

DTL SubProgramme 4

Item 3: Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing

Distinguished delegates,

Last year, we presented the broad scope of the work of the Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL) in areas central to technical cooperation delivery— customs automation, digital transformation including support to women entrepreneurs in e-commerce, trade facilitation, transport and logistics decarbonization, and the use of frontier technologies for development.

At that time you emphasized that this work yields concrete results — by increasing public revenues, improving efficiency, reducing carbon footprints in customs and ports, enhancing cross-border trade operations, or empowering women and youth entrepreneurs in the digital economy. This is confirmed by demand from member States: We have now received more than 180 formal requests for DTL technical cooperation assistance, of which 73 remain pending due to resource constraints.

Last year was a rich and productive one in terms of technical cooperation delivery. DTL implemented close to 65 per cent of UNCTAD's overall technical cooperation portfolio, highlighting the centrality of the development challenges addressed by the subprogramme , as confirmed in the Geneva Consensus.

Turning to our largest programme, ASYCUDA, with USD 30.1 million of expenditures in 2025 represent 50.6 per cent of UNCTAD's overall

technical cooperation delivery and continues to generate transformational impact on the ground for Governments and traders. Countries moving from paper-based to electronic customs processes are lowering transaction costs and improving clearance times while significantly reducing carbon emissions in the process.

In this regard, I am pleased to announce that the ASYCUDA 5 New Generation, which has been under development for the last 4 years, is now fully operational and set to sustain the expansion of Programme for the next decade. ASY5, as it is called, will be formally launched in Angola on 20 February by the Secretary-General and our national partners.

E-commerce and Digital Economy also remains at the core of our technical cooperation mandate. It represents the third biggest programme of UNCTAD, convening public and private stakeholders thanks to the eTrade for All initiative.

This work supports countries in designing evidence-based eTrade readiness assessments and e-commerce strategies while expanding the scope of beneficiaries in countries. To illustrate this, the eTrade for Women has supported more than 600 women digital entrepreneurs across 73 countries with 4 advocates providing them with platforms for high-impact networking and skill-building masterclasses. These tangible results illustrate how digital technical solutions can advance simultaneously development, inclusiveness and climate objectives.

Our E-commerce and Digital Economy programme also supports national statistical systems and helps develop internationally agreed methodologies for e-commerce measurement.

In our third broad area of work DTL has continued and enhanced its support to port management capabilities and to strengthening global supply chain resilience through targeted trade facilitation capacity-building initiatives across multiple regions, with a specific attention given to SIDS and LLDCs. These activities have supported countries in integrating their ports and transport infrastructures more effectively into regional and global networks, despite ongoing disruptions to global trade.

The TRAINFORTRADE programme delivered hybrid capacity-building, including training and advisory services, in statistics, e-Commerce and port Management. In 2025, TrainForTrade reached 4'867 trade operators across 191 countries, with an overall satisfaction rate of 87 per cent.

The UNCTAD Trade Facilitation programme continues to support the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation including strengthening the role of National Trade Facilitation Committees, and through technical assistance and capacity building tools such as the Trade Information Portal, simplification analysis, the Reform Tracker, digital certificates, and the Climate-smart CO2 calculator.

Finally, resource mobilization remains a major challenge for scaling up technical cooperation, especially given the current UN80 context. Extra-budgetary resources have become indispensable to enable DTL to respond to Member State requests and honour the mandates you have provided. This is the final, but essential message, that the subprogramme needs to bring to your attention today.

Thank you for your attention, and I remain at your disposal for questions or comments.