

**INTERSESSIONAL PANEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION  
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

**Geneva, Switzerland  
18-22 January 2020**

Contribution by ITC

to the CSTD 2020-2021 priority theme on “Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on Sustainable Development Goal 3 on good health and well-being”

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

# UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development

## ITC Submission

**PRIORITY THEME 2:** Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on SDG 3, good health and well-being

- 1. Can you give examples of international projects/policies aimed at using science, technology, and innovation for early warning, risk reduction and management of national risks? What are the main challenges confronted while trying to implement these projects/policies?**

ITC has developed a method to identify opportunities for developing regional value chains, including in the medical sector. By using innovative word matching and text-to-data techniques, we have created an input-output table at the product level. Previous input-output tables at the sector level are not detailed enough to identify new products for export diversification based on existing inputs. The detailed production coefficients that we obtain allow us to assess whether available inputs in a country or a region could be transformed into a final product in sufficient quantities to meet demand.

- 2. Could you share specific examples, projects or initiatives that have used frontier technologies (e.g., AI, drones, blockchain, 3D printing, etc.) or other forms of innovation in general in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic?**

ITC applies this novel methodology in project design to prioritize the most promising products and sectors for trade support initiatives. It also informs our partner countries' export strategies and trade support instruments. In cooperation with the Malawi Trade and Investment Center, we have developed an online tool that identifies value-added products for export diversification, based on the ITC methodology ([malawi.exportpotential.intracen.org](http://malawi.exportpotential.intracen.org)).

We have recently applied this method in a report commissioned by UN DSG to evaluate how African countries could work together to develop regional value chains in health-related products. We estimate, for instance, that the ethanol required to provide 500,000 litres of disinfectants per month to the African continent\* corresponds to 2.2% of South Africa's monthly exports. Egypt could contribute lids and bottles, while the required glycerol could be sourced from international suppliers with untapped potential, such as Germany and Malaysia. Developing these regional value chains would reduce the dependency on few international suppliers of essential products and hence mitigate the impact of pandemics on the African health sector.

\*WHO estimate

- 3. Can you provide examples of policies/projects/initiatives aimed at strengthening health innovation systems at the global level? For example, how does your organization support the building of innovative capabilities through investments in R&D and human capital? What projects are in place to stimulate healthcare innovation and effectively address safety, ethical and other concerns?**
- 4. Could you share case studies of international cooperation that have strengthened health capacities, particularly in developing countries? Can you provide success stories**

*involving global cooperation in academic research networks, STI diplomacy, or initiatives to make healthcare innovations accessible for all?*

5. *Could you suggest some contact persons responsible for projects/policies, related technologies and international collaboration in this context as well as any experts dealing with projects in this area? We might contact them directly for further inputs or invite some of them as speakers for the CSTD inter-sessional panel and annual session.*

Dr. Julia Spies, Head of Export Potential Map & Studies, Trade & Market Intelligence Section, ITC

6. *Do you have any documentation, references, or reports on the specific examples on the priority theme in your organization?*

- Medical Industries in Africa: A Regional Response to Supply Shortages, ITC Technical Paper 2020, <https://www.intracen.org/publication/Medical-Industries-in-Africa/>.
- Blog: Strengthening African value chains in medical supplies, <https://www.intracen.org/covid19/Blog/Strengthening-African-value-chains-in-medical-supplies/>.
- SME Competitiveness Outlook 2020 (pages 12-16), <https://www.intracen.org/SMEOutlook/>.
- Export Potential Map – Malawi ([malawi.exportpotential.intracen.org](http://malawi.exportpotential.intracen.org))
- Export Potential Map – Greece ([greece.exportpotential.intracen.org](http://greece.exportpotential.intracen.org))