



PRESS RELEASE

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2026 UN Investment Promotion Awards honour excellence in attracting investment in the digital economy

This year's winners show how targeted investment promotion and facilitation can help bridge digital divides and unlock new economic opportunities.

Doha, 25 October 2026 - At the [9th World Investment Forum](#) in Doha, four trade and investment promotion agencies and one special economic zone received the 2026 [United Nations Investment Promotion Awards](#): the Caribbean Export Development Agency, the Ethiopian Investment Commission, Invest KOREA, Invest Qatar and Tanger Med Zones (Morocco).

Selected from 48 entries across 40 countries, this year's winners were recognized for their innovative approaches to investment promotion and facilitation, their effectiveness in mobilizing sustainable foreign direct investment, and their contributions to digital transformation and sustainable development.

Investment in the digital economy can expand connectivity, strengthen innovation ecosystems, create skilled jobs and accelerate sustainable development. However, these opportunities remain unevenly distributed.

UNCTAD's [World Investment Report 2025](#) shows that global greenfield investment in the digital economy reached \$360 billion in 2024, nearly three times its 2020 level. Yet developing countries received only 30% of global investment over the five years to 2024, highlighting the need for investment promotion agencies to attract inclusive and sustainable digital investment.

Excellence in mobilizing investment in the digital economy

The 2026 UN Investment Promotion Awards went to:

- **Caribbean Export Development Agency** for promoting regional investment through the Caribbean Investment Forum, which brings together investment-ready projects and connects them with international capital. Between 2022 and 2025, the platform showcased 30 projects with a combined investment pipeline exceeding \$170 million. Its innovative region-as-one-destination approach has also supported cross-border joint ventures in digital services and other transformational sectors.

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- **Ethiopian Investment Commission** for facilitating investment in digital connectivity and financial inclusion, particularly through its support for Safaricom Ethiopia and the expansion of M-PESA Ethiopia, a mobile financial services platform. As of 31 March 2026, Safaricom Ethiopia had 13.6 million active subscribers, 3,504 network sites and 4G coverage reaching 59% of the population, while M-PESA had attracted 5.2 million customers. The project helps strengthen competition, expand broadband access and digital payments, while supporting the development of e-commerce, fintech and digital public services.
- **Invest KOREA** for strengthening the semiconductor supply chain through the target promotion and facilitation of foreign investment in semiconductor materials, parts and equipment. Since 2023, the initiative has mobilized \$518 million in foreign direct investment and is expected to create more than 680 direct jobs by 2027. Invest KOREA combined AI-based investor targeting, high-level engagement and coordinated incentive facilitation to attract investment in production and research and development facilities.
- **Invest Qatar** for attracting and supporting high-potential startups through its Startup Qatar initiative. Since 2024, the initiative has facilitated the establishment of over 850 startups through a comprehensive suite of incentives, including free and expedited business registration, AI Compute Credits and tailored residency programmes. Its funding programmes have attracted more than 10,000 applications and enabled more than 50 startups to secure more than \$100 million in funding.
- **Tanger Med Industrial Platform (Morocco)** for attracting and facilitating investment in digital services and solutions, particularly through the establishment of the ALTEN Delivery Center Maroc at Tétouan Shore. A tailored investment package and dedicated one-stop-shop support helped bring highly qualified engineering activities to the region.

Investment promotion and facilitation in focus

The awards are part of a broader World Investment Forum [agenda](#) on investment promotion and facilitation.

Echoing the awards' theme, the second session of the [Global Investment Promotion Conference](#) on 26 October focuses on the digital economy. It aims to identify actions to help more countries benefit from digital investment in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The forum also explores investment in AI infrastructure, international cooperation on AI investment and skills, and policies and partnerships to facilitate investment for sustainable development.

About UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

UNCTAD is the UN's leading body on trade and development. Founded in 1964, it supports 195 member states with expert analysis, technical assistance, and serves as a platform for intergovernmental dialogue.

UNCTAD helps developing countries make trade, finance, investment, and the digital economy work for inclusive and sustainable development.