Independent evaluation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project

"Developing Integrated Programmes to Alleviate Binding Constraints to Development by Fostering Structural Transformation, Building Productive Capacities and Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China" *

Independent Evaluation Unit
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List of acronyms and abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
AUC	African Union Commission
ALDC	Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CCA	Common Country Analysis
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSEA	Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HPCDP	Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEU	UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISID	Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LDC	Least Developed Country
LLDC	Landlocked Developing Country
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
NDP	National Development Plan
NPCGA	National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment
RCO	United Nations Resident Coordinators' Office
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TCS	Technical Cooperation Section
ToC	Theory of Change
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UNCTs	United Nations Country Teams
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNPDF	United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator Office
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

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Executive summary

This Evaluation Report presents the findings of the independent final evaluation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project, “Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China”.

This project aimed to support eight developing African economies in building productive capacities and fostering structural transformation through harnessing their transformative potential (including with Chinese partnerships, and those in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative) for their economic development. Through these outcomes, the project contributes to SDGs 8, 9, and 17.

The project delivered three main country-specific outputs: a training to statisticians on how to interpret and use the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI), an assessment of binding constraints to growth using the PCI, and a holistic programme and associated roadmaps for post-project implementation. The project started in January 2021 and closed in December 2024, after a one-year no-cost extension.

This final evaluation assessed the results of the project and collected evidence on planned indicators, and the linkages between activities delivered, results achieved and sustainability measures. It identified coordination dynamics at country level, considering established and potential partnerships that could support project implementation and continuing achievements, considering that UNCTAD is a non-resident entity. This evaluation included evidence on UN cross-cutting issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind. It identified good practices and lessons learned that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

The methodology was participatory, incorporating the perspectives of the project team, UN staff involved in project design and implementation, project implementation partners, key stakeholders, and beneficiaries. A multi-methods approach supported the collection of substantive and comprehensive information and allowed for triangulation of analysis and interpretation based on a desk review and secondary data collection of additional documents, semi-structured interviews with 51 stakeholders (27% female), field missions in Kenya and Malawi, and online self-administered surveys in English and Portuguese (67 respondents of which 25% female and 69% from government).

The main findings are:

Relevance (Overall score: Highly satisfactory)

#1. There is consensus between beneficiary governments, country and regional stakeholders and implementation partners that the project reflects and addresses the development needs and the policy priorities in the eight countries supported. The project aligns with current strategic documents, national policies and action plans, in addition to raising awareness about strength-based opportunities for development and the advantages of a holistic approach to alleviating bindings to development.

Coherence (Overall score: Satisfactory)

#2. The project is coherent with UNCTAD’s longstanding work on productive capacities and the UN High Impact Initiative Transforming4Trade, led by UNCTAD. The project’s main deliverables (i.e., National Productive Capacities Gaps Assessment and the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme) strongly connect to this framework.

#3. The UNCTAD SDG project was inspired by and well-aligned with the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II that led to joint activities, mutual exchanges and learning between the two projects. However, the concomitance between them in the 2021-2023 period may have caused some degree of invisibility of the UNCTAD SDGs project in the country. Other beneficiary countries did not report similar alignments between other existing projects and this one.

#4. At the global level, the project aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund on the principles of holistic and multi-sectoral responses and demand-driven interventions but missed opportunities in relation to the principles of clearly articulating the UN collective response and the provision of tools to United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) to tailor responses to specific national needs and realities. It also aligns with Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs. Limited coordination with United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO) focal points and long communication gaps in-between national events were the main barriers to fostering a One-UN approach to this project, which, according to the evidence collected, made it a UNCTAD-centred project.

#5. At country level, whilst the project aligns with country priorities and existing projects on productive capacities to alleviate development barriers for vulnerable groups in least developed and landlocked developing countries through economic diversification and private sector development, it missed opportunities to explore complementarities with other in-country UN and non-UN interventions related to structural transformation.

Efficiency (Overall score: Somehow satisfactory)

#6. The project delivered 65 outputs, including events, knowledge products, and advisory services. Its communication campaign was mostly through the UNCTAD project website and social media. The project had achieved 77.5% of its planned indicators as of December 2024, with pending activities in Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe by the closing of the evaluation. There were cost-efficient measures in organising back-to-back events in neighbouring countries.

#7. Project planning and coordination was somewhat efficient in mobilising relevant stakeholders, with varying degrees of efficiency per country. The assumption that China would be a central stakeholder, with Chinese actors engaged in project implementation, proved unfounded, leading to their absence, the redesign of one output on country-based China-UNCTAD programmes of support, and an unsystematic consideration of China in the main knowledge products.

#8. Whilst the project delivered high-quality outputs, implementation of activities faced difficulties due to national elections and change of governments, lack of adequate and predictable funding, the small project management team, a centralized approach, limited capacity of UNRCO economists, and insufficient communication with partners and stakeholders. This, in addition to missed opportunities to synergise with UNRCOs and resident UN entities, and external factors (e.g., COVID-19 and country instabilities) led to inefficiencies, delays and no-cost extension requests (one of them granted).

#9. Communication was a critical source of inefficiency in implementing this project. Issues include stakeholders unaware that events were part of a larger project and receiving the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (NPCGA) and the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme (HPCDP) only a few days in advance of meetings, months-long communication gaps with implementation partners, lack of clarity about the end of the project (leading to countries still waiting for continuation activities), and shifts in institutions housing the project without notice to the previous ones, compromising institutional memory of the project and country ownership. Some of these communication gaps were attributed to in-country dynamics, such as a lack of capacity to implement the project, or changes in government portfolios and priorities and institutional reorganisation after elections.

Effectiveness (Overall score: Satisfactory)

#10. Overall, the project had uneven performance in achieving its planned outcomes. Outcome 1, on articulation of binding constraints and identification of products for diversification and economic transformation, with validation by government, was achieved in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. It was partially achieved in Nigeria, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Outcome 2, on evidence-based policy development and implementation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for China, was achieved in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries. Survey results confirm this by showing rates of effectiveness between 57%-73% overall and 59%-74% among government respondents.

#11. Countries report different uses of the knowledge, skills and products of the project, for example, as input to some extent to national, subnational and sectoral policies, and to support conversations with other stakeholders such as the private sector. Survey results indicate a moderate use of these knowledge products – between 47% and 52% among all stakeholders, including government. (Note: this includes the three countries for which outputs are pending).

#12. Key factors contributing to project success include a novel development narrative that is based on strengths and potential, awareness of the productive capacities approach and sectors of high potential for development, strengthening of ongoing initiatives, opening of opportunities for multiple-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, expansion of central government networks to include local actors and the private sector, and political will, support and ownership.

#13. Overarching limiting factors to achieving the project results are lack of funding to implement the holistic programme, which is conditional on high-level political buy-in, one-off PCI training of statisticians, and insufficient knowledge dissemination to translate project results into action.

Sustainability and potential impact (Overall score: Somehow satisfactory)

#14. Countries have been devising initial measures to promote programmatic and financial sustainability by including elements of the UNCTAD SDG project in policymaking at the national and sectoral levels. Around 50% of survey respondents agree, to a moderate or large extent, that measures to ensure sustainability are in place. However, given the scarcity of resources in the LDCs, there is need for additional funding and expertise from more development partners to embrace a holistic approach.

#15. Overall, countries have started engagements with donors and other development partners to raise additional funds to implement the holistic programme. However, they have faced challenges in advancing conversations due to a lack of information and ownership on critical issues, e.g., budget breakdown and fund management structure. They identify two factors that could facilitate fundraising: a) securing seed money to start implementation and make a case for donors, using the World Bank results-based financing approach as a benchmark, and b) fostering stronger partnerships between UNCTAD, UNRCOs and embassies to reach out to development partners.

#16. Countries have made progress in owning the project and taking actions to make it impactful. Key factors influencing their capacities and ownership to sustain the project results without UNCTAD can be summarised as a) clear and thorough communication between the project management team and stakeholders, including structured support to foster coordination, handover measures, and information on the roles and responsibilities in fundraising, b) timing of the project in relation to strategic planning and budget cycles to ensure high-level engagement, c) careful consideration on the best institution to house the project, with a coordination mandate, and d) active participation of country stakeholders in all stages of the project.

Cross-cutting issues (Overall score: Satisfactory)

#17. The UNCTAD SDG project incorporated LNOB principles and environmental issues in project outputs and, to some extent, in implementation mechanisms (e.g., consultations and invitations to events). Outputs produce data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations. Back-to-back missions to neighbouring countries show the inclusion of an environmental concern during implementation. Stakeholders identify embedded inclusion considering the sectors of focus for structural transformation. Survey results, overall, indicate moderate agreement on the inclusion of vulnerable groups and environmental issues in the project.

Conclusion and recommendations

The project contributes valuable practices, achievements, and lessons learned that can be integrated into future UNCTAD initiatives focused on productive capacities. This includes the Transforming4Trade High Impact Initiative, aimed at promoting the effective adoption of a holistic approach to economic development within CCAs and Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs. Improvements in design and coordination have the potential to generate rippling effects in coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. To support such improvements, this evaluation offers five recommendations, summarised as follows:

R1. UNCTAD should improve project design by ensuring that assumptions and modalities for the involvement of donors and other development partners are verified and confirmed, that the scope of work is adequate to the human resources available for project implementation, that baselines and indicators speak specifically to countries' characteristics and realities, that the institution housing the project has a mandate for coordination, and that the exit strategy is clearly stated.

Stakeholders	Resource investment*	Priority
ALDC, TCS	Low	High

* By resource investment, throughout these recommendations, this evaluation considers those financial and time investments additional to the routine work of project design and management.

R2. UNCTAD should clearly define, from the start of the project, and communicate to stakeholders what aspects and/or elements of the project are global or country specific. For example, the PCI training for statisticians and NPCGA between-countries comparability support a global approach, while the HPCDP, roadmaps, and exit strategies align better with a country-specific perspective.

ALDC	Low	High

R3. UNCTAD should establish, as part of the project design, country-based steering committees with relevant stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, relevant ministries, academia and the private sector to ensure strong and thorough communication channels, country ownership, and high-level engagement from the start. Such a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism could rely on permanent members that are considered 'champions' (i.e. leaders, political influencers, mobilisers) throughout project implementation and add value to existing coordinating mechanisms (e.g., macroeconomic committees). One task of these country-based committees could be developing a knowledge sharing platform to regularly communicate updates on progress against project outcomes and make knowledge products available for long-term capacity building and use.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC, UNRCO focal points, and country focal points	Low – mostly coordination time	High

R4. UNCTAD should establish an effective monitoring system to track progress on indicators, re-assess risks and mitigation measures, and enforce course correction to support project completion and prevent no-cost extension requests. In addition to the internal 6-months progress reports, the scope and characteristics of the UNCTAD SDG project would indicate the need for an independent mid-term evaluation. In the impossibility of such evaluation, the third progress report template (1.5 years into a 3-year project) should be revised to support a more thorough identification of critical gaps in project implementation and inform detailed course-correction.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC, TCS and UNDESA	Low to medium, considering the possibility of a mid-term evaluation	High

R5. UNCTAD should co-develop a post-project resource mobilisation plan with key stakeholders in the beneficiary countries, as soon as there is clarity about country-specific baselines and relatable projects by other development partners. This could be facilitated by a country-based steering committee. This co-development approach can solve some of the key challenges to leverage funding reported by stakeholders in this evaluation.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC (with country stakeholders)	Low for the co-development with countries, which could be coupled with other planned activities, such as the initial missions. Medium to high, regarding the delivery of funds.	Medium to high

Introduction

This Evaluation Report presents the findings of the independent final evaluation of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project "*Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China*"** (also referred to here as the UNCTAD SDG project or project). This project aimed at supporting eight developing African economies in building productive capacities and fostering structural transformation through harnessing their transformative potential, including with Chinese partnerships, and those in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, for their economic development. Through these outcomes, the project contributes to SDGs 8, 9, and 17.

The project delivered three main country-specific outputs: a training to statisticians on how to interpret and use the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI), an assessment of binding constraints to growth using the PCI, and a holistic programme and associated roadmaps for post-project implementation. The project started in January 2021 and closed in December 2024, after a one-year no-cost extension.

This final evaluation assessed the results of the project and collected evidence on planned indicators, and the linkages between activities delivered, results achieved and sustainability measures. It identified coordination dynamics at country level, considering established and potential partnerships that could support project implementation and continuing achievements, considering that UNCTAD is a non-resident entity. This evaluation included evidence on UN cross-cutting issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind (LNOB). It identified good practices and lessons learned that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

Project background

In the context of labour-intensive exports, expanding employment, and rising wages and living standards in several emerging economies – notably in Asia and, to a lesser extent, Latin America – African countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs) and other structurally vulnerable economies such as landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), struggle to compete within manufacturing and higher value-added industries.

> *Structural barriers to trade, investment, and private sector development also limit the full integration of many African economies into strategic sectors of the global economy and the participation of these countries in higher value-added segments of global and regional value chains. For many landlocked countries of the continent, the additional geographic challenges of a lack of connectivity to seaports and affordable and efficient transportation systems further drives up the cost of exports. Furthermore, a number of African countries remain highly commodity dependent. Heavy dependence on the export of commodities leaves the economies vulnerable to external price shocks. Extractive sectors are also preferred destinations for foreign direct investment (FDI) and the engagement of multinational companies. In addition, structural transformation remains limited, and some countries may be experiencing premature deindustrialization, with a decline in the share of manufacturing value-added in some countries. (PRODOC, p. 3-4)*

A development approach to support these countries towards their national development targets and the United Nations 2030 Agenda involves structural transformation and export diversification. A critical step in this direction is building productive capacities, which can be achieved by designing and implementing tailored, holistic programmes. Trade relationships between African countries and China present an opportunity to build such capacities. However, African countries have not always been able to transform the greater trade and investment opportunities arising from Chinese engagements into sustainable development gains.

> UNCTAD defines productive capacities as "the productive resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and production linkages, which together determine the capacity of a country to produce goods and services and enable it to grow and develop."
>
> **UNCTAD, 2006**

UNCTAD's approach relies upon its diagnostic expertise to identify gaps and potential in a country's productive capacities, through the **Productive Capacities Index**[1]. Key aspects of productive capacities include **natural capital** (i.e., policies to harness natural resources for development), **human capital** (i.e., skilled labour), **energy** (i.e., use of the power grid in manufacturing), **information and communication technologies** (i.e., use in entrepreneurial activities), **transport** (i.e., transport infrastructure streamlined with industrial development policies), **innovation** (i.e., R&D for local needs), **structural transformation** (i.e., policy incentives for higher value-added industries), **private sector** (i.e., adequate legal and administrative frameworks, and access to capital, infrastructure, technology and skills), and **institutions** (i.e., coherence between trade, industrial and manufacturing strategies, and alignment with national development views)[2].

Project objectives and approach

The main objective of the UNCTAD SDG project was to assist eight developing economies in Africa in building productive capacities[3] and fostering structural transformation. This aimed to harness their transformative potential, including through partnerships with China and within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), for their economic development.

The project was funded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund of the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF) and implemented by UNCTAD, specifically by the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes (ALDC). It was directly relevant to Programme 10 (Trade and Development) - Subprogramme 5 (Africa, least developed countries and special programmes) of the UN Secretariat's Proposed Programme Budget for the period 2020 and 2021.

The project started in January 2021 and ended in December 2024, after a one-year no-cost extension.

At the project launch, the beneficiary countries included Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe. According to the Progress Report for the period 01/10/2022-31/03/2023, "Botswana and Rwanda have been replaced as additional countries officially sought support of the Project." Progress reports justified this

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[1] UNCTAD. (2023). Productive Capacities Index: 2nd Generation.

[2] Examples of UNCTAD's expertise on these matters are reflected in its annual flagships Economic Development in Africa Report, published since 2000 (series of reports available here: https://unctad.org/publications-search?f%5B0%5D=product%3A390) and The Least Developed Countries Report, published since 1996 (series of reports available here: https://unctad.org/topic/least-developed-countries/least-developed-countries/ldc-report).

[3] UNCTAD. (2006).

change stating that these countries had previously received support on productive capacities and lacked the conditions to take further steps in approving their respective holistic programmes. Additional information from the project management team indicates that, at the beginning of the UNCTAD SDG project, Botswana and Rwanda had reached the validation stage of their holistic programmes and no longer required the interventions proposed by this project. The two new countries joining the UNCTAD SDG project were Malawi and Zambia. Overall, while the selected countries were already benefiting from increased trade and investment relations with China, under the umbrella of the BRI, they needed to further harness these opportunities into sustainable development gains.

The **main expected outputs** of the project were:

- A detailed **assessment of the binding constraints to growth and to the fostering of productive capacities** in each of the African developing countries targeted, as well as the **identification of the potential for significant growth and productivity gains, and recommendations for harnessing trade and investment links with China** to overcome these constraints.
- **Eight country-specific holistic programmes and associated roadmaps** to support the lifting of binding constraints and fostering productive capacities, as well as the strengthening of sectors and industries with development potential.
- **Support to the capacities of national policymakers and other stakeholders in the development process** to address the identified binding constraints to development, including through tools such as the PCI, and formulate holistic policies to address them through partnerships with China and the Chinese private sector and strengthened inter-ministerial collaboration and cooperation with the private sector and civil society.

Project contributions to the SDGs

The project primarily focused on contributions towards **SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**, especially Target 8.2: *Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors*. Specifically, the project was designed to support the expansion of industries and sectors with unexploited growth-potential, contributing to export diversification and economic growth, as well as meeting social and environmental objectives.

It also focused on contributions to the achievement of **SDG 9: Build resilient, infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**, targets 9.3 and 9.a[4], and **SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**, targets 17.11 and 17.12.[5]

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[4] Target 9.3: Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries to financial services, including affordable credit and their integration into value chains and markets. Target 9.a: Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

[5] Target 17.11: Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020; and Target 17.12: Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries,

Project beneficiaries and stakeholders

The **project's direct beneficiaries** spanned multiple sectors and encompassed various stakeholders who play critical roles in fostering sustainable development and productive capacity building in targeted countries. These include **policymakers, technical experts, public and private sector actors, academia, and national institutions in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.**

Policymakers were the main beneficiaries of the project, participating in training initiatives focused on enabling them to identify gaps in productive capacities, formulate tailored interventions, and integrate these into national development strategies. Through frameworks such as National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments (NPCGAs) and Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes (HPCDPs), policymakers and national institutions were empowered to address key constraints and foster sustainable economic growth. Monitoring evidence indicates that 802 individuals benefited from a total of 23 capacity-building workshops, enhancing their ability to address structural transformation, build productive capacities, and strengthen international economic linkages. Table 1 shows the distribution of direct beneficiaries per country and the category of stakeholder.

Table 1. Direct beneficiaries of the project per country and category of stakeholder

Country	Academia	Government (Local)	Government (Central)	Int'l (no UN)	NGO/ CSO	Others	Private Sector	Total
Angola	19		25		4	2	1	51
Ethiopia	14	1	124	5	7	20		171
Kenya	8		117		4	61	8	198
Malawi	6		88		3	9	3	109
Mozambique	3		54		2	5	2	66
Nigeria	12		5			21	1	39
Zambia	7		72	1	3	29	2	114
Zimbabwe	2	1	36		5	4	3	51
NA*	2					5		7
Total	**73**	**2**	**521**	**6**	**28**	**156**	**20**	**806**

Source: monitoring Excel file provided by the project management team.
*Under NA there are educational organisations, UN organizations, and think tanks.

The four countries with the highest number of participants are Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia and Malawi. Policymakers accounted for most of the actual beneficiaries in all countries, except Nigeria, where the majority were academics. The category 'Others' aggregates media organisations, thinktanks in trade and policy analysis organisations, and some UN organizations not directly involved in the project (e.g., UNDP, ILO, UN-Habitat).

consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple and contribute to facilitating market access.

A wider audience was the **indirect beneficiaries** of the project, through access to information and knowledge from a dedicated webpage and active social media campaigns. This approach aimed to promote awareness about the project's objectives and achievements. This outreach has generated demand from countries such as Egypt, Honduras, Jamaica, Nepal, Mongolia, and Trinidad and Tobago, which have formally requested similar support.

Relevant stakeholders described in the PRODOC include public ministries, programme evaluation and monitoring agencies, private sector firms, professional and industry associations, universities and research institutions, Chinese trade, industry and economic development bodies, and African regional bodies including the African Union Commission and Secretariats of relevant Regional Economic Communities. Their detailed roles are in Annex 1.

Project budget and expenditure overview

The UNCTAD SDG project had a **total budget of USD 1,070,000**, including 7% of Programme Support Costs, plus an **additional USD 26,049.83**, mobilised from two sources in 2023: UNCTAD's regular budget and the EU-UNCTAD joint programme for Angola (funded by the European Union). The final report indicates that during project implementation, a budget revision took place in December 2023 and included transferring funds from 'Staff and other personnel costs' and 'Contractual services' towards 'General operating and other direct costs', 'Travel on official business' and 'Supplies, commodities, materials', to conform with the necessary accounting rules and better address the operational needs of the project.

The **total expenses directly related to project activities amounted to USD 833,730.83**, and total expenditures together with indirect support costs to USD 867,080.06, which constitutes **81% of the total project budget** and 83% of funds received. The final balance on 31 December 2024, at the closing of the project, was **USD 197,420.80 of unspent funds**. The efficiency section elaborates on why this happened, by analysing the factors associated with delays and two requests for no-cost extensions, the second of them not granted. Table 2 reproduces the financial breakdown from the project's final report.

Table 2. Financial breakdown of the UNCTAD SDG project.

Items	Unliquidated expenses	Expenses
Staff and other Personnel Costs	24,159.34	196,306.23
Travel on official business	18,378.52	406,866.91
Contractual services	-	56,948.43
General Operating and other direct costs	27,215.19	173,609.26
Total expenses	**69,753.05**	**833,730.83**
Indirect support costs 7% (implementing partner)		33,349.23
Total Expenditures and Indirect Support Costs		**867,080.06**

Source: Final project report.

The additional funds of USD 26,049.83 were spent on three events:

a) USD 17,607, mobilised from the Regular Budget, to organise the High Impact Initiative side event during the SDG Summit in New York on 17 September 2023 (OP 2.5).

b) USD 3,942, mobilised from the Angola Programme, to support the participation of one member of the Angolan delegation and for the Portuguese language translation during the High Impact Initiative side event (OP2.5).
c) USD 4,500, mobilised from the Regular budget and Angola Programme, to support the organisation of the side event '*Holistic and multisectoral interventions to address systemic and structural vulnerabilities in LDCs: Lessons learned from Angola'*, at the LDC5 conference (OP2.5).

Theory of change and log frame

The PRODOC provides a clear theory of change (ToC), with all the elements of a logical framework, i.e. objectives, project outcomes, performance indicators with their means of verification, and the nature and content of the deliverables. It also includes a stakeholder analysis. These components are summarised in Table 3 (for details on outputs, see Annex 2).

This evaluation brought all these elements and their linkages together to guide the evaluation. Evaluation findings informed an updated theory of change[6] (see Annex 3).

This evaluation notes that some indicators do not adequately capture the depth of the outcomes they are intended to measure, i.e., changes in stakeholders' understanding, articulation and capacity to identify binding constraints to development and to design integrated and inclusive policies to tackle them. Indicators 1.1, 1.2.i, 1.2.ii, 1.3 and 2.2 focus on the project outputs and their acceptance or validation by stakeholders, rather than on behavioural and policy change at the institutional level. Considering that final validations were held in one-off events and that participants changed from event to event, measuring validation as a Yes-No result in number of items approved (i.e., policy briefs, binding constraints, policy options) may lack the measurement depth that understanding, articulating and acting upon in a coordinated manner would require. Findings related to this issue informed one of the evaluation recommendations. **Table 3.** Project objectives, outcomes and indicators.

Project objective	
To develop integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation as well as enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China.	
Expected Outcomes	**Indicators**
Outcome 1. Beneficiaries have clearly articulated the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development and identified products with potential for diversification and economic transformation. These include an understanding of the role of productive capacities in development; improved capacities to identify key binding	**1.1. Validation by each participating government of the policy briefs or strategy papers produced by UNCTAD that:** i. clearly articulate the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development in Africa, with dedicated analysis on women, youth and vulnerable groups, and that identify products with potential for diversification and economic and socio-economic transformation; ii. identify priority areas or policy action; and

[6] Intermediate outcomes, in this updated version, exclude the role of Chinese stakeholders in the development and implementation of the holistic programme.

constraints on trade and development, and the ability to map intervention strategies to address the identified constraints. This includes the promotion of gender equality.	iii. identify potential sectors and key products, producers, and destination markets for export from potential or existing regional value chains.
	1.2. At least: i. 5 binding constraints have been identified in each of the selected countries; ii. 10 policy options or recommendations accepted by governments for further implementation to address the constraints; iii. 65% of participants in workshops show improved understanding and institutional capacity to formulate and implement productive capacities centred and gender-responsive policies in beneficiary countries on the structure of their productive sectors and to identify binding constraints to development.
	1.3. At least 5 policy options and recommendations are accepted in each of the countries to facilitate investment flows to targeted sectors.
Outcome 2. Improved national capacity of policy makers in beneficiary countries to develop and implement trade, investment and technology policies thanks to greater availability of economic analysis and good practices for evidenced-based policy generation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for Chinese investors and collaborators.	**2.1. 70% of respondents and key institutions assessed show improved capacity to understand and implement good practices at the national, regional and continental level** to analyse and fill the gaps in trade, investment and technology policies for structural transformation and economic upgrading.
	2.2. Validation by each participating government of policy options produced by UNCTAD for African trade and investment-related policies and frameworks to support regional integration, export diversification and structural transformation, aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative and national development plans.

Source: PRODOC.

Project assumptions and drivers

The PRODOC and interviews with the project management team indicated the following **main assumptions** driving the project:

- China's interest in the project, considering its investments in the selected countries.
- The return to 'the new normal' and lifting of lockdowns resulting from the COVID19 pandemic;
- Political stability in beneficiary countries; and
- Safe and acceptable overall travel and working conditions for staff engaged in the implementation of the project.

- This evaluation identified the following **drivers** in this project:
- UNCTAD's tools and approaches for evidence-based policy making in structural transformation and export diversification, such as the PCI and the comprehensive multi-sectoral programme framework;
  - Lessons learned from previous pilot productive capacities projects in Africa;
  - Lessons learned from the Train for Trade II Programme in Angola;
  - Existence of a network of country-based partners, such as focal points, UNRCO and UNCT staff, in the beneficiary countries.

Project outcomes and targets by country

The PRODOC described the context of each country and established expected outcomes and targets accordingly (see Annex 4 for details). It is noteworthy that Angola had a distinct departure point. It has been benefiting from the Train for Trade II Programme, an EU-UNCTAD partnership to support the country's development through trade. Across seven inter-related programme components, "UNCTAD has delivered a comprehensive programme of support that has mapped the potential of new and innovative sectors with promise for export diversification and job creation. It has also helped national policy makers to implement programmes and realign policies and institutions to more effectively address the trade and development challenges facing the country and leverage the potential of those sectors in which they have comparative advantages" (PRODOC, p. 21).

The UNCTAD SDG project, thus, draws lessons from this programme for the other beneficiary countries. The focus for Angola was on second-order challenges that became apparent once the most significant binding constraints were addressed. The UNCTAD SDG project also incorporated lessons learned from a previous study on the development of productive capacities, implemented in Burkina Faso, Rwanda, and Tanzania between 2020 and 2023.

Stakeholder analysis

Several stakeholders were involved in the UNCTAD SDG project, with the following leading agency/focal points per country:

- Angola: Ministry of Industry and Commerce;
- Ethiopia: Ministry of Industry, and Addis Ababa University;
- Kenya: consultant, The Vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat, Office of the Prime Cabinet Secretary, Kenyatta University;
- Malawi: Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Mozambique: Ministry of Industry and Commerce – merged with the Ministry of Economy after the 2024 elections;
- Nigeria: Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa;
- Zambia: Ministry of Finance and National Planning, and
- Zimbabwe: Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

Table 4 describes the key stakeholders identified in the project design, as project contributors and groups of interest, and for this evaluation. **Table 4.** Evaluation stakeholder analysis

Project partners or stakeholders	Type and level of involvement in the project	Role or interest in the evaluation
UNCTAD	Project design and implementation.	Inform the evaluation with data and evidence. Report on achievements and project management (relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and potential impact). Contribute to the design of the evaluation questions and review of deliverables. Formulate the management

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>response. Take on selected recommendations for implementation in future programming.</td></tr>
<tr><td>UNDESA</td><td>Reviewing progress reports and facilitating the no-cost extension procedures.</td><td>Inform the evaluation with data and evidence. Report on achievements and project management (relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and potential impact). Take on selected recommendations for implementation in future programming.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Other UN organizations (e.g., UNECA, UNIDO, UNCTs).</td><td>Implementation partners.</td><td rowspan="3">Provide evidence of contribution to project implementation (relevance, coherence). Share perspectives on the achievements of the project (effectiveness, sustainability, LNOB). Formulate proposals for the next steps.</td></tr>
<tr><td>UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs)</td><td>Partners to ensure alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). These collaborations strengthened institutional capacity and fostered coherence with broader development goals.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Other African regional bodies (e.g., the African Union Commission (AUC), Secretariats of relevant Regional Economic Communities (such as COMESA, ECOWAS), and others).</td><td>Contribution to project implementation through consultations on the productive capacities, tailored to each beneficiary country, and in collaboration with UNCTAD Regional Centres of Excellence[7].</td></tr>
<tr><td>Policymakers</td><td>Primary beneficiaries, to develop the skills and tools to design and implement evidence-based, data-driven policies to build productive capacities.</td><td rowspan="3">Provide evidence on the project's relevance and outcomes, including evidence on project indicators (effectiveness, sustainability, potential impact, LNOB). Formulate proposals for the next steps.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Technical experts and statisticians, programme evaluation and monitoring agencies</td><td>Beneficiaries of the Productive Capacities Index to be able to assess national capabilities and prioritize sectoral policies.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Public and private sector stakeholders, incl. organisations representing the interests of women, youth and vulnerable groups.</td><td>Contribution through inputs on the needs of the private sector and vulnerable groups. Beneficiaries of capacity building activities to enhance their capacity to promote investment opportunities, foster</td></tr>
</table>

[7] UNCTAD has established Centers of Excellence in Mauritius and Nigeria to serve as network hubs for capacity building. The Centers of Excellence provide opportunities for policy practitioners and stakeholders from least developed countries (LDCs) and other developing economies to benefit from targeted and practical training on trade and development-related themes. For example, the Centre for the Study of the Economies of Africa (CSEA) is a non-profit think tank that conducts independent, high quality applied research on economic policy issues in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

	economic linkages, and engage in productive capacities development.	
Academia and research institutions	Project beneficiaries and collaborators. Contribution to policy development by analysing data, providing research insights, ensuring that interventions are evidence-based and context-specific, and validating the PCI analysis and the focus sector.	
National institutions (e.g., ministries of Economy, Trade, Industry, Finance, Labor, Rural Development, and Foreign Affairs)	Contribution to the identification of binding constraints and the formulation of country-based productive capacities frameworks and supporting the involvement of civil society and the private sector. Beneficiaries of the technical knowledge products created, such as the NPCGAs (National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments) and the HPCDPs (Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes) and their respective Roadmaps.	
Chinese trade, industry and economic development bodies and existing Chinese institutions or groups established in the beneficiary countries, e.g., Exim-bank.	Collaboration for project implementation for the mapping of Chinese investment interests, and the drafting of sustainability frameworks for Chinese businesses operating in beneficiary countries.	Provide evidence on the project's outcomes, including evidence on project indicators (effectiveness, sustainability, potential impact, LNOB). Formulate proposals for the next steps.

Sources: PRODOC, evidence of deliverables, and feedback from inception informants.

Project management and monitoring and evaluation

The **management and coordination structure** of the UNCTAD SDG project, according to the PRODOC, operated at:

a) The level of the implementing agency, UNCTAD, and
b) The level of the beneficiary countries with a view to ensuring full ownership of the project and its outcomes.

Although the PRODOC foresaw the establishment of a Steering Committee at the level of senior management, this governance structure was not created because no other UNCTAD divisions participated in this project. A small team of Project Officers, linked to the Productive Capacities and Sustainable Development Branch of the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, ensured communications between the management and coordination structures at the national, cross-country, and international levels. It was also responsible for linkages with other UN agencies.

The PRODOC also envisaged the creation of a Steering Committee with the Ministers of the key implementing ministries to provide political guidance and impetus to the project. It referred to a Technical Committee to monitor the day-to-day implementation and prepare the decisions of the Steering Committee, as necessary. This evaluation identified that these management and governance structures were not created.

In relation to monitoring, the project managers delivered biannual progress reports to the Management Unit of the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund in UNDESA. Progress was monitored against the logical framework and indicators. These reports included the risks and mitigation measures adopted by the management team. An independent final project evaluation was foreseen to be carried out by UNCTAD at the end of project implementation (with a budget of 25,000 USD), under the guidance of UNCTAD's Independent Evaluation Unit.

Project risks and mitigation strategies

The PRODOC listed **seven risks** that the project was exposed to and corresponding mitigation strategies. They include COVID-19, lack of institutional and human resources capacity to make full use of the PCI results, turn-over and rotation of trained personnel, lack of data availability, expectations of the project's outcomes exceeding reasonable outcomes, unavailability of national or international consultants, and challenges to achieve gender balance. Some of the **planned mitigation actions** included the use of online technology, training of a high number of stakeholders, training of trainers, building of institutional memory, online repositories, use of data proxies, clear communication on the project outputs and expected outcomes, clear terms of reference to hire consultants, and constant encouragement to ensure gender balance.

Information collected by this evaluation added an **eighth risk that emerged during implementation**: the disruption caused by general elections and the time taken to form a new government. Mitigation actions included communication with countries' Permanent Missions in Geneva to anticipate change and design responses.

Progress reports confirmed the occurrence and impact of these risks in implementation. Corrective actions taken included online consultations, insistence on increasing the number of female participants in capacity building activities, and two requests for no-cost extensions. The first request was granted, and the second was not. A detailed list of risks and mitigation strategies, summarised from the PRODOC, progress reports and the final report, is provided in Annex 5.

Objective and scope of the evaluation

The **objective of this final independent evaluation** is to systematically and objectively assess project design, management, implementation, overall results, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB). The evaluation included an assessment of the project's contribution to achieving the SDGs. It identified good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

Based on these assessments, the evaluation formulated practical and constructive recommendations to project stakeholders, particularly UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of UNDESA, including on operational and administrative aspects, with the aim of optimising the results of future projects (as per the ToR).

This evaluation covered the entire duration of the project, from approval to closing (January 2021 to December 2024), and follow-up activities and knowledge uptake up until the end of the data collection phase of this evaluation, around mid-April 2025.

Evaluation stakeholders

This independent evaluation was submitted to UNCTAD and the Sub-Fund Management Unit, for accountability and learning from the project achievements and challenges, and to inform future projects. Donors are a stakeholder group that can benefit by gaining knowledge on the project's results and potential impact. Countries, directly or indirectly involved in the project, can learn from the progress achieved and the challenges faced by those who participated in the project, for the purposes of learning and, possibly, identifying their own needs.

The evaluation report will be published on the UNCTAD website.

Evaluation questions

The following evaluation questions, grouped according to the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, were pursued in this exercise:

Relevance	1. To what extent did the project reflect and address the development needs and priorities of beneficiary countries, expressed, for instance, in their national plans or strategies?
Coherence	2. To what extent were the project design, choice of activities and deliverables aligned with the mandates and work of UNCTAD and the 2030 Sub-Fund? 3. Has the project been complementary to and coherent with existing UN strategy frameworks (UNSCDF and CCAs), and initiatives by other non-UN actors in the beneficiary countries?
Efficiency	4. To what extent was the project management adequate in ensuring the coordination, planning, execution, and monitoring of project activities within the defined scope and timeline? 5. How efficient was the project in utilising project resources?
Effectiveness	6. 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? 7. To what extent have the project participants from each beneficiary country utilised, or intend to utilise, the knowledge and skills gained, and products developed through the project's activities? 8. To what extent has the project contributed to partnerships amongst project participants with national and regional counterparts, regional and international development partners, academia, civil society and/or the private sector? 9. What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?
Sustainability and potential impact	10. What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes both programmatic and financial? Are there measures to mobilise resources and diversify funds? 11. Is there evidence that beneficiary countries have continued, or will continue, working towards the project objectives beyond UNCTAD's interventions? Have there been any catalytic effects from the project at the national/regional levels?
Mainstreaming UN cross-cutting issues	12. To what extent were UN cross-cutting issues (such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind) incorporated in the design and implementation of the project? What results, if any, can be identified in these areas?

Evaluation methods

The evaluation was a **transparent and participatory process** involving the project's implementing entities (e.g., UNCTAD, UNRCOs, and institutional focal points) and key stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, technical experts, private sector, academics, national ministries, and African regional bodies). It adopted a **theory-driven, utilisation-focused approach**, guided by the project-results framework. It triangulated qualitative and quantitative data to compile the available evidence and draw objective findings and conclusions.

Methods for data gathering and how the evaluation applied them are summarised below. Annex 6 – Evaluation methodology – details how each method was implemented, including risks and mitigation strategies, and Annex 7 – Evaluation Matrix – provides an overview of their application to the evaluation questions. Data collection was concluded on 4 April 2025, followed by a closing interview with the UNCTAD implementation team on 9 April 2025.

Desk review of project documents and relevant materials	**Project-level planning, implementation and monitoring of results achieved, including financial information, publications, beneficiary feedback, project website and posts from the project's social media campaigns.** **Related strategic documents at the UN, regional and country levels.**
Semi-structured interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff and a sample of project participants, partners and other stakeholders **Group discussions with beneficiaries**	Initial call for interviews liaised by the UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit and followed up by reminders. Virtual and face-to-face consultations, during field missions. Interviews in English, Portuguese and Spanish. Interviews conducted (including during field missions): 51, 27% female[8]. All beneficiary countries represented, except Nigeria[9]. Related documentation: • Annex 8 – 2 pager summary of the evaluation and the purpose of interviews. • Annex 9 – Stakeholder-tailored interview outlines.
Field mission to two beneficiary countries	Field missions conducted in Kenya and Malawi, between 15 and 22 March. Field mission interviews: 26, 23% women. Access to physical documents, in-depth exchanges with stakeholders, and observational data about articulation between stakeholders and dimensions of productive capacities (e.g., energy, transportation, urban development, entrepreneurship, industrialisation).

[8] This percentage reflects the female: male in the list of overall participants provided by the project management team to this evaluation.
[9] This evaluation did not receive any response to multiple attempts to interview the country focal point and a selected list of project beneficiaries. This gap was somewhat compensated by Nigeria's participation in the survey.

	Focal points provided logistical support. Related documentation: • Annex 10 – Criteria for case study selection
Online self-administered surveys to beneficiaries	Calls for participation launched by the UNCTAD IEU on 27 March, followed by two reminders until the closing of the survey on 11 April. Response rate increased from 8% to 17% (n=67 participants). The tool: mobile-friendly design, ruler-like response options. Versions in English and Portuguese. Anonymous. Participants: 806 in the initial list, 393 valid invitations, 67 returned forms (25% female, 69% from the government stakeholder group, no responses from Angola). Related documentation: • Annex 11 – Survey template. • Annex 12 – Detailed survey results.
Collection and analysis of relevant web and social media metrics	Total number of documents: 31 in the UNCTAD website and other sources, 231 posts on X and LinkedIn, 82 (36%) of them no longer available.

Evaluation findings

Relevance

MAIN FINDING #1

There is consensus between beneficiary governments, country and regional stakeholders and implementation partners that the project reflects and addresses the development needs and the policy priorities in the eight countries supported. The project aligns with current strategic documents, national policies and action plans, in addition to raising awareness about strength-based opportunities for development and the advantages of a holistic approach to alleviating bindings to development.

Baseline assessments provided the project with a relevant overview of the development challenges faced by the beneficiary countries, with binding constraints to development shared among them organised according to the PCI categories.

Examples of these common binding constraints are lack of export diversification and policies to facilitate participation and upgrading in global value chains, lack of incentives and supporting infrastructure in the agriculture sector and weak intersectoral linkages, low quality education and labour underutilisation (human capital), inadequate inter-agency coordination and issues in achieving appropriate energy pricing, insufficient access to electricity and limited ICT skills, high fuel prices and inadequate rail and road infrastructure, insufficient access to finance and inability to foster linkages between sectors and between domestic and foreign firms, and economic governance challenges and gaps in transparency and inter-ministerial coordination.

Project outputs and stakeholders confirmed that these baseline assessments reflected national and sectoral development strategies and plans. The project remains relevant to current national and sectoral strategies and plans. Highlights by country are summarised below.

In **Angola**, the project established a link with the country's process to graduate from least developed to lower middle-income country, including by producing the policy paper 'Strategy for Graduation with Momentum for Angola: Policies for a Smooth Transition and Beyond' (2022). The project reflected priority sectors in the National Development Plan (2018-2022), which included boosting production and export diversification in sectors such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, aquaculture, manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, and hotels and tourism. It considered the national energy strategy, the Angola Energia 2025.

In **Ethiopia**, the project reflected the country's 10-year economic development plan, 'Ethiopia: An African Beacon of Prosperity', which focusses on generating inclusive and sector-led quality growth, supported by institutional transformation, technological capability, and an active role of the private sector. It includes peace building, justice, efficient public services, harnessing electricity from the Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam for productivity and digitalisation, and regional economic cooperation, taking advantage of the AfCFTA. The project reflected the 'National Import Substitution Strategy for the Selected Manufacturing Industry Sub-Sectors in Ethiopia' and the 'Ten Years Development Plan: A Pathway to Prosperity, 2021-2030'. Country focal points referred to efforts to align the project with the Ethiopia Tamrit Movement, the national movement for industrialisation.

In **Kenya**, the project reflected the country's Vision 2030, to break the low-middle-income trap and make Kenya a newly-industrialising, upper middle-income country by tackling the big priorities in food security, affordable housing, manufacturing and affordable healthcare. The country's needs were brought to UNCTAD by Kenya's Permanent Mission in Geneva and the productive capacities approach seemed to be a new approach to development, more in line with the Vision 2030 perspective in comparison with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measures. The project supported the country's challenges to develop manufacturing as the engine of industrialisation. Relevant documents shared with the evaluation that attest to the project's relevance include, for instance, the 'Concept Note on Vision 2030 Transformative Leadership in Promoting the Uptake of Public Private Partnerships and Human Capital in the Infrastructure Sector'. Stakeholders referred to the project continuing to be relevant for the country's current initiatives in the energy sector and in engaging the private sector in implementing government policies. They also indicated that the project called attention back to the whole of Kenya Vision 2030, which had been gradually fragmented since 2013, with some parts of the overall vision receiving more attention than others.

In **Malawi**, the Ministry of Trade and Industry made a request to UNCTAD's senior management to join the project, in 2021, given its alignment with the Malawi Vision 2063. This is the national development plan (NDP) that aims to transform the country into "an inclusively wealthy and self-reliant industrialised upper-middle-income country" by 2063. The three main action areas, designed in an ecosystemic approach, encompass agriculture, industrialisation and urbanisation. The project aligns with the 'Malawi Vision 2063 – First 10-year Implementation Plan (2021 – 2030)', the first short-term development plan to achieve the long-term goals of 2063. Stakeholders referred to the project in showing opportunities to fill in productive capacity gaps that hinder trade activities, notably with international markets, such as standards, added-value exporting, and special economic zones. The project remains relevant with respect to the current 2024-2025 Economic Strategy, which focuses on Agriculture, Tourism, Mining and Manufacturing (ATMM). It supports the work of stakeholders, such as trade unions, on issues of formation of human capital (e.g., skilling and upskilling), technical and technological education – and the related infrastructure needed – gender and employment. The project also addresses the main reason why previous plans failed to deliver the promised development progress: the lack of coordination between short-term plans and the country's long-term goals.

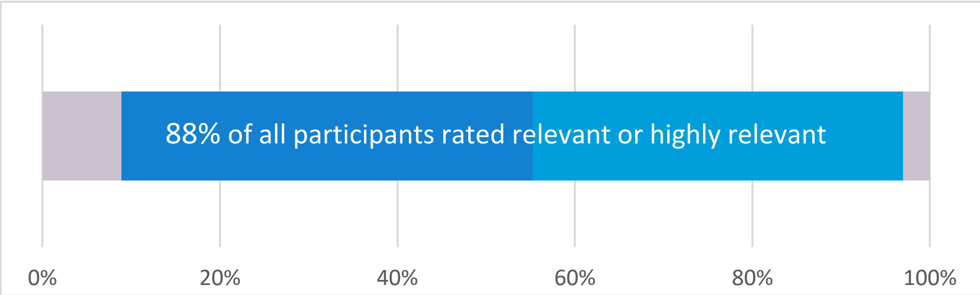
In **Mozambique**, the project was presented by the UNCTAD team in the context of other interventions in the country and attracted the interest and support of its Permanent Mission in Geneva, the government, and the private sector. It reflected the National Development Strategy for 2015-2035 in its purpose of addressing interrelated socio-economic, political, and environmental challenges. The project aligns with the four pillars of the Strategy: development of human capital, the development of infrastructure, research, innovation and technology, and institutional coordination and articulation. The UNCTAD SDG project also aligns with the National Strategy for Economic Development 2025-2044, especially in its pillar on the structural transformation of the economy and the focus on economic diversification, through industrialisation and exploration of high potential sectors and agriculture modernisation.

In **Nigeria**, the project reflected the country's 2050 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This long-term plan aims to transform Nigeria into an upper-middle income country with an industrialised and knowledge-based economy by 2050. It comprises six 5-year plans, the first being the NDP 2021-2025. At its core, this plan aims to create a foundation for a diversified economy, considering: a) Economic Growth and Development, b) Infrastructure, c) Public Administration, d) Human Capital Development, e) Social Development, f) Regional Development, and g) Plan Implementation, Communication, Financing, Monitoring, and Evaluation. The project aligns with these country priorities especially in relation to economic diversification and increased private sector participation for inclusive development.

In **Zambia**, the project was part of longer term UNCTAD support – since 2021 – to the country's graduation process from a least developed country. The UNCTAD SDG project started when the 8th NDP 2022-2026, was in advanced stages of elaboration, with four pillars: economic transformation, human and social development, environmental sustainability, and good governance. The 8th NDP reflects the Zambia Vision 2030, which aspires to make the economy strong, dynamic and self-sustaining to propel a prosperous middle-income nation by 2030. Stakeholders acknowledged that the project confirmed the areas of focus on productive capacities that the country had identified: economic diversification with value addition (e.g., industrialisation, special economic zones) and job creation (e.g., private sector development through, for instance, innovative youth entrepreneurship), and considering strong sectors in the country, such as mining.

In **Zimbabwe**, a lower-middle-income country, the project reflects the objectives of its Vision 2030 to make it an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and the goals of the National Development Strategy 1 (2021-2025), to ensure high, accelerated, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and socio-economic transformation and development. The latter aims to promote macroeconomic stability, economic recovery and growth, and new opportunities for wealth creation, innovation, and enterprise development. Stakeholders acknowledge the relevance of the project in developing government capacities on value chains and structural transformation to achieve their overall NDPs and the current industrialisation plan, the Zimbabwe Industrial Reconstruction and Growth Plan 2024-2025.

Survey results on relevance indicate that 88% of all participants (60% among those in government) consider the project was relevant or highly relevant in responding to their needs for alleviating binding constraints to development.



Highlights from comments[10]:

Strong points:

- **The project is a first step in identifying these constraints.**
- **The PCI training, for developing country capacities to inform policy.**

Where to improve:

- **Implementation did not reach out to the institutional level.**
- **Partner with stakeholders to ensure ownership and adaptability.**

Good practices highlighted by stakeholders include the comprehensive economic approach of this project, in contrast with a narrower project approach, traditionally used by development partners. The NPCGA and the HPCDP are seen as changing the narrative for these LDCs from low GDP and debt-driven to strength-driven development opportunities. Additionally, these stakeholders praised the project for including a wide range of relevant stakeholders, such as the private sector, working in tandem with government, which has been as a challenge for some countries (e.g., Zimbabwe). Another good practice was the possibility to benchmark development in other countries and learn from their experiences and best practices. Angola was the key reference to the other countries, driven by information provided by the project management team.

Key informants also indicated some **missed opportunities** in relation to relevance. One of them is the holistic approach not being holistic enough to push for more inter-ministerial coordination. There are accounts of competition between ministries and the ministries of commerce and trade not having the coordination mandate, nor the capacities to cover all dimensions of the holistic approach of the UNCTAD SDG project, leading to barriers to buy-in at higher levels. Consequences of this for efficiency and effectiveness are presented in the corresponding sections.

Another missed opportunity was the centralisation of project activities in capital cities. Stakeholders (e.g., Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique) referred to the potential relevance of productive capacities across regions and counties, given their specificities in contributing to national production and development. This is acknowledged by the project management team and discussions to reach out to sub-national levels through the implementation of the HPCDP have started in Mozambique.

[10] Consult detailed responses in Annex 12.

Coherence

The project cohered with **UNCTAD's work on productive capacities and structural transformation overall**[11], including the development and use of the PCI. The NPCGA is a PCI-driven assessment that covers all eight categories of the index, and its results directly informed the elaboration of the holistic programmes in each country.

MAIN FINDING #2

The project is coherent with UNCTAD's longstanding work on productive capacities and the UN High Impact Initiative Transforming4Trade, led by UNCTAD. The project's main deliverables (i.e., National Productive Capacities Gaps Assessment and the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme) strongly connect to this framework.

This approach aligns with the **Nairobi Maafikiano**'s (2016) aim to develop consensual actions for the realisation of the global development agenda, through contributing to the establishment of a holistic trade and development agenda. The document stresses the role of UNCTAD in supporting inclusive trade and development in the LDCs and the LLDCs, especially in Africa. The project is closely aligned with Subthemes 2, *Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth through trade, investment, finance and technology to achieve prosperity for all,* and 3, *Advancing economic structural transformation and cooperation to build economic resilience and address trade and development challenges and opportunities, at all levels, within the UNCTAD mandate*.

The project aligns with **Transforming4Trade**, one of 12 United Nations High Impact Initiatives developed with member States and key stakeholders, "to generate fresh political leadership and integrated support across some of the most critical aspects of the SDGs"[12] (p. 1). The Transforming4Trade initiative aims to boost economic development through international trade and has productive capacities and the PCI at its core. UNCTAD is the leading agency, in collaboration with UNDESA and UNIDO. A case study highlighted through this Initiative is the EU-funded project in Angola. One component of this project, on developing capacities of institutions and technical staff on formulating and implementing trade policies (Train for Trade II Programme) was led by UNCTAD. Its first phase was implemented between 2017 and 2021, and

MAIN FINDING #3

The UNCTAD SDG project was inspired by and well-aligned with the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II that led to joint activities, mutual exchanges and learning between the two projects. However, the concomitance between them in the 2021-2023 period may have caused some degree of invisibility of the UNCTAD SDGs project in the country. Other beneficiary countries did not report similar alignments between other existing projects and this one.

[11] An example is the Development Account project 'Coherent Strategies for Productive Capacity Development in Selected African Least Developed Countries', implemented by UNCTAD in partnership with UNECA in Burkina Faso, Rwanda, and Tanzania between 2020 and 2023. See details here: https://unctad.org/project/coherent-strategies-productive-capacity-development-african-least-developed-countries. Other examples are in the series of flagships reports: Economic Development in Africa Report 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, and The Least Developing Countries Report 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023).

[12] United Nations (2023).

the second between 2021 and December 2023[13]. The success of this pilot indicated how this approach to development could lead to concrete results in SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, and 15.

The Angola project produced the benchmark for designing and implementing the UNCTAD SDG project. The Angola NPCGA took indicators from the Train for Trade II Programme into account. Between 2021 and 2023, they ran simultaneously, and this allowed for the confirmation of policy gaps by each project and the exchange of lessons learned during implementation. A UNCTAD staff referred to continuous exchange of information and mutual learning – e.g., feedback on the Angola NPCGA, and inputs for the elaboration of the Angola HPCDP, as well as the development of extension services in agriculture[14] informed by the NPCGA.

However, possibly because Train for Trade II Programme had been in Angola long before the UNCTAD SDG project and the Train for Trade II Programme manager facilitated the implementation of this project, including by holding back-to-back activities for each project and participating in both, country stakeholders stated that they were not aware of the UNCTAD SDG project. For them, there was only the Train for Trade II Programme, on which they reported specific details.

The other beneficiary countries did not report similar alignments between the UNCTAD SDG project and other UNCTAD interventions within their respective countries. Malawi stakeholders referred to the UNCTAD trade facilitation initiative[15] as a possible point of alignment between UNCTAD projects, but this initiative was not referred to in the UNCTAD SDG project documentation.

In relation to the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund**[16], this project aligns with the principles of a) holistic and multi-sectoral responses to challenges to sustainable development, and b) demand-driven interventions based on capacity development needs expressed by member States. It directly responds to the priority areas of a) supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in developing countries, especially LDCs and LLDCs, and b) strengthening “national capacity of developing countries participating in the Belt and Road cooperation on integrated policy formulation, trade promotion, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, financial cooperation, inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity, and integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Belt and Road Initiative into their national plans and strategies.” (p. 4).

The UNCTAD SDG project is complementary to and coheres with existing UN strategy frameworks, such as the **UNSDCF** (formerly named United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UNDAF), in two of its four key objectives: the spirit of partnerships and LNOB. The holistic approach of the project aims at bringing multiple ministries, other government bodies (e.g., national bureaux of statistics, customs authority etc.), academia, the private sector, and development partners together to alleviate binding

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[13] Information on the Train for Trade II Programme can be consulted here: EU-UNCTAD joint programme for Angola: Train for Trade II | UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
[14] An example cited by different stakeholders is the ‘honey project’. Information available here: Meeting to present the Honey Residue Monitoring Plan and results achieved of UNCTAD’s honey value chain support | UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
[15] Link to the launch of the UNCTAD e-learning course for Malawi on How to Draft a National Trade Facilitation Roadmap: https://unctad.org/meeting/launch-course-malawi-how-draft-national-trade-facilitation-roadmap, on 25 October 2023.
[16] UN-DESA; UNPDTF. (2022).

constraints to development. Documents produced by the project (i.e., baseline assessments, summaries of policy discussions, the NPCGA and the HPCDP) consider women, youth, and other vulnerable groups, such as rural populations.

The project is coherent with the available **CCAs** for Angola (2022), Malawi (2023), Mozambique (2021), Nigeria (2022), Zambia (2021) and Zimbabwe (2021), with shared topics on productive capacities and structural transformation, such as economic diversification (Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia), inclusion of women, youth and rural populations in productive activities through improved education and infrastructure (Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe), and private sector development (Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe). Sectors highlighted in the CCAs and emphasised in the UNCTAD SDG project are, for instance, agriculture (Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and energy (Nigeria, Zambia). It is noteworthy that the Angola and the Nigeria CCAs use data from the PCI to provide a holistic country analysis.

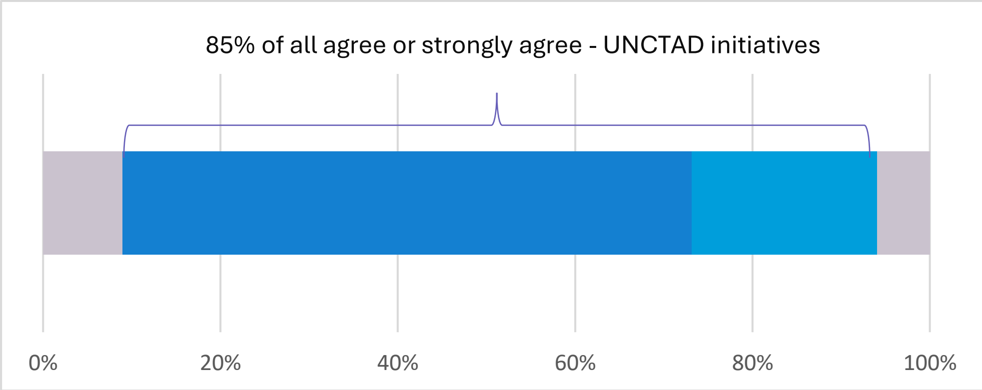
Broadly, the project aligns with resolutions by the UN Economic and Social Council on the graduation process of LDCs that encourage UNCTAD to continue its "methodological work to measure progress in and identify obstacles to the development of productive capacities in developing countries" (p. 2) and share the results with UNDESA and the Committee on countries graduating or graduated from the LDC category. It aligns with Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs, overall.

MAIN FINDING #4

At the global level, the project aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund on the principles of holistic and multi-sectoral responses and demand-driven interventions but missed opportunities in relation to the principles of clearly articulating the UN collective response and the provision of tools to UNCTs to tailor responses to specific national needs and realities. It also aligns with Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs. Limited coordination with UNRCO focal points and long communication gaps in-between national events were the main barriers to fostering a One-UN approach to this project, which, according to the evidence collected, made it a UNCTAD-centred project.

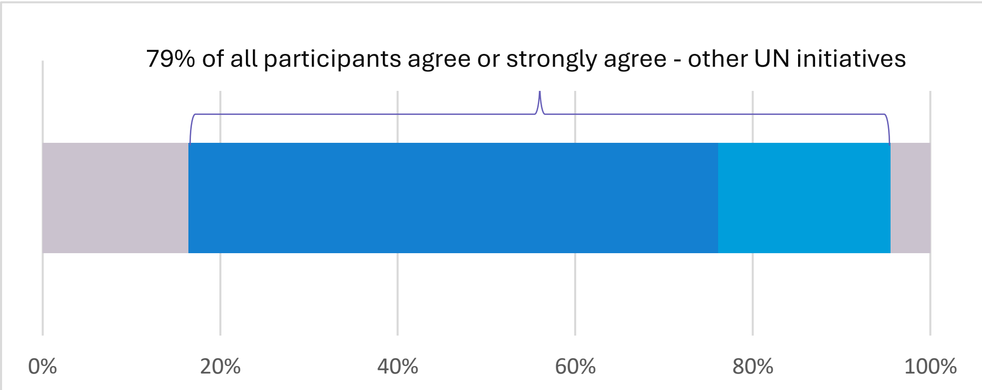
The project reflects the UN Pact for the Future, specifically Action #4l, on scaling up "support from all sources for investment in increasing productive capacities, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, infrastructure and structural economic transformation, diversification and growth in developing countries" (p. 6). From previous UN commitments, the project addresses issues raised in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (2015) on matters of adding value and processing to natural resources and productive diversification, gender and youth inclusion in employment, structural transformation and sustainable industrialisation, long-term investment in productive capacities for international trade, especially in sectors such as agriculture, and notably in LDCs. This resonates with the alignment of the project with the Doha Programme of Action (2022), which also emphasise humanitarian aid with long-term development in conflict-affected LDCs.

Survey results on coherence with other UNCTAD initiatives indicate that 85% of all respondents (89% among government) agree or strongly agree that the project complemented and formed synergies with other UNCTAD in-country initiatives.



Comments indicated **strong points** on the project not working in isolation with other UNCTAD initiatives (i.e., trade facilitation, science, technology and innovation policy frameworks, and industrial parks and SEZ), and the PCI training and use being aligned with policy and infrastructure development.

Survey results on coherence with other UN initiatives indicate that 79% of all respondents (83% among those in government) agree or strongly that the project complemented and formed synergies with in-country initiatives of other UN organizations.



Positive comments highlighted that the project aligns with programmes by UNDP, ILO, UNIDO and FAO in Zambia, which also aim to accelerate economic diversification, address youth unemployment and strengthen institutional capabilities and governance. A **point for improvement** is communication with those who did not participate in all capacity building activities. Detailed responses can be consulted in Annex 12.

In addition, 46% of the survey respondents – 50% of those in government – indicated that the project could have synergised or avoided overlaps with work by other UN organizations, and cited the following entities, from more to less frequently cited: UNDP, ILO, IOM, FAO, UNIDO, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNOPS, UN-WOMEN, UNSD.

Good practices include the consistency of the productive capacities and structural transformation approach in UNCTAD's work, in African countries and especially in the LDCs and LLDCs, building on previous pilot studies and UNCTAD frameworks and tools, such as the PCI, the Nairobi Maafikiano, and the Train for Trade II Programme, as well as on institutional knowledge expressed in flagship reports on Africa in general and the LDCs in particular.

Although the project had potential complementarities with approaches and interventions by other UN entities, at global and country levels, evidence indicates that it was UNCTAD-centred and did not address such complementarities in project design and implementation. This represents **missed opportunities.**

A **technical example** is UNIDO's Competitive Industrial Performance Index, which can be triangulated with the PCI at multiple levels[17].

MAIN FINDING #5

At country level, whilst the project aligns with country priorities and existing projects on productive capacities to alleviate development barriers for vulnerable groups in least developed and landlocked developing countries through economic diversification and private sector development, it missed opportunities to explore complementarities with other in-country UN and non-UN interventions related to structural transformation.

A **strategic example** is missed opportunities in ensuring coherence with the UNSDCF, notably in relation to the objectives of clearly articulating the UN collective response to help countries and the provision of tools to UNCTs to tailor responses to specific national needs and realities. These objectives are linked to the UNCTAD SDG project's sporadic interactions between the project management team and UNRCO interlocutors. Engagement mainly involved reaching out to government bodies to organise in-country events, followed by months with little or no communication.

There is consensus among the UNRCO informants that this was insufficient to support inter-agency collaboration, despite the relevance of the holistic approach to multiple UNCTs operating in each of the beneficiary countries. Additionally, UNCTAD, being a non-resident UN entity, would have benefitted from its relationships in the Inter-Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity – which includes ILO, UNIDO, UNDP, FAO and other UN organizations with stronger presence on the ground. However, a in-country colleague from UNIDO heard about the project only when the UNRCO asked for their input on remarks to be made at the opening of one of the project's events, generating a strong complaint from UNIDO about the lack of cooperation.

The evaluation also identified missed opportunities in potential complementarities with the work of **regional bodies**, such as the East African Community (EAC). Members attended some of the UNCTAD SDG project events and requested documentation on a personal basis, but there lacked institutional communication with the EAC Secretariat to bring the project to the regional level. UNCTAD's work on productive capacities and structural transformation reflects EAC's regional industrialisation strategy and discussions on value chain potentials and human capital in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, and mining.

At **country level**, there are missed opportunities in acknowledging the work of UN and non-UN agencies, such as UNIDO, ILO, and the World Bank on related subjects. Stakeholders in Ethiopia indicated potential complementarities between initiatives under the World Bank climate reform, the UNIDO project to integrate agri-industrial parks in the country, and UNDP's interventions on SMEs and job readiness and the holistic programme. They emphasised that the holistic programme is more comprehensive, so theme-specific projects could become subset initiatives of the holistic programme once these complementarities were explored. Stakeholders identified overlaps with UNIDO's Programme for Country Partnership with Kenya 2021-2025.

The main components of this programme are a) Industrial policy and governance, b) Agro-processing, c) ICT and digitalisation, d) Trade and investment promotion, e) Industrial

[17] Country profiles, comparable at higher aggregated levels, inclusive to the beneficiary countries of the UNCTAD SDG project can be consulted here: https://stat.unido.org/analytical-tools/country-analytics?country=024&codes=OTH_%2CMI_OTH.

zones, f) Green economy, g) Blue economy, and h) Youth and women. It operates under the same country frameworks as the UNCTAD SDG project and, specifically, responds to SDG 9 with the Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development framework (ISID).

It is noteworthy that both projects share major topics on productive capacities and economic diversification, UNCTAD is listed as one of the relevant project partners for UNIDO in the PRODOC, both projects share government stakeholders, and their timeframes overlap. Stakeholders in Malawi referred to a World Bank project on service delivery in the agriculture sector and a UNDP project to develop decentralised 5-year development plans that will take into consideration the local development strengths and could contribute to ground the implementation of the holistic programme at the sub-national level. Another project is the ILO's work with the Government of Zimbabwe on the prosperity pillar of the Zimbabwe UNSDCF. This initiative seeks to provide technical assistance, capacity building and economic policy advisory support to the NDS 1. Also in Zimbabwe, a JAICA-UNDP project delivered capacity building on productive capacities with focus on value chains. Survey respondents corroborated interview informants by indicating the potential synergies between the UNCTAD SDG project and interventions by several UN entities, with UNDP, ILO and IOM being the most cited. They refer to the usefulness of a mapping of existing interventions and programmes to ensure synergies, avoid duplicity, and unlock sectoral potentialities.

Efficiency

MAIN FINDING #6

The project delivered 65 outputs, including events, knowledge products, and advisory services. Its communication campaign was mostly through the UNCTAD project website and social media. The project had achieved 77.5% of its planned indicators as of December 2024, with pending activities in Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe by the closing of the evaluation. There were cost-efficient measures in organising back-to-back events in neighbouring countries.

The project **delivered a total of 65 outputs**, among which were events, knowledge products, and advisory services. Table 5 shows their distribution per category of output and country. It covers project outcomes 1 and 2 and all project outputs delivered. Outputs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 were not delivered in Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, as shown in the analysis of indicators (Table 6). A detailed timeline of these deliverables as per the project progress reports can be consulted in Annex 13.

In relation to OP2.5, the communication campaign, the final project report listed 31 publications regarding the project missions, trainings, workshops, high-level launch events and other high-level meetings, such as the Transforming4Trade presentation. Twenty-nine of them were published in the UNCTAD website and two by other sources. Another part of OP2.5 was a social media communication campaign. This resulted in 231 posts on X and LinkedIn, 82 (36%) of them no longer available[18]. It is noteworthy that they were posted from the UNCTAD official account and the personal accounts of UNCTAD staff involved in the project. The verified evidence for each output, per category, can be consulted in Annex 14.

The project final report indicated a **77.5% delivery rate** in relation to the PRODOC indicators, with 31 indicators achieved, out of 40 planned. The project management team indicated that the partially and non-achieved indicators are in progress and are likely to be

[18] There was no clear evidence on why these posts were no longer available.

fully achieved in the first half of 2025[19] using alternative financial resources, outside of the project's budget. Delays in implementation articulated in the no-cost extension requested on 30 October 2024 refer to general elections (Mozambique), scheduling conflicts (Nigeria) and slow responses from governments of beneficiary countries (such as Zimbabwe). In the case of Mozambique, as the country government was under reorganisation after the elections, UNCTAD received an official letter requesting the postponement of activities until mid-2025. This no cost-extension request was not approved and the project closed in December 2024.

Table 5. Project outputs delivered by country, by December 2024.

Countries	Events[1]	Knowledge products[2]	Advisory services[3]	Total
Angola	●	● ●	● ● ● ●	7
Ethiopia	● ● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●	11
Kenya	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ●	11
Malawi	● ● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●	9
Mozambique	● ●	●		3
Nigeria	● ●	● ● ● ●	● ●	8
Zambia	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	9
Zimbabwe	● ●	● ●	●	5
Other locations	● ●			2
Total	**24**	**21**	**20**	**65**

Source: Project final report. This table computes only deliverables verified by the evaluation.
[1] Events include the training for statisticians (OP1.3), workshops and policy dialogues with policymakers (OP1.3), high-level launches of the HPCDPs (OP2.3) and international meetings on productive capacities (OP2.5).
[2] Knowledge products encompass the summaries of the national workshops (OP1.1), NPCGAs (OP1.2), HPCDPs (OP2.2), and roadmaps (OP2.4).
[3] Advisory services include consultations with stakeholders during country missions (OP1.1), the process of drafting the HPCDPs (OP2.1), and the establishment of national mechanisms for graduation.

Table 6. Status of completion of indicators by December 2024.

Country	I.A.1.1	I.A.1.2	I.A.1.3	I.A.2.1	I.A.2.2.1
Angola	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Ethiopia	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Kenya	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Malawi	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Mozambique	Partial	Partial	Not achieved	✔	Not achieved
Nigeria	✔	✔	✔	✔	Not achieved
Zambia	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Zimbabwe	Partial	Partial	Not achieved	✔	Not achieved

[19] After the conclusion of the evaluation data collection phase, on 9 April 2025, UNCTAD shared updates on the pending deliverables. For Mozambique the pending deliverables, including the validation workshop, were concluded between 22 and 25 April 2025. Therefore, the evaluation does not contain additional evidence on effectiveness, sustainability and potential impact of these deliverables.

Source: final project report, Mozambique official letter to UNCTAD, no-cost extension requested by UNCTAD.
I.A.1.1. Validation by government of the policy briefs or strategy papers produced by UNCTAD.
I.A.1.2. At least 5 binding constraints identified in each country, 10 policy options or recommendations accepted by governments for further implementation, and 65% of participants in workshops with improved understanding and institutional capacity to formulate and implement productive capacities policies.
I.A.1.3. At least 5 policy options and recommendations are accepted in each country.
I.A.2.1. 70% of respondents and key institutions show improved capacity to understand and implement good practices at the national, regional and continental levels.
I.A.2.2. Validation by each participating government of policy options produced by UNCTAD.

Planning and coordination

To deliver these outputs, coordination efforts were somewhat successful in mobilising key stakeholders in the beneficiary countries, through focal points in the UNRCOs and other key institutions. This coordination brought relevant ministries, government bodies, academia, and private sector to the elaboration process and validation events of the NPCGA and the HPCDP, with varying degrees of engagement across countries and stakeholder groups, as evidenced by meeting agendas, lists of participants, and stakeholder interviews. In Angola, for instance, there were efficiency gains in inviting key stakeholders who were already engaged in the Train for Trade II Programme.

MAIN FINDING #7

Project planning and coordination was somewhat efficient in mobilising relevant stakeholders, with varying degrees of efficiency per country. The assumption that China would be a central stakeholder, with Chinese actors engaged in project implementation, proved unfounded, leading to their absence, the redesign of one output on country-based China-UNCTAD programmes of support, and an unsystematic consideration of China in the main knowledge products.

Overall, however, Chinese relevant bodies and institutions, or Chinese groups established in the beneficiary countries are missing. The project management team explained that the participation of these stakeholders was assumed at the planning phase, but, during implementation, it became clear that avenues for their involvement could not be directly established with the Chinese Embassies and private sector actors, since China-country relations are established bilaterally, with ministries of foreign affairs. Nevertheless, government officials and RCO members with linkages with China, such as in Malawi and Mozambique, noted that they could have partnered with UNCTAD to liaise with these contacts. For this, the direct involvement of China should have been on the agenda of discussions with these stakeholders as soon as it became clear that the initial project assumption could not be confirmed.

This realisation made the delivery of OP2.2 inviable as it was designed (i.e., Development of China-UNCTAD programmes of support), so HPCDPs were adapted to be inclusive of China and other potential development partners. A content review of the project knowledge products identified that China figures in the background analysis of four documents: the Ethiopia's baseline (2022) and summary workshop (2022), the Angola's NPCGA (2022), and the Nigeria's draft HPCDP. The evaluation found more in-depth inclusions of China in core data analysis of a few document sections of the following knowledge products:

- ✓ Angola strategy paper for graduation (2022): section on fishery and marine resources, and international support.
- ✓ Ethiopia NPCGA and HPCDP (2024): section on financial constraints to transport.
- ✓ Kenya HPCDP (2025): section on energy.

- ✓ Mozambique draft NPCGA: section on private sector.
- ✓ Nigeria NPCGA (2024): sections on economic overview and energy.
- ✓ Zimbabwe NCPGA (2022) and draft HPCDP: sections on economic overview, natural capital and transport; and Pillars III and IV of the holistic programme.

MAIN FINDING #8

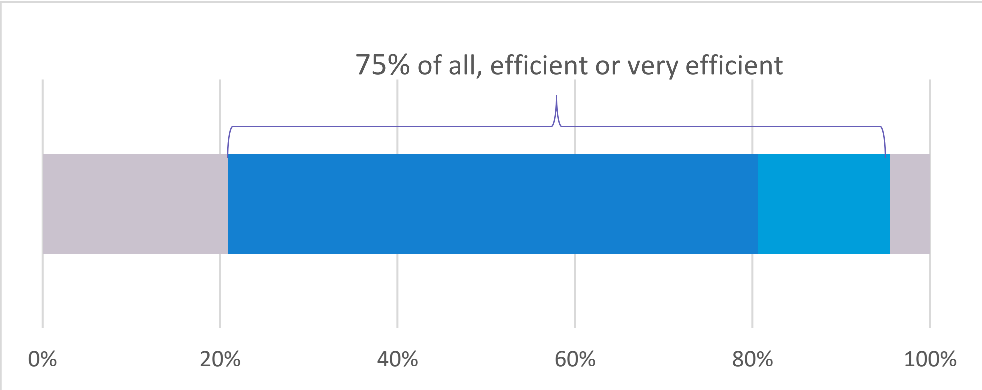
Whilst the project delivered high-quality outputs, implementation of activities faced difficulties due to national elections and change of governments, lack of adequate and predictable funding, the small project management team, a centralized approach, limited capacity of UNRCO economists, and insufficient communication with partners and stakeholders. This, in addition to missed opportunities to synergise with UNRCOs and resident UN entities, and external factors (e.g., COVID-19 and country instabilities) led to inefficiencies, delays and no-cost extension requests (one of them granted).

This indicates the lack of a systematic inclusion of China and Chinese stakeholders in coordination, implementation, and delivery of project outputs. This led to later requests to UNCTAD from the Chinese embassies for justifications on the choice of countries. As a response, the team is developing additional knowledge products on country-China links; drafts for Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe were shared with the evaluator[20].

Survey results on efficiency indicate that 75% of all respondents (74% among those in government) consider that coordination to deliver high quality outputs in a timely manner was efficient or very efficient.

Implementation

Implementation started with baseline assessments discussed in national policy-level workshops in Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia between March and October 2022, in Malawi in October 2023 and in Mozambique in April 2024. They were followed by the three main project activities: the PCI training of statisticians, the elaboration and delivery of the NPCGA and the elaboration and high-level launch of the HPCDP in five of the eight countries.



There is wide acknowledgement that the project management team was highly engaged in delivering the project and that outputs are of high quality. However, stakeholders indicate that the team was too small for the scale of this ambitious project. According to them, it would not

[20] Note: These documents are not counted as project deliverables. The project management team clarified that they are supplemental to the project and do not belong to a specific output.

be possible to conclude the project within the established timeframe. This, in addition to the missed opportunities in synergising with UNRCOs and UNCTs, and external factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and country instabilities, led to implementation inefficiencies and delays.

Stakeholders noted that the **PCI training for statisticians** was complicated in several aspects. First, the project management team did not clearly communicate the specific focus and priorities for these trainings, whether providing overall knowledge of the index, promoting autonomous use of it, running independent calculation etc. This focus was developed and clarified as trainings rolled out. An expert informed the evaluation that the calculation of the PCI must be centralised at UNCTAD and not done at country level. Nevertheless, country stakeholders were affirmative of their desire to run the calculations internally. Second, countries would include participants without the needed statistical background, creating heterogeneous groups[21]. Third, the PCI calculation requires specific statistical software (the training used R) and cannot be made in Excel. Given its complexity, the training time was too short for the content to be covered (two, instead of about five days).

Post-training assessments of the PCI capacity building indicated positive average (good/very good) in relation to relevance and usefulness. The most appreciated aspects were the PCI, learning R, and country-specific orientation. The training reflected links between the training and the work of participants in relation to learning statistical methodologies and informing policymaking. Participants indicated room for improvement in time allocation, more discussions on the elements that define productive capacities and how they link with the eight dimensions of the index, knowledge sharing through digital platforms, training at the sub-national level, improving the engagement of academia and coordination between UNCTAD, local trainers and policymakers, and in training follow-up to ensure sustainability.[22]

Overall average of post-training responses on the PCI training (response range from 1 to 5):

- ✓ Usefulness of discussions: 4.39
- ✓ Relevance to their work: 4.57
- ✓ Usefulness to their activities: 4.46

The **elaboration, capacity building and launch of the NPCGA and the HPCDP**[23] relied on coordination with country focal points for the mobilisation of relevant stakeholders and organisation of presential events, including informal consultations. A country consultant confirmed the support received from the project management team to draft the NPCGA and deliver it on time. Formal events are associated with summary discussion papers, the NPCGA report and the HPCDP and corresponding roadmaps. Informal consultations with stakeholders took place in between formal capacity building and launch events, as reported by interviewees and evidenced by some social media posts. Multiple stakeholders participated in these consultations, including by providing feedback to draft documents. However, many of the interviewees reported learning about the project only a few days before participating in a project's event, when they received the document, through focal points, to be discussed. They could not tell if other members of their

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[21] A possible approach to reduce heterogeneity could be to screen the nominated people through an online short questionnaire or just before starting the training.
[22] The compilation of results and a sample of detailed content analysis of the comments provided by participants can be consulted in Annex 15.
[23] They are considered together here because there are joint events on these two knowledge products. Programmatically, this makes sense from the perspective of the targeted stakeholders in these events, i.e., mostly, policymakers.

ministries would have participated in other project activities, as there was no communication about that.

The evaluation found that this was an UNCTAD-centred process, with invitations to key events sent by institutional focal points on behalf of UNCTAD's division director or UNCTAD as an institution, and project outputs not acknowledging inputs from country specialists. This approach reflects the communication pattern identified across countries and the consequent lack of ownership. Focal points would receive requests from the project management team for specific tasks but would not receive follow-up information, with months of communication gaps or no further communication at all[24]. Some countries are waiting for the final version of the HPCDP. Overall, countries were not informed about the closing of the project in December 2024, so they are expecting further contact at some point to continue the work towards the implementation of the HPCDP. This seems to resonate with the project management team's expectations of continuing this work, despite the closing of the project.

An important efficiency issue was housing the project within the right country institution. Institutional focal points shifted during implementation in some countries, sometimes in response to political changes. The project management team assesses these changes as positive moves to take the project to the most appropriate decision-making level. However, for country stakeholders in Ethiopia and Kenya, this was not always the case and uncommunicated shifts resulted in loss of institutional and country ownership, since there was no continuity to the work in progress and no knowledge transfer between institutions. There are examples of focal points in these countries acting upon previous agreements with UNCTAD to later find out that the project had moved elsewhere, so they would no longer be in the same strategic position to reach out to stakeholders and donors. In Kenya, for example, the project started with the Ministry of Trade, moved to Kenya Vision 2030, and then to the Office of the Prime Cabinet Secretary. Different stakeholders believe that the project is housed in different institutions, depending on what parts of the project they participated in. Some stakeholders believe it is now with the Ministry of Treasury, but they are not sure. In Ethiopia, following a misalignment between expectations of the project management team and the Ministry of Trade on responsibilities for fundraising to implement the HPCDP, the project was moved to the Ministry of Planning and Development, without communication with the focal point in the Ministry of Trade.

Post-event assessments on the NPCGA and the HPCDP indicated average positive assessments (good/very good) in relation to relevance and usefulness. The most appreciated aspects of these capacity building events were group discussions, the PCI and the holistic approach to development, comparability with success stories and lessons learned, the role of macroeconomic dimensions, insights for policy formulation, multiple stakeholders, and highlights of strategic growth potential. These events linked to the participants' work on the following themes: vulnerability profile, transition to a greener economy, bindings to development and industrial transformation, special economic zones, international trade, and a holistic

Overall average of post-event responses on the discussions and launch of the NPCGA and the HPCDP (response range from 1 to 5):

- ✓ Usefulness of discussions: 4.53
- ✓ Relevance to their work: 4.65
- ✓ Usefulness to their activities: 4.55

[24] An example was initial meetings in which ministries presented their mandate, work and development challenges. Participants reported not being informed about their presentation being part of a project activity nor that it would connect with other activities.

approach to development. Participants indicated room for improvement in, for instance, having these discussions at a higher level, with greater involvement of Cabinet officials and senior decision makers, revising the scope of the programme, since it is perceived as too ambitious for the estimated budget and timeline, promoting more coordination among state institutions, increasing the participation of multiple stakeholders (including the private sector and civil society), increasing the time for discussions (through, for instance, less or shorter or timed presentations), and sending documents in advance[25].

Monitoring

The project management team issued 6-months progress reports. They received internal comments from the UNCTAD Technical Cooperation Section and then UNDESA. UNDESA generated memos with its comments for the project management team. There are accounts of meetings between UNDESA and the UNCTAD project management team after the first no-cost extension, but the evaluation did not have access to the meeting agendas or minutes.

Issues with monitoring started with the selection of project indicators, which lacked clear baselines against which the project results could be measured. Another was underestimating the risks associated with the project. The project management team was slow in incorporating comments from UNDESA about risks of delay and this led to last minute submissions of no-cost extension requests. Most of the planned mitigation strategies were not applied to respond to the risks faced, such as continuous training to a large number of staff (including training of trainers), a clear methodology to ensure use of the PCI beyond technical training, creation of an online interactive knowledge repository, clear communication to beneficiaries about project scope and expected outputs from the onset, and close contact with beneficiary countries, including focal points, on the political situation in each country. Therefore, although there was a monitoring system in place, it was inefficient for course correction and avoiding delays and extensions.

Efficient use of resources

Project management was moderately efficient in utilising the project resources – financial, human and economic[26] – to implement activities. The project produced 21 knowledge products, acknowledged by stakeholders for their high technical quality. However, they are seen as 'UNCTAD work', rather than a joint initiative with country stakeholders. Evidence from multiple sources suggests that budgetary and human resources were limited for the scope of the work proposed (i.e., technical and political documents requiring country engagement at multiple levels in eight countries), resulting in a centralised approach to implementation that was partially accountable for delays, incomplete delivery, and requests for extension. At project closure, 18.5% of funds remained unspent and activities were incomplete in three of the eight beneficiary countries.

Evaluation evidence indicates the following **main factors affecting efficiency in resource use.**

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[25] The compilation of results and a sample of detailed content analysis of the comments provided by participants can be consulted in Annex 15.

[26] Financial resources refer to the funds allocated to the project by UNDESA; human resources refer to UNCTAD staff, country focal points, and other people mobilised for and during project implementation; economic resources refer to existing assets (e.g., infrastructure and equipment) available to project implementation.

1 The disruptive nature of risks was underestimated by the project management team, in spite of UNDESA's comments. UNRCOs agree on the predictability of post-election instabilities and believe the project could have been completed before it became unfeasible.	2 Limited human resources compromised the time available for coordination and active communication with country stakeholders – with effects on the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.
3 Expectations were not clearly communicated to beneficiaries, including the objectives of specific activities like the PCI training for statisticians, the roles and responsibilities for fundraising for the holistic programme, and the project's end date. This negatively impacted relationships with institutional focal points and delayed country responses to the project's requests.	4 There were mismatches between the project management's expectations and the actual process for obtaining no-cost extensions. Requests have been subject to increased scrutiny by the steering committee, as such extensions entail administrative costs. Given that a one-year no-cost extension had already been approved and only a few activities remained pending, the likelihood of securing a second extension was minimal.

A **good practice** in efficiency was the coordination with the Train for Trade II Programme in Angola by tapping into its strong relationships with key stakeholders and grounded institutional knowledge. This facilitated communication – channels were the same for the two projects – including in sectors, such as energy, where Train for Trade II Programme had not been so active. This 'optimum situation' supported the acceptance and integration of recommendations.

Another good practice was aligning the delivery of project outputs with national planning and policy cycles, making it easier to integrate policy recommendations into national plans and sectoral policies. This worked in Angola and in Zambia; the latter using inputs from the project to elaborate its 9th National Plan. However, the same was not possible in other countries, especially when internal instabilities would disrupt these cycles.

On use of resources, a good practice was holding back-to-back country missions to neighbouring beneficiary countries. This led to savings in travel expenditures and time spent travelling back and forth to Geneva. It is unclear if they were timed with country political and budgetary cycles to also achieve effectiveness.

This evaluation identified a few **sources of inefficiency** in the planning, coordination and implementation of the project. In relation to planning, the project could have developed a more robust **system of indicators** by establishing country-based baselines from the existing sectoral strategies and national plans. Although the project management team seems to have considered the NPCGA as a baseline, it cannot be considered as such from a project design perspective because it is an output. As indicated by UNRCO focal points and UNDESA Sub-Fund, UNCTAD could have engaged UNRCO economists from the project's inception to gather more country-specific information, which would have helped developing tailored indicators. Yet, the limited technical expertise and human resources within UNRCOs made it challenging for the project management team to establish more effective collaborations. In Zimbabwe, for instance, the UNRCO economist left the organization by the time the project was starting.

Inefficiencies in coordination were closely linked to **insufficient and unclear communication** about the project's phases, the expected involvement of China, prolonged gaps in communication with UNRCOs and country stakeholders, and changes in implementation partners - whether within or beyond UNCTAD's control - without notifying existing partners. On communication with UNRCOs, the evaluation identified a suboptimal use of this UN resource, especially considering that UNCTAD is a non-resident entity. For instance, the UNRCO in Mozambique was formerly part of the UNCT in China and could have linked the project management team to relevant Chinese stakeholders. UNRCO focal points generally emphasised that they could have played a stronger role if they had been more regularly involved in communications with the project management team. Alternatively, from the project management team's perspective, there were challenges to coordination with UNRCO focal points because of their limited availability throughout the project. They are few economists, involved in multiple projects.

The evaluation identified **diverging understandings** on what constituted the end of the project, with many country stakeholders believing that the project included the implementation of the HPCDP, and UNCTAD providing close support to leveraging funding. This, combined with communication gaps, left stakeholders in 'standby mode' until UNCTAD initiated contact for the next activity. There was frustration and a feeling of lack of ownership among those who later found out that the project ended with the high-level launch of the HPCDP. Key informants, who proactively reached out to the project management team with proposals and sought guidance for the next steps, shared with the evaluator e-mails sent to the UNCTAD team that went unanswered.

MAIN FINDING #9

Communication was a critical source of inefficiency in implementing this project. Issues include stakeholders unaware that events were part of a larger project and receiving the NPCGA and HPCDP only a few days in advance of meetings, months-long communication gaps with implementation partners, lack of clarity about the end of the project (leading to countries still waiting for continuation activities), and shifts in institutions housing the project without notice to the previous ones, compromising institutional memory of the project and country ownership. Some of these communication gaps were attributed to in-country dynamics, such as a lack of capacity to implement the project, or changes in government portfolios and priorities and institutional reorganisation after elections.

Still on **ownership**, UNCTAD's centralisation of document drafting and event presentations has left country stakeholders without sufficient knowledge to answer all donor questions when seeking funding, particularly those concerning the breakdown of funding across activities and timelines. Additionally, in some situations, participants received draft documents only a few days before the event, which hindered thorough understanding and in-depth discussions between key stakeholders and the project management team.

A consequence was high-level events being attended by representatives of decision makers, e.g., technical staff instead of directors and other senior officers. This may have impacted higher-level buy-in. In relation to the programmatic content, countries were surprised when China was mentioned for the first time in the high-level launch of the

HPCDP but said nothing because of the presence of non-governmental stakeholders. They felt uninformed about key project stakeholders and dissociated from the project cycle. Given their established trade relations with China, they believe they could have done something in this regard from the inception of the project.

Overall, stakeholders in different countries noted that housing the project within individual ministries (such as the Ministry of Trade), which do not have a coordination mandate over other ministries, was not the best choice. In their view, the Ministry of Planning/Treasury, or another established body with a coordination mandate, would be better suited to host a long-term, holistic development approach than temporary institutions created by presidential executive orders. This would have ensured higher country ownership, with links to the country's budget and operational ministries' workplans.

Effectiveness

Achieving project objectives

Outcome 1, on articulation of binding constraints and identification of products with potential for diversification and economic transformation, was achieved in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. It was partially achieved in Nigeria, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, since Nigeria is pending the validation of the HPCDP and Mozambique and Zimbabwe are pending the validation of the draft NPCGA and HPCDP. Beyond merely accepting recommendations proposed in these documents, the validation events include interactive policy discussions aimed at evolving the understanding of the role of productive capacities in development, improving local capacities to identify key binding constraints on trade and development, and strengthening the ability to map intervention strategies to address the identified constraints, including the promotion of gender equality. Stakeholders noted that the project highlighted the productive capacities (awareness raising) and now countries can work on productive gaps, at a sectoral and, to a certain extent, at an integrated level.

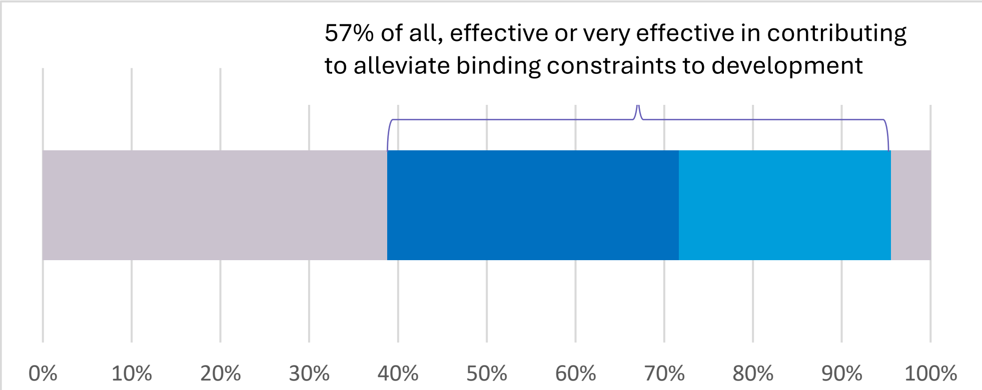
MAIN FINDING #10

Overall, the project had uneven performance in achieving its planned outcomes. Outcome 1, on articulation of binding constraints and identification of products for diversification and economic transformation, with validation by government, was achieved in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. It was partially achieved in Nigeria, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Outcome 2, on evidence-based policy development and implementation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for China, was achieved in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries. Survey results confirm this by showing rates of effectiveness between 57%-73% overall and 59%-74% among government respondents.

Outcome 2, on evidence-based policy development and implementation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for Chinese investors and collaborators, was achieved in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries. Angola integrated productive capacities into the CCA after the Train for Trade II Programme and the UNCTAD SDG project. Kenya has been inviting Chinese stakeholders to meet, without success. Zimbabwe had Chinese counterparts participating in meetings and followed up with investment calls in 2024. Across countries, technicians who attended the discussions, presentations, and launch events reported not having information at the strategic and political level about the effects of the project on policymaking. They are knowledgeable about their sectoral area of expertise and sectoral strategies but could not provide accounts for this outcome.

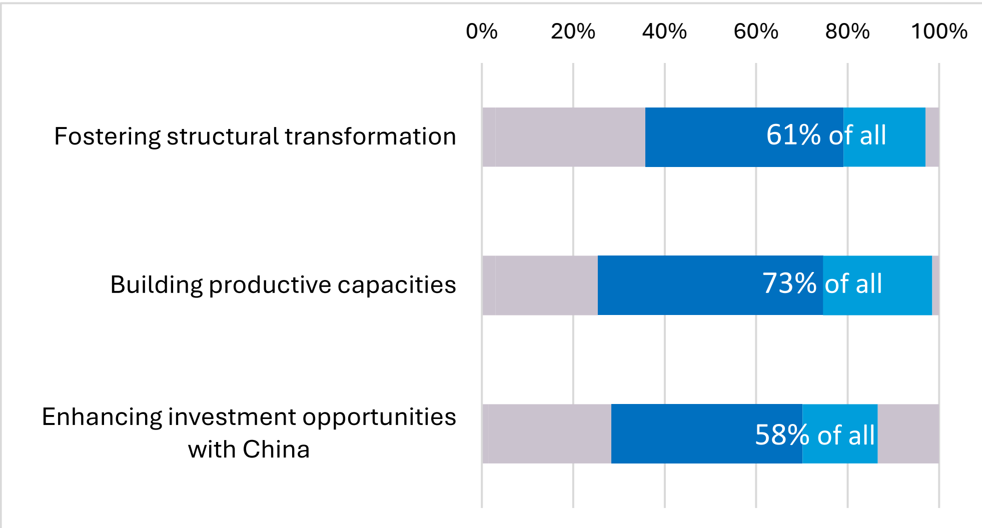
Survey results were somewhat positive on the effectiveness of the project in contributing to alleviate binding constraints to development.

Survey results on effectiveness in alleviating the binding constraints to development indicated that 57% (56% among government respondents) consider the project effective or very effective in contributing to alleviate binding constraints to development in the country.



On the specific dimensions of contributing to foster structural transformation, build productive capacities and enhance investment opportunities with China, between 58% and 73% of all survey respondents agree or strongly agree that the project contributions were effective.

Among survey respondents, 61% agree or strongly agree that the project contributed to fostering structural transformation (65% of those in government), 73% agree or strongly agree that it contributed to building productive capacities (74% of those in government), and 58% agree or strongly agree that the project contributed to enhancing investment opportunities with China (59% of those in government). Comments on evidence that the project contributed to enhancing investment opportunities with China include high-level meetings and capacity building of technical staff (including statisticians on the PCI).



Evaluation evidence and expert judgment on the project's contribution to the SDGs suggest that the project raised awareness on existing gaps with respect to the targets identified through discussions on the knowledge products (i.e., NPCGA and HPCDP). However, these did not go further in promoting actual policy at a holistic level or structural change yet, for two main reasons. First, in addition to countries that have not validated the holistic programme, others are waiting for the final version of it. Nevertheless, the evaluation identified some initial steps in using the knowledge acquired from and produced by the project (see next section) in policymaking. Second, in countries where the project was concluded, the process to raise funds to implement the programme takes time and faces challenges (see section on sustainability). Therefore, the main contribution to the SDG targets identified is offering an alternative discourse to development, based on strengths and opportunities, that countries can rely on to develop their national and sectoral plans and strategies.

Use of knowledge, skills and products

Use of knowledge, skills and products is uneven across countries and stakeholder groups. Accounts from interviews indicated actual and potential uses with conditionalities. For instance, for statisticians to produce work based on the PCI, they need a request from the ministry that is going to use that data; adoption at that level is mandatory to produce official statistics. The **Ethiopia** Economics Association used the PCI to write a working paper. Planners of the **Zambia** 9th National Plan are looking into the NPCGA report and the pillars of the holistic programme to identify issues they want to address, e.g., enablers to development such as transport, energy and ICT, and human capital and private sector involvement in the industrial policy. Stakeholders in **Zimbabwe** are using the NPCGA as input to draft the industrialisation reconstruction road plan, a strategy for 2026-2030 that might be out by September-October 2025.

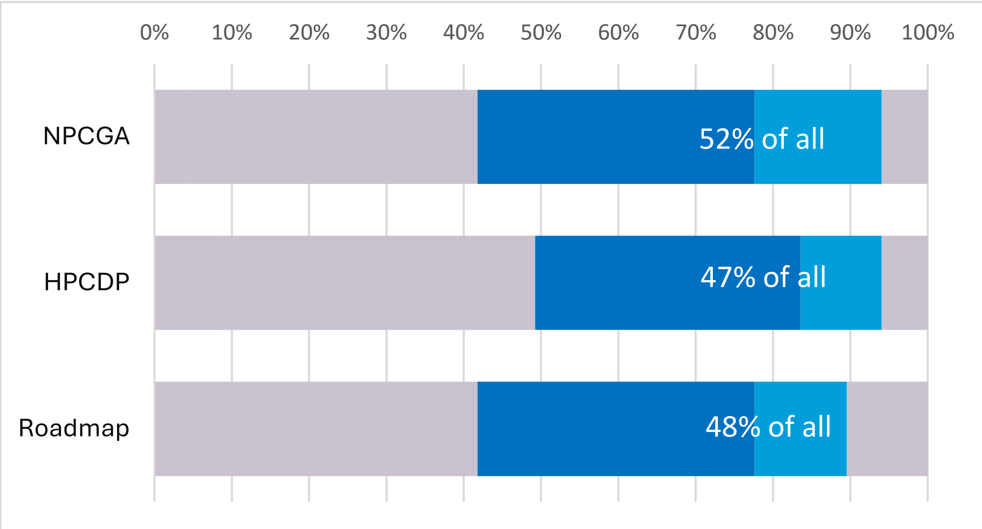
MAIN FINDING #11

Countries report different uses of the knowledge, skills and products of the project, for example, as input to some extent to national, subnational and sectoral policies, and to support conversations with other stakeholders such as the private sector. Survey results indicate a moderate use of these knowledge products – between 47% and 52% among all stakeholders, including government. (Note: this includes the three countries for which outputs are pending).

The **Kenya** Ministry of Trade has been using the PCI as part of its mapping of industries to inform the industrialisation plan, with questions on production capacity, employees, gender, persons with disabilities, reasons for closures, what the government can do, infrastructure, ICT and other PCI-related matters. However, stakeholders are unsure if they are using the same questions as those in the PCI. Others are using the PCI to measure international trade and inform policymaking. Yet others are using the NPCGA as evidence of gaps to draft concept notes for projects on specific sectors, such as infrastructure. The NPCGA facilitates conversations with the private sector, while and the HPCDP supports discussions on strategies and approaches to development with them. Beyond government stakeholders, there are accounts of use by universities and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance.

The **Malawi** Ministry of Planning is working with the Ministry of Trade and lawyers to develop legal frameworks to address the gaps identified in the roadmap. The ATMM strategy reflects the roadmap with actions in targeted sectors, e.g., mining and energy. By overseeing and monitoring the plans of the operational ministries, the Ministry of Planning ensures the implementation of the holistic programme is in line with the Malawi 2063 strategy. The Ministry of Local Development is working with the Ministry of Trade on possible collaborations in the workplans for 2025-26 in areas outlined in the holistic programme. Using a sectoral approach, the Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority incorporated inputs from the holistic programme (e.g., causes of electricity interruptions) to build on a new framework on electricity upgrades. These stakeholders are acting on the draft HPCDP, which they commented on during the launch event, and expect that their feedback will be incorporated into the final document when UNCTAD shares it.

Survey results on the use of these knowledge products indicate that 52% of all respondents (50% of those in government) use the NPCGA to a moderate and large extent, 47% of all (46% of those in government) use the HPCDP to a moderate and large extent, and 48% of all (52% of those in government) use the roadmap to a moderate and large extent. Lower results for the use of the HPCPD and related roadmap are expected, since three of these countries did not reach the stage of validating these documents.

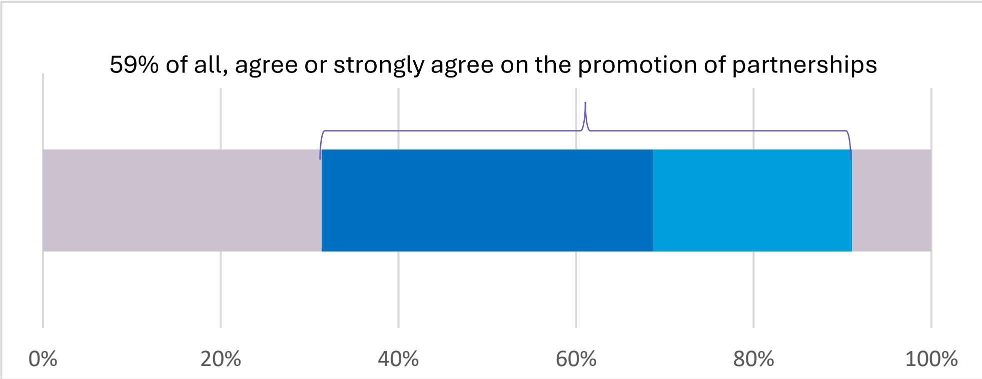


Comments on the **benefits of having these knowledge products available** emphasised their support in enhancing overall productivity in the country and improving its economy, promoting institutional strengthening and collaboration, and the usefulness of the NPCGA in multiple fronts, e.g., aligning sectoral priorities with strategic investment planning, supporting evidence-based policymaking, and providing benchmark with other countries. The main **challenges for using these knowledge products** are limited training, limited commitment by leadership government officials, and limited resources allocated to this programme. The **main area for improvement** is providing more training, including for technical officers, with practical lessons and use of digital technology. This is followed by increasing the engagement of top management officials, increasing the implementation budget, coupled with a commitment from UNCTAD to implement the programme, and regularly updating the NPCGA.

Partnerships

Interview and survey informants reported that the project promoted meeting new partners during the presential events and identifying areas of convergence to improve the country's productive capacities. This included intra-ministerial partnerships to prioritise projects that impact other sectors and optimise the use of country resources. Additionally, it leveraged existing partnerships by adopting a whole-of-government approach that includes the private sector, such as associations of women in business, other business associations, and other organisations. In Zimbabwe, it is the first time that the private sector was included in formulating policies, i.e., the national industrialisation policy, launched in 2024. This marked a shift in the way the government interacts with the private sector since the country's independence.

Survey results on partnerships indicate that 59% of all participants (61% among those in government) agree or strongly agree that the project promoted partnerships with other counterparts at the national (different ministries, such as mining, agriculture and energy), regional (e.g., COMESA and the African region) and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives.



Enabling and limiting factors to achieve results

An overarching **enabling factor** is the new narrative offered by the UNCTAD SDG project. It focusses on the root causes of low GDP, such as jobs moving from agriculture to services but centred on low skills and informalisation. It is a narrative alternative to that of debt and debt restructuring that has been predominant. This new narrative enables country stakeholders to focus on productive capacities and existing resources as the best way to increase GDP.

Another key enabling factor is the project's awareness effect on countries' productive capacities and directions to take towards economic development, considering sectors of high potential in the short term. Some saw confirmation of the work they had been doing, with additional insights (e.g., Malawi, Zambia). Others saw new opportunities to act with specific ministries (e.g., Labour, Trade) on issues that can improve productive capacities (e.g., skilling in specific areas, village development plans).

The main enabling factors that contributed to the project's success in the country, according to survey respondents and in order of importance, are:

1) Collaboration in general, including stakeholders' engagement.
2) Exposure and linkage to a whole community of stakeholders, such as local partners that bring along their networks with different government agencies and business communities.
3) Political will, government support and ownership.
4) Coordination, synergies with relevant stakeholders, pooling expertise, including with other UN organizations.
5) Alignment with national plan (buy-in and integration with national goals) and synergies with ongoing projects and programmes.
6) Availability of data that facilitates policy development and implementation.
7) Knowledge products provide a clear framework for addressing development challenges by informing policy formulation, strategic planning, and institutional capacity building, including in relation to gender inclusion.
8) The support and push of the project managers.
9) Willingness to learn, group sharing.
10) Creating awareness, changing attitudes.

In **Angola**, a critical enabling factor is the low dependence on external financial assistance, which provides the country with policy space to invest in economic diversification and integration into the AfCFTA and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

In **Ethiopia**, a considerable influx of resources will come from an agreement signed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in December 2024. This will support macroeconomic reforms associated with the holistic programme. The country has also been active in changing policies related to market-based rates, foreign exchange (since August 2024), regulatory reform of the agri-processing sector, changes in the energy tariff, and progress in the ICT and digital economy sector.

MAIN FINDING #12

Key factors contributing to project success include a novel development narrative that is based on strengths and potential, awareness of the productive capacities approach and sectors of high potential for development, strengthening of ongoing initiatives, opening of opportunities for multiple-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, expansion of central government networks to include local actors and the private sector, and political will, support and ownership.

In **Kenya**, the project's events raised confidence and promoted networks that enable further building of productive capacities on the ground, to other parts of the country. Because the PCI is multidimensional, each pillar has a transformational potential. An enabler under discussion between academia and UNCTAD is the creation of a regional hub in Kenya to implement the PCI methodology.

In **Malawi**, the HPCDP was an eye opener to leverage their current decentralisation initiatives, leaving the central government to focus on coordination and monitoring.

In **Zambia** and **Zimbabwe**, increased government officers' capacity to understand and measure productive capacities in their countries and compare their performance with others, is a key enabler of the project's success.

An overall **limiting factor** in realising the benefits of the UNCTAD SDG project is the funding required to implement the holistic programme. The estimated funding required is too high to be covered solely by national treasuries. Therefore, securing additional resources is essential, making access to funding a key limiting factor in advancing the project's results. There is wide recognition that an essential condition for fundraising, and programme implementation is senior government buy-in. Although all interviewed government officials confirmed their country's interest in implementing the HPCDP and highlighted the presence of key government stakeholders at the project's events as an indicator of this, closer examination suggests that mere attendance at meetings is insufficient to ensure follow-through and actual ownership in the form of policymaking and budget allocation. In relevant occasions, representatives without decision making power were present. Even if these participants reported to their supervisors, the evaluation considers that this is not enough to ensure high-level ownership. Since it is the implementation of the holistic programme that will demonstrate the practical gains from the PCI and the holistic approach to productive

MAIN FINDING #13

Overarching limiting factors to achieving the project results are lack of funding to implement the holistic programme, which is conditional on high-level political buy-in, one-off PCI training of statisticians, and insufficient knowledge dissemination to translate project results into action.

capacities, non-implementation comes with the risk of the PCI becoming just an index among many others.

Another limiting factor across countries is the training of statisticians. It was done once, with no further training on subsequent updates to the PCI. Many training participants used the knowledge acquired to leverage their profiles and left the institution or the country, reducing the number of trained staff able to respond to country needs.

In **Ethiopia**, security issues can limit outreach to parts of the country where there is conflict, especially in relation to infrastructure, i.e., ICT, energy, roads. However, stakeholders believe that the country can keep the focus on the macro level – laws, regulations. The launch of the holistic programme coincided with international sanctions on the country, leading to delayed conversations with the Italian Cooperation Agency to support the project. Other limitations include lack of accurate data, and coordination. On coordination, stakeholders emphasised the need for senior leadership at UNCTAD to implement the holistic programme effectively.

Kenya faces challenges to collect data countrywide to match with the PCI, compromising data coverage. This relates to another limiting factor which is the focus of activities in Nairobi and the need to expand the productive capacities approach to the country's 37 counties.

The main limiting factors listed by survey participants to achieving the project's results resonate with interview data. In order of importance (i.e., frequency of mentions), the main limiting factors are:

1) Financial constraints/budget allocation, including from the national and subnational budgets.
2) Lack of buy-in by government, including Insufficient high-level discussion on the proposed budget, expenditure framework, and donor funding to better link the project to the country's planning and budget process.
3) Insufficient knowledge dissemination and follow-up to translate the project results into actionable, ground-level interventions, including engagement with key stakeholders beyond meetings.
4) Limited skills, including low availability due to engagement in other projects, and lack of support to engage in activities.
5) Project time management and scheduling, including time lag, limited time.
6) Costs of power and internet and other infrastructure gaps.
7) Political interference.
8) Inadequate collaboration with top government officials at the report validation, including ministries responsible for coordinating the SDGs and national strategies (Agenda 2063).

Starting the project with the NPCGA is considered a **good practice** by government and academic stakeholders because it offers a programmatic overview. It raises awareness of productivity gaps and potential for development. Another good practice was holding face-to-face events with multiple stakeholders and creating networking opportunities. These included intra-government exchanges and networking between government and academia, the private sector and civil society, especially when high-level government officials were present. Presentations by stakeholders raised awareness and opportunities for exchanges. Participants from academia appreciated the inclusion of the academic pillar in the HPCDP as a sustainable approach to capacity building.

The evaluation identified **missed opportunities** in fostering coordination during face-to-face events. First, stakeholders indicated that coordination within and outside of government bodies was not emphasised. Many participants of the initial assessment discussion and the PCI training were not aware that those activities were part of a larger project. In the former, some participants reported that they were asked to make presentations and there was no structure to share these presentations or keep in touch with other presenters. In the latter, there are accounts of understanding the PCI training as a capacity building in using R without clear connections with the wider objective of developing the productive capacities in the country.

As a result, colleagues from other departments inside the same ministry did not know about other project events and did not communicate with each other, compromising intra-ministerial information sharing. In this regard, stakeholders noted the lack of champions to bring forth the UNCTAD SDG project results. These champions would be participants responsible for devising a framework to address risks to knowledge uptake and taking action on them.

Sustainability and potential impact

Measures to promote programmatic and financial sustainability

This section considers the status of project completion in different countries to evaluate these measures according to products delivered. There are accounts of countries using the NPCGA without the HPCDP, which are considered here. However, country stakeholders emphasised that, with so many indices to measure development, the PCI will remain in use if attached to a vision that translates it into development.

MAIN FINDING #14

Countries have been devising initial measures to promote programmatic and financial sustainability by including elements of the UNCTAD SDG project in policymaking at the national and sectoral levels. Around 50% of survey respondents agree, to a moderate or large extent, that measures to ensure sustainability are in place. However, given the scarcity of resources in the LDCs, there is need for additional funding and expertise from more development partners to embrace a holistic approach.

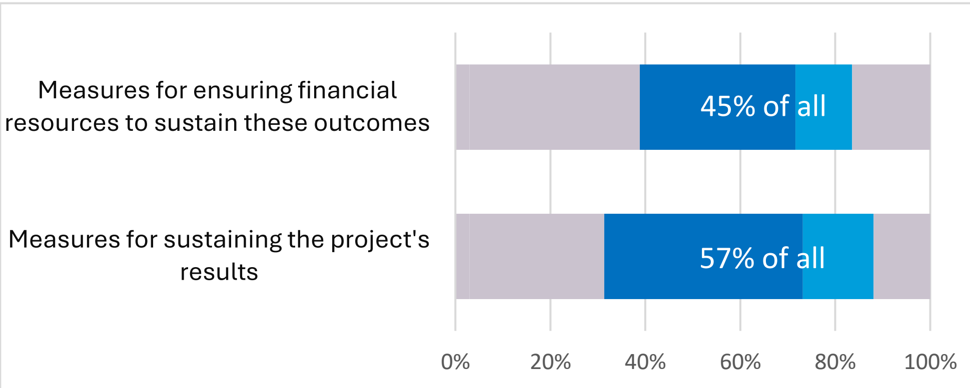
In terms of sustainable capacities, the sustainability of the PCI training is low, given that it was a one-off event without subsequent training updates and considering the turnover of trained staff. Stakeholders refer to potential opportunities for sustainability through online platforms and communities of practice to keep that knowledge alive and accessible. The idea of having 'champions' to carry on the work through a community applies here too.

Overall, the programmatic and financial sustainability of the outcomes is being partly secured by countries using the project knowledge products in policymaking at the national and sectoral levels. These are key steps to institutionalise the results of the project with some funding for implementation. The balancing act to make the project sustainable, according to stakeholders, involves matching capacity building with political will, technical expertise on the ground, and generating results at the local level to see what works and how. Considering the scarcity of resources in the LDCs, there is need for additional funding from development partners to harness structural transformation and to embrace the holistic approach fully. This is, however, a challenge. Donor funding is fragmented and may be targeted at development issues other than the holistic programmes, or at specific issues included in them but focussed on in isolation rather than under a holistic perspective.

Kenya organised meetings with donors, such as Germany, Qatar and Turkey in 2024. However, lack of ownership on the UNCTAD SDG project outputs and shifts between institutions housing the project, imposed barriers to these negotiations. These barriers included, for instance, lack of knowledge to explain to donors the breakdown of the estimated budget, and losing the hosting of the project during negotiations, which had to be stopped. Partnerships with academia led to discussions on how to promote programmatic sustainability by including the productive capacities concept and the PCI in academic curricula. Discussions between the project management team and academic focal points on how the country can mainstream the PCI methodology and develop the academic pillar of the HPCDP have been slow. Decisions to be made include the length of the training and whether to train policymakers or targeted groups of students first, how the course expenses will be borne, and if academics would continue working with the same UNCTAD team. UNCTAD raised the possibility of academics being trained in Geneva, but the country is uncertain of how many could be trained.

Malawi noted that, although the holistic programme showed general alignment with Vision 2063 and other major frameworks, it lacks depth in existing sectoral master plans, where the implementation of the HPCDP could be anchored to ensure the sustainability of the project results, e.g., energy and transportation. UNCTAD's technical assistance to implement the HPCDP covered specific areas of the programme, but the country sees that other areas would need partnering with other specialised development partners. There is expectation that UNCTAD could support the country in mobilising resources in those other areas as well, and a view that this would have been more sustainable if these potential partners were onboard from the start of the project, through their focal points in relevant country institutions.

Zambia is continuing the collaboration with UNCTAD through a capacity-building workshop on industrial policy, to be held on 29-30 May 2025. Internally, the Ministry of Commerce is in the process of appointing an adviser to the Ministry of Industry to facilitate coordination.



Survey results on the existence of sustainability measures indicate that around 50% of respondents (between 52%-54% among those in government) agree to a moderate or large extent that there are measures in place, with lower percentages in relation to ensuring financial resources. Comments on measures to sustain the project's results highlighted that alignment between the project outcomes and countries' plans is the strongest point to ensure programmatic sustainability. Improvements could be made in increasing the accountability of government departments and expanding training on productive capacities.

On financial sustainability, strong points raised by survey respondents focussed on national sources of funding, such as increased budget allocation in selected sectors (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, and trade), focus on self-sustaining projects (e.g., road infrastructure), and investments from pension funds. One response referred to World Bank financing through mechanisms such as the International Development Association and the National Fund for Sustainable Development.

Resource mobilisation

HPCDPs for Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe establish that the implementation of the holistic programme depends on raising funds from development partners. These documents state that:

> *"The estimates comprise all project support costs, except for UNCTAD's in-kind contribution for the substantive and technical implementation of the project, as well as for the coordination of the implementation across the identified areas and sectors of interest to [country name]. As the Programme is financed externally, [country name] is encouraged to mobilise the core resources from the country's development partners. UNCTAD will make available its expertise in the various components of the holistic programme. This has been the practice, so far, with Angola's Programme being supported by generous funding from the European Union."*

In their efforts to raise funds, stakeholders reported that donors wanted a budget breakdown for the amount estimated in the HPCDP as a condition to advance discussions. However, UNCTAD has not provided this information to country stakeholders, leaving countries without ownership of the launched document and facing challenges in advocating for it with donors. The funding management structure is another issue that compromised advances in resource mobilisation. Donors and government stakeholders have raised questions about UNCTAD managing these resources in a centralised way. Moreover, shifts in institutions housing the project affected communication with donors, e.g., when the project changed from Kenya Vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat to the Prime Cabinet Secretariat, conversations with Qatar were interrupted.

There is consensus among stakeholders that the project would have ensured more sustainability if it had included seed money for countries to start implementing the HPCDP. This would have helped them to make the case in negotiations with donors, benchmarking the Word Bank results-based financing approach. Other benchmarks are countries with joint programmes, such as Angola (implemented) and Mozambique (pending delivery of the HPCDP).

Country stakeholders referred to potential benefits of UNCTAD establishing a stronger relationship with UNRCOs and embassies to reach out to development partners for fundraising. They noted that donors prefer communicating with UNRCOs rather than directly with government officials. This

MAIN FINDING #15

Overall, countries have started engagements with donors and other development partners to raise additional funds to implement the holistic programme. However, they have faced challenges in advancing conversations due to a lack of information and ownership on critical issues, e.g., budget breakdown and fund management structure. They identify two factors that could facilitate fundraising: a) securing seed money to start implementation and make a case for donors, using the World Bank results-based financing approach as a benchmark, and b) fostering stronger partnerships between UNCTAD, UNRCOs and embassies to reach out to development partners.

strategy would have also triggered existing long-term partnerships as enablers of resource mobilisation. Such depth in coordination would have helped clarify the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in the resource mobilisation process.

Barriers to resource mobilisation mentioned by stakeholders include donors' targeted interest in specific countries, the political issues around these decisions, and country emergencies that re-direct funds to respond to humanitarian issues (e.g., Ethiopia, Zambia).

Country ownership and potential impact

This section focusses on actions taken by the beneficiary countries that demonstrate their capacities to sustain the project results without UNCTAD. Key factors influencing this level of ownership have been discussed throughout this report and can be summarised as a) clear, continuous and thorough communication between the project management team and stakeholders, including structured support to foster intra- and inter-ministerial coordination, handover measures, and information on the roles and responsibilities for fundraising, b) the timing of the project in relation to strategic planning and budget cycles to ensure the engagement of high-level government officers, c) careful consideration of the best institution to house the project, one with a mandate to coordinate the work of different ministries, and d) active participation of country stakeholders in all stages of the project, including the elaboration of draft documents.

Stakeholders referred to the holistic programme as a concept note to inform national planning and budgeting cycles. After the programme is approved, and considering its inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder nature, it will go through multiple adaptations and revisions before making its way into national policymaking. The result will reflect but will be different from the HPCDP.

Angola, implementing recommendations from Train for Trade II Programme, which were based on the NPCGA developed under the UNCTAD SDG project, succeeded in changing the legislation on the sovereign fund to allow investments in the real economy. This significantly supported the sustainability of these projects' recommendations in programmatic and financial terms.

Ethiopia secured funding from the IMF in December 2024 to support macroeconomic reforms associated with the holistic programme. Policy changes since August 2024 are focussing actions and budget on areas highlighted by the UNCTAD SDG project, such as foreign exchange, regulatory reform of the agri-processing sector, energy tariffs, and ICT and digital economy.

Kenya The Ministry of Trade started a process of roundtables with the private sector, including investors fora, to sensitise industrialists and investors on opportunities for environmental conservation activities and to promote entrepreneurship. This resulted in industrial pacts between the national government and all 47 counties in Kenya, in 2023. This is a continuous process, and each pact is in a different stage of completion. Financially, 50% of the resources are provided by the national government and 50% by the county government. Stakeholders identified the National Productivity and Competitiveness Centre, under the Ministry of Labour, as a body that could, in the future, be involved in policies to strengthen the productive capacities of the country at the central government level. Lessons learned from productive capacities projects in other countries are guiding a value chain approach to begin improving production from the ground, the farm level, to gradually develop the country capacities towards exporting.

MAIN FINDING #16

Countries have made progress in owning the project and taking actions to make it impactful. Key factors influencing their capacities and ownership to sustain the project results without UNCTAD can be summarised as a) clear and thorough communication between the project management team and stakeholders, including structured support to foster coordination, handover measures, and information on the roles and responsibilities in fundraising, b) timing of the project in relation to strategic planning and budget cycles to ensure high-level engagement, c) careful consideration on the best institution to house the project, with a coordination mandate, and d) active participation of country stakeholders in all stages of the project.

Malawi started a World Bank-financed project, Wala, in January 2025, that will invest in the modernisation of the energy sector. Since the World Bank findings converge with those of the UNCTAD SDG project, this initiative will develop those issues too. In the skills and employment pillar, a new programme to improve the employability of women and youth, with just transition, started with funding from the EU Malawi Delegation, including Danish support.

Zambia is bringing the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), French Development Agency (AFD), the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the African Development Bank (AfDB) onboard to discuss the implementation of the holistic programme. The first application to the AfDB, with focus on SME development, was not successful.

Zimbabwe, even before validating the HPCDP, is using an integrated results-based management approach to plan and budget training and dissemination events in areas identified in the NPCGA. They are mostly funded by the government and supported by projects from other development partners. UNDP assists in disseminating the industrial policy, JICA supports capacity building in value chains, and business partners, such as the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries and the Chamber of Commerce of Zimbabwe, support workshops.

Open **survey questions** on how the country will continue working towards the project objective of "alleviating binding constraints to development through structural transformation, productive capacities and linkages with China" offered numerous possibilities. The **top five country actions** cited are:

1) More capacity building workshops and conferences.
2) Linkages with China for further projects, especially for sharing capacity in technical areas.
3) Promoting manufacturing, value-added processing and growth of service sectors to diversify the economy and foster industrial development.
4) Use of the productive capacities' roadmap in strategy planning and alignment.
5) Implementation of policies focussed on infrastructure development, private sector development and strengthening institutional frameworks, while leveraging partnerships with China for market access.

The **most frequently cited contribution of the project** to these and other actions is capacity building, particularly the PCI training. Examples of other contributions, cited once, include: a) the Productive Capacities Development Roadmap as a structured pathway for addressing gaps and unlocking potential, b) bringing knowledge of constraints to the authorities, c) sharing development stages and encouraging countries to look at their priorities, and d) building commitment by others to hold the relevant authorities accountable. Detailed responses are in Annex 12.

A **good practice** to support sustainability is the UNCTAD SDG project being part of a global UNCTAD endeavour to promote the PCI and its advantages to measure development beyond GDP. Some UNRCO and country stakeholders highlighted the One-UN potential of the holistic productive capacities approach and its transformative potential to the whole of the UN system through partnerships and synergies with other UN initiatives.

The lack of a country-based steering committee to promote multi-institutional engagement from the start **limited country ownership** of the project results. Because different individuals from the same institution participated in different activities and there was no coordination or continuity between these participations, participants' information about the project and how it can be transformative for the country is missing. This links to the other missed opportunities to ensure sustainability.

A critical **limitation to sustainability** was the mismatch between the planned end of the UNCTAD SDG project - timed to coincide with the launch of the holistic programme - and the lack of clarity about the actual conclusion of the project, both in terms of process and deliverables. The project management team expressed interest in proceeding from offering recommendations to actively engaging with countries throughout the implementation of the holistic programme. However, this would require large-scale financial resources, which are not likely to be available for an UNCTAD-centred approach. Evaluation evidence suggests that the lack of clear communication on expectations and the closing of the project has compromised the development of a clear exit strategy with sustainability measures and the assignment of roles and responsibilities for resource mobilisation.

The evaluation identified that the project management team sometimes participated in meetings with donors to leverage funds (e.g., Angola, Kenya) and other times left this to the country, with pending promises to return for continuation once funding was secured. Stakeholders emphasised that these roles and responsibilities needed to be clear from the start. UNCTAD officials agree, adding that governments must be aware that this is a joint effort, with country ownership and UNCTAD support (e.g., by issuing letters in support of countries' requests for funding), and including development partners from the first stakeholder meetings. This was not possible in the UNCTAD SDG project because China did not participate in the project. Nevertheless, the evaluation suggests that other development partners could have been considered once the terms for China's involvement were clear. Moreover, even in the absence of development partners, the project missed opportunities to provide country stakeholders with a clear understanding on the funding rationale and how they were expected to source funding. Without a handover strategy to the country, the work of a non-resident entity as UNCTAD risks stopping short of promoting tangible transformation.

Another limitation to sustainability was housing the holistic programme within institutions that lacked a mandate for coordination. Stakeholders consistently referred to their ministries of planning as the most suitable permanent government structures for the holistic programme, with plans attached to budgets and an overview of how strategic plans from the operational ministries can come together to deliver structural transformation with a vision of impact. They have an overview and a monitoring and evaluation mandate regarding resource allocation to strategic sectors.

Mainstreaming UN cross-cutting issues

The evaluation identified that the UNCTAD SDG project incorporated LNOB principles and environmental issues in project outputs and, to some extent, in implementation mechanisms. Across countries, outputs contained data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations. Back-to-back missions to neighbouring countries can account for an environmental concern during implementation, even considering the main purpose of this approach was cost saving.

In **Angola**, the project followed a rule of 40% of women participation set by the Train for Trade II Programme. Sharing the same stakeholders enforced the adoption of this approach.

MAIN FINDING #17

The UNCTAD SDG project incorporated LNOB principles and environmental issues in project outputs and, to some extent, in implementation mechanisms (e.g., consultations and invitations to events). Outputs produce data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations. Back-to-back missions to neighbouring countries show the inclusion of an environmental concern during implementation. Stakeholders identify embedded inclusion considering the sectors of focus for structural transformation. Survey results, overall, indicate moderate agreement on the inclusion of vulnerable groups and environmental issues in the project.

Stakeholders in **Ethiopia** consider that inclusion is embedded in the project design because of its holistic approach, e.g., women and youth are highly engaged in agriculture and industry in Ethiopia and are among those most suffering from unemployment. At the institutional level, participants included the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Skills (linked to youth employment). The NPCGA consulted women, youth and other vulnerable groups and articulated the challenges they face.

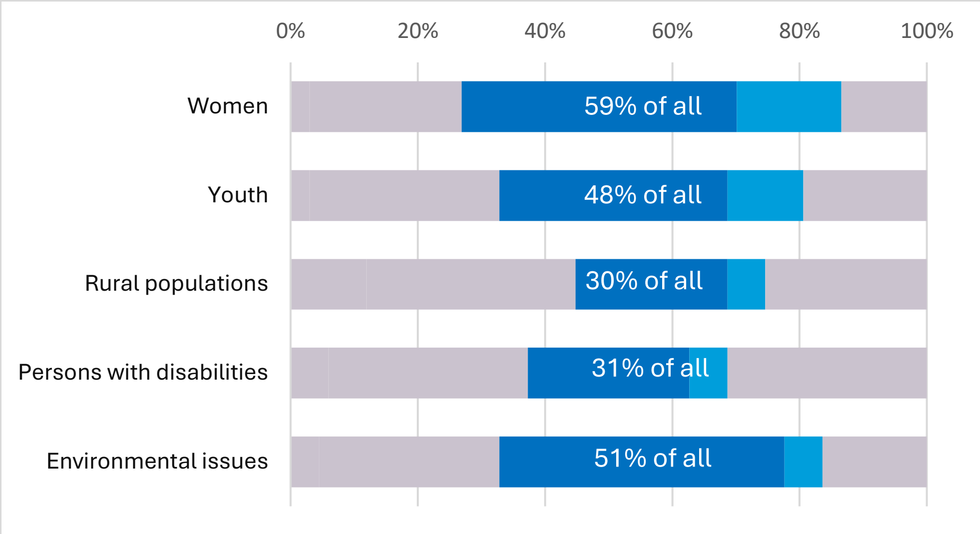
In **Malawi**, stakeholders consider that women were included in most initiatives. In the energy sector, specifically, women, youth and other vulnerable groups (e.g., rural populations) are those that will mostly benefit from structural change.

Stakeholders in **Zimbabwe** acknowledge that there is room to improve participation of marginalised groups in future projects, as this was not a criterion followed by the government for sending out invitations through the current project. Nevertheless, they consider that this has not necessarily impacted the results of the project.

Survey responses on cross-cutting issues are moderate, with between 30% and 59% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the project was socially inclusive and incorporated environmental issues. The same range was observed among those in government. Positive comments highlight that women and youth were encouraged to participate in the project activities through targeted campaigns, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, SMEs and community development, and that women in senior positions in government and other relevant institutions actively participated in the project. In one country, one interviewee highlighted that women were invited only after everything was finalised and did not have access to information from the earlier stages of the project.

Another issue raised was the uneven geographic reach of the project, which focused on urban areas and created barriers to access, including digital and financial obstacles, for rural participants.

Survey respondents offered a wide range of suggestions on how to improve the inclusion of vulnerable groups, with the most frequent being a) engaging directly with vulnerable communities in planning and implementation stages, e.g., through their leaders or local authorities, b) designing specific programmes to develop the productive capacities of these groups, c) targeting institutions dealing with vulnerable groups and environmental issues to select participants from them.



UN 2030 Sub-fund scoring of evaluation criteria

Table 7 summarises the scores according to Annex 1 of the ToRs of this evaluation. It was slightly adapted to fit the structure of the report while keeping the same criteria. Annex 16 details the logical organisation of findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations supporting this overall performance assessment.

Table 7. Performance of the UNCTAD SDG project according to UN 2030 Sub-fund scale.

Evaluation criteria	Rating	Description
Relevance	Highly satisfactory	The project performed well overall with no shortcomings.
Coherence	Satisfactory	The project performed satisfactorily overall but had minor shortcomings.
Efficiency	Somehow satisfactory	The project performed unsatisfactorily overall against key evaluation questions and there is need to take steps to improve efficiency in the future.
Effectiveness	Satisfactory	The project performed well overall but had a few shortcomings.
Sustainability and potential impact	Somehow satisfactory	The project performed unsatisfactorily overall against key evaluation questions and there is need to take steps to improve sustainability and the likelihood of impact.
Cross-cutting issues	Satisfactory	The project performed satisfactorily overall but more could be done in the future.

Lessons learned

This section summarises the lessons learned from the UNCTAD SDG project. The first two lessons learned highlight the strengths of the project that can be leveraged in future interventions. The other six lessons learned summarise key points for improvement in project design and implementation. The full explanation and empirical basis for each of them is available in Annex 17.

1 The **holistic approach** offered a strength-driven, multi-actor narrative to development in the beneficiary countries. Dimensions of the project that contribute for this are the PCI as a powerful benchmark tool, the flagship example of Angola, and the consistent use of the productive capacities and structural transformation approach. This provides potency to effect the One-UN approach through partnerships and synergies with other UN initiatives.	2 **Between-projects coordination**, as in Angola, was successful in keeping the momentum of ongoing interventions and in advancing on less developed aspects. Strong relationships with key stakeholders and grounded institutional knowledge facilitated communication and supported the acceptance and integration of recommendations through alignment with national planning and policy cycles.
3 Unconfirmed **design assumptions** about China's active participation in the project as a development partner led to adjustments in project implementation and reduced the effectiveness and potential impact of the project.	4 The lack of country-specific **baselines** and the establishment of UNCTAD-centred **indicators** left gaps that resulted in poor country ownership. This impacted the project's efficiency in mobilising senior government officials and its effectiveness in influencing national and sectoral policies in a transformative way.
5 Project effectiveness could have increased with a clear **country-specific approach**, with the establishment of multi-stakeholder steering committees and thorough communication with project stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, for strong coordination and in-depth knowledge of country dynamics. The multi-country, global, model of intervention adopted contributed to inefficiencies in implementation and uneven achievements by country.	6 The project's **communication strategy**, primarily through the project website and social media posts, did not reach key stakeholders. Targeted communication campaigns and formal acknowledgement of country specialists' inputs to drafting and revising knowledge products, using communication channels that connect project participants with project activities and among themselves, such as communities of practice and country media, could have achieved higher effectiveness with potential impact on increasing country ownership.
7 Poor **assessment of risks**, including the mismatch between the scope of the project and the size of the implementation team, and the limited use of mitigation strategies contributed to delays in implementation and requests for no-cost extensions that, in some instances, could have been avoided.	8 The lack of a clear **exit strategy**, including roles and responsibilities for fundraising and potential fund governance structure, is hindering countries' efforts to approach development partners for funding. This risks compromising the sustainability and potential impact of the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the data collected from multiple sources at UNCTAD and in the eight beneficiary countries, including implementation partners and other stakeholders, as well as the expert judgement of the evaluator, this report concludes that the UNCTAD SDG project was relevant to country priorities, given its alignment with their major strategies and development plans. It is coherent with the work of UNCTAD on productive capacities, including the UN High Impact Initiative Tranform4Trade. The project benefited from the Train for Trade II Programme in Angola to benchmark the intervention in other countries. It aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the common country analysis and other UN frameworks in matters related to developing productive capacities, such as the Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs.

Nevertheless, there are missed opportunities in relation to clearly articulating the UN collective response, starting with limited coordination with the UNRCOs, UNRCOs' limited personnel capacities, resulting in a lack of coordination with UNCTs operating in the beneficiary countries on projects involving productive capacities issues, including partner agencies in the Inter-Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity. There are multiple consequences of this, such as an UNCTAD-centred approach that stretched the limited resources of a small team at headquarters. It led to inefficiencies in establishing relationships and engagement with country stakeholders, poor communication and coordination mechanisms, and a lack of country ownership. This, in addition to external factors, resulted in delays in implementation, a one-year no-cost extension, and three countries with pending deliverables.

Overall, despite the challenges faced, the project successfully mobilised relevant stakeholders and delivered a substantial number of high-quality outputs ('expert reports'). However, gaps in the delivery of planned outputs stemmed from issues in project design. First, there was an assumption that Chinese stakeholders would actively participate in implementation and be willing to partially finance the holistic programme. This assumption was not realised and led to adjustments in one output and in all knowledge products that were conditional on that support. This also left the project unable to provide seed money to initiate the implementation of the holistic programme. Secondly, there were missed opportunities to establish specific country baselines and tailored indicators, which would have better aligned the project with country dynamics, such as national planning cycles and identifying the most suitable institutions to house the project. Thirdly, despite having a comprehensive list of risks and mitigation strategies, the potential severity of disruptions was underestimated. This led to missed opportunities to implement the envisaged mitigation measures and prevent delays.

A core issue is that the global approach to planning and implementation did not align with the country-specific development stages and internal dynamics. For instance, there were limitations to benchmark much of the Angolan case with other beneficiary countries, starting with the intelligence information from long-term relationships already established in previous interventions in that country.

Despite these shortcomings, the project achieved important results. In terms of intermediary outcomes, countries have been utilising the knowledge, skills, and products from the project to some extent to inform national, subnational, and sectoral policies. Additionally, these resources have supported conversations with other stakeholders, including the private sector. These are important first steps in ensuring ownership, sustainability and potential impact. Nevertheless, the outcomes are not yet reflecting a holistic approach. As a result, Outcome 1 was achieved in five out of eight countries, while Outcome 2 was fully achieved only in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries.

Enabling factors to advance progress include a shift in narrative that is based on countries' strengths for development – with evidence to support high potential sectors –, the extent to which the project builds on existing initiatives, the involvement of multiple stakeholders (e.g., private sector), an expansion in government networks to act holistically, and political will and ownership. Conversely, limiting factors to advancements include lack of funding, weak political buy-in, one-off training sessions, and insufficient knowledge dissemination.

Hence, despite initial efforts by countries to incorporate the UNCTAD SDG project's results into policymaking, the programmatic and financial sustainability of the project is not ensured. National resources are scarce to meet the ambition of the holistic programme, donor support is fragmented, and funding efforts lack country ownership at a deeper level. The lack of an exit strategy with handover measures and the clear establishment of roles and responsibilities for fundraising and management may compromise comprehensive programme implementation.

In relation to cross-cutting issues, the project incorporated LNOB principles (e.g., data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations) and environmental issues in project outputs and, to some extent, in implementation mechanisms (e.g., back-to-back missions to neighbouring countries). Stakeholders recognise the importance of embedded inclusion, particularly in the sectors targeted for structural transformation. Survey results, overall, indicate moderate agreement on the inclusion of vulnerable groups and environmental issues in the project.

In summary, the project has contributed valuable good practices, achievements, and lessons learned. These can be integrated into the Transforming4Trade High Impact Initiative to facilitate a more effective adoption of the holistic approach to economic development within CCAs and Programmes of Action. It can inform discussions on how to "secure regular, sufficient and predictable financing for the HII and prioritise support delivery" (Transforming4Trade Brochure, 2024).

Recommendations

The following recommendations focus on the root causes of the main issues identified by the evaluation and include cross-cutting processes, such as coordination mechanisms and communication strategies as means to implement these recommendations and support the project achieve its objectives.

R1. UNCTAD should improve project design by ensuring that assumptions and modalities for the involvement of donors and other development partners are verified and confirmed, that the scope of work is adequate to the human resources available for project implementation, that baselines and indicators speak specifically to countries' characteristics and realities, that the institution housing the project has a mandate for coordination, and that the exit strategy is clearly stated. Project management teams and UNCTAD management and UNCTAD technical cooperation section are jointly accountable for this recommendation, in their corresponding stage of project design and approval. Although the project implementation team is the accountable party in ensuring the quality of design, comments from UNDESA SDG Sub-Fund, as the source of funding, are relevant in providing additional feedback and guidance during consultation and revision rounds. For instance, during approval stage, requests could have been made for a formal memorandum of understanding with China as implementation partner and for evidence of consultations with UNRCOs to establish baselines and indicators that speak to what is happening on the ground (e.g., existing productive capacities-related projects and funding potential to support validated recommendations) and to properly map other UN interventions relatable to the project. One example of critical information that could enhance efficiency and effectiveness is incorporating country planning and budgeting cycles into indicators. This strategic approach would align the delivery of project outputs with country policymaking discussions and activities.

Stakeholders	Resource investment*	Priority
ALDC, TCS	Low	High

* By resource investment, throughout these recommendations, this evaluation considers those financial and time investments additional to the routine work of project design and management.

R2. UNCTAD should clearly define, from the start of the project, and communicate to stakeholders what aspects and/or elements of the project are global or country specific. For example, the PCI training for statisticians and NPCGA between-countries comparability support a global approach, while the HPCDP, roadmaps, and exit strategies align better with a country-specific perspective. The PCI training for statisticians and the general structure of the NPCGA appear well-suited to a global approach, particularly because PCI results facilitate comparisons between countries. However, the HPCDP, roadmaps, and exit strategies appear to be better suited to a country-specific perspective, with countries taking the lead in owning, financing, and implementing the holistic programme. The advantages of this primary decision to designing would be directing coordination efforts and funding to clear purposes, fostering ownership, and avoiding some of the doubts of country stakeholders and donors at the end of the UNCTAD SDG project.

ALDC	Low	High

R3. UNCTAD should establish, as part of the project design, country-based steering committees with relevant stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, relevant ministries, academia and the private sector to ensure strong and thorough communication channels, country ownership, and high-level engagement from the start. Such a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism could rely on permanent members that are considered ‘champions’ (i.e. leaders, political influencers, mobilisers) throughout project implementation and add value to existing coordinating mechanisms (e.g., macroeconomic committees). One task of these country-based committees could be developing a knowledge sharing platform to regularly communicate updates on progress against project outcomes and make knowledge products available for long-term capacity building and use. They could support further partnerships on the ground, including with other UN interventions, since those on productive capacities tend to interact with the same stakeholders. This would help UNCTAD non-resident teams learn the institutional dynamics, build a UN-based network on the ground, gain intelligence on key stakeholders, estimate risks well, and adopt timely mitigation measures. It could also support handover mechanisms and the continuation of activities in the case of shifts in the institutional housing of the project.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC, UNRCO focal points, and country focal points	Low – mostly coordination time	High

R4. UNCTAD should establish an effective monitoring system to track progress on indicators, re-assess risks and mitigation measures, and enforce course correction to support project completion and prevent no-cost extension requests. In addition to the internal 6-months progress reports, the scope and characteristics of the UNCTAD SDG project would indicate the need for an independent mid-term evaluation. In the impossibility of such evaluation, the third progress report template (1.5 years into a 3-year project) should be revised to support a more thorough identification of critical gaps in project implementation and inform detailed course-correction (e.g., in addition to reporting achievements, there could also be an estimation of implementation time and constraints, by country and output, specifying stakeholders involved or to be involved, until the end of the project, as well as mid-term lessons learned by country). The risk of such a self-evaluation would be selective reporting and the consequent ill-informed follow-up by TCS and UNDESA. Regarding no-cost extensions, clearer instructions from UNDESA could level expectations held by the project management team. It is critical for project managers to be aware of current discussions on no-cost extensions and the likelihood of approval/refusal as early as possible. No-cost extensions involve costs and may indicate issues in project design and implementation that could have been prevented, as highlighted by this evaluation's findings.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC, TCS and UNDESA	Low to medium, considering the possibility of a mid-term evaluation	High

R5. UNCTAD should co-develop a post-project resource mobilisation plan with key stakeholders in the beneficiary countries, as soon as there is clarity about country-specific baselines and relatable projects by other development partners. This could be facilitated by a country-based steering committee. This co-development approach would increase country ownership exponentially and support a structured strategy to raise funds through gradual engagement of potential development partners purposefully selected. Evaluation results suggest that such an initiative would include discussions on the funding management structure, the provision of seed money to priority areas, and possibly the adoption of approaches such as results-based financing. This could require a medium to high resource investment if seed money were allocated from the project budget.

Stakeholders	Resource investment	Priority
ALDC (with country stakeholders)	Low for the co-development with countries, which could be coupled with other planned activities, such as the initial missions. Medium to high, regarding the delivery of funds.	Medium to high

Annexes

Annex 1 – Project stakeholders and their planned roles in the project

Relevant stakeholders considered in the PRODOC are:

a) Public ministries, including but not limited to: ministries of Development, Economy, Trade, Industry, Finance, investment authorities, Labour, Rural Development, and Foreign Affairs: they were to participate in the identification of binding constraints, the formulation of the country-based productive capacity framework, and chosen focus sectors; to be involved as a point of contact for running the workshops, supporting the elaboration of key recommendations, as well as providing information on the potential involvement of civil society and private sector actors.

b) Programme evaluation and monitoring agencies: insights in the implementation of national policies and strategies on the role of fostering productive capacities.

c) Private sector firms, professional and industry associations, incl. organisations representing the interests of women, youth, vulnerable groups: input on what unique circumstances of the beneficiary country may need to be considered during the project, particularly on issues that undermine the role of the private sector.

d) Universities and research institutions: Involvement in the workshops to validate the chosen focus sector and the PCI analysis of the beneficiary countries.

e) Chinese trade, industry and economic development bodies, Chinese institutions such as Exim-bank or Chinese firms established in the selected beneficiary countries: Inputs into mapping the Chinese investment interests in the beneficiary countries. They were also to contribute to the drafting of sustainability frameworks for Chinese businesses operating in the beneficiary countries and helping to secure ownership and engagement for their implementation.

f) African regional bodies including the African Union Commission and Secretariats of relevant Regional Economic Communities (such as COMESA, ECOWAS, and others, depending on the selected beneficiary countries): Provision of peer review and input on PCI analysis; analysis of binding constraints as well as on sectors chosen as focus sectors.

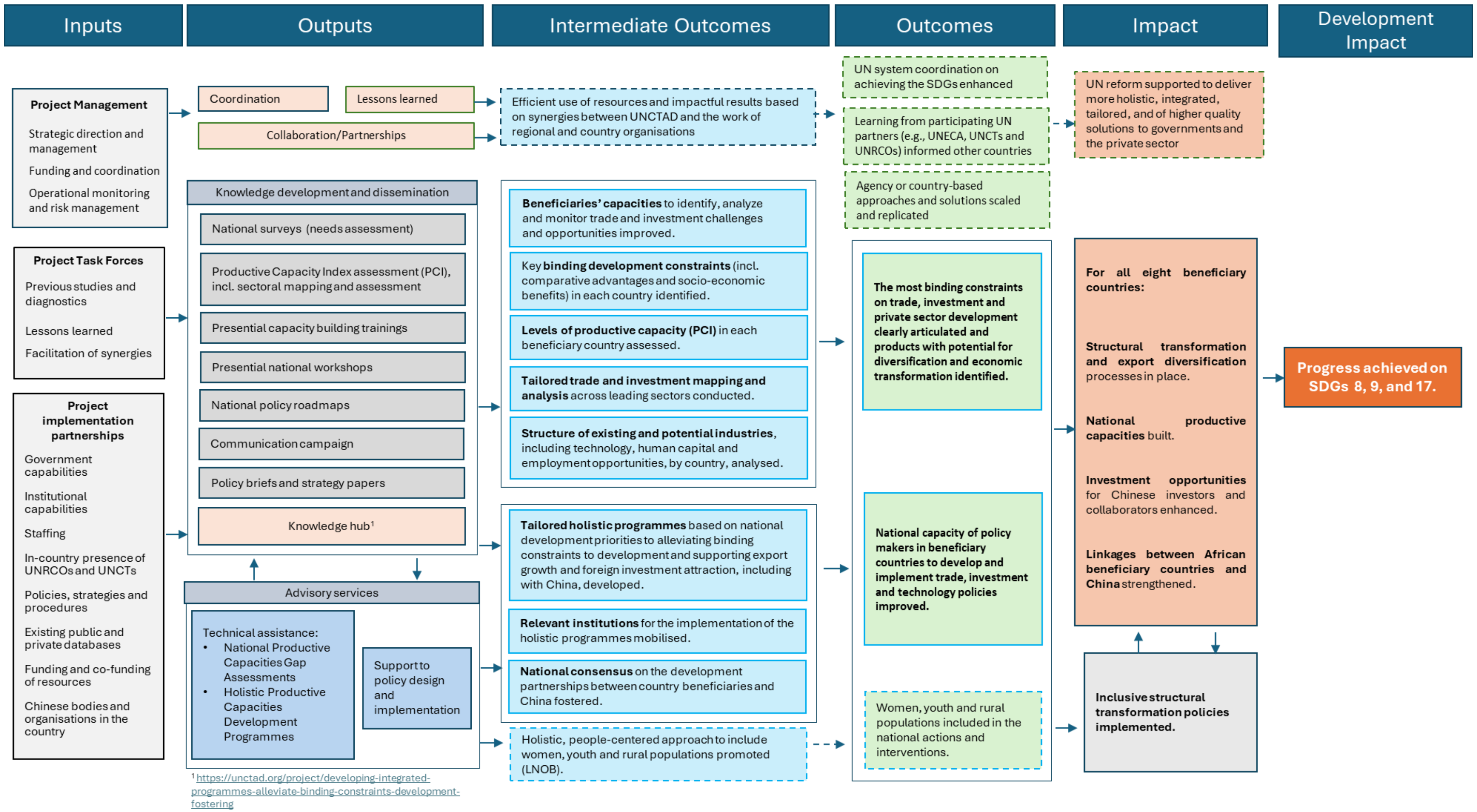
Annex 2 – Logical framework with outputs

Project objective	
To develop integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation as well as enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China.	
Expected Outcomes	**Indicators**
Outcome 1. Beneficiaries have clearly articulated the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development and identified products with potential for diversification and economic transformation. These include an understanding of the role of productive capacities in development; improved capacities to identify key binding constraints on trade and development, and the ability to map intervention strategies to address the identified constraints. This includes the promotion of gender equality.	**1.1.** Validation by each participating government of the policy briefs or strategy papers produced by UNCTAD that: iv. clearly articulate the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development in Africa, with dedicated analysis on women, youth and vulnerable groups, and that identify products with potential for diversification and economic and socio-economic transformation; v. identify priority areas or policy action; and vi. identify potential sectors and key products, producers, and destination markets for export from potential or existing regional value chains.
	1.2. At least: iv. 5 binding constraints have been identified in each of the selected countries; v. 10 policy options or recommendations accepted by governments for further implementation to address the constraints; vi. 65% of participants in workshops show improved understanding and institutional capacity to formulate and implement productive capacities centred and gender-responsive policies in beneficiary countries on the structure of their productive sectors and to identify binding constraints to development.
	1.3. At least 5 policy options and recommendations are accepted in each of the countries to facilitate investment flows to targeted sectors.
OP1.1. National surveys conducted through eight needs assessment missions (one to each country) to agree on the priorities of action or intervention with relevant government institutions. The identification of which sectors present comparative advantages will be based on key binding constraints and identified sectors for transformation, and it will include the establishment of national stakeholder groups, including representatives from government and private sector, among others. **National surveys will be conducted by a nationally recruited consultant, who will help in providing specific technical inputs to the needs assessment**, which will facilitate the articulation of project components by the UNCTAD technical team. The national consultant will also assist in coordinating the needs assessment mission by mobilizing key public sector entities, and private sector institutions, such as chambers of commerce, private sector associations or federations, etc.	
OP1.2. The diagnostic of productive capacity in each beneficiary country will focus on applying the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) of UNCTAD and national survey outcomes to conduct trade and investment mapping and analysis across leading sectors in selected countries. The diagnostics will also analyse the structure of the existing and potential industries, identify the types of technologies that can be transferred and the skills, human capital and know how that can be developed. The analysis will feed into OP1.3. The PCI helps to know the level of	

productive capacities, but not the reasons or binding constraints behind the poor performance of selected countries on the index.	
OP1.3. Eight brainstorming and capacity-building trainings with approximately 30-40 participants (targeting at least 40% participation by women) organised for relevant ministries and agencies to clearly articulate the binding constraints to development and to define the programme narrative with clearly sequenced actions and timeframes. These will follow the needs assessments (OP1.1), and the elaboration or articulation of project key constraints. These activities are undertaken with an objective to agree on time-bound operational activities and to assign concrete roles and responsibilities to relevant national public and/or private institutions.	
Outcome 2. Improved national capacity of policy makers in beneficiary countries to develop and implement trade, investment and technology policies thanks to greater availability of economic analysis and good practices for evidenced-based policy generation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for Chinese investors and collaborators.	**2.1.** 70% of respondents and key institutions assessed show improved capacity to understand and implement good practices at the national, regional and continental level to analyse and fill the gaps in trade, investment and technology policies for structural transformation and economic upgrading.
	2.2. Validation by each participating government of policy options produced by UNCTAD for African trade and investment-related policies and frameworks to support regional integration, export diversification and structural transformation, aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative and national development plans.
OP2.1. Based on national surveys, PCI analysis and brainstorming and capacity building sessions with Government ministries and agencies, **programme components for each of the eight beneficiary countries developed, based on the agreed national development priorities including investment climate, private sector development, trade facilitation and transport logistics, export diversification, ICTs, energy and power, among others. Different project components will make up (or lead to) the development of a comprehensive multi-sectoral programme**, which are referred to in A.2.2. This is key for building consensus and ensuring ownership of priorities identified for intervention.	
OP2.2. Eight China-UNCTAD programmes of support developed for selected beneficiary countries. These will identify the sectors with high export growth potential and capacity to attract foreign investment. The Programmes are meant to help identify where countries themselves have full potential for developing and diversifying their productive structures, including exports, and identify the potential for foreign firms to engage strategically with Africa. The market analysis would also outline some of the opportunities and challenges in entering new markets, including the relevant certifications needed, and the standards to be met. This builds on OP2.1 and it is the core of the theory of change from the current project or sector-based interventions towards multi-sectoral and holistic programme-based interventions.	
OP2.3. Eight national workshops for policy makers, private sector, academia, and civil society organised in beneficiary countries to launch the Programmes at national level and mobilise relevant institutions to agree on the steps and process for implementation. Chinese institutions, banks and State-owned Enterprises already on the ground in Africa will be invited to participate in each of the launching events.	
OP2.4. Eight evidence-based and targeted national policy roadmaps prepared that mutually reinforce structural transformation, export diversification, investment, and productive capacity development. These will be prepared through in-depth consultations with relevant ministries, industry stakeholders, academics, and civil society. The agreed roadmap is a sequenced, time-bound, activity-specific implementation guide for each China-UNCTAD programme for beneficiary countries, referred to in A.2.2. The roadmap for sequenced action follows from the programme developed under OP2.2.	

OP2.5. A communication campaign about the programme developed, including a dedicated page on the UNCTAD website, a social media campaign and national/regional online and offline dissemination campaigns. Communication is important to disseminate project outcomes and results with the public and with other institutions such as national research institutions, professional associations, and think-tanks. This is key in fostering national consensus on the development partnership between project countries and China. It is also vital to document and share practical and operational lessons learned from the project with other countries in the African region to maximise their trade and investment partnership with China and the Chinese private sector.

Annex 3 – Project theory of change updated according to evaluation findings



Source: Evaluator's own elaboration, based on the PRODOC and findings. The output on the tailored holistic programmes was updated to exclude China. Editable version downloadable here.

Annex 4 – Expected outcomes per country

Country	Expected outcomes and targets
Angola	1. Comprehensive analysis of the status of productive capacities. 2. Mapping of Chinese investment opportunities in green non-oil products and services. 3. Priorities for the development of productive capacities, building on the currently implemented Train for Trade II Programme's achievements, and the mapping of Chinese investment opportunities. 4. Sustainability framework (social, environmental, economic) for China's increased engagement in the Angolan FDI landscape.
Ethiopia	1. Assessment of the progress achieved in building its productive capacities and identification of the binding constraints to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth. 2. Identification of ways of addressing these challenges, including through strengthened coordination with Chinese investors. Roadmap for technical assistance and capacity-building. 3. National capacities strengthened to ensure that Chinese investments in infrastructure and human resources development are better aligned with local needs to facilitate greater development gains.
Kenya	1. Comprehensive analysis of the status of productive capacities. 2. Mapping of Chinese investment opportunities in green non-oil products and services. 3. Priorities for the development of productive capacities, considering the mapping of Chinese investment opportunities. 4. Sustainability framework (social, environmental, economic) for China's increased engagement in the Kenyan FDI landscape. 5. A comprehensive support programme based on the analytical work and political consensus.
Mozambique	1. Assessment of the progress achieved in building its productive capacities, and the identification of binding constraints to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth. 2. Identification of ways of addressing these challenges, including through strengthened coordination with Chinese investors. Roadmap for technical assistance and capacity-building. 3. National capacities strengthened to ensure that Chinese investments in infrastructure and human resources development are better aligned with local needs to facilitate greater development gains.
Nigeria	1. Comprehensive analysis of the status of Productive Capacities. 2. Mapping of Chinese investment opportunities in green non-oil products and services. 3. Priorities for the development of productive capacities, considering the mapping of Chinese investment opportunities. 4. Sustainability framework (social, environmental, economic) for China's increased engagement in the Nigerian FDI landscape. 5. A comprehensive support programme based on the analytical work and political consensus.
Zimbabwe	1. Assessment of the progress achieved in building productive capacities, and identification of binding constraints to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth. 2. Identification of ways of addressing these challenges, including through strengthened coordination with Chinese investors. Roadmap for technical assistance and capacity-building. 3. National capacities strengthened to ensure that Chinese investments in infrastructure and human resources development are better aligned with local needs to facilitate greater development gains.
Malawi and Zambia	1. Assessment of the progress achieved in building productive capacities, and identification of binding constraints to achieving inclusive and sustainable growth. 2. Identification of ways of addressing these challenges, through a Holistic Programme and the Roadmap for technical assistance and capacity-building. 3. National capacities strengthened to ensure that productive capacities are built and structural transformation advances.

Source: PRODOC.

Annex 5 – Project risks and mitigation strategies

This evaluation applied a scale of use (from 1, limited use, to 5 extensive use, and n.a. for mitigation strategies that were not reported as used) for each mitigation strategy, based on triangulation of sources of information from document analysis, interviews and surveys.

Risks	Mitigation strategies	Scale of use (1-5*)
R1. COVID-19 related restrictions continue to impede travel and/or physical meetings.	M.1.1 Use of national consultants to support delivery.	5
	M.1.2 Use of online technologies to carry out meetings, either in semi or full online format.	3
	M.1.3. Where the local situation permits, organization of presential meetings strictly following sanitary rules and recommendations, with a video link to UNCTAD.	4
R2. Lack of institutional and human resources capacity to make full use of identified PCI results, and capacity to identify products with potential for exports.	M2.1 Provide training, including online, to update knowledge, information or skills of national public and private sector beneficiaries.	4
	M2.2. Provide convincing evidence base for the usefulness of the PCI and identification and use of comparative advantages.	5
	M2.3. Provide a clear and valid methodology for making use of the PCI and identified comparative advantages to advance sustainable development strategies.	5
R3. Possible change of trained personnel in beneficiary countries after the completion of the project (staff turn-over and rotation).	M3.1. Train more staff with diverse skills on sustainability.	1
	M3.2. Train national trainers.	1
	M3.3. Engage in supporting discussions on the establishment of an incentive structure in Government agencies, with clear opportunities for advancement outlined.	1
	M3.4. Develop good working relationships with counterpart institutions in beneficiary countries to build institutional memory.	1
	M3.5. Develop an online interactive knowledge repository.	1
R4. Lack of data availability presents greater than expected difficulties in calculating and analysing the PCI.	M4.1. The design of the PCI will take into account the potential utility of proxies for data that is unavailable and develop documentation regarding any effects on the usefulness of the indices should any data be impossible to source.	n.a.
R5. Expectations of the project's outcomes may exceed reasonable outcomes.	M5.1. The scope of the project is documented and provided to beneficiaries in the early stages of project implementation.	1
	M5.2. Communication regarding what the probable outputs of this project can be expected to achieve for the targeted LLDCs is maintained by the project team.	2

R6. National or international consultants with the required level of expertise are unavailable.	M6.1. Terms of reference and expectations placed on consultants are sufficiently clear such that less-qualified consultants, if necessary, will still be able to provide adequate work to ensure project progress.	n.a.
R7. Despite the project's aim to achieve gender balance in beneficiary participation, nominations received from the beneficiary Governments are not in line with the gender equality objectives of the project.	M7.1. Constantly encourage gender balance in nominated delegations in all project-related communications.	5
	M7.2. Clearly communicate the need to ensure gender balance in activities at the start of the project and during its implementation.	4
	M7.3. Set activity-specific requirements on expected female/male participation.	n.a.
	M7.4. Provide incentives to female participation, where possible and necessary.	3
R8. National elections and change of government	M.8.1. UNCTAD stayed in close contact with permanent missions in Geneva and focal points in beneficiary countries to ensure that information on changes to the Government structure is obtained quickly and pressure can be exerted for project's implementation.	n.a.

Source: PRODOC, evaluator's expert judgement.
* 1 meaning rarely reported application, and 5 meaning highly reported application across countries; n.a. refers to no information available.

Highlights from progress reports:

- Period 01/01/2021-31/03/2021: COVID-19 pandemic crisis disrupted traveling and led to national lockdowns that prevented project implementation in the first quarter of 2021. The project management team redirected efforts towards desk research on assessing the levels of productive capacities in the eight beneficiary countries using the PCI, and on trade and investment relations between China and Africa. These were to become inputs into the national surveys of productive capacities carried out by national consultants, once the health situation allowed.
- Period 01/04/2021-30/09/2021: COVID-19 lockdowns prevented the work of national consultants in carrying out the national surveys and organising the initial assessment missions. The project action was working on desk reviews and considering different scenarios to implement the project activities.
- Period 01/04/2022-30/09/2022: COVID-19 travel restrictions were mitigated by desk review and online consultations, discussions and trainings[27]. Delays envisioned because of general elections in Angola in 2022 and in Kenya and Nigeria in 2023. The project response was to continue consultations to ensure a smooth project implementation.
- Period 01/10/2022-31/03/2023: COVID-19 and general elections continue to be a challenge, and the project responses are the same as above, except for the request for a 1-year no-cost extension. An additional, and anticipated, challenge was the low participation of women in capacity building activities. The project

[27] Lack of evidence on online trainings.

response was continuous communication with partners to increase the representation of women.

- Period 01/04/2023-30/09/2023: two challenges persisted. First, delays caused by general elections and slow response from some governments to the project's requests, to which the management team's action was submitting a no-cost extension request. Second, the low participation of women in capacity building activities, to which the project team continued to insist with partners to improve that.
- Period 01/10/2023-31/03/2024: in addition to the challenge of increasing the participation of women by communicating with partners to improve that, an additional challenge was the sudden moving of UNCTAD to a new building. The latter impacted productivity negatively.
- Period 01/04/2024-30/09/2024: in addition to the two challenges in the previous period, responded to with the same actions, this period added three new challenges. First, the postponement of the high-level validation workshop in Nigeria due to conflicts of agenda with the 3rd United Nations Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries in December 2024, an official request from the government of Mozambique to postpone the validation workshop to Q3 or Q4 2025, and slow response from the government of Zimbabwe to organise the validation workshop of the NPCGA and the HPCDP. The action taken by the project management was submitting a second 1-year no-cost extension.

Annex 6 – Evaluation methodology

Desk review and secondary data analysis

Study of secondary resources as per the project management process and logframe to validate achievements, including documents/data related to:

a) **Project-level planning, implementation and results achievement**, including but not limited to:

- Project document; Progress reports; Final report (both financial and substantive/narrative report); E-mail exchanges; Monitoring reports.
- Information on non-SDG Sub-fund resources, financial and in-kind, brought in by the participating entities; Information on resources, financial and in-kind, contributed by partners and donors.
- Publications and studies, both produced under the project as well as received from national and regional counterparts.
- Beneficiary/user feedback collected, including, but not limited to, workshop survey results, user feedback on publications, advisory services, methodology documents, etc.
- Requests for assistance/services received; list of completed activities and details about each activity.
- Documentation related to broader projects or sub-projects of the participating entities of which the project or its components have constituted an integral part, or which are linked to and/or build upon/succeed the work undertaken as part of the project; documents and literature related to the project context.
- Relevant web and social media metrics related to the project outputs, such as the project website, and a sample of posts from the project's social media campaigns.

b) **Project strategic documents**, including but not limited to:

- Programme budget and mandate of implementing entities.
- CCAs of the selected beneficiary countries.
- ECOSOC resolution (E/RES/2017/29).
- Nairobi *Maafikiano*.
- Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- African Union Agenda 2063.
- African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- General Assembly's High Impact Initiatives 2023.

Individual and group interviews

Participants of individual and group interviews were selected based on their role in the project (e.g., management, implementation, beneficiary), as per the PRODOC, progress and final reports, indications from the inception phase of this evaluation (intentional sampling), and discussions with project stakeholders during data collection (intentional and snowballing sampling).

Inclusion criteria for interviews were:

a) Participants in all main project deliverables (i.e., the training for statisticians, the workshop on the NPCGA and the high-level launch event of the HPCDP);

b) Participants from all eight beneficiary countries;

c) Diversity of stakeholders, such as participants from the most prominent ministries and other government-related bodies in project activities, private sector, academia, and other types of organisations;

d) Gender balance, to the extent possible;

e) Validation of lists of potential interviewees by the UNCTAD team and country focal points.

Key stakeholders, such as the **project coordination team, focal points** in the beneficiary countries (i.e., consultants, government staff and academia), and **UN staff in the UNRCOs** who supported project implementation did not require a sampling procedure. Group interviews, in general, were held at the discretion of key stakeholders, such as members of the Ministry of Trade holding different work functions and having had distinct roles in the project.

The call for interviews was liaised by the UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit and included a 2-pager summary of the evaluation context and the interview purpose (Annex 8). This supported the engagement of stakeholders in the evaluation process. Nevertheless, multiple reminders were sent by the independent evaluator to gather a fair representativeness of key informants. Consultations were conducted virtually, with Zoom, and during field missions.

The **outline for these semi-structured interviews** was tailored to each major category of stakeholder (i.e., UNCTAD staff, implementation partners and beneficiaries) and questions were adapted according to the role of the key informant in the project, in a conversational way. Interviews were conducted in English, Portuguese and Spanish. Interview outlines can be consulted in Annex 9 (English version).

Consultations were confidential and this report presents the aggregated findings anonymously. Fifty-one key informants (27% female[28]), in total, provided inputs to this evaluation. All beneficiary countries are represented, except Nigeria[29]. Most of the interviewees were linked to government ministries, bodies and authorities, reflecting the position of this project's main beneficiaries.

Key informants consulted	F	M	Total
Angola	**1**	**1**	**2**
Government (Central)	1	1	2
Focal point	**2**	**12**	**14**
Ethiopia		2	2
Kenya		4	4

[28] This percentage reflects that on the overall list of participants provided by the project management team to this evaluation.
[29] Despite multiple attempts to interview the country focal point and a selected list of project beneficiaries, this evaluation did not receive any response back. This gap may be compensated by the responses of Nigerian participants to the survey.

Malawi		1	1
Mozambique		1	1
Zambia	2	3	5
Zimbabwe		1	1
Kenya	**2**	**7**	**9**
Government (Central)	2	5	7
Think tank		2	2
Malawi	**4**	**8**	**12**
Academia		1	1
Government (Central)	3	6	9
NGO/CSO		1	1
Others	1		1
Mozambique	**2**	**1**	**3**
Government (Central)	2	1	3
UNCTAD	**2**	**2**	**4**
Project management team		2	2
Project officer for the EU-UNCTAD joint programme for Angola	1		1
Technical Cooperation Focal Point	1		1
UNIDO		**1**	**1**
Implementation partner		1	1
UNRCO		**5**	**5**
Implementation partner - Angola		1	1
Implementation partner - Malawi		1	1
Implementation partner - Mozambique		1	1
Implementation partner - Zimbabwe		1	1
Kenya		1	1
UNDESA			**1**
Programme Management Officer	1		1
Total	**14**	**37**	**51**
Percentage	**27%**	**73%**	

From the project stakeholder categories established in the PRODOC, this evaluation notes the absence of Chinese stakeholders among the key informants consulted, despite requests made for potential informants. This reflects issues in project design and implementation reported in the findings.

Field mission

A **field mission to two beneficiary countries** was conducted to collect first-hand information from implementation partners and beneficiaries with the purpose of producing in-depth knowledge on good practices and lessons learned. Consultation with the project management team and an analysis of the progress reports regarding the top three candidates resulted in the selection of Kenya and Malawi. Criteria applied included engagement, potential to develop structural transformation towards productive capacity to alleviate binding constraints, donor's interest and progress throughout the project cycle. Annex 10 presents the comparative table used to select the two countries.

In sum, **Kenya** has been in the project since the beginning and, despite delays caused by presidential elections, ended the project at an advanced stage of creating a ministerial level mechanism for productive capacities. The country has a strong private sector that works in close collaboration with the government, which may contribute to the sustainability of the project outcomes. **Malawi**, on the other hand, joined the project at the end of its second year and concluded its participation with the launching of the Holistic Programme (HPCDP) as a new initiative. Project implementation in Malawi is reported as challenging because of the wide range of stakeholders needed to respond to its development challenges.

The field mission took place between 15 and 22 March 2025 and resulted in a **total of 26 interviews** (23% women) with focal points and beneficiaries, being 12 in Kenya and 14 in Malawi. It also allowed for accessing physical documents and engaging in rich exchanges between interviews. The field mission provided the consultant with observational data about articulation between stakeholders and some of dimensions of productive capacities (e.g., energy, transportation, urban development, entrepreneurship, industrialisation). Focal points in the two countries provided logistical support in the form of setting up the agenda for meetings and facilitating workspace and commuting.

Survey

This evaluation carried out a survey based on the project's theory of change, the approved evaluation matrix (Annex 7) and a preliminary data collection outline (inception report). It collected the perceptions of direct beneficiaries on the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and cross-cutting issues of the project. Calls for participation were launched by the UNCTAD IEU on **27 March** and followed up by two reminders until the closing of the survey on **11 April**. The first reminder was the day before the deadline for participation (on 7 April), and the second provided a deadline extension (on 9 April). This strategy increased response rate from 8% to 12% and, finally, to 17%.

Another strategy to stimulate response rates was a **mobile-friendly design**. Given internet infrastructure constraints and that beneficiaries could prefer answering the survey on their phones, as the field mission indicated, the link to the survey could be shared via SMS or other messaging tools and questions would fit in a regular mobile phone screen. For this, this evaluation used a ruler-like format for response options, indicating increasing degrees of the metric (e.g., agreement, efficiency), rather than Likert-type scales. This reduced the number of options and the need to scroll down. Annex 11 presents the survey template.

The initial list of 806 participants provided by the project management team had 355 missing e-mail addresses. Country focal points supported the survey by providing more 75 e-mails to the existing list or from lists of presence collected by them during the project's face-to-face events. In total, the survey, in English and Portuguese, was sent out to 526 potential respondents, of which 133 bounced back, resulting in **393 valid invitations**. At the closing date, the evaluation had received a **total of 67 filled forms** (25% female), being 55 in English and 12 in Portuguese. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents were from the government stakeholder group, which included ministries and other government-linked bodies, such as national statistics offices and customs authorities. Response range per country varied from zero (Angola) to 12 (Malawi and Mozambique). All the answers are completely anonymous.

Survey responses reflect **participants' perceptions** and are not generalisable to the entire community of stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project. Insights shared in the open-ended questions were coded and aggregated for the presentation of results. Whenever relevant, findings cross tabulate responses by gender, country and project output. Survey results per question can be consulted in Annex 12.

Risks, limitations and mitigation strategies

The **constraints or limitations** to this evaluation and corresponding **mitigation strategies** are as follows:

a) **Remote data collection**: Most of the data collection was remote, through online interviews and an online survey. This may have limited evidence collection, considering that a) government changes during project implementation may have led to government-based contact details no longer being available; b) beneficiaries may not regularly access their alternative e-mail addresses; c) the list of participants had 355 e-mail addresses missing. **Mitigation**: A field mission to Kenya and Malawi to collect in-depth evidence in two distinct development contexts benefiting from the project. Use of mobile-friendly survey format. WhatsApp interviews. Support from the Project Management Team and country focal points to validate lists of potential interviewees. The latter also provided the e-mail addresses of additional 75 participants and supported reaching out to interviewees. Use of complementary data collection methods and a wide range of stakeholders to triangulate findings.

b) **Limited availability of informants**. Some country stakeholders may not be readily available, have retired or left their employment organisation or government position. **Mitigation**: the Project Management Team and country focal points supported the evaluation by offering alternative names and reaching out to relevant stakeholders to ensure all countries were represented in this evaluation. This was especially valuable in the field mission, with country focal points providing all the support to the evaluator to consult with as many people as possible.

c) **Short time between the closing of the project and the evaluation to observe impact**. Considering that the project activities were not concluded in Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, this limitation applies mostly to the other five countries, in which the high-level launch event of the HPCDP took place. In these countries, governments have not had the time to include the holistic programme in their budgeting cycles and conversations with donors to support the programme were in progress. **Mitigation**: Data triangulation sought clues that suggest possible future impacts on beneficiaries and implementation partners. These came mostly from stakeholders' accounts on country budgeting procedures and cycles, information on their current consultations with potential donors, and current policies and action plans. Given the relevance and potential uses of the NPCGA, discussed in all countries, the evaluation considered potential impacts of this deliverable as well.

Annex 7 – Evaluation matrix

Relevance		
Evaluation questions	**Suggested measures of evidence**	**Suggested sources and methods**
To what extent did the project reflect and address the development needs and priorities of beneficiary countries, expressed, for instance, in their CCAs?	• Knowledge products (baseline assessments, surveys, reports, workshop reports, etc.). • Reference to binding constraints to development in UNCTAD'S documents (reports) • Country contexts: evidence of articulation between the project's outcomes and countries' priorities. • Reference to the UNCTAD SDG project in country programmes. • Opinion of staff from UNCTAD and UNDESA. • Opinion of external partners, including other UN organizations, governments, private sector, academia, Chinese business representatives and other stakeholders.	Desk review: NPCGAs, holistic programmes, baseline assessments, surveys, workshop reports and presentations, country assessments, PRODOC, progress reports, evaluations. Interviews: UN staff, partners, and key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
Coherence		
To what extent were the project design, choice of activities and deliverables aligned with the mandates and work of UNCTAD and the 2030 Sub-Fund?	• Evidence of the project (or activities of) being mainstreamed in the workplans of other departments or programmes within UNCTAD. • Evidence of the project (or activities) being reflected in the annual work plans and time commitments of UNCTAD staff. • Opinion of UNCTAD staff, including Project Design Team and Task Forces. • Opinion of external partners, including staff in other UN organizations, UNRCOs, UNCTs, governments, other partners and stakeholders.	Desk review: UN Programmes of Actions (current and previous ones). Strategies and workplans of UNCTAD, PRODOCs, progress reports, evaluations. Interviews: Staff from participating UN entities and key regional and country stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
Has the project been complementary to and coherent with existing UN strategy frameworks, e.g. UN Programmes of Action, (UNSCDF and CCAs), and initiatives by other non-UN actors in the beneficiary countries?	• Evidence of collaboration or joint outputs with other UN entities, departments or programmes; evidence of other UN departments or programmes referring to or using this UNCTAD SDG project's outputs. • Evidence of synergies between UNCTAD and implementation partners and overlaps avoided. • Opinion of staff from UNCTAD, including Project Design Team and Task Forces.	Desk review: Strategies and workplans of participating UN entities, UN Programmes of Action, PRODOCs, progress reports, evaluations. Interviews: Staff from participating UN entities and key stakeholders.

	• Opinion of external partners, including other UN organizations, governments, UNRCOs, UNCTs, and other partners and stakeholders.	Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
Efficiency		
To what extent was the project management adequate in ensuring the coordination, planning, execution, and monitoring of project activities within the defined scope and timeline?	• Evidence of project monitoring meetings; technical meetings of the project coordination and the Sub-Fund in UNDESA. • Evidence of project mainstreaming in participating UN entities' workplans. • Evidence of risk assessment and mitigation strategies to avoid duplication of efforts. • Opinion of UN staff, including Project Design Team and Task Forces. • Opinion of external partners, including other UN organizations, governments, UNRCOs, UNCTs, and other partners and stakeholders. • Time taken to develop and deliver planned outputs; evidence of delays. • Evidence of adaptive management and adjustments during project implementation.	Desk review: Meeting minutes, progress reports, evaluations, workplans, PRODOC. Interviews: Staff from participating UN entities and key stakeholders.
How efficient was the project in utilising project resources?	• Evidence of project spending across activities and countries; technical meetings of the project coordination and the Sub-Fund in UNDESA. • Opinion of UN staff, including Project Design Team and Task Forces. • Opinion of external partners, including other UN organizations, governments, UNRCOs, UNCTs, and other partners and stakeholders. • Evidence of adaptive management and adjustments during project implementation.	Desk review: Financial monitoring systems, meeting minutes, progress reports, evaluations, workplans, PRODOC. Interviews: Staff from participating UN entities, key stakeholders.
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?	• Evidence of project outputs and reference to relevant project's outputs in policies, SDG related reports, and other national publications on binding constraints to development (e.g., UN, private sector, national plans, etc.). • Opinion of UN staff, partners, and stakeholders. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: Project outputs, progress reports, assessment questionnaires, evaluations, data from access to knowledge products. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.

To what extent have the project participants from each beneficiary country utilised, or intend to utilise, the knowledge and skills gained, and products developed through the project's activities?	• Evidence of project outputs and reference to relevant project's outputs in policies, SDG related reports, and other national publications on binding constraints to development (e.g., UN, private sector, national plans, etc.). • Opinion of UN staff, partners, and stakeholders. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: Project outputs, progress reports, assessment questionnaires, evaluations, data from access to knowledge products. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
To what extent has the project contributed to partnerships amongst project participants with national and regional counterparts, regional and international development partners, academia, civil society and/or the private sector?	• Evidence of partnerships established between project participants and relevant counterparts, partners and stakeholders in SDG related reports, national publications on binding constraints to development (e.g., UN, private sector, national plans, etc.), and the media. • Opinion of UN staff, partners, and stakeholders. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: Progress reports, evaluations, agreements, meeting minutes, media publications. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?	• Evidence of project enabling and limiting factors in SDG related reports, national publications on binding constraints to development (e.g., UN, private sector, national plans, etc.), and the media. • Opinion of UN staff, partners, and stakeholders. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: Progress reports, evaluations, media publications. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
Sustainability and potential impact		
What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes both programmatic and financial? Are there measures to mobilise resources and diversify funds?	• Reported programmatic and financial sustainability measures in progress reports, evaluations and country policies and action plans related to alleviating the binding constraints to development. • Evidence of resource mobilisation and diversification of funds through arrangements and partnerships to alleviate binding constraints to development. • Opinion of UN staff, partners, and stakeholders on the likelihood of continuing efforts at country level. • Evidence of new approaches and policies adopted and capacity and resources to sustain these.	Desk review: PRODOC, project outputs, progress reports, evaluations, key stakeholders' documentation. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.

Is there evidence that beneficiary countries have continued, or will continue, working towards the project objectives beyond UNCTAD's interventions? Have there been any catalytic effects from the project at the national/regional levels?	• Reported use of the PCI, the NPCGA and the HPCDP and roadmaps in meetings, action plans and policy documents. • New approaches and policies adopted to alleviate binding constraints and capacity and resources to sustain these. • Governments and other beneficiaries' perception of ownership over the project outputs. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: Project outputs, progress reports, evaluations, key stakeholders' documentation. Interviews: UN staff and external partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.
Cross-cutting issues		
To what extent were UN cross-cutting issues (such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind) incorporated in the design and implementation of the project? Can results be identified in this regard?	• Proportion of vulnerabilities disaggregated in outputs, surveys, assessments. • Evidence of human rights conventions and strategies referred in the project documentation. • Evidence of project outputs mainstreaming LNOB principles. • Extent to which partnership agreements and project activities include specific measures advancing gender equality, inclusion, human rights. • Evidence of vulnerable groups or their representative organisations involved in project implementation and monitoring. • Opinion of UN staff, governments, and other partners and stakeholders. • Evaluators' expert judgement drawing on all evidence sources.	Desk review: PRODOC, project outputs, progress reports, assessment questionnaires, evaluations, stakeholders' documents. Interviews: UN staff and partners, key stakeholders. Survey: key stakeholders and target beneficiaries.

Annex 8 – Two-pager for the call to participate in interviews

Independent Evaluation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project:

"Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China".

Contribution to SDGs 8, 9, and 17.

Project objective: To develop integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation as well as enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China.

Period of project implementation: January 2021 until December 2024.

Project outcomes:

Outcome 1. Beneficiaries have clearly articulated the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development and identified products with potential for diversification and economic transformation.

Outcome 2. Improved national capacity of policy makers in beneficiary countries to develop and implement trade, investment and technology policies.

Beneficiary countries: Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Evaluation objectives: to systematically and objectively assess project design, management, implementation, overall results, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB). The evaluation will include an assessment of the project's contribution to achieving the SDGs. It will identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions. Based on these assessments, the evaluation will formulate practical and constructive recommendations to project stakeholders.

Evaluation data collection period: March 2025.

Methods: desk review, interviews and survey, in English and Portuguese.

We want to learn from you what worked well and less well in your organisation and country in relation to the project's objective and achievements and where you see room for improvement, considering the resources and local capacities at your disposal.

The information we seek to collect through interviews relates to the participants' and beneficiaries' perceptions on the following criteria:

Relevance	Extent in which the project responded to national or sectoral agendas or priorities.
Coherence	Support received from different UNCTAD departments on building productive capacities.
	Support received from other United Nations organisations on this topic.
Efficiency	The good practices adopted by UNCTAD in project management, coordination and execution.
	The extent in which partnerships between UNCTAD and implementation partners contributed to deliver the project outputs in a timely manner.
Effectiveness	The most significant outcomes of the project in alleviating binding constraints to development in your country.
	The uptake, in your country, of: • the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments, • the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes, and • the Productive Capacities Development Roadmaps.
	Advantages and challenges of having these tools available.
	Partnerships between your organisation and other counterparts, including Chinese organisations and groups, promoted by the project, and the outcomes they have been leading to.
	Key enabling and limiting factors to achieve the project's results in your country.
Sustainability and potential impact	Programmatic and financial measures put in place to ensure the continuation of the project's results in policies and actions. Contribution of the project to country's efforts to alleviate the binding constraints to development through structural transformation, productive capacities and linkages with China.
Leaving no one behind and environmental sustainability	Inclusion of women, youth, rural populations, people with disabilities and from other marginalised groups in the project activities. Incorporation of environmental issues in the project.

To add evidence to your perceptions, **please, share any documentation that supports achievements, good practices and lessons learned from the UNCTAD SDGs project**. These documents can be shared either in advance or during interviews.

All information you provide will be kept confidential and figure in the evaluation report in an aggregate manner.

If you have any questions, contact the evaluator at ariane_corradi@yahoo.com.br.

Annex 9 – Interview outlines, English version

UNCTAD Staff

UNCTAD
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project:
"Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China".

Data collection Meetings UN Staff at UNCTAD

Date of meeting:	
Participants:	
Organization:	
Location:	
Interviewer:	

Thank you for your time to meet with me.

I am Ariane Corradi, the independent consultant conducting the evaluation of the UNCTAD project on alleviating binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China. We have concluded the inception phase of this evaluation with the project management team and through desk review. At this point, we need to dig deeper on a few questions to answer the evaluation questions more thoroughly.

This interview is confidential, and I will be taking notes for my own use in the evaluation report. Results will be shown in an aggregated manner.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

---

1. Tell me a bit about your participation in the project.

RELEVANCE

2. How did you asses the baseline context for the project activities or products you delivered in beneficiary countries?
3. Did you specifically assess the needs of women and vulnerable groups?
    a. If positive, how?
4. Is there any evidence of such needs (e.g. demands from member States, surveys, minutes from consultations, workshop reports, market assessments, past evaluations)?

COHERENCE

5. What were the other key activities that your department or other UNCTAD departments carried out to support the beneficiary countries between 2021 and 2024?

    a. Which departments implemented those activities?
    b. How did you synergise these activities with the UNCTAD SDGs project?
6. Is there any evidence of complementary activities or outputs designed to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps?
7. Were there any other UN organizations that carried out activities to support the development of institutional capacities between 2021-2024?
    a. Which ones and how did you synergise these activities with the UNCTAD SDGs project?
    b. Is there any evidence of joint or complementary activities designed to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps?
8. What were the good practices?
9. What could have been done differently?
    a. Are there any UN partners with which complementarities could have been strengthened?

EFFICIENCY

10. How did you coordinate project activities with the implementation partners at country level? Were there opportunities to reduce implementation costs or scale benefits?
11. What were the good practices in terms of coordinating the UNCTAD SDGs project?
12. What were the challenges?
    a. What could have been done differently?
13. How did the collaboration with implementation partners (e.g., UN entities, private sector, academia etc.) support the timely delivery of the project outputs?
    a. What were the good practices?
    b. What were the challenges?

EFFECTIVENESS

14. What would you highlight as the most significant achievements of the project in alleviating binding constraints to development?
15. To what extent has the project contributed to:
    a. foster structural transformation
    b. build productive capacities
    c. enhance investment opportunities and linkages with China
16. What examples or evidence would demonstrate such outcomes?
17. Were there unintended outcomes of the project?
18. What is the evidence of utilisation of the knowledge products developed in the project, specifically the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments, the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes, and the Productive Capacities Development Roadmaps?
19. What has been the feedback from beneficiaries on the advantages of using these tools?
    a. Would there be best examples?
    b. Are there any challenges faced by beneficiaries in using them?
20. How has the project promoted partnerships between project participants and other counterparts at the national, regional and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives?
    a. What are the outcomes of these partnerships in relation to fostering productive capacities for the beneficiary countries?
    b. What are the good practices?
    c. What could be improved?

21. What were the key enabling factors to achieve the project's results?
22. What were the key limiting factors to achieve these results?

SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

23. What exit strategies were set up to ensure that the programmatic project outcomes remain sustainable?
24. What exit strategies were set up to ensure the financial sustainability of these efforts?
25. Where measures established to mobilise resources and diversify funds at country level?
26. What evidence is there indicating that beneficiary countries will continue working on the project objectives?
27. Would there be any catalytic effects from the project at the national or regional levels?

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

28. To what extent have women, youth, rural populations, people with disabilities and from other marginalised groups been engaged in the project design and implementation (including outreach and selection process, types of leadership roles, decision making, among others)?
29. To what extent environmental issues were incorporated in the project?
30. How did this approach influence the project results?

CLOSING REMARKS

31. Would you like to add any additional information that you consider relevant for this evaluation?

Thank you for your attention.

Implementation partners

UNCTAD
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project:
"Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China".

Data collection Meetings

Implementation partners

Date of meeting:	
Participants:	
Organization:	
Country:	
Location:	
Interviewer:	

Thank you for your time to meet with me.

I am Ariane Corradi, the independent consultant conducting the evaluation of the UNCTAD project on alleviating binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China. We have concluded the inception phase of this evaluation with the project management team and through desk review. At this point, we need to hear from partners and stakeholders about their perceptions of what went well and less well in the project, from their perspectives.

This interview is confidential, and I will be taking notes for my own use in the evaluation report. Results will be shown in an aggregated manner.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

---

1. Tell me a bit about your participation in the project.

RELEVANCE

2. How were the baseline needs of national beneficiaries regarding Binding Constraints to Development identified?
3. Did you specifically assess the needs of women and vulnerable groups? If positive, how?
4. Who was consulted and what evidence is there (e.g. surveys, minutes from consultations, workshop reports)?

COHERENCE

5. Did you cooperate with different UNCTAD departments? If positive, did they synergise their inter-departmental collaboration while working with you?

    a. What were the good practices? What could have been done differently?
6. Among the range of activities that your organization carried out to support the beneficiary governments during the period 2021-2024, did you synergise any of these interventions with the UNCTAD SDGs project?
    a. Is there any evidence of joint or complementary activities designed to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps? What were the good practices?
    b. What could have been done differently?

EFFICIENCY

7. Did UNCTAD coordinate adequately project implementation?
    a. What were the good practices?
    b. What could have been done differently?
8. How did the project coordination support the timely delivery of the project outputs?
    a. What were the good practices?
    b. What were the challenges?

EFFECTIVENESS

9. What would you highlight as the most significant achievements of the project in alleviating binding constraints to development?
10. Do what extent has the project contributed to:
    a. foster structural transformation
    b. build productive capacities
    c. enhance investment opportunities and linkages with China
11. What examples or evidence would demonstrate such achievements?
12. Were there unintended outcomes of the project?
13. What is the evidence of utilisation of the knowledge products developed in the project, specifically the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments, the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes, and the Productive Capacities Development Roadmaps?
14. What has been the feedback from beneficiaries on the advantages of using these tools? Would there be best examples?
    a. Are there any challenges faced by beneficiaries in using them?
15. How has the project promoted partnerships between project participants and other counterparts at the national, regional and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives?
    a. What are the outcomes of these partnerships in relation to fostering productive capacities for the beneficiary countries?
    b. What are the good practices?
16. What were the key enabling factors to achieve the project’s results?
17. What were the key limiting factors to achieve these results?

SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

18. What sustainability measures did the project establish for the continuation of the programmatic outcomes?
19. How is the financial sustainability of the project outcomes ensured?
    a. Is there evidence of resource mobilisation and fund diversification for this purpose?
20. What evidence is there indicating that beneficiary countries will continue working on the project objectives?
21. Would there be any catalytic effects from the project at the national or regional levels?

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

22. To what extent have women, youth, rural populations, people with disabilities and from other marginalised groups been engaged in the project design and implementation (including outreach and selection process, types of leadership roles, decision making, among others)?
23. To what extent environmental issues were incorporated in project design and implementation?
24. How did this approach influence the project results?

CLOSING REMARKS

25. Would you like to add any additional information that you consider relevant for this evaluation?

The next steps will be concluding the data collection and elaborating the evaluation report, which will be published in the UNCTAD and UNDESA websites.

Thank you for your attention.

Beneficiaries

UNCTAD

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project:

"Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China".

Data collection Meetings

Beneficiaries

Date of meeting:	
Participants:	
Organization:	
Country:	
Location:	
Interviewer:	

Thank you for your time to meet with me.

I am Ariane Corradi, the independent consultant conducting the evaluation of the UNCTAD project on alleviating binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China. We have concluded the inception phase of this evaluation with the project management team and through desk review. At this point, we need to hear from partners and stakeholders about their perceptions of what went well and less well in the project, from their perspectives.

This interview is confidential, and I will be taking notes for my own use in the evaluation report. Results will be shown in an aggregated manner.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

---

1. Tell me a bit about your participation in the project.

RELEVANCE

2. To what extent did the UNCTAD SDGs project respond to a national or sectoral agenda or priority?
3. To what extent did your needs inform project activities?

COHERENCE

4. Did you receive support from different UNCTAD departments?
    a. If positive, is there any evidence of complementary activities designed to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps? What were the good practices?
    b. What could have been done differently?
5. Did you receive support from other UN organizations?

    a. If positive, is there any evidence of complementary activities designed to maximise synergies and avoid overlaps with the UNCTAD SDGs project?
    b. What were the good practices?
    c. What could have been done differently?

EFFICIENCY

6. What were the good practices in project management, coordination and execution, in your perspective?
    a. What could have been done differently?
7. Could you observe the extent in which partnerships between UNCTAD and implementation partners contributed to the timely delivery of the project outputs?

EFFECTIVENESS

8. What would you highlight as the most significant achievements of the project in alleviating binding constraints to development in your country?
9. In your country, to what extent has the project contributed to:
    a. foster structural transformation
    b. build productive capacities
    c. enhance investment opportunities and linkages with China
10. What examples or evidence would demonstrate such achievements?
11. How have you been using the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments, the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes, and the Productive Capacities Development Roadmaps?
12. What advantages do you see in having these tools available?
    a. Are there any challenges faced by beneficiaries in using them?
    b. What could be improved?
13. How has the project promoted partnerships between your organisation and other counterparts at the national, regional and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives?
    a. To what extent could you build on existing strengths in your country?
    b. What are the outcomes of these partnerships in relation to fostering productive capacities in your country?
    c. What are the good practices?
    d. What could be improved?
14. What were the key enabling factors to achieve the project's results in your country?
15. What were the key limiting factors to achieve these results in your country?

SUSTAINABILITY AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

16. What sustainability measures are in place for the continuation of the programmatic outcomes?
17. How is the financial sustainability of the project outcomes ensured in your country?
    a. Is there evidence of resource mobilisation and fund diversification for this purpose in your country?
18. How will your country continue working towards alleviating binding constraints to development through structural transformation, productive capacities and linkages with China?
    a. How has the project contributed to these intended actions?

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

19. To what extent has your organisation included women, youth, rural populations, people with disabilities and from other marginalised groups been engaged in the project activities (including outreach and selection process, types of leadership roles, decision making, among others)?
20. To what extent environmental issues were incorporated in the project?
21. How did this approach influence the project results?
    a. What could be improved?

CLOSING REMARKS

22. Would you like to add any additional information that you consider relevant for this evaluation?

The next steps will be concluding the data collection and elaborating the evaluation report, which will be published in the UNCTAD and UNDESA websites.

Thank you for your attention.

Annex 10 – Criteria to select country case studies

Criteria	Ethiopia	Kenya	Malawi
Engagement in project activities	High	High	Low
Potential to develop institutional capacities towards productive capacities	Moving towards a humanitarian situation	High engagement between private sector and government	Implementation of the holistic programme depending on a new project
Support from donors	Stalled	Positive	n.a.
Progress between 01/04 – 30/09/2022	Policy dialogue followed by a training to statisticians on the PCI; preparations of the background document for the NPCGA*; consultations with ministries	Policy dialogue and statisticians training supplemented by the first draft of the background document for the NPCGA; consultations with ministries; robust private sector	n.a.
Progress between 01/10/2022 – 31/03/2023	NPCGA validated in a national workshop; a comprehensive support programme will be required to undergo structural transformation	Process of finalising the NPCGA, additional consultations, final version in 2023 with a support programme	Included as a beneficiary country in this stage
Progress between 01/04/2023 – 30/09/2023	HPCDP** completed and validated, partnerships with key national institutions	HPCDP completed, partnerships with key national institutions	Preparations initiated to build capacity among policymakers and technical experts
Progress between 01/10/2023 – 31/03/2024		Reports on the conclusions of the NPCGA finalised; HPCDP completed and validated	Advanced draft of the NPCGA completed; consultations with policymakers and other partners; 2 capacity building events, one on the PCI and another for policymakers
Progress between 01/04–30/09/2024		Capacity development roadmaps drafted	NPCGA completed; HPCDP drafted
Final report	Consultations to create a ministerial level mechanism for productive capacities	In the process of creating a ministerial level mechanism for productive capacities	NPCGA validated and HPCDP validated and likely to start in mid-2025, as a new project

* National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment; **Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme

Annex 11 – Survey template (English version)

Developing Integrated Programmes to Alleviate Binding Constraints to Development by Fostering Structural Transformation, Building Productive Capacities and Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China

Independent Final Evaluation

As part of the independent evaluation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project "Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China", implemented by United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) between January 2021 and December 2024, we invite you to take this survey to share your views on the support provided through the project and what has happened since.

The main objective of this project was to assist eight developing economies in Africa in building productive capacities and fostering structural transformation and therefore in harnessing the transformative potential of Chinese partnerships, including those in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, for their economic development.

All survey responses are anonymous and will be treated confidentially. The survey responses will be managed entirely by the independent evaluator and the results will be presented in an aggregate format.

We hope you can take about 10-15 minutes to complete the survey. Your feedback is important in helping UNCTAD plan and deliver future projects!

If you have any questions or encounter any difficulties with the survey, please feel free to contact the independent evaluator at ariane_corradi@yahoo.com.br.

By continuing to the next page, you are agreeing to anonymously take part on this survey.

Thank you for participating!

<u>Demographic questions</u>

1. What country do you work in?

- Angola
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Nigeria
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe
- Other: *(Free text answer)*

2. Please indicate which one of the following you represent:

- UN agency/UN organization
- Government authority

- Non-governmental organization
- Private sector
- National Statistics Office
- Academia
- Other: *(Free text answer)*

3. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other/prefer not to say: *(Free text answer optional)*

Relevance

4. In your opinion, how relevant was the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project in responding to your needs for alleviating binding constraints to development?

- Highly relevant
- Relevant
- Somewhat relevant
- Not relevant at all
- I do not know

4a. Please use the space below to provide any further comments: (*Free text*)

Coherence: Complementarity and Synergies

5. Do you agree that the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project complement and form synergies with other UNCTAD initiatives in your country?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

5a. Please use the space below to provide any further comments.
(free text)

6. Do you agree that the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project complemented and formed synergies with the initiatives of other UN organizations in the country?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

6a. Please use the space below to provide any further comments.
(free text)

7. Were there any UN organizations with which the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project could have increased synergies or avoided overlaps in your country?

- Yes
- No

7a. If you answered yes above, please specify which UN organizations and provide any additional information:

(Free text answer)

Efficiency

8. How efficient was the project coordination in delivering high quality outputs in a timely manner in your country?

- Very efficient
- Efficient
- Somewhat efficient
- Inefficient
- I do not know

Effectiveness

9. How effective has the project been in contributing to the alleviation of binding constraints to development in your country?

Examples of binding constraints: lack of transport infrastructure, scarce access to energy, structural barriers to trade, investment, and private sector development.

- Very effective
- Effective
- Somewhat effective
- Ineffective
- I do not know

10. To what extent do you agree that the project contributed in fostering structural transformation in your country?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

11. To what extent do you agree that the project contributed to building productive capacities in your country?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

12. To what extent do you agree that the project contributed to enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China in your country?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

10-12a. Please provide evidence of these contributions (e.g., country strategies, high-level meetings, other documentation). Include any relevant links, document titles, or attachments.

(Free text answer)

13. To what extent have you used the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment developed under this project?

- To a large extent - it has significantly changed the work I do
- To a moderate extent - it has been influential in my work
- To a limited extent - it has raised awareness, but I have not yet used it
- Not at all - it has not been useful
- I am not familiar with this knowledge product

14. To what extent have you used the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme developed under this project?

- To a large extent - it has significantly changed the work I do
- To a moderate extent - it has been influential in my work
- To a limited extent - it has raised awareness, but I have not yet used it
- Not at all - it has not been useful
- I am not familiar with this knowledge product

15. To what extent have you used the Productive Capacities Development Roadmap developed under this project?

- To a large extent - it has significantly changed the work I do
- To a moderate extent - it has been influential in my work
- To a limited extent - it has raised awareness, but I have not yet used it
- Not at all - it has not been useful
- I am not familiar with this knowledge product

16. Please provide further feedback on the knowledge products developed under the project:

16a. If you answered the previous question positively, what benefits do you see in having these products available?

(Free text answer)

16b. Are there any challenges with using these products?

(Free text answer)

16c. How could these products be improved?

(Free text answer)

17. Do you agree that the project promoted partnerships between your organization and other counterparts at the national, regional and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

17a. Can you provide any evidence of how these partnerships have been fostering productive capacities for your country? Please feel free to include any relevant links, document titles, attachments, etc.

(Free text answer)

18. What do think were the key enabling factors that contributed to the project's success in your country?

(Free text answer)

19. In your opinion, what were the key limiting factors to achieving the project's results in your country?

(Free text answer)

Sustainability and potential impact

20. To what extent do you agree that there are measures in place for sustaining the project's results and promoting impact in your country?

- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a limited extent
- Not at all
- I do not know

20a. Can you provide examples of such measures? Please feel free to add any links, document titles, attachments, etc.

21. To what extent do you agree that there are measures in place for ensuring that financial resources are available to sustain these outcomes?

- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a limited extent
- Not at all
- I do not know

20a. Can you provide examples of such measures? Please feel free to add any links, document titles, attachments, etc.

22. How will your country continue working towards the project objective of "alleviating binding constraints to development through structural transformation, productive capacities and linkages with China"?

(Free text answer)

How has the project contributed to the efforts mentioned in the above question? *(Free text answer)*

Cross-cutting issues

23. To what extent do you agree that the women were included in the project activities (such as outreach and selection processes, types of leadership roles, decision-making, among others)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

23a. Can you provide examples of the effects resulting from this inclusion or exclusion? Please include links, document titles, attachments etc. *(Free text answer)*

24. To what extent do you agree that the youth were included in the project activities (such as outreach and selection processes, types of leadership roles, decision-making, among others)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

24a. Can you provide examples of the effects resulting from this inclusion or exclusion? Please include links, document titles, attachments etc. *(Free text answer)*

25. To what extent do you agree that the rural populations were included in the project activities (such as outreach and selection processes, types of leadership roles, decision-making, among others)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

25a. Can you provide examples of the effects resulting from this inclusion or exclusion? Please include links, document titles, attachments etc. *(Free text answer)*

26. To what extent do you agree that the persons with disabilities were included in the project activities (such as outreach and selection processes, types of leadership roles, decision-making, among others)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

26a. Can you provide examples of the effects resulting from this inclusion or exclusion? Please include links, document titles, attachments etc. *(Free text answer)*

27. To what extent do you agree that environmental issues were incorporated throughout the project cycle? (Planning and design, implementation and monitoring/evaluation)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Disagree
- I do not know

28. What improvements could be made to better include vulnerable groups and address environmental issues in this project?

(Free text answer)

<u>Closing message</u>

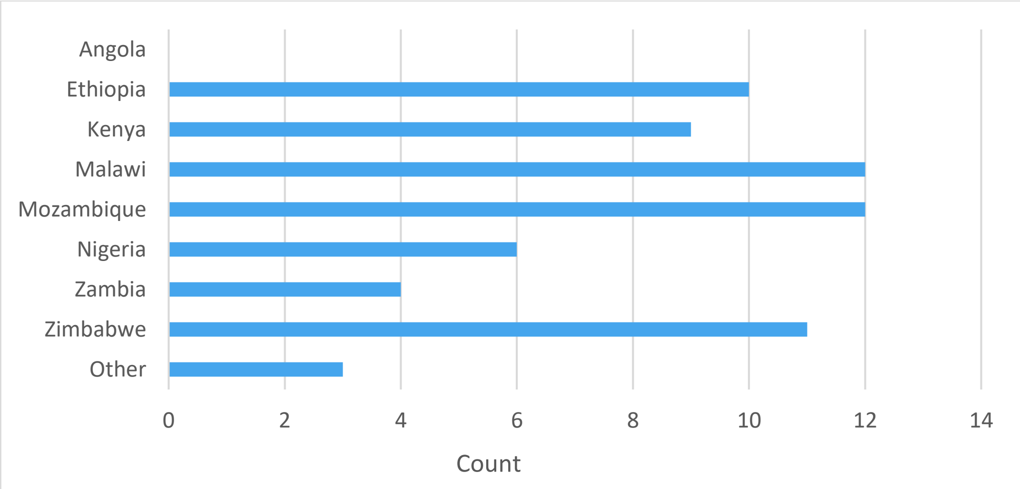
You have completed this survey. Your insights are invaluable in supporting improvements in the work of UNCTAD.

We truly appreciate your participation!

Annex 12 – Survey results

Aggregated results for multiple choice and open-ended questions. Original comments are not presented to ensure anonymity of respondents.

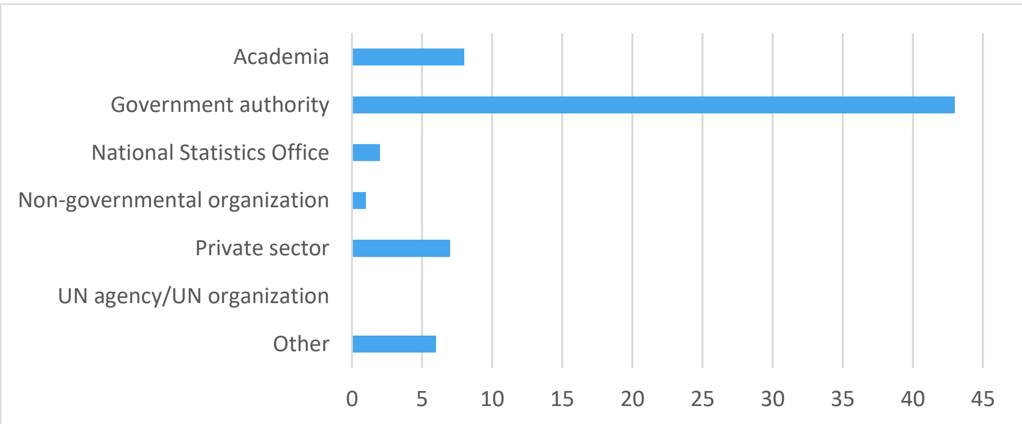
*Q1. **What country do you work in?***



*Q1. **What country do you work in?***

Country	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Ethiopia	1	10	8	3
Kenya	3	7	7	3
Malawi	4	8	9	3
Moçambique	4	8	10	2
Nigeria		6	2	4
Other: Pakistan		1		1
Zambia	2	2	3	1
Zimbabwe	3	8	7	4
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

*Q2. **Please indicate which one of the following you represent:***



*Q3. **What is your gender?***

Response	Count
Female	17
Male	50
Other (feel free to specify)/prefer not to say	0

*Q4. **In your opinion, how relevant was the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project in responding to your needs for alleviating binding constraints to development?***

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know		2	1	1
Somewhat relevant	3	3	5	1
Relevant	6	25	23	8
Highly relevant	8	20	17	11
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q5. Do you agree that the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project complemented and formed synergies with other UNCTAD initiatives in your country?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know		4	2	2
Disagree	1		1	
Somewhat agree		5	2	3
Agree	10	33	31	12
Strongly agree	6	8	10	4
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q6. Do you agree that the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project complemented and formed synergies with the initiatives of other UN organizations in the country?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	1	2	2	1
Disagree		1	1	
Somewhat agree	2	8	5	5
Agree	10	30	30	10
Strongly agree	4	9	8	5
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q7. Were there any UN organizations with which the UNCTAD Productive Capacities project could have increased synergies or avoided overlaps in your country?

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
No	11	25	23	13
Yes	6	25	23	8
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q8. How efficient was the project coordination in delivering high quality outputs in a timely manner in your country?

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
Don't know	1	2	1	2
Somewhat efficient	4	10	11	3
Efficient	9	31	29	11
Very efficient	3	7	5	5
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q9. How effective has the project been in contributing to the alleviation of binding constraints to development in your country?

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
Don't know	1	2	1	2
Ineffective	1		1	
Somewhat effective	5	20	17	8
Effective	7	15	18	4
Very effective	3	13	9	7
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q10. To what extent do you agree that the project contributed to fostering structural transformation in your country?

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
Don't know		2		2
Disagree	2		2	
Somewhat agree	4	18	14	8
Agree	10	19	21	8
Strongly agree	1	11	9	3
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q11. ***To what extent do you agree that the project contributed to building productive capacities in your country?***

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
Don't know		1		1
Disagree	2		2	
Somewhat agree	3	12	10	5

Agree	10	23	25	8
Strongly agree	2	14	9	7
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q12. ***To what extent do you agree that the project contributed to enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China in your country?***

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	2	7	5	4
Disagree	1		1	
Somewhat agree	3	15	13	5
Agree	9	19	20	8
Strongly agree	2	9	7	4
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Comments evidence of enhancing investment opportunities with China.

Q13. ***To what extent have you used the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment developed under this project?***

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
I am not familiar with this knowledge product	1	3	3	1
Not at all	1	2	2	1
To a limited extent	8	17	18	7
To a moderate extent	5	19	16	8
To a large extent	2	9	7	4
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q14.To what extent have you used the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme developed under this project?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
I am not familiar with this knowledge product	1	3	3	1
Not at all	1	5	4	2
To a limited extent	6	21	18	9
To a moderate extent	8	15	14	9
To a large extent	1	6	7	
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q15. To what extent have you used the Productive Capacities Development Roadmap developed under this project?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**

I am not familiar with this knowledge product	2	5	3	4
Not at all	1	3	2	2
To a limited extent	9	15	17	7
To a moderate extent	3	21	17	7
To a large extent	2	6	7	1
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q16a. If you answered any of the three previous question positively, what benefits do you see in having these products available?

Q16b. Are there any challenges with using these products?

Q16c. How could these products be improved?

Comparative summary of answers to questions 16a, 16b and 16c. Bolder and bigger font sizes indicate larger agreement among respondents.

Benefits	Challenges	Areas for improvement
Enhance overall productivity in the country and improve the economy.	**Limited (targeted) training to use and articulate these products.**	**More training (e.g., of technical officers) with practical lessons to fully utilise the products. Use of virtual meetings.**
Institutional strengthening and collaboration.	**Limited commitment by leadership government officials.**	**Increase engagement of top management officials to allow staff to work with UNCTAD in implementing the products.**
NPCGA as a tool to align sectoral priorities with strategic investment planning.	**Limited resources allocated to this programme.**	**Increase budget, coupled with commitment from the UN to implement the holistic programme.**
NPCGA supports evidence-based policymaking by identifying gaps.	**Lack of skills to use these products in some departments.**	**Update the NPCGA regularly with data and insights.**
Benchmark with peers within and outside the region.	**Limited access to information and data.**	**Create more awareness.**
Clearer understanding of the economy for refining interventions.	Limited use of the NPCGA by other stakeholders, e.g., private sector, local governments.	Institutionalisation of the NPCGA by embedding it in national institutions through a permanent mechanism within the Ministry of Finance and National Planning.

Products are practical frameworks that provide insights to evidence-based decision making and strategic planning to developing productive capacities in a holistic and structured manner.	Understanding alternative sources of capital.	A working relationship between the real economy and the capital market.
NPCGA informs national development plans by identifying key binding constraints and sectors for development.	Lack of consistent and efficient use from the country's side.	Develop the local capacities (training) to manage such projects.
NPCGA helps prioritising investments on areas with the highest potential for transformation.	Limited use of the NPCGA beyond policy cycles.	Increase accountability of government.
Awareness raising on the use of the PCI.	Determination of the index and availability of data.	Training and introduction of the PCI in university courses.
Computation knowledge on the PCI provides the skills for future evidence-based research.	The index is hard to interpret in relation to areas with more potential for growth.	Limited production of data.
Widened scope of investment opportunities.	Conditionalities to development are not always aligned with country priorities.	Remove conditionalities to development support; implement efficient monitoring of country's actions.
Efficient service delivery.	Stakeholders operate in silos.	Provide user-friendly manuals, case studies and toolkits to support use by different stakeholder groups.
Products support interventions and drafting of policies in specific sectors.		Encourage openness to collaboration.
		Involve more stakeholders.
		Include more areas in the PCI.

Q17. Do you agree that the project promoted partnerships between your organization and other counterparts at the national, regional and international levels, including with Chinese business representatives?

Response	Female	Male	Government	Others
Don't know	1	5	5	1
Disagree	1	1	2	
Somewhat agree	4	15	11	8
Agree	8	17	21	4
Strongly agree	3	12	7	8
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q18. What do you think were the key enabling factors that contributed to the project's success in your country?

Summary of answers to question 18. Bolder and bigger font sizes indicate larger agreement among respondents.

- **Collaboration in general, including stakeholders' engagement.**
- **Exposure and linkage to a whole community of stakeholders, such as local partners that bring along their networks with different government agencies and business communities.**
- **Political will, government support and ownership.**
- **Coordination, synergies with relevant stakeholders, pooling expertise, including with other UN organizations.**
- **Alignment with national plan (buy-in and integration with national goals) and synergies with ongoing projects and programmes.**
- **Availability of data that facilitates policy development and implementation.**
- **The support and push of the project managers.**
- **Knowledge products provide a clear framework for addressing development challenges by informing policy formulation, strategic planning, and institutional capacity building, including in relation to gender inclusion.**
- **Willingness to learn, group sharing.**
- **Creating awareness, changing attitudes.**
- **Relevant expertise, quality of information.**
- **Dissemination events opening opportunities and how to address them.**
- **Combination of training and policy dialogue enabled, for instance, clearer understanding of discussions and knowledge about the PCI.**
- **Conducive environment for political stability.**
- Investments in infrastructure, skilled labour and focus on sustainable and inclusive growth.
- Support to a follow-up strategy.
- Vulnerability of the country leading to taking advantage of any opportunity to develop.
- Adaptability to local challenges.
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Sector-specific approach.
- Efficiency.
- Training.
- Follow-up on techniques acquired.

Q19. In your opinion, what were the key limiting factors to achieving the project's results in your country?

Summary of answers to question 19. Bolder and bigger font sizes indicate larger agreement among respondents.

- **Financial constraints/budget allocation, including from the national and subnational budgets.**
- **Lack of buy-in by government, including Insufficient high-level discussion on the proposed budget, expenditure framework, and donor funding to better link the project to the country's planning and budget process.**
- **Insufficient knowledge dissemination and follow-up to translate the project results into actionable, ground-level interventions, including engagement with key stakeholders beyond meetings.**
- **Limited skills, including low availability due to engagement in other projects, and lack of support to engage in activities.**
- **Project time management and scheduling, including time lag, limited time.**
- **Costs of power and internet and other infrastructure gaps.**
- **Political interference.**
- **Inadequate collaboration with top government officials at the report validation, including ministries responsible for coordinating the SDGs and national strategies (Agenda 2063).**
- Regular updates and inclusive stakeholder engagement.
- PCI training was too short to enable participants to work with the index after the training.
- Regulatory hurdles.
- Limited scope of implementation.
- Limited number of trained professionals and failure to engage with those trained, including lack of transformative leadership.
- Lack of private sector partnerships.
- Silo mentality.
- Alignment between the UNCTAD programme and country programmes.
- Policy to attract investment.
- Corruption.
- COVID-19.
- Logistical challenges in agri-industry.
- Regional inequalities in the distribution of basic services and the related restricted empowerment of local communities.
- Resistance to change blocking the adoption of new practices and technologies.

- Political situation in the country.

Q20. To what extent do you agree that there are measures in place for sustaining the project's results and promoting impact in your country?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	1	7	5	3
Not at all		2	1	1
To a limited extent	4	15	15	4
To a moderate extent	8	20	17	11
To a large extent	4	6	8	2
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Summary of responses categorised in strong points and issues for improvement.

Strong points	**Where to improve**
• Alignment of the project outcomes with national and subnational plans creates the foundations to continue the focus on productive capacities.	• Lack of accountability by most government departments involved in implementation.
• Public-private partnerships and concessions to implement the holistic programme.	• Training on productive capacities.
• Adequate financing and digital monitoring and evaluation.	
• Continued provision of information to the national statistics offices.	

Q21. To what extent do you agree that there are measures in place for ensuring that financial resources are available to sustain these outcomes?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	4	7	5	6
Not at all	1	1	2	
To a limited extent	5	19	15	9
To a moderate extent	6	16	18	4
To a large extent	1	7	6	2
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Categorised summary of responses:

Strong points	Where to improve
• Increased funding for key sectors, such as agriculture, manufacturing and trade. • Focus on projects that can self-sustain, e.g., SGR, Express Way. • Capital from the pension sector available for investment. • Country strategic documents addressing gaps that are budgeted. • World Bank financing through, e.g., International Development Association, National Fund for Sustainable Development.	• Difficult to uphold accountability for the resources. • Raise more funding.

Q22a. How will your country continue working towards the project objective of "alleviating binding constraints to development through structural transformation, productive capacities and linkages with China"?

Summary of answers, with larger and bolder fonts indicating higher convergence of responses:

- **More capacity building workshops and conferences.**
- **Linkages with China for further projects, especially for sharing capacity in technical areas.**
- **Promoting manufacturing, value-added processing and growth of service sectors to diversify the economy and foster industrial development.**
- **Use of the productive capacities' roadmap in strategy planning and alignment.**
- **Implementation of policies focussed on infrastructure development, private sector development and strengthening institutional frameworks, while leveraging partnerships with China for market access.**
- **Partnering with stakeholders.**
- Integration of the roadmap into national policy documents, such as national plans.
- Roadmap has helped prioritise investment in key sectors to drive economic transformation.
- Roadmap supports national planning agencies with a detailed framework for multi-sectoral coordination and investment prioritisation.
- Roadmap's outputs have been shared with government agencies, development partners, private sector actors, in seminars, workshops and consultations.
- Creation of awareness.
- Update of the policy and regulatory framework.

- Streamlining the licensing process, especially on the export sector.
- Adequate financing, prioritisation of inclusive governance, domestic ownership and resilience.
- Inclusion.
- Provision of resources.
- Development of the National Development Strategy covering all areas of structural transformation.
- Mobilisation of committed technical officers.

Q22b. What were the project contributions to that?

Summary of responses, with the convergences highlighted in bold.

- **Capacity building, remarkably the PCI training.**
- The project shared development stages and encouraged countries to look at their priorities.
- It brought knowledge of constraints to the authorities.
- It built commitment by others to hold the relevant authorities accountable.
- The Productive Capacities Development Roadmap is a structured pathway for addressing gaps and unlocking potential.
- Created awareness of the key sectors of the economy.
- Supported sectoral development in agriculture, urbanisation, trade, investment and financing, technical assistance.
- It contributed to infrastructure development and promotion of sector investment and strengthening of institutional frameworks.
- It linked partnership efforts between countries.

Q23.To what extent do you agree that women were included in the project activities?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	4	5	8	1
Disagree	1	1	2	
Somewhat agree	5	11	9	7
Agree	7	22	20	9
Strongly agree		11	7	4
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q24.To what extent do you agree that youth were included in the project activities?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	5	8	9	4
Disagree	1	1	2	
Somewhat agree	8	12	14	6
Agree	3	21	17	7
Strongly agree		8	4	4

Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q25.To what extent do you agree that rural populations were included in the project activities?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	7	10	11	6
Disagree	1	7	5	3
Somewhat agree	7	15	16	6
Agree	1	15	11	5
Strongly agree	1	3	3	1
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q26.To what extent do you agree that persons with disabilities were included in the project activities?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	7	14	14	7
Disagree	1	3	3	1
Somewhat agree	7	14	14	7
Agree	1	16	13	4
Strongly agree	1	3	2	2
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q27.To what extent do you agree that environmental issues were incorporated throughout the project cycle?

Response	**Female**	**Male**	**Government**	**Others**
Don't know	4	7	6	5
Disagree	3		3	
Somewhat agree	5	14	11	8
Agree	3	27	22	8
Strongly agree	2	2	4	
Grand Total	**17**	**50**	**46**	**21**

Q28. What improvements could be made to better include vulnerable groups and address environmental issues in this project?

Summary of responses, with the convergences highlighted in bold.

- **Engage directly with vulnerable communities in planning and implementation stages, e.g., through their leaders or local authorities.**
- **Design specific programmes to develop the productive capacities of these groups.**

- **Target institutions dealing with vulnerable groups and select participants from them. Similarly with environmental issues.**
- **Continuous engagement of different stakeholders.**
- **Adopting a social inclusion and sustainability approach in the project.**
- **More research.**
- Establishing KPIs and following them strictly.
- Conduct capacity building in specific localities.
- Create awareness through public participation.
- Collaborate more with sectors under each concerned ministry.
- Have a capping for vulnerables groups to be represented.
- Link up with ESG promoters.
- Conduct social impact assessments to identify potential negative effects and develop mitigation strategies.
- Inclusive invitations.
- Tailored outreach programmes to keep these groups informed about and accessing project resources - local languages and culturally relevant communication channels.
- Involve schools and local leadership to monitor environmental issues.
- More advocacy.

Annex 13 – Timeline of outputs delivered according to project progress reports

Outcomes	**Key activities**	**Timeline by progress report - year and months (non-cumulative)**						
		2021.01-03	**2021.04-09**	**2022.04-09**	**2022.10-2023-03**	**2023.04-2023-09**	**2023.10-2024-03**	**2024.04-2024-09**
1. Identification of binding constraints and potential for development	OP1.1. National surveys and missions	delayed COVID-19	delayed COVID-19	Nigeria (survey) Kenya & Ethiopia (missions) Angola (NPCGA)	Botswana and Rwanda replaced by Malawi and Zambia, which officially requested support. Zimbabwe brought back. Zambia Kenya	-	Malawi (mission)	Mozambique & Zimbabwe (mission)
	OP1.2. Diagnostic using PCI and national survey results	Angola Botswana Ethiopia Kenya Mozambique Nigeria Rwanda Zimbabwe	Studies launched in Angola and Nigeria	Zambia (NPCGA) replaced Zimbabwe (no interest voiced) Kenya (draft of background document) ECOWAS (draft comparative study) Angola (NPCGA)	Zambia (NPCGA). Kenya (draft of background document on PC).	-	Malawi (draft NPCGA)	Zimbabwe (NPCGA)
	OP1.3. Brainstorming and capacity building trainings on binding constraints to development	delayed COVID-19	delayed COVID-19	Angola (1 workshop, 8 focus groups) Ethiopia and Nigeria (training of statisticians, brainstorming with policymakers) Kenya (brainstorming with policymakers)	Zambia (training of statisticians, brainstorming with policymakers).	-	Malawi (training of statisticians, brainstorming with policymakers)	Mozambique & Zimbabwe (training of statisticians, brainstorming with policymakers)
2. Improvement of policymakers' capacity to	OP2.1. Development of programme components	-	-	Angola (with Train for Trade II Programme)	-	Kenya (HPCDP) Ethiopia (HPCDP) Zambia (HPCDP)	-	Malawi (HPCDP)

develop and implement policies on trade, investment and technology	based on results from Outcome 1							
	OP2.2. Development of China-UNCTAD programmes of support	-	-	-	Kenya and Ethiopia (holistic programmes in development). Angola (new holistic programme in development).	Angola Kenya Ethiopia Zambia	-	Malawi
	OP2.3. National workshops for multiple stakeholders to launch the programme	-	-	Nigeria Angola (NPCGA)	-	Kenya (validation workshop, high-level dialogue for implementation) Ethiopia (validation workshop)	Zambia (validation workshop)	-
	OP2.4. National policy roadmaps	-	-	Angola (policy document)	-	-	-	Kenya Malawi (draft)
	OP2.5. Communication campaign about the programme	Website	-	-	Side event to the LDC5 Conference in Doha.	SDG Summit in New York, side event Transforming4Trade High Impact Initiative	Publication of a special feature on the holistic programme in the Africa Renewal outlet. UNCTAD's Secretary General chaired the high-level advisory board meeting on the PCI. Side event on the PCI during the 55th session of the UN Statistical Commission.	-

Annex 14 – List of outputs delivered, as of December 2024 and checked until 9 April

Country	Events	Date	Category	Evidence
Angola	4. Working towards Graduation with Momentum – Workshop to discuss the elements of the Angola National Smooth Transition Strategy (NSTS) (06 Apr. 2022, Luanda, Angola)	06 Apr. 2022	Workshop	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-mission-angola-and-graduation-momentum-workshop.
Ethiopia	1. Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Ethiopia for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth (3-4 Mar. 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)	3-4 Mar. 2022	Workshop	Delivered
Ethiopia	5. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI), (31 May- 1 Jun. 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)	31 May- 1 Jun. 2022	Training	Delivered
Ethiopia	10. Workshop on validation of the results of the national productive capacities gap assessment of Ethiopia (13 Dec. 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)	13 Dec. 2022	Workshop	Delivered
Ethiopia	13. High-level launch of the holistic programme for productive capacities development (HPPCD) for Ethiopia (4 Jul. 2023)	4 Jul. 2023	Workshop	Delivered
Istanbul	11. Productive Capacities Index (PCI) Statistical and Technical Advisory Group First Meeting (8-9 Feb. 2023, Istanbul, Turkiye)	8-9 Feb. 2023	Meeting	https://unctad.org/meeting/first-meeting-productive-capacities-index-pci-statistical-and-technical-task-team
Kenya	2. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) (14-15 Mar. 2022, Nairobi, Kenya)	14-15 Mar. 2022	Training	Delivered
Kenya	3. Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Kenya for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth (16-18 Mar. 2022, Nairobi, Kenya)	16-18 Mar. 2022	Workshop	Delivered
Kenya	12. High-level launch of the national productive capacities gap assessment (NPCGA) and UNCTAD holistic productive capacities development programme for Kenya (16-17 May 2023, Nairobi, Kenya)	16-17 May 2023,	Workshop	Delivered
Kenya	High-level dialogue on the implementation of the holistic productive capacities development programme for Kenya (16 Aug. 2023, Nairobi Kenya)	16 Aug. 2023	Policy Dialogue	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-dialogue-implementation-holistic-productive-capacities-development-programme
Malawi	15. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI), (3-4 Oct. 2023, Lilongwe, Malawi).	3-4 Oct. 2023	Training	Delivered
Malawi	16. National Policy-level Workshop on the fostering of productive capacities to build socioeconomic resilience to adverse shocks and realize the development vision of Malawi (5-6 Oct. 2023, Lilongwe, Malawi)	5-6 Oct. 2023	Workshop	Delivered
Malawi	22. High-level Validation Workshop: National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Malawi (5 November 2024, Lilongwe, Malawi)	05-Nov-24	Workshop	Delivered

Malawi	23. High-level Validation Workshop: Holistic Productive capacities Development Programme (6 November 2024, Lilongwe, Malawi)	06-Nov-24	Workshop	Delivered
Mozambique	18. Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Mozambique for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth (29-30 April 2024, Maputo, Mozambique)	29-30 April 2024	Workshop	Delivered
Mozambique	19. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI), (2-3 May 2024, Maputo, Mozambique)	2-3 May 2024	Training	Delivered
Nigeria	6. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) (13-14 Sept. 2022, Abuja, Nigeria)	13-14 Sept. 2022	Training	Delivered
Nigeria	7. National Policy Dialogue on Fostering Productive Capacities in Nigeria for Industrialization Export Diversification, and Inclusive Growth (15-16 Sept. 2022, Abuja, Nigeria)	15-16 Sept. 2022	Policy Dialogue	Delivered
United States	14. "Transforming4Trade: Paradigm Shift to Boost Economic Development" High Impact Initiative (HII) side event (19 Sept. 2023, New York).	19 Sept. 2023	Global conference	Delivered
Zambia	8. Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (4-5 Oct. 2022, Lusaka, Zambia)	4-5 Oct. 2022	Training	Delivered
Zambia	9. Workshop on the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Zambia and the fostering of productive capacities for a smooth transition from the LDC category (6-7 Oct. 2022, Lusaka, Zambia)	6-7 Oct. 2022	Workshop	Delivered
Zambia	17. The Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme' validation workshop (12 Oct. 2023, Lusaka, Zambia)	12 Oct. 2023	Workshop	Delivered
Zimbabwe	20. National Capacity Building Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI), (6-7 May 2024, Harare, Zimbabwe)	6-7 May 2024	Training	Delivered
Zimbabwe	21. National Policy-Level Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Zimbabwe for industrialisation, economic diversification, and inclusive growth (8-9 May 2024, Harare, Zimbabwe)	8-9 May 2024	Workshop	Delivered

Country	Knowledge products	Date	Category	Evidence
Angola	3. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment - Angola (Apr. 2022)	Apr-22	National review	Delivered
Angola	14. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Angola (Jul. 2024)	Jul-24	Guidance material	Delivered
Ethiopia	2. Summary report of the National Policy-level Workshop on Fostering Productive Capacities in Ethiopia for Industrialization, Export Diversification, and Inclusive Growth (Mar. 2022)	Mar-22	Report	Delivered
Ethiopia	9. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Ethiopia (Mar. 2023)	Mar-23	National review	https://unctad.org/publication/productive-capacities-development-challenges-and-opportunities-case-ethiopia
Ethiopia	22. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Ethiopia (Jan. 2025)	Jan-25	Guidance material	Delivered

Kenya	1. Summary report of the High-level Policy Dialogue on Fostering Productive Capacities in Kenya for Industrialization, Export Diversification, and Inclusive Growth (Mar. 2022)	Mar-22	Report	Delivered
Kenya	5. Background paper (first draft) for Kenya's NPCGA (Sept. 2022)	Sep-22	Report	Delivered
Kenya	10. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Kenya (May 2023)	May-23	National review	https://unctad.org/publication/productive-capacities-development-challenges-and-opportunities-case-kenya
Kenya	11. Summary report: High-level Launch of the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (NPCGA) and Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Kenya (Jun. 2023)	Jun-23	Report	Delivered
Kenya	13. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Kenya (Jun. 2024)	Jun-24	Guidance material	Delivered
Malawi	15. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment - Malawi (Sept. 2024)	Sep-24	National review	Delivered
Malawi	17. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Malawi (Sept. 2024)	Sep-24	Guidance material	Delivered
Mozambique	21. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment - Mozambique (Dec. 2024)	Dec-24	National review	Delivered
Mozambique	23. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap for Mozambique will be ready in February 2025.	Feb-25	Guidance material	Pending[30]
Nigeria	4. Background paper (first draft) for Nigeria's and ECOWAS NPCGAs (July 2022)	Jul-22	Report	Delivered
Nigeria	6. Summary report for National Policy-level Workshop on Fostering Productive Capacities and Structural Economic Transformation in Nigeria (Sept. 2022)	Sep-22	Report	Delivered
Nigeria	12. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment - Nigeria (Mar. 2024)	Mar-24	National review	Delivered
Nigeria	19. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Nigeria (Nov. 2024)	Nov-24	Guidance material	Delivered
Zambia	7. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Zambia (Sept. 2022)	Sep-22	National review	https://unctad.org/publication/national-productive-capacities-gap-assessment-zambia
Zambia	8. Summary of The National Workshop on Validation of the Results of the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment and the Fostering of Productive Capacities for Smooth Transition from the LDC Category of Zambia (Oct. 2022)	Oct-22	Report	Delivered
Zambia	18. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Zambia (Oct. 2024)	Oct-24	Guidance material	Delivered
Zimbabwe	16. National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment - Zimbabwe (Sept. 2024)	Sep-24	National review	Delivered
Zimbabwe	20. Productive Capacities Development Roadmap - Zimbabwe (Nov. 2024)	Nov-24	Guidance material	Delivered

[30] Delivered in April 2025, according to evidence provided after the closing of the data collection for this evaluation.

Country	Advisory services	Date	Category	Evidence
Angola	1. Commencement of the multidimensional, multiannual national programme to build productive capacities in Angola (April 2022)	Apr-22	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Angola	2. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Angola, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (6-7 April 2022, Luanda, Angola).	6-7 April 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Missing
Angola	3. Smooth Transition Strategy for Graduation with Momentum: Key Policies and Recommendations – Angola (Jul. 2022).	Jul-22	Establishment of national mechanism	Delivered
Angola	10. Consultations with the Secretary of State for Commerce of Angola during the LDC5 Conference in Doha (8 Mar. 2023, Doha, Qatar).	8 Mar. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Angola	22. New Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Angola (Jul. 2024)	Jul-24	Drafting national policy	Delivered
Ethiopia	5. A comprehensive series of technical consultations with national stakeholders of Ethiopia incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (27-28 July 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).	27-28 July 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Ethiopia	8. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Ethiopia, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (13-14 Dec. 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)	13-14 Dec. 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Ethiopia	13. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Ethiopia (Jun. 2023).	Jun-23	Drafting national policy	https://unctad.org/publication/productive-capacities-development-challenges-and-opportunities-case-ethiopia
Ethiopia	14. Consultations with the Minister of Industry of Ethiopia on the provisions and the implementation of the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Ethiopia (5 Jul. 2023, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)	5 Jul. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Kenya	4. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Kenya, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (25-26 July 2022, Nairobi, Kenya).	25-26 July 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Missing
Kenya	9. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Kenya, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (15-16 Dec. 2022, Nairobi, Kenya)	15-16 Dec. 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Missing
Kenya	12. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Kenya (May 2023).	May-23	Drafting national policy	https://unctad.org/publication/productive-capacities-development-challenges-and-opportunities-case-kenya
Kenya	15. Consultations with the Government of Kenya and other stakeholders (16-17 May 2023, Nairobi, Kenya)	16-17 May 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered

Kenya	16. High-level dialogue on the implementation of the holistic productive capacities development programme for Kenya (16 Aug. 2023, Nairobi, Kenya)	16 Aug. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Malawi	11. Consultations with the Minister of Trade and Industry of Malawi during the LDC5 Conference in Doha (8 Mar. 2023, Doha, Qatar)	8 Mar. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Malawi	18. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Malawi, including government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (3-6 Oct. 2023, Lilongwe, Malawi).	3-6 Oct. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Malawi	23. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Malawi (Sept. 2024)	Sep-24	Drafting national policy	Delivered
Mozambique	20. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Mozambique, including government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (29-30 April 2024, Maputo, Mozambique)	29-30 April 2024	Consultations with stakeholders	Missing
Mozambique	26. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Mozambique will be ready in February 2025	Feb-25	Drafting national policy	Pending[31]
Nigeria	6. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Nigeria, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (13-16 Sept. 2022, Abuja, Nigeria)	13-16 Sept. 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Nigeria	24. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Nigeria (Oct. 2024)	Oct-24	Drafting national policy	Delivered
Zambia	7. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Zambia, incl. high ranking government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (4-7 Oct. 2022, Lusaka, Zambia).	4-7 Oct. 2022	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Zambia	17. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Zambia (Sept. 2023)	Sep-23	Drafting national policy	Delivered
Zambia	19. Consultations with national stakeholders of Lusaka, including government officials, on the implementation of the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme (11-12 Oct. 2023, Lusaka, Zambia)	11-12 Oct. 2023	Consultations with stakeholders	Delivered
Zimbabwe	21. A comprehensive series of consultations with national stakeholders of Zimbabwe, including government officials, to advance fostering of productive capacities (6-7 May 2024, Harare, Zimbabwe)	6-7 May 2024	Consultations with stakeholders	Missing
Zimbabwe	25. Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme for Zimbabwe (Oct. 2024)	Oct-24	Drafting national policy	Delivered

[31] Delivered in April 2025, according to evidence provided after the closing of the data collection for this evaluation.

Country/ Type of event	Communication and outreach	Evidence (all delivered)
Angola	High-level mission to Angola and graduation with momentum workshop	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-mission-angola-and-graduation-momentum-workshop.
Ethiopia	High-level launch of the holistic programme for productive capacities development (HPPCD) for Ethiopia	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-launch-holistic-programme-productive-capacities-development-hppcd-ethiopia
	Validation of the results of the national productive capacities gap assessment of Ethiopia	https://unctad.org/meeting/validation-results-national-productive-capacities-gap-assessment-ethiopia
	Training on statistical, methodological and computational aspects of the productive capacities index (PCI)	https://unctad.org/meeting/training-statistical-methodological-and-computational-aspects-productive-capacities-index.
	Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Ethiopia for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-ethiopia-industrialization-export-diversification.
Kenya	Consultation between the Government of Kenya and key development partners based in Nairobi on a new development paradigm	https://unctad.org/meeting/consultation-between-government-kenya-and-key-development-partners-based-nairobi-new.
	High-level launch of the national productive capacities gap assessment (NPCGA) and UNCTAD holistic productive capacities development programme for Kenya	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-launch-national-productive-capacities-gap-assessment-npcga-and-unctad-holistic
	High-level dialogue on the implementation of the holistic productive capacities development programme for Kenya	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-dialogue-implementation-holistic-productive-capacities-development-programme
	Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Kenya for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-kenya-industrialization-export-diversification-and.
Malawi	High-level workshop on the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment and the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme of Malawi	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-workshop-national-productive-capacities-gap-assessment-and-holistic-productive
	National capacity building training on statistical, methodological and computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index	https://unctad.org/meeting/national-capacity-building-training-statistical-methodological-and-computational-aspects
	National policy-level workshop on the fostering of productive capacities to build socioeconomic resilience to adverse shocks and realize the development vision of Malawi	https://unctad.org/meeting/national-policy-level-workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-build-socioeconomic
Mozambique	Workshop on fostering productive capacities in Mozambique for industrialization, export diversification, and inclusive growth	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-mozambique-industrialization-export.
	National capacity building training on statistical, methodological and computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI)	https://unctad.org/meeting/national-capacity-building-training-statistical-methodological-and-computational-aspects-0.

Nigeria	Workshop on fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation in Nigeria	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-and-structural-economic-transformation-nigeria-0
	Workshop on fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation in Nigeria	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-and-structural-economic-transformation-nigeria
Zambia	High-level launch of the holistic productive capacities development programme for Zambia	https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-launch-holistic-productive-capacities-development-programme-zambia
	Workshop on the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Zambia and the fostering of productive capacities for a smooth transition from the LDC category	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-national-productive-capacities-gap-assessment-zambia-and-fostering-productive
	Training on Statistical, Methodological and Computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index	https://unctad.org/meeting/training-statistical-methodological-and-computational-aspects-productive-capacities-index-0
Zimbabwe	National capacity building training on statistical, methodological and computational aspects of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI)	https://unctad.org/meeting/national-capacity-building-training-statistical-methodological-and-computational-aspects-1
	National policy-level workshop on fostering productive capacities in Zimbabwe for industrialisation, economic diversification, and inclusive growth	https://unctad.org/meeting/national-policy-level-workshop-fostering-productive-capacities-zimbabwe-industrialisation
High-level events	Transforming4Trade - Paradigm shift to boost economic development	https://unctad.org/meeting/transforming4trade-paradigm-shift-boost-economic-development
	UNGA79 Side-Event: Building productive capacity in small island developing States	https://unctad.org/meeting/unga79-side-event-building-productive-capacity-small-island-developing-states
	UNSC55 side event on the Productive Capacities Index (PCI)	https://unctad.org/meeting/unsc55-side-event-productive-capacities-index-pci
	Meeting of the High-level Advisory Board on the Productive Capacities Index	https://unctad.org/meeting/meeting-high-level-advisory-board-productive-capacities-index
	First meeting of the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) Statistical and Technical Task Team	https://unctad.org/meeting/first-meeting-productive-capacities-index-pci-statistical-and-technical-task-team.
	Workshop on strengthening productive capacities and facilitating structural transformation in Asia-Pacific Least Developed Countries	https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-strengthening-productive-capacities-and-facilitating-structural-transformation
High-level press coverage	UNCTAD launches new index for countries to better measure economic potential	https://unctad.org/news/unctad-launches-new-index-countries-better-measure-economic-potential
	Following the successful implementation of the High Impact Initiative, Transforming4Trade on 17 September 2023 as part of the SDG Action Weekend in New York, a reference was made to UNCTAD's holistic approach to productive capacities building in the Financial Times. The event's moderator, Ms. Gillian Tett of the Financial Times covered the approach in her article, Can the SDG Goals be Saved?	https://www.ft.com/content/32c5ff2c-cf76-48f1-9fd6-8b9e1ee82eb5

	It's time to put productive capacities at the heart of every development strategy	https://unctad.org/news/blog-its-time-put-productive-capacities-heart-every-development-strategy.
	By Paul Akiwumi, Director for Africa and Least Developed Countries, UNCTAD and Ratnakar Adhikari, Executive Director, Enhanced Integrated Framework	https://oecd-development-matters.org/2022/10/07/put-productive-capacities-at-the-heart-of-development-strategy/.

Country	Social media	Evidence
Kenya		
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658089617260699648?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/UNCTADinAfrica/status/1658445177743106056?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658495585350045699?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/UNCTAD/status/1658409928019591169?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658542884042203183?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/KenyaVision2030/status/1658766116494139393?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/KenyaVision2030/status/1658373712171741184?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658866418153078786?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/KenyaVision2030/status/1659197392787484675?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1658330250193895428?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658142469807022083?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1658357746125746176?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/Sakwa_Bunyasi/status/1659163721703342080?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/KenyaVision2030/status/1658474353665929220?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1659476012030205952?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1691901642537369667?s=20	Not available
	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7097621348948013056?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_high-level-launch-of-the-national-productive-activity-7063855526903738370-YHSq?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_unctad-is-supporting-kenya-to-strengthen-activity-7064262458948861952-P_3Z?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available

	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_kenya-activity-7064516163258445824-J1vT?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1692554300633886875?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/KenyaVision2030/status/1659202217709289474?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1691457400942059522?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1692425857149599880?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1692426028881149993?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1692543342175756468?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1692543898290160038?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/ForeignOfficeKE/status/1778882990761746638	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778778095471804444	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1727723254851178630	Available
	· https://x.com/ForeignOfficeKE/status/1778882990761746638	Available
	Communications efforts were also made in Swahili to promote the Programme: https://x.com/UNCTADinAfrica/status/1658447658065833988?s=20	Not available
Ethiopia		
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1676328422392360960?s=20	Available
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	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1676328422392360960?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1676441502833164290?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1676441505806921732?s=20	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_ethiopia-npcga-activity-7048926249976483843-_TIZ?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1643147352377630723?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1676692908198559745?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1676994100850049024?s=20	Available

	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1676997138201313281?s=20	Available
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	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1677217796072022016?s=20	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778115437948969342	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778114741015073118	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778051118062616730	Available
	· https://x.com/fanatelevision/status/1777675763879215269	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1777344336864170016	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1777342937371681270	Not available
	· https://x.com/UNCTADinAfrica/status/1777322453825462698	Available
	· https://x.com/fanatelevision/status/1777675763879215269	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778051118062616730	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1778114741015073118	Not available
Malawi		
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	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1709577779509866583	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1709964169896743350	Not available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1709946743784386804	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1710952757593616519	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1710952760781238498	Available
	· https://x.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1710952765516571020	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_malawi-pci-activity-7115339212639326208-MmWq?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
Mozambique		
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_national-capacity-building-training-on-statistical-activity-7192145883784728576-_u7m?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available

	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_mozambique-activity-7191805617190137858-wt0a?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_maputo-mozambique-activity-7191018374129176576--lzb?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_mozambique-mozambique-productivecapacities-activity-7191014781930094593-1bx4?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
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Zambia		
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	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1712091169889382639	Available
Zimbabwe		
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	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_zimbabwe-pci-activity-7194284898965221378-IrN9?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/bennysalo_united-nations-spearheads-national-capacity-activity-7193646086471696384-zzVk?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_zimbabwe-productivecapacities-pci-activity-7193558644012068864-rUM2?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
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	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1787789901557071951	Not available
Broad programme-related messaging related to the key role of productive capacities development in fostering sustainable development (in support of output 2.5)		
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1642835080380051457?s=20	Available
	· https://x.com/PAkiwumi/status/1643529908948180994?s=20	Not available
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	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_ldcs-productivecapacities-sps-activity-7212061319322107907-sfH4?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
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	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_pci-activity-7175908066721177601-c_GP?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_eu-angola-activity-7163853025084702722-VSfN?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/un-africa-renewal_afcfta-economicempowerment-activity-7120318086703902720-Dli9?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available

	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_transforming4trade-will-reshape-african-activity-7120340734875983872-44RJ?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
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	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1633882655253987352?s=20	Available
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	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1632739724686241794?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/AngolaOnu/status/1632734876137926656?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1632724219514564608?s=20	Available
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	· https://twitter.com/UNCTAD/status/1627314629859766276?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1623621816999718912?s=20	Not available
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	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1610176637005402114?s=20	Available
	https://twitter.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1603471012603039751?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1603386131214524416?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1603629228586668034?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1603389080863121409?s=20	Not available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1603386131214524416?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/EIF4LDCs/status/1600074033491431424?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1596149888894517251?s=20	Not available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1595715735153680390?s=20	Not available
	· https://twitter.com/DelelegnMussie/status/1595449038907658241?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1595447621673418758?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1595447286812876801?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1593611913220571136?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1593612357921652738?s=20	Not available
	· https://twitter.com/OECD_Centre/status/1578409902317387789?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/UNCTAD/status/1580181597633929216?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/UNCTAD/status/1579372655224160258?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1578420538568867845?s=20	Available
	· https://twitter.com/PAkiwumi/status/1578316926509457408?s=20	Available
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Ongoing dissemination of the 2nd Generation Productive Capacities Index (in support of output 1.2)		
Updated data and description of the 2nd Generation Productive Capacities Index (PCI) were released on the dedicated web portal. Related information was also made available on the UNCTADStat DataCenter at https://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/Pci.html.	https://pci.unctad.org	Available
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	· https://www.linkedin.com/posts/paul-akiwumi-00121945_building-productive-capacity-is-a-pathway-activity-7168526371894325248-NHRT?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop	Available
High Impact Initiative Transforming for Trade (in support of output 2.5)		
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UNGA side event		
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UNSC side event		
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Annex 15 – Compilation of post-events assessments

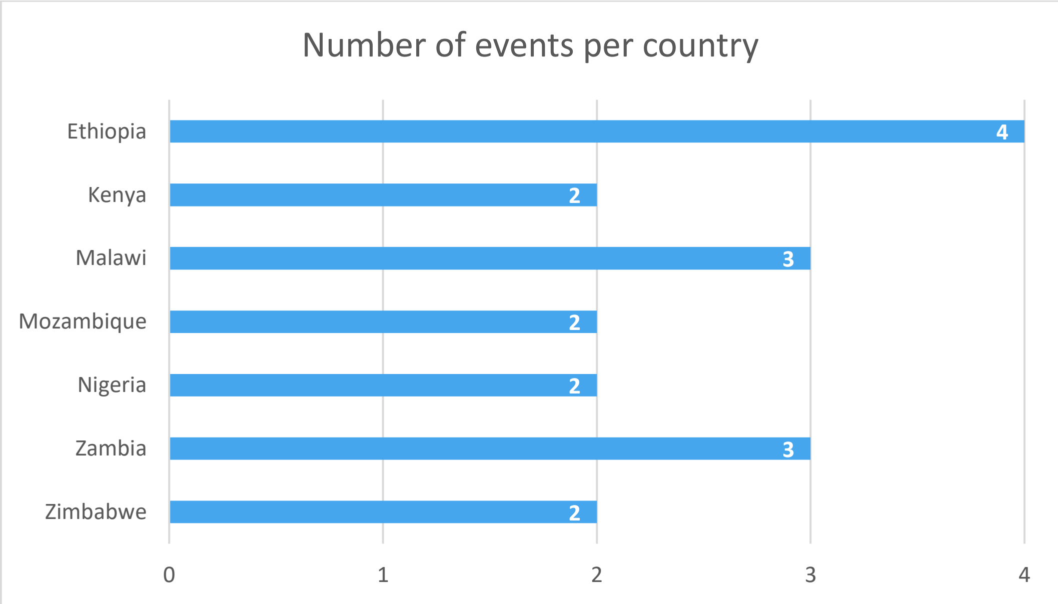
Averages per event

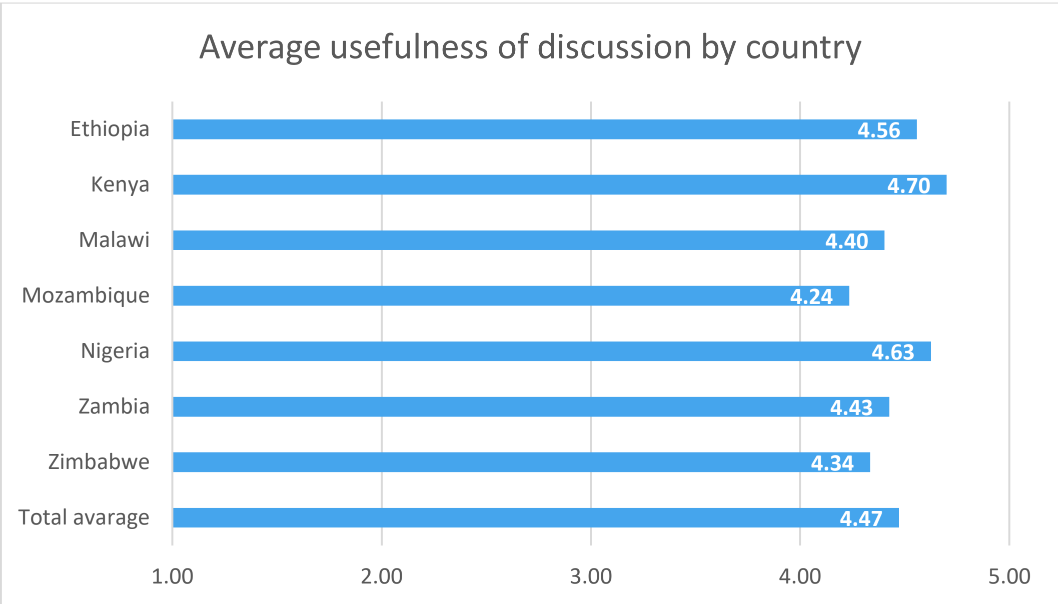
Event	Subject	Country	Average Usefulness of discussions	Average Relevance for your work	Average Usefulness to your activities	Overall comments	Rom to improve
20220303 - EVALUATION - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 3-4 March 2022	Validation of the NPCGA	Ethiopia	4.45	4.74	4.45		
20220314 - EVALUATION - Nairobi, Kenya 14-15 March 2022	Training of statisticians	Kenya	4.57	4.79	4.86	Relevant, request more trainings like this	More time allocation
20220316 - EVALUATION - Nairobi, Kenya 16-18 March 2022	Validation of the NPCGA	Kenya	4.83	4.87	4.89		
20220530 - EVALUATION - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 30-31 May 2022	Training of statisticians	Ethiopia	4.54	4.64	4.61	Relevant, country orientated	More time allocation
20220913 - EVALUATION - Abuja, Nigeria 13-14 Sept 2022	Training of statisticians	Nigeria	4.62	4.76	4.59	Relevant, educational	Involve other insitutions
20220915 - EVALUATION - Abuja, Nigeria 15-16 Sept 2022	Validation of the NPCGA	Nigeria	4.63	4.60	4.40		
20221004 - EVALUATION - Lusaka, Zambia 4-5 October 2022	Training of statisticians	Zambia	4.50	4.29	4.29	Educational, request more trainings like this	More time allocation, more use of local data
20221006 - EVALUATION - Lusaka, Zambia 6-7 October 2022	Validation of the NPCGA	Zambia	4.46	4.69	4.69		
20221213 - EVALUATION - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 13 Decembre 2022	Validation of the NPCGA	Ethiopia	4.43	4.70	4.57		
20230704 - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia -	Validation/launch of the HPCDP	Ethiopia	4.81	4.75	4.56		

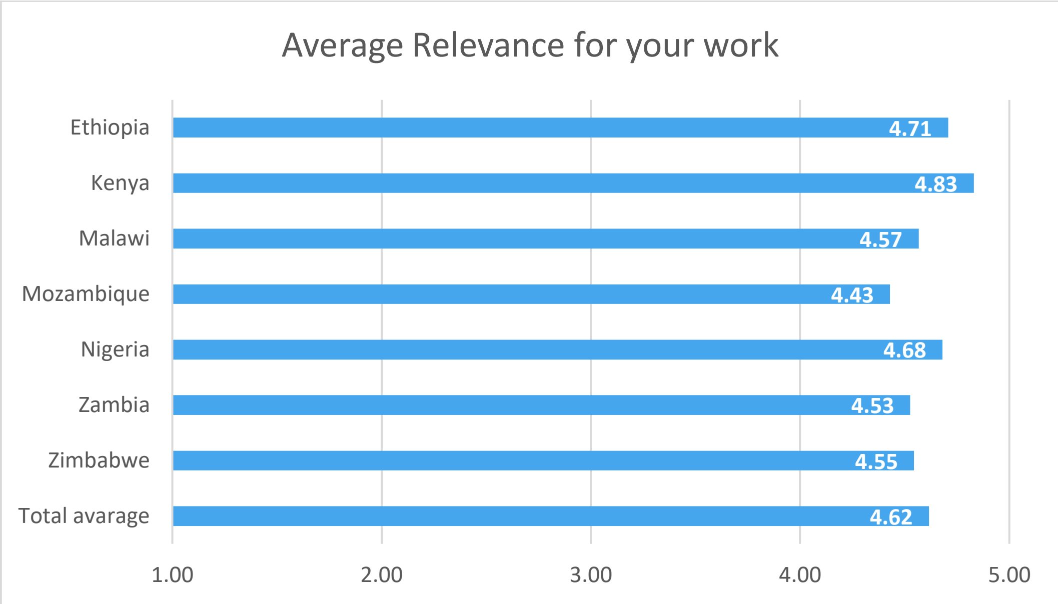
evaluation July 2023							
20231003 - EVALUATION - PCI training - Lilongwe, Malawi - 3-4 Ocotber 2023	Training of statisticians	Malawi	4.05	4.68	4.74	Relevant, request more trainings like this, capacity building	More time allocation
20231005 - EVALUATION - Policy-level workshop - Lilongwe, Malawi - 5-6 October 2023	Validation of the NPCGA	Malawi	4.62	4.66	4.62		
20231012 - EVALUATION - HL Launch of the Holistic PC Dev Prog - Lusaka, Zambia - 12 Ocotber 2023	Validation/launch of the HPCDP	Zambia	4.32	4.60	4.51		
20240429 - EVALUATION - Policy-level workshop - Maputo, Mozambique - 29-30 April 2024	Validation of the NPCGA	Mozambique	4.30	4.53	4.27		
20240502 - EVALUATION - PCI workshop - Maputo, Mozambique - 2-3 May 2024	Training of statisticians	Mozambique	4.17	4.33	3.67		
20240506 - EVALUATION results- PCI workshop - Harare, Zimbabwe - 6-7 May 2024	Training of statisticians	Zimbabwe	4.25	4.50	4.45	Relevant	More time allocation
20240508 - EVALUATION - Policy-level workshop - Harare, Zimbabwe - 8-9 May 2024	Validation of the NPCGA	Zimbabwe	4.42	4.59	4.36		
20241105 - EVALUATION - NPCGA-HPCDP workshop - Lilongwe Malawi -	Validation/launch of the NPCGA and the HPCDP	Malawi	4.54	4.36	4.74		

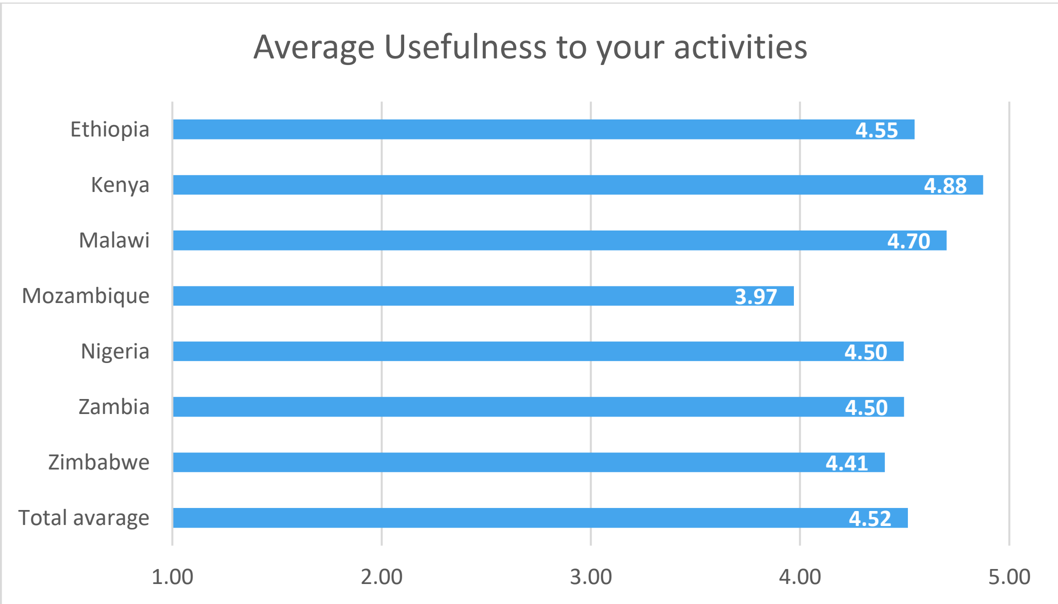
5-6 November 2024							
			4.47	**4.62**	**4.52**		

Averages per country






Average Relevance for your work
Ethiopia
Kenya
Malawi
Mozambique
Nigeria
Zambia
Zimbabwe
Total avarage
4.71
4.83
4.57
4.43
4.68
4.53
4.55
4.62
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00


Average Usefulness to your activities
Ethiopia
Kenya
Malawi
Mozambique
Nigeria
Zambia
Zimbabwe
Total avarage
4.55
4.88
4.70
3.97
4.50
4.50
4.41
4.52
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00

Detailed sample of qualitative comments

Title training	Comments from assessment forms		
	What was relevant/ appreciated?	Links to the work they do	Room to improve
20220314 - EVALUATION - Nairobi, Kenya 14-15 March 2022			
Training of statisticians	Ambition to build a indigenous index R coding R studio PCI practice PCA Identifying gaps during policy making	Statistical methodology and software	More time allocation Use country orientated examples
20220530 - EVALUATION - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 30-31 May 2022			
Training of statisticians	R coding R studio Software (overall) PCI Stata Country specific examples and results	Statistical methodology and software Policy making and decision making	More time allocation Follow-up and training to ensure continuous work and sustainability
20220913 - EVALUATION - Abuja, Nigeria 13-14 Sept 2022			
Training of statisticians	Computing the PCI Policy direction Capacity building aspects Country context orientated	Statistical methodology and software	More engaging ideation, eg. through social media platforms to share ideas etc More time allocation Consider other index building methods to complement the PCI and avoid changing scores/rank each year. Project oriented PCI may bring the application closer. Follow-up and training to ensure continuous work and sustainability Training could be done at sub-national level More discussion on the three elements that define productive capacities, and how they link with the eight categories of the index. Democratic Institutions, e.g. NILDS National policy makers Engage more academics UNCTAD, local trainers and the national policy makers
20231012 - EVALUATION - HL Launch of the Holistic PC Dev Prog - Lusaka, Zambia - 12 October 2023			
Validation/launch of the HPCDP	Group discussions and interventions - wider perspective of groups and individuals The inclusion of academia	The vulnerability profile The transition to a greener economy	More stakeholder participation More expert participation Move the discussions to a higher level with cabinet ministers The scope of the programme is too ambitious given the budget and timeline More time allocation More inclusion of private sector in policy making and implementation

			More inclusion of civil society organizations More coordination with State institutions OVERALL - more coordination/partnerships with different groups - public institutions, private sector, civil society and academia, is requested.
20240429 - EVALUATION - Policy-level workshop - Maputo, Mozambique - 29-30 April 2024			
Validation of the NPCGA	Debates and presentations PCI and the implementation of the holistic approach to improve the productive capacities Interactive event Comparability with other successful stories and lessons learned	Section 3 on bindings to development and industrial transformation SEZ Productive capacities International trade The holistic approach to development Massive access to the TICs	More time for discussion | Shorter (and less) presentations More institutions and sectors Send documents in advance | Document sharing More seminars on the PCI Communication and alignment of themes
20240508 - EVALUATION - Policy-level workshop - Harare, Zimbabwe - 8-9 May 2024			
Validation of the NPCGA	The role of macroeconomic conditions Good in terms of reviling where the country stands in terms of industrialization Case studies on how some countries improved their PCI Discussions were evidence-based Helpful in regard to policy formulation		The views shared should be brought to implementation and not end in discussions More time allocation Policy makers, and they should also participate in the workshops. All government entities should participate.
20241105 - EVALUATION - NPCGA-HPCDP workshop - Lilongwe Malawi - 5-6 November 2024			
Validation/launch of the HPCDP	Exposition of key gaps Highlight of strategic growth potential Representation of different stakeholders		More time allocation Improved UN export of manufactured goods from developing countries More engagement and participation with the principal secretaries and ministers/cabinet Private sector Principal secretaries and ministers/cabinet

Annex 16 – Summary of findings based on the UNDESA 2030 Sub-fund template

This summary follows the UNDESA 2030 Sub-fund template provided in Annex 1 of the ToRs for this evaluation. It was slightly adapted to fit the structure of the report while keeping the same criteria. Findings tend to be more fine-grained to empirically inform each evaluation question, whereas conclusions interweave them in a narrative. Lessons learned and recommendations, on the other hand, are conditional to project overall performance on key issues and cover more than one finding to be comprehensive and robust. This is how they make the case for systemic change in future project planning.

Findings	Conclusions (excerpts from the body of the report)	Lessons learned	Recommendations
Relevance (overall score: Highly satisfactory)			
#1. There is consensus between beneficiary governments, country and regional stakeholders and implementation partners that the project reflects and addresses the development needs and the policy priorities in the eight countries supported. The project aligns with current strategic documents, national policies and action plans, in addition to raising awareness about strength-based opportunities for development and the advantages of a holistic approach to alleviating bindings to development.	This report concludes that the UNCTAD SDG project was relevant to country priorities, given its alignment with their major strategies and development plans.	#1. The holistic approach offered a strength-driven, multi-actor narrative to development in the beneficiary countries. Dimensions of the project that contribute for this are the PCI as a powerful benchmark tool, the flagship example of Angola, and the consistent use of the productive capacities and structural transformation approach. This provides potency to effect the One-UN approach through partnerships with initiatives of other UN organizations.	-
Coherence (overall score: Satisfactory)			
#2. The project is coherent with UNCTAD's longstanding work on productive capacities and the UN High Impact Initiative Transforming4Trade, led by UNCTAD. The project's main deliverables (i.e., National Productive Capacities Gaps	It is coherent with the work of UNCTAD on productive capacities, including the UN High Impact Initiative Tranform4Trade. The	#2. Between-projects coordination, as in Angola, was successful in keeping the momentum of ongoing	-

Assessment and the Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programme) strongly connect to this framework.	project benefited from the Train for Trade II Programme in Angola to benchmark the intervention in other countries.	interventions and in advancing on less developed aspects. Strong relationships with key stakeholders and grounded institutional knowledge facilitated communication and supported the acceptance and integration of recommendations through alignment with national planning and policy cycles.	
#3. The UNCTAD SDG project was inspired by and well-aligned with the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade IIproject in Angola that led to joint activities, mutual exchanges and learning between the two projects. However, the concomitance between them in the 2021-2023 period may have caused some degree of invisibility of the UNCTAD SDGs project in the country. Other beneficiary countries did not report similar alignments.			-
#4. At the global level, the project aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund on the principles of holistic and multi-sectoral responses and demand-driven interventions but missed opportunities in relation to the principles of clearly articulating the UN collective response and the provision of tools to UNCTs to tailor responses to specific national needs and realities. It also aligns with Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs. Limited coordination with UNRCO focal points and long communication gaps between in-country events were the main barriers to fostering a One-UN approach to this project, which, according to the evidence collected, made it a UNCTAD-centred project.	It aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the common country analysis and other UN frameworks in matters related to developing productive capacities, such as the Programmes of Action for Small Island Developing States, LDCs and LLDCs. Nevertheless, there are missed opportunities in relation to clearly articulating the UN collective response, starting with limited coordination with the UNRCOs, UNRCOs' limited personnel capacities, and trickling down to a lack of coordination with UNCTs operating in the beneficiary countries on projects involving productive capacities issues, including partner agencies in the Inter-Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity.	-	-
#5. At country level, whilst the project aligns with country priorities and existing projects on productive capacities to alleviate development barriers for vulnerable groups in least developed and landlocked developing countries through economic diversification and private sector development, it missed opportunities to explore complementarities with other in-country UN and non-UN interventions related to structural transformation.		-	-
Efficiency (overall score: Somehow satisfactory)			

#6. The project delivered 65 outputs, including events, knowledge products, and advisory services. Its communication campaign was mostly through the UNCTAD project website and social media. The project delivered 77.5% of its planned indicators until December 2024, with pending activities in Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe by the closing of the evaluation. There were cost-efficient measures in organising back-to-back events in neighbouring countries.	Overall, despite the challenges faced, the project successfully mobilized relevant stakeholders and delivered a substantial number of high-quality outputs ('expert reports'). However, gaps in the delivery of planned outputs stemmed from issues in project design. First, there was an assumption that Chinese stakeholders would actively participate in implementation and be willing to partially finance the holistic programme. This assumption was not realised and led to adjustments in one output and in all knowledge products that were conditional to that support. This also left the project unable to provide seed money to initiate the implementation of the holistic programme. Secondly, there were missed opportunity to establish specific country baselines and tailored indicators, which would have better aligned the project with country dynamics, such as national planning cycles and identifying the most suitable institutions to house the project. Thirdly, despite a comprehensive list of risks and mitigation strategies, the potential severity of disruptions was underestimated. This led to missed opportunities to implement the envisaged mitigation measures and prevent delays.	-	-
#7. Project planning and coordination was somewhat efficient in mobilising relevant stakeholders, with varying degrees of efficiency per country. The centrality of China as a key stakeholder and the planned engagement of Chinese actors in project implementation was an unfounded assumption, leading to their absence, the redesign of one output on country-based China-UNCTAD programmes of support, and an unsystematic consideration of China in the main knowledge products.		#3. Unconfirmed design assumptions about China's active participation in the project as a development partner led to adjustments in project implementation and reduced the effectiveness and potential impact of the project.	R1. UNCTAD should improve project design by ensuring that assumptions on and the modalities for the involvement of donors and other development partners are verified and confirmed, that the scope of work is adequate to the human resources available for implementation, that baselines and indicators speak specifically to countries' characteristics and possibilities, that the institution housing the project has the mandate for coordination, and that the exit strategy is clearly stated. R4. UNCTAD should establish an effective monitoring system to track progress on indicators, re-assess risks and mitigation measures, and enforce course correction to support project completion and prevent no-cost extension requests. In addition to the internal 6-months progress reports, the scope and characteristics of the UNCTAD SDG project would indicate the need for an independent mid-term evaluation. In the impossibility of such evaluation, a specific mid-term progress report template could replace the third progress report (1.5 years

#8. Whilst the project delivered high-quality outputs, the implementation faced difficulties due to national elections and change of governments, lack of adequate and predictable funding, the small project management team, a centralized approach, limited capacity of UNRCO economists, and insufficient communication with partners and stakeholders. This, in addition to missed opportunities to synergise with UNRCOs and resident UN entities, and external factors (e.g., COVID-19 and country instabilities) led to inefficiencies, delays and no-cost extension requests (one of them granted).	There are multiple consequences of this, such as an UNCTAD-centred approach that stretched the limited resources of a small team at headquarters. This resulted in inefficiencies in establishing relationships and engagement with country stakeholders, manifested in poor communication and coordination mechanisms, which led to a lack of country ownership. This, in addition to external factors, resulted in delays in implementation, a one-year no-cost extension, and three countries with pending deliverables.	#4. The lack of country-specific baselines and the establishment of UNCTAD-centred indicators left gaps that reflected on poor country ownership. This impacted the project efficiency in mobilising senior government officials and its effectiveness in influencing national and sectoral policies in a transformative way. #7. Poor assessment of risks, including the mismatch between the scope of the project and the size of the implementation team, and the limited use of mitigation strategies contributed to delays in implementation and requests of no-cost extension that, in some instances, could have been avoided.	into a 3-year project) to support the identification of critical gaps in project implementation and inform detailed course-correction. Regarding no-cost extensions, clearer instructions from UNDESA could level expectations held by the project management team. It is critical for project managers to be aware of current discussions on no-cost extensions and the likelihood of approval/refusal as early as possible.
#9. Communication was a critical source of inefficiency in implementing this project. Issues include stakeholders unaware that events were part of a larger project and receiving the NPCGA and the HPCDP a few days in advance of meetings, months-long communication gaps with implementation partners, lack of clarity about the end of the project leading to countries still waiting for continuation activities, and shifts in institutions housing the project without notice to the previous ones, compromising institutional memory of the project and country ownership. Some of these communication gaps were attributed to in-country dynamics, such as lack of capacity to implement		#6. The project's communication strategy, primarily through the project website and social media posts, did not reach key stakeholders. Targeted communication campaigns and formal acknowledgement of country specialists' inputs to drafting and revising knowledge products, using communication channels that connect project participants with project activities and	-

the project, change in government portfolios and priorities and institutional reorganisation after elections.		between themselves, such as communities of practice and country media, could have achieved higher effectiveness with potential impact on increasing ownership.	
Effectiveness (overall score: Satisfactory)			
#10. Overall, the project had uneven performance in achieving its planned outcomes. Outcome 1, on articulation of binding constraints and identification of products for diversification and economic transformation, with validation by government, was achieved in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. It was partially achieved in Nigeria, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Outcome 2, on evidence-based policy development and implementation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for China, was achieved in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries. Survey results confirm this by showing rates of effectiveness between 57%-73% overall and 59%-74% among government respondents.	In terms of intermediary outcomes, countries have been utilizing the knowledge, skills, and products from the project to some extent to inform national, subnational, and sectoral policies. Additionally, these resources have supported conversations with other stakeholders, including the private sector. These are important first steps in ensuring ownership, sustainability and potential impact. Nevertheless, the outcomes are not yet reflecting a holistic approach. As a result, Outcome 1 was achieved in five out of eight countries, while Outcome 2 was fully achieved only in Angola and partially achieved in the other countries. *** The core issue is that the global approach to planning and implementation did not align with the country-specific development stages and internal dynamics. For instance, there were limitations to benchmark much of the Angolan case with other beneficiary countries, starting with the	#5. Project effectiveness could have increased with a clear country-specific approach, with the establishment of multi-stakeholder steering committees and thorough communication with project stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, for strong coordination and in-depth knowledge of country dynamics. The multi-country, global, model of intervention adopted contributed to inefficiencies in implementation and uneven achievements by country.	R2. UNCTAD should clearly define, from the start of the project, and communicate to stakeholders what aspects and/or elements of the project are global or country specific. For example, PCI training for statisticians and the NPCGA between-countries comparability support a global approach, while HPCDP, roadmaps, and exit strategies align better with a country-specific perspective. R3. UNCTAD should establish, as part of the project design, country-based steering committees with relevant stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, relevant ministries, academia and the private sector to ensure strong and thorough communication channels, country ownership, and high-level engagement from the start. Such a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism could rely on permanent members that are considered 'champions' (i.e. leaders, political influencers, mobilisers) throughout the whole project implementation and add value to existing coordinating mechanisms (e.g., macroeconomic committees). One of the roles of these country-based committees could be developing a knowledge sharing platform to regularly communicate updates

	intelligence information from long-term relationships already established in previous interventions in that country.		on the project progress and make knowledge products available for long-term capacity building and use.
#11. Countries report different uses of the knowledge, skills and products of the project, for example, as input to some extent to national, subnational and sectoral policies, and to support conversations with other stakeholders such as the private sector. Survey results indicate a moderate use of these knowledge products – between 47% and 52% among all stakeholders, including government. (Note: this includes the three countries that have deliveries pending).		-	-
#12. Key factors contributing to project success include a novel development narrative that is based on strengths and potential, awareness of the productive capacities approach and sectors of high potential for development, strengthening of ongoing initiatives, opening of opportunities for multiple-stakeholder engagement and collaboration, expansion of central government networks to include local actors and the private sector, and political will, support and ownership.	Enabling factors to advance this progress include a shift in narrative that is based on countries' strengths for development – with evidence to support high potential sectors –, the extent to which the project builds on existing initiatives, the involvement of multiple stakeholders (e.g., private sector), an expansion in government networks to act holistically, and political will and ownership.	-	-
#13. Overarching limiting factors to achieving the project results are lack of funding to implement the holistic programme, which is conditional on high-level political buy-in, one-off PCI training of statisticians, and insufficient knowledge dissemination to translate project results into action.	Conversely, limiting factors to advancements include lack of funding, weak political buy-in, one-off training sessions, and insufficient knowledge dissemination.	-	-
Sustainability and potential impact (overall score: Somehow satisfactory)			
#14. Countries have been devising initial measures to promote programmatic and financial sustainability by including elements of the UNCTAD SDG project in policymaking at the national and sectoral levels. Around 50% of survey respondents agree to a moderate or large	Hence, despite initial efforts by countries to incorporate the UNCTAD SDG project's results into policymaking, the programmatic and financial sustainability of the project	-	-

extent that measures to ensure sustainability are in place. However, given the scarcity of resources in the LDCs, there is need for additional funding and expertise from more development partners to embrace a holistic approach.	is not ensured. National resources are scarce to meet the ambition of the holistic programme, donor support is fragmented, and funding efforts lack country ownership at a deeper level. The lack of an exit strategy with handover measures and the clear establishment of roles and responsibilities for fundraising and management may compromise comprehensive programme implementation.		
#15. Overall, countries have started engagements with donors and other development partners to raise additional funds to implement the holistic programme. However, they have faced challenges in advancing conversations due to a lack of information and ownership on critical issues, e.g., budget breakdown and fund management structure. They identify two factors that could facilitate fundraising: a) seed money to start implementation and make a case for donors, using the World Bank results-based financing approach as a benchmark, and b) fostering stronger partnerships between UNCTAD, UNRCOs and embassies to reach out to development partners.		#8. The lack of a clear exit strategy, including roles and responsibilities in fundraising and what a fund governance structure would look like, is hindering countries' efforts to approach development partners for funding. This risks compromising the sustainability and potential impact of the project.	R5. UNCTAD should co-develop a post-launch resource mobilisation plan with key stakeholders in the beneficiary countries, as soon as there is clarity about the country-specific baselines and relatable projects by other development partners. This could be facilitated by a country-based steering committee. This co-development approach, therefore, would solve some of the key challenges to leverage funding reported by stakeholders in this evaluation.
#16. Countries have made progress in owning the project and taking actions to make it impactful. Key factors influencing their capacities and ownership to sustain the project results without UNCTAD can be summarised as a) clear and thorough communication between the project management team and stakeholders, including structured support to foster coordination, handover measures, and information on the roles and responsibilities in fundraising, b) timing of the project in relation to strategic planning and budget cycles to ensure high-level engagement, c) careful consideration on the best institution to house the project, with coordination mandate, and d) active participation of country stakeholders in all stages of the project.		-	-
Cross-cutting issues (overall score: Satisfactory)			
#17. The UNCTAD SDG project incorporated LNOB principles and environmental issues in project outputs and, to some extent, in implementation mechanisms (e.g., consultations and invitations to events). Outputs produce data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations. Back-to-back missions to neighbouring	In relation to cross-cutting issues, the project incorporated LNOB principles (e.g., data and analysis considering women, youth and rural populations) and environmental issues in project outputs and, to	-	-

countries show the inclusion of an environmental concern during implementation. Stakeholders identify embedded inclusion considering the sectors of focus for structural transformation. Survey results, overall, indicate moderate agreement on the inclusion of vulnerable groups and environmental issues in the project.	some extent, in implementation mechanisms (e.g., back-to-back missions to neighbouring countries). Stakeholders recognize the importance of embedded inclusion, particularly in the sectors targeted for structural transformation. Survey results, overall, indicate moderate agreement on the inclusion of vulnerable groups and environmental issues in the project.		

Annex 17 – Detailed lessons learned

LL1. **The holistic approach of the project offered a new, strength-driven, narrative to development in the beneficiary countries. It provided an opportunity to replace a debt-driven narrative by one of development opportunities that includes multiple actors, such as government, private sector, civil society organisations and universities.**

Three dimensions of the project constitute this lesson learned.

First, the PCI is acknowledged by country stakeholders as a powerful benchmark tool for between-countries comparisons and mutual learning from good practices. This reflects on the expressed interest of country stakeholders to develop the skills to conduct the PCI in-house. They see these skills as valuable to inform evidence-based policymaking.

Second, having a country ahead of the others in the development of its productive capacities inspired others to follow suit. Angola was the flagship example for the other countries, and some stakeholders expressed interest in visiting Angola to learn more about how they have implemented the holistic productive capacities approach.

Third, the consistency of the productive capacities and structural transformation approach in UNCTAD's work, especially in African LDCs and LLDCs, with expertise built through previous pilot studies and regular publications, increases the trust of beneficiary countries in the holistic approach.

On a global level, this consistency supports the promotion of the PCI globally, with stakeholders highlighting the One-UN potential of the holistic productive capacities approach and its transformative potential to the whole of the UN system through partnerships with initiatives of other UN entities.

LL2. **Between-projects coordination was successful in keeping the momentum of ongoing interventions and in advancing on less developed aspects, such as in Angola.** Tapping into the strong relationships with key stakeholders and grounded institutional knowledge established in the Train for Trade II Programme facilitated communication – channels were the same for the two projects – and supported the mobilisation of strategic stakeholders at high government levels.

The established institutional learning supported the acceptance of recommendations through alignment between the delivery of project outputs and national planning and policy cycles, making it easier to integrate policy recommendations into national plans and sectoral policies.

LL3. **Unconfirmed design assumptions on China actively participating in the project as a development partner led to adjustments in project implementation and reduced effectiveness and potential impact of the project.** The assumption that Chinese stakeholders operating in the beneficiary countries would engage in project implementation and beyond – through financing the holistic programme – did not account for critical factors such as how these stakeholders engage with United Nations organisations, other development partners, and the selected countries – through countries' ministries of foreign affairs, bilaterally. This limited the presence of Chinese stakeholders to invitations, often unattended, to participate in some of the project activities. Stakeholders referred to rare presences without participation.

This impacted on the delivery of outputs, especially OP2.2 *Development of China-UNCTAD programmes of support*. Programmes were redesigned to become general and approachable by any development partner. Knowledge products, i.e., the NPCGA and the HPCDP and related roadmaps showed a non-systematic approach to the role of China. This partially affected the achievement of Outcome 2, which included country capacity to develop policies to support investment opportunities for Chinese investors and collaborators, and the corresponding indicator 2.2 *Validation by each participating government of policy options produced by UNCTAD for African trade and investment-related policies and frameworks to support regional integration, export diversification and structural transformation, aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative and national development plans*.

Last, this gap on the involvement of Chinese stakeholders compromised the potential impact of the project on country-China relationships, as indicated in survey results. Countries will continue the work they were doing with China, possibly with more awareness of a holistic approach to development, but without a more tangible contribution of the project to it. A mitigation strategy to provide the fundamentals of country-China relationships has been the production of a set of supplemental desk research on country-China trade opportunities, started during project implementation and continuing after its closing.

LL4. The lack of country-specific baselines and the establishment of UNCTAD-centred indicators left gaps that reflected on poor country ownership. This impacted the project efficiency in mobilising senior government officials and its effectiveness in influencing national and sectoral policies in a transformative way. The PRODOC lacked clear baselines against which a robust system of indicators could be drawn and measured. They presented an overview of the country context and binding constraints to development that go beyond what the project could achieve. Later, progress reports presented baseline statements reflecting project milestones and sometimes contradictory to those in the PRODOC, e.g., "Zero binding constrains identified in each selected country (our emphasis), zero policy recommendations accepted, and no workshops held".

Country-specific baselines could have been built with the support of UNRCO economists and other strategic focal points. This would have improved the tailoring of project implementation to each country and started a process of continuous engagement with country stakeholders. Such baselines could have supported higher efficiency by establishing who the key stakeholders in each country are and how they relate to each other (e.g., ministries of planning and operational ministries), where relevant ministries and other stakeholders stand with their existing development efforts under a holistic perspective (e.g., sectoral strategies and national plans), and how countries relate with China (e.g., enablers and barriers).

Country-specific indicators based on these baselines could have informed a tailored tracking of progress towards the validation of recommendations and the programmatic and financial sustainability of the project in alleviating binding constraints to development on a country-by-country basis. They would have reflected better the outcomes' main objective of changing stakeholders' understanding, articulation and capacity to identify binding constraints to development and design integrated and inclusive policies to tackle them. This would have strengthened the narrative of holistic programmes that build on countries' potential and support the engagement and buy-in of higher-level decision makers.

LL5. Project effectiveness could have increased with a clear country-specific approach, with the establishment of multi-stakeholder steering committees and thorough communication with project stakeholders, including UNRCO and country focal points, for strong coordination and in-depth knowledge of country dynamics. The multi-country, global, model of intervention adopted contributed to inefficiencies in implementation and uneven achievements by country. The PRODOC designed a general approach to cover eight beneficiary countries at different stages of development and under distinct political situations. Although the project designed country-specific target outcomes, the implementation approach and milestones global, i.e., the PCI training for statisticians, the NPCGA validation, and the HPCDP high-level launch. This UNCTAD-centred approach, a consequence of the ambitious scope of the project for a too small team, resulted in insufficient and unclear communication on the project design (i.e., phases and expected involvement of China), months-long gaps in communication with UNRCOs and country stakeholders and shifting implementation partners without notifying current partners. Without a country-based multi-stakeholder steering committee to support implementation and ensure continuous engagement of strategic stakeholders, including through country turbulent times and changes in government, the project suffered from coordination inefficiencies with consequences for its effectiveness, sustainability and potential impact.

The evaluation identified a suboptimal use of UNRCOs' resources, especially considering that UNCTAD is a non-resident entity, and the beneficiary countries have multiple other UN organizations implementing projects on topics relating with the holistic productive capacities approach, such as UNIDO, UNDP and ILO. More coordination would have supported more engagement of high-level decision makers and ensured ownership, follow-up and complementarities, with potential to increase the sustainability of the project and the life of the productive capacities thinking in government action and other agencies' interventions, including with associated funding.

Stakeholders referred that the project's model of intervention – with activities far apart from each other and scarce communication with stakeholders between them – does not foster coordination and ownership. For instance, key informants were not aware of the project as a whole and of activities other than those they participated in. They missed mechanisms to connect with other participants within and between events. This applied to focal points when the project management team shifted from one housing institution to another without notice. There was no handover, with loss of ownership in the process, with former focal points unaware of project developments and new focal points lacking background and internal coordination to continue the work in the country. This applies also to follow-ups after the HPCDP high-level launch.

Countries had high expectations about implementing the holistic programme, but, after long communication gaps with the project management team, they fear the loss of momentum. Stakeholders missed, for instance, a post-launch plan of action, such as seed money or an exit strategy. As a result, some countries have started small policy actions, often not holistic, to address binding constraints to development identified by the UNCTAD SDG project.

Overall, this lesson learned brings about a dilemma in development cooperation: whether multi-country projects deliver more development outcomes than individual projects in multiple countries. Even if this is unclear from a broad development perspective, individual countries tend to perceive interventions as country-specific, including when knowledge products allow for inter-country comparisons (i.e., PCI results). In the UNCTAD SDG project, the evaluation identified a design for a multi-country project, but an implementation attuned to individual-country approaches, such as each country raising funds to implement the holistic programme. This in-between situation may have influenced the questioning by country decision makers and donors on UNCTAD managing the resources leveraged by individual countries.

LL6. The project's communication strategy, remarkably through the project website and social media posts, did not reach out to main stakeholders, since these communication channels are designed for broad audiences. Targeted communication campaigns and formal acknowledgement of country specialists' inputs to drafting and revising knowledge products, using communication channels that connect project participants with project activities and between themselves, such as communities of practice, could have achieved higher effectiveness with potential impact on increasing ownership if country stakeholders would be portrayed as active project participants. There are two dimensions of the project communication strategy. One is internal and refers to the overall quality of communication with stakeholders and to the specific acknowledgement of country stakeholders in the process. In this regard, the long communication gaps and lack of clarity on critical issues, explained above, compromised overall ownership. Stakeholders missed more information throughout implementation to sensitise key stakeholders on the relevance of the project and foster their engagement. Complementarily, the evaluation observed that small strategies, such as printed banners about the project on ministries' wall boards, could have worked as a reminder of the project and its relevance to country development. Moreover, the lack of acknowledgement of country contributions to the elaboration of knowledge products reinforced a shared perception that that was an UNCTAD project, producing expert reports apart from what the country was doing. This had consequences for effectiveness and sustainability.

The other dimension of communication, external to the project, centred on two main channels: the project website hosted by UNCTAD, and social media, with posts from the UNCTAD account and the personal accounts of UNCTAD staff. The project website is a necessary hub of institutional information, but the project management team missed opportunities to disseminate it among country stakeholders. Social media communications did not have a clear audience and, often, highlighted the participation of named UNCTAD individuals in the project activities, with less emphasis on country stakeholders. This confirmed the UNCTAD-centred approach in this project and did not contribute to disseminate knowledge among project beneficiaries and stakeholders. In addition to this, the considerable percentage of posts that are currently unavailable raises questions about the efficacy of these communication efforts. In this regard, stronger engagement with local media could have generated more satisfactory results in terms of knowledge dissemination to stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in the project.

LL7. Poor assessment of risks, including the mismatch between the scope of the project and the size of the implementation team, and the limited use of mitigation strategies contributed to delays in implementation and requests of no-cost extension that, in some instances, could have been avoided. This lesson learned relates to LL1 and LL3, on the elaboration of more specific baselines and the establishment of stronger relations with key stakeholders. Had the project elaborated a more in-depth understanding of each country's situation, some foreseeable risks and their potential to disrupt project implementation would not have been underestimated. Timeframes could, possibly, have been worked out around election times and other factors by harnessing partners with a foothold in the country. In the context of profound changes in government structures, a country-based steering committee could have shielded the impact of these changes and supported some level of continuity. Also, many mitigation strategies envisaged in the PRODOC were not used to respond to risks, such as online access to training to cope with turnover and support knowledge retention.

A risk not accounted for was the scope of the project being too great for the limited human resources allocated. Stakeholders in UNCTAD and in the beneficiary countries acknowledged that the project achieved a lot considering the size of the team, but this could have been considered a risk with corresponding mitigation strategies. Stakeholders suggested that it could have been possible to manage this risk by improving overall coordination and communication to multiply the team's efforts at country level and throughout project implementation.

LL8. The lack of a clear exit strategy, including roles and responsibilities in fundraising and what a fund governance structure would look like, is hindering countries' efforts to approach development partners for funding and risks compromising the sustainability and potential impact of the project. Development partners and government bodies have been requesting the rationale to calculate the estimated amount to implement the HPCDP, its breakdown by pillar and year of implementation, and what governance structure would be in place to manage these resources. However, countries reported lack of information on these issues, reflecting the lack of ownership described above and keeping countries dependent on UNCTAD to continue their fund-raising efforts. There are multiple accounts that funding issues were not on the agenda for discussion on the HPCDP high-level launch, which is also the closing event of the project.

There is some shared understanding, however, that countries would raise these resources, for them to be managed by UNCTAD. Stakeholders reported that development partners are not in favour of this arrangement, including because UNCTAD is a small, non-resident entity, which could provide technical assistance to parts of the holistic programme, but would need to partner with others to implement the whole of it. The project management team held meetings with country stakeholders and potential donors in some countries, in which these questions were raised. The result was the continuation of funding in Angola, a prospection for Mozambique, and a low interest from donors in Kenya with conversations interrupted by the shifting between institutions housing the project. It is noteworthy, however, that some key stakeholders understand that UNCTAD will raise these funds, and they are waiting for further developments on this, based on the premise that the holistic programme is UNCTAD-led.

Stakeholders emphasized that some seed money as part of an exit strategy to start implementing the programme could go a long way to attract development partners' support with more funding. It would show the country is already working on it. Some referred to the World Bank results-based financing approach, that pushes countries to show results to access funding.

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Annex 19 – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Independent Evaluation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project

"Developing integrated programmes to alleviate binding constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China"

I. Introduction and Purpose

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the independent final project evaluation of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project**: *"Developing Integrated Programmes to Alleviate Binding Constraints to Development by Fostering Structural Transformation, Building Productive Capacities, and Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China."* The evaluation will provide accountability to the management of UNCTAD, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of UNDESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States, with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.

The evaluation will provide assessments that are credible and useful. Specifically, it will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation, overall results, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues such as gender and the principle of "leaving no one behind." Based on these assessments, the evaluation will formulate practical and constructive recommendations to project stakeholders, particularly UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of UNDESA, including on operational and administrative aspects, with the aim of optimizing the results of future projects.

II. Project background

With a budget of **USD 1,070,000**, the project aimed to assist eight developing economies in Africa in building productive capacities and fostering structural transformation and therefore in harnessing the transformative potential of Chinese partnerships, including those in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, for their economic development. The eight targeted countries were Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. While these countries were already benefiting from increased trade and investment relations with China, they needed to further harness these opportunities into sustainable development gains due to weak productive capacities and a lack of structural economic transformation.

By identifying and analysing the key binding constraints to fostering productive capacities and structural transformation in the eight countries, the project sought to create conditions to multiply the potential development benefits of trade and investment relations with China and contribute to the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

The project produced concrete capacity-building programmes and policy-oriented support for the eight countries to leverage closer trade and investment links with China. It built on UNCTAD's ongoing activities related to productive capacities, including the recently developed index to measure or benchmark such capacities in the selected countries, as well as the operational manual on developing, maintaining, and utilizing productive capacities.

The expected outcomes of the project were:

- A detailed analysis of the binding constraints to growth and the fostering of productive capacities in each of the African developing countries targeted, as well as the identification of the potential for significant growth and productivity gains, and recommendations for harnessing trade and investment links with China to overcome these constraints.

- Eight country-specific holistic programmes and associated roadmaps for comprehensive, multi-year technical assistance and capacity building programmes to support the lifting of binding constraints and fostering productive capacities, as well as the strengthening of sectors and industries with development potential. The programmes will draw on UNCTAD's expertise across different aspects of development, including investment policy, entrepreneurship development, trade policy, transport and transit policy, and customs systems automation.

- Support the capacities of national policymakers to address the identified binding constraints to development, including through tools such as the Productive Capacities Index (PCI), and formulate policies to address them, as well as strengthen inter-ministerial collaboration and cooperation with the private sector and civil society to achieve development objectives.

III. Project beneficiaries, activities and objectives

Beneficiaries

The project's beneficiaries spanned multiple sectors and encompassed various stakeholders who play critical roles in fostering sustainable development and productive capacity building in targeted countries. These include policymakers, technical experts, public and private sector actors, academia, and national institutions in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Around 900 individuals benefited from 21 capacity-building workshops, enhancing their ability to address structural transformation, build productive capacities, and strengthen international economic linkages.

Policymakers were primary beneficiaries, as the project equipped them with the skills and tools to design and implement evidence-based, data-driven policies. Training initiatives focused on enabling policymakers to identify gaps in productive capacities, formulate tailored interventions, and integrate these into national development strategies. Through frameworks such as National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments (NPCGAs) and Holistic Productive

Capacities Development Programmes (HPCDPs), policymakers were empowered to address key constraints and foster sustainable economic growth.

Technical experts and statisticians were another core group of beneficiaries, with training focused on using the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) to assess national capabilities and prioritize sectoral policies.

Public and private sector stakeholders benefited from enhanced capacity to promote investment opportunities, foster economic linkages, and engage in productive capacity development. Their inclusion ensured solutions that are practical and grounded in real-world economic dynamics, promoting structural transformation and inclusive growth.

Academia and research institutions also played a role as beneficiaries and collaborators in the project. They contributed to policy development by analysing data, providing research insights, and ensuring that interventions are evidence-based and context-specific.

National institutions benefitted directly from the technical knowledge products created, such as the NPCGAs (National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments), which provided a clear framework for identifying gaps and comparative advantages. The HPCDPs (Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes) offered holistic interventions to address these gaps. Additionally, Productive Capacities Development Roadmaps provide a sequenced, time-bound framework for implementation.

UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) were engaged to ensure alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). These collaborations strengthened institutional capacity and fostered coherence with broader development goals.

Through a dedicated webpage and active social media campaigns, the project targeted a wider audience, raising awareness about its objectives and achievements. This outreach has generated demand from countries such as Egypt, Honduras, Jamaica, Nepal, Mongolia, and Trinidad and Tobago, which have formally requested similar support.

Project logical framework

Logic Intervention	**Indicators**	**Means of Verification**
Objective *Develop Integrated Programmes to Alleviate Binding Constraints to Development by Fostering Productive Capacities and Structural Economic Transformation as well as Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China*		
Outcome 1 Beneficiaries have clearly articulated the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development and identified products with potential for diversification and economic transformation. These include an understanding of the role of productive capacities in development; improved capacities to identify key binding constraints on trade and development, and the ability to map intervention strategies to address the	**IA 1.1** Validation by each participating government of the policy briefs or strategy papers produced by UNCTAD that: **(i)** clearly articulate the most binding constraints on trade, investment and private sector development in Africa, with dedicated analysis on women, youth and vulnerable groups, and that identify products with potential for diversification and	• Communication from participating governments or reports from each national workshop that reflect validation from the government of the policy briefs or strategy papers produced. • Questionnaires to be completed at each

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<tr>
<td rowspan="3">identified constraints. benefits, including the promotion of gender equality.</td>
<td>economic and socio-economic transformation;

(ii) identify priority areas or policy action; and

(iii) identify potential sectors and key products, producers, and destination markets for export from potential or existing regional value chains.</td>
<td>level of the activities and analysis of responses from beneficiaries.</td>
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<td>IA 1.2 At least 5 binding constraints have been identified in each of the selected countries; at least 10 policy options or recommendations accepted by governments for further implementation to address the constraints; and 65% of participants in workshops show improved understanding and institutional capacity to formulate and implement productive capacities centred and gender-responsive policies in beneficiary countries on the structure of their productive sectors and to identify binding constraints to development.</td>
<td>• Post-workshop surveys or a survey to be administered by UNCTAD 3 months after each national workshop.

• Key export products and markets identified as inputs to national statistics database with market intelligence on export markets.</td>
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<td>I.A 1.3 At least 5 policy options and recommendations are accepted in each of the countries to facilitate invest flows to targeted sectors.</td>
<td>• Communication from participating governments; questionnaires or reports from each national workshop that reflect identified concrete investment opportunities.</td>
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<td colspan="3">OP1.1. National surveys conducted through eight (8) needs assessment missions (one to each selected beneficiary country) to agree on the course and sequence (priorities) of action or intervention with relevant government institutions. The identification of which sector of comparative advantages, what binding constraints to trade and development, and what actions or interventions are needed to relieve said constraints is very important to the successful implementation of projects of this nature. This will be based on key binding constraints and identified sectors for transformation, and it will include the establishment of national stakeholder groups, including representatives from government, and private sector, among others. National surveys will be conducted by a nationally recruited consultant and help in providing specific technical inputs to the needs assessment, which will facilitate the articulation of project components (by themes or sectors) by the UNCTAD technical team. The national consultant will also assist in coordinating the needs assessment mission by mobilizing key public sector entities, and private sector institutions, such as chambers of commerce, private sector associations or federations, etc. The surveys are needed to gather important information on binding constraints that hinder the fostering of productive capacities and structural transformation in the selected countries.</td>
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<td colspan="3">OP1.2 The levels of productive capacity in each beneficiary country (eight (8) countries) assessed. The diagnostic will focus on applying the Productive Capacities Index of UNCTAD and national survey outcomes to conduct trade and investment mapping and analysis across leading sectors in selected countries. The diagnostics will also analyze the structure of the existing and potential industries, identify the types of technologies that can be transferred and the skills, human capital and know how that can be developed. The analysis will feed into OP1.3. The PCI helps to know the level of productive capacities, but not the reasons or binding constraints behind the poor performance of selected countries on the index.</td>
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<td colspan="3">OP1.3 Eight (8) brainstorming and capacity-building trainings with approximately 30-40 participants (targeting at least 40 % participation by women) organized for relevant ministries and agencies to clearly articulate the binding constraints to</td>
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development and to define the programme narrative with clearly sequenced actions and timeframes. These will follow the needs assessments (OP1.1), and the elaboration or articulation of project key constraints. These activities are undertaken with an objective to agree on time-bound operational activities and to assign concrete roles and responsibilities to relevant national public and/or private institutions. For instance, if the project component focuses on targeting foreign direct investment (FDI) to the agriculture sector, this activity will aim to identify and assign the roles and responsibilities of the ministry of agriculture, relevant investment authorities and/ or agro-processing and other private sector stakeholders.		
Outcome 2 Improved national capacity of policy makers in beneficiary countries to develop and implement trade, investment and technology policies thanks to greater availability of economic analysis and good practices for evidenced-based policy generation to support structural transformation in Africa and investment opportunities for Chinese investors and collaborators.	**IA 2.1** 70% of respondents and key institutions assessed show improved capacity to understand and implement good practices at the national, regional and continental level to analyze and fill the gaps in trade, investment and technology policies for structural transformation and economic upgrading.	• Background (preparatory) papers, draft policies or policies by the beneficiary Government.
	IA 2.2 Validation by each participating government of policy options produced by UNCTAD for African trade and investment-related policies and frameworks to support regional integration, export diversification and structural transformation, aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative and national development plans.	• Communication from participating governments or reports from each national workshop that reflect validation from the government of the policy options produced.
OP2.1 Based on national surveys, PCI analysis and brainstorming and capacity building sessions with Government ministries and agencies, programme components for each of the eight (8) beneficiary countries developed, based on the agreed national development priorities including investment climate, private sector development, trade facilitation and transport logistics, export diversification, ICTs, energy and power, among others. Different project components (thematic or sectoral) will make up (or lead to) the development of a comprehensive multi-sectoral programme, which are referred to in A.2.2. This is key for building consensus and ensuring ownership of priorities identified for intervention.		
OP2.2 Eight (8) China-UNCTAD programmes of support developed for selected beneficiary countries. These will identify the sectors with high export growth potential and capacity to attract foreign investment. The Programmes are meant to help identify where countries themselves have full potential for developing and diversifying their productive structures, including exports, and identify the potential for foreign firms to engage strategically with Africa. The market analysis would also outline some of the opportunities and challenges in entering new markets, including the relevant certifications needed, and the standards to be met. This builds on OP2.1 and it is the core of the "theory of change" from the current project or sector-based interventions towards multi-sectoral and holistic programme- based interventions as advocated for in the project document.		
OP2.3 Eight (8) national workshops for policy makers, private sector, academia, and civil society organized in beneficiary countries to launch the Programmes at national level and mobilize relevant institutions to agree on the steps and process for implementation. Chinese institutions, banks and State-owned Enterprises already on the ground in Africa will be invited to participate in each of the launching events.		
OP2.4 Eight (8) evidence-based and targeted national policy roadmaps prepared that mutually reinforce structural transformation, export diversification, investment, and productive capacity development. These will be prepared through in-depth consultations with relevant ministries, industry stakeholders, academics, and civil society. The agreed roadmap is a sequenced, time-bound, activity-specific implementation guide for each China-UNCTAD programme for beneficiary countries, referred to in A.2.2. The roadmap for sequenced action follows from the programme developed which is under OP2.2.		

OP2.5 A communication campaign about the programme developed, including a dedicated page on the UNCTAD website, a social media campaign and national/regional online and offline dissemination campaigns. Communication is important to disseminate project outcomes and results with the public and with other institutions such as national research institutions, professional associations, and think-tanks. This is key in fostering national consensus on the development partnership between project countries in African countries and China. It is also vital to document and share practical and operational lessons learned from the project with other countries in the African region to maximize their trade and investment partnership with China and the Chinese private sector.

Links to the SDGs

The project aimed to assist its beneficiary countries in achieving several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The primary focus is Goal 8 "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all", especially Target 8.2: Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors.

The project also contributes to the achievement of Goal 9 "Build resilient, infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation" and Goal 17 "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development".

IV. Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

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 mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind; and
- Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from January 2021 to December 2024.

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

Project generation and design

1) To what extent were the project design, choice of activities and deliverables aligned with the mandates of UNCTAD and the 2030 Sub-Fund?
2) To what extent did the project reflect and address the development needs and priorities of beneficiary countries? Did the project design build on demand from the beneficiary countries and on UNCTAD work?

Relevance

3) What unique value did UNCTAD bring to the project? Has the project been complementary to and coherent with existing UN strategy frameworks (UNSCDF and CCAs, and initiatives by other non-UN actors in the target countries?

Effectiveness (including impact)

4) 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?

5) 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?

6) To what extent has the project contributed to partnerships amongst project participants with national and regional counterparts, regional and international development partners, academia, civil society and/or the private sector?

7) What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?

Efficiency

8) To what extent was the project management adequate in ensuring the coordination, planning, execution, and monitoring the project within the defined scope and timeline?

9) How efficient was the project in utilizing project resources?

Sustainability

10) What measures have been built in to promote the sustainability of the outcomes both programmatic and financial? Are there measures to mobilize resources and diversify funds?

11) Is there evidence that beneficiary countries have continued, or will continue, working towards the project objectives beyond UNCTAD's interventions? Have there been any catalytic effects from the project at the national/regional levels?

Mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues

12) To what extent were UN cross-cutting issues (such as gender, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of leaving no one behind) incorporated in the design and implementation of the project? Can results be identified in this regard?

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be a transparent and participatory process involving the project's implementing entities and key stakeholders. It will adopt a theory-driven, utilization-focused approach, guided by the project-results framework. It will use both qualitative as well as quantitative data gathering and analysis as the basis for a triangulation exercise of all available data to draw objective conclusions and findings. Methods for data gathering for this evaluation will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Desk review of project documents and relevant materials;
- Interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff, and with a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders;
- Focus group discussions;
- Field mission to 1-2 of the beneficiary countries to speak directly to project stakeholders (depending on the availability of funds);
- Online surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as appropriate; and
- Collection and analysis of relevant web and social media metrics related to the outputs of the project;

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.

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.

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.

VI. Organization of the evaluation

Deliverables and Expected Outputs

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. 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.

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.

Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation:

a) An inception report[32];

b) A draft evaluation report; and

c) The final evaluation report[33]

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.

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

- Executive summary;
- Introduction of the evaluation;
- a brief description of the project, including project objectives, expected accomplishments, strategies and key activities;
- A clear description of the evaluation objectives, scope, and questions as well as evaluation methodology used;
- **Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section IV of this ToR**, with a comparison of planned and implemented project activities and outputs; and
- **An overall score for each evaluation criterion** using the rating system provided by the Management Team of UNDESA 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund of the UNPDF (see Annex 1). If using a different scoring system, the evaluator should provide its advice for equivalence with the generic definition of the Sub-Fund scale.
- Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.

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[32] 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

[33] 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

– Annexes including a list of documents consulted, interviewed stakeholders, survey templates and this TOR.

Description of Duties

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.

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

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.

The evaluator should observe UNEG guidelines, including the Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN system[34], as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy[35], in the conduct of this assignment. The evaluator needs to integrate human rights, gender equality and disability perspectives in evaluations to the extent possible.[36] 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.

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 manager 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.

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.

Timetable

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

[35] "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

[36] "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.

The evaluation will take place over the period 31 January 2025 to 20 May 2025.

Monitoring and Progress Control

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

- The evaluator will submit the first draft of inception report by 21 February 2025. The Report should include draft data collection instruments for review.
- The first draft of the report should be presented to the Evaluation Unit by 16 April 2025 for quality assurance purposes. The revised draft report will then be shared with the project team for factual clarification and comments.
- The deadline for submission of the final report will be 20 May 2025.

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

Qualifications and Experience[37]

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

Experience: At least 7 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.

Language: Fluency in oral and written English. Working knowledge of Portuguese.

Conditions of Service

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.

VII. Evaluation communication and dissemination plan

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;

[37] 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.

- 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.

Annex 1. Rating system and Summary of Evaluation findings

The evaluator should score each evaluation criterion [i.e. relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness (including impact), sustainability, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues] using the below rating system.

Rating	***Description***
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	*The project performed well overall against a particular evaluation criterion with no short comings.*
Satisfactory (S)	*The project performed well overall against a particular evaluation criterion with but had minor short comings.*
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	*The project performed moderately well against the particular criterion (performing satisfactorily against almost half of the evaluation questions) and has short comings and room for improvement.*
Somehow Satisfactory (SS)	*The project performed poorly overall against majority of the evaluation questions and there is need to take steps to improve the project aspect being evaluated.*
Not Satisfactory (NS)	*The project performed poorly in almost all the evaluation questions and there is need for immediate and significant changes to be made to improve project outcomes.*
Unable to Assess (UA)	*The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.*