Enhancing e-trade readiness of developing countries: Insights from country assessment

The Commonwealth

1 Digital trade can unleash up to **US$1.2 trillion** additional trade by 2026 across the **56 Member States in the Commonwealth**.

2 **E-Trade** is a powerful development tool to the **33 small states, 25 SIDS and 14 LDCs** within the Commonwealth that **reduces trade costs, increases productivity and innovation, provides greater market access**.

3 **In 2022**, the Commonwealth countries reported a rise in **digitally deliverable services exports** which was estimated at **US$911 billion**.

4 **Digital divide** can broadly be attributed to **limited connectivity, lack of infrastructure and insufficient skills and knowledge development**.

E-Trade Readiness Assessments

CAMEROON

Review and development of National E-Commerce Strategy in 2018

SRI LANKA

E-Commerce Readiness Assessment in 2020

OECS

Assessment of Digital Trade and E-commerce in Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & The Grenadines in 2021

The Commonwealth

Digital Economy Capacity Constraints

Digital Infrastructure & Technology

1. Telecommunication infrastructure

2. Quality and Affordability of internet services

3. Internet Banking & E-payment solutions

4. Logistics and Transport Infrastructure

Human Capacity

1. Lack of awareness and inadequate skills and IT knowledge

2. User confidence in the system: e-payments

3. Application of ICT across sectors: Banking and finance, retail businesses, manufacturing etc.

Legal & Regulatory Frameworks

1. Effective regulatory frameworks: Consumer Protection

Data protection and privacy to secure information systems, networks, databases

Cybersecurity and cyber criminality

2. Accessible dispute resolution mechanisms

Stakeholder Engagement

1. Interoperability of systems.

2. Coordination among public and private sector players.

Recommendations in a snapshot

- Raising e-commerce maturity of businesses through **e-business modelling, skills development, awareness creation, diffusion of e-business innovation and ICT adoption.**

- Raising e-commerce maturity of consumers by **developing trust, awareness, user skills, internet accessibility and mobile connectivity.**

- Developing **secure IT infrastructure and systems** including secure e-payments.

- Developing and **implementing policies and regulations to protect consumers, businesses from data breaches** and online transactions frauds.

- Developing a **robust logistics and transportation system** through increased automation and ICT application to support e-commerce.

The Commonwealth Secretariat

Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda	Trade Competitiveness	International Trade Policy	Partnerships for goals
Digital Connectivity Cluster: Member countries can strengthen dialogue, cooperation, and share country experiences and best practices on digital economy, digital trade and digital industrial policy .	Capacity building workshops for MSME owners, focused on youth and women entrepreneurship Technical trainings for country experts on digital policies and frameworks	Research and analysis Trade advisory support to Member States	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) International Trade Centre (ITC) International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)

The Commonwealth

Digital Tools and Resources

1. Commonwealth FinTech Toolkit

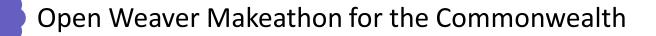2. Policymakers Guide to Manufacturing 4.0 in a digital world

3. Guide on Developing a National Cybersecurity Strategy

4. Policy guide on Digital Agriculture in the Commonwealth

5. Publications: Digital Infrastructure Divide in the Commonwealth ; Digital currencies on small states

6. Open Weaver Makeathon for the Commonwealth