Independent evaluation of United Nations Development Account Project 2023E

*"Coherent Strategies for productive capacity development in African Least Developed Countries (LDCs)" **

Independent Evaluation Unit
August 2024

*This report was commissioned by UNCTAD. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the external evaluator and do not represent the views of the UNCTAD secretariat or of the organizations or institutions with which the evaluator may be connected. This evaluation report has been reproduced without formal editing by the UNCTAD secretariat.

The evaluation report was prepared by **Leny van Oijen** (Team Leader, Rwanda and Burkina Faso component), hereafter the evaluator, in cooperation with Thomas Callaghan (Tanzania component).

Independent Project Evaluations are usually conducted by external evaluators. The role of the Independent Evaluation Unit of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in relation to independent project evaluations that it manages is one of quality assurance and support throughout the evaluation process, including provision of normative tools, guidelines and templates to be used in the evaluation process, and clearance of the final report. This role is based on the responsibility of the Evaluation Unit to respond to the commitment of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in professionalizing the evaluation function and promoting a culture of evaluation within UNCTAD for the purposes of accountability and continuous learning and improvement. The principles underpinning the evaluation function are enshrined in the UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation.

In order to support a transparent and learning environment, UNCTAD's evaluation framework is currently defined by its Evaluation Policy as approved in June 2023.

The Independent Evaluation Unit can be contacted at:
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Palais des Nations, 8-14,
Av. de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10 Switzerland
Telephone: +41 22 917 1234
Email: evaluation@unctad.org

Website: https://unctad.org/about/evaluation

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank all the individuals that volunteered their time to contribute to this evaluation. Their perspectives and inputs were very important for this assessment.

UNCTAD/OSG/INF/2025/5

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AfCFTA	**African Continental Free Trade Area**
AILG	**Africa Inequality Learning Group**
ALDC	**Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes Division (UNCTAD)**
EPRN	**Economic Policy Research Network (Rwanda)**
IEU	**Independent Evaluation Unit (UNCTAD)**
LDCs	**Least Developed Countries**
MCIA	**Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et de l'Artisanat (Burkina Faso)**
MIIT	**Ministry of Investment, Industry, and Trade (Tanzania)**
MTI	**Ministry of Trade and Industry (Rwanda)**
PCI	**Productive Capacities Index**
RC	**Regional Commission**
RCO	**Resident Coordination Office**
SDG	**Sustainable Development Goal**
SEZ	**Special Economic Zone**
ToR	**Terms of Reference**
UNCTAD	**United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**
UNDA	**United Nations Development Account**
UNDP	**United Nations Development Programme**
UNDESA	**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs**
UNECA	**United Nations Economic Commission for Africa**
VNR	**Voluntary National Review**

Executive summary

Brief project overview

This evaluation covers UNCTAD project "*Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African Least Developed Countries (LDCs)",* funded through the 12th Tranche of the United Nations Development Account, and implemented during the period February 2020 - December 2023 with a total actual budget of USD 531,140. The project aimed at supporting selected LDCs in Africa (Burkina Faso, Rwanda and Tanzania) to strengthen their capacity to formulate and implement policies and strategies focused on enhancing their productive capacities in view of fostering structural economic transformation and the achievement of the SDGs.

Evaluation purpose, objectives, scope and intended users

The end-of-project evaluation sought to assess (i) project design and (ii) project implementation in the period 2020 - 2023. It examined the following: the relevance of the project, its effectiveness, its efficiency, and the likely sustainability of its results. The evaluation also looked at cross-cutting issues, including gender mainstreaming and other inclusion issues, as well as the project's response to COVID-19. The evaluation's findings will feed into decision making at the level of UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management of UNDESA, aiming to enhance the design and implementation of future follow-on projects and similar initiatives elsewhere.

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation has been conducted in accordance with UNCTAD and Development Account Evaluation Guidelines and was guided by the project results framework (Annex 2), a list of core questions specified in the Evaluation Matrix (Annex 3) and an Interview Guide (Annex 4). The evaluation findings are based on the triangulation of information obtained from (i) a document review and (ii) stakeholder interviews (virtual in the case of Burkina Faso; in situ as regards Rwanda and Tanzania). The interviews followed a participatory approach, allowing the different stakeholders to share information and their views on project implementation.

Key findings

Project design

The project builds on previous support (provided to Rwanda) related to the measurement of productive capacities and the mobilized interest of the two other beneficiary countries. The project document includes a detailed situation analysis of each of the three countries, including inter alia their development visions, plans and challenges, with emphasis on the industry and trade sectors. The information on the support landscape in the fields covered by the project is considered rather scant. The strategic aim to support both the formulation and the implementation of holistic policies and strategies related to productive capacity development/enhancement was ambitious given the size of available funding. The results framework is logical overall, even though some indicators could have been more specific.

Project implementation

Relevance: Overall, there is no doubt about the relevance of the project for the three beneficiary countries. To graduate from LDC status to higher income levels, reducing poverty and inequality, it is crucial to strengthen existing productive capacities and develop new ones. Moreover, the

effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on these economies has heightened attention on the relevance of productive capacity development in strategic priority setting. The project sought to focus on the need to improve coherence between trade and industrial policies for productive capacity development, whilst also taking into account inequality dimensions. Its scope widened during implementation and, accordingly, the operational strategy documents prepared for each country are vast and their use extends beyond the mandate of the direct counterpart ministries.

In terms of ownership, the project is perceived by the country stakeholders as conceived and essentially managed by UNCTAD. The counterparts received an overview of the project offerings (not the full project document) and annual reports were not shared with the countries. The countries were, however, involved in decision making, for example in the identification and selection of national expertise, and the prioritization of the topics to be addressed by the policy implementation advisers. There are promising indications of countries (Rwanda and Tanzania) using the work of the advisers as inputs in ongoing policy review/development processes.

Effectiveness: Essentially all planned outputs were achieved, including background studies, national workshops, regional workshops, operational frameworks for each country, policy implementation advice, and study tours. There were also achievements of unintended activities, in particular: policy dialogue fostered through cooperation with a think tank in Rwanda (EPRN); a study conducted on the gender dimension of productive capacity development, comparing Rwanda and Tanzania; additional outreach realized by including more African countries in the regional workshop and the study tours; and the inclusion of inequality as a theme in the regional workshop that resulted in the development of a new learning platform. In summary, the main observations regarding the above accomplishments are as follows:

- Using the indicators as per the results framework, the intended objective of the workshops in terms of the number of participants and their feedback on the events was largely reached.

- The workshops were organized around a series of presentations (including the background papers), followed by dialogue among participants on the issues presented; there were no specific workshops for validation by the country stakeholders of UNCTAD's operational strategy prepared for each of the 3 countries.

- The proposed actions (background studies and operational strategies) encompass a broad range of thematic fields (adopting a holistic approach) that are key to strengthening existing productive capacities and developing new ones. Their implementation involves a wide range of national public and private stakeholders.

- The strategies mention several key aspects of their implementation, in particular the availability of financial resources and rigor in monitoring.

- Crucially, there is a need to define how these strategies will be mainstreamed into the implementation of the countries' existing development strategies and to identify who will advance these strategies and identified actions, especially as they extend beyond the mandate of the project's counterpart ministries responsible for trade and industry.

- The short-term policy implementation advice by national advisors was most used in the case of Rwanda and Tanzania.

- The study tours to Morocco and Mauritius were short but reported to have been very successful, offering an opportunity to not only learn from the solid experiences with Special Economic Zones in these countries, but also for peer learning among participants.

- The project could build on prior UNCTAD work (internal synergies). In terms of linkages with others, reference is made to cooperation with national research networks/think tanks in Rwanda (EPRN) and Tanzania (REPOA). Several other development partners (regional organizations, UN agencies, other donors/agencies) participated in both country-level and regional events.

- It is premature to assess the extent to which the project has been able to generate medium-term changes in the utilisation of existing productive capacities and the development of new ones.

Regarding external factors that have impacted the effectiveness of the project, the following are highlighted:

- COVID-19: The project started at the same time as the pandemic. Overall, the project swiftly adjusted its modus operandi in 2020/21. The effects of the pandemic were conducive to bringing productive capacity related themes higher on the policy dialogue.

- Multiple changes at the level of the chief counterparts and project focal points: The project had to be 're-explained' to new decision makers at the country level to secure their 'buy-in'.

- Political instability in Burkina Faso: This impacted the communication of local activities (event) and public sector representatives in the end were unable to take part in the study tour.

Efficiency: The available project resources were used adequately with overall general convergence between the initial budget allocation and actual expenditures. The 10% cut in UNDA 12th and 13th Tranche projects did not really impact project work. The duration of the project remained more or less within the planned limits (6 months beyond the planned closure as per the project document). In hindsight, considering the low density of project activities in its final year, the duration of a project this size and nature could have been shortened to three years.

Project steering and day-to-day management were concentrated at the level of UNCTAD-Geneva, with periodic consultations with UNECA as the cooperating partner. Overall management was adequate. The team was reported to be very engaged and responsive, adjusting the project approach in the COVID-19 context. Progress reporting was in line with UNDA requirements, with emphasis placed on activities conducted. A detailed report was prepared for each event, containing gender-disaggregated data on participation. There is also feedback survey data for each of the national workshops. The documents prepared in the context of project activities (such as studies; operational strategies; event reports) are accessible on a dedicated section of UNCTAD's website[1].

Likelihood of sustainability:

Developing and strengthening productive capacities has been, is, and will remain an integral part of the countries' overall development strategies and sector policies. There is no doubt that

[1] https://unctad.org/project/coherent-strategies-productive-capacity-development-african-least-developed-countries

awareness was enhanced through the project's work. UNCTAD also prepared a comprehensive operational strategy for each of the countries. Time will tell how the strategies (not validated as such by the countries) will be mainstreamed in the countries' development strategies and sector policies. In Rwanda and Tanzania, productive capacity related research and policy dialogue is expected to be pursued by the think tanks with which the project partnered.

Cross-cutting issues:

Conscious efforts were taken to ensure participation of women in the events, including sessions dedicated to gender related challenges and opportunities (women constituting in total about one third of the officials trained under the project). Moreover, gender related research comparing the situation in Rwanda and Tanzania was conducted and resulted in a separate deliverable. It is regrettable that the research did not involve cooperation with country level researchers or business support institutions and omitted Burkina Faso. Additional inclusion concerns were also covered in the analysis. For example, the theme of inequality was put on the agenda of the regional workshop, resulting in the launch of a new dialogue platform on inequality in Africa. Regarding environmental issues, while these were not a point of direct attention in the project deliverables, discussions during the study tour included reference to the importance of environment issues in zone planning and management.

Conclusions

1. The project remains relevant, was timely and was effectively managed by a committed and responsive team.

2. The project resulted in a range of achievements (including studies, awareness enhancement workshops and study tours). These accomplishments are particularly notable given the work spanned over three countries, operated on a small budget and took place during the COVID-19 pandemic;

3. UNCTAD's advice, as compiled in the operational strategic frameworks developed for each of the three countries, is very comprehensive. However, the effective use of the frameworks depends on the countries adopting and mainstreaming it into their development strategies and/or sector policies. There is some emerging evidence of this happening (Rwanda; Tanzania).

4. Given the holistic strategy followed in UNCTAD's advice and the wide range of priority themes covered by the above frameworks, the project's institutional anchorage goes beyond the ministries in charge of industry and trade (UNCTAD's typical counterpart).

5. During the final year of project implementation, 2023, more focus could have been placed on country level validation of the different studies and strategies, to help prepare the ground for the 'way forward' of UNCTAD's advice at the country level.

6. Gender dimensions were well considered in the project, as observed in a dedicated publication. However, more explicit efforts to mainstream these themes into final UNCTAD publications would have further underscored their significance.

Recommendations

1. UNCTAD should continue discussions with the countries involved, possibly in cooperation with UNECA, with particular emphasis on the operational strategies developed through the project. This continued exchange at the highest possible institutional level should stimulate their adoption, priority setting and further use at the country level.

2. UNCTAD should build on the studies conducted under this UNDA project for subsequent related interventions in the three beneficiary countries (or elsewhere) and engage in support that focuses on the *implementation* of *specific priorities* that align with countries' requests and UNCTAD's experience and mandate.

3. UNCTAD should support countries in developing project concepts in specific fields under the general heading of 'productive capacity building/enhancement', ensuring alignment with countries' priority setting, and in view of domestic and external resource mobilization.

4. UNCTAD should participate, even virtually, in country-specific development partner working groups related to productive capacity themes, and seek alliances with related donor interventions under the support priorities to maximize synergies and the impact of interventions at country level.

5. When working in the field of SEZ/industrial zones (as planned), UNCTAD should seek collaboration with other development partners that have been/are involved in technical assistance in this field (e.g. feasibility studies, legal and regulatory framework, zone development and management, good practice guidelines) to ensure complementarity of different research and advisory efforts.

1. Introduction

This independent end-of project evaluation covers UNCTAD project "*Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African Least Developed Countries (LDCs)"*, funded by the United Nations Development Account (12th Tranche UNDA project 2023E).

The project sought to support selected LDCs in Africa (Burkina Faso, Rwanda and Tanzania) to strengthen their capacity to formulate and implement policies and strategies aimed at enhancing their productive capacities in view of fostering structural economic transformation and the achievement of the SDGs.

The project was implemented from February 2020 to December 2023, with an initial budget of USD 590.155 as outlined in the project document. Following a 10% budget cut by UNDESA in 2021 across all UNDA 12th and 13th Tranche projects, the project budget was subsequently reduced to USD 531.140.

2. Description of the Project

2.1 Background

It is widely recognized that to achieve broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction, countries need to strengthen their productive capacities (defined here as the capacity of a country to produce goods and services and enable it to grow and develop). In this regard, LDCs face challenges. These include, *among others*: a dependence on commodities that are exported with limited or no local value addition; fragmented policies and strategies to foster intersectoral linkages, economic diversification and moving up the value chains, including integration into global value chains; obstacles in the business environment such as a lack of financial resources to invest in production activities, weak support institutions and gaps in the transport/logistics

infrastructure, and energy costs; as well as constraints in accessing appropriate technologies and markets.

Challenges vary across countries, given differences such as resource endowments, institutional capacities and overall initial conditions. These challenges also vary across different groups. For example, women and youth face specific obstacles in engaging in productive activities, such as access to education/skills development, land, and capital, among other things. Additionally, there are spatial differences between urban and rural areas.

In its global policy statements, based on its analytical work, UNCTAD has emphasised the need to enhance the capacity of developing countries to formulate and implement policies and strategies. This aims to strengthen their productive capacities, with a view to achieving structural transformation, and export diversification.

The current project builds on the prior work of UNCTAD to develop a conceptual framework for assessing productive capacities as a tool for evidence-based policymaking and priority setting for action in landlocked developing countries. The ensuing *Productive Capacity Index (PCI)* for benchmarking productive capacities was developed in the context of an earlier UNDA project (project number 1617M) in three landlocked developing countries, namely Botswana, Lao PDR and Rwanda.

Based on the above experience, the current project was developed to support selected LDCs in Africa to take this assessment work to the next level, i.e., to assist selected countries in developing and implementing country-specific frameworks to strengthen and develop new productive capacities. While developed based on the initial request of Rwanda, two additional countries confirmed interest in being included in the project, namely Burkina Faso and Tanzania. The latter were reported to be selected based on prior technical cooperation work by UNCTAD in these countries, and representing African LDCs with different resource endowments and structural features, while facing the typical constraints of LDCs, such as widespread poverty incidence and lack of economic diversification.

Finally, it is important to note that the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) carried out in 2019 for each of these three beneficiary countries indicate that fostering local manufacturing and both increasing and diversifying exports are integral parts of their development visions. The current project was thus anchored in their respective national development plans.

2.2 Project objectives and expected accomplishments/results

The **overall objective** of the project was *to strengthen the capacities of selected LDCs in Africa to build, utilize and maintain productive capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* (project document, section 4.2, results framework). The project had **two expected outcomes**, namely:

- **Outcome 1:** *Enhanced capacities of the planning or trade ministry (depending on the institutional setting) of each beneficiary country to develop country-specific strategies for productive capacity development and structural economic transformation*.

- **Outcome 2:** *Enhanced capacities of government officials and practitioners to implement coherent productive capacities policies, with a view to improving their international competitiveness and integration into the world economy*.

There were **7 expected outputs** to achieve the above outcomes and the overall objective. These cover the following dimensions:

- Under Outcome 1: Data collection through fact-finding missions, country case studies, national training workshops and one regional training workshop.

- Under Outcome 2: Development of an operational framework for productive capacity strengthening for each country, advisory missions to support its implementation (UNCTAD; national policy implementation advisors), and study tours.

2.3 Project strategy and key activities

Intervention logic and focus

The project document includes a Problem Tree (p.9) that schematizes the main policy challenges and constraints faced by the beneficiary countries, including causal relationships. Based on this and the overall document review, the project's **intervention logic** was **reconstructed** in the context of this evaluation (included as **Annex 2B).**

As mentioned above, productive capacity is generally defined as a country's ability to produce goods and services that will help the country to grow and develop. Productive capacity encompasses *multiple dimensions*. For UNCTAD, the following 8 composite indicators constitute the components used to measure productive capacity: energy; human capital; ICT; institutions; natural capital; private sector; structural change; transport. Productive capacity is multi-sectoral. While not explicitly mentioned in the project document, it can be inferred from the project documentation that emphasis in this project is particularly on *productive capacity in manufacturing*. While the latter can be agriculture-based, particularly given the importance of the agriculture sector in LDCs, it is understood that the improvement of agricultural sector performance as such (also a productive activity) is not emphasized in the project focus. Accordingly, it is noted that, as regards the study tours, the project focused especially on industrial zones/special economic zones (as such one among a range of industrial policy/investment promotion policy measures to foster the industrialization process).

The **key activities** planned (*cf. Results Framework*) were the following:

- Diagnostic work (fact-finding missions; country case studies).
- National workshops (one in each of the three countries).
- Development of operational framework for building and fostering productive capacities.
- Regional workshop.
- Advice on policy implementation.
- Study tour (focused on industrial parks as one of the instruments for productive capacity development).

For the **complete Results Framework** (outputs/activities and indicators as formulated in the project document), reference is made to **Annex 2A**.

2.4 Beneficiaries and target countries

Project beneficiaries

According to the project document, the beneficiaries of the project cover a wide range of stakeholders, listing the following: policy makers from the main line ministries; national and regional advisors and experts; statistics offices; private sector associations; chambers of commerce; R&D and innovation centres; civil society actors; academic institutions.

As project emphasis is on policy making/implementation, it is argued here that the ***main*** **direct beneficiaries** are the project counterparts within the line Ministries in each of the **three target countries,** namely:

(i) Burkina Faso: Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et de l'Artisanat.
(ii) Rwanda: Ministry of Trade and Industry.
(iii) Tanzania: Ministry of Investment, Industry, and Trade.

The other stakeholders listed in the project document (public sector entities; academic research networks/think tanks; business membership organizations) are in principle also direct beneficiaries of the project activities, while private enterprises are considered more indirect beneficiaries of the policy analysis work. Additionally, as the project aims to pay special attention to gender equality issues as regards productive capacity, existing/potential women entrepreneurs and women business organisations can be added to the list of indirect beneficiaries. Finally, participants from eight other African countries were included in the study tours and can be classified as unforeseen additional beneficiaries.

2.5 Key partners and other key stakeholders

Reference is made to the following **main partners**:[2]

- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA): Cooperating agency as specified in the project document.
- Economic Policy Research Network (EPRN), Rwanda (both beneficiary of support to the organisation of a number its annual conferences and project partner).
- REPOA, Tanzania: A partner/beneficiary in the national workshop, as well as a partner in the organization of the regional workshop.
- United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP at country level (within the spirit of coordination of UN activities in the respective countries).
- Others: UNIDO; UN-WOMEN; African Development Bank; African Export-Import Bank; ECOWAS; UEMOA (who contributed by providing resource persons that participated in/contributed to the workshops).

[2] According to the project document, cooperation was envisaged with other UNCTAD entities (in particular the Division for Technology and Logistics) as well as with the Africa Capacity Building Foundation and the Centre for the Study of Economies of Africa; however, particularly due to challenges related to COVID-19, this cooperation was not implemented.

2.6 Resources

Project management and governance

Day-to-day project management was carried out by a team within UNCTAD's Trade, Poverty and Inequality Branch within the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes (ALDC), with the support of short-term national and international experts. Reporting on project progress was done on an annual basis in line with UNDA requirements.

Project governance was reported to cover periodic exchanges with UNECA as co-operating entity within the UN Secretariat. At the country level there was no steering mechanism foreseen nor put in place that involved the direct counterparts. Instead, there were regular discussions with and updates on project implementation provided to the focal points in the counterpart ministries. The UN Resident Coordination Offices (RCO) were also kept in the loop, receiving information on project outputs and playing a role in the workshops both substantively (presentations) and administratively (intermediary for local expenditures).

Budget and its utilisation

The total initial budget was USD 590,155. As mentioned in Section 1 (Introduction), there was a 10% budget cut by UNDESA in 2021 across all UNDA 12th and 13th Tranche projects. This was related *inter alia* to COVID-19 related project funding needs and implied a reduction of the total project budget allotment to USD 531.140. The table below provides a synthesis of the initial budget and its utilisation

The project document stated 'latest June 2023' as the completion date. As project implementation covered the period up to December 2023, there was *de facto* an extension of the project duration by about 6 months.

Synthesis of the project budget and its use

(initial budget, revised budget and actual expenditures as of April 2024)

Budget line	Budget as per Prodoc (USD)	%	Revised budget (USD)	%, total revised budget	Expenditures incl. commitments 04/24	%, total actual expenditures
BL 015. General temporary	**28 000**	*5*	**48 632**	*9*	**46 690**	*10*
BL 105. Consultants and	**200 155**	*34*	**200 540**	*38*	**191 712**	*40*
BL 115. Travel of staff	**163 000**	*28*	**102 868**	*20*	**89 897**	*19*
BL 120. Contractual services	**20 000**	*3*	**18 000**	*3*	**8 553**	*2*
BL 125. General operating	**54 000**	*9*	**48 600**	*9*	**50 137**	*10*
BL 130. Supplies and materials	**--**		**--**		**--**	
BL 135. Furniture and	**--**		**--**		**--**	
BL 145. Workshops/study	**125 000**	*21*	**112 500**	*21*	**92 842**	*19*
TOTAL	**590 155**	*100*	**531 140**	*100*	***479,831***	*100*

- **Implementation ratio as at mid-April 2024: 90.3 %**
- **Available balance as at mid-April 2024: USD 51 309**

Main observations:

- 10% cut in total budget by DA office in 2021 (across all UNDA 12th and 13th Tranche projects).
- Increase in budget line 015 following freeze on use of Regular Budget post to support project implementation.
- Increase in share of consultants/experts (budget line 105).
- Less travel of staff than planned related to COVID-19.
- Overall harmony in the initial allocation versus the expenditures by budget line other than above-mentioned changes.
- Results-based budget (split by outcome and output) in the project document: Outcome 1 - 48%; Outcome 2 - 52%; as financial reporting during implementation is by budget line/year only, it was not possible to compare by outcome/output the initial allocation and the actual expenditures.
- No comparison possible of budget implementation by country, as no country-specific allocations.

2.7 Link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The purpose of the project has several links to the SDGs. The project document (Section 2.4) highlights its contribution to the implementation/achievement of SDGs 1, 8, 9, 10 and 17. Special reference is made to support provided in: sustaining per capita economic growth and achieving higher productivity (8.1 and 8.2); promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and increasing the integration of small-scale industrial/other enterprises into value chains and markets (9.2 and 9.3); reduced inequalities (including expanding opportunities for women) (10) and partnerships (17).

Moreover, reference is made to its contribution with respect to SDG related global commitments pertaining to (i) the role of trade as an engine of inclusive development, including the promotion of long-term investments in productive capacities (Addis Ababa Action Agenda), and (ii) support to LDCs to help them graduate from that status.

2.8 Innovative elements

The project document highlights a number of innovative features of the project, in particular its emphasis on practical aspects of developing productive capacities (operationalizing policy frameworks), as well as embedding policy advisors in the relevant ministries and organizing study tours. This dimension will be discussed as part of the assessment of project design (cf. Section 5.2).

3. Evaluation objectives, scope and questions

3.1 Purpose and objectives

The main objective of this evaluation is to assess in a systematic and objective manner (i) project design and (ii) project implementation. The assessment is structured in accordance with the standard evaluation criteria, examining (in accordance with the ToR), specifically the following:

- The relevance of the project.
- Its effectiveness.
- Its efficiency.
- The likely sustainability of its results.

The evaluation will also look at cross-cutting issues, particularly*:*

- Gender mainstreaming.
- Environmental mainstreaming.
- Inclusion issues other than gender related issues (human rights; disability).
- The project's response to COVID-19.

The project was selected for evaluation by UNCTAD IEU in coordination with the project team, with a view to optimising institutional learning by making strategic choices on which UNDA projects to evaluate. The goal of the evaluation is to inform UNCTAD management, the Capacity Development

Programme Management/Development Account of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the country level project focal points and partners, as well as UNCTAD's member States at large.

Overall, the evaluation is expected to result in practical recommendations, good practices and lessons learned from the project for the different project stakeholders listed above. More specifically, it is to feed into decision making at the level of UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management/Development Account of DESA to enhance the design and implementation of eventual follow-on project(s) and similar initiatives elsewhere.

3.2 Evaluation scope, criteria and questions

As mentioned above, this final evaluation is to assess the design of the project and its implementation and covers the period February 2020 - December 2023. The assessment aims to be comprehensive and objective, analysing the project work by using the standard evaluation criteria and also looking at key cross-cutting issues.

Guided by the preliminary questions listed in the ToR, the following **6 core evaluation questions** were extracted (see below). These core questions were further specified in the **Evaluation Matrix** (attached as **Annex 3**).

Project design

Q1. To what extent was the design of the project logical, coherent, focused and building on lessons from prior interventions by UNCTAD and by the beneficiary countries themselves in the thematic fields covered by the project?

Project implementation (evaluation criteria)

Q2. To what extent was the project valid in terms of its alignment to the development needs and strategic priorities of the beneficiary countries, as well as to the mandate and priorities of UNCTAD? **(Relevance)**

Q3. Has the project "done the right things" and to what extent have the project's expected results been achieved? Is there evidence of catalytic effects of the project (directly or indirectly, intended or unintended) at national/regional/global levels and of the likelihood of impact? (**Effectiveness**)

Q4. Has the project "done things right" in terms of utilizing the available project resources covering the adequacy of implementation modalities, timeliness and quality of inputs, as well as the adequacy of monitoring and steering? (**Efficiency**)

Q5. What is the likelihood that results/benefits will continue after the project? Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project? (**Sustainability**)

Project implementation (cross-cutting issues)

Q6. To what extent were (i) **gender equality/women empowerment,** (ii) **environmental concerns** and (iii) **inclusion issues** (disability and vulnerable groups other than the gender dimension) incorporated in project implementation and to what extent (iv) **did the COVID-19 situation affect project work**?

4. Methodology

Approach

The evaluation has been conducted in accordance with UNCTAD and Development Account Evaluation Guidelines[3] and followed a theory-based and utilization-focused approach, guided by the project results framework (Annex 2) and the above core evaluation questions. The Evaluation Matrix (Annex 4) followed the 6 core questions listed above and guided the interviews with the different stakeholders, using the Interview Guide (attached as **Annex 4**) that was adapted to the specific role of the different stakeholders in the project.

A mixed methodology was used, including the gathering of qualitative and, to the extent relevant and available, quantitative data. The evaluation findings and the evaluation's ensuing conclusions and recommendations are based on the triangulation of information obtained from document review and stakeholder interviews. The latter followed a participatory approach, offering the different stakeholders an opportunity to share their perspectives on the overall performance of the project (depending on their roles in the project).

Document review

At the start of the assignment, the core project related documentation was shared in the form of electronic access by the evaluator to a dedicated document folder. Based on the initial document review, additional documents were requested and obtained from the Project Manager. The list of documents used is included as **Annex 5**.

Interviews

During the inception phase it was decided that field-based interviews were to be split between the Team Leader/TL (mission to Rwanda from 21-25 May 2024 including travel) and one IEU staff member (Thomas Callaghan; field mission to Tanzania 3-7 June 2024 including travel). Regarding the interviews with the stakeholders in Burkina Faso and other project partners/stakeholders, these were conducted by the TL via zoom. Most interviews were held individually, with some group discussions. **Annex 5** includes the list of organizations/persons interviewed.

Evaluation schedule

The table below outlines the main stages of the evaluation along with the corresponding timeline:

Duties and deliverables	Schedule
Document review.	The first review round started in early March of 2024 upon receipt of access to the core documents; iterative process.
Submission of draft inception report.	3 April 2024
Submission of final inception report based on comments received 17 April 2023 from UNCTAD (EIU and PM).	21 April 2024

[3] UNDA Project Evaluation Guidelines, October 2019; UNCTAD Evaluation Policy, July 2023.

Introduction of evaluation exercise and evaluator (via email) to main stakeholders by UNCTAD.	End April 2024
Virtual interviews with UNCTAD project team.	8 May 2024
Virtual interviews with project stakeholders (Burkina Faso) by TL.	Over period mid-May - early June 2024
Field mission Rwanda by TL.	21 - 25 May 2024 incl. travel
Field mission Tanzania by IEU staff.	3 - 7 June 2024 incl. travel
Virtual interviews with other project stakeholders (outside 3 countries) by TL.	Over period mid-May - early June 2024
Overall analysis of findings and drafting of evaluation report.	Spread over end May- mid June 2024
Submission of draft evaluation report to UNCTAD.	18 June 2024
UNCTAD comments (written) on draft evaluation report.	12 August 2024
Submission to UNCTAD of final evaluation report reflecting comments from UNCTAD.	22 August 2024

Limitations

Overall, there were no major limitations faced in conducting the evaluation. The evaluation team had timely access to the relevant project documentation. Additional information/reports requested to the Project Manager (PM) following the first document review round were swiftly received.

Considering the majority of the project activities were completed by 2022 (with the exception of the study tours), it took some effort (several reminders) to schedule appointments with key stakeholders, notwithstanding the introductory email sent by the PM. In the end however, the majority of key stakeholders were met, providing insights into the project activities, results and their use. They also shared information on the current policy context, helping to update understandings of the relevant policy context and related donor support.

With respect to the international project partners, the core partner was met (UNECA). As the involvement of others (UN agencies/other organizations) was limited to their participation in specific workshops (not in the project as a whole, unlike UNECA), it was decided during the inception phase that they would mostly not be interviewed. Of the Resident Coordinators Offices, the one in Tanzania was included in the evaluation. Similarly, regarding the additional countries included in the study tours and the regional workshop, this was an ad-hoc type activity for these countries. Aside from its expected benefits for these countries, the evaluation focused on the three targeted beneficiary countries (Burkina Faso; Rwanda; Tanzania).

5. Findings

5.1 Assessment of project design

The main observations on the design of the project are the following:

Genesis

The project builds on prior support to develop a composite productive capacities index in three landlocked countries, including two LDCs: Botswana, Lao PDR and Rwanda. Rwanda requested UNCTAD's follow-up support to address the challenge "how to implement productive capacity development/strengthening". As the successor UNDA project focused on African LDCs, Rwanda was by definition, included in the project. UNCTAD sought and secured interest from two additional African countries, Burkina Faso and Tanzania. It can be argued that, given the size of the funding, the project could have focused on support to one single country (such as Rwanda). However, it is understood that this approach is not feasible with UNDA resources.

While each of the participating countries made a request to be included in the project, the national stakeholders were not involved in the design of the project as such. They were reported to have received a summary of the main features of the project (not the project document as such).

Context

As mentioned in the project document, there is no "one-size-fits-all' approach to developing productive capacities, as country specificities, resource endowments, institutional capacities and overall initial conditions vary (project document, Section 2.1). Still, reference is made to "typical gaps" in LDCs in the capacity to formulate and implement coherent policies and strategies (with an emphasis on those focused on the industrial and trade sectors), including the lack of operational frameworks on how to build productive capacities. In this regard there is also mention of the tendency of countries to put weight on the creation of new capacities without paying adequate attention to enhancing existing capacities (cf. brief project description, project document p.2). It can be questioned whether LDCs tend to emphasize the development of new capacities, given the widespread attention to enterprise and quality infrastructure *upgrading* at country and regional (Regional Commissions, RC) levels. Additionally, given there is no lack of (often donor supported) policies and strategies in the targeted countries, including pertaining to the productive sectors and trade, the main issue seems to be (i) coherence between different policies and (ii) challenges with respect to their actual implementation.

Overall objective

By aiming to support the enhancement of national capacities to formulate and implement holistic and coherent policies and strategies related to productive capacity enhancement, the project took an ambitious route given the size of the budget (less than US$ 200,000 per country for analytical work, advice and training). Productive capacity covers a very wide range of elements at macro, meso and micro levels, encompassing multiple sectors and a range of thematic fields.

However, as per the situation analysis and the problem tree (Section 3.1 of the project document), the project sought to focus on more specific sub-themes of the overarching objective of productive capacity enhancement, namely the need for improving coherence between trade and industrial policies, while also incorporating the dimension of inequality. The latter describes the need to make these policies more responsive to the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and youth and to also address urban-rural differences.

Problems to be addressed and alignment with country priorities

The project document includes a situation analysis pertaining to each of the three countries, highlighting the country's socio-economic development vision, plans and challenges, with an emphasis on industry and trade. In the case of Rwanda and Tanzania it also lists some key policy instruments already put in place by the countries, indicating that the project will support these areas.

The project document stated that policies and capacities are missing or not up to date. For example, it states that designing policies for the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) is a key area of action for this project in Rwanda. Yet, the existing SEZs are rooted in legal and regulatory frameworks and typically are the result of prior comprehensive feasibility studies that guided decisions on their overall operation and governance. At best the project work would thus cover SEZ performance review and advice towards performance improvements. Also, in the other two countries, focus would be more on policy implementation review and policy update processes rather than on policy design *stricto senso*, considering the range of relevant policies and policy tools already developed in the countries.

The country analysis omits concrete information on the external support landscape in the targeted fields. All three are countries with major and longstanding multi- and bilateral donor interventions (agriculture; industry; trade), that also include support to improve the business environment and foster public-private sector dialogue. There is however only reference to the latest Diagnostic Trade Integration Study/DTIS update in the case of Burkina Faso (2015).[4] Typically, major policy tools such as SEZs received donor support from their conception onwards. Accordingly, it is considered important that any new policy or operational level support is aware of and builds on prior assistance, within the spirit of support coherence and thus aiding effectiveness. The description under 'donors and partners' in the stakeholder analysis (Section 3) is considered rather general to assess the scope for necessary linkages and synergies between the project and the interventions of other development partners. The project strategy references other projects that require consideration, but it limits this to initiatives from UN agencies, whilst other actors (bilateral and multilateral) are also engaged in interventions relevant to productive capacity enhancement.

The project document highlights what UNCTAD considers innovative project features, particularly its emphasis on practical aspects of developing productive capacities (operationalizing policy frameworks), as well as embedding policy advisors in the relevant ministries and organizing study tours. It is debatable if these dimensions merit the label 'innovative'. Policy design/revision support

[4] There is no reference to the DTIS Update for Tanzania (2018) nor to the DTIS conducted for Rwanda (2005; no indication of update).

typically goes hand in hand with the development of implementable action plans. Funding short term external advice indeed provided an opportunity for UNCTAD to go beyond the analytical work that culminated in the operational strategy document. Meanwhile, study tours are not uncommon in technical cooperation projects, and therefore not considered innovative.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries are mentioned in the stakeholder analysis and project strategy sections, listing the following: policymakers, regulators, advisors and experts, private sector, research and development centres and representatives from civil society, including vulnerable groups. This list is considered quite long. Considering the policy advice nature of the project interventions, the line ministries concerned (industry; trade) are thought to be the most important *direct* project beneficiaries.

Project strategy

The implementation strategy (Section 4.1) combines the reiteration of the project objectives and the mention of specific focus on industrial parks/SEZs (the latter being among the instruments of industrial and trade policies). Reference is made to outputs (national studies; sectoral studies, national guides in managing industrial parks) that partially converge with the results framework. While national/sectoral studies are indeed planned, there is no specific output focused on the development of guides pertaining to the management of industrial parks/zones.

The context Section 2.1 (p.4) states that there tends to be an emphasis on the creation of new capacities without paying adequate attention to enhancing existing capacities. By focusing on industrial parks/SEZs, the project, however, selected a policy instrument that *is primarily* focused on new capacities (attracting export-oriented investment). The reason for focusing on the industrial park/SEZs policy instrument is not explained while understandable, as, indeed, many countries including LDCs have already engaged in using this policy tool for several decades. It is notable that, to foster the use of existing capacities, there has also been growing interest in African countries in another industrial policy tool, namely support to enterprise upgrading.

The strategy distinguishes two phases that correspond to two consecutive project outcomes: (i) assessment, design and formulation and (ii) validation and implementation. The regional workshop was classified as part of the first phase but could have also been considered part of the second phase. By inviting other African LDCs to the regional workshop, the idea was to foster South-South cooperation and peer learning of experiences (including of work/results in the second project stage). Reference was also made to the idea of adapting or replicating the project's achievements (hence at the end of the project) to other LDCs.

It is noted that at the point of project design, the target countries of the study tours were not yet decided (reference being made to South Africa, Mauritius, and Nigeria). Indeed, SEZ schemes are in place in many English and French speaking countries in Africa. It was during implementation that Mauritius and Morocco were selected for the study tours (as these were the countries that showed an interest in hosting them). The strategy does not mention that other African countries would be included to participate in the study tours nor how they would be selected.

Project results framework

As such, the results framework is logical overall, while considered quite ambitious as explained above. More precisely, review of the project logic generated the following observations:

- The indicators of outcome 1 are considered rather elementary (proportion of participants in 1–2-day workshop to report an improved ability to formulate quality policies and strategies); a more meaningful indicator would be policy makers having taken policy decisions (new/improved measures to foster productive capacity); whereas the second indicator of outcome 1 refers to workshop participants endorsing policy instruments, it is the actual endorsement by policymakers in the form of enacting policy measures that demonstrates the result of enhanced policymaking capacity.

- Based on the exchange with UNCTAD, country level operational frameworks are understood to be documents that reflect the advice of UNCTAD (UNCTAD publications) and not operational documents issued by line ministries.

- As mentioned above, it can be argued that the regional workshop would have been more appropriately placed as the final activity under outcome 2, especially considering that other African LDCs were invited to share experiences in formulating/implementing holistic and coherent approaches to productive capacity development.

- The indicators of outcome 2, as formulated, refer to the existence of an inter-ministerial task force to ensure/oversee policy coordination and at least one recommended policy action of the operational framework being implemented in each of the countries. This (or the first) outcome should have included an indicator to assess whether the operational framework was adopted or issued as a national policy framework, rather than just the issuing of an UNCTAD publication.

- The advice related outputs under outcome 2 are split into two: advisory missions as per output 2.2 (by UNCTAD, while the latter is not specified) and by national policy implementation advisors as per output 2.3. It was appropriate to specify '*depending on the requests of the beneficiary countries* to the extent the latter is considered a precondition for policy implementation advice.

- Regarding the study tours (output 2.4), it is not specified that other countries (beyond the three beneficiary countries) would be invited to take part in the study tours. A priori, the latter were limited to 9 government officials and private sector representatives from the beneficiary countries. The number of study tours was not specified.

Cross-cutting issues

The section that describes the link to SDGs refers to aspects of inclusiveness, with special reference to gender equality. In addition, the situation analysis mentions the typical challenges faced by women and other disadvantaged groups (youth; elderly, rural households) in engaging in/developing manufacturing and/or trade activities, such as access to technology. The 'leaving no one behind'

principle was planned to be incorporated in the project work. While there are no precise indicators pertaining to inclusion in the results framework, explicit reference is made to including women among the targeted participants of the training workshops.

Eventual environmental concerns to be incorporated in policies aimed at boosting productive capacity development are not mentioned in the project document.

Risks

Review of the risks and mitigation actions generated the following observations:

- Political instability varied/varies across the three countries (not 'low' in all three countries); the suggested mitigation action to organize the national workshops in Geneva would have had major cost implications; moreover, it would not have been practical, as it is doubtful that government officials could travel during political unrest.

- Delays/lack of quality of work delivered by consultants was listed as a low/medium risk; this risk is considered low, to the extent UNCTAD itself is at the core of identifying and managing the experts recruited; in case of non-performance the mitigation action would be to replace the consultant.

- The stated risk 'lack of data' is considered low rather than medium, considering the prior work undertaken by the countries, often supported by donors.

- Lack of participation of non-governmental stakeholders was listed as medium; an appropriate mitigating action would be to establish effective linkages with existing public-private sector dialogue mechanisms in each of the countries.

- Changes in counterparts were listed as being medium to high; the mitigating action could have been to have several focal points (one reserve).

- The risk that the project would generate expectations beyond what it could fund was indeed medium to high; the mitigation action of explaining from the outset what the project could and what it could not fund, as well as linking with related assistance, was appropriate.

Sustainability

In the sustainability section of the project document (Section 4.4), it is stated that exclusive focus on the three selected countries was to enable *more focused attention and deeper engagement at local level*. As such this would not guarantee the continuation of benefits beyond the project duration. The project being based on demand by the countries, one would indeed expect commitment and engagement to use the project results.

The same section refers to the provision of short-term national policy advisors, which was considered to promote *continuity of the implementation and post-implementation processes*. While this is in theory correct, in practice the involvement of these advisors (not embedded as such in the

Ministries) beyond the project is not automatic, as depending on the availability of resources and subject to national recruitment rules and processes.

Also, the project document refers to *making available the operational frameworks* (UNCTAD publication) *to the stakeholders*. While this is important, it is as such no guarantee of their actual use. In any case, UNCTAD publications stemming from UNDA projects should by nature be publicly and freely available.

Finally, reference is made to cooperation with partner organizations to foster impact and sustainability. As above, this is important but not automatic and needs to be explicitly planned/specified ex ante to foster effective cooperation.

Monitoring and evaluation

Project monitoring and steering was managed by the project manager/UNCTAD together with UNECA as collaborating agency. The contribution of the UNECA Focal Person was to focus on issues such as regional integration and trade/industrial policies.

Regarding the final evaluation, the project document outlined that its planning was intended to coincide with the final project activity. If this would have been the regional workshop, it would have indeed facilitated direct observations on implementation and meeting at the same time project stakeholders present at the event.

5.2 Assessment of project implementation

5.2.1 Relevance

Alignment to the countries' strategic priorities

Overall, there is no doubt about the relevance of the purpose of the project in the national, regional and continental policy context. Namely, the overarching goal to foster productive capacity development in the targeted countries was and remains in line with:

- Each country's existing development vision and sectoral strategies (as described in the project document).
- The strategies at regional level (in the East African region for Rwanda and Tanzania; in the West African region for Burkina Faso) to stimulate industrial and trade development including intra-regional trade.
- The vision of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and aimed at boosting inter-African trade in goods and services.

It is widely recognized that, to move from LDC status to higher income levels, reduced poverty and less inequality, countries require strong, sustained and inclusive economic growth. This in turn needs inter alia structural transformation and export diversification, for which the strengthening of existing and the development of new productive capacities is crucial.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies of the countries reinforced the vision that economic resilience implies inter alia reducing dependency on imported products, boosting product

and market diversification, including value addition. Having created both challenges for businesses in some sectors and opportunities for others, the pandemic increased attention paid to productive capacity development topics in the countries' strategic priority setting.

Scope

According to the problem tree and the subsequent country level situation analyses (project document), the project sought to focus in particular on the need for improving coherence between trade and industrial policies for productive capacity development, also incorporating the dimension of inequality. This is in line with the mandate of the project's direct counterparts, i.e., in each country the ministry in charge of trade and industry. But, based on analysis of project implementation, one observes a tendency towards the *widening* of the project scope. More precisely, the *coherent and operational strategy documents* prepared for each country with a view to enhancing productive activities are vast and, as some country level stakeholders put it, "they cover everything". The decision to opt for a wide scope is potentially linked to the way in which UNCTAD measures productive capacity (the Productive Capacity Index; cf. Section 2.3).

Consequently, the list of actions reflected in these strategy documents goes well beyond what the project counterpart ministries would be able to act upon. In this respect, the "entry point" of such a holistic strategy would rather be at the level of the ministries in charge of economic development, of finance, or at the level of the Prime Minister. It was remarked by some interviewees that involving many ministries may have made the project harder to manage. Yet, this does not take away that, by taking a holistic approach, the use of the project results de facto imply multiple ministries. Also, the question remains as to how these operational strategies (in the form of UNCTAD publications) are expected to be mainstreamed into existing long- and medium-term country development vision documents, as well as into existing sector strategies. It renders the operational strategy documents (Output 2.1) rather *stand alone*, reflecting the strategic advice of UNCTAD and leaving it for the countries to "pick and mix" among the proposed actions. In general, policy advisory briefs by theme would allow for further prioritization and specification of the actions, including who is to do what, by when, and the associated costs (financial resources for policy implementation being a major bottleneck for the countries).

Ownership issues

The project is perceived by the country stakeholders as conceived and essentially managed by UNCTAD. The project document was developed following UN procedures for Development Account projects, albeit not in consultation with the counterparts. The latter were reported to have received an overview of the project offerings (not the full project document). Annual reports were not shared with the countries either. Nevertheless, such transparency (also as regards the budget), is considered good practice to facilitate joint planning, implementation and monitoring of the project. Additionally, the ex-ante sharing of details on the project could have fostered the planning of possible synergies with related assistance. One direct counterpart had understood that activities were undertaken based on the availability of regular budget resources/UNCTAD and were subject to specific country requests, not aware that there was a project document with a results framework and specific budget allocation. As mentioned, the countries (Permanent Missions; Focal Points at

country level) were given an overview. Still, a lack of *precise* information on what the project could and what it could not fund may explain why Burkina Faso made two formal requests (2022) for large scale support for: (i) mango value chain development and (ii) local production and market development in general (areas outside the project scope).

This does not take away from the fact that countries were indeed involved in decision making, such as the identification and selection of national expertise, the prioritization of the topics to be addressed by the national policy advisers, the mobilisation of workshop participants and the designation of participants in the study tours. In the case of Rwanda, at the request of the counterpart, UNCTAD started the project with the work of the policy implementation adviser.

Also, there are nascent indications of countries taking ownership by using project outputs as inputs in ongoing policy review/development processes. In the case of Rwanda, this relates to the ongoing trade and industrial policy revision process. For Tanzania, this relates specifically to the preparation of a new long-term development vision for the country, as well as sector-specific strategies, particularly for edible oils.

Additional beneficiaries

In addition to the perceived widening of the initially more focused scope to a more holistic approach, the project amended its implementation approach by including additional African countries in some of the work (regional workshop and study tours). As will be discussed under effectiveness, this facilitated regional/inter-regional peer learning and networking, even though the (limited) funding was in principle for the three countries only.

Similarly, project support to events organized by think tanks (the case of Economic Policy Research Network/EPRN in Rwanda) was initially not envisaged but was justified as enabling the pursuit of capacity strengthening and fostering policy dialogue around productive capacity related topics. Also, discussions on the inequality issues related to productive capacities during the regional workshop held in Tanzania led to a new joint initiative by REPOA (Tanzanian think tank), the University of Warwick and UNCTAD, i.e., the launching of the Africa Inequality Learning Group (AILG) to give more visibility to issue of inequality.

Additionally, the project carried out an unplanned comparative study (focusing on Rwanda and Tanzania) with respect to gender gaps and potential in relation to productive capacities development. While being no doubt an indication of attention to the cross-cutting issue of gender equality during project implementation, it is regrettable that this analysis could not be integral part of the operational strategy preparation and thus remains a stand-alone document.

Building on prior UNCTAD efforts

Project implementation could benefit from prior analytical work by UNCTAD (that started working on the productive capacities concept in 2006). The development of the initial PCI framework involved *inter alia* the countries included in predecessor UNDA project 1617M - *Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries* that started in 2016 and ended in April 2021. The (updated) PCI was launched by UNCTAD in 2021. As

there was some overlap, in terms of timing, between UNDA projects 1617M and 2023E, it was not always clear for the counterparts (in the case of Rwanda) if an activity had been organized under the former or the latter project. As indicated in the final report of project UNDA 1617M, workshops and training of statisticians enhanced capacities to identify policies and measures to strengthen productive capacities. Project 2023E could in fact benefit from the background analysis (case study) prepared by project 1617M, as providing an overall situation analysis, including description of government's initiatives and challenges faced in strengthening existing and developing new productive capacities. Accordingly, project 2023E used this case study as background information and conducted a complementary analysis to update the situation in the countries, including taking into consideration the effects of COVID-19.

Rwandan counterparts seemingly have some observations on the PCI to date, not fully understanding some of the country's PCI ratings and wishing to 'contextualize' the same (adding the use of primary data). Burkina Faso and Tanzania did not benefit from specific PCI related training other than its general presentation in the national/regional workshops. As UNCTAD considers the two projects distinct support (PCI measurement/benchmarking versus development and implementation of PC strategies), the evaluation decided not to further examine the PCI, its actual use by the countries or its position in this respect vis-à-vis related indices measuring for example competitiveness, the conduciveness of the business environment, industrial and trade performance.

In the case of Burkina Faso and Tanzania, there is no indication if/how the project could specifically build on prior work by UNCTAD in these countries, other than the use of findings of, inter alia, UNCTAD research and publications in the background studies.

5.2.2 Effectiveness

5.2.2.1 Brief overview of project activities conducted

The matrix below summarizes the work done by the project (i) by country and (ii) multi-country. It reflects a *synthesis* of the main activities, is purely *descriptive* and follows the outcome/output structure of the project results framework. For the *assessment* of these activities against the planned results, reference is made to Section 5.2.2.2.

Summary of main activities[5]

Outcome/Output	Burkina Faso	Rwanda	Tanzania	Multi-country
Outcome 1 (*Enhanced capacities to develop productive capacity development/PCD strategies)*				
Output (OP) 1.1 Fact-finding missions	The start of the project (Feb 2020) coincided with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; due to lockdowns and travel restrictions, fact-finding missions were cancelled and replaced by secondary data collection and virtual discussions with counterparts; part of earmarked resources (travel) was redeployed to increase the planned w/m of national policy advisers (from 4 to 6 months).			
OP 1.2 Country background studies	Feb 2021 : *UNCTAD, Etat des lieux de la politique commer-ciale et industrielle *M. Diarra, Strategie pour le développement des capacités productives	2020: UNCTAD study, Enhancing coherence between trade and industrial strategies in Africa – the experience of Rwanda	Feb 2021: D. Mrutu, Development of productive capacities in Tanzania	*Final report (April 2024) refers to total of 444 officials/experts trained during project implementation of which 33% females (NB: all outputs combined)*
OP 1.3 National workshops	Virtual workshop, 17 Feb 2021 (18 participants of which 6 from UNCTAD; 5 f; 13m) National workshop, 8-9 June 2022 (61 part.;13f; 48m; incl. 2 UNCTAD; 1 UNECA)	Virtual workshop, 6 May 2021 65 participants (20f; 45m)	Hybrid workshop, 29-30 April 2021 62 participants (17f; 45m)	
OP 1.4 Regional workshop	*Regional workshop, Tanzania, 12-13 Oct 2022 (53* participants incl. UN partner agencies + other African countries (17f; 36m); of which Burkina Faso (4); Rwanda (5); Tanzania (30) + representatives from Botswana (1), Mauritius (1), Togo (1), South Africa (1), Zambia (1), Zimbabwe (2) + Australia (1)			
Outcome 2 (*Enhanced capacities to implement productive capacity development/PCD strategies)*.				
OP 2.1 Operational framework for each country	Operational Strategy, UNCTAD public. 2022	Operational Strategy, UNCTAD public. 2022	Operational Strategy, UNCTAD public. 2022	
OP 2.2 Advisory missions to support policy implementation (UNCTAD)	Advisory mission/ UNCTAD in margin of workshop participation, 10 June 2022	Advisory mission/UNCTAD in margin of workshop participation, 25 May 2022	Advisory mission/ UNCTAD to Dodoma, 28-29 March 2022	

[5] This description, based on progress reporting and complemented by the interviews with the stakeholders, does not claim to be exhaustive while covering a synthesis of the main accomplishments.

OP 2.3 Policy implementation advice by national advisers within the relevant ministries	T. Zoungrana (Aug-Nov 2022) Report *Mise en œuvre de la politique nationale du Burkina Faso : stratégie de renforcement des capacités productives et transformation structurelle de l'économie - analyse diagnostique des contraintes/plans d'actions*, Feb 2023	J. Rwirahira (May-Aug 2020 + March-Aug 2021) <u>*2020*</u> *Paper on policy coherence, Aug. 2020 <u>*2021*</u> *Stakeholders mapping, April 2021 *Effects of COVID-19, June 2021 *Emerging business opportunities, July 2021 *Institutional capacity needs assessment, Sept 2021	D. Mmari (Feb - July 2022), Report Sept 2022 Reference to industrial field missions to better understand the needs of domestic firms (May-June 2022), with findings used as inputs for policy reviews	
OP 2.4 Study tours	Study tour, Meknès, Maroc, 24-25 May 2023 (one participant of Burkina Faso + other beneficiary countries: Mali (2); Côte d'Ivoire (1); Madagascar (1); UNCTAD (3)	Study tour, Mauritius, 10-12 Oct 2023 including Rwanda (4 participants); Tanzania (7) + two other beneficiary countries, i.e., Botswana (1); Zimbabwe (1); UNCTAD (4)		
***Not foreseen and added during implementation*.**				
Support to networks/think tanks (awareness raising; dialogue) *Proposed to be added by PM as OP 1.5 (for 8th EPRN); amendment not formalized*		Sensitization of policy researchers cum exchange between researchers and policymakers on productive capacity issues through contribution to: *6th EPRN Conference, 25.02.2020 (UNCTAD presentation) *7th EPRN Conference, 25-26.02.2021 (UNCTAD presentation and financial contribution/organization)		

		*8th EPRN Conference, 26-27.05.2022 (140 participants; 71 m/69f); UNCTAD presentation and financial contribution/organization (cost-sharing)		
Comparative study on gender in view of sensitization to integrate gender issues in PC agenda.		Harnessing gender potential for productive capacities development, a comparative study of Rwanda and Tanzania, S. Onyeiwu, 2022.		
Study tours: additional beneficiary countries.	Additional countries benefitted from the study tours (Morocco; Mauritius) - see OP 2.4 above.			
Inclusion in regional w/s of session on « inequality and challenges of productive transformation » (based on UNCTAD XV recommendation).			June 2023: REPOA, UNCTAD and University of Warwick launched Africa Inequality Learning Group (AILG) to give more visibility to the issue of inequality (platform for exchange).	

5.2.2.2 Assessment of results and the use thereof

The main observations on the above accomplishments are the following:

Results by output

Factfinding missions (OP 1.1)

The COVID-19 pandemic required adaptation in the way in which the project was launched. There was no option other than to cancel fact-finding missions, replacing them with virtual discussions with the counterparts, alongside secondary data collection.

Background studies (OP 1.2)

To the extent that the background studies that were to guide the national workshops were conducted by national experts (case of Burkina Faso and Tanzania), their preparation was also affected by the local COVID-19 context (restrictions) but could take place as not involving international travel. In the case of Rwanda, the project could benefit from prior analytical work conducted under the predecessor project (UNDA project 1617M), while adding, based on secondary data collection, another (updated) study in 2020.

The studies prepared in the period 2020-2021 were used as input for the national workshops and were shared with the participants. As such, these studies provided a comprehensive analysis of the country context, challenges and existing policy initiatives with respect to the strengthening of existing and development of new productive capacities. They also included recommendations on the way forward, providing elements for discussion with country stakeholders during the national workshops and input for the operational strategies subsequently prepared by UNCTAD. They also encompassed a section on the impact of the pandemic on the status of productive capacities in the countries. The structure of the reports was guided by the PCI, highlighting gaps as regards specific indicators. Accordingly, the recommendations (proposed actions) contained in the background studies reflect a wide range of thematic fields (holistic approach).

National workshops (OP 1.3)

The national workshops took place over the period February 2021 - June 2022. Regarding Burkina Faso, a virtual exchange with participants from the ministry in charge of trade and industry in 2021 was, at the request of the counterpart ministry, followed by a national workshop in 2022 (this time in situ, with a wide range of participants, including inter alia different ministries and agencies, private sector representatives, participants from regional economic commissions and international organizations). The events organized around a series of presentations and were considered relevant and rich in terms of information sharing. Still, the country stakeholders (both counterparts and national experts) would have preferred more emphasis on the formal validation of the studies including of UNCTAD's operational strategy for the country.

In Rwanda, the national workshop was a half-day virtual event of which the discussion focused on the challenges faced as a result of the pandemic, yet also opportunities related to productive capacities. As was the case in Burkina Faso, the workshop, organized around a series of presentations, was attended by a range of public and private sector stakeholders and representatives of development partners. To the extent the national policy implementation adviser

had already started his work from the start of the project (this based on the request of the Rwandan counterparts), there was a short presentation of his findings. However, the workshop was not organized as an event to validate the reports prepared up to then by the policy adviser that were in input into UNCTAD's operational strategy for Rwanda.

The workshop in Tanzania was in a hybrid format, covering two half-day sessions and with participation from a wide range of national stakeholders and development partners. As above, the event was structured with a range of short presentations on interrelated topics pertaining to the situation of productive capacity. The event was not used to validate the background study (2021), but the discussions were reported to have served as input for UNCTAD's operational strategy for Tanzania.

In total, these country level events involved around 200 participants and allowed for enhancing awareness of the range of key policy issues to be addressed to foster productive capacity strengthening/development, following a holistic approach. Using the indicators as per the results framework, the intended objective of the workshops, in terms of the number of participants (at least 50 per national event), was largely reached. The feedback collected at the end of the workshops shows that participants' ratings were largely concentrated between good and excellent, indicating that the event enhanced their capacity to formulate productive capacity related policies and strategies (in itself a vast theme). The question in the feedback sheet (indicator) as to whether the participant endorsed at least two policies is not considered a meaningful measurement of results of the event and generated very general answers (highlighting sectoral/thematic areas such as national trade policy; energy policy, transport policy, among others). The issue is that the countries have these policies, but the problem lies in gaps in their implementation or in lack of coherence among different policies.

To the extent the country-case studies articulated policy actions to promote productive capacities in each of the three countries, they not only serve as background (*training material*) for the workshops, but especially as inputs for the operational frameworks (as mentioned above). In this respect, the workshops could have been less dense in terms of the number of consecutive individual presentations, while providing ample time to discuss the country studies and their recommendations, in view of their validation and effective appropriation.

Regional workshop (OP 1.4)

The two-day regional workshop (held in Dar es Salaam in October 2022) complemented the national workshops by sharing practices and experiences among the three participating countries, and learning from experiences from other African countries (plus Singapore). Also, several representatives from Tanzania-based UN agencies participated. Inequality issues affecting productive capacities (including but not limited to the gender dimension) were among the presentations and related discussions. The key messages emanating from the presentations and discussions converge with the findings of the earlier country level studies and workshops.

Since the regional workshop constituted the last major ("wrap-up") activity organized by the project (except for the two study tours), the key messages contain general recommendations, but did not spell out the way forward in each of the three beneficiary countries. In particular, the proposed next

steps based on the country studies and UNCTAD's operational strategies developed for each country were not detailed.

The regional workshop report does not mention which documents were shared with the participants. There is no indication that the comparative study *Harnessing gender potential for productive capacities development – a comparative study of Rwanda and Tanzania (*2022) was presented and discussed at the regional workshop.

Finally, the participant survey gathered feedback from 30 of the 50 participants (excluding UNCTAD staff). Almost all the 30 survey respondents rated the event as very good or excellent, timely and relevant. While it is challenging to maximize survey responses for virtual or hybrid events, a 60% response rate for a physical event is generally considered average.

Operational Framework for each country (OP 2.1)

Based on the country-specific studies and workshops, UNCTAD consolidated its policy advice into a publication (2022) for each of the three countries, respectively entitled *Enhancing productive Capacities in Burkina Faso (*in French*)/Rwanda/Tanzania – a coherent and operational strategy* (in this report referred to as operational strategy). The publication could build on UNCTAD's analyses, the studies prepared by the national consultants as well as the discussions during the national workshops.

The three strategy documents are *comprehensive*, covering: relevant country information (structure of the economy; evolution and state of productive capacities; the impact of COVID-19 thereon and measures taken; past and current national policies and strategies related to productive capacity development (with emphasis on industry and trade) and constraints in this regard. Based on this, an action plan was developed, covering policy actions needed to address the identified constraints.

The approach adopted is *holistic* in that it considers a wide range of fields that are key for fostering the strengthening of existing and the development of new productive capacities. The key areas for action, based on the identified constraints outlined in the three strategies, are listed below.

Country	Summary of priority areas for policy actions as defined in UNCTAD's country strategies [6]
Burkina Faso	• Improvements as regards Information and Communication Technologies in terms of quality, access, cost. • Transport infrastructure (road, air and river transport networks). • Energy (supply; access; cost) and energy efficiency. • Human capital development (education infrastructure; quality). • Health infrastructure. • Research and Development. • Fostering inclusiveness (gender; youth). • Private sector development (business environment; access to finance, public-private dialogue; inter-enterprise cooperation/cluster development) • Export development and market/product diversification (including local market demand/consumption).

[6] This broad overview of the main areas covers the main themes and does not claim to be exhaustive.

	• Better use of natural resources, such as through agricultural productivity enhancement; fostering local business linkages with mining sector (subcontracting); value chain development. • Enhancement of policy coherence and alignment with regional and multilateral agreements. • Improvements as regards local/regional planning and related resource allocations • Anti-corruption efforts. • Addressing overall security issues.
Rwanda	• Investment (foreign and domestic). • Development of inter-sectoral linkages and value chains. • Fostering of technology and innovation. • Human capital development. • Physical capital development (infrastructure). • Building of supportive business ecosystem (business development and financial services). • Enhancement of policy coherence. • Promotion of inclusiveness.
Tanzania	• Infrastructure. • Human capital and skills. • Strengthening of public sector institutions (capacity; transparency; accountability). • Strengthening private sector (covering inter alia: formalization; business linkages, access to finance, technology, dialogue with public sector). • Fostering structural change (emphasizing inter alia the key role of manufacturing and FDI in this regard, strengthening of SEZ development/management). • Fostering better use of natural resources. • Stimulating demand for domestic products and quality standards of the latter. • Fostering policy coherence (harmonization/alignment issues; policy predictability; inter-ministerial coordination and public-private sector consultations). • Adopting gender-sensitive approach (inter alia addressing obstacles to labor force participation; supporting women empowerment). • Measures to foster export development and diversification. • Implementation of efforts to benefit from regional integration initiatives.

As evidenced by the above summary, the list of recommended country-specific policy actions is long, cross-sectoral and, depending on the sector or the thematic priority, their implementation involves a wide range of national public and private stakeholders. In addition, as highlighted in each of the strategies, there are several key aspects regarding their implementation, particularly:

- The availability of financial resources (requiring an effective strategy to mobilize and allocate both domestic resources and external - foreign aid/FDI - funding).
- Rigor in monitoring and implementation of policies, strategies, and related initiatives (including tools and capacities for effective policy implementation).

In terms of awareness raising on the issues at stake to enhance productive capacities, the efforts undertaken by the current project, in particular the events organized, and the studies conducted, were no doubt an important step. The country-specific strategies published by UNCTAD, while being comprehensive, are, however, not without challenges, to the extent it is not clearly defined:

- How these strategies will be mainstreamed in the implementation of the existing development strategies of the countries, i.e., Burkina Faso's Development Plans (the latest one being the *Plan National de Développement Economique et Social*), Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation and its Vision 2050, and Tanzania's consecutive Five-Year Development Plans;

- Who will take the strategies and identified actions further, to the extent they go well beyond the mandate of the project's counterpart ministries in charge of trade and industry. Given the holistic nature of the actions, the strategies would rather require anchorage to the Presidency, the Prime Minister's Offices, or the Ministries in charge of Economic Affairs, Finance and/or Planning.

Moreover, while labelled *operational* strategies as containing actions by sector/theme, each of the actions will need operationalization, to move from generally formulated actions to their implementation. As the strategies were developed in the context of a technical assistance project, it is unfortunate that the work stopped with policy advice in the form of an UNCTAD publication, without explicit validation of the document containing UNCTAD's advice by the countries. The validation process would have allowed for priority setting, and, in particular, appropriation by the countries themselves. The latter are considered to be in the driver's seat to boost the strengthening of existing and the development of new capacities, starting with making the strategy or at least part thereof (based on prioritization) *their own*.

Advisory missions by UNCTAD (OP 2.2)

The project document included a specific output pertaining to UNCTAD advice in policy implementation, in the form of missions to support key national institutions. These missions were planned to be focused on support to the implementation of the operational frameworks developed by the project (2022), and the corresponding budget consisted essentially of staff travel. As such, this output was not affected by COVID-19 travel restrictions, as planned support related to the implementation of the operational strategies of frameworks that were completed in the course of 2022.

According to the reporting, these advisory missions took the form of monitoring missions in the margin of travel to Burkina Faso and Rwanda, related to the participation in country events (respectively the national workshop in Burkina Faso and the 8th EPRN Conference in Rwanda). In the case of Tanzania, there was a two-day advisory mission to Dodoma. Overall, it was ambitious to plan an output dedicated to advisory missions by UNCTAD staff, given that they cannot be away from headquarters for extended periods to carry out such advisory roles in situ, beyond their monitoring missions.

Policy implementation advice by national advisors (OP 2.3)

The national advisors were identified and selected in consultation with the country counterparts and the precise focus of their assignment involved joint decision making (country and UNCTAD). This was crucial to enable the consultants (as outsiders of the Ministries) to benefit from the trust and also the support needed to carry out their work and maximize the chances that their advice would have a follow-up (be used).

With respect to *Burkina Faso*, the engagement of a national policy adviser started in 2022. The focus of his work was the result of joint decision making between the Ministry and UNCTAD (with emphasis on three particular dimensions of cooperation: inter-ministerial; public-private and intra-private sector). The Ministry facilitated the contacts of the adviser with the stakeholders covered by the analysis. It is unclear why, during the implementation of the assignment, consultations between the consultant and the Ministry became less frequent. In the end, both sides view the ultimate result as less satisfactory, as there was no presentation or validation of the findings (an essential step for fostering the actual use of the work. From the consultant's perspective, this was also a necessary step). Regarding the counterpart ministry, it considers the assignment not implemented as expected, particularly because the priority actions were not budgeted, as there was no validation of the findings (as mentioned above). Additionally, it considers that the policy advice aspect was missing. As both sides regret the lack of validation to foster appropriation, the divergence in perceptions could be attributed to the broad scope of the ToR of the policy adviser: very large expectations of expected results of advisory work covering a period of some 4 months. Also, the ToR omitted reference to an explicit validation event of the findings of the policy adviser, particularly of the action plan developed as part of the assignment. In general, the counterpart regretted that, notwithstanding the relevance of the studies under both OP 1.2 and OP 2.3, their country level validation was missing in both cases, affecting the way forward (their use).

In the case of *Rwanda*, the project virtually started with the work of the policy advisor (in 2020), at the request of the country. The support was timely, as the ministry was at that time in the process of reviewing/revising its national trade and industrial policies (the latter with the support of Trademark East Africa/TMEA).[7] Particularly, the report on policy coherence (among the 5 papers prepared by the national adviser) facilitated discussions on draft revised policies, involving not only the ministry but also the team of consultants hired by TMEA to draft the policy revisions. It resulted in the ministry rejecting the proposals by the TMEA team. Another development partner was subsequently identified by Rwanda to support the ministry in this policy revision stage, i.e., the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI). The policy revision process was reported to be still ongoing; to illustrate, the new Industrial Policy 2024-2034 is expected to be approved and enacted by Government end 2024. Reportedly, this new industrial policy will follow a more holistic approach, seeking coherence with other priorities (local market development; trade; SDGs). This would be fully aligned with the policy advice emerging from the UNDA project.

Also, the papers on the negative effects and the opportunities of COVID-19 prepared by the national adviser were reported to have been timely and useful in guiding policy decisions and priority setting of support measures at that time. It is to be noted that the project was not the only one to conduct a study on the effects of the pandemic. In 2021, Rwanda's Private Sector Foundation (PSF) conducted a study on the impact of and opportunities related to the pandemic (funded by TMEA). In turn, in his paper, the policy implementation adviser used data from a study conducted by Access to Finance Rwanda (2021) - a multi-donor initiative - on the impact of the pandemic on businesses in Africa. As such, the COVID-19 related analysis funded by the project was one among several at that time.

[7] An Aid for Trade organization, established to support the growth of trade – both regional and international – in East Africa funded by the development agencies of the several countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, UK, and USA).

In conclusion, in Rwanda, core elements of the national policy adviser's work were effectively utilized by the ministry. Additionally, the operational strategy prepared by UNCTAD (2022) is largely based on the reports produced by the national policy adviser.

Regarding Tanzania, the national adviser was engaged for a period of approximately six months in 2022. Tanzanian government counterparts remarked that the chosen consultant, and by extension his think-tank (REPOA), was highly reputable and an ideal fit for the work undertaken in the project. Moreover, it was reported that collaboration between the adviser and relevant stakeholders to produce his report, including ministry staff and private industries (to which field trips were undertaken) was excellent and involved the additional benefit of the consultant building relationships with these stakeholders. Another stakeholder praised the choice to have Ministry of Industry and Trade staff involved in the field trips and data collection, as this increased the feeling of national ownership and facilitated knowledge transfer.

The highlighted sectors (cotton, edible oils and sugar) were agreed by all stakeholders to be of high relevance and importance for Tanzania and thus presented some of the best opportunities to improve their respective value chains. Counterparts from the Ministry of Trade also remarked that following the adviser's report, they are able to better recognize the extant challenges of these sectors and are better placed to allocate resources in a way that could effectively influence their development. As with Rwanda, it was observed that the adviser's report largely formed the foundation for the subsequent operational strategy.

Moreover, Tanzanian counterparts pointed out that policy development underway in country, namely a new long term development vision (to supersede the National Development Vision 2025), and updated strategies for industrial sectors covered in the operational strategy, mean that the project's results will to some extent end up being mainstreamed into action by Tanzania. Though this does not amount to explicit validation, as noted previously, this does denote a degree of ownership by the beneficiary (see above) and implies the likelihood of eventual impact in the form of policies to boost productive capacities.

Study tours (OP 2.4)

According to the reporting by UNCTAD, including the testimonials (videos) recorded and also the feedback from a number of study tour participants met in the context of the evaluation, the study tours to Morocco (May 2023) and Mauritius (October 2023) were highly successful in providing an opportunity to not only learn from the solid experiences of SEZs in these countries but also for peer learning among the participants. One participant from Tanzania remarked that there was a high degree of relevance in selecting these tour locations, as "what Tanzania has been thinking about implementing, has already been implemented in Mauritius." Moreover, as Mauritius has a mature sugar production / processing industry, it allowed a handy comparator for Tanzanian stakeholders, and hence the benefit extended beyond just the SEZ.

The programme in the two countries included a one-day seminar on industrial parks and industrial zones, in addition to meetings with the authorities in charge of overseeing the industrial parks/zones, and visits to the sites and to a number of enterprises. Some participants reported that they would have liked to have more in-depth one-to-one/group discussions, particularly with managers of the zones. While visits to enterprises were interesting, key learning points for policy makers relate to

inter alia the legal and regulatory framework, zone management and operations, infrastructure and services, incentives for enterprises, linkages with non-zone enterprises.

Its duration was considered very short (2 days in situ in the case of the Morocco study tour; 3 days as regards the one to Mauritius). It is argued that a more extended duration would have been possible at minor additional costs. Even if considered too long by participating UNCTAD staff (3/Morocco; 4/Mauritius), the programme could have been longer for the country participants in consultation with the host organizations.

Study tour reporting does not indicate which background documentation was made available for the one-day seminars in Morocco/Mauritius to the participants, i.e., if this included available good practice guidelines on the theme of industrial parks/SEZ.[8] As mentioned in the study report of Mauritius, UNCTAD plans to pursue its efforts in the field of SEZ. In this context, it will be possible to build on available guidelines based on technical cooperation in Africa (such as feasibility studies; support in legal and regulatory framework and zone management) by other development partners.

It is noted that study tour reporting was done by UNCTAD itself; it would have been useful to request each of the participating country teams to prepare a report, to see which lessons they drew from the study tours regarding the SEZ or similar instruments in their respective countries.

To the extent the study tours constituted the very last activity conducted by the project, the inclusion of a number of African countries other than Burkina Faso, Rwanda and Tanzania (see Section 5.2.2.1) did not really affect the work implemented in these three countries. Otherwise, allocating part of that budget to countries other than the beneficiary countries would have reduced the available funding for activities in the three core countries. As mentioned, the inclusion of other countries facilitated wider peer learning and networking (to illustrate, Rwanda wants to invite Botswana to learn from its SEZ experience). Also, for reasons beyond the control of the project, none of the public officials from Burkina Faso designated to participate in the study tour, could travel (given a last-minute problem related to political changes in the country). Only one representative of the Burkinabé private sector could be part of the study tour, the others being from Mali, Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar. In the case of the latter, it is argued that the country could have been included in the Mauritius study tour (that country being both French and English speaking).

Achievements of unforeseen activities

The unintended efforts undertaken and their results/use are as follows:

Support to EPRN/Rwanda

UNCTAD's participation in the 6th Annual Conference of EPRN (2020) and its participation in and financial contribution to the organization of the 7th and 8th Annual Conference of EPRN in respectively 2021 and 2022 constituted an avenue to further enhance awareness and the dialogue regarding productive capacity building related themes. While several development partners supported the 8th

[8] Such as guidelines prepared earlier on by the World Bank, GIZ, UNIDO based on their work in this field. E.g.: GIZ, UNIDO and WB, An international framework of eco-industrial parks, published in 2021 by WB Group; International guidelines for industrial parks published by UNIDO in November 2019 and its findings of Expert Group Meetings held earlier on the themes of Industrial Estates and Export Processing Zones.

Conference, UNCTAD was the largest co-organizer among them. The cooperation with EPRN through its annual event was de facto an avenue for dialogue complementary to the short national virtual workshop in 2021 and involved a large group of researchers, policy makers, representatives of civil society, the private sector, and also of development partners (there were some 140 participants in 2022 Conference).

It is to be noted that the theme of productive capacity has remained a theme on the agenda of 9th Conference (2023) – not supported by UNCTAD. Also, during the forthcoming EPRN Conference (27-28 June 2024) under the theme *Reimagining effective policies towards inclusive, sustainable and resilient development in Rwanda,* research papers will be presented that, directly and indirectly, relate to the theme of enhancement of productive capacities.

With chapters in all universities across Rwanda and members based in a wide range of public and private entities, EPRN is well-positioned to disseminate analysis and influence policy dialogue.

Comparative study of gender dimension of productive capacity development

In 2021, the decision was taken to conduct a comparative study on the gender potential for productive capacities development, focusing on Rwanda and Tanzania. The study, completed in 2022, encompasses a comprehensive situation analysis, presents a general assessment of productive capacities in the countries and its determinants, including constraints by women in this regard. The analysis results in strategies and recommendations for developing women's productive capacities in Rwanda and Tanzania. Drafts of the study were shared with the counterpart ministries in the two countries and their comments were reported to be reflected in the final report. The study was shared with the countries, but there is no indication of its presentation and discussion during the events organized by the project.

As the work started in 2021, no field missions could be conducted. Accordingly, the study is based on secondary data collection and indeed contains a vast range of relevant gender specific data. While it would have been possible for the US-based research team to present and discuss the findings in situ in 2023, this opportunity was not used. Due to language constraints, Burkina Faso was not included in this study. This limitation could in principle have been addressed by involving local expertise from Burkina Faso in the research team.

In hindsight, the rationale for conducting a *separate* study, rather than mainstreaming the analysis in the background studies and the operational strategy, is not fully clear. Additionally, the involvement of local researchers or business support structures at country level (e.g., the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Rwanda or the Women Entrepreneurs section of the Small Industries Development Organization in Tanzania) would have facilitated not only data collection, but also the contextualization of the recommendations of the study and the likelihood of follow-up (use).

Additional outreach of the regional workshop and study tours by including more African countries

To the extent resources were available, it was decided to include participants of a number of additional African countries in the regional workshop. While planning additional activities in each of

the three countries could have been an option, based on the operational strategies developed and the work started by the policy implementation advisers, it was decided to invite additional countries to participate in the aforementioned events. As the opportunity to exchange with a wider range of countries was appreciated by the beneficiary countries, the widening of participation was justifiable. Although the selection of the additional countries is not explained, it was reported to be based on requests made by the countries to UNCTAD to participate.

Inclusion of the theme of inequality

In the regional workshop, UNCTAD included a session addressing the challenges of inequality in relation to productive transformation. While gender inequality aspects were already extensively covered in the analyses conducted, the wider concerns as regards inequality were included in the discussions (e.g., spatial inequality). It was an opportunity for UNCTAD to insert the theme in the dialogue pertaining to productive capacities, in line with inequality related recommendations of the UNCTAD XV Conference. As mentioned in Section 5.2.2.1, it gave rise to a new learning platform called Africa Inequality Learning Group initiated at the project's regional workshop and officially launched in June 2023.

Synergies with related efforts

Internal linkages

The analytical work could build on prior UNCTAD-wide work (country level, LDCs, global). In the case of Rwanda, the project could benefit from the situation analysis (case study) conducted under the predecessor UNDA project that focused on productive capacity measurement. Additional linkages, initially envisaged with other departments within UNCTAD (as per the project document), did not materialize, reportedly hampered due to COVID-19.

External linkages

Cooperation with national research networks/think tanks is facilitated the organization of dialogue around productive capacity related themes (Rwanda's EPRN) and also was a source of national expertise (Tanzania's REPOA). Other development partners (regional organizations, UN agencies, other donors/agencies) were invited to the country level and regional events and several made presentations therein.

There is no indication of cooperation with other development partners going beyond their participation in the events. As multiple development actors are engaged in one form or the other in macro, meso, and/or micro level support to productive capacities' enhancement in the three countries, there is no doubt about opportunities for development partners to effectively collaborate when assisting these (or other) countries in the implementation of actions aimed at fostering, e.g., local value addition and export diversification. As UNCTAD is not present in the countries, it is not directly part of country-level donor coordination/cooperation mechanisms.

Likelihood of impact

It is considered premature to assess the extent to which the project was able to generate medium-term changes in terms of effects on the utilisation of existing productive capacities and the

development of new ones. As reflected in the reconstructed project logic (Annex 2-B), this required a wide range of preconditions that largely extended beyond the scope of this relatively small-scale project.

Somewhat surprisingly, the project's final report (April 2024) uses the positive evolution of beneficiary countries' Productive Capacities Index (PCI) during the period 2020-2022 as evidence of the project having achieved its broad goal of enhancing productive capacities. While the trend regarding the three countries is indeed encouraging, it is questionable to use it as "evidence" of the effects of project achievements, considering both the nature of the indicators that make up the index and the scope of the project's work.

External factors having affected effectiveness

In this regard the following are highlighted:

COVID-19

The project started at the same time as the pandemic, which required adjustments at that point, as no field missions were possible and as meetings had to be organized virtually.

The project coincided with the economies of the beneficiaries being affected by the pandemic, such as in terms of problems in the supply chains, price increases and also regarding export flows. Yet, the shock also implied opportunities for some sub-sectors. Importantly for the project, it strengthened policymakers' attention to productive capacity issues (such as the need for reducing dependency on imports, enhancing local production and value addition, including for the local market/local consumption). While these were also among the priorities prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the new context intensified their importance.

Overall, it can be stated that the project quickly adjusted its modus operandi in 2020/21.The COVID-19 context was even 'supportive' in bringing productive capacity related themes higher on the policy dialogue.

Changes at the level of the chief counterparts and project focal points

In the period 2020-2023 there were several changes at counterpart level in all three countries (involving multiple changes at ministerial level, of Permanent Secretaries and of Focal Points). It meant that the project had to be 're-explained' to new decision makers at country level to get their 'buy-in'. As there were no local project events organized in 2023 (after the publication of the operational strategy in 2022), the anchorage of the work and its follow-up at country level, particularly in case of changes on the side of the counterparts, remained feeble.

Political instability

The political context in Burkina Faso (coups d'état, 2022) required a low-key position of the project in terms of communication around its activities (local event). Travel-related restrictions meant that none of the public sector representatives from Burkina Faso could ultimately leave the country to take part in the study tour to Morocco.

5.2.3 Efficiency

The available project resources were used adequately, with the following observations:

Budget

As already mentioned in Section 2.6, overall, there is a general convergence between the initial budget allocation and actual expenditures, with some minor variations between the two. There was an across-the-board 10% cut in UNDA 12th and 13th Tranche projects, but the project was not really affected (especially as, given the travel restrictions during the pandemic, travel expenses were less than expected).

It is understood that the budget was not split into three sub-budgets per country to allow for flexibility (such as the ability to use the funds in another beneficiary country, in case of delays in one country). Still, sharing the project document with the countries, including information on the budget as well as the principles of its use, would have been appropriate for the sake of transparency and fostering of co-ownership. The project strategy did not foresee any cost-sharing modality. As a result, all activities were funded solely through project resources.

Duration

The duration of the project remained more or less within the planned limits (6 months beyond the planned closure as per the project document). With hindsight, and considering the low density of project activities in its final year, it can be argued if the duration of a project this size and nature should perhaps be shortened to a maximum three years. By spreading the activities over a long period, momentum of follow-up of individual activities could be affected. As observed by the evaluation, counterparts may not necessarily recall the operational strategy developed in 2022 by mid-2024, despite it being a core deliverable of the project.

Project steering and day-to-day implementation

Project steering and day-to-day management were concentrated at the level of UNCTAD-Geneva, with periodic consultations with UNECA as the core implementation partner. Representatives of the latter also joined a number of country-level project activities. UNCTAD considered the project too small to put in place a formal steering mechanism that would include the beneficiary countries. Still, whatever the project size, a steering mechanism is considered good practice. This does not take away the fact that the project team had regular discussions with the focal points, including updates on project implementation.

Overall management was adequate. The team was reported to be very engaged and responsive, effectively adjusting the project approach to the COVID-19 context (see also above under 'external factors'). Progress reporting was in line with UNDA requirements, with emphasis on activities conducted. Periodic reporting was conducted between UNCTAD and UNDESA.

A detailed report was prepared for each of the national workshops, the regional workshop and the two study tours. All reports contain gender-disaggregated data related to participation. There is also feedback survey data for each of the national workshops.

Procedures for recruitment of consultants and for local payments (logistics etc. of events) were reported to be smooth and aligned UNCTAD rules. For local expenses, the project worked through the countries' UNDP Offices.

Communication

The documents prepared in the context of project activities (such as studies; operational strategies; event reports) were put on a dedicated section of UNCTAD's web site. According to web statistics included in the project's terminal report, the main publications were downloaded 3790 times (of which the three operational strategies almost 2700 times). This is certainly an indication of interest in the studies, but unfortunately, it provides no indication of their actual use.

5.2.4 Sustainability

The project trained some 444 public and private sector officials in the different events, provided inputs into capacity development/strengthening related policy design and implementation through the studies of the national experts and through UNCTAD's strategic advice reflected in the comprehensive operational strategy documents prepared for each of the three beneficiary countries. Some policy advice was reported to be used in the reviews of existing policies and strategies (Rwanda, Tanzania). The question is whether these results/benefits are likely to continue beyond the project, which leads to the following observations:

- The countries are indeed likely to continue working towards developing and strengthening productive capacities, as the latter is a theme that was, is, and will remain an integral part of their overall development strategies and sector policies.

- Awareness was enhanced through the project work and time will tell if and how policy makers will intensify their efforts to ensure the effective and coherent implementation of policies and strategies.

- UNCTAD emphasized the need to adopt a holistic approach, which is essential for countries to achieve structural transformation and graduate from LDC status. Its policy advice has been formulated in the form of an operational strategy for each country. These are UNCTAD publications and for UNCTAD, the actual use thereof is in the hands of the countries.

- The project implementation strategy did not put emphasis on the validation of the above strategies to encourage their mainstreaming in the countries' development strategies; as such this hampers the appropriation of the results and their use beyond the project.

- In the case of Rwanda, the policy dialogue based on productive capacity related research is expected to continue to be "fueled" by EPRN.

- In Tanzania, it is likely that project outputs will feed into ongoing policy development processes.

- The expectation that the policy implementation advisors will continue to be available to pursue support to the policy makers (as based in the countries) is somewhat theoretical. In the case of Tanzania, as the policy implementation advice involved a local institution/think tank (REPOA), collaborations are expected to continue (though perhaps not strictly related to the theme of productive capacities). The same requires resources and, even if a ministry would have a budget for this purpose, the process of recruitment is subject to procedures

that may/may not result in the advisors mobilized under the UNDA project being recruited to continue the work started under the project.

5.2.5 Cross-cutting issues

Gender mainstreaming

The project undertook conscious efforts to strengthen attention to the role of women on the productive transformation agenda. In this regard reference is made to:

- Efforts to ensure participation of women in all workshops (in the case of Tanzania, with the support of the Resident Coordinator's Office).
- Capturing of data on gender at activity-level (women constituting in total about one third of the officials trained under the project).
- The organisation of sessions dedicated to gender-related challenges and opportunities in all workshops.
- Gender-related research comparing Rwanda and Tanzania (see also Section 5.2.2.2).

With hindsight, the comparative research could have been mainstreamed in the preparation of the operational strategies rather than being implemented a stand-alone deliverable. Additionally, it would have been better to include all three beneficiary countries in the analysis rather than excluding coverage of the situation in Burkina Faso for mere language reasons. Finally, as mentioned, it is regrettable that the research did not involve country-level researchers and its recommendations require contextualisation (in order for the proposed actions to be anchored to and build on the work of existing national research and business support institutions).

Inclusion concerns

While not envisaged in the project design, during implementation the theme of inclusiveness was addressed. As mentioned above, gender issues were addressed by identifying constraints faced by women and girls to participate in productive activities and also measures to address the same. Also, other inclusion concerns were covered in the analyses conducted, such as the importance of informal sector activities (production; cross-border trade) and the need to support formalization. Particularly during the regional workshop, the theme of inequality was put on the agenda in the form of a dedicated session on this theme. It was used as an opportunity for UNCTAD to enhance awareness on the subject, in line with the deliberations of UNCTAD-XV. As mentioned in Section 5.2.2.2, it resulted in a new dialogue platform on inequality in Africa.

Environmental safeguards

As environmental concerns were not explicitly included as a focus in the project deliverables, they were nevertheless considered an important dimension to be addressed in work related to productive capacity development and enhancement. It is, however, noted that the discussions during the study tour (the workshop part of these events) included reference to the importance of environmental issues in zone planning and management. In this respect, one can also consider the need for measures/incentives that are aligned to commitments of the countries pertaining to sustainable and green growth (typically an integral part of industrial policies), related, among others, to priorities such as resource (including energy) efficiency, clean technologies, waste management, circular economy. In brief, environmental sustainability concerns need explicit inclusion in policy advice regarding productive capacity enhancement.

6. Conclusions

The main conclusions of this end-of-project evaluation are the following:

1. The project was and remains relevant, was timely and effectively managed by a committed and responsive team.

2. The project had a range of achievements (studies; awareness enhancement workshops; study tours); which is particularly notable given the spread of the work across three countries, the small size of the budget and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 context.

3. UNCTAD's advice, as compiled in the operational strategic frameworks developed for each of the three countries, is very comprehensive, while its effective use depends on its adoption by the countries and its mainstreaming in their development strategies and/or sector policies. There is some nascent evidence of this taking place (Rwanda; Tanzania).

4. Given the holistic strategy followed in UNCTAD's advice and the wide range of priority themes covered by the above frameworks, the project's institutional anchorage goes beyond the ministries in charge of industry and trade (UNCTAD's typical counterpart).

5. During the last year of project implementation (2023), more emphasis could have been put on the country level validation of the different studies and strategies, to prepare the ground for the 'way forward' of UNCTAD's advice at country level.

6. Gender aspects were well considered during the project, including a dedicated publication, but more explicit efforts to mainstream this into final UNCTAD publications would have further underscored its significance.

7. Recommendations

The main recommendations of this evaluation are as follows:

1. UNCTAD should continue discussions with the countries involved, possibly in cooperation with UNECA, with particular emphasis on the operational strategies developed through the project. This continued exchange at the highest possible institutional level should stimulate their adoption, priority setting and further use at the country level.

2. UNCTAD should build on the studies conducted under this UNDA project for subsequent related interventions in the three beneficiary countries (or elsewhere) and engage in support that focuses on the *implementation* of *specific priorities* that align with countries' requests and UNCTAD's experience and mandate.

3. UNCTAD should support countries in developing project concepts in specific fields under the general heading of 'productive capacity building/enhancement', ensuring alignment with countries' priority setting, and in view of domestic and external resource mobilization.

4. UNCTAD should participate, even virtually, in country-specific development partner working groups related to productive capacity themes, and seek alliances with related donor interventions under the support priorities to maximize synergies and the impact of interventions at country level.

5. When working in the field of SEZ/industrial zones (as planned), UNCTAD should seek collaboration with other development partners that have been/are involved in technical assistance in this field (e.g. feasibility studies, legal and regulatory framework, zone development and management, good practice guidelines) to ensure complementarity of different research and advisory efforts.

8. Lessons

UNCTAD makes a clear distinction between support to PCI measurement (the predecessor UNDA project that included inter alia Rwanda) and support to productive capacity (PC) related policy development and implementation (the project under review). There seems to be merit in aligning PC-related policy advice to the way PCI is measured, particularly focusing on gaps to be addressed at the country level based on PCI benchmarking.

Whereas research projects end in a publication, technical assistance projects in the field of policy formulation/implementation are expected to result in a strategy, action plan or policy measure adopted or amended by the beneficiary country.

Regardless of the size of a technical assistance project, involving the beneficiary countries in their design and steering fosters co-ownership and possibly also sustainability.

Fruitful collaboration with the relevant Resident Coordinator's Offices from the design stage onwards, facilitates engagement within the country and is expected to spur country co-ownership and sustainability of results, whilst building good foundations for future technical cooperation activities.

Annexes

Annex 1 Evaluation TORs

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Independent Evaluation of Development Account Project *2023E: Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African least developed countries*

Introduction and Purpose

1. This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the independent final project evaluation for the United Nations Development Account (DA) funded project titled *"Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African least developed countries"*.
2. The evaluation will provide accountability to the management of UNCTAD, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.
3. The evaluation will provide assessments that are credible and useful and include practical and constructive recommendations. In particular, the evaluation will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation, overall results, and the extent of gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming. On the basis of these assessments, the evaluation will formulate recommendations to project stakeholders, in particular to UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management Office/Development Account of DESA, including on operational and administrative aspects, with a view towards optimizing results of future projects.

Context of the project

4. Following several years of job-less growth in many African Least Developed Countries (LDCs), there is now growing consensus that achieving broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction in these countries requires building productive capacities. However, building such capacities is not straightforward. In this regard, UNCTAD's long standing work on the subject underlines the need for a holistic approach to address three inter-related challenges: first, weak productive capacities; second, lack of structural economic transformation; and third, weak institutional and human resources capacities to implement policies. Fostering productive capacities in LDCs is challenging because of weak production and innovation linkages. This hinders their capacity to engage in skill or technology-intensive activities and makes them heavily dependent on a few low value-added commodities for export, which in turn exacerbates their structural weaknesses.
5. Despite these common challenges, there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to developing productive capacities, as pathways may differ according to country specificities, resources endowments, institutional capacities and overall initial conditions. There are also constraints faced by specific groups in developing productive capacities, particularly women. The development of productive capacities rarely happens spontaneously, thus Governments need to play a proactive and catalytic role, including through improving infrastructure, creating an enabling environment for investment, providing support to private initiatives, and striving for coherence and participation by creating synergies across sectors and stakeholders. For governments to be able to perform such a role, it is important to enhance their national capacity to formulate and implement policies and translate the agreed priorities and commitments into action.
6. UNCTAD has already developed significant expertise and analytical work on the subject, including a conceptual framework in assessing the level of productive capacities in LDCs and assisting them in identifying priority areas for action. As part of the DA project on *"Indices for benchmarking productive*

capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries" (UNDA 1617M) UNCTAD has developed the first composite productive capacities index and had conducted national qualitative assessments and workshops with policymakers in three landlocked countries, including two LDCs: Botswana, Lao PDR and Rwanda. Policymakers in Botswana and Rwanda highlighted that the concept of productive capacities provides a useful framework for developing priorities to achieve structural transformation and export diversification. However, they noted continuing challenges regarding mainstreaming the goal of productive capacities in the national policy-making process, designing country-specific policies to foster productive capacities, and ensuring implementation, follow-up and coordination between relevant ministries and stakeholders.

7. While there is now growing recognition of the importance of productive capacities and their measurement, there is a need for an operational framework on how to build such capacities. Existing frameworks to develop productive capacities tend to be fragmented and ad hoc. Thus, a more holistic and coherent approach to productive capacity development is needed. This project seeks to strengthen the capacities of selected African LDCs to formulate and implement such holistic and coherent strategies to develop productive capacities, to enhance their prospects of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

8. Moreover, current development strategies to build productive capacities tend to emphasize the creation of new capacities without paying enough attention to how to utilize, enhance and maintain existing ones. Therefore, the exclusive focus of this project is on how to utilize and maintain existing capacities, while building new capacities in selected LDCs. In other words, the project will provide concrete, country-specific policy-frameworks on "how" to build new productive capacities, and fully utilizing and strengthening existing productive capacities. In this regard the project aims to train at least 50 officials and specialists in each of the beneficiary countries.

Project beneficiaries, activities and objectives

Beneficiaries

9. The beneficiary countries of this project are 1) Rwanda, 2) Burkina Faso and 3) Tanzania. The selection of the countries was demand-driven to address national policy priorities and technical assistance needs, as evidenced by ad hoc requests of member States, as well as through previous assistance programmes provided by UNCTAD. The countries selected reflect different resource endowments, structural features and constraints prevalent in LDCs. Moreover, the proposed countries face widespread poverty and lack of economic diversification.

10. The three identified countries have well contextualized national development plans identifying priority areas. They also have very low productive capacities and limited policy implementation capacities. Also, limited stakeholder coordination prevails in the selected LDCs. In addition to the national development plans and visions, the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) developed in the context of the SDGs monitoring framework, provide detailed thematic analysis and review of the countries' situations across sectors and SDG areas.

11. **The VNR for Burkina Faso (2019)** presents the country's goals within the 2030 Agenda and of Agenda 2063, which are outlined in its National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES 2016-2020). The PNDES was adopted in July 2016 and is operationalized through fourteen sectoral policies, taking also into account the SDG targets. The PNDES's overall objective is to "structurally transform the Burkinabe economy, for a strong, sustainable growth, resilient, inclusive, creating decent jobs for all and leading to improved social wellbeing", and is the guiding document for all interventions in relation to economic and social development, and structural transformation at the national level. The major challenges facing the country to achieve medium and long term development goals according to the VNP are: (i) increasing the level of mobilization of financial resources; (ii) the fight against growing insecurity in certain regions of the country; (iii) strengthening the national statistical system; (iv) increasing the energy supply; (v) development of socio-economic infrastructure; (vi) the development of productive bases, the competitiveness of the production and processing sectors of national products.

12. **Rwanda's VNR (2019)** defines the Government's efforts to mainstream SDGs into policy, strategies and programs at national and sub-national levels focusing on, inter alia, building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation. Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NTS1) is linked to the SDGs, and specifically sets out to establish Rwanda as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy (in relation to SDGs 4, 8, and 9); and promote industrialization and attain a structural shift in the export base to high-value goods and services with the aim of growing exports by 17% annually (addressing SDGs 8 and 9). Additionally, to address existing needs to forge the appropriate infrastructure for industrialization, Rwanda is developing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and industrial parks as an economic policy tool that promotes private investment, industry and export growth. Designing appropriate policies for the establishment of SEZs is a key area of action within this project and will be addressed in the operational framework developed for Rwanda. Efforts will continue to develop industrial parks in provinces and expand the Kigali Special Economic Zone with capacity of 350 companies operating by 2024. In partnership with the private sector the government launched the Made in Rwanda brand in 2015, and adopted the Made in Rwanda policy in 2018, which provides a holistic roadmap aimed at increasing competitiveness by enhancing the domestic market through value chain development and increasing and diversifying exports. One of the persistent challenges facing the country is that, whereas the strategic focus is to expand export-oriented industrialization, the country does not have capacity to achieve this goal. This is mostly due to the limited capabilities for rapid industrialization both at private and public sector levels.

13. **Tanzania's VNR (2019)** "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality", affirms the efforts to integrate the 2030 global development agenda into its national plans. Tanzania is already implementing the Development Vision (TDV) 2025, which aims at accelerating the transformation of the country into a semi-industrialized middle-income nation by the year 2025. In particular, the Five-Year Development Plan identified the following priority areas closely linked to this DA-funded project, namely: growth and industrialization: interventions for fostering innovation and technological adaptation; and strategically repositioning the country to maximize on the global and regional economic dynamics; and, conducive environment for doing business including, among other things, improvement in both quantity and quality of infrastructure services, as well as policy and institutional reforms aimed at facilitating start-ups and sustaining businesses. Despite noted achievements on the goal, some challenges still exist, namely the high cost of doing business, a shortage of qualified employees with specialized skills in some growth sectors and limited long-term finance for industrial projects to name a few. Initiatives such as the adoption of the Blueprint for Business Regulatory Reform, implementation of the National Skills Development Strategy and the capitalization of the Tanzania Development Bank are being implemented to address these challenges. Thus, as recognized in the NVR and other national policy documents, there is a need for assistance in terms of policy design and implementation to diversify the economy away from fuels.

Project activities and objectives

14. As noted, the project aims overall at strengthening the capacities of the three countries to build, utilize and maintain productive capacities to achieve the SDGs. Given the important role of women in building productive capacities and in the economic development of the beneficiary countries, gender issues were integrated into the activities of the project. The project follows three interconnected implementation strategies to achieve the expected results:

    (i) Capacity building and technical assistance: assisting the beneficiary countries to strengthen national capacities in the formulation and implementation of holistic and coherent trade and industrial strategies for productive capacity development.

    (ii) Critically assessing the state of industrial parks and special economic zones, and their roles as instruments for productive capacity and structural economic transformation.

    (iii) Dissemination of substantive outputs such as national studies, sectoral studies, and national guides in managing industrial parks and other strategic sectors identified by each beneficiary country.

15. To achieve such an implementation strategy, the project will follow two phases as follows:

    1. Assessment, design and formulation:

16. This phase will be undertaken with full engagement of national stakeholders with the aim of enhancing their capacities. The respective ministries of economic development and planning, trade or finance, depending on each country's institutional framework, serve as focal points. The main beneficiary of the projects includes policymakers, regulators, advisors and experts, private sector communities, research and technology centers, and representatives from civil society, including vulnerable groups.

17. This phase was conducted as follows. First, country-level assessments and national studies were undertaken to identify country-specific and sector-specific circumstances, to collect important information and to coordinate the strategic implementation of the project with key government ministries and stakeholders. The country-case studies helped to clearly articulate policy measures and actions to promote productive capacities in each of the three beneficiary countries, and served as background for the training and skill building activities, as well as inputs for the country level operational frameworks for design and implementation of coherent policies.

18. Second, national training and capacity building workshops at policy and expert levels were organized in beneficiary countries, on how to design and implement coherent strategies for productive capacity development and to achieve the sustainable development goals. The workshops discussed mechanisms for facilitating policy coordination. Issues addressed at the workshops included: domestic policies and strategies to address economic concentration; how to foster productive capacities and structural economic transformation; policy implementation and coordination strategies; the role of finance, skills and technology; the role of the private sector in developing and enhancing productive capacities; using data and statistics to guide polices for building productive capacities.

19. Also, a regional training workshop was convened based on the results of the different activities at the national level. The workshop brought together representatives from all beneficiary countries and other African LDCs, partner implementing agencies, as well as international experts. The workshops allowed identifying recommendations on possible measures and options to address existing constraints on productive capacities development. The workshop also shared best practices and experiences in formulating and implementing holistic and coherent approaches to productive capacities development amongst the selected government officials and stakeholders. This helped to identify the relevant strategies and instruments included in the operational frameworks. The activity will facilitate South-South cooperation and peer learning.

    2. Validation and implementation:

20. In consultation with beneficiary governments, operational frameworks for each country on how to build and foster productive capacities for structural economic transformation were developed and published. To assist with the implementation of the identified policy actions, direct support was provided through embedding policy implementation advisors within the relevant ministries, depending on the requests of the beneficiary countries.

21. Through the project, technical assistance was provided to key national institutions to implement the operational frameworks on how to foster productive capacities and structural transformation. After validation of the various studies and operational frameworks, study tours were organized for government officials and private sector representatives from beneficiary countries, to existing industrial parks in other selected African countries.

22. This phase also sought to raise understanding and share lessons across countries in further meetings or conferences, or through cooperation with regional forums or partners. This phase was designed to enable adaptation or replication of the project's achievements in other LDCs.

    Links to the SDGs

23. The project is in line with the 2030 development agenda and provides a direct contribution to the

implementation and achievement of SDGs 1, 8 and 9. In particular, the project will address the primary targets 8.1 and 8.2 (sustaining per capita economic growth, and achieving higher productivity through diversification), and 9.2 and 9.3 (promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and increase the integration of small-scale industrial and other enterprises into value chains and markets). It also follows the agreed principles on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which acknowledge the role of trade as an engine of inclusive development and a vehicle for achieving the SDGs, particularly by promoting long-term investment in productive capacities.

24. Furthermore, the project follows UNCTAD's policy research and analytical framework, which has guided the policy analysis and recommendations for LDCs over the past two decades, focusing on promoting inclusive productive capacity development and sustainable structural transformation. This framework is based on the understanding that social, economic and environmental development are linked and are important for achieving the SDGs and graduation from LDC status.

25. Promoting sustainable structural transformation and inclusive productive capacity development will enable social outcomes by expanding or creating employment, including opportunities for women and girls, shifting actors up in the value chain, and by expanding or creating trade markets that did not exist previously, hence contributing to the achievement of the SDGs – notably goals 8, 9, 10 and 17.

Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

26. This final evaluation of the project has the following specific objectives:

- Assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realized, including the extent of gender, human rights and disability mainstreaming; and
- Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

27. The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from March 2020 to December 2023.

28. The evaluation is expected to address the following questions under the below criteria (to be further developed in the inception report, as appropriate):

a) Relevance

- To what extent were the project design, choice of activities and deliverables aligned with UNCTAD and UNDA objectives?
- To what extent did they reflect and address the development needs and priorities of beneficiary countries?
- What unique value did UNCTAD bring to the project? Has the work of the project been complementary to that of initiatives by other UN and non-UN actors in the target countries?

b) Effectiveness

- Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document, including the SDG targets identified? Is there any evidence of (intended or unintended) outcomes?
- To what extent have the project participants from each targeted country utilized, or intend to utilize, the knowledge and skills gained, and products developed through the project's activities?
- To what extent has the project contributed to partnerships amongst project participants with national and regional counterparts, regional and international development partners, civil society and/or the private sector?
- What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?

c) Efficiency

- To what extent was the project management adequate in ensuring the coordination, planning, execution, and monitoring the project within the defined scope and timeline?
- How efficient was the project in utilizing project resources?
- Has the project enabled effective and efficient sharing of resources through building partnerships with other UN and non-UN organizations?

d) Sustainability

- What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes?
- Is there evidence that beneficiary countries have continued working towards the project objectives beyond UNCTAD's interventions?
- Have there been catalytic effects from the project at the national/regional levels?

e) Gender, human rights and disability

- To what extent were an equity-focused approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention, and can results be identified in this regard?

Methodology

29. Methods for data gathering for this evaluation will include, but are not limited to, the following:

– Desk review of project documents and relevant materials;

– Collection and analysis of relevant web and social media metrics related to the outputs of the project;

– Observation of a sample of meetings, webinars and other activities implemented by the project, as appropriate;

– Interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff, and with a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders;

– Online surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as appropriate; and

– Focus group discussions.

30. Travel to one or two beneficiaries of the project is expected, in order to interview project stakeholders.

31. As part of the desk review, which will lead to an Inception Report, the evaluator will use the project document as well as additional documents such as mission reports; progress reports, financial reports, publications and studies - both produced under the project as well as received from national and regional counterparts. A list of project beneficiaries as well as other partners and counterparts involved in the project will be provided to the evaluator.

32. The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in the Inception Report, determining thereby the exact focus and approach for the exercise, including developing tailor-made questions that target different stakeholders (based on a stakeholder analysis), and developing the sampling strategy and identifying the sources and methods for data collection.

33. The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of those interviewed in an Annex to the evaluation report. The evaluator is to ensure a wide representation of stakeholders, bearing in mind the need to include those in a disadvantaged or minority position as appropriate.

Organization of the evaluation

(i) **Deliverables and Expected Outputs**

34. The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw

conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the project.

35. More specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Highlight, as appropriate, any specific achievements that provide additional value for money and/or relevant multiplier effects;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the project while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;
- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how work in this area can be further strengthened in order to address beneficiaries' needs and create synergies through collaboration with other UNCTAD divisions, international organizations and development partners, and other international forums;
- Draw lessons of wider application for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects/countries;
- Review exit strategies if any, how well it is tailored to the needs of the member States and the implementing entities.

36. All assessments must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and well-substantiated logic. Proposed recommendations must be supported by the findings and be relevant, specific, practical, actionable, and time-bound.

37. Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation:

i. An inception report[9];
ii. A draft evaluation report; and
iii. The final evaluation report[10]

38. The inception report should summarize the desk review and specify the evaluation methodology, determining thereby the exact focus and scope of the exercise, including the evaluation matrix, the sampling strategy, stakeholder mapping analysis and the data collection instruments.

39. The final report of the evaluation must be composed of the following key elements:

i. Executive summary;
ii. Introduction of the evaluation;
iii. a brief description of the project, including project objectives, expected accomplishments, strategies and key activities;
iv. A clear description of the evaluation objectives, scope, and questions as well as evaluation methodology used;
v. Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section III of this ToR, with a comparison of planned and implemented project activities and outputs; and
vi. Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.
vii. Annexes including a list of documents consulted, interviewed stakeholders, survey templates and this TOR.

(ii) **Description of Duties**

2. The evaluation will be undertaken by an independent evaluator and facilitated by the UNCTAD Independent Evaluation (IEU) in close collaboration with the Project Team from UNCTAD.

3. The evaluator reports to the Chief of the UNCTAD Evaluation Unit. S/he will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of IEU and in coordination with the project managers for UNCTAD. The

[9] The quality of the inception report should meet those standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports: http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608
[10] The quality of the evaluation report should meet those standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607

evaluator is responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, analysis and reporting as provided in this TOR.

4. The evaluator shall act independently, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and in her/his private capacities and not as a representative of any government or organization that may present a conflict of interest. S/he will have no previous experience of working with the project or of working in any capacity linked with it.

5. The evaluator should observe UNEG guidelines, including the Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN system[11], as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy[12], in the conduct of this assignment. The evaluator needs to integrate human rights, gender equality and disability perspectives in evaluations to the extent possible.[13] The evaluator needs to ensure a complete, fair, engaging, unreserved, and unbiased assessment. In case of difficulties, uncertainties or concerns in the conduct of the evaluation, the evaluator needs to report immediately to the Chief of Independent Evaluation Unit to seek guidance or clarification.

6. The project team will support the evaluation by providing desk review documents, contact details of project stakeholders as well as any additional documents that the evaluator requests. It is the responsibility of the project managers to ensure senior management engagement throughout the evaluation and timely feedback in the quality assurance and factual clarification process coordinated by IEU. The project team will review and provide comments on the inception, draft and final reports, and formulate a management response to the recommendations of the evaluation report.

7. The UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit endorses the TOR and approves the selection of the proposed evaluator. It reviews the evaluation methodology, clears the draft report, performs quality assurance of the final report and participates in disseminating the final report. The Independent Evaluation Unit engages the project team throughout the evaluation process in supporting the evaluation and validating the reports.

(i) Timetable

40. The evaluation will take place over the period 15 March 2024 to 15 July 2024.

(ii) Monitoring and Progress Control

41. The evaluator must keep the UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit informed of the progress made in the evaluation on a regular basis.

42. The evaluator will submit the first draft of inception report by 15 April 2024. The Report should include draft data collection instruments for review.

43. The first draft of the report should be presented to the Evaluation Unit by 15 June 2024 for quality assurance purposes (approximately 1 week). The revised draft report will then be shared with the project team for factual clarification and comments (approximately 2 weeks).

44. The deadline for submission of the final report will be 15 July 2024.

45. The contract concludes, and payment issued, upon satisfactory receipt of the final report.

---

[11] "Norms and Standards for Evaluation" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2016): http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914

[12] "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), June 2023. https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/osg_evaluationpolicy2023_en.pdf

[13] "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2014): http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616. The UNEG Handbook on "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations: Towards UNEG Guidance" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2011): http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980.

(iii) Qualifications and Experience[14]

46. **Education:** Advanced university degree in economics, trade, development, public administration, rural development, or related field.

47. **Experience:** At least 10 years of experience in conducting or managing evaluations, or in programme management, preferably on interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. Solid understanding of the UN context and the Sustainable Development Goals. Experience working in Africa. Experience conducting public policy and/or development programme evaluations. Solid understanding of gender responsive and equity-focused evaluation design, data collection and analysis methods. Ability to develop clear, realistic, feasible recommendations.

48. **Language:** Fluency in oral and written English and French.

(iv) Conditions of Service

49. The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

Evaluation communication and dissemination plan

50. The final evaluation report and key findings will be disseminated widely to all relevant stakeholders including through the following channels:

- A copy of the final evaluation report and management response will be made available publicly on the UNCTAD website;
- A summary of the key evaluation findings, highlighting the results of the project in particular, and lessons learned, will be shared with UNCTAD member States as part of the annual reporting on evaluation activities; and
- Other communication briefs and products as appropriate.

[14] The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

Annex 2A Project results framework

Intervention logic	Indicators	Means of verification
Objective To strengthen the capacities of selected least developed countries in Africa to build, utilize and maintain productive capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.		
Outcome – OC1 Enhanced capacities of the planning or trade ministry, depending on the institutional setting, of each beneficiary country to develop country-specific strategies for productive capacity development and structural economic transformation.	**IA 1.1** At least 70% of the trained policymakers at the national and regional workshops reporting improved ability to formulate quality policies and strategies aimed at enhancing productive capacity and structural transformation, and in integrating them in national plans.	• Feedback from participants at workshops
	IA 1.2 Stakeholders at national training workshops endorse at least two policy instruments to implement productive capacities development strategies.	• Stakeholder surveys • Meetings reports • Focal points feedback
Output OP1.1 Undertake fact-finding missions to identify country-specific and sector-specific circumstances, to gather and collect data and to coordinate the strategic implementation of the project with key government ministries and stakeholders.		
OP1.2 Undertake country-case studies to understand the country-specific circumstances and constraints and to clearly articulate policy measures and actions to promote productive capacities in each of the three beneficiary countries. The studies will serve as background for the training and skill building outputs, as inputs for the country level operational frameworks (OP.2.1), as well as for the design and implementation of coherent policies to achieve SDGs 8 and 9.		
OP1.3 Organize three national training workshops (one in each beneficiary country), on how to design and implement coherent strategies for productive capacity development and to achieve the sustainable development goals. The workshops will also discuss mechanisms for facilitating policy coordination. Fifty participants are expected at each workshop, including policymakers, women, and private sector representatives.		

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">OP1.4 Organize one regional training workshop based on the results of the different activities envisaged under OP1.1, OP1.2 and OP1.3.

The workshop will bring together 22 representatives from all beneficiary countries and other African LDCs, partner implementing agencies, as well as international experts. The workshop will allow identifying recommendations on possible measures and options to address existing constraints on productive capacities development. Gender issues will be included in the programme of the workshop. The workshop will also share best practices and experiences in formulating and implementing holistic and coherent approaches to productive capacities development amongst the selected government officials and stakeholders. This will help to identify the relevant strategies and instruments to be included in the operational frameworks.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Outcome - OC2
Enhanced capacities of government officials and practitioners to implement coherent productive capacities policies, with a view to improving their international competitiveness and integration into the world economy</td><td>IA 2.1 Each beneficiary country establishes a policy coordination mechanism such as inter-ministerial committee or taskforce, to integrate key stakeholders into the policy design and implementation process for productive capacity development.</td><td>• Feedback from beneficiaries
• List of national coordination mechanisms
• A final draft of the operational frameworks on how to build and foster productive capacities for structural transformation</td></tr>
<tr><td>IA 2.2 At least one recommendation, or priority action, derived from the country-specific frameworks for productive capacity development is implemented in each of the</td><td>• A final draft of the operational frameworks on how to build and foster productive capacities for structural transformation
• Feedback from beneficiaries</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Output OP2.1 In consultation with beneficiary governments, develop and publish the operational frameworks for each country on how to build and foster productive capacities for structural economic transformation. The publication will consider the outcome of the national training workshops under OP1.3 and the results of the regional training workshop under OP1.4. This activity contributes to the achievement of both OC1 and OC2.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">OP2.2 Carry out advisory missions in support of key national institutions to implement the operational frameworks on how to foster productive capacities and structural transformation.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">OP2.3 Provide capacity building support through embedding policy implementation advisors within the relevant ministries, to assist with policy implementation depending on the requests of the beneficiary countries.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">OP2.4 Organize study tours for 9 government officials and private sector representatives from beneficiary countries, to industrial parks in selected African countries. The study tours will provide beneficiaries with practical ideas and lessons on how other countries have used industrial parks as instruments for productive capacity development.</td></tr>
</table>

Annex 2 B
Schematic reconstruction of the project's intervention logic

Interrelated challenges and opportunities	Project Intervention areas	Short-term changes (results)	Medium term changes (effects; impact)
Gaps in existing policies and strategies related to the development & strengthening of productive capacities (PC). More precisely: **gaps in policies and strategies relevant for PC yet incomplete* **lack of coherence among the range of policies and strategies relevant for PC* **gaps in policy formulation capacity* **gaps in policy implementation capacity* **gaps in inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral coordination (agriculture - industry – trade)* **gaps in public-private sector dialogue* **constraints faced by particular groups (women; youth) to engage in PC*	Country studies (diagnostics) National workshops Regional workshop PC Operational strategy Advisory support (UNCTAD and national advisors) Study tours (with focus on one of the industrial policy instruments: industrial zones) *Cross-cutting theme:* Gender PC development potential comparative study	PC development and strengthening mainstreamed in national policy-making processes Comprehensive and specific policies, strategies and measures revised/developed to foster PC Policies, strategies and measures implemented in coherent and effective manner to foster PC Distribution (inequality) including also gender dimensions mainstreamed in policy formulation/policy review and policy implementation	• Increase in local value addition (share of manufacturing in GDP) • Increase of manufacturing-based exports (diversification of export basket) • Increase in domestic SMEs engaged in regional and international trade • Overall export growth (integration in regional and international value chains) • Increase in per capita economic growth • Poverty reduction • More inclusive development incl increase in share of women/youth entrepreneurs in local production, processing and trade (ntl/regional/intl markets)
HYPOTHESES			
Policy, institutional and physical infrastructure	Project interventions in line with policy priorities of the beneficiary countries; efforts towards improvement of the overall business environment; interest of public and private support organisations to improve/expand their services to support enterprises (in particular from micro to medium) based on their needs and market requirements; investment in human capital (education; skills development).		

Overall context	Political stability; favourable demand trend (national; regional; international) in the priority value chains of the countries.
Private sector	Interest in engaging in/upgrading of production/processing activities; readiness to enhance cooperation among enterprises in the value chain; access to affordable finance to invest in production/processing or its upgrading.
External support	Effective cooperation among PC-related external support by development partners (bi- and multilateral; NGOs).

Annex 3 Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation questions and sub-questions	Sources of information	Data collection/ analysis methods
Project identification and design		
Q1. *To what extent was the design of the project logical, coherent, focused and building on lessons from prior interventions by UNCTAD and by the beneficiary countries themselves in the thematic fields covered by the project?* Sub-questions: • How were the three countries selected (criteria; process)? • To what extent was the design based on a needs assessment (analysis of situation/problems/opportunities and of stakeholder capacities and of prior work by UNCTAD/others in the countries related to productive capacity building/strengthening? • To what extent were the country level stakeholders involved in project design? • Did the project have a clear thematically focused overall development objective? • Were the project outcomes clear, realistic, relevant, addressing the problems/opportunities identified and providing a clear description of the benefits or improvements expected to be achieved at the end of the project? • Is the results hierarchy in the logical framework - from activities to outputs, outcome(s) to overall development objective - logical and consistent? • Were the indicators (development objective, outcomes and outputs) as defined in the logical framework specific, measurable and relevant? • Were baselines established to measure progress? • Were the assumptions/preconditions identified that could affect project performance identified? Were the risks assessment and the risk mitigation strategy/measures adequate? • Was the project steering, management, monitoring and reporting mechanism clearly described? • Were the roles and responsibilities of the different project partners clearly described? • To what extent and how were cross-cutting issues (gender equality, environmental and social concerns) reflected in the design of the project?	UNCTAD Project Manager (PM) Project document Reports of inception missions to the countries, if conducted First Annual Progress Report	Interviews Content Analysis

Project implementation			
Core evaluation questions and sub-questions		**Sources of information**	**Data collection/ analysis methods**
Relevance **Q2.** *To what extent was and does the project remain valid in terms of its alignment to the development needs and strategic priorities of the beneficiary countries, as well as to the mandate and priorities of UNCTAD?*			
Sub-questions	• *Is the project still reflecting and addressing the development needs and strategic priorities of the beneficiary countries?*	Annual progress reports UNCTAD strategic documents Project team Project chief counterparts	Interviews Content analysis
	• *Were changes introduced in the project strategy since the start of the project? If so, which amendments and why?*		
	• *How were the unforeseen additional beneficiaries selected (EPRN, Rwanda; additional African countries participating in the study tours and regional workshops)?*		
	• *How could project implementation benefit from previous work by UNCTAD, i.e., its analytical research with respect to productive capacity, its development of the Productive Capacity Index, and its prior efforts in the three beneficiary countries/from efforts conducted elsewhere?*		
Effectiveness **Q3.** *Has the project "done the right things" and to what extent have the project's expected results been achieved or are likely to be achieved?*			
Sub-questions	• *Which results have been/are likely to be achieved (evidence of results produced by the project - direct or indirect, intended or unintended, positive and negative)?*	Annual progress reports Technical reports Event reports	Interviews Content analysis
	• *Are achievements/progress towards the intended results measured against baselines?*		

	• *How do the national stakeholders (counterparts; beneficiaries) and UNCTAD itself (i) perceive the quality of the results and (ii) to what extent and how do they use these results?*	Project team Project counterparts/beneficiaries Project partners Other development partners in the countries	
	• *Has the implementation strategy been appropriate in order to achieve the results?*		
	• *To what extent did the project generate or is expected to generate higher level outcomes/effects (likelihood of impact)? Did other direct or indirect, intended or unintended, positive or negative developmental changes (economic, environmental, social) occur or are they likely to occur as a result of the interventions?*		
	• *Were internal linkages (intra-UNCTAD) pursued in implementation; which ones? How did it affect the achievements?*		
	• *Were external linkages pursued in implementation? Which ones and how did it affect the achievements?*		
	• *Were there missed opportunities for internal and external cooperation (synergies) during implementation?*		
	• *Are there external factors which have affected the effectiveness of the project (such as COVID-19)?*		

Efficiency

Q4. *Has the project "done things right" in terms of utilizing the available project resources covering the adequacy of implementation modalities, timeliness and quality of inputs, as well as the adequacy of monitoring and steering?*

Sub-questions	*Have the project resources (funds; human resources, time) been allocated strategically and appropriately to achieve the intended results?* • *Budget: Were the funds (instalments) made available by UNDA as planned? What explains the difference between planned and actual allocations (budget reduction by UNDA)?* • *HR: was the HR set-up adequate?* • *Time: were there delays? Under which outcome/output/activity and why?* • *Procedures: were implementation modalities/procedures adequate (recruitment/subcontracting/other)?* • *To what extent were counterpart inputs foreseen in activities? If so, have they been provided in a timely manner and were these adequate to meet requirements?*	Annual progress reports Technical reports Event reports Budget and HR analysis (planned/actual) Project team Project counterparts/ beneficiaries	Interviews Content analysis
	How well has the project performed in terms of its steering, day-to-day implementation, monitoring, reporting and communication? • *Was project steering adequate?* • *Was day-to-day project management adequate and was planning results based?* • *Are the available monitoring data adequate in terms of capturing achievements, results and outcomes? Are these data disaggregated (gender/other)?* • *Was project reporting adequate and was it results-based?* • *Was project communication adequate? How was information on the project and its results (studies/ strategies) diffused?* • *How did the project make adjustments in response to the new priorities in relation to COVID-19?*		
Likely sustainability **Q5.** *What is the likelihood that the results/benefits will continue after the project? Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project?*			

Sub-questions	• Are the results, benefits and eventual developmental changes that have occurred or are likely to occur as a result of the interventions sustainable • Are the partnerships established expected to be sustainable? • Was sustainability correctly factored in into the project strategy?	Annual progress reports Technical reports Event reports Project team Project counterparts/ beneficiaries	Interviews Content analysis
Cross-cutting issues			
Q6. *To what extent were (i) gender equality/women empowerment, (ii) environmental concerns and (iii) social concerns incorporated in project implementation?*			
Gender mainstreaming Sub-questions	To what extent were gender equality issues addressed in the project? To what extent have gender related data collection and analyses been included in studies, events and overall reporting? To what extent have women benefited from the project or to what extent can they be expected to benefit?	Annual progress reports Technical reports Event reports Project team Project counterparts/beneficiaries	Interviews Content analysis
Environmental mainstreaming Sub-questions	To what extent and how were environmental concerns addressed in the project (studies, events, and overall reporting)		
Inclusion concerns (other than gender mainstreaming) Sub-questions	To what extent and how were inclusion concerns (human rights, disability, other) addressed in the project (studies, events, and overall reporting)?		

ANNEX 4 Data collection instrument (Interview Guide)

Country and Organization	
Name and function	
Date of interview	
Introduction	• Brief explanation of purpose of meeting and emphasis on confidentiality principle. • Role in project and since when.
Project background and design	• To what extent involved in project design. • Specific observations on the project document if received at the start of the project (its intervention logic and logical framework, budget, implementation strategy, other).
Relevance	• Degree of alignment to needs and priorities of the country (in case of project team also as regards UNCTAD: How could the project benefit from previous analytical work re PC/development of PCI and from prior efforts in the 3 countries?). • Any changes in needs and priorities during the project life (country? UNCTAD?). • Degree of country involvement in project steering and implementation (ownership).
Effectiveness	• The most significant overall results of the project in view of interviewee *(adapt to activity in which involved)*. • Indication of the actual use of the results (studies; strategy); follow-up of workshops and study tours. • Areas in which achievements are less than expected. • Eventual unforeseen positive or negative results. • Indication of wider changes/effects? • Factors that contributed to these achievements/to gaps therein. • Degree of internal synergies (intra UNCTAD). • Degree of external synergies (linkages with related interventions of country itself; of other development partners). • Any missed opportunities for complementarities/cooperation?

Efficiency	• UNCTAD: Were instalments made available bhy UNDESA as planned? In case of delays, why? Reason for budget cut? • Perception on the utilisation of resources (financial; human); on timeliness of inputs; on quality of inputs • Project steering: did it function adequately? • Project management: was it adequate? • M&E system put in place: are available monitoring data adequate and disaggregated (gender/other)? • Progress reporting: was it adequate? Was it results-based? • Were risks and assumptions identified in the project document adequately monitored during implementation? • Project response to COVID-19/how it affected project work: were the adjustments made in response to the pandemic adequate? What was the effect of these adjustments? • Communication on the project/its activities and its results (types of communication tools; diffusion): was it adequate?
Sustainability	• What is the likelihood of the project results/benefits/effects to continue beyond the project? What are the indications so far in this regard, now that the project has been closed since end Dec 2023? • Were sustainability concerns adequately reflected in the implementation strategy?
Cross-cutting issues	
○ **Gender mainstreaming**	• To what extent were gender equality issues addressed in the project? • Have gender-related data been collected and analyzed and to what extent are they included in baselines, monitoring and reporting?
○ **Environmental mainstreaming**	• To what extent and how were environmental concerns addressed in the project?
○ **Inclusion concerns**	• To what extent and how were inclusion concerns (other than gender issues, such as human rights and disability) addressed in the project?
Next steps	• What are the plans to build on the achievements of the project, i.e., to take the results and their use further
Summary of observations and lessons *(only for UNCTAD PM and Chief Counterparts)*	• Overall rating on scale of 1-6 (6=highly satisfactory): • Strong points : • Points for improvement / what to be done differently if starting again/ if replication elsewhere:

Annex 5
List of main documents reviewed

List of documents by type of document	Year
General project information	
Terms of Reference, Independent Evaluation of DA project 2023E	non dated
Project document, UNDA 2023E	non dated
Annual Progress Report 2020	January 2021
Annual Progress Report 2021	non dated
Annual Progress Report 2022	non dated
Final Report	April 2024
Budget	As at April 2024
Regional workshop, 12-13 October 2022, Tanzania, report	Oct. 2022
UNCTAD, Harnessing gender potential for productive capacities development - a comparative study of Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania	2022
Visite d'étude et séminaire « Zone Economique Spéciale Agropolis » (24-25 May 2023), Meknès, Maroc	May 2023
Study Tour and Seminar on Special Economic Zones in Mauritius (10-12 October 2023), Concept Note, Programme and Report	October 2023
Documents/reports pertaining to the beneficiary countries	
***Project work in Burkina Faso**	
Request of Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et de l'Artisanat to be included in the project	27 January 2020
UNCTAD, Capacités productives au Burkina Faso: état des lieux de la politique commerciale et industrielle	February 2021
Mahamadou Diarra, Stratégie pour le développement des capacités productives au Burkina Faso	February 2021
Rapport, séminaire virtuel sur l'étude des capacités productives de Burkina Faso (17 février 2021) – concept note, programme, report	February 2021
Renforcement des capacités productives au Burkina Faso - Une stratégie cohérente et opérationnelle	2022
Rapport de synthèse, atelier national sur les capacités productives du Burkina Faso, 8-9 June 2022	8 June 2022
UNCTAD, Advisory mission to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 10 June 2022	June 2022
Min. du Développement Industriel, du Commerce, de l'Artisanat et des PME, appreciation letter cum request for assistance 'renforcement des capacités de transformation et de commercialisation des acteurs des produits locaux' (FCFA 100 000 000)	7 July 2022
Min. du Développement Industriel, du Commerce, de l'Artisanat et des PME, request for assistance 'renforcement des capacités de transformation et de commercialisation des acteurs de la mangue au Burkina Faso' (FCFA 250 000 000)	19 September 2022
Tibi Didier Zoungrana, Mise en oeuvre de la politique nationale du Burkina Faso: stratégie de renforcement des capacités productives et transformation structurelle de l'économie – analyse diagnostique des contraintes/plans d'actions	February 2023

Evaluation of report of Tibi Didier Zoungrana by Conseiller au Min. du Développement Industriel	17 February 2023
***Project work in Rwanda**	
Request by Minister of Trade and Industry for support to operationalize the recommendations of the UNCTAD study on productive capacities benchmarking and development	31 July 2018
John Rwirahira, Ensuring policy coherence for strengthening Rwanda's productive capacity	August 2020
UNCTAD, Enhancing coherence between trade and industrial strategies in Africa, the experience of Rwanda	2020
Appreciation email of DG of Planning, Ministry of Trade and Industry, of above study (UNCTAD, 2020)	September 2021
Ministry of Trade and Industry, Request for refresher training on statistical and methodological aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) – in context of previous UNDA project	24 March 2021
John Rwirahira, Stakeholders mapping for strengthening productive capacities in Rwanda	April 2021
Policy Implementation Advisory (John Rwirahira), Indicative effects of COVID-19 on Rwanda's productive capacities and identification of the most affected sectors	June 2021
Policy Implementation Advisory (John Rwirahira), How the new emerging business opportunities could support strengthening productive capacities amidst and post COVID-19 pandemic	July 2021
Policy Implementation Advisory (John Rwirahira), Institutional capacity needs assessment and implementation work plan	September 2021
Appreciation letter, Ministry of Trade and Industry, work of national policy implementation adviser (1 May - 31 August 2020 + March - August 2021)	21 September 2021
Virtual national workshop on coherent strategies for developing productive capacities, 6 May 2021 (concept note, programme, report)	May 2021
Enhancing productive capacities in Rwanda – A coherent and operational strategy	2022
UNCTAD, Advisory mission to Kigali, Rwanda, 25 May 2022	May 2022
UNCTAD, National capacity building workshop on indicators for measuring and benchmarking productive capacities and structural economic transformation in Rwanda (*predecessor project*) – Concept Note and Programme	July 2018
UNCTAD, Second statistical capacity building training on Productive Capacities Index - Rwanda (Programme) – virtual training on 15 April 2021 conducted in context of previous UNDA project	15 April 2021
UNCTAD contribution to 6th Annual Research Conference, EPRN, February 2020, presentation 'reflections on building and utilizing productive capacities in Africa and training on PCI (in letter of EPRN of 11 May 2020)	February 2020
EPRN request for partnership, 7th Annual Research Conference, 25-26 February 2021 on Economic policy measures to enhance productive capacities post COVID-19 crisis (request for approx. 50% cost-sharing to commission studies, finance presenters and logistics – request USD 30,000) + appreciation letter for contribution received dated 2 June 2021	2 June 2021

UNCTAD contribution to 8th Annual Research Conference, EPRN, 26-27 May 2022), Olga Solleder, Boosting productive capacities, a way for LDC to cushion COVID-19 impacts; report of the 8th Conference	May 2022
Project work in Tanzania	
Confirmation of interest through Note Verbale from Permanent Mission	26 May 2020
Dunstan Mrutu, Development of productive capacities in Tanzania	February 20121
Hybrid national workshop on coherent strategies for developing productive capacities, 29-30 April 2021 (concept note, programme, report)	April 2021
Appreciation letter/workshop, MIIT, April 2021	8 July 2021
Enhancing productive capacities in URT – A coherent and operational strategy	2022
Donald Mmari, national policy implementation adviser, report	September 2022
General appreciation letter by MIIT	20 May 2022
Appreciation letter of MIIT, work of national policy implementation adviser (period Feb – June 2022)	Non dated
UNCTAD, Advisory mission to Dodoma, Tanzania, 28-29 March 2022	March 2022
Other documents	
UNCTAD, Nairobi Maafikiano, from decision to action – moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development	September 2016
UNCTAD, The Bridgetown Covenant, from inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all	November 2021
UNCTAD LDC Report	2021
UNCTAD, Productive Capacities Index, 2nd Generation – Enhanced statistical and methodological approach with results	2023
UNCTAD Evaluation Policy, Second Edition	2023
UNDA Project Evaluation Framework and UNDA Evaluation Guidelines	2019
United Nations Evaluation Group, Norms and standards for evaluation	2017