

IGE on E-commerce and the Digital Economy  
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# Building eTrade Readiness of countries

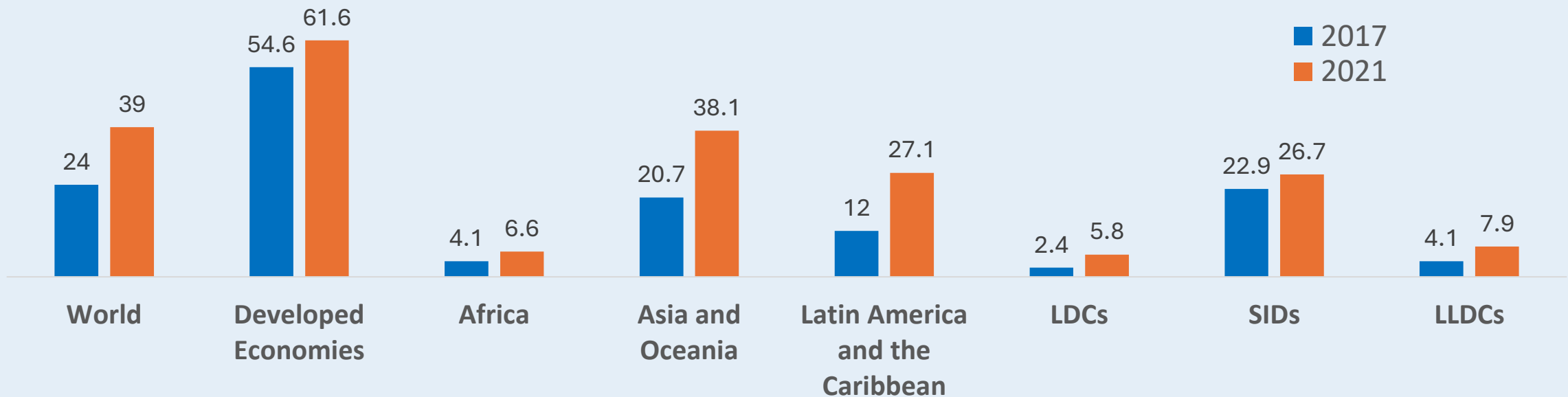
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# Building eTrade readiness: a sense of urgency

Proportion of individuals using the Internet for purchasing or ordering goods or services (%)



Source: World Bank Global Findex database, 2021

# Assessing countries digital readiness: snapshot of programmes and initiatives

- UNCTAD: 36 eTrade Readiness assessments (4 in progress)
  - 18 in Africa (16 LDCs), ECOWAS and WAEMU
  - 10 in Asia (7 LDCs)
  - 5 in the Pacific (3 LDCs)
  - 1 in LA
- UNDP: 32 Digital Maturity Assessments
- USAID: 21 Digital Ecosystem Country Assessment (DECA)
- World Bank: DE4A (46 assessments); Digital Trade analyses (with WTO)
- Commonwealth Secretariat, PIFS, EIF, EU (Africa rise)



# UNCTAD eTrade Readiness Assessments



## Build capacities

Capacity-building and knowledge sharing on the challenges and opportunities offered by e-commerce



## Strengthen multi stakeholders' dialogue

Strengthen inter-ministerial coordination, public-private dialogue, development partners' coordination and mobilization



## Support for implementation

Continuous engagement with the Focal points, development partners, eTrade Reform Tracker

# A snapshot of implementation trends

- E-government remains a dynamic area, delivering benefits for business facilitation
- National e-commerce marketplaces are gaining momentum albeit with challenges for their sustainability
- Countries are investing in digital public infrastructures and there is a growing emphasis on promoting sustainable connectivity and greener ICT infrastructure
- Reforms of postal addressing systems and public-private partnerships for innovative last-mile solutions
- Trade facilitations reforms and customs modernization projects are advancing
- Progress and appetite in adapting legal frameworks to address various aspects of digital trade
- Digital payments are growing at an accelerated pace: regulatory sandboxes, cashless initiatives despite hurdles (i.e. connectivity, currency issues)
- Skills development and promoting uptake of digital technologies are more and more an essential element of a decent jobs and economic growth strategy
- Increased alternative financing options, such as venture capital as well as crowdfunding

# Impact of eT Readies

- Improved government coordination on e-commerce
- Prompted development of national e-commerce strategies and policies that outline visions for the development of e-commerce in line with national development agendas
- Prompted regional e-commerce development initiatives (ECOWAS, EAC and the Pacific)
- Boosted countries' ability to engage and participate in e-commerce and trade negotiations (JSI, AfCFTA, RCEP, ASEAN, etc.)
- Triggered increased interest and support from development partners
- Enhanced public-private sector dialogue on e-commerce-related policies
- Facilitated legislation and digital payment solutions for e-commerce and to build trust
- Strengthened trade facilitation and logistics measures to facilitate cross-border e-commerce
- Empowered women-owned businesses to influence policymakers on e-commerce/digital trade
- Raised the needs and challenges of vulnerable groups

# Institutional challenges of e-commerce development

- **The level of government leadership**, necessary to gain, maintain and sustaining political commitment to promote e-commerce enabling reforms
- **The pace of institutional development**, as issues related to staff turnover, limited availability of staff involved in lead implementation agencies, as well as knowledge transfer and capacity development constraints in areas like results-based management and multi-stakeholder coordination
- **The quality of policy development** (harmonization and coherence), as competing priorities, policies and plans often exacerbate the problem of funding gaps and cause implementation delays

# Strategic alliance with development partners including eTrade for all partners

- **eTrade Readiness Assessments** : BSI, Commonwealth Secretariat, Consumers International, ECLAC, ESCAP, ITC, UPU, UNCITRAL, UNCDF, PIFS, WB
- **Implementation of policy measures** : UNCDF, BSI, ITC, UPU, UNCITRAL
- **UN Joint SDG Fund on Digital Transformation in Ghana** (together with UNCDF and UNDP)
- Yet increased coordination and smart partnerships are much needed





# Scaling up strategic partnerships for sustainable capacity-building action

- **Building trust : Cyberlaw reforms**
  - Preparation and revision of e-commerce laws (domestic and regional) aligned with international and regional instruments.
  - Regional and national capacity-building workshops
  - Regional Cyberlaw reviews (Pacific) and thematic studies (Mobile Money, Data Flows, Taxation)
  - UNCTAD Global Cyberlaw Tracker
- **Measuring E-commerce and Digital Trade**
- **eTrade for Women**

## Legal Aspects of e-commerce (LAEC)

- Modules: Consumer Protection, E-transaction, cybercrime, Securing e-commerce, E-payments & Taxation, Privacy Online, Trade & e-commerce, Regulating e-commerce, Content regulation

## Digital identity for trade and development (DITD)

- Modules: Fundamental Concepts of Digital Identity, Data Protection, DI Usage, Governance, DI Technology Solutions & Risks

# Concluding messages

- Capacity-building and multi-stakeholder cooperation remain a top priority for enhancing readiness for e-commerce and digital trade
- Given cross-cutting nature of e-commerce and gaps, cooperation between development partners and countries is critical for effective implementation
- Improved inter-ministerial coordination and public-private sector cooperation are needed – for the benefit of all development partners
- Resource mobilization and joint programmes from development partners for capacity building need to be scaled up

# Thank you

