Final Report for the restitution workshop as part of the Development Account tranche 14 project: *TrainForTrade blended learning strategy to boost the digital economy in Small Island Developing States of Africa, the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific (2022-2025)*

Grand Hyatt, Singapore from 5-7 November 2025

Geneva, December 2025

Contents

Summary

From February 2023 to July 2025 TrainForTrade hosted three e-learning courses on the digital economy as part of the Development Account tranche 14 project (DA2225F), **blended learning strategy to boost the Digital Economy in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**. The three e-learning courses were: *The legal aspects of e-commerce*, *Digital identity for trade and development*, *Statistics on the digital economy, e-commerce, and digital trade*. The final component of this project was the in-person restitution workshop held from 5-7 November 2025 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Singapore.

This report covers the final restitution workshop which convened the top participants from the three courses for an in-depth discussion covering the project thematics. The event featured expert presentations as well as participant-led sessions highlighting local contexts and practical insights. The hybrid conference was interactive, allowing for fruitful exchanges and for participants to engage with experts throughout the sessions. The afternoon of the second day, participants visited to the Singaporean law firm Rajah & Tann where they enjoyed presentations dedicated to regulatory policies and best practices for governing artificial intelligence (AI).

Policy recommendations that came out of the e-learning components were further refined in Singapore. These final recommendations are captured in the project's Technical Note, outlining best practices to guide SIDS in developing modern, competitive digital economy strategies.

30 participants from 25 SIDS attended the conference in-person with the addition of 2 online participants. The conference was also attended by experts from Australia, France, Singapore and UN entities: UNICITRAL (online), UN ESCAP, UNCTAD, and UNDESA.

Participants' satisfaction rate was at a very high level of 96%.

Background

The SIDS Conference in Singapore is the concluding component of the Development Account tranche 14 project (DA2225F), **blended learning strategy to boost the Digital Economy in SIDS**. The project was designed to strengthen the capacity of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) across Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific regions to develop and harness the digital economy to foster economic development and build resilience.

As SIDS often face particular structural constraints such as small domestic markets, geographic isolation, limited connectivity infrastructure, and heightened vulnerability to external shocks, digital technologies and e-commerce offer a promising avenue to overcome traditional barriers. Many SIDS today confront persistent challenges in their digital transformation — including lack of adequate ICT infrastructure, weak or outdated legal and regulatory frameworks for e-commerce, absence of reliable digital identity systems, limited digital-trade statistics, and insufficient capacities among policymakers, regulators, businesses, and statistical authorities to navigate the complexities of digital trade.

To address these challenges, the project was structured around three complementary components:

Digital Identity for Trade and Development: Promoting the adoption of secure and effective digital-identification systems to facilitate trust, authentication, and secure transactions as a way of ensuring scalable and inclusive e-commerce and digital trade.

Legal Aspects of E-Commerce: Equipping lawmakers, regulators, judiciary, and service providers with the knowledge needed to draft or update legal frameworks governing e-commerce, covering areas such as consumer protection, payments, cybersecurity, data privacy, e-transactions, and content regulation.

Statistics on the Digital Economy, E-Commerce, and Digital Trade: Building capacities of national statistical offices and relevant authorities to collect, compile, and disseminate reliable data on ICT use, e-commerce, and digital trade.

The project deployed a blended-learning methodology, combining asynchronous online courses, webinars, and the final in-person hybrid conference.

Each of the three e-learning components concluded with policy recommendations drafted by participants either from fora exchanges or closing webinars. These recommendations were later refined at the SIDS Conference in Singapore. The final recommendations have been included in the Technical Note, the final element of the project covering best practices to assist SIDS in charting a roadmap for future national and regional efforts to maintain modern and competitive digital economy strategies in SIDS.

Participant selection

The blended learning format of the Project allowed TrainForTrade to reach a broad range of SIDS participants during the three e-learning courses. This flexible and scalable approach was intended to reach a wide group of beneficiaries despite geographical, infrastructural, and resource constraints. The e-learning courses saw a total of 921 registered participants (60% women) from 58 countries or areas, including 37 SIDS, with 438 receiving certificates of completion.

As part of the Development Account Project, financing to travel one participant from each SIDS was allocated. A merit-based system was applied in selecting participants to attend the conference, with those earning the highest grades and providing presentations during the e-learning course closing webinars invited to attend the conference in Singapore.

Additional consideration was given to a participant's place of work, ensuring that those invited to attend the conference are employed in sectors relevant to the Project. This approach helped ensure that the policy recommendations were refined by the right stakeholders and that the dissemination of the Technical Note would be effective.

The SIDS Conference in Singapore saw 30 participants from 25 SIDS attend. Additional participants from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were self-financed to attend the conference upon request. Additionally, extra participants from Singapore were invited to attend the conference sessions hosted in their home country.

In addition to the participants, course experts, organizers and other UN entities were invited to take part in the conference. A detailed list of participants, experts and organizers can be found in Annex 2.

Conference platform

Participants were invited to engage online ahead of the conference through a dedicated course page on the TrainForTrade e-learning platform (learn.unctad.org). This page was for conference attendees to reflect on the policy recommendations emerging from the three e-learning courses, with the understanding that the conference aimed to develop inclusive and realistic policy recommendations related to the digital economy in SIDS.

The platform also served as a space for participants to introduce themselves prior to meeting in person and to raise any questions related to the event. Additionally, the conference page was used for participants to provide feedback and testimonials on their experiences throughout the development account project, both anonymously and non-anonymously.

Presentations from the conference were uploaded to the conference page throughout the three days for participants to access and keep for reference.

⌄ Legal Aspects of e-Commerce

Meet our experts:

- Dan Jerker B. Svantesson (Bond University)
- Witada Anukoonwattaka (UN ESCAP).

▼ 🗀 LAeC presentations

- 1. Legal Aspects - Course recap.pptx
- 2. Dan Jerker B. Svantesson - Bond University - Legal Aspects of e-Commerce.pptx
- 3. Witada Anukoonwattaka - UN ESCAP - Digital Trade, E-commerce Regulatory Trends, Insights for Asia-Pacific SIDS.pdf
- 4. Susan Jarvis - Antigua and Barbuda - An Examination into e-Commerce Legislation in Antigua and Barbuda.pptx
- 5. Jonica Brito Tavares - Cabo Verde - e-Commerce in Cabo Verde.pptx

🔗 UNCTAD publication: Indirect taxation of e-commerce and digital trade: Implications for developing countries

⌄ Visit to Rajah & Tann

▼ 🗀 Presentations

- RTT AML Overview - Copy.pdf
- UNCTAD Presentation - AI Regulations and Governance (RT 20251106).pdf
- UNCTAD RTT AI Governance.pdf
- UNCTAD Slides(RTS)(6 November 2025).pdf

Screenshot of the some of the conference page where participants and experts can exchange and access all conference documents, presentations and evaluations.

Conference programme

Opening – Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry

Following the opening remarks by TrainForTrade Chief Mr. Mark Assaf, Ms. Sangeetha Madasamy and Ms. Sherry Sun of Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry delivered a joint introductory presentation on Singapore's approach to digital trade.

Ms. Sangeetha Madasmay, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Singapore presenting "Singapore's approach to Digital Trade"

Conference sessions

Centering around the project's three thematics, the conference was divided into three main sessions on *Digital Identity for Trade and Development*, the *Legal Aspects of E-Commerce* and *Statistics on the Digital Economy, E-Commerce, and Digital Trade*. The detailed conference agenda can be found in Annex 1.

Each session included a **course recap** providing details of the e-learning courses such as topics covered, forum discussions and simulation exercises. The recaps provided an important introduction to the topic discussion to follow as not all participants of the conference took all three e-learning courses, therefore ensuring they could still engage in the session discussions. The course recaps also provided course statistics such as number of participants, certification rate, module test scores and satisfaction rate.

Course recaps were followed by **presentations from course experts**. The presentations served as in-depth overviews of the thematics with specific attention provided to the context of SIDS. In many cases updates of the thematics were also provided, noting the possible policy and best practice changes which occurred during the elapsed time between the e-learning and the conference.

Participants, experts and organizers in the conference room listening to a presentation.

The expert presentations were followed by **participant presentations** where national cases studies and best practices were highlighted.

The presentations across the three days were as follows:

Digital Identity for Trade and Development
- Expert: Mr. Luca Castellani (online), UNCITRAL
- Expert & course developer: Ms. Tanya Tang, Rajah & Tann, Singapore
- Expert: Mr. Daniel Wong Hoe Han, Boston Consulting Group

- Participant: Ms. Natalie Maharaj, Ministry of Public Administration, Trinidad and Tobago

Legal Aspects of E-Commerce
- Expert & course developer: Mr. Dan Jerker B. Svantesson, Bond University, Australia
- Expert: Ms. Witada Anukoonwattaka, UN ESCAP
- Participant: Ms. Jonica Brito Tavares, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy, Cabo Verde
- Participant: Ms. Susan Jarvis, Government of Antigua and Barbuda, Antigua and Barbuda

Statistics on the Digital Economy, E-Commerce, and Digital Trade
- Expert & course developer: Mr. Thierry Coulet, Statistician, France
- Expert: Mr. Markie Muryawan, Statistician, UNSD
- Expert: Mr. Benny Salo, Statistician, UNCTAD
- Participant: Mr. Alfonso Casanova, Universidad de la Habana, Cuba
- Participant: Ms. Maria Batlle, Central Bank of the Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic

It was ensured that there was enough time during each session for some questions and answers between presenters and those in the room.

The three rounds of presentations were all concluded with time for review, refinement and validation of the policy recommendations which came out of the e-learning courses. The policy recommendation review sessions were led by the TrainForTrade team and experts working together to guide the conversation in an inclusive and productive manner. The policy recommendations are part of the final Technical Note as part of this Development Account project and can be found in Annex 5.

Mr. Dan Jerker B. Svantesson, Bond University, Australia

Ms. Susan Jarvis, Antigua and Barbuda, presenting on the Legal Aspects of E-Commerce.

Closing

The SIDS Conference in Singapore concluded with a certificate ceremony where the participants were awarded UNCTAD/TrainForTrade certificates for their presentation over the three-day event.

The group after the certificate ceremony.

Organizers

The conference took place at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Singapore and was organized with the assistance of the official UN service provider for the region, MEP Meeting & Exhibition Planners based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. MEP ensured the venue was prepared with the requested conference materials (projector, microphone, name badges, water, etc.) and made sure breaks (coffee and lunch) were on time and easy for participants to locate within the hotel. MEP also maintained a registration table throughout the conference taking note of participant attendance throughout the three days.

The conference was set up in hybrid mode via Zoom, allowing for those not able to travel to attend the conference online. One of the experts, Mr. Luca Castellani was unable to attend in-person and so his intervention was presented online. Two participants initially invited to attend in-person but could not make it were also online for many of the sessions, Mr. Verne Cazaubon of Saint Kitts and Nevis and Mr. Isaac McWilliams Retakali Kakaraya of Papua New Guinea.

Visit to Rajah & Tann

The afternoon of the second day of the conference experts, organizers and participants travelled to the offices of the Singaporean law firm Rajah & Tann for a series of presentations centered on AI regulation and AI governance. Conference attendees were greeted in one of the law firm's large conference rooms and welcomed by Mr. Raymond Lum, Group Chief Executive Officer alongside his colleagues Ms. Tanya Tang, Mr. Justin Lee and Ms. Joanne Seah.

Dominique Chantrel, TrainForTrade, with participants in the Rajah & Tann conference room before presentations begin.

Group photo in the lobby of the Rajah & Tann office.

Conference evaluation

As part of the Development Account, the project is to be evaluated by an external evaluator. For the SIDS Conference in Singapore, Ms. Nishta Keeble from the UNCTAD Evaluation Unit, attended as a first step in beginning the evaluation process. Ms. Keeble was present for the entirety of the conference and had the opportunity to get to know the participants as well as understand the TrainForTrade blended learning methodology.

On the final day, participants were asked to provide feedback on the conference, as well as the entire project itself. The evaluation form was provided to all utilising the dedicated conference page created on the TFT e-learning platform. Upon completion of both the anonymous and non-anonymous opinion questionnaires, a small recap of the results was provided; this allowed participants the opportunity to share their thoughts on all elements of the Development Account project in which they participated. Results of the two questionnaires can be found in Annex 3 and Annex 4.

Annex 1: Detailed Agenda

Programme

5–7 November 2025
Grand Hyatt Hotel, Singapore

Wednesday, 5 November

Time	Session	Participants
12:30 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Registration Lunch break	All delegates
2:00 p.m.–2:15 p.m.	Opening	UN Representatives
2:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Singapore's approach to Digital Trade	Ms. Sangeetha MADASAMY (Ministry of Trade & Industry, Singapore)
2:45 p.m.–3 p.m.	Break and group photo	All delegates
3:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m.	Digital Identity for Trade and Development (DITD) ○ Recap of the project ○ Latest trends ○ Case study presentations from selected participants	Speakers • Mr. Rajesh Sreenivasan (Technology Media and Telecoms Law Practice) (online) • Ms. Tanya Tang (Rajah & Tann) • Mr. Luca Castellani (online) (UNCITRAL) • Mr. Daniel Wong Hoe Han (Boston Consulting Group) • Ms. Natalie Maharaj (Trinidad & Tobago)
4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.	Round table and recommendations	All delegates

Thursday, 6 November

Time	Session	Participants / Speakers
9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.	Welcome coffee and warm-up	All delegates
9:30 a.m.–11 a.m.	**Legal Aspects of E-Commerce (LAEC)** ○ Recap of the project ○ Latest trends ○ Case study presentations from selected participants	Speakers • Mr. Dan Jerker B. Svantesson (Bond University) • Ms. Witada Anukoonwattaka (UN ESCAP) • Ms. Jonica Brito Tavares (Cabo Verde) • Ms. Susan Jarvis (Antigua and Barbuda)
11 a.m.–12 p.m.	Round table and final recommendations	All delegates
12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.	Lunch break	
3:00 p.m.–5 p.m.	**Visit to the office of Rajah & Tann Technologies** • Anti-Money Laundering Essentials – Gazelle • Rajah & Tann Technologies Innovating AML Risk Management Through Technology – Raymond • Development of AI regulations and governance – Justin • AI Governance Framework – Joanne 9 Straits View #06-07, Marina One West Tower, 018937	Speakers • Mr. Raymond Lum (CEO) Attendance of all delegates

Friday, 7 November

Time	Session	Participants / Speakers
9 a.m.–9:30 a.m.	Welcome coffee and warm-up	All delegates
9:30 a.m.–11 a.m.	**Statistics on Digital Trade, E-Commerce and Digital Economy (SDT)** ○ Recap of the project ○ Latest trends ○ Case study presentations from selected participants	Speakers • Thierry Coulet (Statistician) • Markie Muryawan (UNSD) • Benny Salo (UNCTAD) • Mr. Alfonso Casanova (Cuba) • Maria Batlle (Dominican Republic)
11:00 a.m.–12 p.m.	Round table and final recommendations	All delegates
12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.	Lunch break	
1:30 p.m.–2 p.m.	Evaluation of the project	Project evaluator
2:30 p.m.–3 p.m.	Conclusion and closing ceremony	UN Representatives

UNCTAD Support team	
	Mr. Mark Assaf, Chief, TrainForTrade Mr. Dominique Chantrel, Programme Management Officer, TrainForTrade Mr. Tomasz Kulaga, Associate Information Systems Officer, TrainForTrade Ms. Liliane Flour, Consultant, TrainForTrade Mr. Benny Salo, Statistics Assistant Ms. Laura Cyron, Economic Affairs Officer Ms. Nishta Keeble, Programme Management Officer

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Annex 2: List of participants and experts

Participants

Ms. Susan Jarvis	**Ms. Erika Perpall**	**Ms. Joycelin Itza**
Government of Antigua and Barbuda	Computer Incident Response Team of the Bahamas (CIRT-BS)	BELTRAID
Antigua and Barbuda	Bahamas	Belize
Ms. Brito Tavareres	**Mr. Alfonso Casanova**	**Ms. Joanne Jno.Baptiste-Guiste**
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy	Universidad de la Habana	Dominica Air and Sea Ports Authority
Cabo Verde	Cuba	Dominica
Ms. Maria Batlle	**Ms. Vasemaca Tuimavana**	**Ms. Catherine Francis**
Central Bank of the Dominican Republic	Fiji Bureau of Statistics	Ministry of Finance Central Statistical Office
Dominican Republic	Fiji	Grenada

Ms. Sandra Bart	Ms. Patrice Clayton	Ms. Baneawa Margret Moantau
CARICOM Secretariat	Ministry of Finance and the Public Service	Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, Industry and Cooperative
Guyana	Jamaica	Kiribati
Ms. Tamiko Jajo	Ms. Rushaa Banu Badaloo	Mr. John Jr. Adolph
Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority	Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Department of Resources & Development, Division of Statistics, FSM National Government
Marshall Islands	Mauritius	Federated States of Micronesia
Mr. Isaac McWilliams Retakali Kakaraya (online)	Mr. Verne Cazaubon (online)	Ms. Afric Abiola Sandiford
National Statistics Office	Eastern Caribbean Central Bank	OECS Commission
Papua New Guinea	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Saint Lucia

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Ms. Josephine Peters-Ross	Ms. Lydia Hazelman	Mr. Fabricio Fernandes Paquete
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour	SENAPIQ-STP
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Samoa	Sao Tome and Principe
Ms. Li Hiang Ng	Mr. Wayne Lim	Mr. Chee Hau Khoo
Singapore Department of Statistics	Singapore Polytechnic	Department of Statistics Singapore
Singapore	Singapore	Singapore
Ms. Shane Marie Demalata	Mr. Richard Nokia	Mr. Tristein Tapu Zutu
National University of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy	Solomon Islands Government	Solomon Islands Government
Singapore	Solomon Islands	Solomon Islands
Ms. Natalie Maharaj	Ms. Francisca Miller	Mr. James Tatangis
Ministry of Public Administration	Aid for Trade Management Unit	Vanuatu Government
Trinidad and Tobago	Vanuatu	Vanuatu

Experts and Organizers

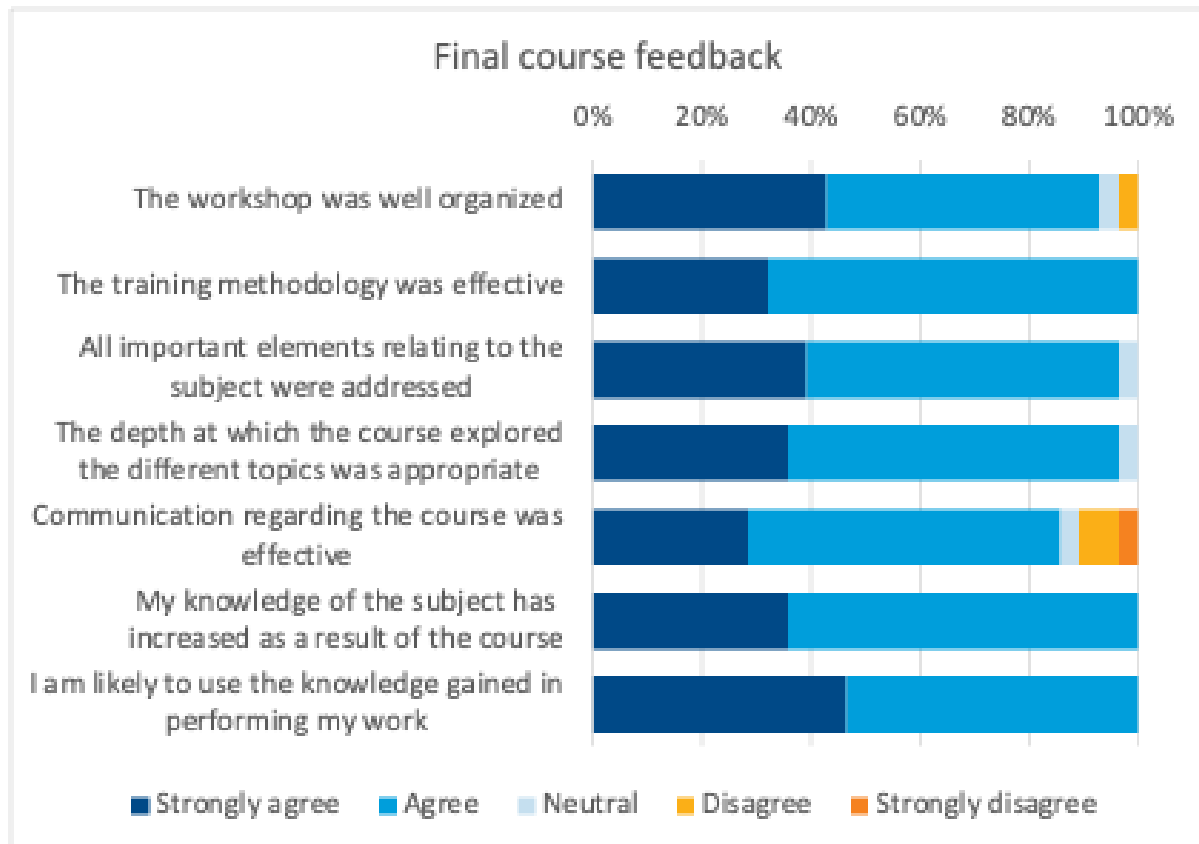|		
Mr. Dan Jerker B. Svantesson	**Mr. Thierry Coulet**	**Ms. Sangeetha Madasamy**
Professor, Faculty of Law, Bond University	Statistician	Deputy Director, International Trade Division, Ministry of Trade and Industry
Australia	France	Singapore
Ms. Sherry Sun	**Ms. Tanya Tang**	**Mr. Daniel Wong H. Han**
Assistant Director, International Trade Division, Ministry of Trade and Industry	Partner, Rajah & Tann LLP	Boston Consulting Group
Singapore	Singapore	Singapore
Mr. Luca Castellani (online)	**Ms. Witada Anukoonwattaka**	**Mr. Mark Assaf**
Legal Officer	Economic Affairs Officer	Chief, TrainForTrade
UNCITRAL	UN ESCAP	UNCTAD
Mr. Dominique Chantrel	**Ms. Laura Cyron**	**Ms. Liliane Flour**
Programme Management Officer, TrainForTrade	Economic Affairs Officer	Consultant, TrainForTrade
UNCTAD	UNCTAD	UNCTAD

Mr. Tomasz Kulaga	Mr. Benny Salo	Mr. Markie Muryawan
Information Systems Officer, TrainForTrade	Statistician	Statistician
UNCTAD	UNCTAD	UNSD

Annex 3: Conference feedback and evaluation

<u>Anonymous Questionnaire</u>

Final course feedback

In your view, what are the strengths of the workshop?

- Networking with Experts and Peers: Connecting directly with the subject matter experts and peers to share challenges, gain unique perspectives
- In my view, the strength of the workshop is the ongoing support from staff whenever you have any questions or concerns.
- The strengths are when they are interactive and engaging moments and sessions where we have Case studies of different countries that could elevate some of the least developed countries like Vanuatu.
- Experts with knowledge of the subject matter coupled with valuable input from participants with expert and working knowledge of the areas.
- The collaboration with various territories, experts as well as the UN staff is a strength. There is probably no other way to achieve this level of collaboration.
- The active in-person discussions were very productive in driving thought and strategic foresight.
- 1. Depth of topics explored 2. Interesting case presentations
- Good
- The workshop's main strengths lie in its integrated and practical approach, combining technical depth with direct policy relevance for participants from SIDS. It effectively bridges conceptual frameworks with applied learning by introducing international

standards such as MSITS 2010, BPM6, and the Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade while linking them to policymaking, regulation, and digital governance. The sessions promote statistical transparency, advocacy, equipping participants to manage issues of data quality, dissemination, and confidentiality.

- For me personally, I learned a lot especially from the discussions in the room since I am new to some of the topics. I would encourage more of that in future workshops.
- In my view the strength of the workshop was the fact that you got to hear what everyone had to say and incorporate it into something that you can you to better that statistical office.
- In my opinion, the strengths of this workshop would be the fact that it covered several topics at one point in time. One of the strengths that I took note of was that the presenters were very knowledgeable in the topics that they presented, and they explained the topics very well. The content of the workshop was a lot, and the presenters were all experts in their respective fields.
- Well organised
- More days
- The host was very good at keeping the group engaged
- I appreciated the seating arrangements
- I thought that the participants who were selected to do presentations were appropriate and good in their delivery
- I appreciated the recap of the various courses because I did not do all 3 courses, so I was unaware of the content of the other two.
- A lot of good discussions followed most of the presentations
- I loved the round table collaborative approach to formulating the recommendations
- The agenda was not onerous. Just enough to hold your attention without being too taxing
- I enjoyed the presentations from Rahj and Tann, especially the one on AI.
- The UNCTAD staff were all so very nice and engaging with us.
- The strengths of the workshop for me are more around the discussion of the recommendations at of each session, lessons learned from the presenters and the visit made to the Rajah and Tan firm.
- Diverse participants
- - Bringing together representatives from SIDS with different backgrounds in statistics and legislation/regulations provides a comprehensive approach to the workshop with diverse understanding and knowledge shared by participants. - Site visitation to Rajah & Tann provides an opportunity to learn more about legal aspects of E-commerce by learning from Singapore's experiences. - Having the right representatives and experts in the related thematic areas of the Conference really boosts the value of this workshop.
- From my view the strength of this workshop is that it encourages me more on e-commerce and digital trade which would be my takeaway to take back home.
- I only took 2 courses but, the workshop gave an overview of all 3 courses which was very comprehensive.
- The workshop is well organised, bringing participants from different SIDS together to learn, brainstorm and share ideas.

- The strengths were mainly the privileges of having experts present on these topics - also that the TFT team is quite remarkable and have great personalities.
- I told the TFT team how enchanted I currently am. I really like how you guys take into account what we have to say and are genuinely interested in our participation to draft the policy recommendations.
- The Strengths of the Workshop were having all experts in the field who have experience to share with us. And another brilliant part is the venue where the workshop was organized. Despite being a country where digitalization is fully implemented, it is a famous local, on which we could have opportunities to know. Thank you so much.
- The workshop was very interesting. We get to network with various experts
- The various presentations by experts and participants were very good in expanding my perspective on the subject areas.
- The scheduling was very good.

In your view, what aspects of this workshop should be improved? Please be precise and wherever possible try to provide examples to clarify your comments. Explain clearly and be constructive by providing suggestions.

- Maybe it might be better to have the workshop be a week long or at least three full days in order to not rush over the different recommendations.
- Good
- To be completely honest, I did not see any area of improvement. Everything was well organized.
- 1. The timing, clearly there was not enough time to go over everything. 2. The workshop or conference in my opinion should be broken off into 3 different parts. (One topic at a time). 3. The invitation should be extended to several/appropriate Government Agencies. For instance, in my case, I will have to report to several agency heads when I go back. (The National Statistics Office and The Division of Trade & Investment). It would be nice to have someone from Trade and Investment for the policy side of things. All in all, the workshop conference was well organized and very beneficial for me.
- The only thing I would say is that it could be extended to 5 days instead of 3.
- I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the program of Train for Trade, the fact that I haven't done any of the courses. However, listening with interest if there are any opportunities to offer these courses again next year, I would love to study few of the courses especially on the Legal aspects of E-commerce which more of the perspective that am working on back in Vanuatu.
- Logistics of getting people from the airport to their hotels.
- The logistical arrangements prior to arriving in Singapore needed improvement. I think that as a participant I should not have had to write and ask about flight arrangements and DSA payments. These matters should have been communicated in a better manner.
- Nil
- From my view the workshop went really well since it is mostly related to my work and I find it very productive.

- The workshop was good I don't think it should improve
- The methodology may be more interactive, using technology to answer quizzes
- Overall, the workshop was informative and well organized, but there are a few areas that could be improved. One aspect would be to include more hands-on or interactive sessions where participants can practice using digital trade tools or e-commerce platforms. For example, a short guided activity on setting up a basic online store or using digital payment systems would make the learning more practical and engaging.
- Two things (among others) to be considered for improvement: 1) Allow for participant presentations by country. For example, it would be good to have each country present on their context and responses or understanding of the Thematic areas, including possible policy recommendations. 2) Include group discussions as many participants may be effective in sharing their inputs at group discussion level than open forum. For example, during group discussions, a participant may be able to provide his or her comments as opposed to open forum where only a few maybe allowed to comment or provide interventions. 3) Participant mix - since there are 3 different thematic areas, it may be important to request 3 participants from each country for each thematic area, especially those that completed the courses.
- Experts from the African and Latin America and the Caribbean regions should be considered as presenters to ensure inclusive representation.
- The workshop was well organized. However, the logistics and communication leading up to the workshop were very poor. Creating a whatsapp group before the conference so that everyone can communicate would be great. This group would allow the organizers to update us on any necessary changes and even allow participants to ask questions and ensure everyone travels safely.
- The workshop offers strong theoretical and technical content and regional relevance, several aspects could be improved to enhance its long-term impact and practical application.
- The workshop is very great from day 1 to the final day
- More breaks between sessions
- No aspect.
- Nil
- I know that other people who started, dropped off the course. It would be great to have a mechanism to ensure all participants complete the courses.
- There needed to be better communication and coordination getting delegates to the workshop.
- So far all is good. However, i would encourage more clear line of communications to the participants to be clear of the of what should be done (e.g. in terms of logistics)
- So far, so good, quite happy and appreciative of the way the whole program was designed and executed, started with virtual and ended with an in-person training workshop, which brought together participants from different SIDS countries. Really help us to network and learned from other SIDS countries, and importantly, learn from Singapore.

What is one area you wish the project had focused more on, or done differently, to better meet your country's needs?

- How can we access technical assistance
- One area that could have been strengthened is the localisation of policy and implementation frameworks to reflect the specific conditions of SIDS.
- Perhaps we could get the participants from Singapore to share with the other states on how Singapore manages the digitalization efforts... like the use of Singpass in Singapore...
- This is digital trade, are there any digital transformation experts who could have been included to support knowledge on emerging technology and cybersecurity.
- Cybersecurity
- Nil
- In the case of my country, the areas that were focused on in the workshop were relevant. We have enacted legislation on E-commerce, and that was explored along with the legalities of doing business online. Digital identity and statistics are also very important areas that are relevant to my country, so I have no issues with the project topics.
- The area that I think would benefit my country is on the Statistics on Digital Trade E-commerce and Digital Economy.
- I am happy with the project
- Maybe for the Pacific particularly, it would have been great to learn about the exact role of the different government agencies with implementing e-commerce interventions as well as the role of the private sector. also the logistics pre-conference could have been more efficient
- Perhaps exploring how we as governmental agencies can collaborate more with the private sector or how do we agree with the private sector on MOU's in data collection. I find that this is difficult to navigate because, the private sector often does not like to share their data. So learning on methods how to collaborate with them and navigate those relationships would be better.
- Statistics on Digital Trade, E-Commerce and Digital Economy, offer more capacity building/more workshops.
- More fpcid could've been given to learnt experiences of other countries particularly for e-commerce and digital trade statistics so that my country could build a framework from lessons learnt from other countries' experience.
- Perhaps for my Country it would be a more focused on the Statistics on the Digital Trade, E-commerce and Digital Economy.
- One area I wish the project had focused more on is strengthening national implementation capacity, particularly in building local frameworks and digital infrastructure to support e-commerce growth.
- The conference covered all that is relevant to the 3 thematic areas of the course.
- Good
- I believe that E-Commerce is a better project to focus on, this is an era where e-commerce is moving forward and this also happened in my country. National E-Commerce Policy is currently implemented, not yet launched, other kit-tools for better e-commerce served were being on the list of implemented with the help of organizations such as UNCTAD, PIFS, etc.

- All this area is important for my country. I intend to share this 3 pillars and its recommendation to the policemaker.

Annex 4: Testimonials

We would be grateful if you could leave a comment on your overall appreciation of the course and/or on how you will use the knowledge/soft skills acquired in the training in your work/life.

John Jr. Adolph, Department of Resources & Development, Division of Statistics, FSM National Government (Federated States of Micronesia)
Overall, the workshop was extremely beneficial for me, and I gained a lot of new knowledge and insights. What I appreciated the most was that the policy recommendations were well-developed and comprehensive. They provide a solid reference that I can rely on when I return home and report to my superiors.

Rushaa Banu Badaloo, The Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Mauritius)
This workshop has been a truly meaningful and transformational experience. It has not only expanded my technical understanding of digital trade, e-commerce, and statistical systems but has also strengthened my sense of purpose in contributing to sustainable and inclusive development. The clarity of the modules, the quality of the materials, and the spirit of collaboration among participants and trainers created an environment that was both intellectually rich and deeply motivating. I leave this training with a sense of gratitude and purpose, equipped with practical tools to improve data systems, enhance policy coordination, and advocate for digital inclusion in my country. The workshop has reaffirmed my belief that accurate data and sound governance are not just technical goals but instruments of empowerment and progress for people and communities.

Maria Batlle, Central Bank of the Dominican Republic (Dominican Republic)
This has been an unforgettable experience. As my first time in an UNCTAD event, I can say I am deeply honored to have been invited to participate in this important conversation. The whole UN team is wonderful, everyone is willing to help and extra sweet, kind, and nice... In regards to the content, no stone left unturned, they saw everything through. I'm pretty inspired by all these wonderful people I met here and hopefully, this is the first of many collaborations. I'll be forever thankful with all of you.

Jónica Brito Tavares, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy (Cabo Verde)
Was very useful, the visit to Rajah and Tann. I was able to capture in the law view may some of the challenges we can face with AI, technology and under IP the discussion was very important to clarify certain points, and sure we have benchmark now.

Patrice Clayton, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (Jamaica)
This was a great learning experience. It has increased my knowledge on the legal aspects of digital trade and e-commerce, digital identity and statistics on E-commerce, digital trade and the Digital Economy. I was able to understand the experiences of other countries based on the challenges and advantages that they encountered in expanding their digital economy and framework. It was especially enlightening to see how other SIDS were able to overcome certain challenges in implementing their digital technology and legislative framework.

Shane Marie Demalata, National University of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (Singapore)

Great opportunity to explore a depth of topics on Digital Economy. Especially enjoyed the range of expertise available and the diversity of participants.

Catherine Francis, Ministry of Finance Central Statistical Office (Grenada)
I value this course because it allowed me to learn firsthand about the difficulties some nations are facing with regard to the digital economy and data in general, as well as others that have advanced and adapted to the modern age. But it also helped me understand what needs to be prioritized in the trade department.

Joanne Guiste, Dominica Air and Sea Ports Authority (Dominica)
The opportunity to be a part of this conference was humbling, informative and interactive. It presented an avenue to significantly contribute to the continued work of UNCTAD to SIDS. The conference brought together experts and participants from the three e-courses and allowed the opportunity to be heard in the development of policy recommendations.

Lydia Hazelman, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (Samoa)
Being part of the conference was a great experience - the opportunity to enhance our knowledge on E-Commerce and also being able to have a seat at the table to validate the policy interventions that aims to benefit our Island Homes is extremely appreciated.

Joycelin Itza, BELTRAIDE (Belize)
The courses were extremely insightful, before taking part did not understand the level of importance of the digital economy. We are often too focused on the trade of goods, and overlook that digital services/tools are major contributors to economies and trade. Going forward I hope to bring this as a matter of attention to my government since we currently do not collect much data on these growing sectors.

Tamiko Jajo, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (Marshall Islands)
I really appreciated the conference, it gave me a clearer understanding of digital trade and e-commerce opportunities for the Marshall Islands. I plan to apply the knowledge by sharing it with colleagues and supporting local efforts to strengthen digital trade. The soft skills gained will also help me collaborate more effectively on future projects.

Susan Jarvis, Government of Antigua and Barbuda (Antigua and Barbuda)
The extra knowledge I gained from doing the Legal Aspects of e-commerce course was very useful to me. I learned so much and existing knowledge was reinforced. The contents of the course Legal Aspects of E-commerce assisted me in analysing legislation relating to e-commerce and identifying gaps as well as strengths of existing e-commerce laws in my country.

Wayne Lim, Singapore Polytechnic (Singapore)
Fantastic session where there's participation from the various members of small island states, and a general approval of the suggestions shows much transparency... great work...

Natalie Maharaj, Ministry of Public Administration (Trinidad and Tobago)
This course content was very relevant to the work happening in my country with National Digital ID. Additionally there is current effort for a National trade policy. The information and discussions really supplemented knowledge and gave a holistic view of considerations for digital trade efforts; not only at the national level but also at the regional level.

Recommendations will be shared with Ministry of Trade as well as the Ministry with responsibility for technology. I am very grateful for the opportunity to participate and learn with my regional colleagues. Thank you!

Baneawa Margret Moantau, Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, Industry and Cooperative (Kiribati)
The overall course training strengthens the ability to move beyond providing simple definitions to offering strategic, actionable, and contextually grounded advice. This includes providing valuable insight into trade promotion and enhanced my communication and strategic planning skills in my work as an e-Trade Promotion Officer.

Richard Nokia, Solomon Islands Government (Solomon Islands)
On behalf of the Solomon Islands Government and the E-Commerce Implementation Team, I would like to sincerely thank UNCTAD for providing this valuable training opportunity and for organising this in-person workshop in Singapore. So far, the sessions have been highly insightful. I have learned a great deal from the presenters, gained new perspectives during our visit to Rajah & Tann, and had the privilege of networking with other participants from across the region. The knowledge and insights gained from this workshop will certainly be applied to strengthen and enhance the areas covered under our e-commerce development efforts in the Solomon Islands.

Erika Perpall, Computer Incident Response Team of The Bahamas (Bahamas)
The workshop and indeed the series of courses was relevant to the new normal. I hope policy makers sit up and take note followed by appropriate action to ensure SIDS grow and thrive on the world stage.

Josephine Peters-Ross, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Commerce (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
I just want to say thank you to the team from UNCTAD it was a pleasure networking with experts and delegates. In such a short conference we covered and were in line with the programme. The knowledge/soft skills acquired in the training will be shared

James Tatangis, Vanuatu Government (Vanuatu)
To be honest, i did not do any of the courses but through the workshop i learned alot that would be applicable to my workplace. For my country we will be reviewing our Ecommerce strategy next year, and with the recommendations discussed during the 3 days would be helpful in aligning some of the recommendations to our new E-commerce strategy. In addition, AI is not to be ignored but as mentioned during our visit, it needs to be controlled and rules should be put in place in its usage in the workplace. In addition, there needs to be a closure in Contracts regarding the use of AI especially in policy drafting in order to know if the work done is realistic.

Vasemaca Tuimavana, Fiji Bureau of Statistics (Fiji)
I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the entire team for organising this well structured and insightful conference. The sessions were highly engaging and the presentations were particularly valuable , as they were directly relevant to my work. I gained practical knowledge and soft skills that I will apply in my daily responsibilities, especially in strengthening my approach to data management stakeholder engagement, and decision making.   Thank you for your continuous guidance throughout the course and for the effort

invested in making tghis experience productive and memorable. Vinaka Vakalevu (Thank you very much) from Fiji.

Tristein Tapu Zutu, Solomon Islands Government (Solomon Islands)
The Policy Recommendations for each of the thematic areas are forward looking, which means participants have a clear direction on what's next when supporting our government in progressing the Digital Transformation Agenda.

Annex 5: Policy recommendations

Digital Identity for Trade and Development

Develop a national digital ID strategy

Invite Governments to develop a coherent national digital ID strategy that clarifies objectives in line with national priorities, coordination mechanisms with relevant stakeholders, governance structures, and digital infrastructure. The strategy, ideally implemented in phases, should clarify the role of the digital ID in enabling access to services, facilitating trade and supporting inclusive development.

Review the legal frameworks

Encourage Governments to review, and where necessary, revise legal frameworks related to digital identity, including data protection, cybersecurity, privacy and ID in general, such that they are inclusive by design, prevent function creep, encourage resilience, and ensure accessibility for all (allowing for offline/low-bandwidth use).

Ensure secure implementation

Recommend that digital ID systems are designed so that systems separate identification from authorization functions and incorporate robust security and redress mechanisms. Adopt a public digital infrastructure that is secure and minimizes centralized data storage, in line with national sovereignty and local realities, and includes execution and recovery mechanisms in place.

Promote regional cooperation and interoperability

Support regional and inter-regional collaboration to enhance interoperability of systems for cross-border trade, including mutual recognition, data exchange and possibly cooperation and cost-sharing to build joint infrastructure. Regional frameworks should align with international standards, while reflecting local contexts and capacities.

Foster buy-in

Encourage Governments to launch targeted awareness campaigns for citizens and stakeholder engagement initiatives to build trust, reduce the digital divide and increase understanding of the systems. Further encourage introduction of digital IDs tied to immediate use cases (e.g., access to government services, financial inclusion) to onboard users and demonstrate benefits.

Legal Aspects of E-commerce

Modernise the legal framework

Encourage Governments to formulate national strategic frameworks to provide a vision and concrete roadmaps for the development of e-commerce and accordingly adopt and revise relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks such that they are adaptable to technological

change and aligned with international standards[1]. Special attention should be given to the unique challenges of SIDS, including the reliance on imported digital services and limited legislative drafting capacity.

Enable trust through coherent data governance

Invite Governments, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to develop coherent and context-appropriate data protection and privacy frameworks that facilitate trust in e-commerce, encourage public-private partnerships, enable cross-border data flows, and are interoperable with regional and international frameworks taking into account human rights and inclusion. Emphasis should be placed on capacity building for enforcement authorities and on minimizing compliance burdens for MSMEs.

Encourage regional and international negotiations

Encourage Governments to actively participate in regional and international negotiations on digital economy governance, including those related to emerging technologies, data, digital trade and e-commerce, and to leverage regional cooperation mechanisms to amplify their voice and ensure their specific development needs are reflected in global standards and agreements.

Support regional harmonization

Support efforts to harmonize e-commerce enabling aspects of legislation at the regional level in line with regional needs and global agreements, including on electronic transactions, consumer protection and dispute resolution, and to explore mutual recognition agreements that reduce legal uncertainty and facilitate cross-border e-commerce/digital trade.

Build capacity for policymakers

Recommend that Governments invest in capacity-building for policymakers, regulators and negotiators to understand and apply e-commerce related laws and regulation, including through regional and international training programmes to encourage exchange of experiences and best practices and knowledge-sharing platforms, and call on international organizations and development partners to support such capacity-building endeavours. Further develop and implement stakeholder awareness programmes on e-commerce enabling legislations beyond the public sector. Programmes and exchanges should be scalable, taking into account adoption by all.

Statistics on the digital economy, e-commerce and digital trade

Establish institutional and strategic framework

Encourage Governments to develop and implement national strategies for comprehensive e-commerce, digital economy and digital trade statistics, aligned with national capacities (capabilities) and priorities and in support of evidence-based policymaking and international reporting. In this context, further call for designating a lead agency, establishing inter-agency

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[1] In areas such as digital infrastructure, trade, competition, local content, consumer protection, data protection, electronic transactions, cybersecurity, online dispute settlement, taxation, linguistic diversity, education, skills development, labour, and AI governance.

coordination mechanisms and integrating relevant indicators into national statistical development strategies in line with internationally recognized frameworks, including the approaches put forward by the UNCTAD Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy 2020 and the IMF-OECD-UNCTAD-WTO Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade. These strategies may involve a focus on specific services such as the tourism sector.

Invest in statistical capacity

Recommend that Governments invest in capacity building for national statistical offices, central banks and other relevant institutions through targeted training, apprenticeships and the provision of statistical tools, taking into consideration gender equality and the inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Encourage cooperation in international capacity-building programmes, such as UNCTAD's Trade-in-Services Statistics Information System (TiSSTAT).

Implement statistical frameworks in a phased manner

Recommend national statistical offices/lead agencies to implement statistical frameworks, based on national priorities and in a phased approach, with metadata systems aligned with international standards to document data sources, methodologies, limitations and revisions, thereby enhancing transparency, international comparability and user trust. Furthermore, national statistical offices/lead agencies are encouraged to introduce indicators relevant to SIDS, such as on digital data readiness and resilience as well as the environmental sustainability of the digital economy. Further, they are encouraged to compile disaggregated data, including, but not limited to, by gender, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

Promote the use of administrative and alternative data

Encourage national statistical offices/lead agencies to use administrative data (e.g., VAT returns, customs declarations, International Transaction Reporting Systems) and alternative data sources (e.g., web scraping, mobile phone data, card payments) to complement traditional data collection, reduce costs and improve timeliness, including through public-private partnerships.

Enhance regional and international cooperation

Encourage regional cooperation among SIDS, including through South-South cooperation and partnerships with regional organizations, to set a common list of priority indicators on digital trade, e-commerce and digital economy, as well as to share tools, methodologies and data sources. Further recommend national statistical offices/lead agencies to actively participate in international discussions around statistical frameworks on e-commerce, digital economy and digital trade, such as through joining the Task Group on measuring e-commerce value, established under UNCTAD's Working Group on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy.

Cross-cutting recommendations

Work for government buy-in

Call on Governments to allocate human and financial resources to realize the priorities for legislation and statistics of the digital economy in line with national, regional and international standards. Governments should leverage regional organisations to ensure collaborative approaches in support of their interests.

Assure institutional scalability

Recognising the hurdles that may prevent SIDS from effectively participating in international law, policy and statistical frameworks and standards development in relation to e-commerce and the digital economy, the work on such development should include a 'scalability assessment' examining: 1) what potential impacts the proposed or developed approaches will have on SIDS and their capacity to participate effectively, and 2) what will be the practical and long-term implications for SIDS if such approaches are adopted widely.

Seek support from development partners

Call on the donor community and Governments to support methodological development, capacity-building, training, and technical assistance for statistics on digital trade, e-commerce and digital economy.