Report on the TrainForTrade course Digital Identity for Trade and Development for SIDS 2023 (DITD)

UNITED NATIONS UNCTAD | TRAIN FOR TRADE | eTrade for all — Connecting the dots | **Development Account** — *Department of Economic and Social Affairs*

DIGITAL IDENTITY FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT 2023
for small island development states

30-hour e-learning course 13 February – 17 March + webinars 29 March

378 participants
of which **320** from SIDS
from **47** countries or areas

223 women (59%)

650
post exchanges
in the forum

identity digital data system country national knowledge government security public services trade
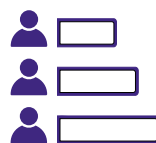
83%
average score

90%
satisfaction rate

172
certificates granted

Participants had access to manuals, multimedia presentations, tests, surveys, forum and webinars

"The importance of digital identity is only likely to increase"

"The course gave a bigger picture of the recent development of digital trade"

Summary

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development successfully organized an e-learning course on "Digital Identity for Trade and Development" (DITD). It was delivered from 13 February to 17 March 2023, followed by two concluding webinars held on 29 March 2023.

Designed specifically for Small Island Developing States, the course was also open to other countries/territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean regions. Among the 378 trade practitioners from 47 countries or areas who initially registered, 234 started the course, while 172 completed it and obtained a certificate. The course contributed to women's empowerment: they represent 60 per cent of graduates (103 over 172). Overall, the training was successful and interactive. The average score and satisfaction rate were of 83 and 90 per cent respectively.

The course was delivered via the TrainForTrade distance learning platform. It is a place where participants can access manuals, multimedia presentations, modules, evaluations, opinion polls, and fora. The latter were created for each module, allowing discussion with the instructor and other participants.

The course's main objective was to provide useful and new knowledge about digital identity's benefits, challenges, and best practices. Its design was such that, at the end of the training, participants would have all the necessary tools to promote the development of digital identity in Small Island Developing States.

Note: This report presents results mainly for the DITD 2023 course. At times there is some information presented for other courses as well and in such cases, it is clearly noted.

Table of contents

Background

Digital technologies and their application to international trade practices can greatly contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). E-commerce and, more broadly, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have an immense potential for supporting the participation of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in international and regional markets, building their resilience and their ability to recover from disasters. Despite these promises, the digital economy in SIDS is still in an early stage of development. These countries do not only face challenges related to infrastructure development, but also to capacity and knowledge. Adapting their legal frameworks, adopting digital identity systems and collecting statistics on digital trade are of vital importance for the transition to a digital economy. It goes without saying that the COVID-19 pandemic has complexified pre-existing bottlenecks in this matter. SIDS have therefore crucial reforms to undertake in order to fully benefit from the potential of the digital revolution.

In this regard, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has a significant role to play. As the United Nations' focal point for trade and development integration, it has long experience in supporting countries on issues located at the nexus between investment, technology, finance and sustainable development. Within UNCTAD, TrainForTrade is specialized in capacity building and delivering trainings via a recognized blended learning method and state-of-the-art technological solutions. TrainForTrade has been mandated by the UN Development Account to assist SIDS in fostering digital economy development and enhancing crisis responsiveness. This course, devoted to digital identity, is the first in a series of three.

Objectives

This course aims to give participants all the necessary tools to develop digital identity systems in their respective countries. It also seeks to promote regional synergies between SIDS, fostering the exchange of ideas and solutions.

Programme Outline

This course contains six different modules covering the different aspects of digital identity. The participants should spend between 4 to 5 hours per week to study the material and participate in the for a. The six sessions are respectively devoted to:

> Module 1: Fundamental Concepts of Digital Identity
> Module 2: Data Protection
> Module 3: Digital Identity Usage
> Module 4: Governance
> Module 5: Digital Identity Technology Solutions & Risks
> Module 6: Digital Trade Agreement

The participants access the content in TrainForTrade's distance learning platform. The latter gives access to manuals, multimedia presentations, exams and opinion surveys. Thanks to the fora, each module offers the possibility to discuss with the instructors and other participants, encouraging interaction and cooperation.

Two 90-minute follow-up webinars were also organized to conclude the course. The topics covered during these two webinars were selected from proposals submitted by the course participants during the on-line course.

For a more detailed outline, please refer to *Annex 1: Agenda of the e-learning course*.

Course Participants

Primary Target

Policy makers:
- Ministry of Interior (national security and identification issues)
- Ministry of Justice (legal issues)
- Ministry of Finance
- Financial regulator (National Bank)
- Ministry of Trade/Commerce (usability)
- Ministry of ICT

Private sector:
- Chamber of Commerce
- Business Cluster (ICT, Fintech, etc.)
- Entrepreneurs

Secondary Target population
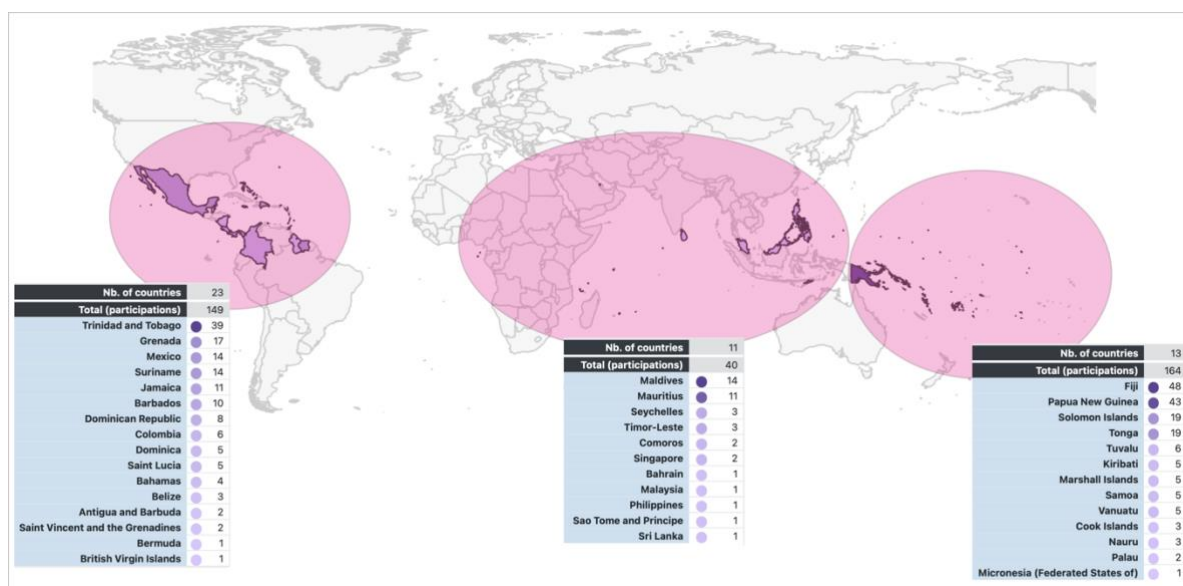- Authentication institution
- Postal services

- Financial institutions
- Telecom companies
- NGOs

At the end of the application period, UNCTAD/TrainForTrade approved the registration of 320 civil servants and trade operators from 34 SIDS[1]. Thanks to its format, the course could also be opened to other countries or areas in the Pacific and the Caribbean regions, and UNCTAD/TrainForTrade approved the registration of 33 other participants from 13 other countries or areas. Eventually, 25 members of international organisations were accepted in this course. Out of this total of 378, 234 participants initiated their activities in the course and 172 have completed it receiving a certificate of completion. The course contributed to women's empowerment: they represent 60 per cent of graduates (103 over 172). Regarding SIDS more specifically, 153 participants from these countries graduated and obtained a certificate. Among them, 61 per cent were women. (For detailed information about participants, with breakdown by gender and countries, please refer to *Annex 3: Participants of the e-learning course*.)

In SIDS, 61 % of graduates are women

Figure 1. Registration by country

Nb. of countries	23
Total (participations)	149
Trinidad and Tobago	39
Grenada	17
Mexico	14
Suriname	14
Jamaica	11
Barbados	10
Dominican Republic	8
Colombia	6
Dominica	5
Saint Lucia	5
Bahamas	4
Belize	3
Antigua and Barbuda	2
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2
Bermuda	1
British Virgin Islands	1

Nb. of countries	11
Total (participations)	40
Maldives	14
Mauritius	11
Seychelles	3
Timor-Leste	3
Comoros	2
Singapore	2
Bahrain	1
Malaysia	1
Philippines	1
Sao Tome and Principe	1
Sri Lanka	1

Nb. of countries	13
Total (participations)	164
Fiji	48
Papua New Guinea	43
Solomon Islands	19
Tonga	19
Tuvalu	6
Kiribati	5
Marshall Islands	5
Samoa	5
Vanuatu	5
Cook Islands	3
Nauru	3
Palau	2
Micronesia (Federated States of)	1

Delivery of the Course

The on-line course was conducted from 13 February to 17 March 2023 with follow-up webinars organized on 29 March 2023. The course was delivered in English. Registration and course participation were free of charge. Registered trainees were provided with the on-line platform user guide and the credentials to log-on to the TrainForTrade e-learning platform, where all the course material was available.

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[1] No participants from Cabo Verde, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau and Haiti registered, despite TrainForTrade's efforts to advertise its programme in these countries. It is an valuable lesson learnt and new approaches will be adopted for the two next courses of the *Blended learning strategy to boost the digital economy in SIDS*.

The e-learning course was conducted according to the established schedule (see *Annex 1: Agenda of the e-learning course*). During the five-week period, participants had the opportunity to go through six modules, to learn through various multimedia means (manuals and videos), and to interact with other participants from different countries, facilitators, and experts in the discussion fora. These fora are a privileged place for the exchange of ideas, information, and experiences, ideally complementing the programme. Trainees could organize their study and their agenda, while knowing that they would be evaluated at the end of each week through an on-line test.

At the end of each module, as well as at the end of the course, participants were invited to share their feedback and suggestions through opinion questionnaires. This will allow UNCTAD to improve the training material and the course organization in the future (for more information, please refer to *Course Evaluation*). The course follow-up was a set of 2 webinars on 29 March 2023 to clarify the different issues met during the course, and present a selection of national case studies developed by the trainees.
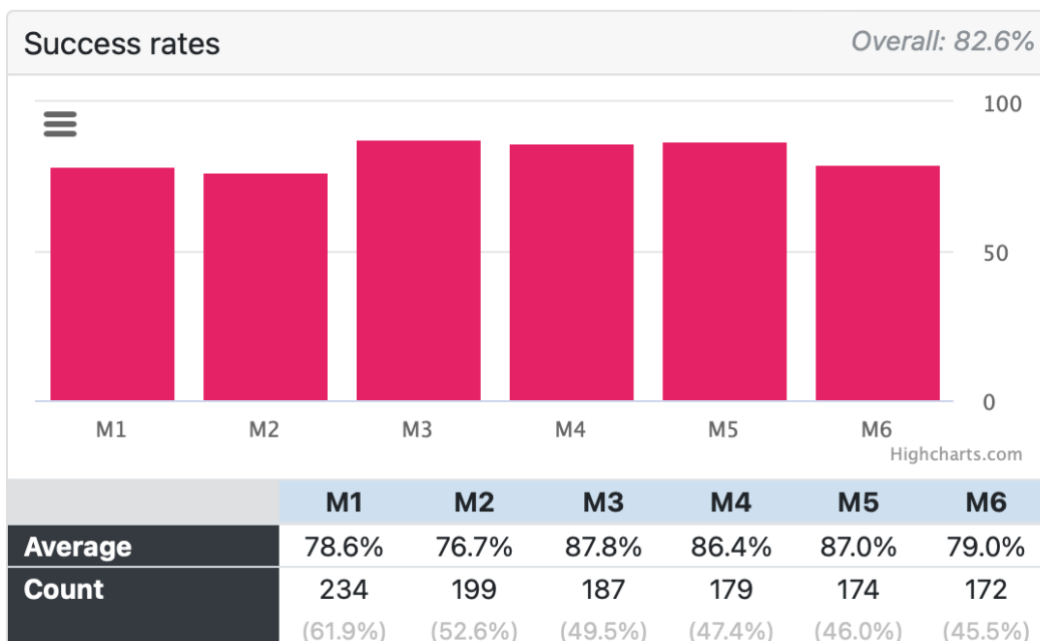
Main moderators for the fora:

Ms. Tanya Tang, Mr. Dominique Chantrel and Mr. Tomasz Kulaga from UNCTAD moderated the discussions in the fora and provided technical assistance.

Course Results

At the end of each module, participants were invited to evaluate the newly acquired knowledge through a quiz. The average grade for specific modules were ranging between 76 and 87 per cent (see figure below).

Figure 2. Average grade (%) for quizzes for specific modules (M1-M6) in DITD 2023

	M1	**M2**	**M3**	**M4**	**M5**	**M6**
Average	78.6%	76.7%	87.8%	86.4%	87.0%	79.0%
Count	234	199	187	179	174	172
	(61.9%)	(52.6%)	(49.5%)	(47.4%)	(46.0%)	(45.5%)

Discussions in the fora

Participants engaged in discussions and exchanges with experts in the course's fora. **There was a total of 509 student posts and 141 teacher posts** exchanged and mostly focusing on topics covered by the course. A brief overview can be found in the figure below.

Figure 3. Number of posts in the different fora and the word cloud with the most frequent words used
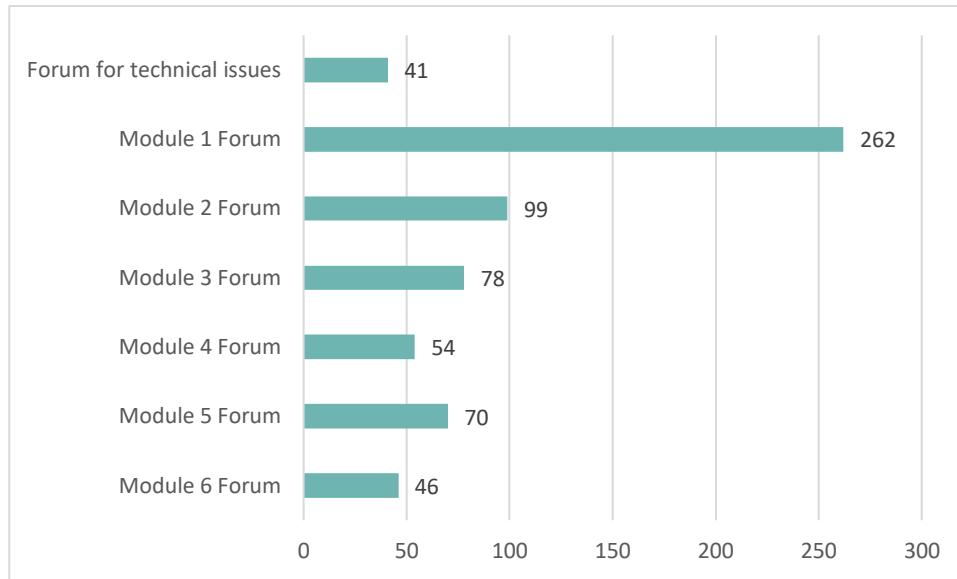
Course Evaluation

Participants were asked to evaluate both the course in general and the different modules. This system allows TrainForTrade to assess the learning process, the content's accuracy and the relevance of the course organization. **The satisfaction rates for all the modules were at very high levels between 84 and 91 per cent** (see the figures below).

Figure 4. Satisfaction rates (%) for specific modules (M1-M6) and final feedback in DITD 2023
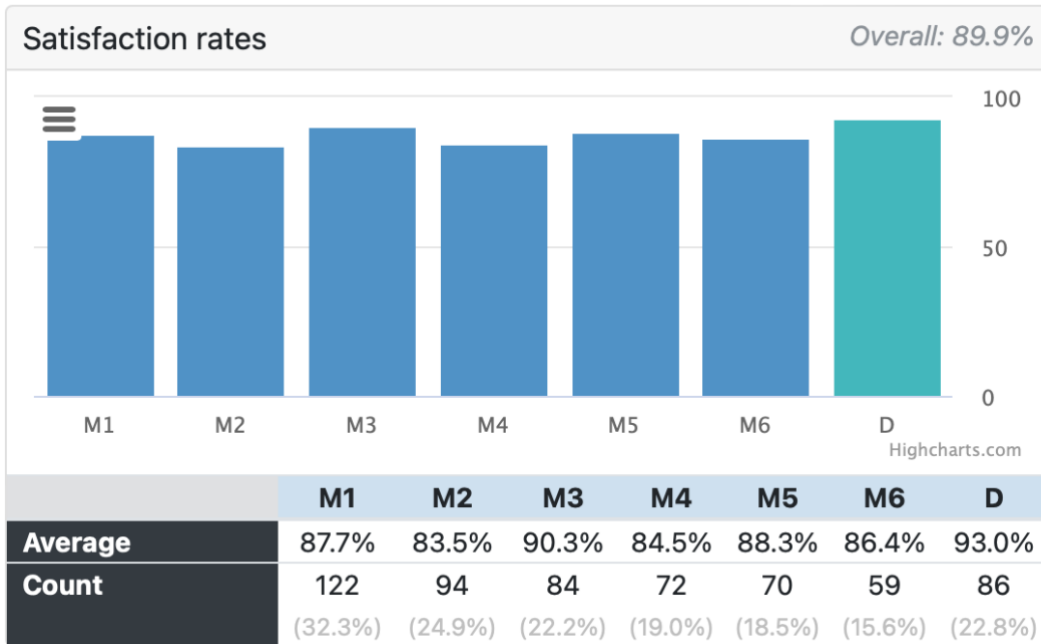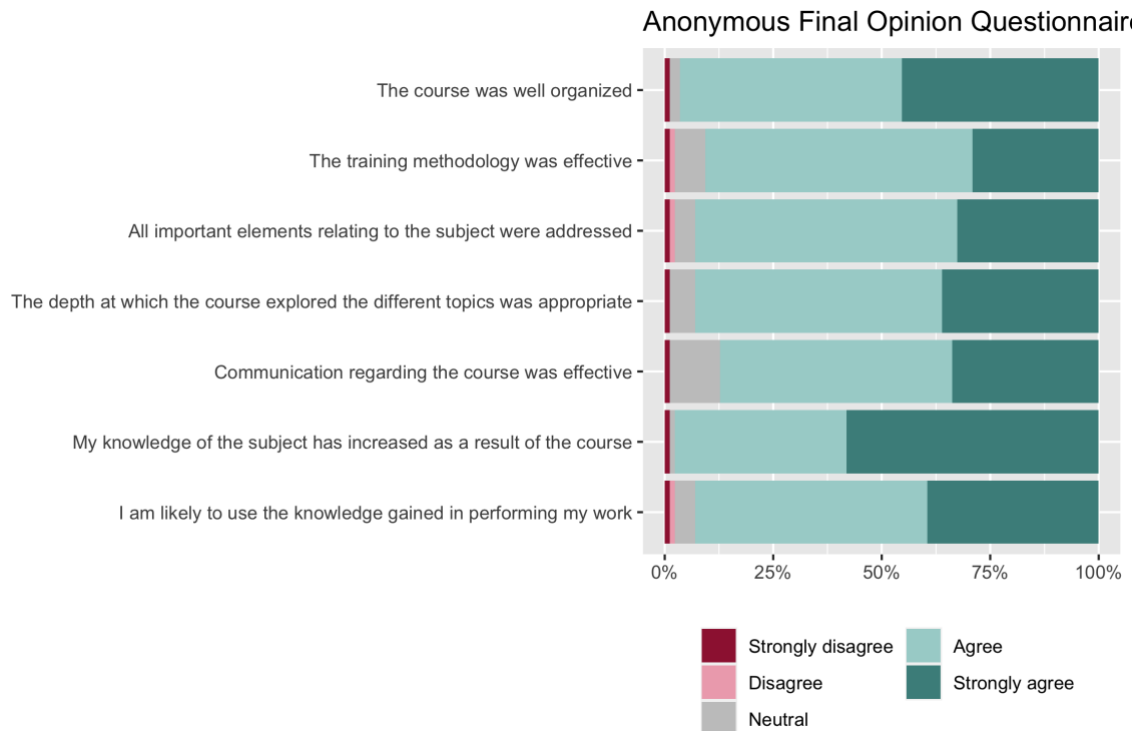
Satisfaction rates — Overall: 89.9%

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	D
Average	87.7%	83.5%	90.3%	84.5%	88.3%	86.4%	93.0%
Count	122	94	84	72	70	59	86
	(32.3%)	(24.9%)	(22.2%)	(19.0%)	(18.5%)	(15.6%)	(22.8%)

Figure 5. End of the course opinion questionnaire for DITD 2023

Anonymous Final Opinion Questionnaire

- The course was well organized
- The training methodology was effective
- All important elements relating to the subject were addressed
- The depth at which the course explored the different topics was appropriate
- Communication regarding the course was effective
- My knowledge of the subject has increased as a result of the course
- I am likely to use the knowledge gained in performing my work

Legend: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly agree

Final Opinion Questionnaire

Strengths of the course

The most popular strength of the course was the wide range of real-life case studies, as well as the course structure.

"The case studies were very interesting, as well as the analysis of the efficacy of different approaches to the implementation of digital IDs."

"Coverage includes diverse areas that relate to the digital economy and the use of appropriate real life case studies helps make the topic areas more applicable and makes sense."

"The course was very well structured and provided great insight on Digital ID. It provided us with some real-world examples which can serve as case studies as we seek to implement our Digital ID. "

"Very clear manual and presentations."

"Explanations and examples of what happened in other countries was very helpful."

"The breakdown of chapters was well articulated. Relevant real-world examples was a boost."

"This content is reliable and very crucial in terms of the technical added knowledge that you absorb in order to make informed decisions in policy planning and implementation as far as Digital Identity is concerned."

Aspects to be improved

Participants made several suggestions for improvements. The most popular one invites the course developers to give more case studies and concrete examples which could be imitated.

"Providing more practical examples, such as case studies of successful digital identity programs or interviews with experts in the field, could help learners better understand and compare with developed countries such as Asia."

"I would like additional case studies focusing on both successful and failed projects as well."

"While providing examples from developed countries is good, can you also highlight what developing countries are going through or particularly what challenges Pacific Island Countries are facing in terms of digital identity."

There were also voices calling for feedback after quizzes and more interaction between participants.

"Provide reasons and references for quiz answers. For example, if someone answered a question incorrectly, in addition to stating the correct answer on the review page, you should suggest the paragraph to find said answer."

"While the lectures are informative, I think it would be useful to have more interactive elements, such as group discussions or debates, to encourage more engagement and participation among students."

Testimonials

All aspects of the course generated positive feedback from the participants: the topic itself, the training materials and the method followed. Many underlined that the course was well organized and that its content provided a thorough and comprehensive introduction to Digital Identity.

*"This course was **well put together** and the information provided helped to start much needed discussions in assessing where we are and what are the steps to move forward."*

*"Saint Lucia is in the process of implementing a number of key Digital Transformation projects seeking to bring over 100 government services on-line as well as to modernize backend processes to allow for increased efficiency within government. The Digital ID (called the National Authentication Framework) is a critical component. **The content of this programme is very timely. It has provided great insight into Digital ID, as how other countries have successfully implemented theirs and how Digital ID is used to improve service delivery.** The knowledge gained here will support the roll out and help our team further engage the necessary stakeholders along the implementation journey critically the political directorate and senior policy makes to garner their support (Budgetary and policy) for this initiative."*

*"Overall, I would highly recommend this course to anyone looking to develop their knowledge and skills in this area. The course content was **well-organized, engaging, and highly relevant** to the challenges we face in today's complex and fast-paced world. Thank you for providing such an excellent learning experience!"*

*"The course has **broaden my knowledge on digital identity in terms of trade and development**. In particular, it is interesting to learn what developed countries are doing in terms of digital identity for trade and development. It would be great to see my Island, Fiji, learn from these countries and do the same."*

*"**This course is directly related to the work that I do**. As my government is currently trying to develop a digital ID, the learning will help me and my associates along the journey. I do have to make recommendations and consult on national standards and I will definitely **use the work I learned here**."*

Follow-up webinars

The e-learning course was followed by two concluding webinars held on 29 March 2023. All course participants were invited to this opportunity to go beyond the modules' content and share national and regional case studies. On the basis of their excellent quality, the following six topics were selected to be featured during the sessions:

- "Digital Identity – Overview of the Dominican Republic", Ms. Aura Morillo Camilo (Dominican Republic);
- "Challenges faced in relation to digital identity for SIDS", Ms. Samania Ned (Papua New Guinea);
- "Vulnerable groups and digital identity impacts", Ms. Alena Finau (Fiji);
- "Governance Considerations for a National Digital Identity Solution in Trinidad Tobago", Ms. Natalie Maharaj (Trinidad and Tobago);
- "Cross-border Government Collaborations", Mr. Daniel Wong (Singapore);
- "Jamaica's Data Protection Act", Mr. Carey Brown (Jamaica).

90 participants registered for these webinars (57 for the first one, and 33 for the second). Ms. Tanya Tang and Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan, who developed the course, took part in these two sessions summarizing the course content and exchanges. Mr. Dominic Leong, from UNCTAD and based in Fiji, presented the current digital challenges and the potential of digital identity systems in the Pacific region. Selected course participants presented their case studies related to digital identity (see *Annex 2: Agenda of the webinars* for more details). These events were moderated and supported by Ms.

Amélie Cournoyer, Mr. Mark Assaf, Mr. Maxime Ladrière and Mr. Tomasz Kulaga from UNCTAD/TrainForTrade.

Screenshot taken during one of the concluding webinars

The webinars were conducted via Zoom. The slides shared during the event and its recording are available to course participants on the e-learning platform.

Feedback

Regarding the webinars, the satisfaction rate was 96 per cent with 9 responses (see figure below).

Figure 6. Evaluation of the DITD 2023 webinars
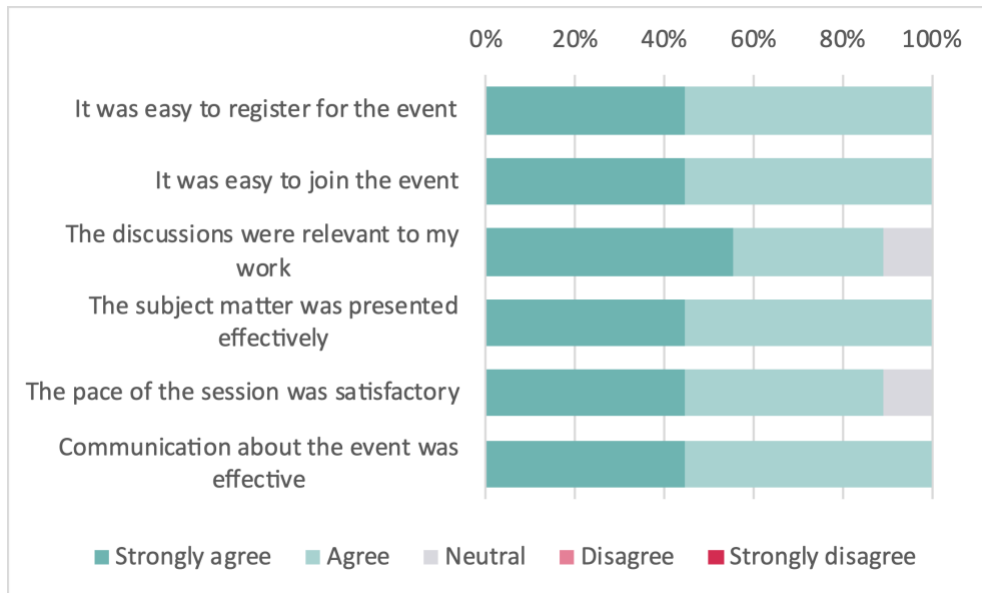
Conclusions

The course enhanced capacities and enabled exchanges between 234 public policy specialists and trade practitioners mostly from SIDS. According to participants, the methodology and the distance

learning platform were efficient and adapted to the teaching objectives. Feedback highlighted the richness of case studies, the appropriateness of the course's progression, as well as the relevance of the modules' subjects in view of the post-pandemic context and the participants' background. The collected testimonies will be used to elaborate future courses and improve student learning.

Annex 1: Agenda of the e-learning course

TrainForTrade E-Learning Course on
Digital Identity for Trade and Development 2023
Organized by UNCTAD

from 13 February to 29 March 2023

Week	Module	Activities
Week 1 13-17 February	1: Fundamental Concepts of Digital Identity	Read the manual of Module 1 (PDF or EPUB)
		Watch the video M1
		Run quiz M1
		Give your feedback on Module 1 (Opinion questionnaire)
Week 2 20-24 February	2: Data Protection	Read the manual of Module 2 (PDF or EPUB)
		Watch the video M2
		Run quiz M2
		Give your feedback on Module 2 (Opinion questionnaire)
Week 3 27 February – 3 March	3: ID Usage	Read the manual of Module 3 (PDF or EPUB)
		Watch the video
		Run quiz M3
		Give your feedback on Module 3 (Opinion questionnaire)
		Personal Case Study (Assignment)
Week 4 5-10 March	4: Governance	Read the manual of Module 4 (PDF or EPUB)
		Watch the video M4
		Run quiz M4
		Give your feedback on Module 4 (Opinion questionnaire)
Week 5 13-17 March	5: ID Technology Solution & Risks 6: Digital trade agreement	Read the manual of Module 5&6 (PDF or EPUB)
		Watch the video M5 & M6
		Run quiz M5 & M6
		Give your feedback on M5&6 (Opinion questionnaire)
		Give the Overall feedback of the course
		Complete the Golden Book
Week 6		
29 March 2023	Webinar (Option 1)	09:00 (Singapore), (2:00 GVA time), (21:00 Trinidad) Webinar DITD for SIDS
29 March 2023	Webinar (Option 2)	14:00 (Singapore), (9:00 GVA time) Webinar DITD for SIDS

Annex 2: Agenda of the webinars

The first webinar on Wednesday, 29 March at 9 a.m. Singapore (1 p.m. Suva, 28 March, 8 p.m. Kingston)

Agenda

PART 1 – Introduction and feedback on the course
 - Ms. Amélie Cournoyer, TrainForTrade Programme, UNCTAD

PART 2 – Course & forum exchange overview and takeaways
 - Ms. Tanya Tang & Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan, UNCTAD Consultants

PART 3 – Case studies by course participants
 - Ms. Aura Morillo Camilo, Dominican Republic
 - Ms. Samania Ned, Papua New Guinea
 - Ms. Alena Finau, Fiji
 - Ms. Natalie Maharaj, Trinidad and Tobago
 - Mr. Daniel Wong, Singapore

PART 4 – The Digital Economy Report Pacific Edition 2022: Towards value creation and inclusiveness
 - Mr. Dominic Leong, Regional Specialist, UNCTAD,

PART 5 – Policy Recommendations
 - Ms. Tanya Tang & Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan, UNCTAD Consultants

PART 6 – Wrap up and way forward
 - Ms. Amélie Cournoyer, TrainForTrade Programme, UNCTAD

The second webinar on Wednesday, 29 March at 3 p.m. Singapore (11 a.m. Victoria, 7 p.m. Suva)

Agenda

PART 1 – Introduction and feedback on the course
 - Mr. Mark Assaf & Mr. Maxime Ladrière, TrainForTrade Programme, UNCTAD

PART 2 – Course & forum exchange overview and takeaways
 - Ms. Tanya Tang & Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan, UNCTAD Consultants

PART 3 – Case studies by course participants
 - Ms. Samania Ned, Papua New Guinea
 - Mr. Carey Brown, Jamaica (video)

PART 4 – Digital Identity & UNCITRAL
 - Mr. Luca Castelli (video)

PART 5 – The Digital Economy Report Pacific Edition 2022: Towards value creation and inclusiveness
 - Mr. Dominic Leong, Regional Specialist, UNCTAD

PART 6 – Policy Recommendations
 - Ms. Tanya Tang & Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan, UNCTAD Consultants

PART 7 – Wrap up and way forward
 - Mr. Mark Assaf & Mr. Maxime Ladrière, TrainForTrade Programme, UNCTAD

Annex 3: Participants of the e-learning course

The following two tables provide details about the participants' country of residence and gender for SIDS and other countries or areas and international organisations.

34 SIDS*	Participants			certificates		
	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Antigua and Barbuda	2	1	1	1	1	0
Bahamas	4	4	0	1	1	0
Bahrain	1	1	0	1	1	0
Barbados	10	9	1	6	6	0
Belize	3	3	0	2	2	0
Comoros	2	1	1	1	1	0
Dominica	5	4	1	1	1	0
Dominican Republic	8	5	3	5	3	2
Fiji	48	34	14	16	10	6
Grenada	17	16	1	14	13	1
Guyana	1	0	1	1	0	1
Jamaica	11	4	7	6	2	4
Kiribati	5	3	2	1	0	1
Maldives	14	4	10	9	1	8
Marshall Islands	5	2	3	1	1	0
Mauritius	11	5	6	2	2	0
Micronesia (Federated States of)	1	0	1	0	0	0
Nauru	3	1	2	0	0	0
Palau	2	1	1	0	0	0
Papua New Guinea	43	22	21	18	10	8
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1	1	0	0	0	0
Saint Lucia	5	4	1	2	1	1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2	1	1	2	1	1
Samoa	5	4	1	1	1	0
Sao Tome and Principe	1	0	1	1	0	1
Seychelles	3	3	0	3	3	0
Singapore	2	0	2	2	0	2
Solomon Islands	19	7	12	7	1	6
Suriname	14	6	8	6	2	4
Timor-Leste	3	1	2	0	0	0
Tonga	19	13	6	9	7	2
Trinidad and Tobago	39	27	12	33	22	11
Tuvalu	6	3	3	1	1	0
Vanuatu	5	1	4	0	0	0
Total	**320**	**191**	**129**	**153**	**94**	**59**

Source: UNCTAD/TrainForTrade

* No participants from Cabo Verde, Cuba, Guinea-Bissau and Haiti registered in the course.

Country or area	Participants			Certificates		
	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Bermuda	1	0	1	0	0	0
British Virgin Islands	1	1	0	0	0	0
Cook Islands	3	3	0	1	1	0
Curaçao	1	0	1	0	0	0
Montserrat	1	0	1	0	0	0
Colombia	6	2	4	1	0	1
Costa Rica	1	0	1	1	0	1
Malaysia	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mexico	14	7	7	4	1	3
Nicaragua	1	1	0	0	0	0
Panama	1	1	0	0	0	0
Philippines	1	1	0	0	0	0
Sri Lanka	1	0	1	1	0	1
International organisation*	25	16	9	11	7	4
Total	**58**	**32**	**26**	**19**	**9**	**10**

Source: UNCTAD/TrainForTrade