the courses had succeeded in preparing participants to conduct their own research on the topic and/or incorporate trade and gender-based concepts into their teaching and policy-related work.



*“The course was very good in all spheres. I enjoyed the course materials, tutor and fellow participants, who shared their various ideas from around the globe. I have developed new skills and ideas on the content itself and this will take me to another level in my career and aspirations. I look forward to more challenging opportunities. Thank you.”*

Participant in the 2019 edition of the standard online course

*“I generally expected mainly theory on the module but the practical examples and practical situations given were so valuable to me beyond what I perceived the course to be like.”*

Participant in the online course devoted to the Southern African Development Community, 2018



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2010

Country studies: 7

Regional studies: 6

Online courses: 11

Trade agreements analysed through the Trade and Gender Toolbox methodology: 1

Website: [unctad.org/gender](http://unctad.org/gender)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

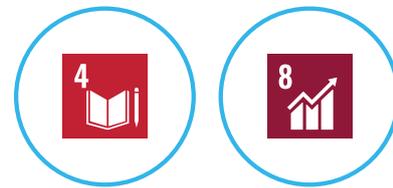
Directly: 5, 8

Indirectly: 1, 10, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Australia, Finland, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Trade Mark East Africa, United Nations Development Account



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## FOSTERING SMALL ENTERPRISES AS ENGINES OF INCLUSIVE GROWTH



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are key engines of sustainable and inclusive growth. They make significant economic contributions through outputs, employment, new job creation and innovation. In most countries, they account for over half of the total share of gross domestic product. Their share in the number of registered companies is typically much higher, reaching 90–95 per cent in nearly all countries. The importance of SMEs for large companies, both as subcontractors and sellers of their products, has been constantly increasing. However, for SMEs to become internationally competitive so that they draw greater benefits from globalization and contribute to inclusive growth, they need assistance to create or enhance an enabling entrepreneurship environment and to contribute to entrepreneurship skills facilitation.

UNCTAD is a recognized global leader in the area of entrepreneurship promotion. In its resolution 73/225, adopted on 20 December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly acknowledged the role of UNCTAD in entrepreneurship for development within the United Nations system and encouraged UNCTAD to continue leading the work on entrepreneurship policy promotion and expanding the outreach of the Empretec programme as an effective tool for fostering a mindset change in entrepreneurs.

Concretely, UNCTAD work on entrepreneurship consists of the following three components:

- **Empretec** (Entrepreneurship Development Programme of UNCTAD). This is a capacity-building programme that promotes the creation of a one-stop centre for enterprise creation and development, in particular for SMEs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Since 1988, the Empretec Programme has helped to foster entrepreneurship capabilities and the growth of internationally competitive SMEs in these countries.
- **Business Linkages Programme.** This multi-stakeholder initiative that grew out of Empretec, goes a step further for SMEs by transforming linkages between SMEs and multinational enterprises into sustainable business relationships.
- **Entrepreneurship Policy Framework.** This UNCTAD tool provides a basis for the provision of technical assistance and building capacity in a number of developing economies to inform and guide the development and implementation of national entrepreneurship policies, strategies and action plans.



### HOW IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROMOTED?

The *Empretec* Programme operates through a network of centres in more than 40 countries. Certified local trainers ensure that training is delivered on the ground in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Swahili and Vietnamese. The Programme encompasses the following elements:

- Establishment of self-sustained, local market-driven entrepreneurship development centres (Empretec national centres) and follow-up technical assistance.
- Provision of entrepreneurship development training and follow-up services to entrepreneurs.
- Transfer of Empretec training methodology to local training teams and customization of training and non-training services in the local context and local languages.
- Promotion of networking and establishing associations of entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs benefit from follow-up services provided by established Empretec centres, which offer assistance with business health checks, business plan formulation, public–private sector partnerships and business linkages with multinational enterprises.

By means of the *Business Linkages* Programme, UNCTAD plays the role of intermediary, improving the productivity and efficiency of local suppliers through training, mentoring, information exchange, quality improvements, innovation and technology transfer. Thanks to UNCTAD assistance, local suppliers and domestic SMEs can be better integrated into global value chains, thus providing them with an opportunity for internationalization. In addition, UNCTAD assists Governments and other stakeholders in building an enabling policy environment and supports networks of business development and other service providers.



The *Entrepreneurship Policy Framework* identifies policy objectives and outlines options in the form of recommended actions designed to aid Governments in the practical formulation of national entrepreneurship strategies and action plans. Advisory services are delivered to facilitate efforts to implement the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework. To date, nine countries are successfully utilizing the Framework in the implementation of national entrepreneurship policies. The Framework is also adapted to specific target groups and is assisting countries in implementing the UNCTAD–Commonwealth *Policy Guide on Youth Entrepreneurship* and the *Policy Guide on Entrepreneurships for Migrants and Refugees*, a joint publication of UNCTAD, the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees through capacity-building workshops for policymakers and practitioners.



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- Business performance indicators applied in Jordan showed that 72 per cent of participants started a business within the eight months following attendance of an Empretec training course and, within the same time frame, the number of jobs created by participants in the survey was on average 2.6 per business.
- During the first year of Empretec installation in Angola, 15 per cent of the entrepreneurs that received training opened a new business or expanded existing ones, and 30 per cent of the entrepreneurs had reported sales growth.
- A sustainable institutional framework to monitor the implementation of a national entrepreneurship strategy and related action plan was developed in Ecuador with an online tool; core indicators show that 300 new firms were established, 1,000 jobs created and \$9 billion in exports generated.
- In the United Republic of Tanzania, the national business linkages programme has assisted 1,200 farmers in tomato, coffee, passion fruit, vegetables and dairy value chains. An assessment conducted on various groups of beneficiaries of Empretec and farming-as-a-business workshops in Moshi and Morogoro showed that their business turnover increased on average 78 per cent in 2018, compared with 2017, while the average productivity per acre among women farmers in Moshi rose from 10,000 kg to 30,000 kg of selected types of vegetables.



*"Under the framework [of] Entrepreneurship Policy Framework implementation, two important elements have been identified as best practice: first, the involvement of the private sector in implementing entrepreneurship policy; second, the creation of a venture capital fund aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs and their participation in value chains."*

Eduardo Egas, Minister of Industry and Productivity, Ecuador, 2017

*"From what I have learned from the Empretec workshop, I have managed to get more customers, improved on diversity and moved on a number of projects that previously I could not attempt. I was very motivated when I won the first prize at the Empretec workshop, having the highest profits in the business creation exercise."*

Davies Mendulo Sinyinza, Empretec graduate, Zambia, 2017



## PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 1988

Activities per year: 850 Empretec workshops, 20,000 entrepreneurs trained

Countries assisted: More than 40

Persons trained: 480,000

Website: [empretec.unctad.org](http://empretec.unctad.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 4, 8

Indirectly: 1, 5, 9, 12, 17



## DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

China, Ecuador, Finland, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, International Labour Organization, One United Nations funds, United Nations Development Account, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, United Nations Office for Project Services, Multi-donor/ Cross-cluster Trust Fund on Capacity-building in Investment for Development



# TRAINFORTRADE

## STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

The UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme provides developing countries with bespoke technical assistance and capacity-building. The overarching aim of the programme is to empower countries to reap the benefits of international trade in an equitable and sustainable manner. In particular, the programme builds sustainable networks of knowledge to enhance national ownership, South–South and triangular cooperation. It also encourages development-oriented trade policy to reduce poverty and foster transparency and good practices and promotes digital solutions and innovative thinking to enhance capacities of players in international trade.



### HOW DOES THE TRAINFORTRADE PROGRAMME WORK?

The TrainForTrade programme assesses country needs, sets up national project committees, builds digital networks, develops high-quality training based on a pedagogical methodology, including the training of trainers, coaching and blended learning. It also facilitates policy analysis and the sharing of best practices and enhances transparency.

The programme combines distance learning with face-to-face training. This is an environmentally friendly and cost-efficient method of delivering training that offers considerable flexibility, making it a pragmatic approach for use in today’s busy world.

The TrainForTrade programme currently covers technical assistance and capacity-building in the following areas:

- **E-commerce**, covering the legal aspects of e-commerce, e-commerce best practices and digital identity for trade and development.
- **Trade statistics**, including statistics on international trade in services, international merchandise trade and foreign direct investment.
- The **Port Management Programme** supports port communities with efficient and competitive port management services, to increase trade flows and foster sustainable economic development. The programme offers a public–private partnership model, worldwide networks of port entities, a sustainable training and talent management scheme, value added solutions in port communities (case studies), modern port management courses (240 hours over two years) and port performance measurements.



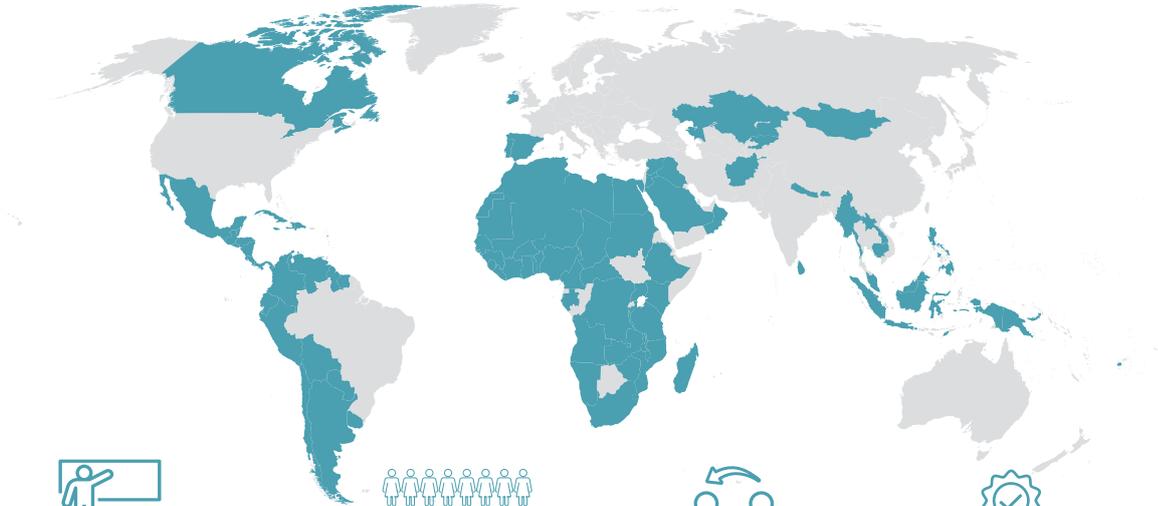
### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Between 2014 and 2018, TrainForTrade held 150 courses either as face-to-face training or distance learning, benefiting more than 5,000 participants from 116 countries. Participants received training equivalent to almost 45,000 full days.

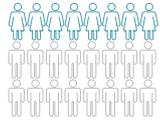
The European Union classified the TrainForTrade methodology of project management and blended learning delivery as a best practice, following an evaluation of a TrainForTrade project in Angola. The Government of Ireland, the main donor of the Port Management Programme, has stated that the partnership between Irish Aid, ports in Ireland, UNCTAD and beneficiary ports is an example of a best practice in development cooperation. The Port Management Programme receives continuous positive feedback from beneficiary port managers across its linguistic networks.



TrainForTrade **trained** participants from **116** countries



Over **5,000** participants, completing on average **9 days of training**



**34%** of the participants are **female**



Over **500** trainers promoting South–South **knowledge-sharing**



**Certification** and **satisfaction** rates both above **80%**



*"If this training never existed, there should have been the urgent need to create one. It does not only help in fashioning the way senior port workers look at ports but contributes towards the mental deconstruction of workers with stereotypes that hold back ports from functioning as facilitators of world trade and the turbine engines of development".*

Nchechuma Banla  
Port Authority of Douala, Cameroon  
Training of Trainers, Belfast, 2019

*"The UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme is vitally important in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris climate accords".*

Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, 2018



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 1996

Website: [tft.unctad.org](http://tft.unctad.org)

Content and Learning Management System: [learn.unctad.org](http://learn.unctad.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 9, 14, 17

Indirectly: 1, 5, 13

Social media:   

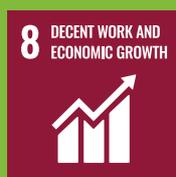


### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Ireland, 60 beneficiary-partners (TrainForTrade beneficiary countries also contribute financially to the programme using the cost-sharing principle), 9 United Nations agencies and other international and regional organizations, United Nations Development Account, 9 port partners

# FOSTERING ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY, IMPROVING GOVERNANCE

Efficient markets and effective and development-focused States are indispensable for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Markets play an important role in the allocation of resources. However, without proper regulatory mechanisms, there are risks of market failures, including abuses of monopoly power, negative externalities and inequality. The role of States is to correct market failures, create an enabling legal, regulatory and institutional framework and provide the right incentives for market players to contribute more effectively to sustainable development. UNCTAD technical cooperation supports developing countries in fostering economic efficiency and improving governance. In particular, it helps to establish pro-competitive regulations, facilitate trade and business by removing bureaucratic barriers to trade and investment, mainstream sustainability in international investment agreements, promote best practices on sustainability reporting by companies and strengthen statistical capacity to formulate sound economic policies.





# VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEWS OF COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW AND POLICY

## SHARING BEST PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Competition is fundamental to the success of any market economy. It stimulates a country's attractiveness as a business location and fosters economic efficiency, productivity, innovation and economic growth. Competitive markets offer a wider range of products with lower prices and increased quality, to the benefit of consumers. Trade liberalization cannot reach its full potential if anticompetitive practices between private companies remain, raising barriers to market entry and leading to high levels of market concentration and potential abusive behaviour. Therefore, it is essential for all countries to assess and, if necessary, improve the effectiveness of their competition laws and policies.

UNCTAD has supported developing countries and countries with economies in transition through a process of voluntary peer reviews of their competition laws and policies since 2005. The unique development perspective and experience of UNCTAD in working with competition authorities worldwide serves as a guarantee that the voluntary peer review process focuses on improving competition laws and policies in a way that fosters competitiveness and addresses countries' development needs and current economic challenges.

Consumer protection law and policy play a crucial role in ensuring that consumers are well-informed and well-protected against unfair and fraudulent business practices and will be provided with appropriate remedies if deceived. Voluntary peer reviews of consumer protection law and policy are a new global exercise that has been mandated to UNCTAD in United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/186; no such process exists at the international level in the field of consumer protection.

UNCTAD has supported developing countries and countries with economies in transition through a process of voluntary peer reviews of their consumer protection laws and policies since 2016. The reviews aim to improve consumer protection legislation and enforcement, to ensure that countries can address current challenges in providing effective protection to consumers and to raise awareness of relevant stakeholders of the importance of a consumer protection culture.



### HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection law and policy allow developing countries to benchmark their legislative framework against international best practices. They also provide an opportunity for reviewed countries to self-evaluate their enforcement performance. The reviews are conducted using an interactive peer review method that promotes knowledge-sharing and mutual understanding between competition authorities and consumer protection agencies at the regional and international levels through formal relations and informal networks and encourages both North–South and South–South cooperation.

The reviews identify major legislative, administrative and procedural changes that might be necessary for the optimum functioning of the competition and consumer protection frameworks. They give insights into country-specific constraints, including political and economic problems that restrict effective enforcement of the laws in question. The reviews serve as a basis for peer review examination during the annual meetings of the intergovernmental groups of experts on competition and consumer protection law and policy.

Voluntary peer reviews also provide an opportunity for the reviewed country to benefit from UNCTAD capacity-building and technical assistance in implementing the review recommendations. When necessary, development partners are invited to join efforts in implementing the technical cooperation and capacity-building project concerned. Ensuring ownership by the country undergoing review is essential to the sustainability of a peer review.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

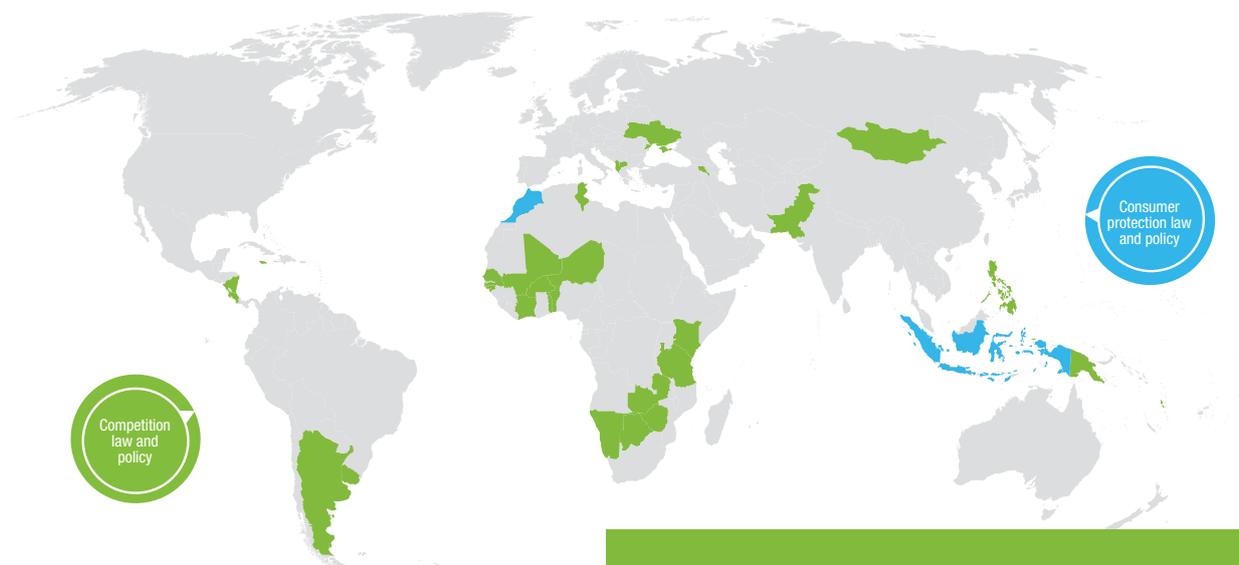
Global competitiveness assessments carried out annually by the World Economic Forum show that competition climates have improved in 10 countries following their peer review processes, facilitated by UNCTAD – an indication of UNCTAD contributions to competition law and policy.

Review reports have been used in amending legislation (at the level of draft laws), for advocacy and in establishing a new training agenda for staff. According to an external evaluation in 2015 of voluntary peer reviews on



competition law and policy that were carried out by UNCTAD, the reviews have been successful in many ways, namely, by delivering high-quality and practical recommendations with clear road maps for members to follow, increasing the capacities and impacts of the work of agencies and raising awareness among other national and international stakeholders. All respondents indicated that one of the main reasons for undertaking a peer review was the high level of the technical assistance provided.

## Voluntary peer reviews completed by 2019



### Brief highlights

*The first-ever Voluntary Peer Review of Consumer Protection Law and Policy of Morocco (2018), facilitated by UNCTAD, was followed by a two-day dissemination event in Rabat, with the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders. The Government of Morocco had by then amended its legislation according to the report's recommendations, illustrating the contribution of this exercise to the improvement of consumer protection in the country and setting a unique and high-level example in the region.*

*The Peer Review of Competition Law and Policy of Botswana (2018) was followed by a dissemination event in Gaborone with the participation of relevant stakeholders, including from the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry. The Government of Botswana is considering the ways and means of designing a road map towards combining the two functions of competition and consumer protection under one authority as recommended in the peer review report. The peer review exercise affirmed that as the Government moves towards cost-saving measures, it is planning to boost the competition authority to include consumer protection functions, as opposed to establishing a new institution to handle these matters.*



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Start date: competition law and policy: since 2005; consumer protection law and policy: since 2016

Reviews per year: 2 (1 on competition law and policy, and starting in 2018, 1 on consumer protection law and policy)

Completed peer reviews: competition law and policy: 24 (including 1 of the West African Economic and Monetary Union plus Benin and Senegal, 1 tripartite review of the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe)

Consumer protection law and policy: 2 (Morocco and Indonesia)

Countries or regional organizations assisted: competition law and policy: 25 countries, West African Economic and Monetary Union; consumer protection law and policy: 2 countries

Upcoming reviews: competition law and policy: West African Economic and Monetary Union; consumer protection law and policy: Peru

Website: [unctad.org/competition/peer-reviews](http://unctad.org/competition/peer-reviews)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
Directly: 8, 10  
Indirectly: 9, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Luxemburg, Sweden, Switzerland, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, International Trade Centre, One United Nations funds



# COMPETITION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

## IMPROVING MARKET EFFICIENCY AND CONSUMER WELFARE



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Competition and consumer protection policies are complementary to trade and industrial policies and are important instruments for achieving economic growth and inclusive and sustainable development. In the current global economy, with highly concentrated markets, competition policy is even more relevant to create an enabling business environment and provide opportunities for start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises, while ensuring consumers wider choice, lower prices and good-quality products. On the demand side, consumers need to have their rights protected and have easy access to effective dispute resolution and redress, especially in context of the digital economy.

UNCTAD has expertise in competition and consumer protection policies and has been working in these areas since the 1980s. UNCTAD is the custodian of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, adopted in 1980, the only internationally agreed instrument on competition policy that provides recommendations for the control of anticompetitive practices and a framework for international cooperation and exchange of best practices, while recognizing the development dimension of competition law and policy. UNCTAD is also the guardian of the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection, adopted in 1985 and revised in 1999 and 2015, which have strongly influenced the drafting and the modernization of consumer protection legislation by developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

UNCTAD assists developing countries and countries with economies in transition in adopting or revising competition and consumer protection policies and legislation, as well as regional frameworks, to ensure alignment with international best practices. Until 2018, almost 140 member States adopted competition frameworks, including several developing countries and countries with economies in transition across the world, as did several regional economic organizations with developed and developing countries as members (for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Caribbean Community, Central African Economic and Monetary Community, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Eurasian Economic Union, West African Economic and Monetary Union).



### HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

UNCTAD contributes to the strengthening of competition and consumer protection regimes in developing countries and countries with economies in transition through the following:

- Developing and improving policy, legislative and institutional frameworks.
- Drafting competition and consumer protection legislation adapted to addressing current challenges and harmonized with regional frameworks.
- Setting up institutional frameworks for effective law enforcement and efficient functioning.
- Building human capacities through training programmes aimed at competition and consumer authorities, Government and officials of sectoral regulators, representatives of business and consumer organizations and the judiciary.
- Developing curriculums for universities, to deliver courses on competition and consumer protection.
- Establishing links between agencies through study visits from experts from both developed and developing countries.

UNCTAD technical assistance and capacity-building in the fields of competition and consumer protection is developed in close cooperation with the beneficiaries and employs a multi-stakeholder approach to foster a culture of competition and consumer protection and raise awareness among consumers and businesses. UNCTAD provides support to relevant institutions and stakeholders to build institutional and human capacity in implementing competition and consumer protection legislation.



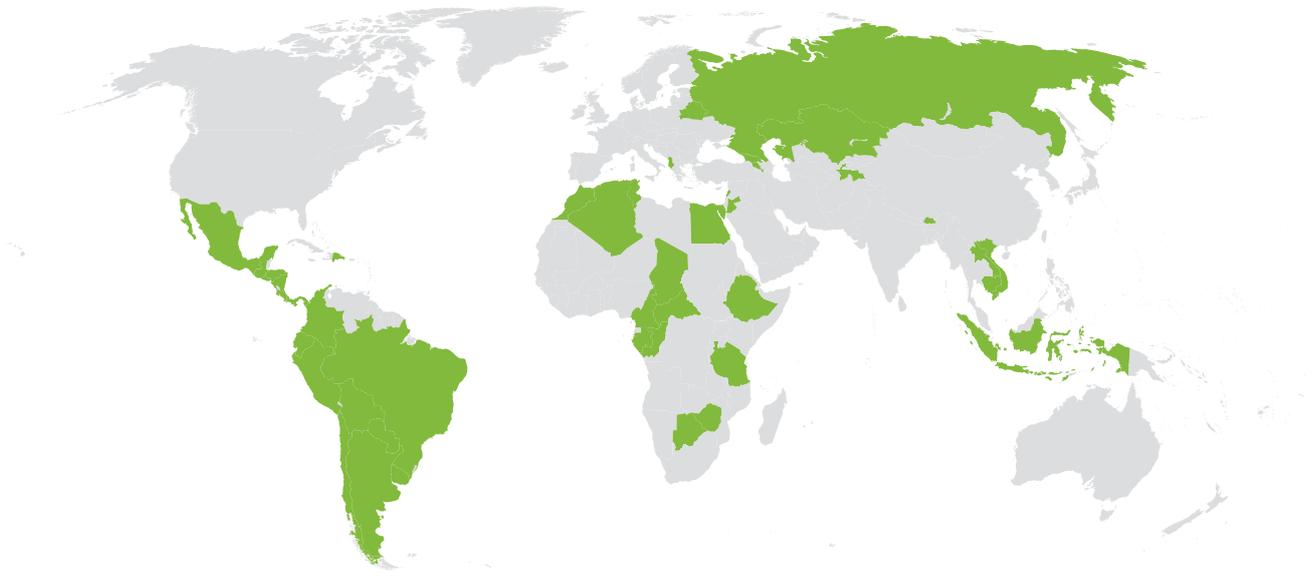
### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

UNCTAD has achieved the following results in countries involved in its technical assistance and capacity-building programmes:

- Improved competition and consumer protection legislation to address current challenges.
- Strengthened human capacities in competition and consumer protection law enforcement.
- Improved institutional structure and organization to strengthen effective and efficient law enforcement.
- Enhanced competition and consumer protection culture through advocacy and awareness-raising seminars.



## Competition and consumer protection policies and frameworks (up to 2019)



UNCTAD has a record of accomplishments in assisting developing countries in building capacities to adopt and implement competition and consumer protection law and policy. For example, UNCTAD has played an important role in the recent adoption of the merger control law by the Government of Peru. Peru had discussed the merger control for more than 20 years and it had encountered firm opposition from an important economic sector of the country. UNCTAD began the work of raising awareness and preparing the merger control bill for Peru in March 2017, and the law was finally adopted on 30 October 2019.

In Central Africa, UNCTAD worked on the reform of competition regulation and the creation of a legislative framework for consumer protection from July 2017 to July 2019. The work proved very successful, given that in March 2019, the Council of Ministers of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community adopted a new regulation in the field of competition and a directive that obliges member States to adopt internal consumer protection rules in a harmonized way. During the same period, UNCTAD worked on the development of a draft regulation on competition for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was also approved by the country's Parliament in June 2018.

The UNCTAD *Manual on Consumer Protection* provides concrete examples of how to implement effective consumer information and education, covering critical issues with respect to labelling and advertising. The UNCTAD course on consumer education and business guidance for 17 Latin American countries was delivered to 1,500 civil servants, leading to new sustainable consumption initiatives such as the Argentinian online courses against food loss and the Chilean “My Green Code” for sustainable consumer products.

As a result of the effective implementation of its technical assistance and capacity-building programmes, UNCTAD has developed good cooperation and working relationships with competition and consumer protection agencies in member States. The UNCTAD network with these agencies is further reinforced through annual meetings of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy, held since 1998, and the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, held since 2016.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2003

Activities (2017–2019): Regional programmes – Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, Central African Economic and Monetary Community, Eurasian Economic Community; National projects – Belarus, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Ethiopia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe

Countries or regional organizations assisted: 44 countries and 1 regional commission (Eurasian Economic Commission)

Persons trained: 632 (2018)

Website: [unctad.org/competition](http://unctad.org/competition)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 9, 10, 12, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, European Union, United Nations Office for Project Services, One United Nations funds



# BUSINESS FACILITATION

## SIMPLIFYING THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT TO IMPROVE NATIONAL BUSINESS, INVESTMENT AND TRADE CLIMATES



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Facilitating business through simplified administrative procedures reduces informality and corruption, empowers small entrepreneurs, removes bureaucratic barriers to trade and investment, and increases government revenue, thereby fostering enterprise creation and operation. It also increases competitiveness and ultimately contributes to economic growth. UNCTAD estimates that administrative and procedural transaction costs, excluding customs-related costs, constitute between 3 and 6 per cent of the value of internationally traded goods. There are thus opportunities for reductions in transaction costs and for increased competitiveness.

The UNCTAD Business Facilitation Programme aims to seize such opportunities and offers a series of efficient tools of information and communications technology (ICT) and interactive methodologies to clarify and simplify procedures. Applied sequentially, they comprise an integrated programme for the modernization of public administration. The Programme provides an interface for interdivisional and inter-agency cooperation for increased coherence and impact at the country level.



### HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME HELP IMPROVE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT?

The Business Facilitation Programme provides a methodology that allows for the simplification of procedures without changes to regulations. Focused on streamlining administrative practices, the main aspect experienced by users, the Programme is aimed at producing quick and measurable results and includes three sequential components: eRegulations, eSimplifications and eRegistrations. The tools are developed at the request of beneficiary Governments.

The eRegulations system is an affordable, turnkey solution for Governments to clarify and publicize administrative procedures on the Internet. It shows administrative procedures step by step from the user's point of view. For each step, it provides the following data: contact information (entity, office and person in charge), expected result of the step, required documents, cost, duration, legal justification and how to lodge a complaint. Any type of administrative procedure can be clarified through an eRegulations portal, such as company creation, tax payment, import and export.

Once clarified, procedures are easier to simplify, by comparing the practice to the law and limiting the number of interactions and documents to what is necessary and sufficient. The 10 principles to simplify administrative procedures – eSimplifications – generally allow Governments to decrease the number of steps and requirements by more than 50 per cent, without changing laws.

Simplified procedures are computerized using the UNCTAD eRegistrations system, a web-based application conceived to create electronic single windows, which allow for simultaneous registration with multiple public agencies.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

With rapid and measurable results, the Business Facilitation Programme concretely supports the move from an informal to a more formal economy with increased transparency. It also empowers small entrepreneurs through the removal of unnecessary bureaucratic barriers to trade and investment.

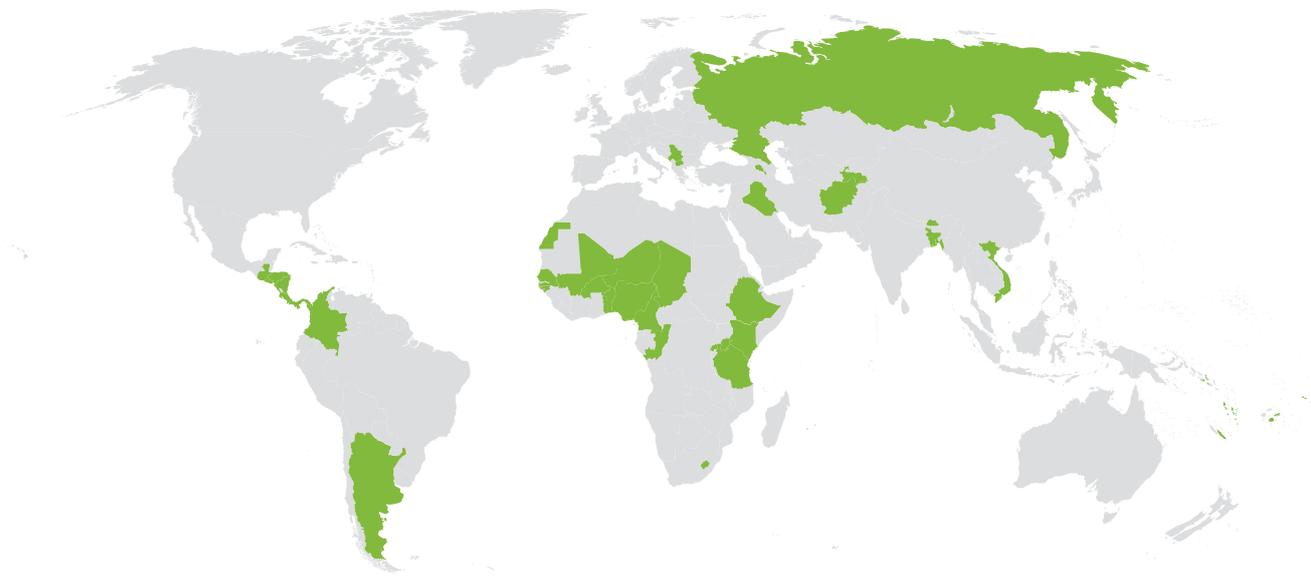
The Programme supports Governments' efforts towards institutional efficiency, including the increased collection of tax revenue, to be later reinjected into the economy in support of innovative sectors with a focus on the employment of women and youth.

The Programme has been implemented in over 40 countries. More than 70 user-centred open-source electronic government systems have been developed to clarify, simplify and automate administrative procedures, thereby facilitating business operations and alleviating regulatory burdens. A few recent examples:

- Iraq simplified the procedure for creating a company by over 60 per cent through the implementation of the eRegulations system. Previously, the procedure involved 35 physical steps and 47 documents.



## Business facilitation systems implemented by 2019



After clarifying the procedure through the eRegulations system, the agencies involved merged steps and removed unnecessary documents to bring the numbers down to 14 steps and 21 documents. They also set a new goal to implement the eRegistrations system and automate the company registration process by mid-2020.

- Lesotho moved 35 positions up on starting a business indicator in the World Bank 2020 Doing Business report after automating the procedure for obtaining a trade license with the eRegistrations system.
- Cameroon formalized over 24,000 businesses in two years through the eRegistrations system. The system has been installed in three regions, namely Douala, Garoua and Yaoundé, and has led to a reduction of more than 70 per cent in the number of steps and requirements and in processing time.
- El Salvador fully automated the process to register companies and individual traders. Eight institutions now offer their services online through the eRegistrations system, and businesses can obtain their mandatory registrations in less than three days. In 2018, the *miempresa.gov.sv* portal was established as the unique channel to register a business in El Salvador, which resulted in an increase of 822 per cent in businesses registered online. Also, 1,052 new taxpayers registered for the value added tax. Based on an average monthly payment of \$100 in value added tax, these new taxpayers will contribute yearly an additional \$1.2 million to the state budget.
- Armenia, Iraq, Lesotho and Montenegro joined the Global Enterprise Registration portal, *GER.co*, with the highest rating, 10 points out of 10. *GER.co* is a joint initiative by UNCTAD, the Kauffman Foundation Global Entrepreneurship Network and the United States of America Department of State. The portal gives direct access to official business registration websites worldwide and assesses their user-friendliness.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Start date: 2005

Countries assisted per year: 6 (average)

Coverage: 64 eRegulations/trade portals, 5 eRegistrations in more than 40 countries

Website: [unctad.org/Business-Facilitation](http://unctad.org/Business-Facilitation)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

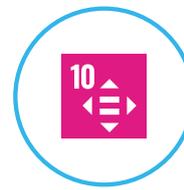
Directly: 8, 16

Indirectly: 1, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Self-financing by some user countries, Australia, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, United States, European Union, [United Republic of] Tanzania Investment Centre, Trade Mark East Africa, One United Nations funds, United Nations Office for Project Services



# TRADE FACILITATION

## MAKING TRADE EASIER AND FASTER



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

In an international environment where falling tariffs and quotas represent less of a barrier to trade, trade facilitation has emerged as an important trade policy tool. **The main objective of trade facilitation is to reduce the complexities and costs associated with cumbersome border procedures and controls, while maintaining efficient compliance controls.** World Bank estimates suggest that administrative hurdles arising from cumbersome border procedures can cause up to 75 per cent of delays of shipments. The Agreement on Trade Facilitation of the World Trade Organization, which entered into force on 22 February 2017, is a major international achievement. It aims to reduce trade transaction costs and bureaucratic barriers, speeding up clearance procedures for the cross-border trade of goods, thereby making trade easier, faster and less costly. The alignment of national and regional rules with the multilateral trade facilitation framework is instrumental to achieving increased trade integration. **To facilitate the implementation of the technical and institutional obligations resulting from the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, UNCTAD assists developing countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs), with a range of activities, as follows: elaboration of needs assessments and assistance with the ratification, categorization and notification of national trade facilitation implementation plans; development of project plans; advisory services to national trade facilitation committees; monitoring and evaluation of trade facilitation initiatives; general capacity-building and technical assistance on trade facilitation reforms; as well as assistance with the implementation of trade facilitation measures.**



### HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

Ultimately, the Trade Facilitation Programme of UNCTAD aims at enhancing trade facilitation processes and the competitiveness of developing countries, including LDCs, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Its goal is to **ensure an increased implementation of trade facilitation reforms by developing countries, improving their capacity to comply with international and regional rules and standards relating to trade facilitation, including World Trade Organization commitments.**

One of the programme focuses is to improve decision-making capacity and implementing skills of national trade facilitation committees to fulfil their mandate. UNCTAD provides an intensive professional programme for the secretariat and members of such committees, namely the Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees. The main objective is to help the committees to implement, in a coordinated manner, trade facilitation reforms, including the provisions of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, and to be able to monitor implementation. With a view to ratification and implementation of the Agreement, UNCTAD support covers assessments of technical assistance needs and preparation of categorization of provisions of the Agreement; tailored training in trade, transit and transport facilitation; advisory services on ratification of the Agreement; and assistance in the creation and sustainable operation of national trade facilitation committees.

The Trade Facilitation Programme also assists developing countries in the implementation of trade facilitation measures, for instance: establishing a legal framework for trade-related single windows, undertaking simplification of trade-related procedures, training national transit coordinators or supporting regional trade facilitation initiatives. The success of the programme resides in its strong cooperation not only with external partners such as the World Customs Organization and the International Trade Centre, but also with other experts within UNCTAD, working on the crossroads of trade facilitation with customs automation, e-commerce or non-tariff measures.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Learn about the results of UNCTAD Empowerment Programme in just two minutes with this short video: [youtube.com/watch?v=Jh4-ukGQrxc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jh4-ukGQrxc). Since 2016, UNCTAD has empowered 27 countries around the world, mainly in Africa and the Caribbean region.

UNCTAD has held over 60 programme events and trained over 2,000 trade facilitation stakeholders (40 per cent women). But UNCTAD support to national trade facilitation committees is not just about training. UNCTAD also supports countries in the production of numerous outputs, such as terms of reference and work plans for the committees, multiannual trade facilitation road maps, categorization and notification to the Trade Facilitation Committee of the World Trade Organization, support for legislative documents, project proposals for trade facilitation reforms and knowledge-transfer strategies.



## IMPACT STORIES

**94%** of beneficiaries fully agree or tend to agree that the programme has improved their knowledge in trade facilitation



**92%** of beneficiaries intend to apply the acquired knowledge in their daily jobs

**86%** of beneficiaries affirm that they now feel in a better position to assume their role as members of national trade facilitation committees than before the workshop

## WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT US

*The knowledge shared by the resource experts has encouraged greatly the inter-agency collaboration in Nigeria to enhance trade and reduce time as well as cost of imports and exports.*

*I have come a long way, and it has been a lifetime experience that I will definitely apply in the future.*

*I have learned so much in this programme. Now, I think of trade facilitation in a different way. I understand better all the things that the Sudan can do and how important it is to mainstream trade facilitation in its development policy.*

# UNCTAD EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME IN AFRICA

for National Trade Facilitation Committees



- Empowerment Programme completed
- Empowerment Programme ongoing
- Empowerment Programme starting in 2020
- Past and present support to national trade facilitation committees outside the framework of the Empowerment Programme

Updated in December 2019



## PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2012

Countries assisted: more than 80

Ongoing programmes:

Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees in 15 developing countries, including 5 LDCs

Support to national trade facilitation committees in 15 small island developing States

Support to regional trade facilitation efforts

Support for the establishment of a single window legal framework in Jamaica

Website: [unctad.org/tf](http://unctad.org/tf)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 10, 16

Indirectly: 17



## DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Australia, China, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom, European Union, United States Agency for International Development, Trade Mark East Africa, United Nations Development Programme



# ASYCUDA – AUTOMATED SYSTEM FOR CUSTOMS DATA

## STREAMLINING CUSTOMS MANAGEMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Long waiting times at borders, inappropriate fees and cumbersome formalities are all serious obstacles to trade and adversely affect investment and employment. An efficient and effective customs administration is essential to the welfare of any country. It benefits the national economy in various ways: by collecting revenue; by assisting the Government to promote cross-border trade; and by combating fraud and illegal trafficking of prohibited and restricted goods. It further provides the statistical information on foreign trade transactions essential for economic planning and encourages international trade. The automatic calculation of duties speeds up and simplifies the clearance process and increases State revenues.

ASYCUDA is an information and communications technology (ICT)-based customs management system targeted at reforming the customs clearance processes of developing and middle-income countries. It computerizes and simplifies procedures. ASYCUDA has a major impact on electronic business and government transactions, making international trade simpler and cheaper, and international markets more accessible to enterprises from developing countries. In more and more countries, ASYCUDA constitutes the core system for building a single window for international trade, trade portals, port management training and the implementation of transit and corridor management.



### HOW CAN CUSTOMS PROCEDURES BE IMPROVED?

The UNCTAD ASYCUDA software is installed at the request of Governments and adapted to suit the national characteristics of individual customs regimes, national tariffs and legislation.

The ASYCUDA Programme is implemented in three phases. A **preparation** phase identifies the areas needing reforms, such as simplification of clearance procedures, alignment of forms to international standards and modernization of the national customs law.

During the **implementation** phase, ASYCUDA is configured to incorporate national specificities, that is, the coding of tariffs and related regulations and legislation, data entry of the control tables and preparation of valuation systems. A large training and capacity-building programme is associated with this phase for the transfer of skills and know-how.

In the **roll-out** phase, various national sites are equipped with the human, technical and logistical skills to autonomously implement and manage the ASYCUDA project.

The ASYCUDA software suite ensures that “*what gets measured, gets done*” (T. Peters), and that “*what gets measured, gets managed*” (P. Drucker). A new module, the ASYCUDA System for Performance Measurement, is a tool that allows customs management to measure its performance, through the provision of dynamic graphs, diagrams and tables based on live and accurate information on all customs operations, which enable management to detect inefficient practices and increase its efficiency.

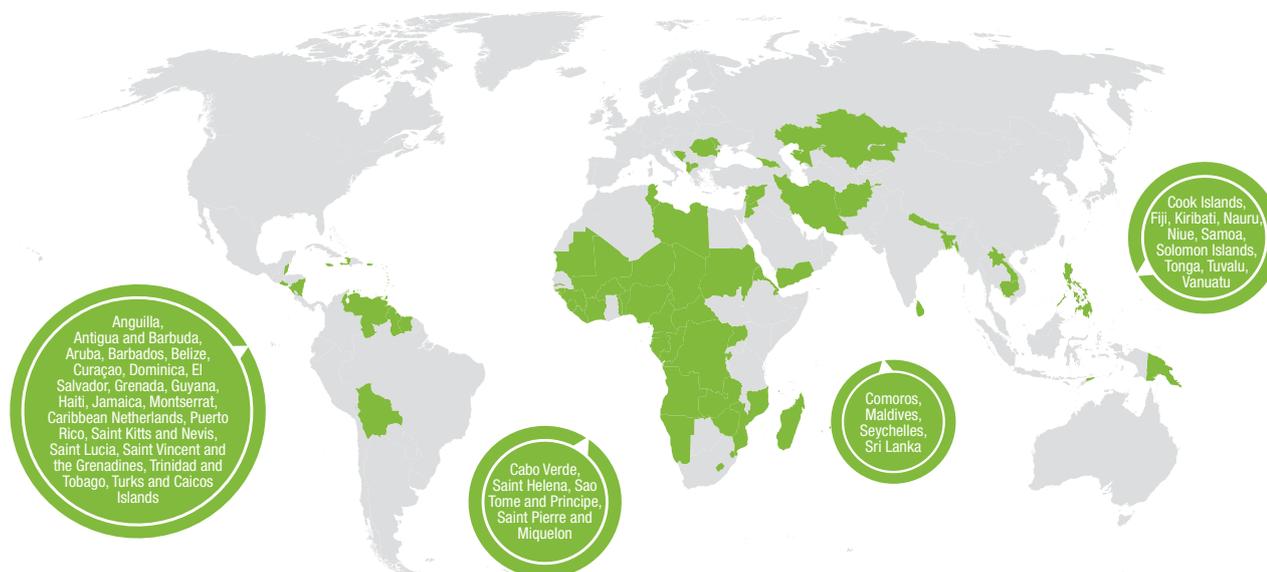


### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- In *Afghanistan*, the ASYCUDA system covers more than 95 per cent of international trade in Afghanistan, producing huge benefits for the country and boosting customs’ annual revenue to almost \$1 billion in 2017, compared with about \$50 million in 2003. The deployment has led to the re-organization and modernization of customs in Afghanistan, with the structure of all customs offices now reflecting the much simpler and safer process.
- The E-borders package of the ASTANA-1 system (ASYCUDA-based) was launched in *Kazakhstan* on 1 October 2017. The Minister for Finance reported to the Government that the average transit processing time by customs had decreased four times. Over 140,000 transit declarations had been processed by the end of 2017. The transit data exchange was implemented with the members of the Eurasian Economic Union.
- In *Mauritania*, where the ASYCUDA system was installed in 1981, the Director General of Mauritania Customs reported that, even though the country was undergoing a financial crisis, revenue collection



## ASYCUDA technical assistance projects, 2019



In 2019, 41 African countries, 34 LDCs, 21 landlocked developing countries and 27 small island developing States benefited from ASYCUDA programme support.

had increased by 15 per cent in 2016, compared with 2015.

- Following the implementation of the ASYCUDA system at the National Tax Agency in *Angola*, customs revenue recorded an increase of more than 43 per cent in 2018 in comparison with 2017.
- *Jamaica* Customs has made substantial progress with the implementation of ASYCUDA World by bringing greater trade facilitation through the new electronic environment for the automated clearance of imported and exported goods, which involves all other regulatory agencies present at the Import–Export Inspection Centre (one-stop shop). It enhanced revenue collection by at least 18 per cent in the fiscal year 2016–17 and allowed for at least 70 per cent of its cargo released within 24 hours after submission of the customs declaration.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 1981

Countries and territories benefited: 121

Ongoing activities: 5–8 projects under negotiation; 72 active projects (2018)

Countries using latest ASYCUDA version (2019): 83

New ASYCUDA projects or addendums signed (2018): 29

Website: [unctad.org/ASYCUDA](http://unctad.org/ASYCUDA)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 9, 15, 17

Indirectly: 1, 6, 8



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2018)

36.2 per cent from the World Bank, 29.8 per cent from beneficiary Governments, 29.2 per cent from regional organizations (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Southern African Development Community, Trade Mark East Africa) and 4.8 per cent from other entities (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Enhanced Integrated Framework, German Agency for International Cooperation)



# STATISTICS

## MAKING THE NUMBERS ADD UP TO INFORM AND IMPROVE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Reliable statistical information – statistics and indicators used in the analysis of international trade, investment and development – is indispensable for formulating sound economic policies and recommendations. Policy decisions, once taken, may commit countries for many years as they strive to integrate into the world economy and improve the living standards of their citizens. Having access to high-quality research and evidence-based policy analysis thus enables countries to make informed decisions and design better policies. This, in turn, is essential to fostering social, environmental and economic development.

Good quality, robust statistics are inherent to the work of UNCTAD. UNCTAD compiles, validates and processes a range of data collected from national and international sources. Most time-series data cover extended periods of time, with some dating back to 1948, for almost all economies in the world. The breadth of information makes possible analysis of emerging and timely issues in the context of long-lasting trends and a wide geographical scope. When data are missing or there is a break in a series, UNCTAD applies its expertise and methodology to make estimates. UNCTAD statistics are thus grounded in continuity, accuracy and timeliness. Statistical work also conforms to the United Nations principles governing international statistical activities – formulated with significant contributions from UNCTAD.



### HOW CAN STATISTICS BECOME THE BASIS FOR POLICY DECISIONS?

The UNCTAD Statistics Programme produces more than 150 indicators and statistical time series essential for the analysis of international trade, economic trends, foreign direct investment (FDI), external financial resources, the population and labour force, commodities, the information economy and maritime transport. In many cases, UNCTAD statistics are compiled jointly or in close cooperation with other statistical agencies. For example, quarterly and annual trade-in-services statistics are jointly compiled with the World Trade Organization. This is not only an efficient use of resources but also ensures comparable and consistent results.

On a practical level, being able to use data is key to conducting the research and analysis that are the foundation of policymaking. The UNCTADstat database houses data for every country in the world. Such information can be used to automatically generate country profiles. The profiles are individual summaries of selected descriptive statistics that can be of interest to a range of users – from economists and modellers, who typically want all the data they can get, to journalists who need a few pertinent facts. UNCTADstat can also generate detailed bespoke tables, charts and maps for specialist users.

Reliable FDI data is crucial for the national statistical analysis of investment and for better shaping and evaluating national policies. To make this a reality on the ground, UNCTAD proposes workshops that aim to enhance the capacity of developing country government agencies to compile, disseminate and report FDI and transnational corporation data.



### HOW CAN STATISTICS CONTRIBUTE TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT?

UNCTAD assists national statistical agencies in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their data collection and dissemination efforts. In cooperation with United Nations agencies, development banks and other international organizations, such as Eurostat, capacity-building initiatives are carried out in the areas of international trade, FDI, debt, commodities, information and communications technology (ICT) and the creative economy.

UNCTAD trains hundreds of people every year around the world using e-learning courses on merchandise trade and trade in services, developed in cooperation with the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Statistics Division.

UNCTAD has also been working with the West African Economic and Monetary Union statistical commission to develop a common questionnaire, legislation and information technology system to improve the collection of trade-in-services statistics. The statistics programme is working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations regional commissions in Africa, Europe, and Asia and the Pacific, as well as the European Union, to pioneer new statistics on illicit financial flows and gender in trade.



## ✓ RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

The UNCTADstat database is updated and enhanced continuously to provide users with the latest available data. Between 1 November 2018 and 31 October 2019, the UNCTADstat website received almost 565,000 visits and 9 million page views from more than 200 countries.

Country profiles and interactive data exploration tools, such as, the **trade flows map** or the **revealed comparative advantage** tool enable users to have access to a wide range of easily accessible data.

UNCTAD produces a number of publications to further facilitate access to data. To celebrate the fiftieth edition of the *Handbook of Statistics*, a revised version was launched in 2017. This new handbook provides a user-friendly overview of trade, FDI, macroeconomic, population and maritime statistics from around the world. The report also includes nowcasts for the latest information available. It is available in PDF form and in an electronic, interactive version, from which statistics can be downloaded directly.

In 2019, UNCTAD statistics launched a new statistical report on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entitled “*SDG [Sustainable Development Goal] Pulse*”. This is an online report, featuring updates on UNCTAD custodian indicators, as well as a broader overview on progress. It also features statistics illustrating how UNCTAD contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The programme publishes a range of other statistical reports, including the monthly, *Commodity Price Bulletin*, the quarterly *Trade-in-Services Bulletin*, and the annual *Key Statistics and Trends in International Trade*, *Key Statistics and Trends in Trade Policy*, and *Factsheets*. In addition, UNCTAD produces the online publication *Development and Globalization: Facts and Figures*, which offers practical tools for a better understanding of development trends and their evolution over time. The 2016 edition was dedicated to the measurement of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2020 edition will focus on small island developing States.

The scarcity, unreliability and inconsistency of FDI data pose a serious challenge for policymakers, academics and practitioners. To fill that gap, UNCTAD launched *Bilateral FDI Statistics 2014*, which presents FDI data systematically. The tool covers inward and outward FDI flows and stocks by region and economy.

## RESULTS IN-DEPTH: APPLYING THE NUMBERS – UNCTAD FLAGSHIPS

The annual UNCTAD flagship publications – the *Trade and Development Report*, *The Least Developed Countries Report*, *Economic Development in Africa Report*, *World Investment Report* and *Review of Maritime Transport* – provide rigorous research and policy recommendations on globalization, interdependence and development.

The reports draw on the Statistics Programme’s data for their analysis of issues ranging from current economic trends and major policy issues of international concern, to trends in FDI and emerging measures to improve the contribution of FDI to development, and socioeconomic analysis and data on the world’s most impoverished countries. The data and analysis serve as the basis for the policy recommendations presented by UNCTAD in the reports for addressing such issues at the national, regional and multilateral levels.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: more than 150 indicators and time-series data

Start date: 1967

Annual reports: 2

Factsheets per year: 10

Country profiles per year: 2 series

Bulletins per year: 17

Website: [unctad.org/statistics](http://unctad.org/statistics)

UNCTADstat database: [unctadstat.unctad.org](http://unctadstat.unctad.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 17

Indirectly: 2, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

West African Economic and Monetary Union, Multi-donor/Cross-cluster Trust Fund on Capacity-building in Investment for Development, United Nations Development Account, One United Nations funds



# ENABLING ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AIMING AT TRANSPARENCY



## GLOBAL CONTEXT

The increasing pace of globalization has created a strong interdependence and connectivity among worldwide financial markets. A high-quality corporate reporting infrastructure in compliance with international standards and best practices is essential for countries to facilitate international flows of financial resources and regional economic integration, while helping to reduce corruption and mismanagement of resources. Such an infrastructure strengthens investors' and other stakeholders' confidence and enhances comparability, transparency, credibility and financial stability. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, high-quality and internationally comparable reporting plays a key role in providing data on the private sector's contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. There is also a growing demand of users for sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting and increasing emphasis on the integration of sustainability information into companies' reporting cycles. In particular, Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production in its target 12.6 explicitly encourages companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycles. Sustainable Development Goal indicator 12.6.1 requires data on the number of companies publishing sustainability reports.

The challenge for many countries, however, continues to be the adoption and effective implementation of international standards, requirements and good practices, including the new demands spurred by the 2030 Agenda, due to institutional and technical capacity gaps in their national accounting and reporting infrastructure.

To assist member States in addressing these challenges, UNCTAD, through its Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR), developed the Accounting Development Tool in 2012. Updated to adapt it to the requirements of the 2030 Agenda, the tool is now known as the Accounting Development Tool for the Sustainable Development Goals. Further on, to support the implementation of the updated tool, UNCTAD also developed and published in 2018 the *Guidance on Core Indicators for Entity Reporting on Contribution towards Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* to facilitate the harmonization and comparability of data on the private sector's contribution towards the implementation of the Goals in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring framework, including as part of the voluntary national reviews. The reviews are reports presented by countries during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held annually in New York, to discuss progress on the implementation of the Goals at the national level.

UNCTAD is mandated to advance its work on international standards of accounting and reporting, and to promote best practices on sustainability reporting and corporate transparency, including through the use of the Accounting Development Tool.



## HOW DOES THE ACCOUNTING DEVELOPMENT TOOL WORK?

The *Accounting Development Tool for the Sustainable Development Goals* enables beneficiary countries to voluntarily assess their accounting infrastructure, including national institutions, regulations, human resources and processes, against international requirements for high-quality corporate reporting on financial, non-financial and environmental, social and governance issues. The tool also promotes an open and constructive dialogue among all stakeholders involved in the reporting supply chain, which is required for conducting successful accounting reforms. The tool provides a quantitative benchmark of a country's position at a particular time. Countries can use the tool to identify gaps and priorities, and design and implement sustainable strategies and action plans towards convergence with international standards and best practices with regard to financial reporting and reporting on environmental, social and governance issues, as well as on the Sustainable Development Goals. The Accounting Development Tool methodology also allows to monitor progress in reforming accounting and reporting towards meeting requirements of international markets and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Dynamic graphical quantitative information can be generated on strengths and weaknesses at



different levels of detail. The tool also features an Internet-based platform, currently available in English, French, Russian and Spanish, through which assessments can be conducted.

To support the use of the Accounting Development Tool for institutional and technical capacity-building in such a novel area as Sustainable Development Goal reporting by companies, since 2018, UNCTAD has provided support in a pilot application of its Sustainable Development Goal core indicators for companies, including on environmental, social and governance issues, with a view to building technical expertise and facilitating data comparability. The guidance on core indicators was implemented in 10 companies from 7 countries and enhanced stakeholder awareness and understanding of how comparability of companies' reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals could be facilitated and could inform the voluntary national review process at the national level.

## ✓ RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

The impact of assessments conducted through the Accounting Development Tool is evidenced by the development and implementation by Governments of coherent national action plans and activities based on gaps and priorities identified with the help of the tool. By 2019, 17 countries, including developing countries, developed countries and countries with economies in transition, had implemented the tool. In some cases, countries had implemented it more than once, in order to obtain a quantitative assessment of progress in enacting accounting reforms, thereby showcasing the tool's status as a relevant policymaking guidance and monitoring instrument.

Recognizing the impact of the Accounting Development Tool application, ISAR, at its thirty-sixth session in 2019, requested in its agreed conclusions that the UNCTAD secretariat continue its efforts on the implementation of the Accounting Development Tool in interested countries with a view to assisting them in strengthening their regulatory, institutional and human capacity in an integrated and comprehensive manner and with a view to achieving high-quality financial reporting, as well as reporting on environmental, social and governance issues by enterprises. It also requested awareness raising and dissemination of the Guidance on core indicators, as well as training and capacity-building in this area.

Impact of the Accounting Development Tool application has been noted by member States since its pilot application in 2013, up to the most recent projects in 2019.



*"Between 2012 and 2017, three rounds of Accounting Development Tool implementation have provided the Russian Federation with a dynamic full-scope assessment of its progress on achieving a high-quality accounting environment."*

Leonid Shneydman, Head, Regulations of Accounting, Financial Reporting and Auditing, Ministry of Finance, Russian Federation, 2017

*Colombia is facing the challenge of connecting private sector initiatives to national priorities, specifically with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals. The private sector requires guidance, which is provided by the Accounting Development Tool. This tool allows to link the activities of the private sector to the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure that the regulatory and legal framework is robust.*

Lucas Gómez García, Director of Follow-up and Evaluation of Public Policy, Department of National Planning, Colombia, 2019



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2012

Countries assisted: 17

Ongoing or upcoming assessments: 3

Website: [unctad.org/isar](http://unctad.org/isar)

Accounting Development Tool website: [adt.unctad.org](http://adt.unctad.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 12, 17

Indirectly: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

China, United States Agency for International Development, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (United Kingdom), United Nations Development Account, International Labour Organization, One United Nations funds



# INVESTMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS BY PROMOTING INVESTMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Pharmaceutical research and development requires investment. In this regard, two challenges need to be overcome. First, while the pharmaceutical industry has developed effective treatment for communicable and non-communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, cancer and hepatitis, the related medicines are too expensive for developing countries' public health systems. Second, current research and development incentive structures have limitations and a rethink is required to channel investment for innovative responses to public health needs. There is, for example, an acute need to respond to the steep rise in antimicrobial resistance, affecting in particular Latin America, South and South-East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.



### HOW DOES THE INVESTMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMME WORK?

UNCTAD provides technical assistance to developing countries in the promotion of investment in domestic public health systems, in pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 3, through its Investment and Public Health Programme. The Programme emphasizes coherence between related laws and policies, including investment, intellectual property and health. UNCTAD also assists countries with the formulation of intellectual property-related policy and promotes stakeholder ownership to ensure the sustainability of its activities, for instance through the training of judicial academy trainers. The mandates for the Programme are in paragraph 55 (s) of the Nairobi Maafikiano, adopted at the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; recommendation 40 under the Development Agenda of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); and elements 4 and 5 of the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property of the World Health Organization (WHO).



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

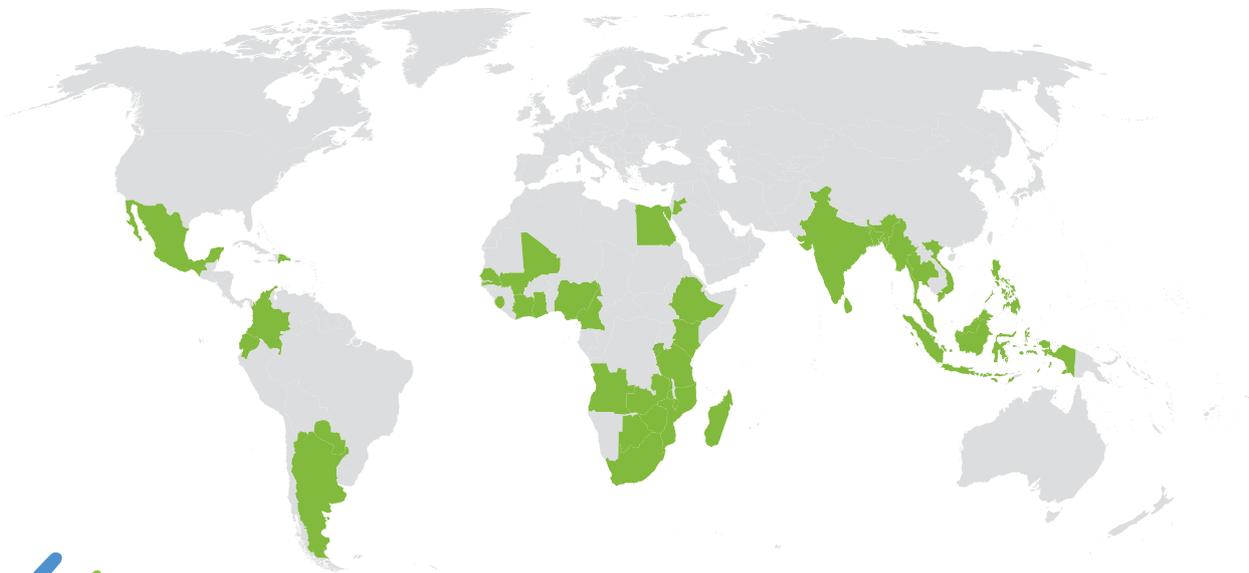
The Investment and Public Health Programme was launched in 2017, building on a wealth of experience under the long-standing Development Dimensions of Intellectual Property Rights Programme (since 2002). The Programme has achieved important results, as evidenced in the following examples:

- Training courses are held to equip judges with an understanding of the public health implications of their decisions. Workshop evaluations attest to the courses' benefits. For example, 96 per cent of workshop participants in the Philippines said they would apply the knowledge acquired in their daily work, all participants rated the course as excellent or good and 96 per cent said they would recommend the workshop to others.
- In July 2016, Indonesia enacted amendments to its national patent law, incorporating recommendations from UNCTAD.
- South Africa in 2018 released its Intellectual Property Rights Policy, which benefited from major substantive input from the Investment and Public Health Programme of UNCTAD.
- UNCTAD assisted Viet Nam in reviewing its patent examination guidelines and aligning the national intellectual property policy with recommendations to improve the policy environment to stimulate local pharmaceutical production and promote access to medicines.
- As a result of UNCTAD cooperation with WHO on local pharmaceutical production, UNCTAD was recognized as a stakeholder in transfer of technology in the revised WHO Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property. WHO Member States requested the WHO Secretariat to identify new opportunities for collaboration with other United Nations organizations (for example, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and UNCTAD) to promote technology transfer as part of local health technology production programmes in developing countries in line with country needs.
- The 2016 Comprehensive Evaluation of the Implementation of the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property published by the WHO Evaluation Office acknowledges the contributions of UNCTAD in the area of intellectual property, technology transfer and public health:



- “UN [United Nations] agencies, in particular UNCTAD, WHO and WIPO, played a pivotal role in promoting the transfer of health-related technologies between the owners of the technologies and lower middle-income and low-income countries.”
- “For example, a collaborative effort of WHO, UNCTAD and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development ... initiated a European Commission-supported project to examine the main obstacles to the transfer of pharmaceutical-related technology and local production in lower-middle-income and low-income countries for health products.”
- “International organizations with a mandate in this field, such as WHO, WIPO, WTO and UNCTAD and UNDP [United Nations Development Programme], provide support for the implementation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in a way that facilitates access to affordable medicines.”

### Investment and Public Health: Beneficiary countries (up to 2019)



*“I would like to express my appreciation for the work conducted by UNCTAD. Participants are now in a better position to understand the implication of [Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights] plus provisions in trade and investment agreements on public health and to design potential negotiation strategies. ...our patent examiners [better understand] how to use public health considerations in the examination of pharmaceutical patent applications.”*

Josephine Santiago, Director General, Intellectual Property Office, Philippines, 2017

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*“[The UNCTAD programme on access to medicines] has demonstrated its strength in policy analysis, facilitating consensus-building and stakeholder consultation and capacity-building.”*

Lionel October, Director General, Department of Trade and Industry, South Africa, 2017

**PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Scope: Africa, Asia and Latin America  
 Start date: 2002  
 Activities implemented per year: 25 (average), 3 regional activities  
 Countries assisted: 39  
 Website: [unctad.org/ddip](http://unctad.org/ddip)

Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
 Directly: 3, 9  
 Indirectly: 16, 17

**DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

China, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Rockefeller Foundation, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Institute for Training and Research



# INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS

## BENEFITING FROM INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Countries' efforts to attract and benefit from foreign direct investment (FDI) have resulted in a network of investment rules embodied in numerous bilateral investment treaties, free trade agreements with investment components, double taxation treaties and other treaties with investment provisions. This network of investment rules is multilayered and multifaceted – partly overlapping and partly complementary – and consists largely of first-generation treaties in need of reform. Parties to international investment agreements and current negotiations should therefore be thoroughly familiar with key issues and concepts surrounding such agreements, including their sustainable development dimension and implementation.

UNCTAD helps developing countries to engage in international investment policymaking, with a focus on treaties' development dimensions and effects. In addition to supporting the participation of Governments and of relevant stakeholders in international investment policymaking, UNCTAD assists countries in mainstreaming sustainability in international investment agreements using the Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development and the Reform Package for the International Investment Regime. The Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development consists of a set of core principles for investment policymaking, guidelines for national investment policies and guidance for policymakers on the design and use of international investment agreements. The Reform Package consolidates UNCTAD research and policy guidance across the three phases of the reform. Together with the Reform Package, the Investment Policy Framework anchors all UNCTAD training and capacity-building activities on such agreements.



### WHAT SERVICES HELP TO MAKE INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS WORK FOR COUNTRIES?

UNCTAD activities pursue the common objective of assisting countries in better responding to the growing complexity of the international investment agreement regime and strengthening the sustainable development dimension of these agreements.

Demand drives the services that UNCTAD tailors to the specificities of each country and/or region. Support through the International Investment Agreements Programme covers several aspects, as follows:

- Advisory services provide legal commentary and advice on international investment agreements and their implementation and modernization.
- Capacity-building workshops include intensive training courses and preparatory distance-learning courses on international investment agreements, drawing on the advisory and analytical work of UNCTAD. Training activities are organized at the national, regional and interregional levels, often in cooperation with partner organizations.
- Evidence-based policy research, provided through tools such as the *Issues Notes* on international investment agreements, as well as reports to requesting countries and regional organizations.
- Information on bilateral investment treaties, other international agreements with investment components and investor–State dispute settlement cases, provided through databases. The web-based International Investment Agreements Navigator, for example, contains the texts of more than 2,250 bilateral investment treaties and 330 other international investment agreements, dating from 1959 to the present. The database covers 86 per cent of all bilateral investment treaties and 95 per cent of all other international investment agreements currently signed – a “one-stop shop” for delivering information on the latest trends to users and investment stakeholders.
- An international electronic network and online discussion forum on international investment agreements is maintained and backstopped as a service for negotiators and practitioners.



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Of the 29 international investment agreements concluded in 2018 (with texts available), most include a large number of provisions explicitly referring to sustainable development issues (including the right to regulate for sustainable development-oriented policy objectives). Nineteen of these agreements have general exceptions – for example, for the protection of human, animal or plant life or health, or the conservation of exhaustible natural resources, and 16 recognize that the parties should not relax health, safety or environmental standards to attract investment. Additionally, corporate social responsibility obligations and the inclusion of proactive investment promotion and facilitation provisions are becoming more prevalent; 13 of the 29 agreements feature corporate social responsibility provisions.

These developments point towards the effectiveness and impact of UNCTAD policy tools on reform of the international investment agreement regime. In addition, several emerging and large developing countries such as Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa, as well as countries with economies in transition, have begun to modernize their international investment policies to better align them with sustainable development objectives, frequently referring to UNCTAD work in this area, such as the 10 options for phase 2 of reform of the international investment agreement regime.

Feedback from participants in capacity-building workshops is generally very positive, with an average of 90 per cent stating that the courses contributed substantially to improving their understanding of the key issues at stake. An average of over 80 per cent of respondents also indicated that they had reported on issues related to the Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development to colleagues in their departments and 44 per cent noted that the Investment Policy Framework had prompted their country to reconsider its investment policy strategy.



*"UNCTAD has played a vital role for the success of [international investment agreement] reform on two tracks. First, you keep feeding us (the small countries) with excellent information, analysis and technical assistances and second, by organizing different events (regional and multilateral), you give us voice."*

Samira Sulejmanovic, Head, Department for Bilateral Trade Relations, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017

*"I had also the opportunity to learn more about UNCTAD's idea of a systemic and sustainable, development-oriented reform for the [international investment agreement] regime. That whole experience provided me with some food for thought for what would later become Brazil's [Cooperation and Facilitation Investment Agreements]. I can't talk about Brazil's [Cooperation and Facilitation Investment Agreements] construction process without mentioning UNCTAD."*

Abrão Neto, Secretary of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Industry, Foreign Trade and Services, Brazil, 2016



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 1997

Activities per year: 4 regional workshops organized, 6 expert advice services provided, 10 national, regional and international capacity-building events co-organized (average)

Activities (1998 –2018): 129 advisory services, 41 regional or other training courses

Website: [unctad.org/ia](http://unctad.org/ia)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 17

Indirectly: 1,10



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014-2019)

China, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, Multi-donor/Cross-cluster Trust Fund on Capacity-building in Investment for Development

# TACKLING VULNERABILITIES, BUILDING RESILIENCE

Eradicating poverty and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires joint and persistent efforts to tackle the specific challenges faced by weak and vulnerable economies. For example, poor people and nations are more vulnerable to external shocks. To build their economic resilience, structurally weak economies need to develop sound strategies to diversify economies and build productive capacity. In addition, to combat climate change, it is important to develop climate-resilient transport infrastructure and identify the best approaches to mitigating climate change while enhancing economic development prospects. UNCTAD technical assistance addresses the specific demand from the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and post-conflict States to help them better address vulnerabilities and build resilience. In particular, UNCTAD helps to improve the capacities of developing countries to effectively manage debt, supports commodity-dependent developing countries in their diversification efforts, promotes sustainable and resilient transport, and assists LDCs in trade policymaking, market access and achieving structural progress towards and beyond graduation from the LDC category. In the area of debt management, for instance, many Governments in developing countries continue to have a limited capacity to build and maintain debt management systems and debt databases, and even middle-income countries with higher capacities may opt for a ready-made and customizable solution, such as that provided by the UNCTAD Debt Management and Financial Analysis System Programme, known as DMFAS.

8 DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



14 LIFE  
BELOW WATER



17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS





# SUPPORT TO GRADUATION FROM LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRY STATUS

## HELPING THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO GRADUATE SMARTLY



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

All developing countries aspire to achieve structural economic progress, generally through productive capacity-building, the path to poverty reduction. For the least developed countries (LDCs), graduation from LDC status is a normal milestone on the road to socioeconomic betterment. Bringing structural economic progress to fruition in the largest possible number of LDCs has been an important goal of the United Nations. In the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, member States postulated the ambitious vision of seeing at least half of all LDCs meet graduation criteria by the end of the 2020 decade. Five countries (Botswana, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Maldives and Samoa) have already graduated from LDC status, and 10 more are either confirmed graduation cases or LDCs that are likely to be found eligible for graduation in 2021 or 2024. Achieving structural change toward and beyond graduation from LDC status is a challenging objective for all relevant countries, a majority of which are at a geographical disadvantage and constantly exposed to serious risks of external shocks beyond domestic control.

Helping LDCs create and maintain a momentum of structural economic transformation toward graduation is the aim of UNCTAD in the forefront of United Nations action to fulfil the vision of the Programme of Action. Economic diversification is generally considered a desirable engine of structural transformation if it involves more employment opportunities (a necessary condition for sustainable poverty reduction) and greater resilience to adverse factors. UNCTAD plans its action along these lines by mapping and measuring structural change and strengthening the capacity of policymakers in the most advanced LDCs to pave the way for structural progress through action on the fundamental factors of change in key structures of the economy, particularly productivity levels.



### WHAT TYPES OF ASSISTANCE ARE PROVIDED?

In addition to its general support to LDCs in their efforts to achieve structural economic transformation, UNCTAD provides specific advisory services to countries that are faced with the challenge of graduation from LDC status. It does so **before** an official decision by the United Nations to take a country off the list of LDCs, and **after** such a decision has been taken (through a General Assembly resolution).

**Before** the United Nations has found an LDC to be eligible for graduation and decided that it will be reclassified, UNCTAD prepares a vulnerability profile of the country to analyse the implications of its pre-eligibility for graduation. The aim of this exercise is to enrich the understanding of all major constraints on the country's development, particularly its exposure to risks of external shocks beyond domestic control, and to analyse the various facets of its economic and social progress. The vulnerability profile is a key input to the work of the Committee for Development Policy, the group of independent experts who will recommend the eligible country's graduation based on graduation criteria and other considerations.

**After** the decision to graduate a country has been taken and as the country begins to benefit from the grace period preceding the loss of LDC status, UNCTAD helps the country formulate a smooth transition strategy. The exercise involves inventorying the LDC benefits of particular importance to the economy and supporting the Government's negotiations with relevant development partners to ensure that the eventual loss of LDC treatment will not disrupt the continuation of progress (an approach informally referred to as the move to graduate smartly).



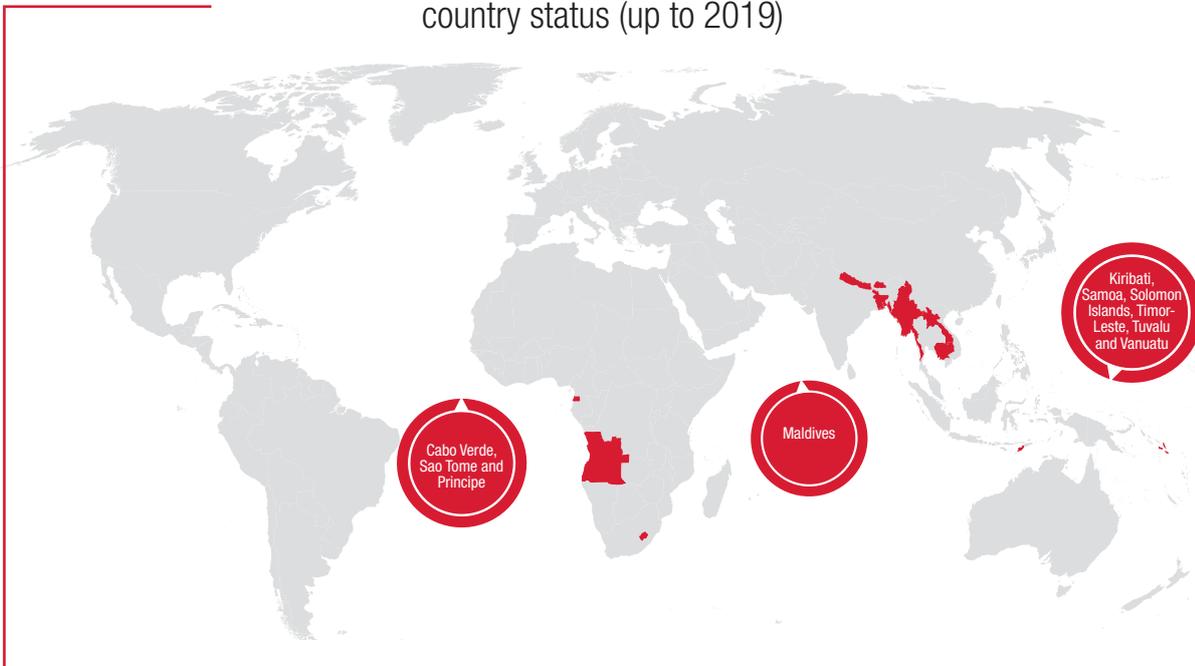
### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

UNCTAD has helped policymakers in some 18 LDCs understand the implications and anticipate the consequences of graduation from LDC status. It has also helped these countries achieve a smooth transition to their new status. UNCTAD action in this area of technical assistance has enhanced the capacity of beneficiaries to make a sound plea to the United Nations with regard to the question of graduation (particularly when the loss of LDC status was not welcome in a capital), or to secure a smooth transition to post-LDC status once the General Assembly had endorsed the recommendation to graduate the country concerned.



- In 1997, *Vanuatu* became the first LDC to receive UNCTAD assistance on the question of graduation from LDC status. At the request of the Government in September of that year, a major reform of the LDC graduation criteria led the United Nations to adopt a vulnerability criterion as part of the methodology to identify graduation cases. This reform did justice to Vanuatu by highlighting its acute vulnerability to external shocks. Since then, UNCTAD has been actively supporting structural economic progress in Vanuatu, a country earmarked to graduate in December 2020.
- In *Cabo Verde, Maldives* and *Samoa*, UNCTAD was instrumental in assisting national authorities in their request for continued concessionary treatment and a smooth transition. In Maldives, this work enabled the Government to negotiate the continuation of duty-free, quota-free (LDC-like) treatment with a major trade preference giver, namely the European Union.
- In *Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Myanmar, Nepal, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste* and *Tuvalu*, UNCTAD has carried out advisory and training activities to help national policymakers and other stakeholders chart the pathway to graduation from LDC status and establish a road map for government action.

### Countries benefiting from UNCTAD support to graduation from least developed country status (up to 2019)



- Angola
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cabo Verde
- Cambodia
- Equatorial Guinea
- Kiribati
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Lesotho
- Maldives
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Samoa
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Solomon Islands
- Timor-Leste
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu



#### **PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Start date: 1999  
 Countries assisted to date: 18  
 Persons trained or officials advised: more than 100  
 Programme website: [unctad.org/LDCs-graduation](http://unctad.org/LDCs-graduation)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
 Directly: 8  
 Indirectly: 10, 17



#### **DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

Self-financing by some countries, Trust Fund for Least Developed Countries (multi-donor), United Nations Development Account



# DMFAS – DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS SYSTEM

## IMPROVING CAPACITIES FOR EFFECTIVE DEBT MANAGEMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Debt-based finance, as recognized by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, is a key component of countries' strategies for financing the investments needed to meet the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. The importance of maintaining external debt sustainability and of national capacity for sound debt management is also emphasized.

In the current global environment of low interest rates, combined with new forms of borrowing, proper debt management contributes to the formulation of critical financial policies and strategies, and consequently, to improvements in financial stability, risk identification and the enhancement of good governance.

It is widely accepted that timely and comprehensive data on the level and composition of debt are a prerequisite not only for the effective management of public liabilities but also for the identification of the risks of occurrence of a debt crisis and the limitation of its impact. But it is also recognized that many countries lack the capacity for effective debt recording and reporting. This situation has serious consequences for effective debt management at the national level and for the ability of the international community to help avoid debt crises and to support the countries concerned.

The DMFAS Programme, one of the world's leading providers of technical cooperation and capacity development in debt management, offers countries a set of proven solutions for improving their capacity to handle the day-to-day management of public liabilities and the production of reliable debt data for policymaking purposes. Its focus on debt data recording, reporting and monitoring (the downstream areas of debt management) complements the work of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which focus primarily on data sustainability analysis and medium-term debt strategies (upstream debt management).

The Programme consists of a *specialized debt management software, DMFAS*, with related training (technical and functional), which greatly facilitates the work of the debt office, and a *set of capacity-development activities in debt management*, using a combination of traditional courses, e-learning and self-learning material.

The monitoring and prudent management of liabilities is an important element of comprehensive national financing strategies and is critical to reducing vulnerabilities.

**Addis Ababa Action Agenda**



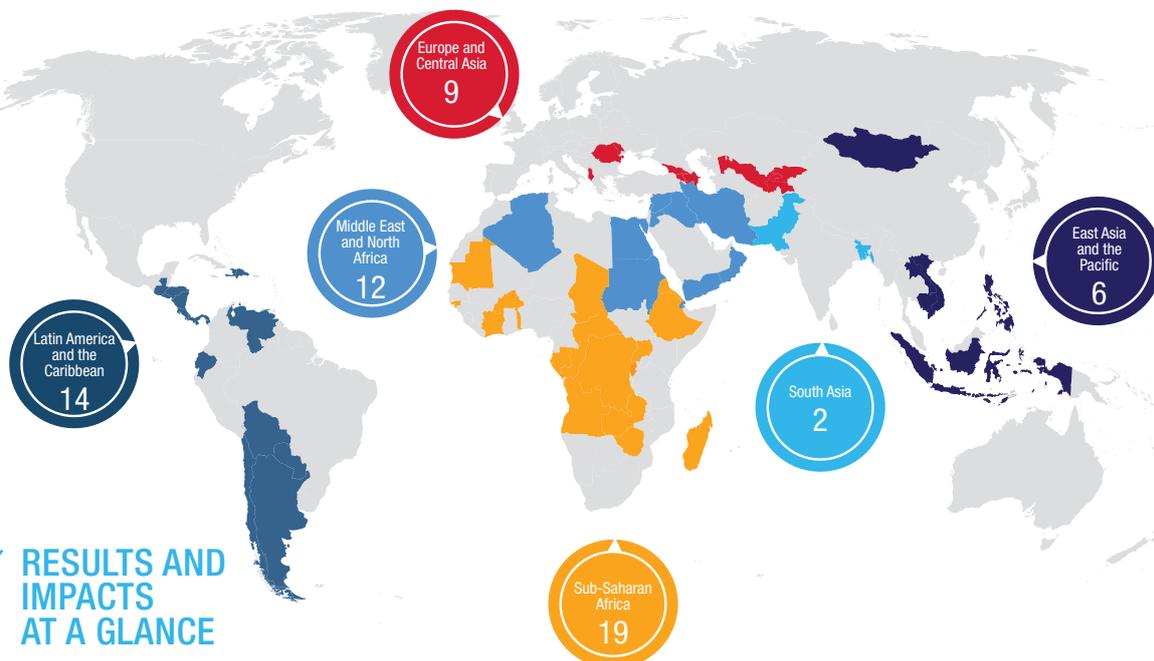
### HOW IS MANAGING DEBT MADE MORE FEASIBLE?

DMFAS projects are initiated at the request of Governments. The counterpart ministry or central bank that is involved throughout the process takes ownership of the project. Each project is customized based on the specific needs of the beneficiary country. The project covers the software and the training activities related to the installation and use of the system, as well as a series of capacity-development activities. Technical assistance projects typically cover the following types of activities:

- Technical training on installing and maintaining the system.
- Functional training in areas such as recording debt instruments, reporting and basic analysis.
- Capacity development in debt data validation, debt statistics, debt portfolio analysis and procedures (operational risks).
- Self-learning material on basic debt concepts, debt reorganization and government securities market and financial calculations.



## DMFAS users by number of countries per region, 2019



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Testimonies from DMFAS users back its practical solutions and results:

*"This [DMFAS] would allow the Ministry of Finance to have world-class accounting and management of public debt."*

Ministry of Finance, Uzbekistan, 2019

*"(We emphasize) the (DMFAS) programme's continued essential role in assisting countries to build sustainable capacity for the effective management of public debt, particularly in ensuring the availability of high-quality debt data and statistics, and consequently assisting the international community to meet its commitments to promote debt sustainability as defined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."*

DMFAS Advisory Group, 2017

*"Thanks to the joint efforts of UNCTAD and of the DMFAS user team in Albania, we have established an accurate information system on external debt. Its advantages are quite evident in debt management decision-making."*

Vice-Minister of Finance, Albania

*"DMFAS helped us manage our public debt in a more efficient and transparent manner and proved itself to be an indispensable tool in helping us during the last phases of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative in reconciling our public debt data with our creditors."*

Director of Public Credit, Ministry of Finance, Honduras



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 1981

Projects implemented per year: 25 (average)

Active DMFAS users: 88 institutions in 62 countries

Website: [unctad.org/dmfas](http://unctad.org/dmfas)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 17

Indirectly: 1



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Self-financing by some user countries, other international organizations and institutions (African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Union, World Bank), Multi-donor Trust Fund (Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Switzerland, European Union and cost-sharing by user countries)



# UNCTAD CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENHANCED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK

## SUPPORTING THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN TACKLING CONSTRAINTS TO TRADE



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Least developed countries (LDCs) represent the poorest and most vulnerable segment of the international community. They comprise more than 980 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 recognized the critical importance of implementing “effective trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building to LDCs on a priority basis, including by enhancing the share of assistance to LDCs for Aid for Trade and support for the Enhanced Integrated Framework” (paragraph 66, section 3 (e)).

The Enhanced Integrated Framework 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 to enable 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.

The six core partner agencies that support the Enhanced Integrated Framework 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.

The support of UNCTAD focuses on contributing towards strengthening the capacities of LDCs in trade policymaking and thus improving ownership of the Enhanced Integrated Framework process. Specifically, UNCTAD supports LDCs under the Programme of the Framework through the formulation of diagnostic trade integration studies and their updates, and by drafting and piloting technical cooperation projects for implementation of the action matrix of the studies, in particular with regard to trade mainstreaming projects and tier 2 projects funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework Trust Fund.



### WHAT KIND OF ASSISTANCE DOES UNCTAD PROVIDE?

UNCTAD provides tailored assistance in response to specific requests from countries participating in the Enhanced Integrated Framework. 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 and implementing national and regional tier 2 projects drawn from action matrices of such 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.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

A number of LDCs – for example, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, the Niger and Senegal – have made progress, with support from UNCTAD, in mainstreaming trade policies in their national development plans, identifying trade-related priorities and implementing the action matrices of diagnostic trade integration studies.

- In 2019, UNCTAD concluded a diagnostic trade integration study update for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It was presented and validated in a workshop in that country in November 2019. The Minister for Foreign Trade highlighted during the workshop that the diagnosis and some recommendations of the study would be integrated into the country's national strategic development plan.
- At the request of the Governments of Cambodia and Myanmar, UNCTAD in 2019 carried out two studies on a new trade policy and strategy for LDCs in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The study of Cambodia was incorporated in the Cambodia Trade Integration Strategy as chapter one. To



support the implementation of the new trade policy and strategy for ASEAN LDCs, UNCTAD has submitted a regional project to be approved under the Enhanced Integrated Framework. It aims to put into effect recommendations of the Cambodia Trade Integration Strategy, the trade policy study of Myanmar and the trade policy issues listed in the 2012 Diagnostic Trade Integration Study of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. It will provide ASEAN LDCs with targeted research and capacity-building to successfully lead trade negotiations at the multilateral and regional levels and implement their commitments.

- UNCTAD prepared and validated the diagnostic trade integration study updates of Djibouti and Ethiopia in 2015 and 2016, respectively. The trade policy, trade facilitation and transport components of the updates focused on making the trading environment of both countries more efficient and recommended that improvements be made in the logistical performance of the Djibouti–Ethiopia corridor that links Addis Ababa with Djibouti and the port of Djibouti. UNCTAD arranged a follow-up workshop for Djibouti and Ethiopia in November 2016 to discuss options to improve the logistics systems and trade facilitation. As a result, a Djibouti–Ethiopia corridor management authority study was carried out and discussed in a second workshop in May 2017. The event led to a political endorsement at the highest level for the establishment of a managing authority of the Corridor between the two parties. A technical assistance programme was then developed by UNCTAD as a regional tier 2 project of the Enhanced Integrated Framework, in collaboration with the Ministries of Commerce of Djibouti and Ethiopia.
- A similar initiative was undertaken in West Africa on how to build coordination in the implementation of the diagnostic trade integration study action matrices on trade facilitation, transport and transit for West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso and the Niger). Following an UNCTAD subregional workshop held in 2016, in Florence, Italy, in collaboration with the Academy of Global Governance, and European University Institute and with the participation of the Enhanced Integrated Framework Secretariat, a regional tier 2 project proposal was drawn up by UNCTAD in 2017 in cooperation with the respective Framework focal points of these countries, the Permanent Representative of Benin at the United Nations in Geneva and the Secretariat of the Enhanced Integrated Framework. The project was officially validated by the Enhanced Integrated Framework National Steering Committee of the three West African countries and has been submitted to the Secretariat for final approval.

*"In the past few decades, Ethiopia went through a significant reform programme and put in place important regulatory and institutional frameworks to improve the business environment. In relation to this, they realized the diagnostic trade integration study that focuses on trade policy, trade facilitation and transport. The study shows that these elements are relevant for Djibouti too. The focus paves the way for making the business environment more efficient and effective. As the main trade artery for the two countries, it is important that the Ethiopia–Djibouti corridor be conducive and guided by the principle of a win-win situation. It is the right time to solve all existing issues along the common corridor. The relations between the two countries have now reached the highest level as we have launched the new railway from Addis Ababa to Dire Dawa and onward to Djibouti. I would like to thank UNCTAD, [Enhanced Integrated Framework] and all donor partners for their relentless efforts."*

Bekele Bulado, Minister of Trade, Ethiopia, 2017



## **PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Start date: 2012

Countries assisted per year: 5 (average)

Countries assisted: 10 (diagnostic trade integration study updates)

Website: [unctad.org/EIF](http://unctad.org/EIF)

Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 9, 17

Indirectly: 1



## **DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

United Nations Office for Project Services



# MARKET ACCESS, RULES OF ORIGIN AND GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

SUPPORTING LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRY PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE



## GLOBAL CONTEXT

Least developed countries (LDCs) are granted preferential tariff treatment in the markets of developed and developing countries under several schemes and arrangements. Among them are initiatives such as the Generalized System of Preferences, the European Union “Everything but Arms” initiative, the African Growth and Opportunity Act of the United States of America, trade preferences under African, Caribbean and Pacific States–European Union partnership agreements and other preferential trading arrangements that have rules of origin as key components.

LDCs nonetheless face significant obstacles to market access. Overcoming the limited diversification of LDC exports, the low value added of those exports and the continued challenge of bringing small local producers up front in the global commodity value chain remain concerns. At the same time, the rich biodiversity of several LDCs allows them to draw on their natural resources to create an array of traditional products and preparations with the potential to compete globally and secure higher returns from sales. Benefiting from that natural wealth can require taking steps to gain recognition of quality and generate a solid reputation for specific products in the eyes of consumers and buyers. One important approach can be using geographical indications in combination with a branding strategy for those products.

UNCTAD provides policy advice and technical assistance to help developing countries comply with requirements on rules of origin under preferential trading arrangements – focusing on product origin – with a view to improving the utilization rates of trade preferences granted to them. Since 2006, for instance, UNCTAD has assisted LDCs that are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the implementation of the 2005 Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Sixth Ministerial Conference of WTO (Hong Kong, China) on duty-free, quota-free market access. The declaration called for ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are simple and transparent, and contribute to facilitating market access. UNCTAD also provides support in relation to the WTO Ministerial Decisions (Bali, Indonesia and Nairobi) on preferential rules of origin for LDCs. Furthermore, UNCTAD assists rural communities and LDC Governments in enhancing the value of traditional products by exploiting trading opportunities such as geographical indications and facilitating compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary requirements.



## HOW CAN PRODUCT ORIGIN COMPLIANCE FACILITATE MARKET ACCESS?

The principle of country ownership drives UNCTAD technical assistance on market access and rules of origin. For all schemes under the Generalized System of Preferences, products exported from a country receiving such preferences must observe the rules of origin of the countries granting those preferences. Documenting evidence of compliance with those rules is necessary for products to qualify for preferential tariff treatment. UNCTAD services in support of developing countries in this area include providing advice to Governments and the private sector to comply with origin requirements and delivering tailored technical assistance, such as advisory memorandums on policy options in drafting and negotiating preferential rules of origin under different trading arrangements.



## HOW CAN GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS ENHANCE PRODUCT MARKET VALUE?

UNCTAD technical assistance on geographical indications is demand-driven. Identifying and registering traditional products under a geographical indication requires different steps, such as drafting a disciplinary of production, the main text that defines a product’s unique identity. Being able to convey what makes products unique geographically adds value to those products. Such information is also useful for customers that can be



attracted to those products when they learn more about them. UNCTAD supports countries in identifying products that could be eligible to use geographical indications – signs used on products with a specific geographical origin and possessing qualities or a reputation based on that origin – and in drafting the legal specifications for those products and introducing a branding policy.



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

In line with the Ministerial Declaration of the sixth WTO Ministerial Conference of 2005, UNCTAD has since 2006 regularly supported LDCs in WTO negotiations by providing technical assistance with regard to **duty-free, quota-free market access**, as well as on **rules of origin**.

Since 2014, UNCTAD has been organizing executive training sessions in partnership with the European University Institute. This activity constituted the basis for the preparation of meetings of the Technical Committee on Rules of Origin and of the eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference (2017). In the context of the Bali and Nairobi Decisions on preferential rules of origin, LDCs carried out successful negotiations thereon and are actively pursuing implementation of such rules. Thanks to this UNCTAD-supported LDC advocacy, the dialogue on rules of origin reform is firmly anchored in the WTO agenda, and some countries have started considering a reform of their rules of origin.

The timely assistance of UNCTAD to LDCs has been critical in increasing utilization rates of preferences under the “Everything but Arms” initiative after the European Union introduced a reform on rules of origin in 2011. For instance, the utilization rate for bicycles exported to the European Union by Cambodia increased in 2011 to around 80 per cent, up from the previous year’s rate of 33 per cent. Moreover, between 2010 and 2015, export values multiplied almost sixfold, increasing from \$60 million to \$347 million.

This long-standing engagement fostered further collaboration on rules of origin among research and practice. As a result, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the European University Institute, initiated a regular round table of rules of origin experts in 2019. The aim of this annual event is to discuss and establish a policy-focused research agenda and provide Governments and private sector actors with data, analysis and practical tools ranging from convergence in product-specific rules of origin and utilization rates, to best practices on origin certification and administrative procedures.

In an effort to strengthen the capacity of rural communities in LDCs and enhance the value added component of their traditional products, UNCTAD has supported communities in Benin, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Senegal, among others, in the introduction of **geographical indications** as a protection and marketing tool. For example, the experience of UNCTAD in supporting producers of Kampot pepper in Cambodia, Gari Sohoui (a crisp flour) from Savalou in Benin and Harenn coffee in Ethiopia, shows that rural communities can gain significantly from utilizing geographical indications.

During a workshop in Benin, two dozen Beninese women making a unique type of gari flour carefully reviewed a draft code of practice to ensure that the document precisely reflected traditional knowledge of how the final product, “*Gari Sohoui from Savalou*”, is made. The workshop, organized by UNCTAD, was a milestone on a path to bringing the product to bigger markets and boosting the income of the specialists who make it. It is an example of how often unique foodstuffs and handicrafts in some of the poorest countries lie undiscovered and are ripe for better distribution.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Start date: 2006

Countries assisted per year: all LDC member States of WTO regularly assisted year-round; 3 (geographical indications (average))

Countries assisted: all LDC member States of UNCTAD (rules of origin); 18 (geographical indications)

Website: [unctad.org/gsp/rules](http://unctad.org/gsp/rules)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 10, 17

Indirectly: 1, 5, 12, 14



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Netherlands, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa



# BREAKING THE CHAINS OF COMMODITY DEPENDENCE

## DIVERSIFYING ECONOMIES AND STRENGTHENING NON-COMMODITY ACTIVITIES



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

In many developing countries, an overreliance on exports of raw commodities constrains structural transformation and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNCTAD estimates that, in 2017, two thirds of developing countries were commodity-dependent, that is, countries in which unprocessed agricultural produce, minerals or crude oil constituted 60 per cent or more of total exports. The economic consequences of this dependence are severe. The boom and bust cycle of commodity prices severely hampers countries' macroeconomic management, and the lack of value added activities restrains industrial development.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires breaking the chains of commodity dependence. Developing countries should add more value to their commodities and diversify into non-commodity activities. They should anticipate the boom and bust cycle of commodity prices with prudent macroeconomic and fiscal management policies. Finally, they should plan how to convert natural resources wealth into better jobs and livelihoods for their citizens. UNCTAD assists countries in these efforts through its programme on breaking the chains of commodity dependence.



### HOW ARE NEEDS IDENTIFIED?

In response to a request for assistance, UNCTAD works with a country to evaluate its needs under the following four main thematic outcomes:

- Developing value added activities in its commodity sector.
- Establishing development linkages between the commodity sector and the wider economy.
- Diversifying to non-commodity activities.
- Integrating into global and regional value chains.

To respond to the identified needs, UNCTAD and the country concerned plan a programme of activities that may include workshops, training, advisory services, policy analyses, consensus-building events and information services.

Delivering an effective programme requires an integrated value chain approach that considers a country's commodity dependence in its full context. It also requires an inclusive process that engages the public and private sectors and civil society, with a special focus on small producers, women and minority groups. Inter-agency collaboration and South–South cooperation are two further principles of the Breaking the Chains of Commodity Dependence Programme.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Since 2008, the Programme has assisted over 30 developing countries in reducing their commodity dependence, diversifying their economies and converting their natural resource wealth into sustainable development.

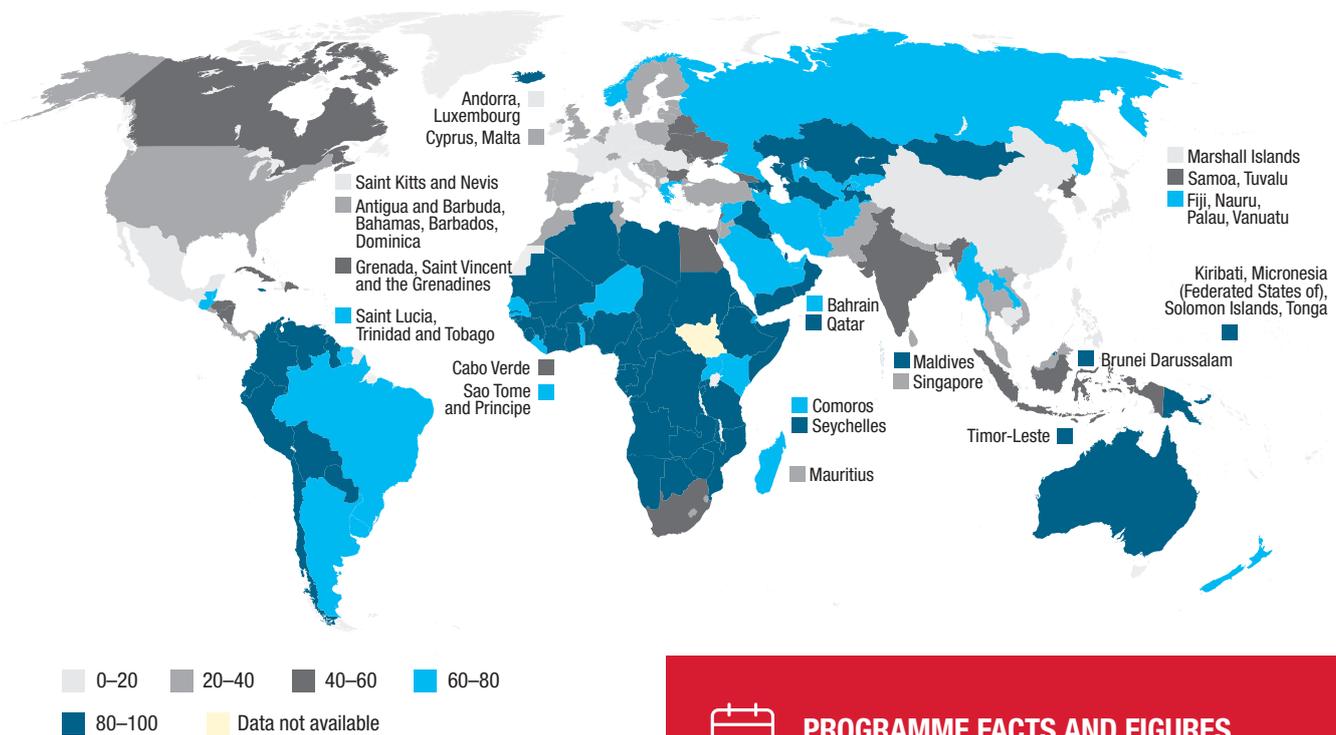
- A set of customized policies and information tools has been disseminated in project countries, as part of a \$3.9 million technical assistance project of UNCTAD, funded by the All African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States Agricultural Commodities Programme of the European Union.
- UNCTAD conducted a review of agricultural commodity policies of Mexico related to agricultural production, trade, food security and poverty reduction, in relation to 13 agricultural products identified by authorities from Mexico as being of strategic importance.
- The New Partnership for Africa's Development has appropriated the Pan-African Cotton Road Map, a regional framework for developing the cotton sector in Africa, a process led by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD.
- UNCTAD trained more than 600 policymakers in three countries in Africa in formulating effective policies and regulations related to development linkages and local content in extractive sectors. According to one project-trained policymaker from Chad, who was promoted to Deputy Director-General of the National



Refinery, the UNCTAD project equipped her with the knowledge to better bridge the oil sector with other sectors of the Chadian economy through the provision of petrol and other oil derivatives. The project is funded by the United Nations Development Account.

- With another Development Account project, UNCTAD helped four countries in eastern and southern Africa design commercial initiatives, draft policies and create investment profiles so as to develop value added processing of cotton by-products, such as fuel briquettes from cotton stalks and absorbent cotton products from waste fibres. This is meant to contribute to increased income opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs, especially in rural areas, and to a more resilient cotton sector overall.

Degree of commodity export dependence of all countries in the world, 2013–2017 (percentage)



*"A farmer can increase daily income by making a bit of transformation to the cotton they have. What is needed is to empower the farmers with the technologies appropriate to their income and environment."*

Director of Industry, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, 2019

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*"Briquettes and pelleting can help us reduce deforestation because it can be an alternative to biomass charcoal, which has led to deforestation in my country."*

Vice-Chair, Cotton Association of Zambia, 2019

**PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Scope: commodity-dependent developing countries in all regions  
 Start date: 2008  
 Projects per year: 1 (average)  
 Projects to date: 11  
 Persons trained: more than 2,000, including more than 600 women, in 21 developing countries  
 Website: [unctad.org/commodities](http://unctad.org/commodities)

**Sustainable Development Goals addressed:**  
 Directly: 8, 9

**DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

China, African Export Import Bank, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Institute for Sustainable Development, United Nations Development Account



# SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SERVICES

SUPPORTING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN IMPLEMENTING  
SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION AND  
LOGISTICS SERVICES



## GLOBAL CONTEXT

The importance of freight transport as a trade enabler, engine of growth and driver of social development cannot be overemphasized. At the same time, the adverse impacts of freight transport activity on human health, the environment and climate are a cause for concern. If left unchecked, unsustainable freight transport patterns will undermine the effective achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. UNCTAD has mainstreamed sustainability and climate resilience considerations in its work programme on transport and trade logistics. The overall objective is to assist the effective integration of developing countries into trading networks and transport systems. This will facilitate their participation in value chains through efficient, reliable, cost-effective, well-connected, socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient freight transport systems. With over 80 per cent of world merchandise trade by volume carried by sea, maritime transport is a particularly crucial catalyst for sustainable development.



## HOW DOES THE SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT TRANSPORT PROGRAMME WORK?

The Sustainable and Resilient Transport Programme consists of several components, with an emphasis on providing the following services:

- **Promoting a supportive legal framework to facilitate transport and trade**, through advisory services on transport law and policy. UNCTAD has been extensively involved in rule-making and standard-setting in the field of maritime transport law, with an emphasis on the economic and commercial aspects of shipping. Relevant international conventions and model rules cover the economic aspects of shipping, liability for carriage of goods by sea and multimodal transport, as well as the enforcement of maritime claims. In addition to providing legal advice upon request, UNCTAD prepares analytical studies on transport law and policy, aimed at assisting developing countries in assessing the merits of ratification of relevant international legal instruments or in their national implementation. Related reports have covered a wide range of topics, including the carriage of goods by sea and air, multimodal transport, road safety, ship-source oil pollution, maritime and supply-chain security, maritime cabotage and the implications of climate change.
- **Analysing climate change impacts and adaptation for seaports and other key coastal transport infrastructure**. UNCTAD has been working on the implications of climate change for maritime transportation for over a decade, with an increasing focus on climate change adaptation and resilience-building for global seaports and other key coastal transport infrastructure. Following the successful implementation of a project on climate change impacts and adaptation for coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean, UNCTAD is delivering a project on climate-resilient transport infrastructure for sustainable trade, tourism and development in small island developing States, implemented jointly with the United Nations Environment Programme and funded by Germany.
- **Assisting developing countries in better managing and operating their transport corridors**. Relevant work by UNCTAD includes building institutional capacity through corridor management arrangements and regulatory framework. The aim is to strengthen the operational performance and management of corridors and to promote coordination and collaboration among corridor stakeholders, regulators and private operators, for example. It also builds capacity to promote sustainable transit and transport corridor operations. Relevant principles include economic efficiency, such as seamless transport and trade movements, cost-effectiveness, competitiveness, reliability, smooth and effective operation, energy efficiency, safety, environmental sustainability (i.e. environmentally friendly, low-carbon, clean energy use, climate resilient) and social inclusiveness (i.e. affordable, accessible, supports rural areas and key sectoral development).
- **Fostering sustainable freight transport systems and freight transport finance**. UNCTAD supports developing countries in their efforts to move towards sustainable freight transport systems (e.g. road, rail, maritime and ports, urban). To this end, UNCTAD has developed a sustainable freight transport and logistics toolkit, which includes a dedicated comprehensive training package, covering various modes of transport, including multimodal transport. Specific topics include sustainable shipping and ports, corridor management, finance, public-private partnerships, environmental performance and port performance indicators.



The training can be tailored to suit the needs of a wide-ranging group of stakeholders from developing countries. The toolkit also includes the *UNCTAD Framework for Sustainable Freight Transport*, an online web-based methodology and documented processes, together with practical tools and guidance that help users to plan, design, develop and implement sustainable freight transport strategies. These tools are as follows:

- Self-assessment questionnaire.
- Filterable list of key performance indicators.
- Catalogue of sustainable freight transport solutions and measures.
- Emissions calculation model that quantifies carbon dioxide emissions and air pollutants across corridors.
- **Maintaining a maritime transport knowledge hub.** UNCTAD informs and builds the capacity of developing countries to design and implement evidence-based maritime transport policies and strategies. Instruments include research, analysis and data on key maritime transport issues; statistics and indicators; and maritime transport expert discussions through expert meetings, seminars and workshops. Issues covered include maritime trade, shipping and ports, transport costs, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in maritime transport, port performance and connectivity, as well as regional maritime transport developments. The knowledge hub builds upon the UNCTAD flagship publication *Review of Maritime Transport*, maritime country profiles, extensive online statistics and key performance indicators.

## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

**East Africa** – Northern and central transit and transport corridors (Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania):

- In 2017, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, supported the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority in developing a green freight programme, which was later integrated into the Authority's master plan. The ultimate objective is to mainstream the programme in the Authority's long-term sustainable freight transport strategy, which is being developed by making use of the tools and guidance of the UNCTAD sustainable freight transport programme.
- In 2018, UNCTAD provided support to the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency in drawing up a sustainable freight transport strategy for integration into the Agency's master plan.

**Caribbean** – capacity-building in sustainable shipping and ports, as well as finance; and capacity-building in climate-resilient transport infrastructure for sustainable trade and development:

- In 2018, UNCTAD supported the region, in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank, in developing its sustainable freight transport strategy, as well as a regional sustainable logistics observatory, in collaboration with the Port Management Association of the Caribbean. The observatory will enable informed and evidence-based transport policymaking in the region, as well as sound resource allocation and priority setting. Partnered with the All Island Truckers Association of Jamaica, the Ministry of Transport and Mining of Jamaica and Natural Resources Canada, UNCTAD delivered a national training workshop on eco-driving in Jamaica and developed a curriculum for the All Island Truckers Association to train its members.
- Under the project on climate change impacts and adaptation for coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean, UNCTAD, in collaboration with a range of partners, has achieved the following key outcomes: assessment of potential operational disruptions and marine inundation risk to coastal international airports and seaports of Jamaica and Saint Lucia, under different climate scenarios; a transferable methodology to assist in adaptation planning and a series of capacity-building workshops bringing together stakeholders from 21 countries and territories in the Caribbean.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2014

Projects to date: 7

Persons trained: more than 360

Countries assisted: more than 50

Websites: Trade Logistics Branch:  
[unctad.org/ttl](http://unctad.org/ttl)

Climate change impacts and adaptation for coastal transport infrastructure in the Caribbean:  
[SIDSport-ClimateAdapt.unctad.org](http://SIDSport-ClimateAdapt.unctad.org).

UNCTAD Sustainable Freight Transport Portal:  
[unctadsftportal.org](http://unctadsftportal.org).

UNCTAD Framework for Sustainable Freight Transport: [sft-framework.org](http://sft-framework.org).

Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 9, 13, 14

Indirectly: 1, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Germany, Republic of Korea, European Union, Islamic Development Bank, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, United Nations Development Account, World Bank

# TRANSFORMING ECONOMIES, FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires building productive capacity and transforming economies by shifting resources to more productive and sustainable sectors and enhancing their competitiveness. Investment, trade and technology are important channels for achieving economic diversification and structural transformation. Trade and trade-related investment, combined with technology upgrading, could enable countries to improve productivity, develop productive capacities and climb regional and global value chains. UNCTAD technical cooperation helps developing countries attract foreign direct investment towards sectors that could lead to structural transformation and better integration into regional and global value chains, and foster the nexus between trade, productive capacity and employment, while integrating sustainable development objectives at all levels. It also supports countries in integrating into the multilateral trading system, formulating services-driven development strategies, developing electronic commerce (e-commerce) and the digital economy, promoting sustainable trade and leveraging science, technology and innovation for productive capacity-building.





# INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEWS

## LEVERAGING INVESTMENT POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a major catalyst for development and can boost growth, offer new employment opportunities and enhance trade in goods and services. FDI is also an integral part of an open and effective economy. With its potential linkages with the domestic economy – such as technology transfer, human capital formation and creation of new industries – it can also stimulate the greater integration of developing countries into the global economy.

The benefits of FDI do not automatically materialize, nor are they spread evenly across countries. To fully reap them, FDI inflows should be promoted through conducive national policies geared at upgrading and diversifying a country's economy and supported by an effective international investment architecture.

To support developing countries in adopting conducive policy environments for FDI, UNCTAD conducts diagnostic studies – investment policy reviews – of the legal, regulatory and institutional framework for investment. The reviews, specific to each country, are published as advisory reports containing concrete policy advice. UNCTAD then provides technical assistance activities to support beneficiary countries in implementing the reviews' recommendations and improving the prospects for sustainable development.



### WHAT MAKES INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEWS EFFECTIVE?

Investment policy reviews are carried out in different phases. The approach promotes national ownership and encourages countries to learn from others. Best practices are exchanged, as well as lessons learned.

A review begins at the request of a Government. The national counterpart, either a ministry or an agency, is involved throughout the process and takes ownership of the policy recommendations.

Each review takes a country-specific approach to attracting and benefiting from FDI. The publication of the investment policy review report is part of a process that promotes the implementation of recommendations.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- Review countries across different regions experienced significant increases in FDI inflows and displayed less volatile FDI inflows, for example the least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa.
- Country commitment to the reviews is evident with endorsement of policy recommendations and their implementation, as displayed by follow-up assessments. Most of the implementation reports on the investment policy reviews among the 16 completed to date have shown a good-to-strong implementation record, increased interest by existing investors and strengthened capacity to market investment opportunities.
- Interest in the programme is illustrated by many of the 53 economies with reviews requesting follow-up technical assistance and the 27 new countries that have requested to benefit from the reviews.
- Over 450 policy recommendations have been implemented to date.

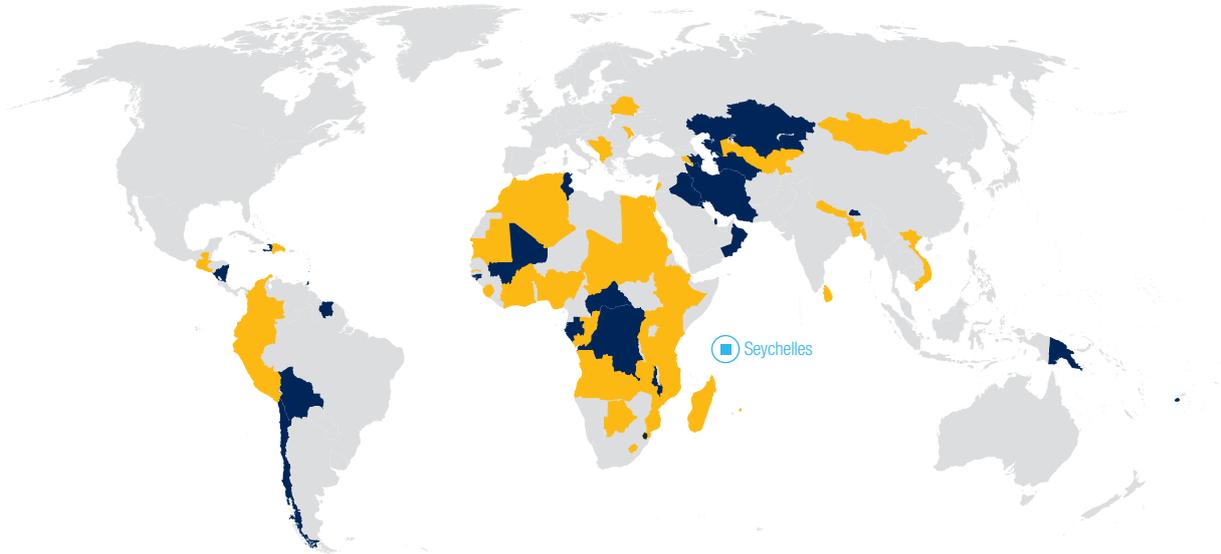


### Brief highlights

*The Investment Policy Review of Mauritius recommended several reforms to upgrade and intensify the country's diversification drive. Over 95 per cent of the recommendations were implemented, with dramatic impacts on FDI levels, economic diversification and poverty reduction.*



Investment policy reviews,  
1999–October 2019  
(including national and regional reviews)



■ Completed
 ■ Ongoing
 ■ Requested



*"No important issue has been left out in the investment policy review, and the report will be our baseline framework to reform the investment climate and help us achieve the objective of sustainable and inclusive growth."*

Tigran Khachatryan, Minister of Economy, Armenia, 2019

*"Ten years after the Investment Policy Review of the Dominican Republic, the document is still the blueprint of every investment strategy we implement today; each time a new administration comes on board, the review is the first document we hand them."*

Natalia Vásquez Guzmán, Investment Manager, Export and Investment Centre, Dominican Republic, 2018



**PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Scope: all regions  
 Starting date: 1999  
 Reviews per year: 3–4  
 Reviews to date: 53, including 20 LDCs and 29 countries in Africa  
 Upcoming reviews: Seychelles  
 Website: [unctad.org/ipr](http://unctad.org/ipr)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
 Directly: 8, 17  
 Indirectly: 1, 2, 10, 16



**DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

China, Finland, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, European Union, United Nations Institute for Training and Research



# SERVICES POLICY REVIEWS

## REALIZING THE POTENTIAL OF SERVICES



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

International trade in services has expanded rapidly since 2005 and recorded strong growth in 2018 – faster than both global gross domestic product (GDP) and merchandise trade – with total exports increasing to \$5.8 trillion. Developing economies have achieved strong growth in their services exports, boosting their share in world services exports from 23 per cent in 2005 to 30 per cent in 2018. The least developed countries (LDCs), despite their continuing small share in world trade in services (less than 1 per cent), also witnessed faster growth of services exports than goods exports. Services exports from LDCs grew at 11 percent annually between 2005 and 2018, leading to an increase of the share of services in their total exports from 14 to 19 per cent. This suggests that services are contributing to the economic diversification in LDCs.

Services, and in particular infrastructural services, improve value addition in other economic sectors, promote employment and facilitate trade in manufacturing and agriculture. Services have become indispensable links in global value chains. The achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development largely depends on the development of key services activities, including health, education, energy services, financial services, telecommunication and computer-related services, as well as transport services. Yet many Governments in developing countries, including LDCs, and countries with economies in transition, face challenges in identifying and addressing the services-related needs of the domestic economy and then translating them into policies with a view to enhancing the quantity and quality of services output. There are also the challenges to (re)formulate appropriate negotiating positions to benefit from the liberalization of trade in services in both home and foreign markets.

With a view to helping these countries address these challenges and build up their supply and export capacity through evidence-based policymaking, UNCTAD developed the services policy review tool to systematically analyse the economic, regulatory and institutional frameworks that have an impact on the services sector and specific service subsectors of a country.



### HOW ARE SERVICES POLICY REVIEWS CONDUCTED?

UNCTAD carries out services policy reviews at the request of Governments. The counterpart ministry or agency is involved throughout the process, and relevant stakeholders are engaged as well to ensure ownership, desirability and feasibility of the policy recommendations. The reviews focus on the services sector. Each review, which typically covers two to three service subsectors, includes policy analysis and research, consultative multi-stakeholder meetings at the national level for fact-finding, awareness-raising and consensus-building to validate the findings and policy recommendations. It assesses a country's overall status of services development; conducts a diagnosis using the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats tool about the specific subsectors determined in consultation with the requesting country; and offers policy recommendations for developing the overall services sector and for the specific subsectors, as well in line with national development objectives.

Resources permitting, UNCTAD further assists the Governments in the implementation of the policy recommendations presented in the reviews through advisory services and training activities to enhance the expertise of government officials involved in the formulation of national services trade-related policies and negotiations. Support would also be offered for the actual formulation of national services trade policy and facilitating multi-stakeholder consultation towards its adoption and implementation.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

To date, services policy reviews have been conducted for nine countries. For Paraguay and Uganda, two reviews were undertaken. The reviews provided a sound basis for the reviewed countries to (re)formulate strategies and policies relating to the development of their services sector in general or specific subsectors.

- Following the two reviews for *Uganda*, the country developed a national policy on services, which was approved by the Cabinet in 2017 for implementation. It fully implemented three out of the five recommendations concerning accounting services, including incentives to promote compliance with



International Financial Reporting Standards, which had a positive impact on the sector's development. The insurance sector underwent extensive reforms after the completion of the first review. Of the 10 recommendations concerning this sector, 4 were fully implemented and 3 were partially implemented.

- *Paraguay* worked out a national services development plan in 2018 based on the reviews.
- The review conducted for *Bangladesh* helped the country formulate pragmatic policies for its emerging services sectors.
- The services policy reviews carried out for the *five LDCs* (Bangladesh, Lesotho, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda), which helped build up their supply and export capacity in specific sectors through evidence-based policymaking, usefully complemented these countries' efforts in effectively utilizing the LDC services waiver in the World Trade Organization, which grants preferential treatment only to services and service suppliers from LDCs.

### Services policy reviews completed by 2019



#### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions

Start date: 2009

Reviews per year: 1–2

Number of reviews completed to date: 12

Upcoming reviews: Morocco

Programme website: [unctad.org/services/sprs](http://unctad.org/services/sprs)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 9, 17

Indirectly: 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10



#### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

General Trust Fund on Services, United Nations Development Account



# TRADE POLICY FRAMEWORK REVIEWS

## HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF TRADE FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

International trade is an engine for economic growth that can contribute to promoting sustainable development. It can be a powerful force for creating jobs, fostering efficient use of resources, stimulating entrepreneurship and ultimately lifting people out of poverty. Many developing countries have limited capacity to analyse the relationship between trade, productive capacity and employment; assess policy options; and (re)formulate and implement adequate national trade policy frameworks. Promoting a coherent and integrated approach to national trade policy formulation and implementation becomes a major challenge for developing countries and countries with economies in transition as they reformulate national trade policy frameworks to better draw development benefits from trade and respond to the imperatives of the Sustainable Development Goals, including in progressing towards the achievement of target 17.11 (increasing the exports of developing countries), Goal 8 (economic growth) and Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure).

The UNCTAD trade policy framework reviews help countries assess their trade policy regimes in a systematic, comprehensive and strategic manner, to identify possible areas for improvement. The reviews focus on identifying key sectors for diversification with the potential to bring higher economic value, setting the right trade policies to back up those development priorities and establishing a trade policy framework to ensure effective implementation of such strategies. The aim is for trade policy framework reviews to contribute to the (re)formulation and implementation of national trade policy regimes according to a country's own needs. The reviews, through analysis and consultative workshops, provide a tool for policymakers in developing countries, including LDCs, and countries with economies in transition, that enable them to set their own priorities, make impact assessments of policy options and devise the best actions, including at the sectoral level.



### HOW ARE TRADE POLICY FRAMEWORK REVIEWS CONDUCTED?

A review is initiated at the request of a Government. The counterpart ministry or agency is involved throughout the process, and relevant stakeholders are engaged as well to ensure ownership, desirability and feasibility of the policy recommendations. A review starts with a national consultative multi-stakeholder workshop to identify key trade and development challenges faced by the country, as well as possible solutions and policy reforms. Following the preparation of the review report, the analysis and policy recommendations emanating from the review are examined and validated at national multi-stakeholder validation workshops for further governmental action.

Resources permitting, UNCTAD further assists the Governments in the implementation of the policy recommendations presented in the reviews through advisory services and training activities to enhance the expertise of government officials involved in the formulation of national trade-related policies and negotiations. Support would also be offered for the actual formulation of national trade policy and facilitation of multi-stakeholder consultation towards the adoption and implementation of the reviews.



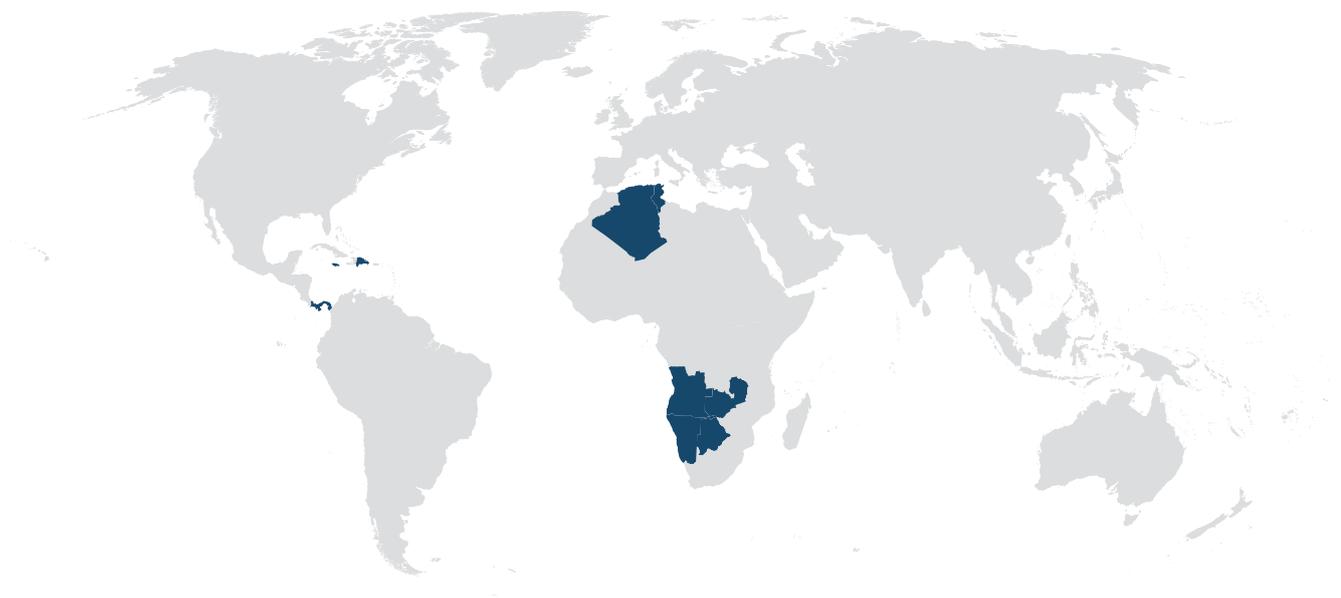
### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Since 2013, trade policy framework reviews have been conducted for nine countries. The reviews provided a sound basis for the reviewed countries to (re)formulate their national trade development strategies and policies aligned with their national development objectives.

- Based on the Trade Policy Framework Review of Rwanda, the Government adopted a new comprehensive trade policy framework.
- Several countries, such as *Botswana*, *Jamaica*, *Namibia* and *Zambia*, have embarked on the implementation of recommended policy measures by formulating draft national trade policy legislation and an implementation road map. Specifically, the reviews helped *Botswana* and *Jamaica* revise and update their national trade policy to achieve development objectives. Botswana has also prepared concrete and detailed action plans to implement the updated national trade policy. *Namibia* is developing a national trade policy following completion of the review, and the review has been helpful in guiding *Zambia* as it moves towards export diversification.



## Trade policy framework reviews (2013–2019)



### **PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES**

Scope: all regions

Start date: late 1990s, original approach; 2013, updated methodology

Reviews per year: 1–2

Number of reviews to date: more than 40 country or regional assessments of overall (or sectoral) trade policies

Upcoming reviews: Angola, Guyana, Mozambique

Programme website: [unctad.org/TPF-Reviews](http://unctad.org/TPF-Reviews)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 17

Indirectly: 1, 8, 9



### **DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)**

Norway, United Nations Development Account



# SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION POLICY REVIEWS

## FACTORING IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Building national capacities in science, technology and innovation at the firm, farm, industry and national levels is essential for local industries in developing countries to compete in today's increasingly integrated and knowledge-based world economy. The capacity to adopt and use technologies, and to innovate, is critical to diversify economies into new areas with higher value added, raise productivity, generate well-paid jobs, reduce poverty and address environmental challenges. It has become increasingly clear that the attainment of all the social, economic and environmental objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals will require the effective application of technology and the development of strong national innovation capacity.

UNCTAD developed the science, technology and innovation policy reviews to assist developing countries in assessing science, technology and innovation systems and building innovation capacity at the firm, farm, industry and national levels. The reviews are an analytical and policy-learning process for a country's science, technology and innovation stakeholders to reach a clearer understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of their innovation systems and identify strategic priorities for their development. The result of this process is documented in the science, technology and innovation policy review document and considered at the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

The starting point for the reviews is that it is essential to harness science, technology and innovation for sustainable development. Achieving this requires mainstreaming science, technology and innovation policy in national development strategies and plans and promoting coherence among key development policy areas related to technology and innovation. The reviews seek to achieve both of these goals in order to support a country's broader national sustainable development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The reviews make a systematic effort to involve a broad range of stakeholders to build national consensus.



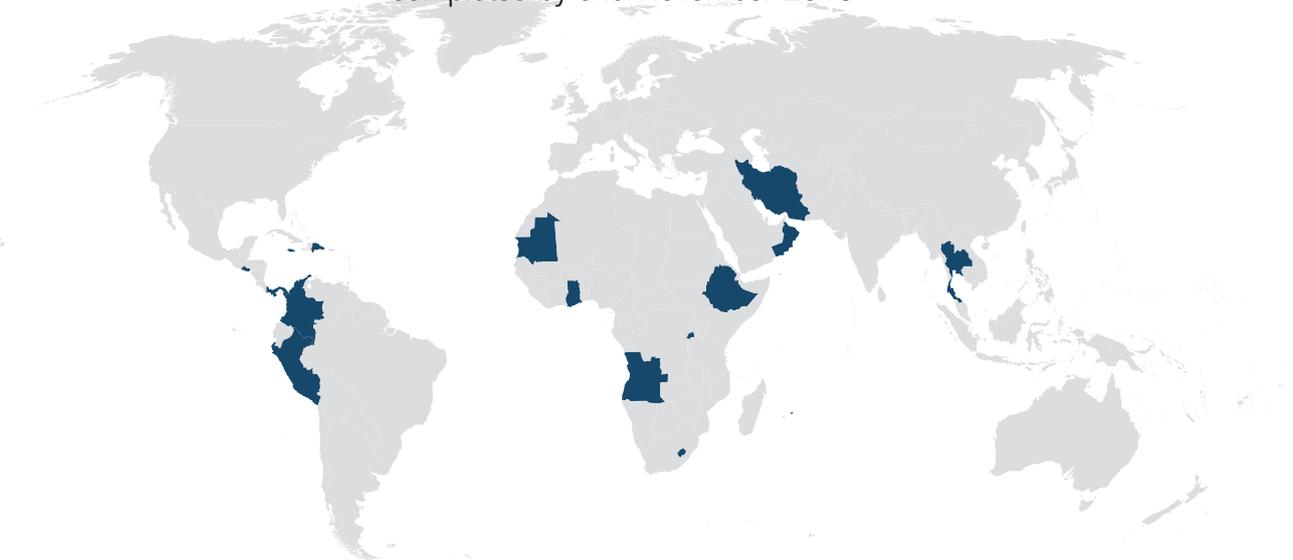
### HOW CAN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION BE FACTORED IN?

The science, technology and innovation policy reviews are undertaken at the request of Governments. The reviews include an assessment of the governance of science, technology and innovation; science, technology and innovation policies, rules and regulations; infrastructure; and firm, industry and national-level innovation capabilities. They usually include a mapping of innovation systems, along with in-depth studies of specific sectors or issues related to science, technology and innovation that are particularly important for development in the country concerned. They include policy recommendations for fostering technology upgrading, strengthening innovation capacity and enhancing the systems or ecosystems that support innovation. A modular capacity-building programme is available and can be delivered in conjunction with the diagnostic phase of the science, technology and innovation policy review. Capacity-building activities can also be delivered as part of follow-up implementation, or as a self-standing activity upon request.

The methodological approach is based on a new framework introduced in the 2019 UNCTAD publication, *A Framework for Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews: Harnessing Innovation for Sustainable Development*. The framework aims to align science, technology and innovation policies with the policy agenda of sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, the framework highlights the importance of addressing the gaps in science, technology and innovation capacities between men and women, as well as the need to fully include the gender dimension in the analysis of policies and practices relating to science, technology and innovation.



## Science, technology and innovation policy reviews completed by end-November 2019



### ✓ RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- Following the **Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Peru** in 2010, the national budget dedicated to science, technology and innovation increased by 20 times in one year.
- The **Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Oman** in 2014 led to the establishment of two consultative bodies in the country. One such body at a strategic level consists of five ministers and several senior advisers. The other, at an operational level, includes the executive directors of over 20 stakeholder institutions focused on science, technology and innovation. It also led to the design of the 2017 national innovation strategy of Oman.
- The **Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Thailand** was completed in 2015. The diagnosis and recommendations of the report have been fed into public policy design processes, including proposals on science, technology and innovation policy reform. At the twenty-second annual session of the Commission for Science and Technology for Development, the country reported several institutional changes carried out on the basis of the review. The recommendations helped create awareness at the highest political level of the importance of science, technology and innovation. Currently, science, technology and innovation plays a central role in their national economic and social development plan. Also, the review led to the implementation of institutional reforms in the country, such as the creation of a new ministry of science, technology and innovation and higher education.
- The **Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Panama** was carried out in 2019. Its findings and recommendations are being used by the Government as one of the main sources of strategic guidance in the preparation of the National Science, Technology and Innovation Plan 2020–2024. The review also contributed to raising the importance of investing in science, technology and innovation in the country. At the presentation of the review at the Interministerial Committee on Science and Technology in July 2019, the new administration announced its intention to invest 1 per cent of the country's GDP in science, technology and innovation activities by 2022.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions  
Start date: 1998–2005 (first series); 2008 (current series)  
Reviews per year: 1–2  
Reviews to date: 16  
Upcoming reviews: Uganda (2019–2020), Dominican Republic and Zambia (2020–2021)  
Website: [unctad.org/STIPreviews](http://unctad.org/STIPreviews)  
Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
Directly: 9  
Indirectly: 8, 12, 17



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Germany, United Nations Development Account, United Nations Development Programme



# E-COMMERCE AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

## LEVERAGING E-COMMERCE AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

E-commerce – and more generally the rise of the digital economy – is rapidly transforming the way in which enterprises are interacting among each other, as well as with consumers and Governments. E-commerce is creating new opportunities for technological leaps, productivity gains across the economy, the rise of new sectors and boosting trade. At the same time, digital disruption is raising new challenges and costs for countries. Some of the greatest dynamism in e-commerce and information and communications technologies (ICTs) can be found in developing countries, but the potential is far from fully realized.

To reverse current trends towards widening inequalities and power imbalances wrought by the digital economy, policymakers need to adapt existing policies, laws and regulations and adopt new ones. The global nature of the digital economy also requires more dialogue, consensus-building and policymaking at the international level. Developing countries should establish legal, institutional and policy frameworks, as well as effective national strategies, to leverage the dynamism of e-commerce and digitalization for value creation and capture. It is important for policymakers to have better statistics and to receive evidence-based guidance on the design of sound policies and to learn from best practices in securing development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy. Seizing development gains from this evolving landscape requires a holistic, cross-sectoral and cross-institutional approach.



### HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

The E-commerce and the Digital Economy Programme of UNCTAD provides a unique platform for dialogue between developed and developing countries on harnessing the evolving digital economy for trade and sustainable development. Specifically, it encompasses several distinct technical assistance subprogrammes, as follows:

- The *E-commerce and Law Reform* Subprogramme helps to build the capacity of law and policymakers at the national and regional levels to understand the legal issues underpinning e-commerce. Concrete actions include the following:
  - Assistance in establishing domestic and regional legal regimes to enhance trust in online transactions.
  - National and regional capacity-building workshops for law and policymakers.
  - Mapping of e-commerce legislation, available at [unctad.org/cyberlawtracker](http://unctad.org/cyberlawtracker).
- UNCTAD work on *measuring the information economy* includes statistical data collection and the development of methodology, as well as linking statistics and policy through the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy. Figures are published in the biennial *Digital Economy Report* and the statistics portal UNCTADstat. Technical cooperation here aims to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to produce better, more reliable and internationally comparable statistics on the following issues: ICT use by enterprises, size and composition of the ICT sector, and e-commerce and international trade in ICT-enabled services.
- Work on *ICT policy reviews and national e-commerce strategies* involves technical assistance, advisory services, diagnostics and strategy development on e-commerce and national ICT planning at the request of Governments. Through an analysis of the infrastructural, policy, regulatory, institutional, operational and socioeconomic landscape, the reviews help Governments to overcome weaknesses and bureaucratic barriers, leverage strengths and opportunities and put in place relevant strategies.
- The *eTrade for all* initiative is a collaborative effort of 30 partners to scale up cooperation, transparency and aid efficiency towards more inclusive e-commerce. Its main tool is the online platform ([etradeforall.org](http://etradeforall.org)), a knowledge-sharing and information hub that facilitates access to a wide range of information and resources on e-commerce and the digital economy. It offers a unique gateway for matching the suppliers of technical assistance with those in need. Beneficiaries can connect with potential partners, learn about trends, best practices, up-to-date e-commerce indicators and upcoming events, all in one place.
- *eTrade Readiness Assessments (eT Readies)* assist the least developed countries (LDCs) and other developing countries in understanding their e-commerce readiness in key policy areas to better engage in and benefit from e-commerce. They provide recommendations for overcoming identified barriers and bottlenecks to growth and enjoying the benefits of digital trade.



- To foster ecosystems conducive to gender-inclusive digital entrepreneurship in developing countries, *eTrade for Women* builds and nurtures a selective community of successful women leaders in e-commerce who play a role as advocates of the initiative. With their active involvement, they contribute to inspiring and empowering the next generation of technology-based women entrepreneurs and to making their voices better heard in policy processes.



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- The E-commerce and Law Reform Subprogramme pioneered the introduction of the legal dimension of ICTs in more than 63 developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, 20 of which are LDCs. The East African Community became the first African region to adopt a harmonized framework for cyberlaws. The Global Cyberlaw Tracker is the first-ever global mapping of the state of e-commerce legislation in the field of e-transactions, consumer protection, data protection and privacy, and cybercrime adoption in the 194 member States of UNCTAD.
- UNCTAD has trained over 250 national statistical officers from 117 countries to produce official statistics on the information economy. Further, it has contributed to defining information economy indicators through the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development (endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission), and developed a new methodology to measure international trade in ICT-enabled services.
- Egypt, Oman and Rwanda have received assistance in developing their first national e-commerce strategies. In the case of Egypt, collaboration between UNCTAD and the World Bank led to a comprehensive strategy on electronic payments for e-commerce.
- As at November 2019, the *eTrade for all* platform had on average 3,000 monthly visitors, 42 per cent of which were from developing countries. The platform offers 30 development solutions in English, French and Spanish, as well as 137 country profiles in English and French, presenting a quick overview of the e-commerce landscape. A monthly newsletter is issued to highlight the activities of key partners in e-commerce, as well as daily digests of news, events and publications.
- Since 2017, 20 *eT Readies* have been completed. Six are under way, and additional ones are being planned for 2020. In 2019, the subprogramme was extended to other developing countries, with Iraq being the first non-LDC to benefit from an assessment. *eT Readies* are considered a valuable tool for Governments and regional organizations to better understand countries' digital ecosystems and identify appropriate policy solutions so as to harness the benefits of the digital economy for development.
- The selection of the first eTrade for Women Advocates of UNCTAD – seven entrepreneurs from across the developing world – was announced on the margins of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly in New York in September 2019. Drawing on their ground-breaking work in e-commerce, the advocates were selected to inspire other digital women entrepreneurs and help ensure women a seat and a voice at the policymaking table for a more inclusive local, regional and global digital economy.

*"eTrade for all is a highly relevant project, providing unique value added to e-commerce stakeholders."*

Achim Engelhardt, Independent Evaluator of *eTrade for all*, 2019



## PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Start date: 1999 (new components added in 2007, 2009, 2016 and 2019)

Projects per year (since 2016): about 20

Partners: more than 30 (public sector and civil society); more than 30 (private sector)

Persons trained: more than 3,000

Website: [unctad.org/ict4d](http://unctad.org/ict4d); [etradeforall.org](http://etradeforall.org)

UNCTADstat database: [unctadstat.unctad.org](http://unctadstat.unctad.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 8, 9, 17

Indirectly: 5



## DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Australia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Oman, Sweden, United Kingdom, European Union, Enhanced Integrated Framework, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation, MasterCard, United Nations Development Account



# NON-TARIFF MEASURES

## STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY AND REGULATORY COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Non-tariff measures affect lives every day. Packaging requirements and limits on the use of pesticides ensure safe food in supermarkets; restrictions on toxins in toys protect children; mandatory safety standards on electrical household appliances prevent electric shocks; and emissions standards for vehicles influence climate change. Currently, 90 per cent of global trade is affected by such regulatory non-tariff measures; traditional trade barriers such as quotas are still used but less common. Regulatory measures are indispensable and crucial for sustainable development. Their elimination is not an option.

However, non-tariff measures also raise consumer prices and create barriers to trade and economic development. UNCTAD estimates show that the aggregate impact of non-tariff measures is three times higher than that of tariffs. Non-tariff measures affect trade through compliance and procedural costs, which often disproportionately burden small enterprises and poorer countries.

Striking a balance between trade costs and regulatory benefits requires transparency, policy coherence and international-level regulatory cooperation. For developing countries, understanding the uses and implications of such measures is essential for the formulation and implementation of effective development strategies.

The UNCTAD Non-tariff Measures Programme focuses on the means of reducing trade costs to strengthen the competitiveness of developing countries while enabling policymakers to fully achieve public policy objectives, such as protecting health and the environment.



### HOW CAN COUNTRIES BETTER ADDRESS NON-TARIFF MEASURES?

UNCTAD has been working on research and capacity-building related to non-tariff measures since the early 1980s. It assists policymakers along the entire value chain of non-tariff measures, ranging from definition and classification to data collection and dissemination, to research and policy support. Specifically, UNCTAD assists developing countries through the following three tools:

- **Increasing transparency through data collection and dissemination.** UNCTAD assists Governments in establishing greater transparency on non-tariff measures within regional trade agreements, to facilitate trade and stimulate economic growth. In collaboration with many partners, UNCTAD has developed a proven and widely accepted methodology to systematically collect and disseminate information on non-tariff measures. At the national level, increased transparency helps various domestic regulatory agencies to achieve interministerial policy coherence.
- **Capacity-building through online and face-to-face courses.** Three online training courses are available and may be complemented by face-to-face training workshops, as follows:
  - **Non-tariff measures executive course.** This course is for policymakers and executives who would like to have an overview of the importance of non-tariff measures and related challenges and opportunities. This non-technical course outlines the linkages of non-tariff measures to economic, social and environmental development and introduces the Non-tariff Measures Programme of UNCTAD.
  - **Non-tariff measures transparency and data collection.** This online training course enables participants to review national policy frameworks and collect comprehensive information on non-tariff measures. The course consists of the following five modules: introduction to non-tariff measures, classification of non-tariff measures, classification of products, guidelines on collecting data on non-tariff measures and hands-on exercises. Successful participants are awarded certification by UNCTAD as a non-tariff measures data collector.
  - **Trade policy analysis.** This online training course enhances capacity in developing countries to analyse and implement trade policy. *A Practical Guide to Trade Policy Analysis* – a co-publication of UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization – serves as the main reference for the course, and the World Bank's World Integrated Trade Solution software (developed in collaboration with UNCTAD) is another core component. Training is tailored to the needs of each audience, with a more technical focus for analysts and a more discursive and descriptive approach for policy-oriented audiences.



- **Regional non-tariff measures integration reviews and tailored advisory services.** The reviews provide analytical support for regional integration processes by systematically addressing non-tariff measures in regional trade agreements. A review consists of an economic impact assessment, an institutional analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses in the regional integration of non-tariff measures and a validation workshop to develop strategies for deeper regional integration. Tailored advisory services and support for policymakers to streamline national regulations, establish good regulatory practices and strengthen value chains are available upon request. Regional and national trade portals, as well as non-tariff barrier reporting, monitoring and elimination mechanisms, are currently being implemented in several regions.



## RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- **Enhanced transparency**

The UNCTAD Trade Analysis and Information System – TRAINS – is the most comprehensive database on non-tariff measures. In recent years, significant improvements in data quality and coverage have been achieved. The database now covers over 90 per cent of world trade and is accessible through the UNCTAD portal, at [trains.unctad.org](https://trains.unctad.org), and the World Bank World Integrated Trade Solution portal, at [wits.worldbank.org](https://wits.worldbank.org).

- **Online training in non-tariff measures transparency and analysis**

More than 600 participants have been trained through the online courses. Over 90 per cent of participants in the transparency and data collection course found the knowledge acquired during the training extremely or very useful. For example, the course empowered one participant from Cambodia to better provide technical support to colleagues and partners or opened the eyes of a participant from Eswatini to know exactly what regulations to look for to obtain the whole picture of trade regulation, especially from a trade facilitation perspective. Another participant noted that the course would help in regular reporting to the World Trade Organization on trade policy measures.

- **Regional non-tariff measures integration reviews**

The reviews were highly appreciated by stakeholders and workshop participants in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). SADC officials used the study to respond to a request from the SADC Committee of Ministers Responsible for Trade for a strategic plan to eliminate non-tariff barriers in the region. MERCOSUR member States used the study to revitalize their efforts to achieve regional integration.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

**Start date:** 2008

**Activities to date:** non-tariff measures data collected in 109 countries; more than 600 persons trained in online courses; 3 regional non-tariff measures integration reviews conducted; more than 50 training workshops and advisory missions conducted

**Activities per year:** non-tariff measures data collected in more than 20 countries; 150 participants trained online; more than 50 participants trained face to face; 1 regional non-tariff measures integration review; 10–15 workshops and/or advisory missions conducted

**Website:** [unctad.org/ntm](https://unctad.org/ntm); [trains.unctad.org](https://trains.unctad.org)



**Sustainable Development Goals addressed:**

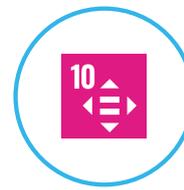
Directly: 3, 8, 17

Indirectly: 2, 9, 12



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Canada, Germany, European Union, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (Japan), United Nations Development Account, World Bank



# TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM

## SUPPORTING TRADE-LED GROWTH STRATEGIES AND INTEGRATION INTO THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Trade remains an important instrument for economic growth and development. However, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition for triggering and sustaining development. Reaping effective development benefits from participation in the multilateral trading system, as well as coping with proliferating bilateral, regional and subregional trade integration processes, remains a big challenge for national policymakers and trade negotiators. Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that calls for revitalizing the global trade partnership in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system continues to be the cornerstone of such a partnership, particularly to contribute to achieving Goal 17.

Within this global context, UNCTAD provides capacity-building support to developing countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs), small and vulnerable economies; countries with economies in transition and regional groupings in the areas of bilateral, regional and multilateral trade negotiations (such as accession to the World Trade Organization) and the implementation and utilization of trade agreements, including trade preference, such as the Generalized System of Preferences. UNCTAD assistance addresses specific substantive areas, including agriculture, non-agriculture market access, services, rules, special and differential treatment, dispute settlement and other trade-related rules, disciplines and procedures. UNCTAD support relating to trade negotiations and the international trading system aims to help beneficiary countries enhance their human, analytical, regulatory and institutional capacities in trade negotiations and agreements. The ultimate objective is to allow them to better draw benefits from the international trading system and increase their participation in the international trade for the interest of their development.



### HOW DOES UNCTAD DELIVER SUPPORT FOR TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE PREFERENCES?

UNCTAD support for trade negotiations and the international trading system is initiated at the request of a Government or a regional grouping. Emphasis is placed on building the capacities of national governments and regional groupings to establish negotiating priorities and identify practical positions and policy options in bilateral, regional and multilateral trade negotiations. This is done through research to support evidence-based decision-making, along with advisory and capacity-building support to regional coordinators, national negotiating teams and regional institutions.

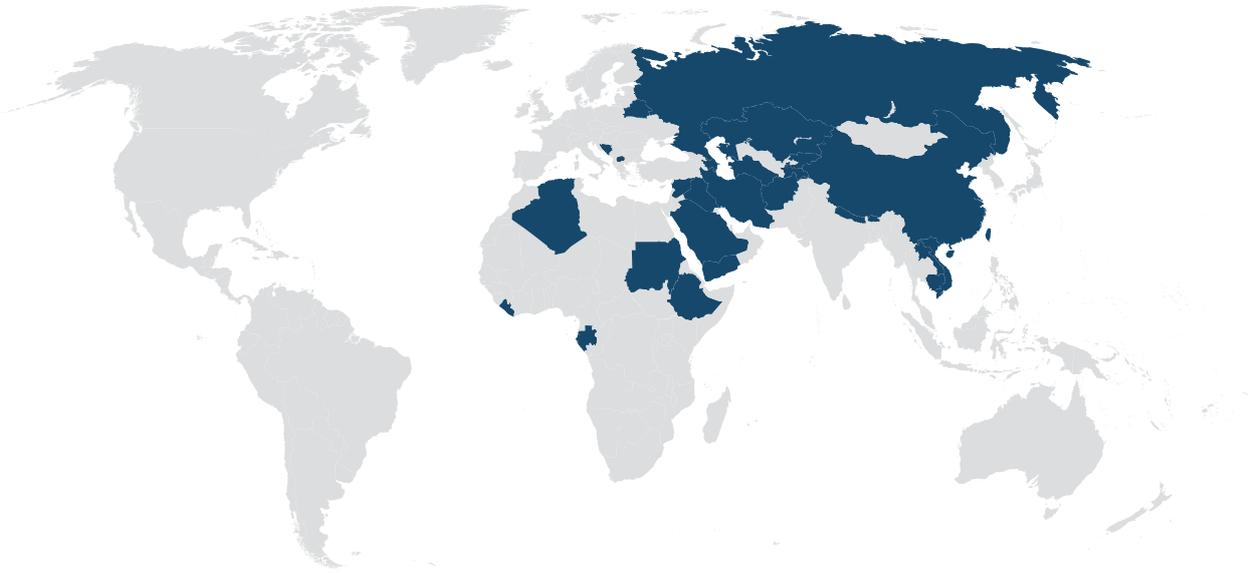
At the multilateral level, UNCTAD works closely with the regional coordinators of developing country groupings, such as Africa, LDCs and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, as well as individual countries, to provide analytical and advisory support for their consideration of negotiating issues, implications and options, upon request. One example is UNCTAD assistance to the LDC group in negotiating the LDC services waiver. For countries acceding to the World Trade Organization, UNCTAD provides hands-on support to national negotiating teams to build national capacities and institutions to effectively conduct policy reform and manage all stages of accession (before, during and after accession).

At the regional level, UNCTAD partners with regional entities such as the African Union; the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States; and regional economic communities, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Economic Community of West African States and Pan-Arab Free Trade Area, to support their constituencies' effective engagement in regional trade negotiations, such as the negotiations on the economic partnership agreements between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, Arab Customs Union, as well as the African Continental Free Trade Area processes. UNCTAD also assists countries in negotiating bilateral free trade agreements.

UNCTAD provides technical assistance to developing countries, including LDCs, to implement and utilize trade agreements, such as trade remedies in the bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements for Mozambique. UNCTAD works with member States to help them understand the challenges in the Generalized System of Preferences and how to use the mechanism effectively, through newsletters, updated schemes, handbooks and advisory services. UNCTAD also administers the certificates of rules of origin of the



## UNCTAD technical assistance on accession to the World Trade Organization (up to 2019)



Generalized System of Preferences. UNCTAD conducts country case studies to help LDCs utilize the LDC services waiver effectively so as to contribute to the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals. UNCTAD serves as the secretariat for the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries and provides administrative and substantive support to participants in the system.



### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

UNCTAD assistance to African countries, the African Union Commission and regional groupings in the negotiations concerning the African Continental Free Trade Area, particularly relating to trade in goods and services, contributed to the formulation and adoption of the negotiating modalities in these areas and eventually the adoption of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. UNCTAD support to the negotiators was strongly appreciated by all the beneficiaries through letters and statements. The Chair of the African Union Commission thanked UNCTAD for its support during the thirtieth ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January 2018.

A 2015 external evaluation, in assessing subprogramme 3 (international trade), pointed to recognition of the comparative advantages of UNCTAD: “Stakeholders note that UNCTAD provides valuable support to LDCs and developing countries in pre-accession and accession stages in ways that others cannot... Unlike [the World Trade Organization], which can only address technical aspects related to rules and must refrain from any policy advice, UNCTAD’s mandate tasks it with providing advice on policy options and alternatives for acceding States and backstopping the accession process.”

Regarding UNCTAD work on the Generalized System of Preferences rules of origin certificates, four country case studies on the use of the LDC services waiver were undertaken for Cambodia, Nepal, Senegal and Zambia in 2018. The studies are expected to help them benefit from the preferences notified by their developed trading partners and developing ones in a position to do so. UNCTAD services to the participants in the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries ensured the smooth functioning of its Agreement and close follow-up to the São Paulo Round results towards its effective implementation by the signatories so as to further expand and deepen South–South trade and cooperation.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all developing countries, including LDCs, and countries with economies in transition

Programmes start date: 1980s

Number of countries and country groups assisted to date: majority of developing countries and groups

Programme website: [unctad.org/tncd](http://unctad.org/tncd)

Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 10, 17

Indirectly: 1, 8, 9



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Finland, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, European Union, United Nations Industrial Development Organization



# SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

## TOWARDS GREEN ECONOMIES



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment aim to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in designing and implementing mutually supportive trade, environment, climate change and sustainable development strategies while integrating sustainable development objectives at all levels. UNCTAD work explores the trade opportunities arising from multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment-related negotiations. It promotes sustainable trade in sectors that contribute to further economic growth, job creation and opportunities for social inclusion.

UNCTAD work is based on requests from developing countries to examine the development impact and economic repercussions of existing and potential multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment negotiations and how best to address the challenges and seize the opportunities related to trade. Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, the principles of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including its Nagoya Protocol, UNCTAD facilitates multilateral and expert processes in areas in which the environmental aspect is central to trade. Making economic growth compatible with sustainable development requires adequate policies and mechanisms, and UNCTAD programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment work towards stimulating economic diversification, creating jobs, raising income levels and fostering environmental protection, thereby improving living standards.



### PROGRAMMES AT A GLANCE

- The Climate Change Programme brings Governments, industry and civil society together to address the economic aspects of climate change and its trade and sustainable development implications in several sectors of the economy, such as transportation, energy use, electricity generation and agriculture.
- The BioTrade Initiative works at the national, regional and global levels with partners along the following three strategic lines: enabling a policy framework for biotrade; value chain enhancement; and market creation and development for biodiversity products and services. As one means of enhancing the value chain, UNCTAD has developed a biotrade value chain methodology to support the growth of biodiversity-based sectors. The aim is to enhance the production of value added products and services derived from biodiversity, for both domestic and international markets.
- National green export reviews: The reviews support a country-led process to assess national potential and build action plans to advance the development of green sectors. Adopted by national stakeholders, these actions can generate new employment and export opportunities and advances, while promoting sustainable development.
- The Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies Programme supports developing countries in seizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources. It promotes the sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors by analysing, developing and adopting evidence-based and policy-coherent oceans economy and trade strategies and enhancing national implementation capacities.
- The Circular Economy Programme contributes to eliminating waste to protect the environment and conserve natural resources. Through the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution project, UNCTAD is assisting developing countries in their transition to a circular economy by improving the utilization of resources, adopting technology-based solutions and cleaner production methods, diversifying exports and reducing the levels of environmental pollution generated by manufacturing.



### RESULTS AND IMPACT AT A GLANCE

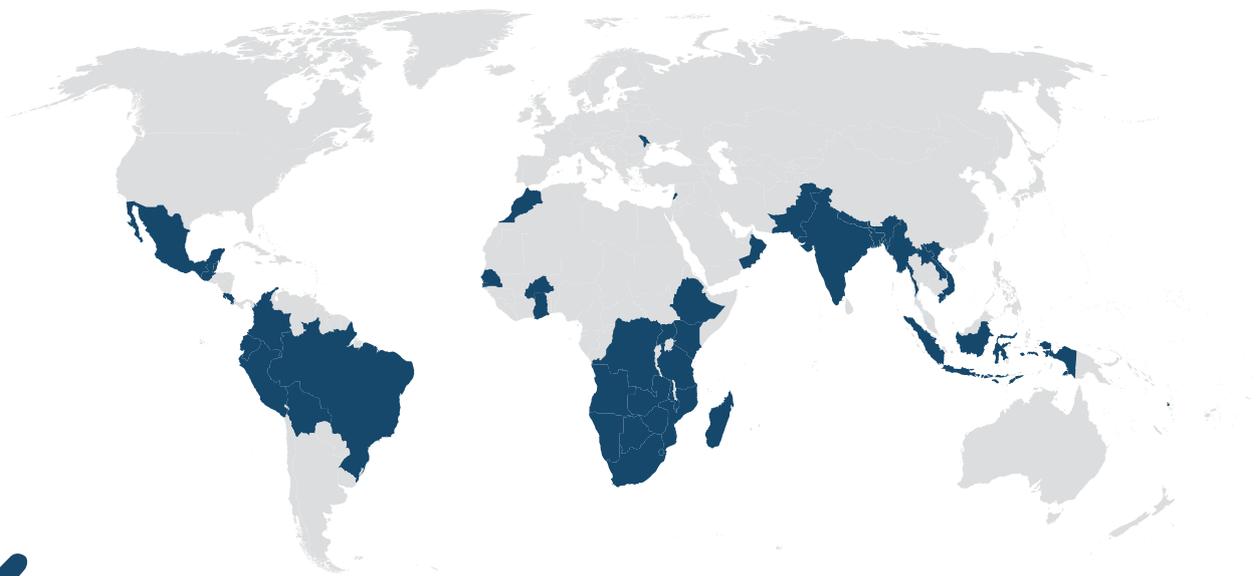
- UNCTAD works closely with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to address countries' concerns about the negative effects of climate change response measures, as well as to explore ways to enable trade to be part of the global solution to address climate change.
- Over the past two decades, BioTrade Initiative activities have benefited about 5 million people by directly



assisting more than 20 countries and indirectly assisting, with the support of its partners, 25 more countries. It has created jobs and generated additional income opportunities for rural and marginal communities in over 1,000 value chains. Sales revenues of BioTrade Initiative beneficiary organizations, working with small and medium-sized enterprises, community-based associations and multinational companies, amounted to €4.3 billion in 2017, compared with €35.3 million in 2003.

- The National Green Export Review Programme has assisted 10 countries in identifying new green export opportunities. Public and private sector stakeholders have improved capacity to build national productive and export capacity in sustainable or green products.
- The Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies Programme has supported three coastal beneficiary countries in identifying and assessing oceans-based sectors with trade potential under the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the multilateral trading system.

### Sustainable trade and the environment: Beneficiary countries (up to 2019)



*"The national green export review of our country is a highly valued and welcomed experience for Vanuatu. Unlike other projects where foreign experts come and tell us what we need to do, the UNCTAD review is the first technical assistance project which encouraged native stakeholders ourselves, to collectively analyse, assess and decide how to best support and promote our economy."*

Jimmy Rantes, Director, Department of Industry, Vanuatu, 2015



#### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Scope: all regions  
 Collaborative arrangements: more than 50 programme partners  
 National green export reviews completed: 10  
 Oceans economy and trade strategies: 3 in progress  
 Sustainable manufacturing and environmental pollution: 2 country case studies in progress  
 BioTrade: ongoing in 45 countries (directly in 20 countries and 25 through partners)  
 Website: [unctad.org/environment](http://unctad.org/environment)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:  
 Directly: 12, 13, 14, 15  
 Indirect: 8, 17



#### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

Switzerland, United Kingdom, European Union, United Nations Development Account



# INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND FACILITATION

SUPPORTING GOVERNMENTS IN ATTRACTING FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



## GLOBAL CONTEXT

Foreign direct investment (FDI) has become an important factor in bringing capital, as well as jobs, technology and management skills to many developing countries. Some developing countries have seen major benefits from these investments in terms of economic development and rising standards of living. FDI can also play a significant role in financing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 in basic infrastructure, food security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, health and education. To do so, Governments need to mobilize private investment more efficiently, channel it into sustainable development sectors and maximize its positive economic, social and environmental impacts. As direct intermediaries between Governments and investors, investment promotion agencies (IPAs) have a crucial role to play.

Countries with great needs for investment in projects contributing to sustainable development often lack institutional capacity to catalyse foreign investment and maximize benefits generated by FDI inflows. UNCTAD strengthens the capacities of these countries to promote investment and gives them tools to identify, target and facilitate strategic investment projects. The Investment Promotion and Facilitation Programme includes advisory services, training, capacity-building for the development of online investment guides and the convening of high-level international meetings to share new developments, trends and best practices, as well as guidance on the institutional, policy and strategic aspects of investment promotion and facilitation, provided through its publications. Through these activities, the Programme can help Governments promote economic growth and investments in Goal-related projects.



## HOW CAN GOVERNMENTS BUILD INVESTMENT PROMOTION CAPACITIES?

The investment promotion advisory services of UNCTAD help create a policy and institutional framework for attracting and retaining FDI for sustainable development. Assistance is provided in areas such as policies, regulations, institutional arrangements, strategies and techniques.

Investment promotion training builds capacities among professionals and diplomats in investor targeting, aftercare and policy advocacy, as well as in the promotion and facilitation of new business opportunities. Training is often carried out with partner organizations, including the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies.

Investment guides provide investors with online information on the business environment of a country or region, including regulations, taxes, operating costs, prices and business opportunities, along with the experiences of established investors and investment case studies. Created jointly by UNCTAD, Governments and the International Chamber of Commerce, the guides help build the capacity of IPAs, as they are responsible for researching, inputting and updating the information. (For more information, see the respective fact sheet in the *UNCTAD Toolbox*.)

Investment promotion publications help investment promotion professionals learn about investment promotion strategies, best practices and trends. Special emphasis is put on green and sustainable sectors, such as in the guides on promoting low-carbon investment and promoting investment in the Sustainable Development Goals, and *The IPA Observer* series. Moreover, the *sustainableFDI.org* platform provides an extensive library of recent publications on attracting investment in Sustainable Development Goal-related sectors and projects, as well as information on upcoming events.

Investment promotion awards are presented annually to recognize the achievements of best-practice agencies and organizations in a variety of areas and contribute to the dissemination of these practices among the investment promotion community.



## RESULTS AND IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- Every year, 200 investment promotion professionals benefit from UNCTAD training, and 700 investment stakeholders take part in high-level investment promotion meetings and conferences. In 2014–2019, UNCTAD trained investment promotion experts from more than 100 countries.
- Nine out of 10 participants in UNCTAD investment promotion training sessions rate the workshops as beneficial for their work.
- Through the UNCTAD programme on the promotion of green FDI, many developing countries, including India, Jamaica and Kenya, have introduced or reinforced their activities in attracting low-carbon FDI.
- Since 2002, 58 agencies and organizations from 46 countries have received investment promotion awards or special recognition from UNCTAD for their achievements.

*"The UNCTAD regional seminar was extremely insightful and relevant for IPAs promoting Sustainable Development Goals for the development of their respective countries. The content was unique and organized professionally to address the different challenges and opportunities associated with Sustainable Development Goal projects. I have gained a wealth of knowledge which I look forward to implementing."*

Investment Executive, Uganda Investment Authority, 2019

*"I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to UNCTAD for drafting a report on promoting FDI in solar energy with a special focus on India. This will be most useful for both the policymakers and the private stakeholders as we work towards our target of achieving 100 GW in solar power by 2022."*

Chief Executive Officer, Invest India, 2016



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Start date: 1994

Conferences, seminars and workshops per year: 8

Website: [sustainableFDI.org](http://sustainableFDI.org)



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 9, 17

Indirectly: 7, 8, 10



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

China, Netherlands, Multi-donor Trust Fund on Capacity-building in Investment Promotion, United Nations Development Account



# INVESTMENT GUIDES

## STRENGTHENING LOCAL INSTITUTIONS BY PROMOTING INVESTMENT TO FINANCE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



### GLOBAL CONTEXT

Foreign direct investment (FDI) has the potential to contribute to economic growth and social development. It can help bridge the annual \$2.5 trillion gap required to finance the Sustainable Development Goals through the investment opportunities targeted. It can also bring capital, technology, management know-how and access to new markets. Compared with other forms of capital flows, FDI is also more stable, with a longer-term commitment to the host economy.

Attracting FDI and facilitating decision-making on investments, however, is not a given. Host countries need to be able to provide potential investors with up-to-date information, ranging from business costs and investment opportunities to investment-related legal and regulatory frameworks in areas such as company registration, land acquisition, labour laws and tax regimes.

The online investment guides are a joint product of UNCTAD and the International Chamber of Commerce. They aim to raise awareness among the global investment community of the opportunities and conditions for investment in beneficiary countries. Given that they are online, the guides can be easily updated to reflect changes in legislation, infrastructure, costs or taxes. The guides can include full texts of laws, legal instruments and hard, time-sensitive data that would be difficult for investors to find without visiting a country. The guides help build the capacity of local institutions in investment promotion, as Governments of beneficiary countries are trained to research, input and update data.



### HOW ARE INVESTMENT GUIDES DEVELOPED?

Investment guides are developed jointly with the Governments of beneficiary countries, at their request, and often in partnership with regional development organizations which are able to provide ongoing aftercare. Once an investment guide is ready, it typically allows potential investors to obtain four types of investment information:

- Locally available data, costs and prices – including wages, taxes, rent values, utility prices and transport costs.
- Relevant rules and licensing requirements, timelines and useful contacts.
- Investment opportunities, particularly in sectors that support the Sustainable Development Goals (this has included manufacturing, agriculture and agro-processing, the blue economy, renewable energy and education).
- Experiences of established investors and investment case studies.

Developing an investment guide generally requires the steps outlined below:

- Following a request from a Government, a team from UNCTAD and/or its implementation partners visit(s) the country together with an onsite team of staff nominated by implementing partners. The UNCTAD team conducts preliminary research on the laws and institutions regulating investors.
- During the visit, the onsite team asks questions and begins to input information directly into the investment guide website, based on information standards and training provided by UNCTAD and the International Chamber of Commerce. The training provided can include anything from identifying investment-specific issues and information gathering, to how to present information on the web and maintenance techniques.
- After the country visit, UNCTAD staff guide and monitor the work of the implementing partner staff, as they conduct research, input information into and update the investment guide website and provide feedback on the type and quality of information entered to further enhance capacity.
- The investment guide is launched at a stakeholder workshop where comments and recommendations of participants are taken into account to further improve the product.

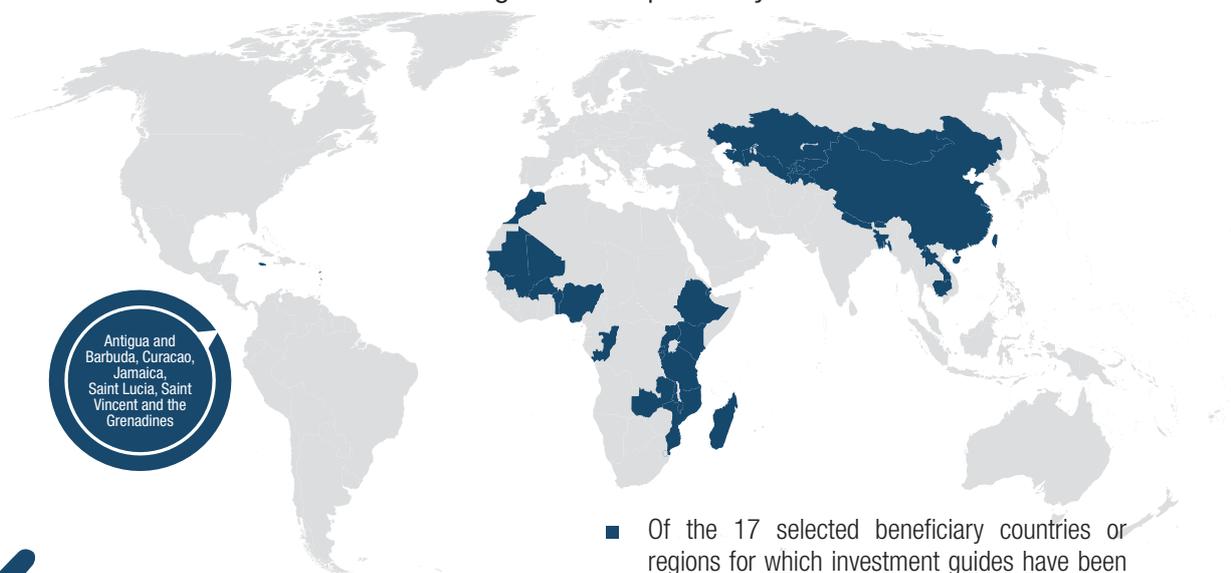


### RESULTS AND IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

- Thirty-six countries have benefited from investment guides, including subnational regions and country groupings. Prior to 2013, the guides were produced as paper documents. Some countries that benefited from paper guides subsequently received online guides.



## Investment guides completed by 2019



Antigua and Barbuda, Curacao, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



*"This investment guide will improve transparency, reduce bureaucracy, improve the business environment and strengthen relations with investors."*

Chimediin Saikhanbileg, Prime Minister of Mongolia, 2016

*"The investment guide is a reliable and credible online tool that will help both orient and provide information to foreign and local investors, and improve Benin's business climate."*

Is-Deen Bouraïma, Director, Investment and Exports Promotion Agency, Benin, 2017

*"The investment guide is about making relevant and up-to-date content available to existing and potential investors. It should help us bridge the gap between foreign investors and small and medium-sized enterprises."*

Fitsum Arega, Ethiopia Investment Commissioner, 2018

*"We are really happy to see this guide coming out. It means our information is now accessible online. We want you to disseminate it and tell everyone about it."*

Diane Edwards, President, Jamaica Promotions Corporation, 2019

*"This guide is an important source for business opportunities for Curaçao. It is part of reforms to improve Curaçao's business environment. It will help position Curaçao worldwide."*

Giselle McWilliam, Minister for Economic Development, Curaçao, 2019



- Of the 17 selected beneficiary countries or regions for which investment guides have been produced, 13 countries or regions have seen their average FDI inflows in the four years following the publication of their guides increase by at least twofold, compared to average FDI inflows in the four years preceding the publication. Such a contribution of investment guides to increased FDI inflows can be seen in Rwanda, for example, which registered a tenfold increase in FDI inflows.
- Following the launch of the Bhutan investment guide, Druk PNB Bank, one of the country's largest, circulated the guide to its clients, investors and partners for their use, calling it innovative and user-friendly.



### PROGRAMME FACTS AND FIGURES

Start date: 2000

Online investment guides produced per year (since 2013): 3 (average)

Beneficiary countries to date of online and/or paper guides: 36

Website: [theiguides.org](http://theiguides.org)

Regional implementation partners to-date: Economic Commission for Africa, Caribbean Export Development Agency



Sustainable Development Goals addressed:

Directly: 9, 17

Indirectly: 3, 4, 7, 8, 14



### DONORS/FUNDING SOURCE (2014–2019)

China, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Multi-donor/Cross-cluster Trust Fund on Capacity-building in Investment for Development, United Nations Development Account