

# E-commerce and Digital Economy Programme

Year in Review 2021

Bridging the digital readiness divide



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UNCTAD



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# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Artificial intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
B2C	Business to consumer
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DACUM	Developing a Curriculum
DCDF	Digital Cooperation and Development Forum
DER	Digital Economy Report
EAC	East African Community
ECDE	E-commerce and Digital Economy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECS	E-commerce strategy
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HLCP	High-Level Committee on Programmes
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IGE	Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy
ISM	Implementation Support Mechanism
ITC	International Trade Centre
JSI	Joint Statement Initiative
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSMEs	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDEP	Pacific Digital Economy Programme
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RPTC	Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNGIS	UN Group on the Information Society
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society Forum
WTO	World Trade Organization

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## Message from Shamika N. Sirimanne, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics

With the world still in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic, last year further underscored the value of being able to harness digital opportunities for economic resilience and sustainable development. At the same time, as wide digital divides remain, countries' readiness to "go digital" varies considerably. And as brought out in our *Digital Economy Report 2021*, the pandemic may well result in deepening existing divides and accentuating inequalities.

This makes the E-commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) work programme all the more relevant, as recognized by all UNCTAD's member States. The main outcome document from UNCTAD's 15th Ministerial Conference – The Bridgetown Covenant – which sets the basis for our work for the next few years, calls for strengthening the work on assisting developing countries to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, thus contributing to the closing of the digital divide. In doing so, the Covenant reinforces UNCTAD's mandate to work on enhancing development gains from the digital economy.

I deeply appreciate the faith member States are placing in the Programme, which continues to receive a high number of requests for support. Against this background, I am also grateful to our

donors and partners, without whom we would not be able to deliver the work programme. In 2021, we welcomed Switzerland on board as a new core donor together with Germany and the Netherlands. We also had our first meeting of the new Core Donor Advisory Board, which will serve as a platform for transparent interaction between UNCTAD and the core donors as well as among the core donors. Two new organizations also joined the *eTrade for all* initiative: the British Standards Institution and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

The ECDE Programme has significantly expanded in the past few years. Nevertheless, it will need to continue to grow in order to meet the expectations signaled through the strengthened mandate from UNCTAD's member States and to foster a more inclusive digital future as we recover from the pandemic. The importance of enhancing digital cooperation and digital governance is also underlined in the United Nations Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda".

In this *Year in Review* you will find out more about the many activities and results achieved during 2021 in our newly created E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch.



## Message from Torbjörn Fredriksson, Head, E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch

The year 2021 witnessed the continued growth and innovation of the E-commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme. An important milestone was the creation of the E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch, which provides a stronger basis for further reinforcing UNCTAD's position as a centre of excellence for helping member States to harness digitalization for sustainable development. This will also be facilitated by the clear message in the Bridgetown Covenant to strengthen our work.

Many important outputs were produced, despite continuous challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the area of research, the *Digital Economy Report 2021* quickly attracted the attention from member States, partners and the academic community. Both the G20 and the BRICS subsequently invited UNCTAD to support the work on data and the digital economy in 2022.

Our collaboration with developing countries to strengthen their capacities to harness e-commerce and the digital economy for inclusive development was further developed. We created the Implementation Support Mechanism to ensure better follow-up to eTrade Readiness Assessments and we deepened our relationship with UN Resident Coordinator Offices to mobilize increased support from partners. We also launched work on the first regional e-commerce strategy, for the ECOWAS region, as well as completed national e-commerce strategies for Botswana and Rwanda. And the UNCTAD Manual on measuring the digital

economy was released, providing an update on its previous edition published one decade earlier.

Our network of partners was further strengthened, with a broader base of donors and new partners joining *eTrade for all*. For the first time, we also launched a regional partnership, with UNCDF and UNDP, to support the development of the digital economy in the Pacific. We welcomed the second cohort of amazing eTrade for Women Advocates and saw the emergence of three new Communities of women digital entrepreneurs which will help us foster more inclusive digital economies in developing countries. Several new competent colleagues joined the team, thanks to the growing support from our partners.

In the last few months of the year, the ECDE Programme underwent its first external evaluation, the results of which are to be released in 2022. We will welcome them as we continue to explore ways to improve our ability to deliver results in support of the overall objectives of the Programme.

I will take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the entire ECDE team as well as to many colleagues in other parts of UNCTAD, member States, funders and partner organizations. In 2022, we will continue supporting developing countries to reap more inclusive and sustainable development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy.





## Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 continued to disrupt economic and social life around the world. Its impact is asymmetric and tilted towards the most vulnerable, both within and across countries. While people and enterprises who could already participate in the digital economy have been able to continue to work, trade and access basic services, those who were digitally excluded have fallen further behind. The pandemic has accelerated the process of digital transformation and added urgency for Governments to respond to a widening gap in digital readiness, including through international cooperation. This has made the E-commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme even more relevant.

In the Bridgetown Covenant – the outcome document of UNCTAD's 15th Ministerial Conference – member States called for strengthening the work on assisting developing countries to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, thus contributing to the closing of the digital divide. The Covenant reinforced UNCTAD's mandate to work on enhancing development gains from the digital economy, which is carried out through the ECDE Programme. In 2021, the Programme continued to deliver on its mandate through the three pillars of work: research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation, as well as through convening partnerships and fostering stakeholder engagement.

### Enhancing understanding through research and analysis

Several research publications were released to enhance the understanding of policymakers of policy options to benefit from e-commerce and the

digital economy. The Programme's flagship [Digital Economy Report \(DER\)](#) took a deep dive into the development and policy implications of cross-border flows of digital data, warning of a growing data-related divide in addition to the traditional digital divide and calling for a concerted effort to develop a global data governance approach that factors in the multidimensional nature of data. Delivered at close to 30 outreach events to over 1,200 participants from all stakeholder groups, the DER 2021 gained significant traction. As a result, UNCTAD was requested to be a knowledge partner of Indonesia's G20 Presidency for the Digital Economy Working Group's work on cross-border data flows, as well as to support the Chinese BRICS Presidency in the area of the digital economy. Launched in September, by the end of 2021 the DER had been downloaded more than 32,000 times.

A new Policy Brief sought to aid policymakers' understanding of the [digital trade opportunities and actions for developing countries](#), while Technical Notes added to a growing base of evidence of the pandemic's implications for e-commerce and the digital economy, by providing [estimates of global e-commerce in 2019 and a preliminary assessment of COVID-19 impact on online retail in 2020](#), as well as by assessing the [pandemic's impact on trade in the digital economy](#).

The [COVID-19 and e-commerce global and regional reviews](#) undertaken under the *eTrade for all* umbrella in collaboration with United Nations Regional Commissions and other partners contributed to enhanced understanding of the pandemic's impact on e-commerce globally and regionally, underscoring the need for greater efforts to reduce inequalities in e-trade readiness.

Additional resources enabled data collection on the size of the ICT sector and the use of ICT by enterprises to resume from National Statistical Offices, with a view to informing policy discussions at the national and international level as well as powering capacity-building activities in 2022.

## Strengthening capacity through technical cooperation

The Programme continued engaging in technical cooperation with government policymakers to strengthen their capacity to formulate sound policies on e-commerce and the digital economy for development. At the heart of this work are national and regional eTrade Readiness Assessments (eT Readies), which in 2021 were completed for [Jordan](#) and [Tunisia](#). As an immediate follow-up, Action Plans are being developed to provide the Governments with an operational and planning tool to mobilize resources and fast-track the implementation of selected actions identified.

Support for the implementation of the recommendations put forward by the 29 eT Readies conducted to date was provided through the [eT Ready Implementation Support Mechanism](#), which initiated a second Implementation Review taking stock of the experience and feedback shared during a series of stakeholder engagement events. Countries are increasingly taking ownership of the implementation process and making good progress. For example, Cambodia has consolidated its top-ranking position, with 92 per cent implementation rate, followed by Bhutan, Senegal and Togo at 81 per cent. The value of the eT Readies as a diagnostic and planning tool continued to be recognized, as evidenced by new assessments kicking off in Kenya and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, where they will serve as a first step towards the development of e-commerce strategies.

National e-commerce strategies with UNCTAD's support were finalized in [Botswana](#) and Rwanda, while strategy development was still ongoing in Benin, Solomon Islands, Kenya and ECOWAS. Rwanda will be the first country in the East Africa region to benefit from the implementation of strategic measures in support of e-commerce at both the national and regional levels, on the basis of a regional e-commerce strategy led by the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat and that builds on earlier work carried out in the region, including by UNCTAD. Work to develop a national e-commerce strategy in Solomon Islands marked the start of the Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP) jointly with the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Development Programme. In the framework of the PDEP, a draft e-commerce legislation gap analysis was also prepared.

Other work in the area of e-commerce and law reform was undertaken in Kazakhstan, where the Programme engaged in technical cooperation with the Government for a review of the country's existing regulations and laws related to e-commerce against the draft provisions of the consolidated negotiating text of the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on e-commerce. The review served as a basis for a workshop on e-commerce negotiations and implications for Kazakhstan and laid the foundation for further work on the development of a comprehensive and unified new or updated legal framework.

Advances in the adoption of e-commerce legislation in four legal areas that are essential for increasing online user confidence were recorded by the Global Cyberlaw Tracker, which was updated for release in 2022. Despite an increase in the worldwide adoption of legislation in all four areas, least developed countries (LDCs) are still lagging behind, particularly in the areas of data protection and consumer protection, where less than half of

the LDCs have adopted legislation. Against this backdrop, the actions taken in 2021 by Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Madagascar and Senegal to implement eT Ready recommendations related to legal and regulatory frameworks were welcome steps towards building an enabling environment for e-commerce.

Through the eTrade for Women Initiative, the Programme contributed to the improved business and leadership skills of more than 200 women digital entrepreneurs. Three Masterclasses took place under the leadership of the Advocates, gathering 116 women from 19 countries across the Balkans, East Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Three new Communities were launched in South-East Asia, East Africa and the Balkans, connecting by the end of 2021 more than 100 women from 27 developing countries, including 13 LDCs. These networks will continue to boost the influence of women digital entrepreneurs in the policy debate for a more inclusive e-commerce development. For example, in 2021 one Advocate contributed to the consultations for the eT Ready in Jordan, and several members of the Communities contributed to global events such as the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum and UNCTAD XV.

## **Building consensus and fostering digital partnerships**

UNCTAD XV identified the widening digital divide and the uneven speed of digital transformation as two of the major global challenges that have become more acute, and it called attention to the role of digitalization in transforming economies for a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable world. The Programme contributed to this outcome by co-organizing the Ministerial Roundtable on Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Shared Prosperity, as well as the Creative Economy and Digitalization Forum.

The second meeting of the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy attracted more than 200 registered participants from 52 countries and 26 international and civil society organizations. The meeting advanced a shared understanding of progress in e-commerce and digital economy measurement by international organizations, and how to tap into non-survey data sources on e-commerce and the digital economy.

A catalyzer for partnerships, the *eTrade for all* initiative welcomed two new members: the Economic Research Institute for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and East-Asia (ERIA) and the British Standards Institution (BSI). BSI contributed to advancing the analysis in the eT Ready in Kenya to include the role of standards in building an enabling environment for e-commerce development. Stemming from the main findings from the *COVID-19 and E-commerce: Global Review*, UNCTAD, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and selected partners of the initiative launched the first phase of a new Core E-commerce Course for policymakers, to bridge knowledge gaps in how to improve the environment for inclusive e-commerce development.

The Programme continued fostering digital partnerships by, among other things, co-organizing a special session of Asia-Arab Dialogue on Digital Economy and an Arab WSIS Plenary Session on E-Commerce. It also participated in the High-level Committee on Programmes' (HLCP) Interagency Working Group on artificial intelligence and the HLCP workstream on global public goods/data governance, on the basis of the DER 2021.

## **Transforming for greater impact**

To meet the expectations signaled through the strengthened mandate from UNCTAD's member States and in view of the growing demand for technical assistance, research and dialogue, in August 2021 UNCTAD's ECDE Branch was created,

as an upgrade of the ICT Policy Section from which the ECDE Programme previously operated. The Programme welcomed Switzerland as a core donor, and together with Germany and the Netherlands formed a Core Donor Advisory Board that will provide advice on its resources and priorities with a view to ensuring the predictability and continuity of its interventions and the sustainability of its results. It also underwent a first external evaluation, the preliminary findings of which confirm the high relevance of the Programme to the current development context, which has been redefined by the COVID-19 pandemic. Its recommendations will be carefully considered to help improve the overall performance of the Programme.

## Looking ahead to 2022 and beyond

In 2022 the Programme will continue promoting increased dialogue and consensus-building among policymakers and other stakeholders through the global edition of eCommerce Week and the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on E-commerce and the Digital Economy. Largely informed by the *DER 2021*, the eCommerce Week will put a special emphasis on data and cross-border data flows and the crucial role they

play in economic and social development, while the IGE will be convened under the theme “Recovering from COVID-19 in an increasingly digital economy: Implications for sustainable development”.

The Programme’s main goals and objectives in the technical cooperation domain include new eTrade Readiness Assessments (e.g. for Mongolia), the eT Ready Implementation Support Mechanism (e.g. finalization of the second Implementation Review), and E-commerce Strategies (e.g. for Benin, Kenya, Solomon Islands and ECOWAS). New eTrade for Women Masterclasses and online courses on e-commerce will add to the Programme’s capacity-building agenda.

Last but not least, as the Programme’s first regional sub-programme, the PDEP will support the development of the digital economy in the Pacific through country-specific activities, initially focusing on Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, as well as through region-wide research and capacity-building, including a regional Digital Economy Report for the Pacific, assistance with the design of national e-commerce and digital economy strategies, regional training and support on e-commerce law reform and measuring of e-commerce.

# Highlights from 2021



# ECDE Programme 2021 in action



JAN

*Technical Note on Digital Economy Growth and Mineral Resources: Implications for Developing Countries* published



FEB

DER 2021 peer review



MAR

*COVID-19 and e-commerce: Global Review*: published; first research-oriented project undertaken under the *eTrade for all* umbrella



APR

High-level thematic debate on digital cooperation and connectivity



AUG

Second eT Ready ISM Implementation Review kicked off



JUL

*ECDE Year in Review 2020* published - the first assessment of the work done under the common programmatic vision of the Programme



JUN

Expansion of *eTrade for all* (from 32 to 34 members; BSI and ERIA)



MAY

Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy

...  
New cohort of eTrade for Women advocates assumed their tenure



SEP

Launch of DER 2021  
...  
First Core Donor Advisory Board (CDAB) meeting  
Switzerland joins the Programme as a core donor  
...  
Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP) starts



OCT

UNCTAD XV reaffirmed UNCTAD's mandate to work on digital for development



NOV

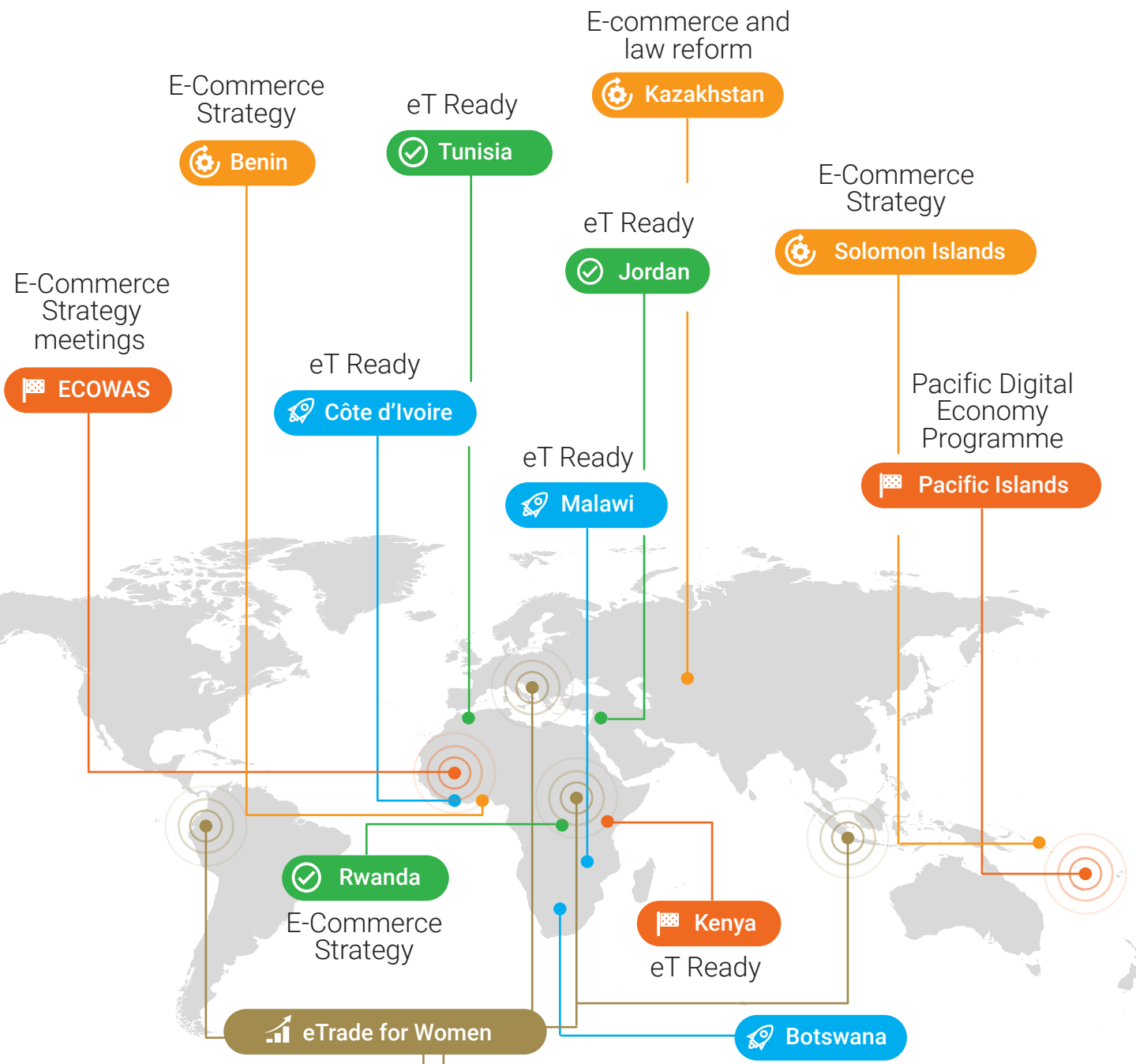
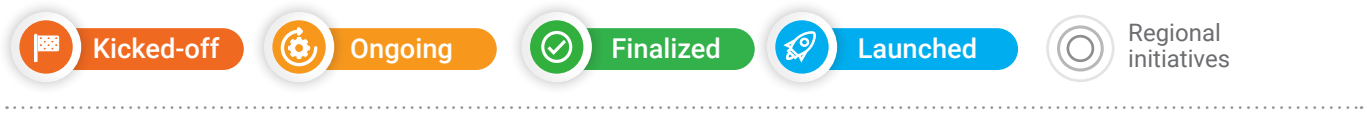
Work on regional eT Ready in ECOWAS begins  
...  
DACUM sessions of *eTrade for all* core e-commerce course kicked off



DEC

eT Ready Jordan and Tunisia finalized

# Where we worked in 2021



**3**  
Masterclasses  
were held in  
Balkans  
East Africa  
Latin America and the Caribbean

**116**  
Participants  
**19**  
Countries

**3**  
New communities  
were launched in  
Balkans  
East Africa  
South-East Asia

E-Commerce  
Strategy

# Management and communication highlights in 2021

## Increased donor support

### New core donor

- Switzerland committed to contribute **CHF 4 million** until **2024**

### New funding

- Australia for the PDEP



### Core Donor Advisory Board

First meeting in **2021**

### Renewed support

- The Netherlands
- Germany
- Republic of Korea
- Sweden
- Estonia

## Creation of the ECDE Branch

to respond to:

### Growing demand

and to achieve a more **effective organization of work**



### Expansion of the team

from **23** as of **April 2021** to **30** as of **March 2022\***

\* Including first colleagues based out of Geneva

## Strengthened results-based approach

and application of the

### Programme's M&E Framework

First **ECDE Year in Review** report published



First **external evaluation**

## Increased media exposure

**3 out of 10 top most-read news** were about ECDE-related work



**22 articles** published generating **170,000** unique page views

**Profile visits** ECDE@UNCTAD Twitter handle

**2020** **16 times** **2021**

**Average impressions per post**

**2020** **+70%** **2021**

## Wider audience



**10 new publications** in 2021

totaling more than **100,000** downloads

with the DER 2021 and the COVID-19 and e-Commerce: Global Review accounting for roughly half of them

## High satisfaction

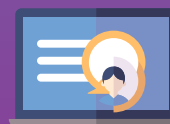


**ECDE-related technical cooperation and capacity-building**

**95% of beneficiaries\***

rated the assistance provided as

**“Useful” or “very useful”**



\* On average and among those who responded to feedback surveys





# Main activities and accomplishments in 2021



# Towards improved policy formulation on e-commerce and the digital economy for development

## 1.1. Building knowledge on how to benefit from e-commerce and the digital economy

### Digital Economy Report 2021

The 2021 edition of Digital Economy Report (DER) explores [“Cross-border data flows and development: For whom the data flow”](#). It highlights why global data governance matters for development, taking a deep dive into the development and policy implications of cross-border flows of digital data, examining recent trends and global developments in the digital economy, and reviewing existing data governance approaches at national, regional and multilateral levels.

Against the backdrop of a surge in international data flows in recent years, an increased concentration in value creation and capture fuelled by digital data, and a fragmentation of data governance approaches, the DER warns of a growing data-related divide in addition to the traditional digital divide. The Report calls for a concerted effort to develop a global approach that factors in the multi-dimensional nature of data and balances different interests and needs, and crucially makes the case for a new global institutional framework with the appropriate mix of multilateral, multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary engagement that addresses several policy areas and priorities for inclusive and sustainable development, under the auspices of the United Nations, the most inclusive international forum in terms of country representation.



The DER gained significant traction, having been launched at a pre-event to UNCTAD XV in September with the participation of the UNCTAD Secretary-General, the Minister of Telecommunications and the Information Society of Ecuador, the Minister of Communications and Informatics of Indonesia, the Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union, the European Commissioner for Justice, and the Executive Director of the Internet and Jurisdiction Policy Network, moderated by the President of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board.

The DER's message was amplified through close to 30 outreach events reaching over 1,200 participants from governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society and academia. These included a high-level dialogue in New York with the support of the President of the UN General Assembly and opened by UNCTAD's Secretary-General, the World Data Forum in Bern, a joint event with Research ICT Africa, a meeting of the UN Economists Network, eT Ready Focal Points ([see section](#) on eTrade Readiness Assessments below), *eTrade for all* Focal Points ([see section](#) on *eTrade for all* below) and courses for UN delegates in Geneva, North Macedonia and Egypt. By the end of 2021, the DER had been downloaded more than 32,000 times.

As a follow-up to the DER, UNCTAD was requested to be a knowledge partner for the Digital Economy Working Group's work on cross-border data flows under Indonesia's G20 Presidency. Moreover, UNCTAD is participating in the High-Level Committee on Programmes' (HLCP) Working Group on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the HLCP workstream on global public goods/data governance.

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## Statistics related to e-commerce and digital economy

During the second half of the year, UNCTAD resumed its survey data collection from National Statistical Offices and other competent authorities of member States, with a view to updating the Database on statistics related to e-commerce and the digital economy with latest data on the size of the ICT sector and the use of ICT by enterprises (last updated in 2018). Internationally



**“Not only are the contents of high quality, but the very choice of topic for the report and the decision to expose the different approaches to it, constitute powerful tools for those of us who participate in policymaking in developing countries.”**

**Juan Alfonso Fernández González,  
Advisor, Ministry of Communications  
of the Republic of Cuba**

Last but not least, analysis from the DER served as the basis of the background note for the 2022 meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-Commerce and the Digital Economy on the topic of “Recovering from COVID-19 in an increasingly digital economy: Implications for sustainable development”. The theme of the eCommerce Week 2022 “Data and Digitalization for Development” will further extend discussions around the issues presented in the DER.

comparable statistics on trade in ICT goods and services, including digitally deliverable services, were updated and disseminated via UNCTADStat. They inform policy discussions at the national and international level and power capacity-building activities ([see section](#) on Technical assistance on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy below).

## Policy Briefs

Motivated by the fact that digital trade – trade in goods and services that are digitally ordered and/or digitally delivered – accounts for a growing share of international trade, the policy brief [“Digital Trade: opportunities and actions for developing countries”](#) notes that digitalization creates new trade opportunities and the potential to support resilience in times of disruption, yet economies and firms with low levels of digital preparedness risk falling further behind. Ensuring more inclusive outcomes from digital trade requires a holistic and coordinated approach to formulating and implementing relevant policies, often supported by development assistance. The policy brief highlights key areas for action across ICT access and connectivity, education and skills, trade facilitation, support for micro-small, and medium-sized enterprises, gender-based inclusion, and regulatory frameworks.



## Technical Notes on ICT for Development

In 2021, the Programme released two Technical Notes on ICT for Development examining the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on e-commerce and the digital economy. [“Estimates of global e-commerce 2019 and preliminary assessment of COVID-19 impact on online retail 2020”](#) concludes that the value of e-commerce transactions in 2019 increased by around 4% from 2018. It also provides a first indication of the potential for a pandemic-driven boost to e-commerce; online retail sales grew by 2 percentage points

over the same period in the countries with data available, but jumped by a further 3 percentage points to reach 19% of total retail sales in 2020. [“Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade in the digital economy”](#) found that ICTs have been crucial for enabling countries to continue trading during the pandemic, with digitally deliverable services remaining relatively resilient against a one-fifth decline in overall services flows, thereby surging to 64% of total services trade. However, LDCs and Africa experienced sharp declines in imports of the ICT goods that form a foundation for such resilience. As such, the pandemic risks further exacerbating digital divides.

## Implications of COVID-19 for e-commerce and development

In addition to the Technical Notes, the Programme’s research agenda generated knowledge about the impact of the pandemic on e-commerce through the COVID-19 and e-commerce global and

regional reviews, undertaken under the *eTrade for all* umbrella in collaboration with United Nations Regional Commissions and other partners. Following the release of the [Global Review](#) in March 2021, regional reports were published for [Africa](#), [Latin America and the Caribbean](#) and [transition economies](#).<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2. Building capacity to harness e-commerce and the digital economy

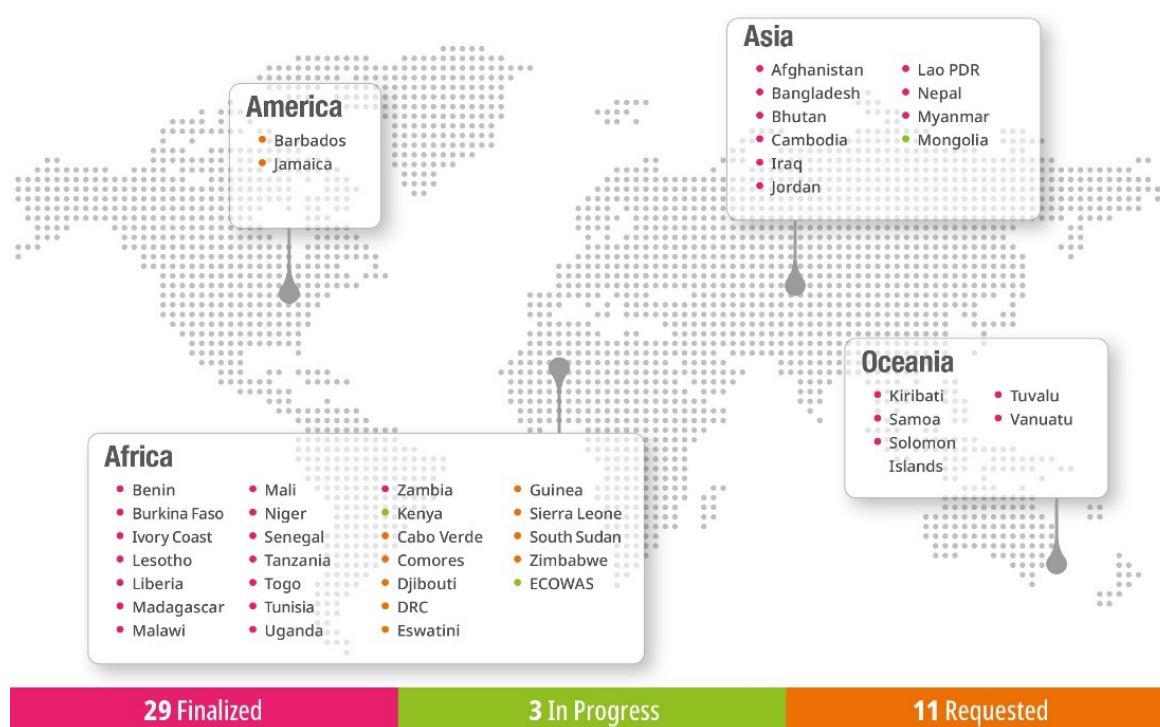
The ECDE Programme is working with governments to help them better understand challenges pertinent to e-commerce and to build the adequate environment for its development by conducting national assessments (eT Readies) and supporting their implementation, developing e-commerce strategies (ECS), providing policy and legal advice to countries requesting assistance in building legal frameworks (e-commerce and law reform) and in measuring e-commerce and the digital economy. It also promotes the inclusive development of e-commerce and the digital economy by enabling women to participate and influence the policy debate through eTrade for Women.

### eTrade Readiness Assessments

The challenge of strengthening the readiness of developing countries to benefit from digital transformation has gained added urgency by the COVID-19 pandemic. The eTrade Readiness Assessments (eT Readies) provide detailed diagnostics and policy recommendations to foster an enabling environment and build sound e-commerce ecosystems in developing countries, particularly Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

A total of 29 eT Readies have been conducted by UNCTAD since 2017 (see [Figure 1](#)). Twenty-four of them cover LDCs but there is a steadily increasing demand from governments of other developing countries to benefit from such assessment. The eT Readies of Jordan and Tunisia were finalized in 2021. The eT Ready of Kenya and the regional eT Ready for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are ongoing.

**Figure 1: UNCTAD eTrade Readiness Assessments status (as of March 2022)**



Source: UNCTAD 2021.

As an immediate follow-up to the assessments of **Jordan** and **Tunisia**, Action Plans are being developed for the first time under the leadership of lead Ministries and in consultation with relevant public and private stakeholders.<sup>2</sup> It is expected that those plans provide the Governments with an operational and planning tool to mobilize resources and fast-track the implementation of selected actions identified in the assessment, based on the countries' policy priorities.

In both Jordan and Tunisia, this work has helped to catalyze inter-institutional coordination and involve the private sector and other key actors in the e-commerce policy discussions. A steering committee has been put in place in both countries to support the assessment process and ensure policy coordination and coherence.

In **Kenya**, UNCTAD is conducting an eT Ready assessment as a first step towards the ECS formulation process.<sup>3</sup> Particular emphasis has been placed on the issue of inclusion of women, youth, rural populations and persons living with disabilities in e-commerce activities. Collaboration with one *eTrade for all* partner, the British Standards Institution, which joined the initiative in 2021 ([see section](#) on *eTrade for all* below), has helped to include the role of standards in the assessment

of the enabling environment that is needed for e-commerce to develop. It has brought to light the importance of standards for the emergence of trust among actors engaged in e-commerce transactions or for entrepreneurs to secure financing.

In the **ECOWAS**, the regional eT Ready is the first step towards the development of a regional ECOWAS E-commerce Strategy.<sup>4</sup> The regional eT Ready will build on the 8 eT Readies undertaken by UNCTAD for ECOWAS member States in [Benin](#), [Burkina Faso](#), [Côte d'Ivoire](#), [Liberia](#), [Mali](#), [Niger](#), [Senegal](#) and [Togo](#) between 2018 and 2020. It will also include the results of data collection, desk review and national workshops organized in the 7 countries which have not yet benefited from an eT Ready (Cabo Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia) between October 2021 and February 2022, thereby providing an overall readiness assessment for the region. Several kick-off events were organized by UNCTAD in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission in October-November, for various stakeholders, including the ECOWAS Commission, focal points in ECOWAS member States, representatives of ECOWAS member States in Geneva and United Nations Resident Coordinators (UNRCOs) based in the region.

### Box 1: Mapping of Digital Cooperation Initiatives in support of the ECOWAS Region

With a view to gaining a better understanding of the ongoing initiatives in ECOWAS member States in the area of digital cooperation, UNCTAD disseminated a survey in December 2021 to resident development partners through the UNRCOs. Survey responses as well as prior mapping exercises shared with UNCTAD<sup>5</sup> allow to start inferring a number of trends. Most development partners that responded to the survey (87.5%) stated that digital cooperation was one of the priorities of their organization.<sup>6</sup> The number of partners that indicated that they planned to include digital cooperation activities in the next development strategy represented an increase of 9% as compared to the number that reported having conducted

such activities during the last 5 years. Specific projects described in the mapping exercises demonstrate great diversity of targeted beneficiaries (MSMEs and start-ups, youth, women, agrobusinesses, CSOs, etc.) and broad sectoral and substantive coverage (ranging from support to policymaking, to universal access and inclusion in relation to ICT infrastructure and services, e-commerce skills, AI, e-learning, e-health, gender equality and access to financing). While this coverage has increased over time, reflecting the increasing number of areas undergoing profound changes brought about by technology, the significant number of projects that continue to address access to ICT infrastructure and services points to persisting digital divides in ECOWAS countries.

Through all these projects, UNCTAD is engaging closely with *eTrade for all* partners and UNRCOs and other development partners to map ongoing digital related activities with a view to strengthening synergies with ongoing digital programmes and mobilizing their support for the implementation of the eT Readies, Action Plans and E-commerce Strategies (see [Box 4](#) below for UNRCOs).

The ECDE Programme also conducted a mapping of assessments of country digital readiness. Looking at LDCs, so far 31 of the 46 LDCs have been assessed by UNCTAD (24), the World Bank

(16) and UNDP (1).<sup>7</sup> The various assessments have different scope (digital economy in a broad sense for the World Bank and UNDP) and use different methodologies. Those conducted by UNCTAD involve a series of capacity-building activities and an implementation support mechanism to ensure follow-up to policy recommendations. Efforts to build on existing studies and to strengthen cooperation with development partners for their implementation are at the heart of *eTrade for all* and the ECDE Programme philosophy.



**“eTrade Readiness Assessments proved to be a great tool for countries to fast-track targeted actions on concrete policy recommendations. Countries that have a clear picture of their e-commerce ecosystem as well as coherent strategies in place have been able to respond to the sector’s needs more quickly and more effectively. Germany has financed 16 eTrade Readiness Assessments over the past five years and we are happy to contribute to this important groundwork. Now it is more urgent than ever to pay collaborative attention to what these assessments tell us and to move to committed implementation on all sides.”**

**Dr. Tania Rödiger-Vorwerk, Deputy Director General, Private Sector, Trade, Employment and Digital Technologies, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development**



## Implementation Support Mechanism

eTrade Readiness Assessments have proven to be strategic policy advisory tools to strengthen developing countries' digital readiness. Their real value for beneficiary countries is fully realized only when policy recommendations are implemented. The eT Ready Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM) was launched in 2020 to enhance synergies and scale up joint efforts among eT Ready beneficiary and development partners. The ISM relies

on an implementation review to assess progress and gaps in the implementation of the recommendations and to document good practices, policy impacts and lessons learned. In 2021, UNCTAD embarked on the second ISM implementation review, taking stock of the experiences and feedback shared during a series of stakeholders engagement events, based on the lessons learnt from the [first](#) implementation review conducted in 2020 (see [Box 2](#)).<sup>8</sup>

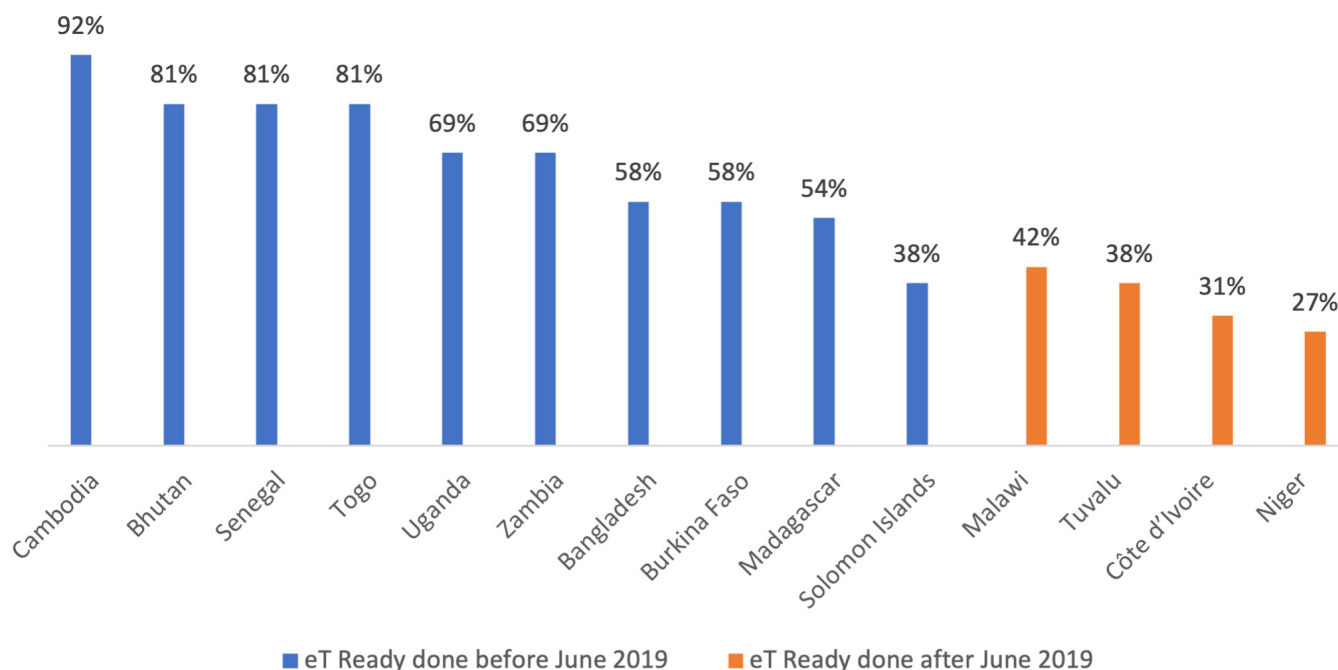
### Box 2: Knowledge and experience-sharing through the UNCTAD Implementation Support Mechanism

UNCTAD organized a series of stakeholder engagement events in 2021 to facilitate the sharing of experiences in managing the eT Ready follow-up process. In January-February, over 270 people, from more than 20 countries, attended two virtual workshops to discuss the findings of the 1<sup>st</sup> implementation review and share experiences. The events brought together stakeholders from different ministries and regulatory agencies, the private sector, development partners, including UN system organizations, mobilized with the support of UNRCOs, as well as *eTrade for all* partners. These initiatives served to strengthen coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, at the national level as well as across country groups and regions. In September, three capacity-building virtual workshops were organized with eT Ready Focal Points and other relevant stakeholders involved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation review. These helped to improve their understanding of the methodology used and good practices for a successful participation in the implementation review.

Fourteen countries, of which 13 LDCs, participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation review.<sup>9</sup> Preliminary results suggest that countries have increasingly taken ownership of the implementation process and are making good progress, also thanks to *eTrade for all* partners that have provided valuable assistance to support countries' implementa-

tion efforts.<sup>10</sup> **Cambodia** has consolidated its top-ranking position, with 92 per cent implementation rate according to the 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation review scored performance assessment, followed by **Bhutan, Senegal** and **Togo** at 81 per cent (see [Figure 2](#)).

**Figure 2: eT Ready implementation rates in the 14 countries reviewed in 2021**



Source: UNCTAD forthcoming.

ICT infrastructure and services, legal and regulatory framework and payments are the areas where most of the implementation efforts were concentrated. The 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation review provides 140 examples of public and private sector

achievements from the 14 reviewed countries in the seven *eTrade for all* policy areas. Some key achievements in selected countries are outlined in [Box 3](#).

### Box 3: Key achievements in the implementation of eT Ready recommendations in selected countries

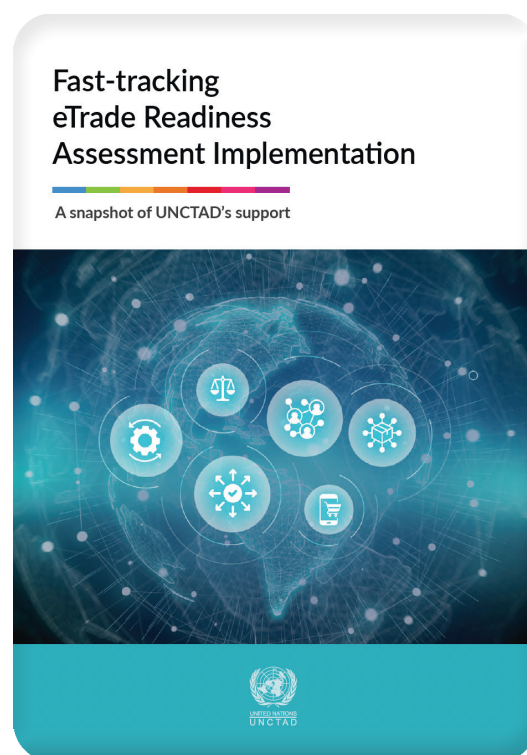
In 2021, the **Bangladesh** Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized training workshops and led an advocacy programme on promoting women's participation in the digital economy. In **Bhutan**, the Royal Monetary Authority collaborated with Ripple, a blockchain company, to explore the possibility of a central bank digital currency. In **Burkina Faso**, as part of a reform of school curriculum, ICT and digital education will be introduced in all pre-schools and first grades on a trial basis from October 2022 onwards. **Cambodia** set up the Inter-ministerial Committee for Monitoring Implementation of E-commerce Strategy and two new business associations dealing with e-commerce were established: the Cambodia E-business Association and the Cambodia Digital Technology Association. To improve the processing speed of cross-border e-commerce, Cambodia Post and the Ministry of Commerce are collaborating with UPU and UNCTAD to interface UPU's customs declaration system (CDS) with the ASYCUDA customs management system.<sup>11</sup>

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, a workshop took place for the validation of the cybersecurity strategy that aims to ensure secure financial transactions, among other objectives. A home delivery start-up from **Madagascar** raised its first round of capital through an impact investment, three years after the start-up's launch. The first Mastercard debit card was introduced in **Malawi**, in partnership with a mobile operator. **Niger** established a multi-stakeholder e-commerce consultative committee. **Senegal** inaugurated a new tier 3 data centre. The data centre is supposed to safely store all Government data as well as providing storage space to the private sector. In addition to starting to develop a national ECS with UNCTAD support, the Government of **Solomon Islands** passed a cabinet paper to construct 200 additional telecommunications towers for 3G and 4G network, to be completed by 2023. **Togo** launched the country's first cyberattacks response center and developed a national ECS. **Tuvalu**, as well as **Kiribati**, started using UNCTAD's ASYCUDAWorld customs management software that will help to automate import and export clearance processes. To improve last-mile delivery in **Uganda**, post and courier services increased by 18 per cent the number of registered pick-up centers used for mail processing and delivery. **Zambia** has extended its offer of e-government services from 51 to 128 throughout the year, including also services for businesses.

The eT Readies have also been instrumental to foster regional visions for e-commerce, showing the value of having national assessments as a basis for regional comprehensive diagnostics. This is the case of the ECOWAS and the PIFs where eT Readies have been instrumental in leading to the development of regional E-commerce Strategies. In addition, in the feedback received through the 2<sup>nd</sup> implementation review, **Uganda** reported being better equipped with a stronger analytical basis to engage at the regional level during the development of the **East African Community** (EAC) e-commerce strategy in 2021. The latter, led by the EAC Secretariat, has drawn on the eT Readies of **Tanzania** and **Uganda** as well as the ECS of **Rwanda** for its preparation. UNCTAD is part of the established Steering Committee for the EAC e-commerce strategy.

Recurring hurdles that are hampering countries' efforts in accelerating e-commerce enabling investments include limited inter-ministerial coordination, fragmented public-private sector cooperation, and scarce resource mobilization from development partners for capacity-building in different policy areas. There is a need for more significant and coordinated engagement of development partners in supporting e-commerce development initiatives. This is still a relatively new policy area and beneficiary countries often have to deal with fragmented and uncoordinated actions taken by a multitude of development assistance players. Given the cross-cutting nature of e-commerce, cooperation between development partners and the beneficiary countries is critical for effective policy implementation.

While recognizing that implementation is first and foremost a national process, UNCTAD's eT Ready ISM and the *eTrade for all* initiative both facilitate access to many relevant e-commerce capacity-building programmes offered by UNCTAD and other partners. UNCTAD is advocating for a more coordinated approach, especially at the country level, and a brochure providing a snapshot of how the ISM can contribute to this effect was developed in 2021.<sup>12</sup> For example, UNCTAD now works with UNRCOs to enhance cooperation and contribute to mainstreaming e-commerce and digital economy into national development policy processes and cooperation frameworks. The UN system's Cooperation Frameworks led by RCOs provide a valuable platform with great potential for scaling-up coordinated actions. As the pandemic has added urgency to strengthening the digital readiness of countries, particularly LDCs, the eT Ready recommendations are most relevant for national COVID-19 recovery plans ([see Box 4](#)).



#### **Box 4: Cooperation with UNRCOs - the example of the UN Country Team in Lao PDR in the context of the COVID-19 recovery plan**

Throughout all ECDE capacity-building activities, UNCTAD is increasingly partnering with UNRCOs. While not all RCOs and resident development partners have included e-commerce and the digital economy among their priorities, many are partnering with UNCTAD in mapping resident development partners' digital-related activities, convening meetings to present UNCTAD's projects in-country, and engaging in the launching events and follow-up activities. In 2021, UNCTAD reached out to UNRCOs in more than 20 countries to map digital related-activities to assess their level of engagement of in-country development partners in e-commerce development. Mapping should not be viewed as an end in itself but rather as a steppingstone to assess who is doing what, foster coordination and build synergies. UNCTAD has also contributed to discussions led by several UNRCOs in the context of COVID-19 recovery plans. For example, in Lao PDR, UNCTAD in cooperation with other UN Country Team members contributed to raising the profile of e-commerce development in the context of the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED), in line with eT Ready recommendations. UNCTAD also contributed to a background paper for a High-level Roundtable in November 2021 that is providing a basis for the development of a national COVID-19 recovery plan in Lao PDR.



“We have benefited from the experience shared by the countries that participated in the first implementation review. Such capacity building activities are very useful as they help our efforts for effective implementation of eT Ready recommendations.”

Ibrahim Tanda Bonkano, Director of Services Trade Promotion, Ministry of Trade and Private Sector Promotion, Niger, on occasion of the 2nd Implementation Review Capacity Building Virtual Workshop for eT Ready beneficiary countries’ Focal Points, 22 September 2021

## E-Commerce Strategies

UNCTAD provides support to developing countries, including LDCs, to develop E-commerce Strategies (ECS) at national or regional levels ([see Figure 3](#)).

In 2021, the ECSs of Botswana and Rwanda were finalized, and strategy development is ongoing for Benin, Solomon Islands, Kenya (eT Ready under finalization), and the ECOWAS region (regional eT Ready under finalization).

**Figure 3: UNCTAD E-commerce Strategy status (as of March 2022)**



Source: UNCTAD 2021.

**Rwanda's** ECS was completed, including a review of the country's draft e-commerce policy to ensure alignment between the umbrella policy and the e-commerce strategy that would serve as its implementation document.<sup>13</sup> The national e-commerce policy and strategy are in validation phase. The EAC Secretariat supported the development of a regional E-Commerce Strategy over the course of 2021, following an assessment exercise covering all Partner States carried out in 2020 and built on earlier work carried out in the region, including by UNCTAD. Rwanda will be the first country in the region to benefit from the implementation of strategic measures in support of e-commerce at both national and regional level, demonstrating the scope for coordinated actions at various levels. For example, in the area of payments, the national strategy proposes measures aimed at incentivizing merchants and consumers engaged in e-commerce activities, including among disadvantaged groups, to adopt digital payments through training and awareness-raising campaigns and measures aimed at reducing charges for e-payments, while the regional strategy proposes the development of guidelines for mobile money payments interoperability across the EAC.

In **Benin**, UNCTAD prepared an ECS following the eT Ready finalized in 2020.<sup>14</sup> A series of consultations were organized with several public institutions and a consumer survey disseminated through 40 Community Digital Points. A draft was submitted to the Government of Benin for its review in November 2021. In view of the preliminary nature of the e-commerce ecosystem in Benin, the draft strategy focuses, *inter alia*, on strengthening the business component of e-commerce (e.g., by identifying "champions", particularly within the MSMEs, which would receive targeted support and benefit from incentive mechanisms put in place to encourage the adoption of e-commerce). The strategy also aims to ensure the implementation of a dedicated logistics network as a prerequisite for the development of e-commerce and the adhesion and loyalty of consumers.

**Botswana's** National ICT Policy Review and ECS was launched in October.<sup>15</sup> To support Botswana in achieving its Vision 2036, priority areas of Botswana's development agenda, including growing the country's export markets, private-sector development, citizen empowerment, job creation, productive capacity, global competitiveness, diversification and building a knowledge-based economy were reflected in the strategy, which illustrates the role that e-commerce can play in allowing countries with small populations to tap larger, more developed markets. With a view to promoting local empowerment and increasing the efficiency of domestic entrepreneurship, UNCTAD is supporting the Government in developing and implementing an e-commerce training for local entrepreneurs. The first of a series of e-commerce training activities was delivered in December to help MSMEs increase sales during the Christmas season.

In **Myanmar**, in 2019 UNCTAD had engaged in the development of a national ECS, which aimed to support the country's strategic development goals by serving as a roadmap for how e-commerce can strengthen national industrial, trade and services sectors.<sup>16</sup> Although project implementation was negatively impacted by delays owing to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and political developments in Myanmar in 2021, which eventually resulted in the suspension of project activities, in March 2021 the draft strategy document was reportedly accepted by the National Implementation Unit.

In the Pacific, UNCTAD initiated support for the development of a national ECS in the **Solomon Islands**. The strategy is part of the Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP), the joint initiative by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNCTAD, with financial support from Australia.

In December, a project steering committee was set up, supported by a technical working taskforce.<sup>17</sup>

The ECDE Programme in 2021 mapped e-commerce policy documents prepared by various development partners and by countries themselves and identified that such documents were available for 45 developing countries, including 13 LDCs. This

non-exhaustive list suggests that many developing countries still lack such frameworks or are in the process of developing them. It is worth noting that a gender component has for the most part not been integrated within those policy tools.



**“The Netherlands is a proud partner of UNCTAD. Together we stimulate digitalization and e-commerce in an inclusive way to support and enable partner countries reaping the benefits from digitalization. UNCTAD’s eTrade Readiness Assessments and their follow-up strategies, like the ECOWAS E-commerce Strategy, are critical elements in making ongoing progress and further development.”**

**Desiree Hageaars, Coordinating policy officer Trade for Development, Department for Sustainable Economic Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands**

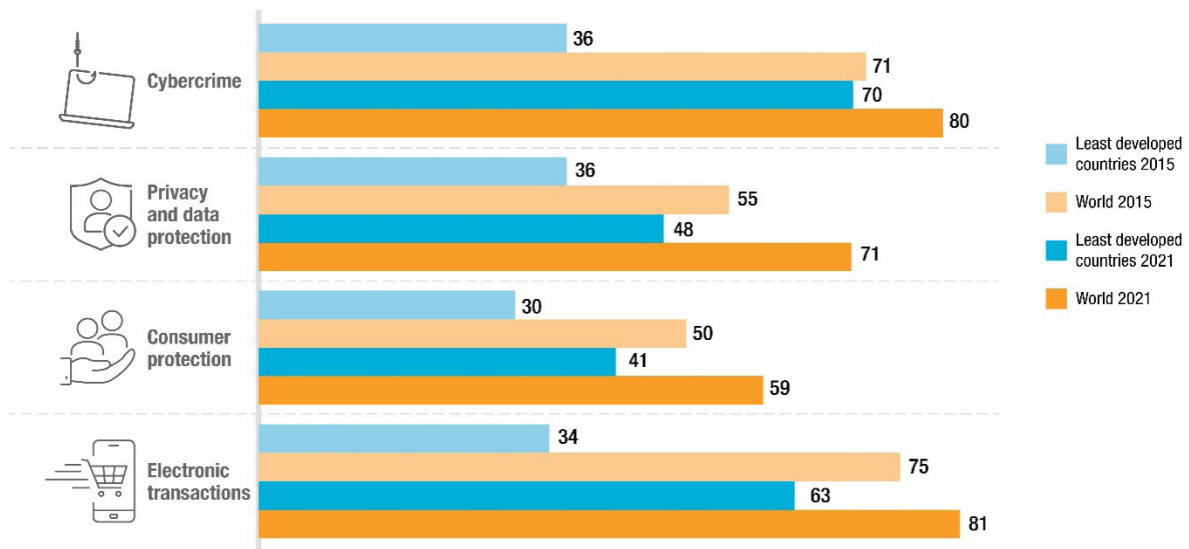
## E-commerce and Law Reform

In recent years, and particularly during the pandemic, the rise of e-commerce has created unique challenges for governments including regarding their legal frameworks. The escalation of cybercrime and online fraud accelerated by the global COVID-pandemic adds urgency to the adoption of sound laws, with corresponding efficient implementation mechanisms.

The **Global Cyberlaw Tracker**, which provides an overview of the state of e-commerce legislation in four legal areas that are essential for increasing online user confidence, namely e-transaction, consumer protection, privacy and data protection, and cybercrime, was updated for release in February 2022. Data collected in 2021 show an

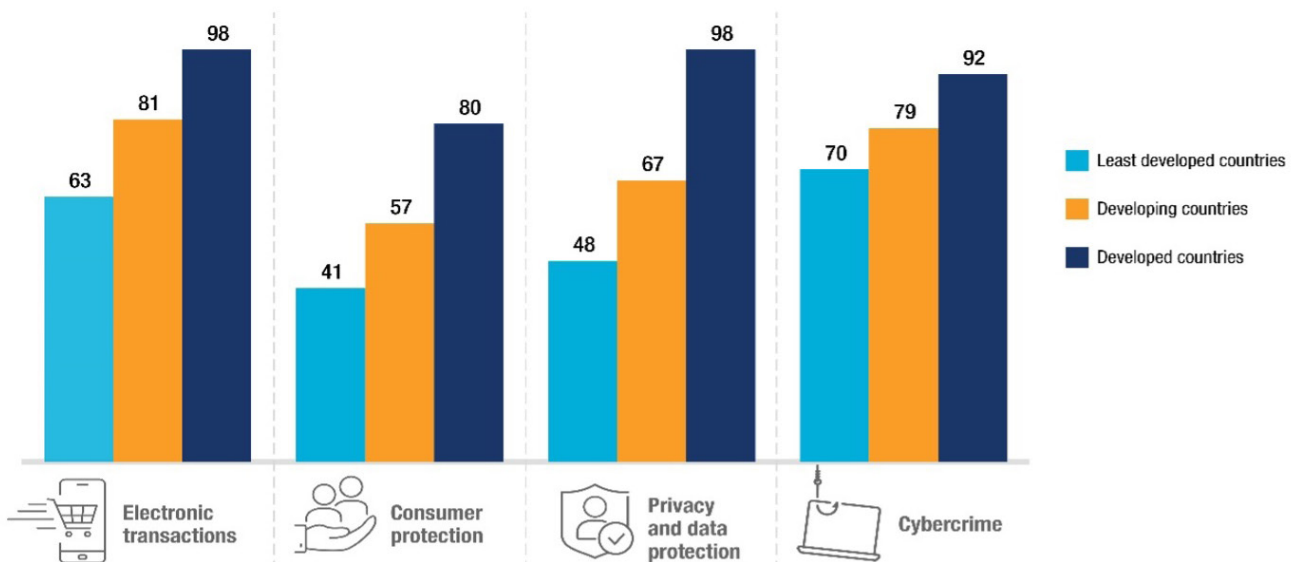
increase in the worldwide adoption of legislation to fight cybercrime (from 71 per cent of countries in 2015 to 80 per cent in 2021, and to protect data and privacy (from 55 per cent of countries in 2015 to 71 per cent in 2021) ([see Figure 4](#)).<sup>18</sup> While the availability of such legislation is generally high in developed countries, it remains inadequate in other parts of the world, especially in LDCs. Despite significant advances since 2015, the share of LDCs with relevant laws is still small in the area of privacy and data protection (48 per cent) and consumer protection (41 per cent). For e-transaction and cybercrime laws, the adoption rate is 63 per cent and 70 per cent respectively.

**Figure 4: Cyberlaw adoption rates in LDCs vs. the world, 2015 vs. 2021 (% of countries)**



Source: UNCTAD 2021.

**Figure 5: Cyberlaw adoption rates in developed, developing countries and LDCs in 2021 (% of countries)**



Source: UNCTAD 2021. The group of Developing countries excludes LDCs.



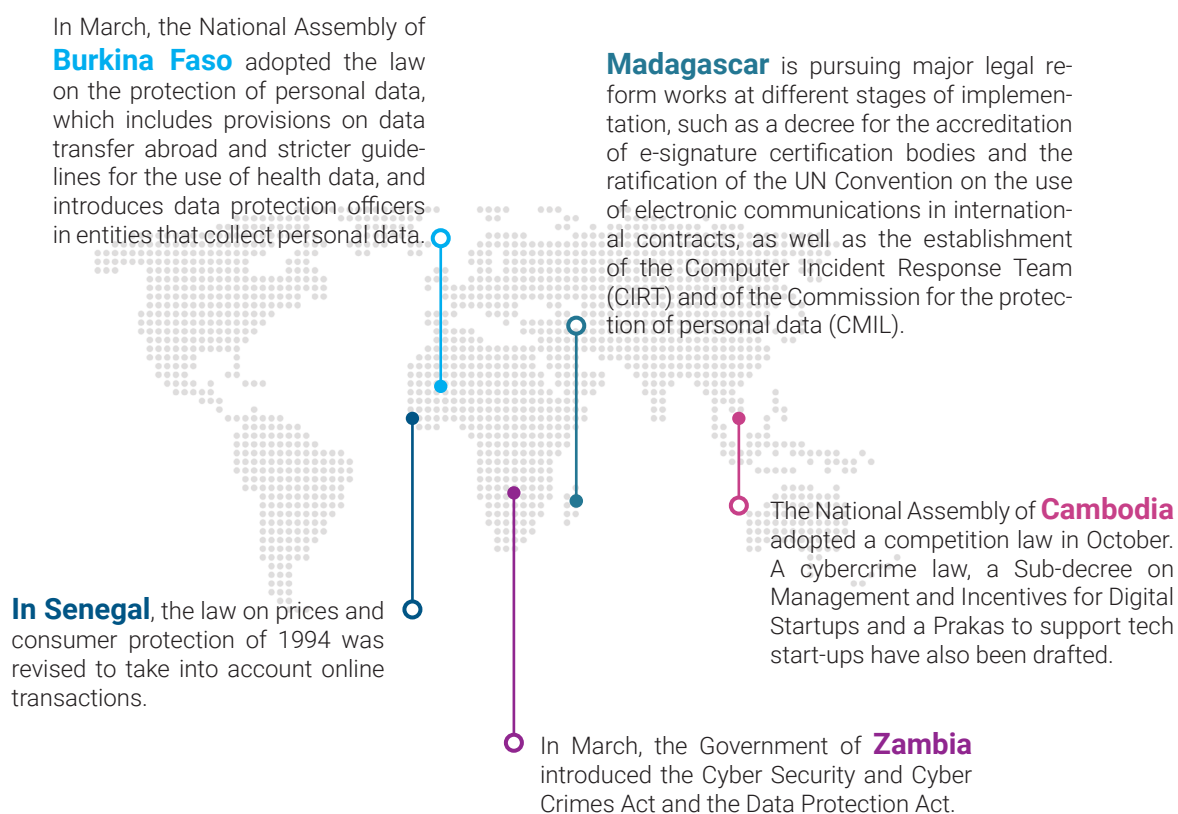
In **Kazakhstan**, the Programme conducted a review of existing regulations and laws related to e-commerce against the draft provisions of the consolidated text of the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on e-commerce. Two reports were prepared providing the Government with an analysis of compatibilities, deficiencies, and missing elements as well as a comparative analysis of the international, regional, and national approaches to e-commerce. A third report will be completed in 2022 and provide policy options and approaches for the Government to consider while preparing its legal framework based on a synthesis of the findings of the first two reports. An online Workshop on E-Commerce Negotiations and Implications for Kazakhstan was organized in September to present and discuss the main findings of the first report. Twenty-six government officials (among whom 9 women), as well as representatives of intergovernmental organizations, participated. UNCTAD expects further discussions in 2022 with the Government

to assist with the development of the comprehensive and unified new or updated legal framework.

In the **Pacific**, as part of the PDEP Programme, a draft e-commerce legislation gap analysis was prepared to be finalized after a regional training course on the Legal Aspect of E-Commerce planned for early 2023, with contributions from participants in the region.

A review of the actions implemented in the 14 eT Ready beneficiary countries covered by the 2nd implementation review found that in the area of legal and regulatory frameworks the implementation rate stood at 64 per cent on average. Five countries have undertaken gap analysis of e-commerce legal frameworks, another 5 have recorded achievements in terms of new laws and regulations ([see Figure 6](#)), and 9 have undertaken efforts to disseminate and build awareness of the legal framework.<sup>19</sup>

**Figure 6: Actions taken in 2021 to implement eT Readies recommendations related to legal and regulatory frameworks**



## Technical assistance on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy

Requests for technical assistance on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy have been received from Cambodia, Kenya, and Panama. UNCTAD offers training based on the *UNCTAD Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy 2020*, but also individual assistance subject to the availability of resources in the design of ICT and e-commerce business surveys and the analysis of results.

## eTrade for Women

eTrade for Women in 2021 continued to develop its activities along its four strategic action lines – **advocacy, capacity-building, community-building and policy dialogue** – with the aim of combining the transformative power of women entrepreneurs with the opportunities of digital technologies.

### Advocacy

eTrade for Women launched its second cohort of Advocates, a small group of influential women leaders in the digital sector, who act as role models for the next generation of women entrepreneurs and who bring women's voices to the front to influence policymaking at the national and global level.

Throughout the year, the Advocates delivered compelling messages to raise awareness about the need to close the digital gender divide. They engaged with experts and policymakers to share their unique experience as champions of the digital economy and help to identify concrete avenues to build more gender-inclusive regulatory and policy environments.

The Advocates took part in numerous high-level events, such as the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum (March), the launch of

The UNCTAD Manual was finalized in early 2021 and will serve as the basis for developing training material for offline and online training courses. The online courses are being developed in collaboration with the TrainforTrade programme.

For 2022, it is anticipated that training activities will commence at the regional level, tentatively in the Pacific, and that the ECDE Programme will provide various support to National Statistical Offices in response to requests received.

the eTrade Readiness Assessment of Côte d'Ivoire (April), the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Day (June), the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (July), the World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum (October), UNCTAD's 15th Ministerial Conference (October), and the International Trade Centre (ITC) ecomConnect Days (October).

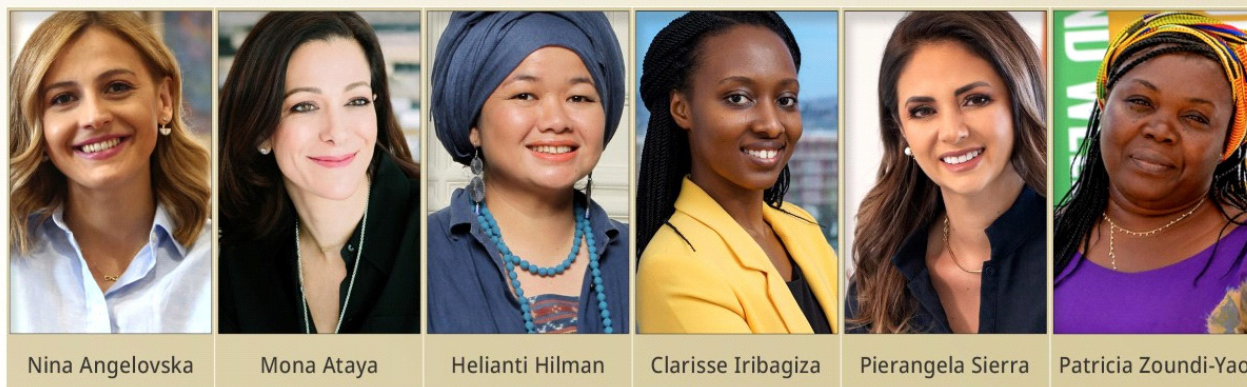
They also dedicated time to meet, inspire and provide guidance to over 100 women digital entrepreneurs from their regions. Their advice helped these entrepreneurs to overcome challenges and keep growing their digital businesses in challenging COVID-19 times.



**“I have always believed that knowledge and experience are only meaningful when they are shared and expanded. eTrade for Women is the perfect vehicle to make this happen. Being part of this initiative brings a great responsibility.”**

**Pierangela Sierra, Founder and CEO of Tipti, eTrade for Women Advocate for Latin America and the Caribbean**

## The eTrade for Women Advocates 2021–2022 Cohort



eTrade for Women



### ↓ To go further

Watch [The video presenting the eTrade for Women Advocates](#)

Check the [Advocates' individual profiles and video interviews](#)

### Capacity-building

A critical dimension of eTrade for Women is to help more women strengthen their skills to thrive as business leaders and pioneers of digital transformation. Prepared and delivered jointly with the Advocates, three online [Masterclasses](#) were delivered for 116 women entrepreneurs from 19 countries in the [Balkans](#), [Eastern Africa](#), and [Latin America and the Caribbean](#). Each Masterclass offered 3 days of regionally tailored engagement, with a combination of inspirational and business-oriented sessions, networking opportu-

nities, and a high-level policy dialogue event. Over 90% of Masterclasses participants who completed the final evaluation surveys rated the programme as “useful” or “very useful”. They reported that the opportunity to connect with peers was particularly impactful; 70% also indicated that the policy dialogues helped them better understand their policy environment and its impact on digital businesses. The Masterclasses paved the way for the creation of the Communities, eTrade for Women’s network of women digital entrepreneurs.

## Community-building

The year was marked by the growth of the [eTrade for Women Communities](#), the regional chapter of the initiative aiming at fostering safe spaces where women digital entrepreneurs can share good practices, create synergies, develop new skills, inspire each other and discover new business opportunities. After launching the first Community in 2020 in West Africa, in 2021 the initiative expanded to 3 additional regions: Southeast Asia, Eastern Africa and the Balkans, to reach more than 100 members in 27 countries, 13 of which are LDCs.

Throughout the year, eTrade for Women organized different activities to support the communities, through networking meetings, inspirational chats with the Advocates, interactions with experts and targeted workshops.



**“There is so much learning during the sessions! My hope for 2022 is to continue to learn and to be inspired by successful women entrepreneurs, for me to be able to make a bigger impact and empower the marginalized children and women in my society.”**

**Mazlita Hassan, Founder of RECQA, Malaysia**

## Advancing Policy Dialogue

To shape more gender-inclusive digital ecosystems, eTrade for Women gathers different stakeholders of the digital economy to discuss critical issues and inform policy processes related to women digital entrepreneurship.

Taking advantage of the convening power of UNCTAD and the *eTrade for all* partners, eTrade for Women facilitated a series of consultations between policymakers and women digital entrepreneurs at the local, regional and global levels. Three formal regional Policy Dialogues were held for the Balkans, Eastern Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, respectively.

They all helped to uncover challenges and good practices for facilitating women digital entrepreneurship.

The Advocates provided inputs to these processes. For instance, Mona Ataya took part in the consultations conducted by UNCTAD in the framework of the eTrade Readiness Assessment of Jordan (June), highlighting key obstacles to the expansion of e-commerce and pointing to several enablers that could boost the digitalization of Jordanian small businesses and facilitate their integration into regional markets. Patricia Zoundi-Yao advised the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of ICT of Côte d’Ivoire on issues related to the regulation of data protection and of telecommunications operators. Members of the Communities also contributed to public-private dialogues by sharing the challenges they face as women digital entrepreneurs based in developing countries during global events such as the WSIS Forum and UNCTAD XV.

## Changing the narrative: communicating for impact

eTrade for Women increased its online presence and provided opportunities for the Advocates and the Communities to share their voice on different media such as the UN News website, UNCTAD Unpacks Podcasts and UNCTAD website.

### Way forward

eTrade for Women will continue its efforts to help more women entrepreneurs succeed in the digital economy, with support from the initiative's newly established Advisory Board. Looking ahead at 2022, a new cohort of Advocates will be selected, to continue bringing the voice of women leaders forward to help inform policymaking and empower women digital entrepreneurs through new Masterclasses and a growing network of communities. As the initiative continues to grow and impact larger groups of women digital entrepreneurs across the world, additional financial support, as well as increased cooperation opportunities with the private sector, will be sought.



[Socheata Touch's participation in the WSIS](#)

[Birame Sock's intervention during UNCTAD XV](#)

[Description](#) and [Video](#) of the Policy Dialogue for the Balkans

[Description](#) and [Video](#) of the Policy Dialogue for Eastern Africa

[Description](#) and [Video](#) of the Policy Dialogue for Latin America and the Caribbean

[Pierangela Sierra was interviewed by UN Department of Global Communications](#)

[Mona Ataya was interviewed by UN Department of Global Communications](#)

[UNCTAD Unpacks Podcast with Nina Angelovska](#)

[CER interviewed Patricia Zoundi-Yao to collect her views on the eTrade Readiness Assessment of Côte d'Ivoire](#)

[eTrade for Women Communities featured on UNCTAD Website](#)

[News Item covering the Advisory Board](#)

## Towards improved coordination in support of e-commerce and the digital economy

### 2.1. Building consensus

#### UNCTAD XV

The fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was held in a hybrid format, in Bridgetown and Geneva from 3 to 7 October 2021. The Conference among other things saw member States forge and adopt a covenant - the Bridgetown Covenant - to address a number of priorities of utmost urgency to the timely attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, including closing the digital divide. The Covenant, which sets the basis for UNCTAD's work until its next Ministerial Conference, calls for strengthening the work on assisting developing countries to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, thus contributing to the closing of the digital divide. In doing so, the Covenant reinforces UNCTAD's mandate to work on enhancing development gains from the digital economy, which is carried out through the E-Commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme.

The ECDE Programme contributed to several parts of the Conference. It co-organized the Creative Economy and Digitalization Forum, which among other things noted that the digital divide and prevailing imbalances in the trade of creative and digital goods and services are not being ameliorated by current approaches as rapidly as is necessary for the global South to benefit from the data-driven digital economy. It also co-organized

a Ministerial Roundtable on Harnessing Frontier Technologies for Shared Prosperity. In both these events, representatives of eTrade for Women contributed to the discussion.



**“At UNCTAD we have always believed that gender disparities are not inevitable, that we can help change the rules of the game so women can successfully engage in the digital economy and benefit from its many opportunities.”**

**Rebeca Grynszan,  
UNCTAD Secretary-General**

## Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy

After being postponed in 2021, member States decided that the fifth session of the IGE will take place in April 2022, under the theme “Recovering from COVID-19 in an increasingly digital economy: Implications for sustainable development”. Topics for discussion in the IGE draw heavily on UNCTAD’s research and analysis as well as technical cooperation work, with good practices and lessons learned on the ground feeding into intergovernmental consensus-building. Analysis from the DER formed the basis of the background note for the fifth session of the IGE.



## Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy

The second meeting of the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy took place on 3-4 May, in a hybrid format that attracted more than 200 registered participants from 52 countries and 26 international and civil society organizations. The Working Group discussed progress in e-commerce and digital economy measurement by international organizations, capacity-building based on the updated UNCTAD *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy*, and how to tap into non-survey data sources on e-commerce and the digital economy. The Working Group noted that to produce meaningful and timely statistics on the rapidly evolving digital economy, developing countries will need support from development partners for continuous capacity-building, as well as from international and regional organizations.

## 2.2. Fostering digital partnerships

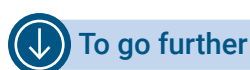
### eTrade for all: connecting the dots



#### Catalyzer of partnerships

The *eTrade for all* initiative is a unique partnership that connects the dots between beneficiary countries, partners and donors, and serves as a global helpdesk for information and contacts on technical assistance in the 7 policy areas that are key to e-commerce and the digital economy for development, namely:

In 2021 the initiative welcomed 2 new members: the Economic Research Institute for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and East-Asia (ERIA) and the British Standards Institution (BSI), bringing the total number of key institutional partners to 34, up from 14 in 2016 when the initiative was first started. The partners' Development Solutions offered on the etradeforall online platform were revised and updated to address users' feedback, offering a more user-friendly interface and an improved multilingual function.

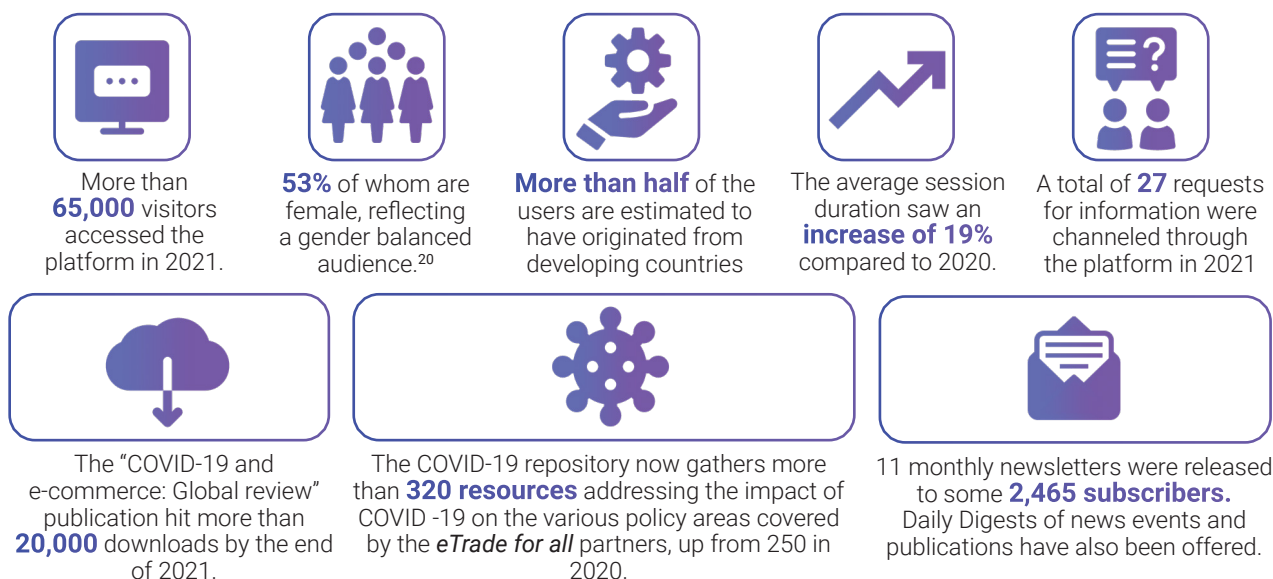


[News item on the two new members in 2021](#)

#### ETRADE FOR ALL POLICY AREAS



Figure 7: eTrade for all - key figures in 2021





## Bridging the knowledge gap

Stemming from the holistic approach to e-commerce for development put forward by the initiative, and partly based on the main findings from the first collective research effort undertaken in the framework of the [COVID-19 and E-commerce: Global Review](#), in 2021 UNCTAD, UNECLAC and selected partners started the “Design a Curriculum” phase of an *eTrade for all* Core E-commerce Course for policymakers. It aims to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of policymakers to improve the business environment for e-commerce development. The pilot version of the course, to be released in 2022, will primarily focus on Latin America. Additional regional versions, pending availability of resources, are planned to be developed for Africa and Asia in 2023 and 2024. The course is being developed in close collaboration with the TrainForTrade programme of UNCTAD.



### To go further

[How COVID-19 triggered the digital and e-commerce turning point](#)

## New collaborations for greater impact

UNCTAD was offered the opportunity to contribute a chapter of the 2021 edition of the [OECD Development Co-operation Report](#), titled “Shaping a Just Digital Transformation” (released in December 2021 and officially launched in April 2022). The chapter highlights the crucial role of the *eTrade for all* initiative for stepping up collaboration and coherence for smart and transparent digital for development solutions.

In addition, UNCTAD co-organized a special session of Asia-Arab Dialogue on Digital Economy and an Arab WSIS Plenary Session on E-Commerce, Post-COVID and Beyond: Global and Arab Perspectives in December 2021 with UNESCWA and UNESCAP, as part of the inaugural edition of the Arab International Digital Cooperation and Development Forum (DCDF 2021). The events capitalized on findings from recent publications on digital economy in various regions while offering the opportunity for stakeholders from the Asia-Pacific region, Arab region and beyond to exchange and learn about good practices implemented by governments and businesses in advancing the digital economy to build more inclusive and resilient societies.

Such collaborative efforts would most likely not have been developed without the *eTrade for all* initiative.

## Way forward

In 2022 the *eTrade for all* initiative will continue leveraging the commitment of its partners to exchange information and resources, offering a dedicated space for collaboration on topical issues, and enabling sustained synergies for joint projects and its major spin-offs (*eTrade* Readiness Assessments and the *eTrade for Women* initiative). It will continue to provide a favorable environment for increased multi-stakeholder dialogue, in particular through the next edition of the [eCommerce Week](#) (25 to 29 April 2022). Finally, it will continue to advocate for increased digital cooperation, at all levels and through a holistic approach, to fulfill its mandate to make e-commerce work for the many, rather than for the few.

## eCommerce Weeks

Following the cancellation of the Asia eCommerce Week 2021 due to changing and unforeseen circumstances, preparations for the next global edition of the eCommerce Week commenced in 2021. It will be held under the theme “Data and Digitalization for Development”, drawing on the analysis and findings of the DER 2021. To reach a wider audience, and to adapt to a new reality and maximize flexibility, the [eCommerce Week 2022](#) will take place mainly online, with only a handful of High-Level events in hybrid format.

# eCommerce Week

25–29 April 2022, Geneva



**Data and Digitalization for Development**

## Digital Cooperation for Development

Like every year, UNCTAD was co-organizer and active participant in the WSIS Forum 2021, including as co-facilitator with ITC and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) of the WSIS action line on e-business. UNCTAD contributed to the WSIS Forum High-Level Policy Session on Digital Economy and Trade, highlighting how digitaliza-

tion has changed production and consumption, but its opportunities are not easily seized by small businesses in low-income countries. It will take more than connectivity for developing countries to flourish in the digital economy, and stakeholders must accelerate their efforts to build legal frameworks, trust, digital skills, and financing for digital entrepreneurs. During the Forum, UNCTAD also concluded its role as Chair of the UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS).

During the second half of 2021, UNCTAD chaired the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and continued to provide methodological guidance and raise awareness of ICT statistics, including the dissemination of a thematic list of ICT indicators to track progress towards the targets of the 2030 agenda. In 2021, manuals on measuring ICT in households, the digital economy, and e-waste were updated.

On the basis of the DER 2021, UNCTAD is participating in the HLCP Interagency Working Group on AI and the HLCP workstream on global public goods/data governance.

UNCTAD also leads Cluster 3 on finance and technology of the initiative “Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond”, which seeks to promote finance and technology solutions, in particular digital, for a sustainable recovery from the pandemic and achievement of the SDGs.

# Goals and objectives for 2022 and beyond



At UNCTAD XV member States reaffirmed UNCTAD's mandate to work on assisting developing countries to systematically assess their state-of-play and readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, thus contributing to the closing of the digital divide. In addition, continuous funding from donors and the upgrading of the former ICT Policy Section to the E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch will further boost the ability of the ECDE Programme to deliver on its commitment to support member States, in particular developing countries, in harnessing digital transformation for inclusive and sustainable development through all its activities. The Programme's main goals and objectives for 2022 are presented in this section.

The eCommerce Week will take place simultaneously in Geneva and online from 25 to 29 April 2022 under the theme "Data and Digitalization for Development", putting a special emphasis on data and cross-border data flows and the crucial role they play in economic and social development. Organized in collaboration with *eTrade for all* and other partners, this eWeek will provide key stakeholders from all backgrounds a platform to discuss the wide gaps that exist between and within countries to harness data as well as the importance of closing data divides. Discussions will also shine a light on how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting digital transformations globally. Eight high-level sessions and several dozens of thematic sessions will be organized during the week.

The fifth session of Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy will take place in April 2022 during the eCommerce Week. The overall theme for the session will be "Recovering from COVID-19 in an increasingly digital economy: Implications for sustainable development". Member States will have the oppor-

tunity to share experiences and good practices in responding to the pandemic by harnessing digital solutions, as well as the ways for digitalization to function in the recovery for inclusive and sustainable development, and for building resilience against potential future shocks. International cooperation for digitalization that works for a better future will be emphasized in the discussion. The IGE session will also review the Chair's summary of the second meeting (May 2021) of the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy and decide on the topics for its third meeting, which is scheduled in the fourth quarter of 2022.

In 2022, the ECDE Programme will contribute to intergovernmental initiatives including the G20 and the BRICS in the field of the digital economy, thanks to the DER 2021. Its analysis led the Indonesian G20 Presidency to invite UNCTAD as a knowledge partner to its work under the Digital Economy Working Group on issues related to cross-border data flows and data free flows with trust. The Chinese BRICS Presidency, meanwhile, invited UNCTAD to support the work of the BRICS in the area of the Digital Economy, together with ITC.

Taxation and e-commerce will also be studied in 2022. An Expert Group Meeting is planned in May 2022 to identify the challenges and opportunities for governments of developing countries' domestic tax regimes resulting from the increase of e-commerce, review the online sales tax landscape and present country experiences in taxing e-commerce domestically and across borders as well as propose possible approaches based on existing tax systems and practices in different countries. The deliberations will feed into a study to be published by the end of the year.

The Programme's main goals and objectives in the capacity-building domain include new eTrade Readiness Assessments (e.g. for Mongolia), the eTrade Readiness Assessment ISM (e.g. finalization of the second IR), and E-commerce Strategies (e.g. for Benin, Kenya, Solomon Islands and ECOWAS). The Programme also plans to increase its assistance to member States seeking to consolidate their legal frameworks as well as sensitize businesses and consumers in collaboration with relevant partners.

Two online courses on e-commerce for development jointly developed by the ECDE Programme and selected partners will be available in 2022. The first – Core E-commerce Course - aims to enhance the awareness of policymakers in developing countries on how to strengthen country readiness to engage in and benefit from e-commerce. The second, based on the revised *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy*, aims to improve the measurement of e-commerce and the digital economy of member States, with the first of this kind of training activities to be conducted for the Pacific countries.

The advisory board members of the eTrade for Women initiative met for the first time in January 2022 to identify the key actions to unlock women's potential in the digital economy, thus building more inclusive digital ecosystems by empowering women digital entrepreneurs in developing countries. A Masterclass is scheduled in the Arab region for the first time, and the existing five eTrade for Women communities will be further nurtured by engaging female entrepreneurs in experience-sharing and knowledge-building activities.

Last but not least, as the ECDE Programme's first regional sub-programme, the PDEP will carry out both country-specific activities, initially focusing on Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, and region-wide research and capacity-building activities, including a regional Digital Economy Report for the Pacific, assistance with the design of national e-commerce and digital economy strategies, regional training and support on e-commerce law reform and measuring of e-commerce.

# Management



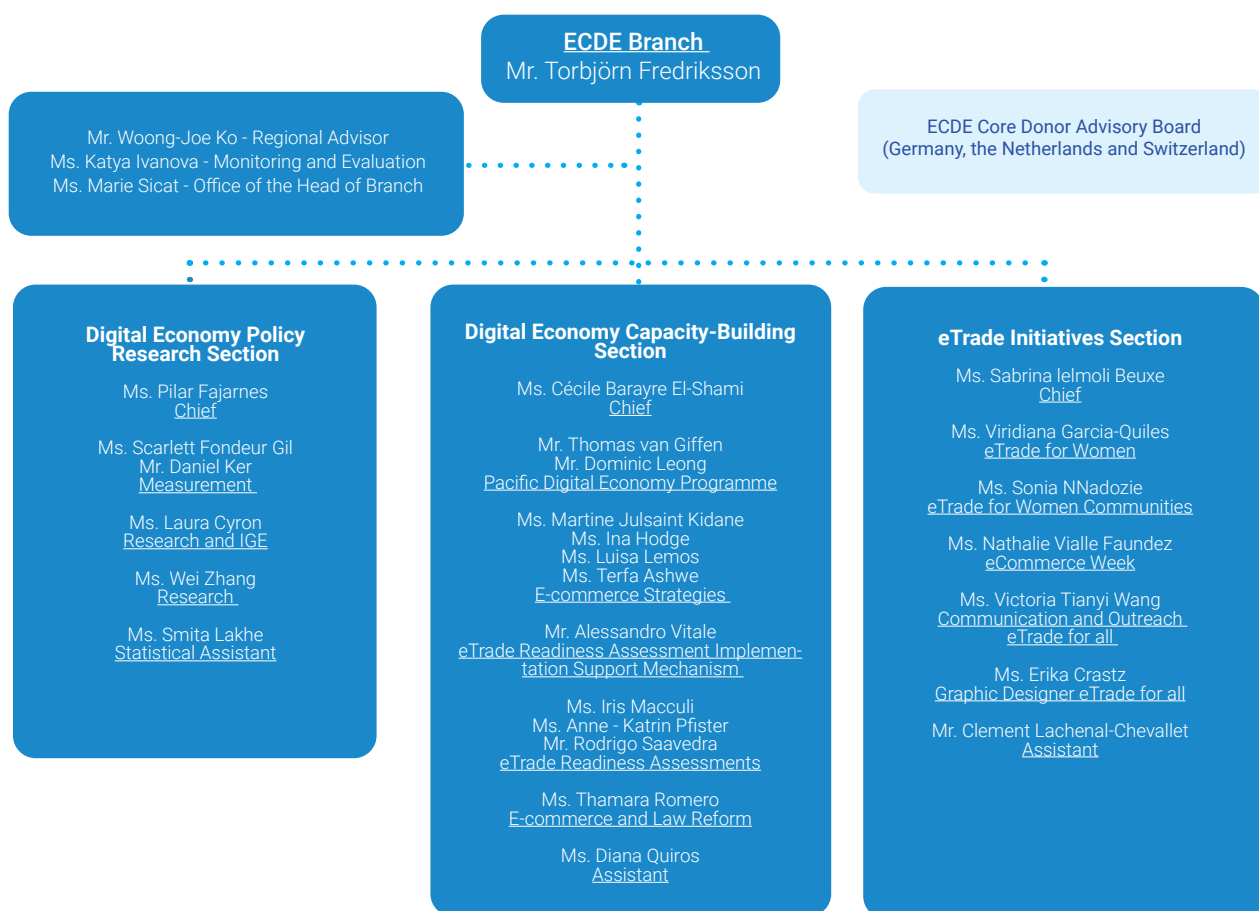
## Human resources

To meet the expectations signaled through the strengthened mandate from UNCTAD's member States and in view of the growing demand for technical assistance, research and dialogue, in August 2021 the ICT Policy Section was upgraded to the ECDE Branch, which consists of three sections: the Digital Economy Policy Research Section, Digital Economy Capacity-building Section and eTrade Initiatives Section.

At the time of drafting this report (March 2022), the ECDE Programme had a total of 30 staff members, including seven staff members funded through UNCTAD's regular budget (RB), 1 staff member on secondment, and 22 staff members funded through extra-budgetary (XB) funding with contracts of various length.

Thanks to additional resources committed by donors, 12 staff members joined the ECDE Programme during 2021, greatly enhancing the ability of the Programme to scale up its service to member States, especially developing countries. For example, the hiring of an Economic Affairs Officer and a Statistics Assistant made it possible to conduct the survey to National Statistics Offices and engage in training activities on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy. The ECDE Programme also, for the first time, has two staff members based in duty stations outside of Geneva (i.e. Nigeria and Fiji) to provide on-site support to the ECOWAS E-commerce Strategy and Pacific Digital Economy Programme, respectively.

**Figure 8: ECDE Programme team organigram (as of March 2022)**



In 2021, the Programme drew on the specific skills and expertise of 31 consultants and 13 individual contractors, 45% of whom are female,

45% represent developing countries and 91% have more than 10 years' experience in their respective fields.

**Figure 9: ECDE Programme consultants and individual contractors by programme component, 2021**



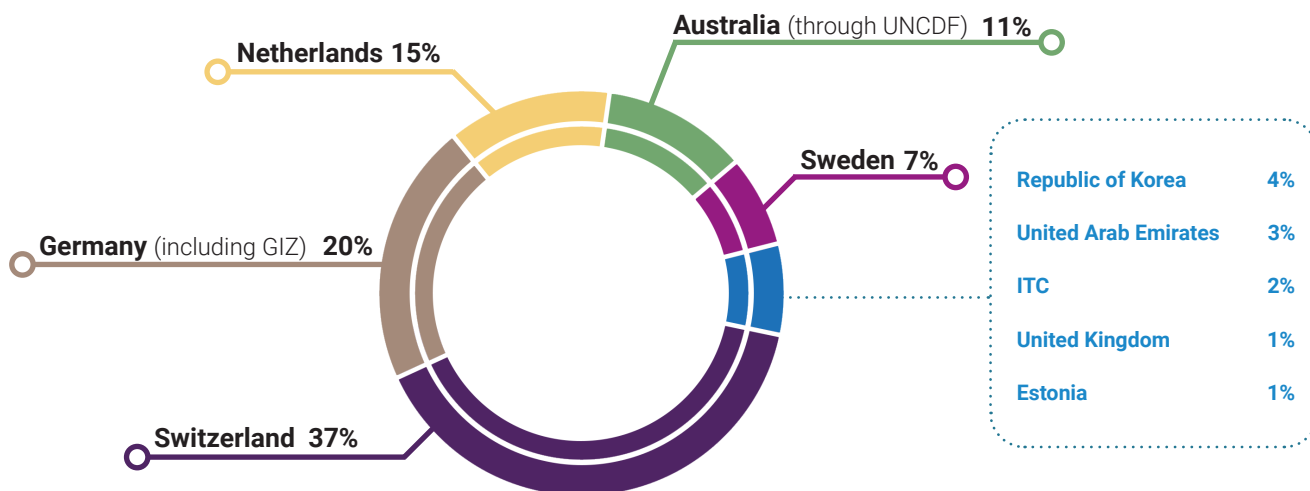
## Financial information

UN's Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) in 2021 funded 3 staff members supporting eTrade Readiness Assessments and eTrade for all and 4 consultants preparing background studies for the DER 2021, for a total of USD 468'212.<sup>21</sup>

In 2021, ECDE Programme interventions were funded by 10 different donors, for a total of more than USD 7.3 million in extra-budgetary

funding. More than two-thirds of the Programme's extra-budgetary resources were provided by 3 core donors – namely Switzerland, Germany (including both BMZ and GIZ) and the Netherlands. Significant contributions were also received from Australia through UNCDF, Sweden, and five other organizations (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: ECDE Programme donors, 2021**

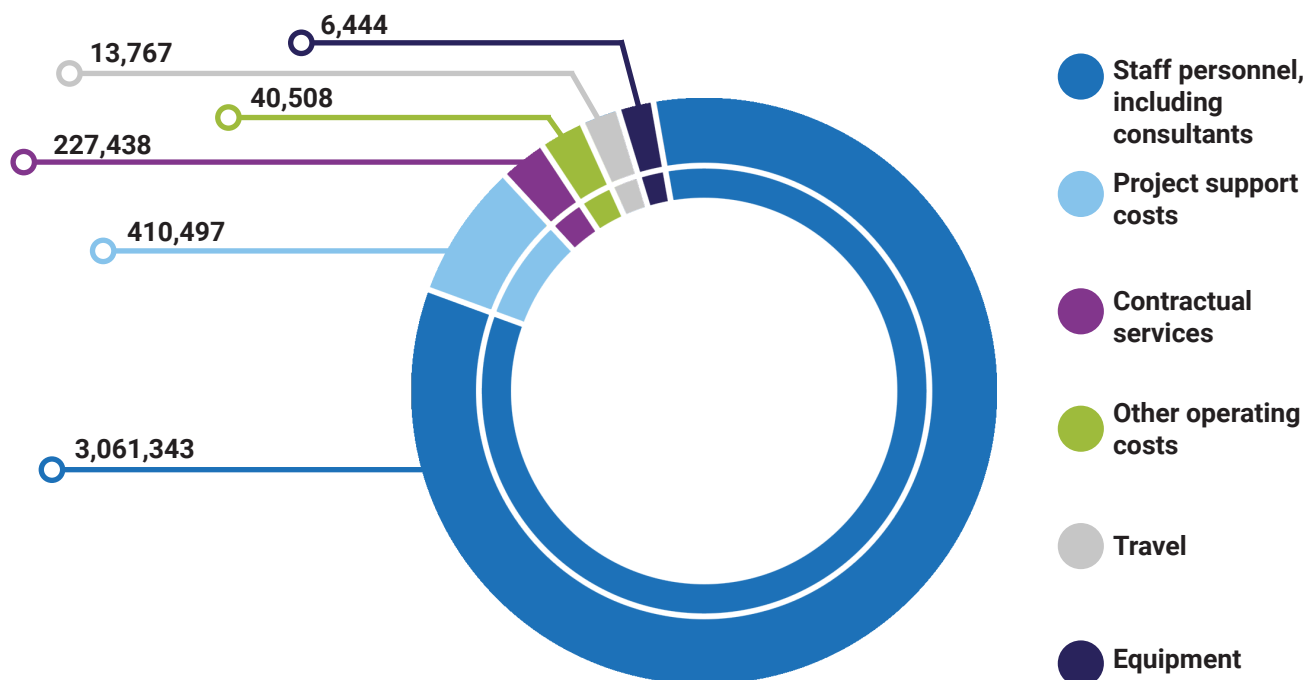




In 2021, the ECDE Programme's total extra-budgetary expenditures amounted to USD 3'759'997. A breakdown by type as well as by programme

component is provided in [Figure 11](#) and [Table 1](#) below.

**Figure 11: ECDE Programme extra-budgetary expenditures by type, 2021**



More than three-fourths of the Programme's extra-budgetary expenditures in 2021 are attributed to staff personnel and consultants, with

consultant-related expenditures for consultants whose contract started in 2021 amounting to USD 840,311.

**Table 1: ECDE Programme obligated extra-budgetary expenditures by programme component and type, 2021**

	Staff Personnel (Including consultants)	Contractual Services	Operating Other Costs	Travel	Equipment	Project Support Costs	Grand Total
eTrade Readiness Assessments	24.9%	1.2%	0.7%				26.8%
eTrade for Women	11.7%	0.6%		0.1%			12.3%
eTrade for all	9.0%	0.9%					9.9%
Research	4.5%	2.1%					6.6%
Monitoring & Evaluation	5.9%			0.4%			6.3%
E-commerce and Law Reform	6.1%						6.1%
eCommerce Week	5.1%						5.1%
Pacific Digital Economy Programme	5.0%				0.1%		5.0%
E-commerce Strategies	3.9%	0.8%					4.8%
Measuring	2.8%	0.7%					3.4%
Management	2.2%			0.1%			2.3%
Project Support Costs						11.4%	11.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>81.1%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The committed and anticipated extra-budgetary funding for the 2019-2023 period amounts to USD 19.1 million. For 2022 and beyond, the Programme will continue to seek additional extra-budgetary funding. Based on the Programme's current work plan for the next two years (i.e. 2022 – 2023) and projected funding requirements, the anticipated gap of extra-budgetary funding is 65% in 2022 (i.e. 35% covered) and 72% in 2023 (i.e. 28% covered). Discussions are ongoing with the Netherlands for renewed support for the Programme beyond the end of the current funding agreement in 2022, as well as with the UK for the funding of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) position. Additional funding from Germany (GIZ) is anticipated in support of technical cooperation with Algeria and Mauritania. Reflecting the Bridgetown Covenant's call on UNCTAD to ratchet up its assistance to developing countries to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, the Programme also hopes to secure more regular budget resources from 2023.

## Risk analysis

A protracted COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to hamper the Programme's ability to raise extra-budgetary funds due to mounting pressure on public budgets, with spending on national health systems and mitigating the economic impacts of the pandemic being prioritized over development funding. As mitigation measures such as exploring alternative funding avenues are being taken, they can only be effective in the medium- to long term, given the time it takes for new funding opportunities to materialize. The availability of regular budget resources is therefore key to mitigating this risk.

Recent political developments in certain countries may jeopardize the completion of ongoing activities or follow-up on already completed activities whose results' sustainability is contingent on continued engagement with and support to policy-makers on the part of development partners.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The first independent evaluation of the ECDE Programme was conducted in 2021, to assess progress towards the achievement of the Programme's development objective, review its M&E Framework, identify potential areas of improvement and inform future programme development.

While the evaluation report is still being finalized at the time of drafting this report (March 2022), preliminary findings confirm the high relevance of the ECDE Programme, further boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic; there is also a high level of user satisfaction with research and analysis products including the DER, as well as a high level of interest and confidence in the Programme's intergovernmental consensus-building work. Activities undertaken under the Programme's technical cooperation pillar were found to have been instrumental in boosting the e-commerce and digital economy agenda within beneficiary countries.

As part of the evaluation inception phase, the Programme's Results Framework was revised to better distinguish between immediate and intermediate-level outcomes, and more clearly outline where the Programme has attribution and control vs. contribution and influence. In 2022 the Programme will aim to further refine its M&E framework and strengthen its outcome monitoring in particular.

## Core Donor Advisory Board

The first meeting of the Programme's Core Donor Advisory Board (CDAB), whose main objective is to provide advice on the Programme's resources and priorities with a view to ensuring the predictability and continuity of its interventions and the sustainability of its results, was held virtually in September. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss how the ECDE Programme fits within the CDAB members' - Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland - broader work on promoting digitalization for development, and to outline priorities for the future. The second CDAB meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in the second quarter of 2022.

# Annexes

## Annex 1: ECDE Programme Results Framework



### Impact

Enhanced inclusive and sustainable development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy for people and businesses in developing countries, particularly LDCs.

**Accountability at Impact level: Governments of member States, development partners, civil society and private sector**

#### Intermediate Outcome 1

Improved policy formulation at the national, regional and global level on e-commerce and digital economy for development, in a gender sensitive manner

#### Intermediate Outcome 2

Improved coordination of governments, together with development partners, civil society and the private sector, to implement policies on e-commerce and the digital economy that work for development, in a gender sensitive manner.

**Accountability at Intermediate Outcome level: Governments of member States, development partners, civil society and private sector**

#### Immediate Outcome 1.1

Enhanced understanding of policymakers about policy options to benefit from e-commerce and the digital economy

#### Immediate Outcome 1.2

Improved capacity of policymakers to integrate e-commerce and the digital economy in the national and regional development agenda in dialogue with other stakeholders

#### Immediate Outcome 2.1

Increased dialogue and exchange of good practices among policymakers as well as research institutions, academic centres, public and private entities at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels in the areas of e-commerce and the digital economy, and agreed conclusions as appropriate

**Accountability at Immediate Outcome level: UNCTAD and Governments of member States**

#### Outputs of Pillar I – Research and Analysis

- 1.1 Digital Economy Report
- 1.2 Technical notes on ICT for development
- 1.3 Policy briefs
- 1.4 Database on statistics related to E-commerce and the Digital Economy
- 1.5 Other research products

#### Outputs of Pillar II – Technical Cooperation

- 2.1 E-commerce and Law Reform advisory services
- 2.2 National and regional E-commerce Strategies
- 2.3 eTrade Readiness Assessments and Implementation Support Mechanism
- 2.4 Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy training
- 2.5 eTrade for Women initiative

#### Outputs of Pillar III – Consensus-building and Partnerships

- Intergovernmental:**
  - 3.1 Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy
  - 3.2 Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy
- Multi-stakeholder:**
  - 3.3 eTrade for all initiative
  - 3.4 eCommerce Week(s)
  - 3.5 Digital Cooperation for Development (UNGIS, WSIS, G20 Digital Economy Task Force)

**Accountability at Output level: UNCTAD**

#### Activities under Pillar I

- Methodology development
- Secondary data review (background research)
- Primary data collection (surveys)
- Data processing and analysis
- Database management
- Report production and dissemination
- Brainstorming and peer review meetings when appropriate

#### Activities under Pillar II

- National and regional capacity-building workshops
- Legislation mapping, review and revision
- Diagnostics, strategy formulation and implementation support
- Development of manuals and training materials, training delivery
- Empowerment events, community building

#### Activities under Pillar III

- Organization of IGE and Working Group
- Follow-up of IGE for TDB reporting
- Development of background material and overall substantive coordination
- Meeting and event management
- Platform management
- Content management
- Stakeholder management
- Coalition and partnership building
- Policy dialogue
- Advocacy
- Outreach

**Accountability at Activity level: UNCTAD**

Contribution and Influence

Attribution and Control

## Annex 2: ECDE Programme results indicators, 2021<sup>1</sup>

Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
<b>IMPACT</b> - Enhanced inclusive and sustainable development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy for people and businesses in developing countries, particularly LDCs	<b>0.a) Variation of UNCTAD B2C E-commerce index on a yearly basis (disaggregated by region and development status (developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs))</b>				
	World	2019	55	No update <sup>2</sup>	Not applicable
	Developing Economies	2019	83	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Africa	2019	31	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Asia and Oceania	2019	54	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Latin America and the Caribbean	2019	48	No update	Not applicable
	LDCs	2019	24	No update	Not applicable
	SIDS	2019	54	No update	Not applicable
	LLDCs	2019	36	No update	Not applicable
	<b>0. b) Proportion of individuals using the Internet for purchasing or ordering goods or services (latest available year, disaggregated by region and development status (developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs))</b>				
	World	2017	24%	No update <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable
	Developing Economies	2017	54%	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Africa	2017	5.5%	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Asia and Oceania	2017	20%	No update	Not applicable
	Developing - Latin America and the Caribbean	2017	10.6%	No update	Not applicable
	LDCs	2017	2%	No update	Not applicable
	SIDS	2017	14.6%	No update	Not applicable
	LLDCs	2017	4.7%	No update	Not applicable
	<b>c) Share of enterprises in developing countries that receive orders online</b>				
		Varies <sup>4</sup>	See Table B below	See Table B below	

<sup>1</sup> The designation of economies used in the Year in Review 2021 follows the differentiation between developing and developed regions made in the "Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (M49)", known as M49. The category "transition economies" is no longer used. Where possible, baseline figures have been revised accordingly. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with the figures in the Year in Review 2020. For the purposes of the Year in Review 2021, the Republic of Korea is counted in the group of Developing economies.

<sup>2</sup> The UNCTAD B2C E-commerce index has been discontinued. The Programme is exploring possible alternatives.

<sup>3</sup> Data is collected by ITU/ the World Bank for inclusion in the Global Findex database. Latest available year is 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Data are only available for a handful of developing countries. Based on UNCTAD's Survey to National Statistical Offices, 2018 and 2021. If a country reported data in both data collection rounds, only the latest available data are shown. Reference years vary and so does coverage; data are therefore not directly comparable. Only data not older than 5 years (according to the reference year) are shown.

Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
<b>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 1:</b> Improved policy formulation at the national, regional and global level on e-commerce and digital economy for development, in a gender sensitive manner	<b>1. a) Share (%) of countries that have adopted laws and regulations related to e-commerce (disaggregated by law area, region and development status (developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs))</b>				
	<b>Developing Economies</b>				
	e-transaction	2018	73%	76%	80%
	Protection of consumers online	2018	43%	52%	57%
	Privacy and data protection	2018	43%	61%	65%
	Cybercrime	2018	63%	76%	81%
	<b>LDCs</b>				
	e-transaction	2018	51%	63% <sup>5</sup>	69%
	Protection of consumers online	2018	30%	41%	45%
	Privacy and data protection	2018	34%	48%	48%
	Cybercrime	2018	38%	70%	73%
	<b>World</b>				
	e-transaction	2018	78%	81% <sup>6</sup>	
	Protection of consumers online	2018	52%	59%	
	Privacy and data protection	2018	58%	71%	
	Cybercrime	2018	72%	80%	
	<b>1. b) Number of countries having reported progress in implementing recommendations of eTrade Readiness Assessments and/or e-commerce strategies (disaggregated by developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs))</b>				
	Developing Economies	2020	13	14	
	LDCs	2020	12	13	
	SIDs	2020	2	2	
	LLDCs	2020	5	6	
	Total	2020	13/18	14/25	23/30
	<b>1. c) Number of developing countries and LDCs with a strategy on e-commerce and/or digital economy, disaggregated by UNCTAD-supported vs non UNCTAD-supported strategies, and by strategies that address gender vs. that do not</b>				
<b>UNCTAD supported countries</b>					
Strategies that address gender	2020	2	5		
Strategies that do not explicitly address gender	2020	1	3		
Strategies that do not explicitly address gender	2020	1	2		
<b>non-UNCTAD supported countries</b>					
Strategies that address gender	2020	9	12		
Strategies that address gender	2020	1	3		
Strategies that do not explicitly address gender	2020	8	9		
Total	2020	11	17 (cumulative)	20 (cumulative)	

<sup>5</sup> This figure reflects the graduation of Vanuatu from LDC status in December 2020.

<sup>6</sup> The Year in Review 2020 had incorrectly reported the rate of worldwide adoption of legislation in the area of e-transaction at 82%, due to one country (Panama) having been incorrectly recorded as having legislation adopted in this area. The correct 2020 figure is 81% (unchanged in 2021).

Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
	<b>1. d) Number and % of countries that supply UNCTAD with data related to e-commerce and the digital economy for inclusion within UNCTAD's statistical database (disaggregated by developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs) <sup>7</sup></b>				
	Developed Economies	2017	32 (74%)	40 (78%)	
	Developing economies	2017	9 (6.7%)	20 (14%)	25
	LDCs	2017	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	
	SIDs	2017	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	
	LLDCs	2017	0 (0%)	4 (13%)	
	<b>1. e) Number of countries measuring international trade in ICT-enabled services (developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs)</b>				
	Developed Economies	2020	0	0	
	Developing economies	2020	2	2	4
	LDCs	2020	0	0	
SIDs	2020	0	0		
LLDCs	2020	0	0		
Total	2020	2	2 (cumulative)	4 (cumulative)	
<b>1. f) Number of specific actions taken by developing countries to enhance gender inclusivity in relation to e-commerce and the digital economy with UNCTAD support</b>	2020	7	16 (cumulative)		
<b>1. g) Number of specific actions taken by countries to implement programmes aimed at enhancing country readiness regarding e-commerce and digital economy, with the assistance of UNCTAD</b>	2021		8 (cumulative)		
	<b>1.1 a) Number of media mentions of UNCTAD's research work on e-commerce and the digital economy per year</b>	2021		Numerous <sup>8</sup>	
	<b>1.1 b) Number and reach of news items on UNCTAD's work on e-commerce and the digital economy per year</b>	2020	27 news items for a total of 96,138 unique page views	49 news items for a total of 439,356 unique page views (cumulative)	117 news items for a total of 800,000 unique page views (cumulative)

<sup>7</sup> Countries include both those that responded to UNCTAD's Survey to National Statistical Offices and those for which data are provided by Eurostat. Countries providing data older than 5 years (according to the reference year) are excluded.

<sup>8</sup> The Programme relies on UNCTAD's Communications and External Relations (CER) Division for the means of verification of this indicator. Up until late 2021 CER used Factiva to monitor media mentions; that tool has since been replaced by Meltwater. As the methodology used by these two tools varies, the data provided differ considerably. The Programme has therefore favored not reporting on this indicator quantitatively. Examples of media covering the Programme's research work include the Economist, Forbes, the Guardian Nigeria, Alternatives Economiques and others.

Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1.1: Enhanced understanding of policy makers about policy options to benefit from e-commerce and the digital economy	<b>1.1 c) Number of publication downloads per year (disaggregated by publication category)</b>				
	Digital Economy Report 2019, 2021	2019	160,859	660k (cumulative)	
	Technical notes in ICT for development (2017-2021)	2019	52,793	163k (cumulative)	
	Policy Briefs (2017-2021)	2019	6,849	16k (cumulative)	
	ICT Policy Reviews & E-commerce strategies (2017-2021)	2019	3,964	18k (cumulative)	
	eTrade Readiness Assessments (2017-2021)	2019	35,290	116k (cumulative)	150k (cumulative)
	Other	2020	27,100	110k (cumulative)	
	<b>1.1 d) Number of stakeholders attending launch events/presentation of UNCTAD research work (disaggregated by activity, sex)</b>				
	Digital Economy Report 2021: launch and presentations	2021	1199	1199	
	<i>Of whom female</i>	2021	423	423	
	eTrade Readiness Assessments	2021	390	390	
	E-commerce Strategies	2021	185	185	
	eTrade for all: COVID-19 research presentations	2021	1094	1094	
IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 1.2: Improved capacity of policy makers to integrate e-commerce and the digital economy in the national and regional development agenda in dialogue with other stakeholders	<b>1.2 a) Number and type of technical assistance requests formally received by UNCTAD related to e-commerce and the digital economy (disaggregated by developing / LDC / SIDS / LLDCs, ECDE sub-component)</b>				
	Developing economies	2019	13	28	
	LDCs	2019	5	9	
	SIDS	2019	4	6	
	LLDCs	2019	2	9	
	eTrade Readiness Assessments	2019	6	12	
	E-commerce Strategies	2019	6	12	
	Law Reform	2019	0	2	
	Measuring e-commerce and the digital economy	2019	1	2	
	Total	2019	13	28 (cumulative)	30 (cumulative)
	<b>1.2 b) Number of countries that benefitted from capacity-building activities by ECDE and its sub-components (disaggregated by region and development status (developed/developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs))</b>				
	Developed	2021	1	1	
	Developing - Africa	2020	9	19	
Developing - Asia and Oceania	2020	3	27		
Developing - Latin America and the Caribbean	2020	1	2		
LDCs	2020	6	23		
SIDS	2020	0	5		
LLDCs	2020	1	16		
Total	2020	13	49 (cumulative)	50 (cumulative)	



Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
	<b>1.2 c) Share (%) of project beneficiaries rating UNCTAD's technical assistance and other activities as "useful" or "very useful" (disaggregated by UNCTAD activity)</b>				
	eTrade for Women Master-classes	2020	90%	98%	90%
	E-commerce and Law Reform	2021	100%	100%	90%
	Measuring e-commerce and the digital economy	2021	96%	96%	90%
	eTrade Readiness Assessments	2021	88%	88%	90%
	eTrade Readiness Assessments- 1st implementation review	2021	91%	91%	90%
	E-commerce Strategies	2021	86%	96%	90%
	<b>1.2 d) Number of empowerment and skill-building activities engaging the eTrade for Women network (Masterclasses, workshops, and other training sessions)</b>	2019	1	12 (cumulative)	19 (cumulative)
	<b>1.2 e) Number of communities established in the region (hubs, associations) to foster women digital entrepreneurship resulting from eTrade for Women empowerment activities</b>	2020	3	4 (cumulative)	6 (cumulative)
	<b>1.2 f) Number of partnerships / actions created / collaborations aimed at increasing business opportunities for the eTrade for Women network</b>	2020	4	13 (cumulative)	30 (cumulative)
<b>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 2:</b> Improved coordination of governments, together with development partners, civil society and the private sector, to implement policies on e-commerce and the digital economy that work for development, in a gender sensitive manner	<b>2. a) Number of development partners / donors that incorporate e-commerce and digital economy in their development assistance plans</b>	2018	21	24 (cumulative)	30 (cumulative)
	<b>2. b) Share (%) of resources to support Aid for Trade per year dedicated to ICT or e-commerce and the digital economy (disaggregated by developing/LDC), and/or special categories (SIDS/LLDCs)</b>				
	<b>Bilateral commitments</b>	2017	1.2%	2.8%	
	Developing economies	2017	1.2%	2.8%	
	LDCs	2017	2.2%	3.4%	
	SIDs	2017	4.9%	11.5%	
	LLDCs	2017	2.8%	3.5%	
	<b>Regional commitments</b>	2017	1.7%	2.7%	
	<b>Unallocated commitments</b>	2017	0.8%	1.5%	
	<b>Total (bilateral, regional, unallocated)</b>	2017	1.2%	2.7% <sup>9</sup>	3.5%

<sup>9</sup> 2021 data is for 2020; 2023 target is for 2022 data, given the natural time lag in data collection, processing and reporting.

Expected results	Indicators	Baseline year	Baseline data	Actual data 2021	Target 2023
	<b>2. c) Number of partnerships / actions created / implemented with the support of eTrade for all partners to enhance e-trade readiness of developing and LDC countries</b>	2020	10	13 (cumulative)	18 (cumulative)
	<b>2. d) Number of advocacy actions (participation in high-level events, policy dialogues) undertaken by women digital entrepreneurs from the eTrade for Women network, to change perceptions and raise awareness of gender equality in the digital economy at the global level</b>	2020	9	27 (cumulative)	40 (cumulative)
<b>IMMEDIATE OUTCOME 2.1: Increased dialogue and exchange of good practices among policy makers as well as research institutions, academic centres, public and private entities at the national, subregional, regional and international levels in the areas of e-commerce and the digital economy, and agreed conclusions as appropriate</b>	<b>2.1 a) Number and satisfaction of participants in UNCTAD eCommerce Week(s) (disaggregated by region and development status (developed/developing/LDC), sex)</b>				
	<b>Total number of participants</b>	2020	2034	No update <sup>10</sup>	6,000 (cumulative)
	Female	2020	44%	No update	
	Male	2020	56%	No update	
	Developed Economies	2020	46%	No update	
	Developed - Africa	2020	31%	No update	
	Developing - Asia and Oceania	2020	19%	No update	
	Developing - Latin America and the Caribbean	2020	5%	No update	
	LDCs	2020	14%	No update	
	SIDs	2020	3%	No update	
	LLDCs	2020	11%	No update	
	Average Satisfaction Rate (%)	2020	94%	No update	90%
	<b>2.1 b) Number of Development Solutions per policy area promoted on the platform by eTrade for all partners in three languages (Fr, Es, En)</b>	2019	24	34 (cumulative)	40 (cumulative)
	<b>2.1 c) Number of requests for information or support channeled through eTrade for all</b>	2019	82	213 (cumulative)	400 (cumulative)
<b>2.1 d) Number of visitors on the eTrade for all platform per year (disaggregated by returning/new)</b>	2017	11,964	65,508	100,000	
Returning	2017	1,670 (14%)	7,960 (12%)		
New	2017	10,294 (86%)	57,548 (88%)		
<b>2.1 e) Number of subscribers to the eTrade for all newsletter</b>	2017	326	2,468 (cumulative)	5,000 (cumulative)	

<sup>10</sup> Due to changing and unforeseen circumstances, the Asia eCommerce Week originally planned in 2021 was cancelled.

**Table B: Share of enterprises in developing countries that receive orders online, for countries where data are available**

Country	Date Collection Year	Reference Year	Share of enterprises that receive orders online (%)
Azerbaijan	2018	2017	1.75
Bolivia	2021	2016	15.67
Chile	2021	2018	9.46
Colombia	2021	2019	76.16
Dominican Republic	2021	2020	25.84
Ecuador	2021	2019	28.37
India	2021	2018	47.37
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2018	2017	0.31
Mauritius	2021	2020	52.11
Mongolia	2018	2016	12.74
Peru	2021	2018	8.84
Philippines	2018	2017	5.47
Qatar	2018	2018	33.3
Republic of Korea	2016	2018	8
Saudi Arabia	2018	2016	11.07
Thailand	2021	2018	5.89
Tunisia	2021	2019	46.43
Turkey	2021	2021	10.67

## Annex 3: List of outstanding requests for technical assistance, March 2022

Country	Title	Request Date	Requesting Institution
Dominican Republic	<b>E-commerce</b>	13/09/2017	Dominican Institute of Telecommunications (INDOTEL)
Afghanistan	<b>E-commerce Strategy</b>	07/12/2017	Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the WTO
Barbados	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment and a national E-commerce Strategy</b>	21/02/2018	Ministry of Industry, International Business, Commerce & Small Business Development of Barbados
Zimbabwe	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	16/03/2018	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
Cabo Verde	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	28/03/2018	Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Energy
Congo (Democratic Republic of the)	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	28/05/2018	Ministry of Foreign Trade
Belarus	<b>Analysis of electronic trade regulatory procedures, including electronic transactions &amp; documents exchange, cyber security, customer rights protection in the Net, etc.</b>	27/08/2018	Ministry of Communications and Informatization of the Republic of Belarus
Guinea	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	28/12/2018	Ministry of Commerce
Comoros	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	07/02/2019	Ministry of Economy, Investments, in charge of Economic Integration
Djibouti	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	07/02/2019	Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, en charge de l'Industrie, Djibouti
Mongolia	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment and a national E-commerce Strategy</b>	08/04/2019	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sierra Leone	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	12/04/2019	Ministry of Trade & Industry
Paraguay	<b>E-commerce Strategy</b>	05/07/2019	Ministry of Industry & Commerce, through the Permanent Mission of Paraguay
Jamaica	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment and a national E-commerce Strategy</b>	23/08/2019	Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade of Jamaica
Eswatini	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment and a national E-commerce Strategy</b>	12/11/2020	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Permanent Mission
Kenya	<b>E-commerce survey &amp; ICT Satellite Account</b>	29/06/2021	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Permanent Mission
South Sudan	<b>eTrade Readiness Assessment</b>	24/09/2021	Ministry of Trade and Industry
Panama	<b>Development of the project "Use of ICTs and measuring of electronic commerce as an element of economic statistics"</b>	07/02/2022	Ministry of Commerce and Industry, through the Permanent Mission
Cambodia	<b>Production of sets of data and statistics on digital economy and e-commerce</b>	10/02/2022	Ministry of Commerce through the Permanent Mission

## Annex 4: List of ECDE Programme key contacts

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## Notes

- 1 The COVID-19 and E-Commerce regional reports were published under the leadership of UNECLAC, UNECA and UNECE.
- 2 In Tunisia, the eT Ready was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and Export Development with the support of GIZ. In Jordan, the assessment was conducted in close collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITS), and with the funding from the Government of Germany and Kingdom of the Netherlands through their joint Trade for Employment programme.
- 3 The eT Ready in Kenya is being conducted in close collaboration with the Ministries of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs and of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, with financial support of GIZ.
- 4 The regional eT Ready for ECOWAS is being conducted in close collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission and member State ministries responsible for Trade and for Information Communication Technology, with the financial support of the Netherlands.
- 5 Mapping for Guinea was done by UNRCO, mapping for Senegal was done by the World Bank.
- 6 Responses to the UNCTAD survey were submitted by 32 respondents, based in 8 among the 15 ECOWAS member States.
- 7 Some countries have been assessed by multiple partners.
- 8 [Fast-tracking implementation of eTrade Readiness Assessments | UNCTAD](#)
- 9 Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Togo, Tuvalu and Uganda
- 10 Examples include the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) in Cambodia and Senegal, and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in Bhutan, Cambodia, Malawi, and Zambia.
- 11 ASYCUDA, UNCTAD's automated customs management system currently used in more than 100 countries, facilitates cross-border e-commerce by, for example, helping countries to improve customs procedures and boost cross-border paperless trade, and building a national single window environment.
- 12 [Fast-tracking eTrade Readiness Assessment Implementation: A snapshot of UNCTAD's support | UNCTAD](#)
- 13 Rwanda's E-Commerce Strategy was completed in cooperation with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM) in 2021 with funding from the United Kingdom.
- 14 The development of Benin's E-Commerce Strategy has been supported by the Netherlands.
- 15 Botswana's National ICT Policy Review and E-commerce Strategy was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry and supported by the SADC Trade Related Facility funded by the European Union.
- 16 Funding for Myanmar's ECS was received from the EIF and the project was integrated in a broader Myanmar Services Trade Enhancement Project (M-STEP) as one of its components.
- 17 Solomon Islands' steering committee is co-chaired by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration and the Ministry of Communication and Aviation.
- 18 In 2021, Fiji, South Sudan and Zambia adopted legislation on cybercrime, and Botswana, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe adopted laws on data protection. Cambodia reported amendments to their data protection and privacy laws. Legal reforms on consumer protection and e-transactions took place in Argentina, and Chile reported new legislation on e-transactions. In addition, some countries have bills awaiting legislative approval. These include Kenya and Yemen (on cybercrime), Burundi and Lao People's Democratic Republic (on consumer protection) and Eswatini, Gambia and Tanzania (on data protection).
- 19 For example, in Tuvalu, awareness on e-commerce topics and initiatives is being raised using the E-Commerce Tuvalu social media pages and through workshops for potential e-commerce businesses. In March 2021, the E-commerce Tuvalu team hosted a series of training workshops with assistance from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, training businesses how to move online, covering various topics on laws and regulation.
- 20 Data from Google Analytics.
- 21 The contracts for the 4 consultants covered October 2020 to January 2021.

