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**Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD
and their financing**

Report by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Annex I: Review of activities undertaken in 2021*

* Mention of any firm or licensed process does not imply the endorsement of the United Nations. The present document has not been formally edited.



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Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
DFQF	duty free and quota free
DMFAS	Debt Management and Financial Analysis System
DOALOS	Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
DTIS	Diagnostic trade integration study
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	foreign direct investment
GDP	gross domestic product
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
GSTP	Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries
ICT	information and communication technology
IFFs	illicit financial flows
IIA	international investment agreement
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPR	investment policy review
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LDC	least developed country
LLDC	landlocked developing country
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MSME	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprise
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PCI	Productive Capacities Index
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PPP	public-private partnership
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
STI	Science, technology and innovation
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UN-OHRLLS	United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator Office
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Country/territory/region codes

AFG	Afghanistan	COI	Comoros
ALB	Albania	COL	Colombia
ALG	Algeria	COS	Costa Rica
ANG	Angola	CPR	China
ANL	Anguilla	CUB	Cuba
ANT	Antigua and Barbuda	CVI	Cabo Verde
ARG	Argentina	CZE	Czechia
ARM	Armenia	DJI	Djibouti
ARU	Aruba	DMI	Dominica
AZE	Azerbaijan	DOM	Dominican Republic
BAH	Bahrain	DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
BAR	Barbados	ECU	Ecuador
BDI	Burundi	EGY	Egypt
BEN	Benin	ELS	El Salvador
BER	Bermuda	EQG	Equatorial Guinea
BES	Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba	ERI	Eritrea
BGD	Bangladesh	EST	Estonia
BHU	Bhutan	ETH	Ethiopia
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR	Europe
BKF	Burkina Faso	FIJ	Fiji
BOL	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	GAB	Gabon
BOT	Botswana	GAM	Gambia
BRA	Brazil	GBS	Guinea-Bissau
BRU	Brunei Darussalam	GEO	Georgia
BUL	Bulgaria	GHA	Ghana
BYE	Belarus	GIB	Gibraltar
BZE	Belize	GLO	Global
CAF	Central African Republic	GRN	Grenada
CHD	Chad	GUA	Guatemala
CHI	Chile	GUI	Guinea
CMB	Cambodia	GUY	Guyana
CMR	Cameroon	HAI	Haiti

HON	Honduras	MOT	Montserrat
HUN	Hungary	MOZ	Mozambique
IND	India	MYA	Myanmar
INS	Indonesia	NAM	Namibia
INT	Interregional	NCA	New Caledonia
IRA	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	NEP	Nepal
IRQ	Iraq	NER	Niger
IVC	Côte d'Ivoire	NIC	Nicaragua
JAM	Jamaica	NIR	Nigeria
JOR	Jordan	NIU	Niue
KAZ	Kazakhstan	OMA	Oman
KEN	Kenya	PAK	Pakistan
KIR	Kiribati	PAL	Palestinian Authority
KOR	Republic of Korea	PAN	Panama
KUW	Kuwait	PAR	Paraguay
KYR	Kyrgyzstan	PER	Peru
LAO	Lao People's Democratic Republic	PHI	Philippines
LAT	Latvia	PNG	Papua New Guinea
LEB	Lebanon	POL	Poland
LIB	Libya	PRC	Congo
LIR	Liberia	PUE	Puerto Rico
LIT	Lithuania	QAT	Qatar
LSO	Lesotho	RAF	Africa (regional)
MAG	Madagascar	RAS	Asia and the Pacific (regional)
MAL	Malaysia	RER	Europe (regional)
MAR	Mauritius	RLA	Latin America and the Caribbean (regional)
MAU	Mauritania	ROM	Romania
MCD	North Macedonia	RUS	Russian Federation
MDV	Maldives	RWA	Rwanda
MEX	Mexico	SAF	South Africa
MLI	Mali	SAM	Samoa
MLW	Malawi	SAU	Saudi Arabia
MOL	Republic of Moldova	SEN	Senegal
MON	Mongolia	SEY	Seychelles
MOR	Morocco	SIL	Sierra Leone

SIN	Singapore	TIM	Timor-Leste
SLO	Slovakia	TOG	Togo
SOI	Solomon Islands	TON	Tonga
SOM	Somalia	TUK	Turkmenistan
SPM	Saint Pierre and Miquelon	TUN	Tunisia
SRL	Sri Lanka	TUR	Türkiye
STH	Saint Helena	TUV	Tuvalu
STK	Saint Kitts and Nevis	UAE	United Arab Emirates
STL	Saint Lucia	UGA	Uganda
STP	Sao Tome and Principe	UKR	Ukraine
STV	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	URT	United Republic of Tanzania
SUD	Sudan	URU	Uruguay
SUR	Suriname	UZB	Uzbekistan
SVN	Slovenia	VAN	Vanuatu
SWA	Eswatini	VEN	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
SYR	Syrian Arab Republic	VIE	Viet Nam
TAJ	Tajikistan	YEM	Yemen
TCI	Turks and Caicos Islands	ZAM	Zambia
THA	Thailand	ZIM	Zimbabwe

Introduction

1. This annex provides a description of the main technical cooperation projects undertaken by UNCTAD in 2021. It is presented in accordance with the four themes specified in the *UNCTAD Toolbox*: transforming economies, fostering sustainable development; tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience; fostering economic efficiency, improving governance; and empowering people, investing in their future. Under each theme, there are a number of products around which projects are grouped. For projects that are not linked with any of the 28 Toolbox products,¹ they are reported under the category “Other” of the pertinent theme. A table showing the individual projects implemented under each product and under the category “Other” of each theme is provided. The technical assistance and capacity-building activities, which draw on research conducted by UNCTAD and on policy suggestions arising from the UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery, contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I. Theme A: Transforming economies, fostering sustainable development

2. Attaining the Sustainable Development Goals requires building productive capacity and transforming economies by shifting resources to more productive and sustainable sectors and enhancing their competitiveness. Investment, trade and technology are important channels for achieving economic diversification and structural transformation. Trade and trade-related investment, combined with technology upgrading, could enable countries to improve productivity, develop productive capacities and climb regional and global value chains.

3. UNCTAD technical cooperation helps developing countries attract foreign direct investment (FDI) towards sectors that would lead to economic transformation and sustainable development; better integrate into regional and global value chains; and foster the nexus between trade, productive capacity and employment. It also supports these countries in formulating a services-driven development strategy, developing electronic commerce (e-commerce) and the digital economy, promoting sustainable trade and leveraging science, technology and innovation for productive capacity-building.

4. In this section, 10 products under the theme “Transforming economies, fostering sustainable development” are reported on. The reports highlight main technical cooperation activities carried out in 2021 and key results to date. Technical cooperation projects that are pertinent to the aforementioned theme, but not linked to any of the existing 10 products under this thematic area, are reported on under “A99 Other”.

A1 Investment policy reviews

Table A1

Investment policy reviews: List of projects

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/0T/BAQ	Capacity-building in investment for development	2011–	Multi-donors

¹ See *UNCTAD Toolbox*, available at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/unctad-toolbox-delivering-results-1>.

5. **Development context.** To fully reap their associated benefits for development, which are not automatic nor evenly spread across countries, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows should be directed towards activities and projects that lead to enhanced economic and social development, and do not affect the environment negatively. To support beneficiary countries in their efforts to diversify the economy, attract higher levels of FDI and promote sustainable development, UNCTAD conducts diagnostic studies of the strategic, legal and institutional framework for investment: the investment policy reviews (IPRs). The reviews, which are country-specific or regional, provide action-oriented policy advice and concrete recommendations. To foster their implementation and further build capacity for investment policymaking, UNCTAD provides follow-up support through technical assistance activities.

6. **Objectives and features.** The IPR process promotes ownership and learning, and is conducted in five phases:

(a) *Ensuring government ownership of the IPR process.* A review begins at the request of a government. The counterpart ministry or agency is involved throughout the process and the entire government takes ownership of the policy recommendations.

(b) *IPR evaluation and advisory report.* The diagnostic phase includes desk research and a fact-finding mission by UNCTAD technical staff. Policymakers at the highest level and a wide range of stakeholders are brought into the process, including line ministries and agencies, universities and other research institutions. Interviews and consultations are also held with representatives of the private sector, non-governmental institutions and the donor community active in the country.

(c) *Dialogue on IPR recommendations and intergovernmental review.* Once the draft report is ready, beneficiary countries agree to go through a review process which includes a national stakeholders' workshop to discuss the findings of the draft report and review its recommendations. It is followed by an intergovernmental peer review, which draws upon the experiences of other countries in attracting and benefiting from investment, including benchmarking against international best practices.

(d) *Implementation and follow-up technical assistance.* The review process is designed with one key purpose: making FDI work for sustainable development. The finalization and publication of the IPR report is the preamble to the core focus of the programme, namely the delivery of technical assistance to help beneficiary countries meet their development objectives by attracting higher levels and more diversified types of FDI inflows, whilst maximizing their developmental benefits and limiting potentially negative impact. The implementation phase is carried out through short-term action plans and multi-agency medium-term technical assistance.

(e) *Implementation report and additional follow-up actions.* Upon publication of the IPR, beneficiary countries are given access to the live implementation matrix,² an online tool designed to assist member States to better address the challenges of a dynamic investment policymaking process at country-level and improve prospects for achieving the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. By providing timely and up-to-date information on investment policy reform, the live implementation matrix contributes to foster ownership of the IPR recommendations, strengthens implementation results, improves transparency, enhances accountability, strengthens the tracking of reforms and highlights technical assistance and capacity-building needs. About five years after completion of the review, UNCTAD assesses the implementation of its recommendations and identifies the need for further technical assistance.

7. **Outputs.** In 2021, the main outputs delivered by the programme included:

(a) Preparation and publication of the reports on the implementation of the IPR of Ecuador and Uzbekistan.

(b) Preparation of a publication focussing on investment law policymaking.

² Available to authorized users at <https://investmentpolicy.unctad.org/investment-policy-review>.

(c) Introduction of the live implementation matrix to Angola and Tajikistan, and implementation of the matrix by Ecuador and Uzbekistan.

(d) Technical assistance activities and advisory services to support the implementation of the IPR recommendations and to deal more effectively with issues related to investment policies, promotion strategies, international investment agreements and business facilitation. The beneficiaries from these activities included, at the country level, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Montenegro, Nigeria, Seychelles, the Sudan, Togo and Uzbekistan. Regional activities on capacity-building for investment policymaking have also been delivered, notably to French-speaking African countries.

8. The following activities were implemented in 2021 at the country level and for group of countries.

9. *Angola.* Following the publication of the IPR of Angola in 2019 (undertaken in the context of the European Union–UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II), UNCTAD engaged with the Government on capacity-building and advisory activities to support the implementation of the IPR recommendations, including through the presentation of the live implementation matrix to the Angolan authorities. Other activities included investment promotion capacity-building, undertaken in cooperation with the Angolan investment promotion agency, AIPEX, and advisory services to strengthen investment promotion efforts.

10. *Côte d'Ivoire.* Following its publication in 2020, the IPR of Côte d'Ivoire was presented at a dedicated event held as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum in October 2021. The Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire was represented by the Minister to the Prime Minister in charge of the Promotion of Private Investment, who said that the IPR “is an excellent technical document which identified in its diagnosis the legal hurdles impeding the private sector’s potential and growth perspectives. Côte d'Ivoire made encouraging progress in investment reforms to enhance the attractiveness of the country. These reforms are in line with the recommendations of the IPR”.

11. *Ecuador.* The Government requested UNCTAD to provide substantive inputs and comments on the national investment policy being developed by the country and to prepare a report on the implementation of the IPR. Considering the reforms undertaken by the country, the report elaborated on recommendations, in line with the national and sustainable development objectives, including in the areas of the investment-specific regime, the digitalization of government services, the simplification of business procedures and the strengthening of entrepreneurship skills and business linkages. The work was carried out using the live implementation matrix. The report was completed in August 2021 and presented by the Ecuadorian authorities at dedicated event held as part of the seventh World Investment Forum in October 2021, with contributions by the Minister of Production, Foreign Trade, Investment and Fisheries, and the Vice-Minister of Exports and Investment Promotion.

12. *Nigeria.* The Government requested UNCTAD to provide assistance in the elaboration of the Nigeria investment policy. To this end, UNCTAD shared written comments and took part in an online session to further discuss the articulation and content of the policy. UNCTAD will continue to work with the authorities in 2022 towards the finalization of the Nigeria investment policy.

13. *Seychelles.* Following the publication of the IPR of Seychelles in 2020, the authorities, represented by the Minister of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry, presented the report at a dedicated event held as part of the 7th World Investment Forum in October 2021. The Minister highlighted the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations of the IPR and emphasized its usefulness and relevance.

14. *Sudan.* The IPR of Sudan was published in 2015. As part of the follow-up technical assistance, UNCTAD was requested to and provided comments on the new draft investment law of the country. Written comments were shared in January 2021.

15. *Togo.* UNCTAD received a request from the Government of Togo to conduct an IPR. The IPR will form part of a three-components project conducted by UNCTAD, with the financial contribution of UNDP. The project will also consist of the implementation of

the UNCTAD eRegulations and eRegistrations tools (by the Business Facilitation Programme) to simplify and digitalize business procedures, and investment promotion capacity-building activities. Consultations with the authorities and UNDP took place in 2021 and work on the IPR will continue in 2022.

16. *Uzbekistan.* Following a request from the Government of Uzbekistan, UNCTAD assessed the implementation of the IPR recommendations and advised on measures that could be taken to further improve the investment environment and attract quality FDI, in light of the numerous reforms undertaken by the country, in particular since 2017. These include a revision of the investment-specific strategic and legal frameworks, the elaboration of an investment-promotion strategy and related capacity-building activities to better focus and prioritize targeted sectors, the strengthening of entrepreneurship skills and business linkages. This work was carried out using the live implementation matrix and the report on the implementation of the IPR was published in December 2021.

17. *French-speaking African countries.* In June 2021, UNCTAD participated in the annual conference of the RIAFPI (Réseau international des agences francophones de promotion des investissements). The online meeting took place under the theme “Investment destinations and COVID-19: what attraction strategy and how to measure impact?” An UNCTAD presentation highlighted the most recent data on FDI and latest investment policy developments, as well as key actions for a sustainable recovery, including in terms of FDI attraction. The meeting gathered representatives from several French-speaking African countries, development partners, including France, ANIMA Investment Network (the Euro-Mediterranean Network of Investment Promotion Agencies), as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society. It provided an excellent opportunity for a rich discussion on investment policymaking in times of a pandemic and for the recovery.

18. **Results and impacts.** Overall, the IPRs have played a key role to strengthen the investment policies and strategies of developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs). This has enabled them to attract higher levels of FDI, even if this is challenging to measure, and derive larger development gains, while minimizing as much as possible the potential negative effects, in line with the UNCTAD Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development (IPFSD). Furthermore, many activities to support the implementation of the IPR recommendations have been undertaken under the programme.³ Evidence of impact can be illustrated at three levels: country commitment and endorsement of recommendations, implementation of IPR recommendations as well as impact on investment flows and the investment environment.

Commitment at the highest level and endorsement of recommendations

19. The importance and relevance of the IPR work is reflected by the involvement of Heads of State or Government in the process and their commitment to implement its outcome. In most cases, the IPRs have been presented to and discussed with Heads of State and cabinet ministers, as the following endorsements show:

20. “In 2019, UNCTAD responded favourably to the call of our government for the analysis and diagnostic of the investment ecosystem in Côte d’Ivoire. This initiative allowed my country to dispose of an IPR with a set of coherent and rational recommendations. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the UNCTAD Secretary-General and express our gratitude.” Minister to the Prime Minister in charge of the Promotion of Private Investment of Côte d’Ivoire, during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, 19 October 2021.

(a) “Our strategy and the corresponding strategic interventions have been derived from the IPR carried out with the much-appreciated expertise of UNCTAD. We would not

³ Further references on the IPR programme include (a) UNCTAD (2020). Live implementation matrix: Fostering investment reforms for sustainable development. UNCTAD/DIAE/PCB/2020/3. December. Geneva; (b) Sauvart, K. (2020). *The WIR at 30: Contributions to National and Global Investment Policymaking*. AIB Insights, vol. 20, December; (c) UNCTAD (2018). *Implementation Reports: Lessons learned*. UNCTAD/DIAE/PCB/2018/3. September. Geneva.

have been able to do it without you. Through a thorough analysis of our investment environment, UNCTAD has helped us identify the gaps, which has in turn enabled us to formulate our strategy. It has also allowed us to save a lot of time because we have been able to develop strategies that are very target-specific and focused.” Minister of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry of Seychelles, during the seventh World Investment Forum, 22 October 2021.

(b) “The Government is carrying out changes to improve the investment climate in Uzbekistan. In this regard, we would like to send our appreciation to UNCTAD for supporting the implementation of the ongoing ambitious reforms in various sectors of the economy. UNCTAD experts are participating in the preparation of the report on the implementation of the IPR. This document will serve as a tool for further improving the investment climate of Uzbekistan and developing concrete proposals for the continuation of the country’s economic transformation.” Deputy Director, Investment Promotion Agency under the Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan, during the seventh World Investment Forum, 22 October 2021.

Implementation of IPR recommendations

21. Another benchmark of the impact of IPRs is the extent to which Governments have implemented the IPR recommendations.

22. Since 1999 and the inception of the IPR programme, UNCTAD published 51 IPRs, involving 55 economies worldwide, and 19 reports on the implementation of the IPR. Assessments conducted in some of these countries showed that to date at least 480 recommendations have been implemented, a significant number of which with the technical assistance of UNCTAD. This assistance took different forms, including advisory services on policy, legal, regulatory and institutional matters.

Direct impact on investment flows and improvement of the investment environment

23. It is difficult to assess the correlation between the implementation of an IPR’s recommendations and an increase in FDI flows, although this is one of the key objectives of the requesting country. Therefore, one of the goals of the review is also to improve the quality of FDI and ensure that it contributes more effectively to the national and sustainable development objectives of the country. Consequently, countries could experience a decline in flows but an improvement in the development impact of FDI and the operations of investors. Similarly, it is difficult to compare the FDI performance of countries that have completed an implementation report, which range widely in geographic location, income level and political context, against a similar panel of economies that have not received an IPR. However, data show that between 2001–2010 and 2011–2020, FDI inflows rose by 42 per cent worldwide while they grew by 72 per cent in 19 countries for which an assessment of the implementation of IPR recommendations has been conducted.

24. Another indicator of IPR impact is their integration to the national policy reform efforts and how they often serve as the main platform for investment climate improvements. For many beneficiary countries, the IPR constituted the main document to guide investment climate reforms at the strategic, legal and institutional level (see statements above, for example).

25. Finally, another way to attest for the overwhelming expression of interest in the IPRs is illustrated by the number of countries that have requested to benefit from the programme, including follow-up technical assistance. Official requests for investment policy reviews are in the pipeline for 31 countries: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bhutan, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Central African Republic, Chile, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Fiji, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malawi, Mali, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Somalia, South Sudan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Turkmenistan.

A2 Services policy reviews

Table A2
Services policy reviews

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/9BG	Trust Fund on Services, Development and Trade	2009–	Multi-donors

26. **Development context.** The service economy is the important instrument for the expansion of trade, productivity, and competitiveness, providing jobs and universal access to essential services. Development of the services sector provides the backbone of an integrated and effective economy. Vibrant infrastructural services such as financial services, telecommunications, transport and energy can boost economic diversification and enhance domestic supply capacity. Diversification into the services sector is conducive to integrating developing countries, especially LDCs and small, structurally weak and vulnerable States, into the global services economy, and increasing their participation in services production and trade is essential contributions to Sustainable Development Goals which refer, for example, to the developmental potential of tourism services; infrastructure services and social services (such as health and education services). In order to generate the expected development benefits, services trade liberalization needs to be properly paced and in sequence with the establishment of effective regulatory and institutional frameworks. This poses important challenges for developing countries, including the establishment of national services policies to build up productive capacity in services and the negotiation of services agreements at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. It also entails the strengthening of robust regulatory and institutional frameworks.

27. **Objectives.** UNCTAD conducts services policy reviews (SPRs) to assist developing countries in assessing their services economy and trade and reviewing their existing policy and regulatory frameworks to inform their efforts to formulate best-fit national services regulatory and institutional frameworks to develop competitive productive capabilities in services sector and better engage in international trade negotiations and agreements dealing with services. SPRs serve as a toolkit for assessing the potential of services-related productive capacities and trade in order to identify constraints that may impede development of the services sector and ascertain practical solutions and policy mixes.

28. **Outputs.** UNCTAD provides demand-based assistance on services assessments – services policy reviews, including specific country- and sector-focused services assessments – that examine policy and regulatory frameworks and the potential impact of trade liberalization. Such assessments provide beneficiary countries with the data and information necessary for making informed policy choices about accelerating national services development and about the liberalization and regulation of services sectors at the national, regional, and international levels.

29. To date, SPRs have been conducted for Bangladesh, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Uganda and ECOWAS.

30. In 2021, UNCTAD concluded the publication regarding the SPR of Morocco (volumes I and II). This study includes an analysis highlighting the growing importance of services in modern economies and their role, as a determining factor, in the structural transformation process. In addition, it offers an analysis of the state of play of the services sector of Morocco. The SPR addresses the economic, regulatory and institutional constraints and challenges that are halting the emergence of a modern services sector in Morocco, particularly in the professional services (legal services) and in the logistic services. In this volume, these two sectors are analysed following the SWOT methodology.⁴ It provides also for a detailed set of policy recommendations and an action plan to reform

⁴ SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A SWOT analysis is a technique for assessing these four points.

these sectors in order to enhance their economic performances and maximize their impact on and value addition to the GDP of Morocco, job creation and poverty mitigation, which contribute to the realization of some key Sustainable Development Goals.

31. By the request of the Government of Uzbekistan, UNCTAD initiated a services policy review for Uzbekistan. The study will cover distribution services, financial services and transport. It will provide a systematic review of the economic, regulatory, institutional and trade policy environments characterizing their service sectors, with the aim of identifying the appropriate policy options that advance national development objectives.

32. **Results and impacts.** Services policy reviews have contributed to the improvement of policy and regulatory frameworks and trade policies of beneficiary countries, enhanced their understanding of the impact of trade liberalization on specific sectors and countries, and equipped them with trade policy options that advance national sectoral development objectives. SPRs have provided policy recommendations and action plans for measures on implementation of recommendations, legislative actions, improved institutions, and new and innovative strategies to enhance services economy, trade and development.

33. On the SPR of Morocco, the representative of Morocco, in his presentation at the eighth session of UNCTAD Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development, stated that the “Morocco SPR comes at a critical juncture due to COVID-19 impact on all national economies. The service sectors selected in the review, in particular distribution services of pharmaceuticals, have been at the forefront of the Government’s efforts to curb the pandemic and to supply the population with hygiene and protection supplies used in the prevention from the COVID-19 pandemic”. He concluded that “the SPR is extremely useful for a developing country like Morocco and that the support provided by UNCTAD is highly appreciated by the Government of Morocco, which would like to see an extension of the project for a second phase in order to include other services sectors in this review”.

34. Regarding the SPR of Paraguay II, UNCTAD has received the following feedback from the country: “This report provides an in-depth analysis of the service sectors in terms of the challenges they face, capacities and potential, and possible alternatives that could serve as a basis for the development of support and promotion policies for the service sector, the basis for improving the competitiveness and productivity of [the country’s] global economy.” And, “this second report leaves the basis to deepen the regulatory and structural needs that the service sector in Paraguay requires, work and activities that both the public sector and the business sector must develop with creativity so that the benefits of welfare can be distributed to the general public”.

A3 Trade policy framework reviews

Table A3

Trade policy framework reviews

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ROA-2124 (F)	Trade policies and frameworks to foster regional integration and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in selected conflict and post-conflict Arab countries	2021-	Development Account

35. **Development context.** The comprehensive, development-centred trade policy is an engine for economic growth that can contribute to promoting sustainable development. Effectively done, trade policy can drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including in progressing towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 17.11 on increasing the exports of developing countries, Goal 8 (economic growth) and Goal 9 (industry, innovating and infrastructure). Many developing countries, however, have

limited capacity to analyse the relationship between trade, productive capacity and employment, assess policy options and formulate and implement adequate national trade policy frameworks.

36. **Objectives.** Developing countries continue to face significant challenges in the formulation of development-oriented trade policy framework that are best fit to their national circumstances and development needs. UNCTAD devotes particular attention to strengthening the national capacity of policymakers on trade policy formulation. UNCTAD provided support to individual countries in the assessment and reassessment of national trade policy regimes to help them elaborate new comprehensive, development-centred trade policy frameworks. The objective of support is to assess, develop, elaborate and implement a new generation of trade policy measures and strategies as well as to promote and strengthen self-sustainable national institutional capacities on trade policy and negotiations and in participating effectively in, and benefiting from, international trade. These activities contribute to enhancing the understanding of trade policy community of the contribution of trade to economic recovery, growth and sustainable development, and equipping the countries concerned with policy analysis and policy framework that promote policy coherence to support inclusive and sustainable development. Trade policy frameworks (TPFs) have helped countries in a systematic, comprehensive, and strategic manner. These TPFs focus on identifying key sectors for diversification with the potential to bring higher economic value, setting the best-fit trade policies to back up those development priorities, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and establishing a trade policy framework to ensure an effective and coherent implementation of such strategies. The reviews provide the tools to policy makers and all stakeholders to enable them to set their own priorities, make impact assessments of different policy options and devise the best actions, including at sectoral level.

37. **Outputs.** UNCTAD assisted beneficiary countries in assessing and preparing Millennium Development Goal/Sustainable Development Goal-oriented trade policy frameworks. Up-to-date reviews have been conducted for Algeria, Angola, Botswana, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Namibia, Panama, Tunisia and Zambia and focused on national policies and strategies needed to achieve inclusive and sustained development and developmental provisions and flexibilities that are particularly important in creating an enabling environment through the international trading system. These analyses and policy recommendations were reviewed and validated by national stakeholders and associated advisory and capacity-building support were provided.

38. In 2021, UNCTAD launched a Development Account project (13th tranche) in support of trade policy formulation for post-conflict Arab countries (Iraq and the State of Palestine). The project has two main outcomes, namely: (a) enhanced capacity of Iraq and Palestine trade officials to formulate and implement WTO compliant and Sustainable Development Goal-oriented trade policy frameworks; and (b) improved skills of trade officials in the two beneficiary countries to prepare for and negotiate trade agreements in the context of regional trade integration processes and WTO accession, in the case of Iraq. In view of COVID-19 pandemic -related constraints on travel and face-to-face meetings, online consultations and debriefing meetings were organized with trade officials of Iraq and Palestine to launch the planned trade policy framework studies. These included virtual national consultative multi-stakeholder workshops in both countries, delivery of impact study on Trade in services liberalization readiness for Iraq in the context of the WTO accession process for Iraq, assessment of key services sectors of Palestine and impact study on gender mainstreaming and women participation in economic and trade policymaking. In this context, the study for Iraq was delivered in December 2021 (originally planned for Q3 2022).

39. Regarding the gender-related study for Palestine, a detailed research work was undertaken by UNCTAD Trade, Gender and Development Programme. Field research and investigation is underway to document and to analyse the gender-trade nexus, combining the actual situation of top export products, the priority sectors identified by the government in its export strategy, and sectors that are actually or potentially female-intensive so as to focus on identifying the ways to increase women's involvement in the production of higher

value added goods from selected agricultural, manufacturing and handicrafts sectors (e.g. olive oil, soap, textile and garment etc.).

40. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD assistance on trade policy formulation and implementation has contributed to enhanced understanding of developing countries' policymakers and trade negotiators on national policies and strategies needed to achieve inclusive and sustained development. It has also fostered inclusive multi-stakeholder consultations for inclusive trade policymaking and enhanced ability of policymakers and trade negotiators to analyse, formulate and implement Sustainable Development Goal-oriented trade policies. In particular, it has facilitated consideration, and/or adoption, by Governments, of best-fit trade policy options and strategies that can help strengthen productive capacities and increase participation in international trade in a manner that maximizes the potential of development gains, especially job creation and poverty reduction. Several countries have embarked on the implementation of recommended policy measures. Such experience could be usefully replicated in a broader number of countries in need.

A4 Science, technology and innovation policy reviews

Table A4
Science, technology and innovation policy reviews

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/OT/KAR	Study on Innovation and Entrepreneurship - Diagnosis and Recommendations	2021–	UNDP
BOT/OT/ICH	UNCTAD STI Policy Review of Botswana	2021–	Botswana
ROA-1819 (L11)	Strengthening policy coherence and integration to ensure that science, technology and innovation support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa and Asia	2018–	Development Account

41. **Development context.** The basic assumption that underpins this work is that innovation, particularly innovation based on knowledge and technology, is a key driver of economic growth, productivity, structural transformation and sustainable development. Among the capabilities that developing countries need to generate in order to harness science, technology and innovation (STI) for development, sound policymaking frameworks leading to the establishment of effective innovation systems are key. While this is recognized by the Governments of many developing countries, designing and implementing national STI strategies and policies present considerable challenges for many of them. There is a clear need to support a process of STI policy learning, experimentation and the dissemination of good practices.

42. **Objectives and features.** The STI policy review programme provides policy advice to countries requesting assistance in building and maintaining a dynamic and responsive STI framework that can foster technological capabilities, create effective innovation systems, facilitate technology acquisition and improve national innovation performance. It aims to ensure that national STI programmes become an instrument for supporting the national development agenda and promoting sustainable development. The reviews assess the strengths and weaknesses of a country's innovation systems, including the policy framework, institutions, capabilities, and innovation effort as well as performance. Reviews generally include an analysis of the technology and innovation challenges and opportunities in specific industries (such as agriculture, textiles, oil and gas or pharmaceuticals) or issue areas of high priority for the beneficiary country (such as information and communications technology, biotechnology, human capital and energy). Key STI issues that affect the productivity and competitiveness of industries are identified. The reviews include

recommendations for action to revamp policy frameworks, including policies, regulations, measures and practices that can improve technological and innovation capacity, increase investment in innovative activity, raise productivity and upgrade firm and industry competitiveness. The primary beneficiaries of the reviews are the major players in the national innovation system, such as policymakers (from science and technology ministries or similar bodies, trade and industry ministries and other ministries of importance to STI), the business community, academic and research institutions, civil society and development and sustainability interest groups with a role in STI, in particular those related to any specific areas to be adopted as a focus for a review.

43. **Outputs.** The science, technology and innovation policy review of Uganda was published in October 2020, and UNCTAD agreed with the Government of Uganda to implement follow-up activities. Based on the assessment provided in the review, UNCTAD is supporting the development of a national policy framework for STI. A draft STI policy was delivered in March 2021. In-person trainings was delivered using the STI policy review during two workshops in 2019. Further capacity-building will be offered using the STI e-learning platform, currently being developed. The Government aims to further strengthen the coordination of the National Innovation Ecosystem. The policy focus is to increase the application of appropriate technology in the production and service delivery processes to support economic growth and improve labour productivity through identifying, facilitating, nurturing and commercializing novel innovations and technologies, and their transfer and appropriate adoption, including innovative solutions for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.⁵

44. After the science, technology and innovation policy review of Ethiopia was published in March 2020, Ethiopia embarked on the road to formulate, with advisory support from UNCTAD, the country's new STI policy, based on the findings and recommendations of the STI Policy Review. For this purpose, the Government set up a drafting committee. It is noteworthy that the STI policy review examined the use of STI in the textiles and apparels industry, which is the main foreign exchange earner of Ethiopia, as well as the pharmaceutical industry. Both industries are identified as high priorities of the national development plan.⁶

45. The STI policy review for the Dominican Republic, undertaken at the request of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, was published in April 2021. The analysis was largely based on the findings of an UNCTAD mission in November/December 2019 as well as virtual meetings organized in 2020. During the mission in 2019, over 80 meetings were held with representatives of major sectors participating in the national system of innovation. A first draft of the document was reviewed in five workshops with stakeholders in 2020. Abundant feedback was received that allowed fine-tuning of the analysis and recommendations. In the process and based on the analysis of the STI policy review, UNCTAD was able to contribute inputs to the national competitiveness plans that the Government undertook in 2020. Potential follow-up capacity-building activities are under consideration by the Government of the Dominican Republic.

46. The main recommendations of the STI policy review for the Dominican Republic address three sets of issues: (a) raising awareness of the importance of STI for development; (b) fostering an effective governance system that promotes active government, private sector and civil society participation; and (c) building a more effective allocation of resources to promote STI.

47. The STI policy review production process was in full activity during the reporting period despite difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic prevented most international travel and in-person meetings and, as a result, several missions were cancelled while consultations and capacity-building activities were moved online. This has led to a rethinking about adapting future activities by using online tools and platforms,

⁵ The STI policy review report for Uganda is available at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/science-technology-and-innovation-policy-review-uganda>.

⁶ The STI policy review report for Ethiopia is available at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/science-technology-and-innovation-policy-review-ethiopia>.

alongside in-person events, in a hybrid delivery mode. Such changes are necessary in order to respond to country requests and assists policymakers in maximizing the contribution of STI to the socioeconomic challenges of the post-COVID recovery.

48. The STI policy review for Zambia was launched in late 2019. A complete working draft was delivered to the Government for feedback in May 2021, and the final document was published on 11 April 2022. The review provides perspectives on the national system of innovation of Zambia. It also discusses, in greater detail, the role and contribution of STI in Zambia for digital transformation, gender equality, a functional food system and the mining sector. The STI policy review highlights the need to raise STI policy to the highest level in national development planning and how this will require greater efforts in capacity-building for STI policy design and implementation. Reflecting on a number of the recommendations, and following national elections in 2021, a new and independent Ministry of Technology and Science was created, which will carry the STI mandate. The analysis in the review will serve to develop capacity-building for policymakers in Zambia using the UNCTAD e-learning vehicle, currently under development.

49. Based on a request from the Ministry for Tertiary Education Research Science and Technology of Botswana, UNCTAD is undertaking an STI policy review in collaboration with the Ministry's Department for Research Science and Technology. It is notable that the Government of Botswana is financing the project, the first African review fully financed by the beneficiary country. Project implementation was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented physical travel and in-person meetings. It was decided to undertake the review entirely virtually through online interviews, discussions and research. Project implementation began with a scoping mission in September 2020. Based on the experience of that mission, revisions were made to the modalities for further implementation. Research along with a series of fact-finding interviews and discussions was conducted during 2021. A first full draft is being prepared, with parallel planning for the implementation of a foresight exercise as part of the review. The review and the foresight exercise are designed to support Botswana in its process of revising its policy framework for STI and strengthening its capacity to effectively harness STI as a key tool to move from a natural-resource based economy towards a knowledge-based economy.

50. These STI policy reviews and related trainings improved the capacity of public and private stakeholders to assess their national STI capacities, with a view to identifying gaps and incoherencies in policies, and to identifying priority actions. Especially through participating in the review and follow-up activities, policymakers in these countries enhanced their capacity to design and implement coherent STI policies that align with the overall development strategies of countries for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. In 2020, the UNDP and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Technology and Innovation of Angola requested UNCTAD support in the preparation of a Study on Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Angola, as the first step for policy development and to collect information which will be made publicly available to the actors of the national innovation system. The focus is on the sectoral innovation systems of the economic pillars of Angola: industry (petroleum and gas, diamonds and other minerals, and manufacturing), and agriculture, and to map and provide a rapid diagnostic of the digital and new technologies in the innovation system of the country. The focus on innovation is mainly on economic diversification, in expanding the productive capacities of the economy to produce goods and services that are new to the country. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the research is being carried out through online interviews and desk research.

52. In order to reinforce the capacity building delivered through STI policy reviews, UNCTAD offers officials and policymakers from countries undergoing STI policy reviews multiple training opportunities on STI policy for the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, a series of online training on STI and the Sustainable Development Goals was held from 6 to 10 December 2021 in collaboration with SADC. The training workshops were co-led by UNCTAD and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the Inter-agency Task Team, an operational arm of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM). This activity was open among others to current and former African STI policy review countries. The participants found the training helpful

for them to review, design and implement STI policy and to conduct STI for the Sustainable Development Goal case studies.

53. To support UNCTAD advisory services to assist developing countries in building their technological and productive capacities, UNCTAD is conducting pioneering field work to develop innovations surveys concerning the deployment and use of new technologies by firms of developing countries. The results will enable the development of a generalized framework for such type of firm-level surveys, including a list of relevant indicators. It will also lead to the development of questionnaires for measuring those indicators that could be cognitively tested in a subsequent stage. In 2021, UNCTAD conducted a cognitive test and a pilot application of the survey in 500 firms in Ghana. The objective is to test the questionnaire and the survey methodology in a developing country context to identify potential weaknesses, analyse the similarities and differences of the results of a pilot exercise in another developing country. Based on this information, the survey was revised in 2021 to make it ready to be applied in other developing countries in worldwide.

54. **Results and impacts.** At the end of 2021, UNCTAD had completed STI policy reviews in 18 countries, in which they had often ignited a renewal in STI policy, raised its profile in national development strategies and facilitated the inclusion of related activities in international cooperation plans. A key feature of the reviews is the systematic effort made to involve a broad range of stakeholders. This participatory process can mobilize networks of actors towards transformation through policy experimentation and learning. These activities under the STI policy reviews have enabled policymakers and other STI stakeholders in these countries to reach a better understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses in their STI systems, policies, institutions and capacities, and identify strategic priorities and policy options for improving STI capacity and becoming more innovative.

55. In Uganda, for instance, the policy recommendations made in the STI policy review, which cover both the general framework conditions for innovation in the country and the role of STI in addressing key development challenges, formed the base for the 2021 National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy. The new national policy document provides strategic guidance for the country's STI actors and aims at the realization of national development aspirations as expressed in Vision 2040 to transform Uganda into an inclusive, sustainable and industrialized economy driven by innovation.

A5 E-commerce and the digital economy

Table A5
E-commerce and the digital economy

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
BOT/0T/HBM	ICT Policy Review: National E-commerce Strategy for Botswana	2018–	Botswana
KAZ/0T/KAB	Developing comprehensive e-commerce legislation for the Republic of Kazakhstan	2021–	ITC
KEN/0T/JBC	E-commerce Strategy (ECS) of Kenya	2021–	Germany, BMZ
KIR/0T/HCI	Rapid eTrade readiness assessments of the least developed countries – Kiribati, EIF	2018–	United Nations Office for Project Services, Switzerland
JOR/0T/JAM	eTrade Readiness Assessment of Jordan	2021–	Germany GIZ
RWA/0T/FAV	ICT Policies for Development: E-commerce Strategy for Rwanda	2017–	Rwanda

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
TUN/0T/JAK	eTrade Readiness Assessment of Tunisia	2021–	Germany GIZ
INT/0T/FAQ	eTrade for all coordination	2016–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/GAT ^a	Rapid eTrade Readiness Studies	2018– 2021	Germany
INT/0T/HCE	Strategic Partnership Netherlands	2021–	Netherlands
INT/0T/IBN	E-commerce and the Digital Economy (ECDE) for Development	2019–	Germany
RAF/0T/HCC ^a	Africa E-commerce Week	2018– 2021	Germany
RAS/0T/KAJ	Pacific Digital Economy Programme	2021–	Australia, UNDP MDTF

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

56. **Development context.** E-commerce and, more generally, the rise of the digital economy, are rapidly transforming the way in which enterprises are interacting with each other, consumers and Governments. Digitalization is creating new opportunities for technological leaps, productivity gains across the economy, the rise of new sectors and more trade. At the same time, the transformation is raising new challenges and costs for countries. The importance of digital solutions was further enhanced in 2021 as a result of the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the considerable divides in terms of connectivity and the ability to harness digital opportunities became even more evident. The evolution of the digital economy calls for unconventional economic thinking and policy analysis. Policymakers need to make choices that can help reverse current trends towards widening inequalities and power imbalances wrought by the digital economy. This involves the adaptation of existing policies, laws and regulations, and the adoption of new ones. While some issues can be addressed through national policies and strategies, the global nature of the digital economy will require more dialogue, consensus-building and policymaking at the international level. This applies not least to the area of data, where a widening data divide can be observed. Many developing countries need to establish legal, institutional and policy frameworks, as well as effective national strategies, to leverage e-commerce, data and digitalization for value creation and capture. It is also important to improve the availability of relevant statistics needed for the design of sound policies and to learn from best practices in securing development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy. Special efforts are also needed to ensure that women have equal opportunities in e-commerce and the digital economy.

57. The Bridgetown Covenant calls for strengthening the work on assisting developing countries to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy, thus contributing to the closing of the digital divide. In doing so, the Covenant reinforces UNCTAD's mandate to work on enhancing development gains from the digital economy, which is carried out through the E-commerce and Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme. UNCTAD in 2021 continued to show leadership in this area through its three pillars of work: research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation. The delivery of work had to be adapted to the pandemic but most objectives were still achieved.

58. **Objectives and features.** The ECDE programme ultimately aims to improve the ability of people and businesses in developing countries, in particular LDCs, to reap inclusive and sustainable development gains from e-commerce and the digital economy. This should be achieved through improved policy formulation at the national, regional and global level on e-commerce and the digital economy for development, in a gender sensitive manner; and improved coordination within Governments, together with development partners, civil society and the private sector, to implement policies on e-commerce and the digital economy that work for development, in a gender sensitive manner.

59. **Outputs.** In 2021, extrabudgetary funding contributed to the production and dissemination of several research products. In September, the *Digital Economy Report 2021: Cross-border Data Flows and Development – For Whom the Data Flow*, was published. It examines the implications of growing cross-border data flows, especially for developing countries. It proposes to reframe and broaden the international policy debate with a view to building multilateral consensus. It is more important than ever to embark on a new path for digital and data governance. The current fragmented data landscape risks us failing to capture the value that could accrue from digital technologies, and it may create more space for substantial harms related to privacy breaches, cyberattacks and other risks. The Report calls for innovative approaches to governing data to ensure more equitable distribution of the gains from data flows while addressing risks and concerns. More than 28 outreach activities were organized (including a high-level launch event in Geneva, a virtual high-level dialogue with the support of the President of United Nations General Assembly), reaching over 1,200 participants from international organizations, national Governments, academia, the private sector and civil society.

60. Four technical notes and one policy brief were produced with support from extrabudgetary funds. In January, a note entitled “Digital economy growth and mineral resources: Implications for developing countries” was published. A new edition of the UNCTAD B2C E-commerce Index and global estimates of e-commerce were published in February and May, respectively. And in October, an analysis of the “Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade in the digital economy” was issued. A policy brief entitled “Digital trade: Opportunities and actions for developing countries” was released in January 2022.

61. The UNCTAD E-commerce Week has become the leading global forum at which public and private stakeholders, as well as civil society, can engage in dialogues about the development implications of the digital economy. In 2021, the planned Asia E-commerce Week had to be cancelled due to changing and unforeseen circumstances. The global E-commerce Week 2022 was held on 25–29 April 2022 in Geneva in a hybrid format.

62. The national e-commerce strategies for Botswana and Rwanda were completed. In Myanmar, although political developments in 2021 resulted in the suspension of project activities, the draft e-commerce strategy document had reportedly been accepted by the National Implementation Unit in March. Work began or continued on similar strategies for Benin, Solomon Islands and for a regional e-commerce strategy for the ECOWAS. Demand from member States remains high in this area with new requests for assistance having been received by the secretariat.

63. In the area of e-commerce and law reform, in response to a request from the Government of Kazakhstan, UNCTAD prepared two analytical reports to assist the Government in understanding the issues at stake in the Joint Statement Initiative (December 2020), with an analysis of compatibilities, deficiencies and missing elements with regards to the current national legal framework. Different policy options were put forward for consideration by the Government to amend their e-commerce legal framework. In addition, a capacity-building workshop and several consultations were organized in 2021. The global database on cyberlaws (the cyberlaw tracker) was updated following a survey in which 55 Members provided updates on recent legal developments in their jurisdictions. A draft e-commerce legislation gap analysis for the Pacific was also prepared, which should be finalized after a regional training course on the legal aspect of e-commerce to be organized in early 2023, with inputs from participants in the region.

64. The eTrade for all initiative, acts as both an information-hub and global help desk to developing countries on e-commerce related issues, as well as a catalyst for building synergies across its partners. As a global help desk, it offers news, events and a new COVID-19 repository page to help developing countries bridge the knowledge gap on e-commerce and related issues. The initiative saw two new members joining, the British Standards Institution (BSI) and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), bringing the total number of partners to 34. Members were offered regular opportunities to bring their expertise to the forefront of the global debate. Regular development and content management work on the online platform have also benefited from extrabudgetary funding. The platform underwent a migration and revamping in 2021.

Therefore, it was available in English only throughout the year. There has been a small decline in terms of visitors (10 per cent), but the duration of stay on the platform has increased. In 2021, there were 65,508 users of the eTrade for all website. In 2022, the multilingual option will be restored. The initiative continued to issue a monthly newsletter offering relevant insights and a snapshot of partners' agenda in the various policy areas and their relevant main policy priorities. The eTrade for all initiative also acts as a catalyst of partnership among its members, offering a regular platform for exchange and creating synergies to enhance efficiency and transparency of interventions. Under the auspices of the initiative, a major global review was undertaken in collaboration with United Nations regional commissions and other partners to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on e-commerce in different parts of the world and was published in March 2021, followed by regional reports for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and transition economies. Partly based on the main findings from the collective research effort undertaken in the framework of the COVID-19 and E-commerce: a Global Review, an e-commerce course targeting policymakers in developing countries is being developed by the eTrade for all initiative, led by UNCTAD, UNECLAC and selected partners.

65. In 2021, with the support of the Government of Germany, UNCTAD published one eTrade Readiness Assessment for Côte d'Ivoire and completed two new eTrade Readiness Assessments in Tunisia and Jordan. An assessment was also started in Kenya. As an immediate follow-up to the assessments conducted in Jordan and Tunisia, UNCTAD will be supporting in 2022 the elaboration of action plans to provide an operational tool for the Governments to fast-track and monitor the implementation of the selected priority actions, following a results-based approach.

66. Moving from assessment to implementation, UNCTAD started the second implementation review of the extent to which countries that have benefitted from an eTrade readiness assessment have acted upon the recommendations contained in the assessments. The report on the second review was published in April 2022.

67. Digitalization is also creating new business opportunities for women. Yet this potential is far from fully exploited. Women entrepreneurs still face many obstacles to scale up their business or to get a seat at decision-making tables, and the COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed gender inequalities in the digital economy. The eTrade for Women initiative launched by UNCTAD in 2019, combines the transformative power of female entrepreneurship with the positive impact of digital technologies. The initiative provides unique support to women digital entrepreneurs from developing countries, to help them thrive as business leaders and emerge as influential voices at the policy table. With a select cohort of successful women leaders in the digital economy, the eTrade for Women Advocates, the initiative contributes to changing the narrative and to fostering public-private dialogue to build more gender-responsive digital ecosystems. In partnership with international institutions, donors and the private sector, eTrade for Women also conducts targeted empowerment activities in the form of eTrade for Women Masterclasses and nurtures a growing network of women digital entrepreneurs across regions, called the eTrade for Women Communities. In 2021, eTrade for Women strengthened and expanded its activities along four key action lines: advocacy, capacity-building, community-building and policy dialogue, impacting more than 200 women in 27 countries.

68. During 2021, the revised UNCTAD Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy was published. It will serve as a basis for technical assistance to be provided to member States in the area of measuring e-commerce and the digital economy. The manual is being translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese. Moreover, the annual survey of member States' statistical organizations on business use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) was resumed, with results expected to be published in the first half of 2022.

69. **Results and impacts.** The ongoing work of UNCTAD on e-commerce and the digital economy continued to raise considerable interest among donors, beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Additional funding was secured from Australia (through the United Nations Capital Development Fund), Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. In order to secure effective coordination with the largest financial contributors, a Core Donor Advisory Board was set up, with a first meeting

convened in September 2021. The first independent evaluation of the ECDE Programme started in September 2021, which covers the period 2019–2021 and aims to assess progress towards the achievement of the Programme’s development objective, review its monitoring and evaluation framework, identify potential areas of improvement and inform future programme development.

70. The UNCTAD secretariat received many new requests from member States for capacity-building activities. The number of partners of the eTrade for all initiative has increased considerably since its creation in 2016. As of December 2021, 34 partners from the public sector and civil society had subscribed to the collective vision of supporting developing countries on their journey to e-commerce for development, while championing successful initiatives.

71. The *Digital Economy Report 2021* (DER 2021) was well received. Four months after its launch, it had been downloaded more than 41,000 times. Based on its research, UNCTAD was able to advise the African Union Commission in the process of its formulation of a data policy in 2021. Its analysis led the Presidency of Indonesia of the Group of 20 to invite UNCTAD as a knowledge partner to its work under the Digital Economy Working Group in 2022 on issues related to cross-border data flows and data free flows with trust. The Presidency of China of BRICS, meanwhile, invited UNCTAD to support the work of the BRICS in the area of the digital economy in 2022, together with the ITC. Moreover, the DER 2021 was used as an important background document to discussions on data governance in the context of the United Nations High-Level Committee on Programmes.

72. In 2021, 116 women digital entrepreneurs from 19 countries across the Balkans, East Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean participated in one of the three eTrade for Women Masterclasses. Participants were offered a set of inspirational, capacity-building and networking sessions to gain practical knowledge and tools to continue growing their digital businesses and positively impact their ecosystem in COVID-19 times. The Masterclasses paved the way for the expansion of the Communities, eTrade for Women’s regional networks of women digital entrepreneurs. In 2021, 3 more communities were launched in South-East Asia, East Africa and the Balkans. By end-2021, more than 100 women digital entrepreneurs from 27 developing countries, including 13 LDCs, had joined the Communities.

73. In order to support more gender-inclusive digital ecosystems, a series of formal and informal policy dialogues and consultations were held between policymakers and women entrepreneurs at the local, regional and global levels. The eTrade for Women initiative held three regional policy dialogue sessions, during the Masterclasses for the Balkans (July 2021), for Eastern Africa (September 2021) and for Latin America and the Caribbean (November 2021). The advocates also contributed to the eTrade Readiness Assessments of Côte d’Ivoire and Jordan. Such interactions helped to inform policy and regulatory processes about the challenges faced by small digital businesses, in particular women-led ones, and identified good practices and opportunities of collaboration with the public sector. Throughout 2021, the advocates engaged in numerous high-level events, such as UNCTAD XV, the WTO Public Forum, the SMEs Day, ITC eComConnect Days and the High-Level Political Forum. They shared their experience with a wide range of stakeholders, drawing attention to the need to make the digital economy more gender-inclusive, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 8.

74. The eTrade readiness assessments contributed to raising awareness on e-commerce in the beneficiary countries. The 29 assessments conducted for LDCs and non-LDCs confirmed that the countries are inadequately prepared to capture the many opportunities emerging from the digital economy. In 2021, UNCTAD intensified its efforts to foster synergies between development partners by working more with UNRCOs in participating countries to identify technical and financial support to implement the recommendations included in the assessments. Government leadership and private-sector involvement are needed to accompany the implementation of the recommendations made. Over time, the eTrade readiness assessments have turned from an output-based to a result-based product. In Jordan and Tunisia, the improved methodology – including a number of capacity-building workshops, multi-stakeholders consultations, round tables with partners and so on

– has contributed to: (a) develop national capacities to better understand challenges and unleash opportunities raised by e-commerce; (b) increase dialogue and foster interministerial coordination on e-commerce related initiatives; and (c) reflect on the implications of the pandemic for the development of e-commerce in each country.

75. As part of the eTrade Ready Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM), UNCTAD embarked on the second eTrade Ready Implementation Review (IR) in 2021. In February, two virtual workshops for the 18 countries involved in the first IR served as opportunities to strengthen coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, at the national level as well as across country groups and regions. It also helped to take stock of experiences and feedback on the data collection process. In September, three virtual workshops were organized to brief the 25 countries from the Africa and the Asia and the Pacific regions invited for the second IR to have a shared understanding of the review process. Fourteen countries out of 25 eventually participated in the IR, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi, the Niger, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda and Zambia. The full report of the second IR was launched during the UNCTAD E-commerce Week 2022, and results show that countries have increasingly taken ownership of the implementation process and are making good progress, partly thanks to the support of development partners.

76. The eTrade readiness assessments have also helped to foster regional visions for e-commerce. Amongst the feedback received from the second IR, Uganda reported having become better equipped to engage at the regional level during the development of the East African Community (EAC) e-commerce strategy in 2021. The latter, led by the EAC Secretariat, has considered the assessments of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania as well as the e-commerce strategy for Rwanda for its preparation. As part of the established Steering Committee, UNCTAD provided comments on the EAC strategy. Similarly, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, jointly with West African Economic and Monetary Union, has taken stock of the findings of the UNCTAD eTrade Readiness Assessments carried out in the region to start developing a strategic regional vision for e-commerce development. The ECOWAS Commission had formally requested UNCTAD assistance to develop a regional e-commerce strategy, the work on which officially kicked off in October 2021.

77. In the case of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), a Pacific E-commerce Assessment was released in 2020 based on the five eTrade Readiness Assessments conducted by UNCTAD in the region, plus five conducted by the PIFS using UNCTAD methodology. The regional assessment laid the analytical foundations for the development of the Pacific E-commerce Strategy and Road Map in 2021. In support of the efforts of the PIFS for the development of inclusive digital economies in the region, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UNDP and UNCTAD have joined forces to implement the Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP), a multi-agency partnership funded by the Government of Australia. The PDEP includes both country-specific activities, initially focusing on Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, and region-wide research and capacity-building activities.

78. Impact of capacity-building and empowerment activities delivered online: Participants in the eTrade for Women's online empowerment and community-building sessions highlighted the positive impact of such activities. The Advocates reported that the online induction week they attended had allowed them to gain useful knowledge to perform their advocacy role. Over 90 per cent of participants of the eTrade for Women Masterclasses, which were virtually delivered, who responded to the final evaluation surveys rated the programme as "useful" or "very useful" to them as digital entrepreneurs. They reported that the opportunity to connect with peers, even remotely, had been very impactful. They also indicated that the online policy dialogue sessions had helped them to better understand their policy environment and how it affects their businesses. Members of the communities reported that interacting online with like-minded peers had been very valuable and enabled them to learn from others, overcome bottlenecks and identify business opportunities at the regional and global level, even though connections and interactions had to take place virtually.

79. Due to the COVID-19 related restrictions, the DER 2021 outreach activities were mainly conducted online. This format helped to reach a wider audience in various regions in addition to activities held in Geneva. For example, the DER had a regional launch in Africa, which was attended virtually by around 100 participants from governments, academia and the private sector. Moreover, through other webinars, the DER was presented to economists in the United Nations system, university students in Brazil and the Russian Federation, as well as policymakers in Eastern European countries. The outreach and training activities have been generally welcomed. According to a survey conducted by UNCTAD, 100 per cent of survey respondents (Geneva-based delegates) assessing the short course on the cross-border data flows, where the main findings of the DER 2021 were presented, found that their awareness of e-commerce and the digital economy had increased.

A6 Investment guides

Table A6
Investment guides

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/H CJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2018–	Netherlands

80. **Development context.** The investment guides (iGuides) programme provides developing country governments with the necessary capacity to better market their countries or territories as investment destinations to the global investment community, in order to attract quality FDI in pursuit of their development goals. Providing transparency on the investment process is a fundamental to effective investment facilitation.

81. **Objectives and features.** The iGuides online platforms, designed by UNCTAD and the International Chamber of Commerce, provide international investors with essential up-to-date information on rules, economic conditions, procedures, business costs and investment opportunities in developing countries. The platforms are developed jointly with beneficiary governments, at their request. Content includes the following:

(a) Locally available costs. In addition to taxes, social contributions or the state of infrastructure, iGuides provide indicative price ranges regarding wages, rents, consumer goods and transportation costs. This hard-to-find information enables investors to build a basic business model for their projects.

(b) Relevant licences, procedures and useful contacts. iGuides platforms give an overview of procedures and licences required to start a business, obtain work permits, acquire land, clear imported goods or repatriate funds. Contact persons are also identified in the most useful institutions and offices. iGuides can integrate seamlessly with existing eRegulations systems to provide full information on start-up and business procedures.

(c) Investment opportunities both by sector and in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. Governments have the option of promoting bankable projects.

(d) Experiences of established investors. Whether the topic is paying taxes, hiring labour or obtaining electricity, iGuides platforms summarize the experiences of established investors and provide case studies of their investment history.

82. During a project, UNCTAD creates a national iGuides platform for the country and trains the government staff assigned to the project in researching and compiling the necessary information and entering it into the system. Once completed, an official launch is organized in the country, and the platform is made publicly available to investors. At the end of project implementation, the beneficiary country has its own iGuides platform and trained staff to administer and update it under the continuous guidance of UNCTAD. The iGuides online platforms replace the previous practice of publishing printed investment

guides. It is essential that the new iGuides allow information to be kept up to date by Governments and may be accomplished in a third of the time and at half of the cost.

83. **Outputs.** Following a request from respective governments, starting July 2021 field missions were undertaken in the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Mauritius and Namibia to research information and train government officials. The guides will be launched in the second quarter of 2022. Under an existing partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa, agreement was also reached to produce guides for Cameroon and Gabon.

84. **Results.** The iGuides are web-based, and any element may be easily updated at any time to reflect changes in legislation, infrastructure, costs or taxes. The iGuides therefore remain relevant and useful to their audience. In addition, Governments (not UNCTAD) are responsible for researching, inputting and updating data based on information standards and training provided by UNCTAD and the International Chamber of Commerce. The iGuide launches enjoy high-level participation and receive extensive press coverage. Governments have updated their sites, showing retained capacity to update the website in an effective manner and the continued relevance of the website. The availability of online training allows staff working on iGuides to readily transfer knowledge and capacity to their peers.

A7 Non-tariff measures

Table A7
Non-tariff measures

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/CBG ^a	Non-tariff measures trust fund (under Transparency in Trade programme)	2013–2021	World Bank
INT/0T/JAY ^a	NTM data update for selected APEC economies	2020–2021	National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Japan
INT/0T/KAI	NTM data update for selected APEC economies	2021–	National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS, Japan)
RAF/0T/HBT	AfCFTA support programme to eliminate non-tariff barriers, increase regulatory transparency and promote industrial diversification	2018–	Germany
RAF/0T/JBK	Support project for the African Continental Free Trade Area to eliminate non-tariff barriers and increase regulatory transparency – Phase 2	2021–	Germany
RAF/0T/KAH	Support Project to Increase Regulatory Transparency on Non-Tariff Measures in the AfCFTA	2021–	Germany
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

85. **Development context.** Regulations, including behind-the-border regulations protecting safety, health and the environment, affect 90 per cent of merchandise trade. Such non-tariff measures are policy measures, other than customs tariffs, which often have an impact on international trade in terms of quantities traded or prices. These measures, although mostly legislated with non-protectionist and non-discriminating intents, can have important implications for international trade in terms of both increasing trade costs and the effects of trade diversion. Non-tariff measures affect trade by raising trade, compliance and procedural costs, which often disproportionately burden small enterprises and poorer countries. LDCs and smaller producers in developing countries are disproportionately affected, hampering trade and economic development. However, most non-tariff measures have important public policy objectives such as protecting health, safety and the environment. More than 40 per cent of non-tariff measures are directly and positively linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. Striking a balance between trade costs and regulatory benefits requires transparency, policy coherence and international-level regulatory convergence. Concrete actions in this regard are often coupled with regional economic integration and domestic regulatory reforms. Over 140 countries resorted to the use of non-tariff measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, both to facilitate and to restrict international trade. While many of these measures were put in place for legitimate policy objectives, such as ensuring access to or safety of essential goods, they impacted sustainable development. For developing countries, understanding the uses and implications of such measures is essential for the formulation and implementation of effective development strategies.

86. **Objectives and features.** The UNCTAD programme on non-tariff measures aims to increase transparency and understanding of trade control measures and regulations so that policies can better promote sustainable development. The programme covers the entire chain of non-tariff measures, ranging from classification,⁷ data collection and dissemination, to research, policy advice and capacity-building in countries and regional integration groupings. UNCTAD leads international cooperation (working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the International Trade Centre, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization) on the development and revision of the International Classification of Non-Tariff Measures and with regional and international partners (African Development Bank, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, International Trade Centre, Latin American Integration Association, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Southern African Development Community (SADC), World Bank and WTO) on data collection. This ensures a globally coordinated and resource-saving approach. UNCTAD assists developing countries in enhancing transparency and building analytical capacity on non-tariff measures by the following means: collecting and making available online data on such measures to enhance transparency in this regard; conducting regional reviews of the integration of non-tariff measures; providing online and in-country training on data collection on non-tariff measures and on data sources, tools, methods and policy-relevant research questions on such measures; and providing advisory services upon request to countries and regional groupings in building capacities to address such measures and remove non-tariff barriers.

87. **Outputs.** UNCTAD delivered the following in 2021:

(a) Data on non-tariff measures for some 25 countries were updated or newly collected. The UNCTAD database on non-tariff measures, the Trade Analysis and Information System (TRAINS), is the world's largest and most comprehensive, covering 90 per cent of world trade, and data on non-tariff measures are publicly available through the dissemination tool TRAINS Portal for non-tariff measures (for policy makers), the

⁷ Classification focuses on the identification of policies and regulations that determine trade and market access and how information about non-tariff measures can be structured.

World Integrated Trade Solutions platform (for researchers) and the Global Trade Helpdesk (for private sector users);⁸ TRAINS Portal⁹ aims to strengthen the transparency of non-tariff measures across countries and reduce access to information cost of traders. It is an interactive web portal that allows public users to benefit from efficient search queries, data compilation, data retrieval, as well as download customized search results. Non-tariff measures and trade regulation data on TRAINS Portal are retrieved from the newly developed TRAINS Data Entry Tool,¹⁰ where data from over 109 countries have been collected using a standardized approach, endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission, that ensures cross-country comparability. The number of users is increasing and bypassed 17,000 in 2021.

(b) The Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) continued to work in 2021 jointly with UNCTAD to provide yearly updated NTM data for all its member countries. ALADI also worked towards integrating its database with TRAINS online, through a tailor- made application programming interface (API) for automatic transfer of data.

(c) Other countries connecting to TRAINS online through APIs are Kyrgyzstan and Vietnam.

(d) Capacity-building activities conducted through online training and face-to-face workshops on non-tariff measures.

(e) UNCTAD for the first time in 2021 offered the online course on non-tariff measures and their relevance to the corona virus pandemic in Spanish, attracting applications from various Spanish-speaking countries. One hundred and fifty-six participants from 14 Spanish-speaking countries participated in the two versions of the course. UNCTAD also cooperated with UNESCAP to organize two courses on the topic of trade regulations in general and non-tariff measures. A course on non-tariff measures and sustainable development trained 120 government officials, trade practitioners, and researchers. Another course, the UNESCAP–UNCTAD Global Course on Negotiating Regional Trade Agreements for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic, graduated more than 235 trade officials (46 per cent of whom were women) from over 70 countries in different regions of the world. UNCTAD also conducted a course on economic analysis of non-tariff measures which provides researchers with empirical methods and tools to analyse the impacts of non-tariff measures on trade. Overall, 600 government officials, traders and researchers have completed the courses on non-tariff measures provided by UNCTAD. In each course, roughly 85 per cent to 95 per cent of participants believed that the knowledge acquired during the online course helped them understand non-tariff measures and the policy issues that their country faces in international trade.

(f) Eurasian Economic Commission. Tailor-made course on data available and data analysis for development impact was delivered in September 2021 to key managers responsible for research planning and implementation in the area of regional integration.

(g) UNCTAD estimates that addressing non-tariff barriers (NTBs) across Africa can bring gains of \$20 billion each year to AfCFTA Member States/States Parties.¹¹ Between 2018 and 2021, UNCTAD worked with the African Union to develop and implement the official AfCFTA NTB Online Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Mechanism, which is based on Annex 5 of the AfCFTA Protocol on Trade in Goods. Any cross-border trader, including MSMEs, women, youth and informal traders, can register and report an NTB through the online platform.¹² Formally appointed National Focal Points were trained by the African Union and UNCTAD on the use of the system. The National Focal Points are responsible for monitoring and resolving reported NTBs. In 2021, UNCTAD supported the AfCFTA Secretariat in the organization of the inaugural meeting

⁸ See <https://globaltradehelpdesk.org>.

⁹ <https://trainsonline.unctad.org>.

¹⁰ <https://dataentry.trains.unctad.org/>.

¹¹ Vanzetti D, Peters R and Knebel C (2017). Non-tariff measures: Lifting Continental Free Trade Area and African, Caribbean and Pacific trade to the next level. Research Paper No. 14. UNCTAD.

¹² See <https://tradebarriers.africa/>.

of the AfCFTA Sub-Committee for Non-Tariff Barriers and the drafting of its 2021–2022 workplan. UNCTAD also worked with the AfCFTA Secretariat on the daily management of the NTB mechanism. For example, UNCTAD assisted the Gambia and Senegal with regard to the resolution of a reported NTB that concerned small traders. A record of the complaint and its resolution is publicly available on the website of the AfCFTA NTB Online Mechanism. For more traders to become aware of and benefit from the platform, UNCTAD has worked with regional and national partners to raise awareness. To break down another hurdle for small and informal traders who lack internet connectivity, UNCTAD worked with Member States of the AfCFTA to develop an SMS offline reporting feature. After approval from Member States in late 2020, the feature was fully developed in 2021 and will be piloted in several countries in 2022. Finally, UNCTAD worked with regional economic communities to ensure a seamless integration of existing NTB online mechanisms. The EAC-SADC-COMESA Tripartite NTB Mechanism¹³ is already fully integrated and automatically exchanges data with the AfCFTA Mechanism. In 2020/2021, UNCTAD also worked with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC) and developed an ECCAS subsystem of the AfCFTA NTB Online Mechanism. UNCTAD will work on implementing the subregional tool in 2022.

(h) UNCTAD work on NTM regulatory transparency supports AfCFTA Member States/States Parties in complying with AfCFTA annexes on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, technical barriers to trade (TBT), trade facilitation, customs cooperation and mutual administrative assistance that all include transparency provisions. NTM data collection and transparency also fosters inter-agency collaboration between various ministries to improve policy coherence (Sustainable Development Goal 17.14, indicator 17.14.1). For 10 countries that requested support in 2019/2022, data collection was completed in 2021. In 2021, UNCTAD received additional 10 requests from AfCFTA Member States/States Parties to participate in the NTM regulatory transparency initiative or update information from previous efforts. New participants are Chad, Gabon, Lesotho, Mozambique and Rwanda, and updates are ongoing in Guinea, Kenya, the Niger, Senegal and Togo. Capacity building workshops were held in these countries to strengthen the understanding of the impact and policy implication of NTMs, and the benefits of regulatory transparency. Data collection in these 10 countries was completed in mid-2022.

(i) UNCTAD works to increase the capacity of four Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) members – Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands – to identify and strengthen synergistic linkages between green trade promotion and their sustainable development in a regionally collaborative manner. The project called “Green trade for sustainable development in Pacific SIDS of the MSG (hereafter, the Green Trade project)” under the 12th Tranche of Development Account was revised in early 2021 due to three main reasons. First, the COVID-19 pandemic made travel and physical meetings difficult. Second, the priority of development needs in beneficiary countries has changed. Third, as other development projects, especially Pacific Regional Integration Support (PRISE) programme and Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative (PQII) started to or planned to be implemented during this project period, coordination with other projects should be enhanced to reduce duplication and create synergy. The revision was based on needs assessment and consultation with national and regional partners – the MSG secretariat, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the UNRCOs in the Pacific region. On 23 November, the first activity of the project – a virtual start-up regional workshop – was held with government officials from four MSG member States, the MSG Secretariat and UNCTAD to inform the activities and discuss next steps.

(j) UNCTAD manages and implements one of the six outputs under PRISE programme as mentioned in (i) above, with the title “Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade” (IMPACT). It aims to boost and increase intraregional and international trade of Pacific ACP countries with a focus on capacity-building for the accession and implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union. IMPACT is a multi-divisional project led by ASYCUDA programme. It is at the stage of joint work planning and coordinating with other PRISE implementing partners. UNCTAD

¹³ www.tradebarriers.org.

identified collaborations with the Pacific Community (SPC), another implementing partner, which cover assistance to countries to comply with NTMs for the SPC targeted value chains and EPA priority products. On 1 December 2021, the Second Technical Coordination Group Meeting was held with the European Union delegation and PRISE implementing partners.

(k) The Non-Tariff Measures Cost-Effectiveness Toolkit was developed and published to provide policymakers with a framework and tools to evaluate national NTMs. The toolkit analyses NTMs in terms of the objective they are designed for, the manner in which they are implemented, and how easy it is for the private sector to comply with them. Designed to review NTMs applicable to intermediate inputs for a value chain of national economic and political interest, the toolkit targets increasing competitiveness in the identified sector and creation of regional value chains (RVCs). After a pilot on the cotton-textile-clothing value chain in Kenya, ASEAN Economic Ministers adopted the NTM Toolkit in their meeting on 8–9 September 2021. ASEAN envisages to roll out the toolkit across ASEAN countries to strengthen good regulatory practices and regional integration. Workshops were organized jointly with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia at the political and the technical levels in 2021. NTM data in Thailand were updated in 2021, preparing the ground for the NTM toolkit.

(l) Under a United Nations Trade Cluster Project for Trade and Productive Capacity in Myanmar, work had been shifted during 2021 to conduct desktop work due to challenges working on the ground in Myanmar. A Voluntary Sustainability Standards readiness survey was finalized and a report, that will in 2022 be converted into guidelines, prepared in 2021. Furthermore, a review of technical NTMs of Myanmar on select products with respect to NTMs in potential export markets was finalized to identify opportunities and challenges for market access.

(m) UNCTAD collaborated with the governments of Viet Nam and the United Kingdom to build a modern and user-friendly national trade repository – the VNTR. This portal will integrate ASEAN Repository and complies with the obligations of Viet Nam under the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement. It essentially contains information on NTM as well as on tariffs and rules of origin. UNCTAD provided the NTM data ensuring its global standardized methodology is followed, while a private company (Nathan) developed the web portal. UNCTAD also developed the API automatic data transfer from TRAINS database to the VNTR web portal. Data was updated for 2020, after data collection in 2015 and 2018. The NTM data provided will be both comprehensive and comparable to that of the other 100 countries in the NTMs global database (TRAINS Online) being managed by UNCTAD.

(n) In close cooperation with UNECE and UNESCAP, transparency in East Europe and Central Asia has been increased. Non-tariff measures data are available for all Eurasian Economic Union countries as well as for Azerbaijan. Data collection for Georgia and the development of a national e-NTM platform started with UNECE in 2020 and was ongoing in 2021. The national online system of Kyrgyzstan for timely collection and exchange of information on NTMs was tested successfully in 2021. NTM portal was developed by government agencies to collect information on NTM, and to share data automatically with UNCTAD TRAINS online containing data for all other countries.

(o) UNCTAD followed the negotiations on a dispute settlement mechanism to resolve non-tariff barriers between Parties in Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). The project “Support CEFTA for monitoring and reporting of NTBs and implementation of dispute settlement mechanism” is to be implemented as of June 2022.

88. **Results and impacts.** Based on a mandate from the Heads of State, the project led by UNCTAD and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia significantly increased transparency in non-tariff measures in the ASEAN region. The forty-ninth meeting (held in September 2017) and fifty-third meeting (held in September 2021) of ASEAN economic ministers recognized the UNCTAD–Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia data and dissemination portal as a foundation to address non-tariff measures and mandated a regular review of the database as well as implementing the NTM

toolkit across ASEAN member States.¹⁴ The ASEAN Ministers thanked the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia and UNCTAD for the work of developing the NTM database, the in-country trainings on NTMs collection, classification and analysis, and the toolkit on cost-effectiveness of NTMs at the fifty-first and fifty-third meetings of economic ministers. The data is “a good resource in assisting ASEAN Member States in populating and developing the NTMs section of their National Trade Repositories (NTRs).” (ASEAN Economic Ministers, 9 September 2019) “The Meeting underscored the importance of the Toolkit as a guideline to manage NTMs affecting the smooth flow of goods within the region and encouraged AMS to make full use of this Toolkit.” (ASEAN Economic Ministers, 8–9 September 2021). Furthermore, the data have been used in the implementation of customs single windows in Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam. ASEAN members are using the joint data to explore possibilities for harmonizing non-tariff measures in ASEAN. Malaysia is using the data for a cost–benefit assessment to streamline national regulations, and other countries have requested UNCTAD support in this area. NTM data were updated for Viet Nam in 2020 and discussed with the Government, with a view to including this officially in a trade portal that is going to be built with the support of the United Kingdom.

89. The updated NTM data of New Zealand in 2021, and the support to the Pacific SIDS through the Green Trade project and IMPACT project are creating synergistic effect with other development assistance projects. NTM data of New Zealand provided groundwork for the NTM data update of Australia because these countries share the same food standards. Moreover, coordination meetings and workshops allowed various development institutions to understand each other’s work and identify potential areas to collaborate such as jointly collecting regulatory documents or using each other’s workshop as an additional communication channel. It led to support government officials of the Pacific SIDS, who would have been involved in only one or another project, to have an overview of development support across their country and coordinate with other ministries to maximize the benefit of such support. For example, when Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands choose an agricultural product for voluntary sustainable standards (VSS) assessment, UNCTAD informed the government focal points of these countries about other product-specific assistance to be provided by the PIF and SPC so that they can take an integrated approach when making a decision. The government focal points also welcomed upcoming NTM data collection as it paves a way to update the Trade Information Portals developed in the PACER Plus project¹⁵ and responds to their then-made request for support in the WTO notification.

90. The support projects to the AfCFTA in the areas of NTBs and NTM regulatory transparency led to the following results: Awareness raising on the website of the AfCFTA NTB online reporting, monitoring and eliminating mechanism increased the number of users by 28 per cent from 6,400 in 2020 to 8,200 in 2021 and site visits by 36 per cent from 11,000 in 2020 to 15,000 in 2021. UNCTAD support to the NTB mechanism also resulted in the resolution of an NTB between the Gambia and Senegal. After many consultations at various levels, the NTB was finally addressed by Heads of State, as also confirmed by the concerned small traders. UNCTAD assistance to the organization of the first AfCFTA Sub-Committee on NTBs contributed to the success of the event which was attended by 149 delegates from 24 States Parties and 10 Member States and marked with the successful adoption of a comprehensive workplan. The workplan sets an ambitious and impact-driven agenda for 2022 and designates UNCTAD as the main technical partner for many activities. Furthermore, the Ministers responsible for trade of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) adopted the UNCTAD proposal to implement a regional NTB online mechanism as a “virtual sub-system” of the AfCFTA mechanism, ensuring perfect compatibility between the platforms. Regarding regulatory transparency, requests for NTM data collection from 2020 were finalized in 2021: in 10 countries, over 500 regulatory texts were collected by governments themselves and entered in the database. UNCTAD classified these regulations into the International Classification of NTMs and is now

¹⁴ See <http://asean.i-tip.org>.

¹⁵ See <https://unctad.org/project/transparency-trade-regulation-and-facilitation-pacific-agreement-closer-economic-relations>.

disseminating them through aforementioned websites. In 2021, ten additional requests were received from AfCFTA Member States/State Parties to collect or update NTM data to increase regulatory transparency. For these countries, more than 300 regulations have already been collected in 2021.

91. The Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) is continuing to promote trade through the continuous provision of updated information on non-tariff measures to policymakers, exporters and importers, based on UNCTAD methodology and technical support. Southern Common Market countries are revitalizing their efforts towards deep economic integration, including based on an UNCTAD regional non-tariff measures integration review providing background data on and an analysis of non-tariff measures. The results of the joint work are enhanced by the two online courses carried out in Spanish. This made possible to reach out to more professionals working in the area, so as to highlight the importance of NTM for development and regional integration, especially within COVID framework.

92. The dissemination of research results on NTMs has improved awareness of the importance of non-tariff measures for international trade and export-led development strategies and of the need to devise policies to minimize the negative effects of NTMs. In particular, transparency on non-tariff measures was increased through the collection and dissemination of data and through a series of studies that helped to provide better understanding of the implications of these measures for developing countries. UNCTAD also provided statistics on newly collected non-tariff measures data for the World Tariff Profiles 2021, which is jointly published with WTO and ITC.

93. Since its release in July 2020, the TRAINS Data Entry Tool has been used in data collection and update of NTMs and trade regulations around the world. The new tool has received strong buy-in from countries including Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Viet Nam, with the support of UNCTAD, in developing a common integration platform that will allow non-tariff measures and trade regulations data collection within these countries, and a secure information exchange channel with TRAINS Portal. These efforts signal the increasing transparency and openness of countries in reducing additional information costs for traders as well as boosting investors' interest in their markets. Data from ALADI member States as well as Central America are also being integrated into TRAINS online through a dedicated API.

A9 Trade negotiations and the international trading system

Table A9
Trade negotiations and the international trading system

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
MOZ/0T/JAH	Building Competitiveness for Exports in Mozambique	2020–	European Union through United Nations inter-agency agreement with UNIDO
INT/9X/00M	SUPPORT TO THE GSTP	2020–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/HAA ^a	Measurement of services value added in exports and analysis of related services and	2018– 2021	European Union

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	trade policies		
ROA-2124 (F)	Trade policies and frameworks to foster regional integration and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in selected conflict and post-conflict Arab countries	2021–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

94. **Development context.** The multilateral trade cooperation is essential for Sustainable Development Goal 10 and 17 to revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, especially its target 17.10 to promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO. UNCTAD contributed actively to Sustainable Development Goal 10 and 17 through three pillars of its work. Important challenges confronted policymakers in their endeavour to harvest trade's potential for sustainable development. The WTO reform, corrections, setbacks and renegotiations of existing and proposed trading arrangements were brought to the forefront of international trade policy debates aimed at adapting and modernizing different aspects of the multilateral trading system, not to mention the protracted WTO negotiations and the proliferation of bilateral and regional initiatives. Along with the proliferation of regional trade agreements, the drive towards regionalism will be a major focus of the trade policy agenda over the coming years. Dynamic growth of some developing countries has also contributed to increased South–South trade. In this light, reaping effective development benefits from participation in the multilateral trading system, as well as parallel and proliferating plurilateral, regional and subregional trade integration processes, remains an important challenge for national policymakers and trade negotiators. Nonetheless, the multilateral trade architecture continues to play a central role, acting as a major stabilizer in the global economy and as a global public good for all countries. It should therefore be continuously supported and strengthened so that it could serve as an essential enabler for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNCTAD continued trade negotiating support remains critically important for developing countries, particularly for LDCs, Africa and small vulnerable economies, as various substantive negotiating agenda issues are of particular relevance to sustainable development. Such support would be required particularly on agriculture, food security, domestic support, cotton, non-agricultural market access, non-tariff measures, services market access, domestic regulations, services trade facilitation, services preferences, duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) market access and rules of origin, special and differential treatment (SDT) and fishery subsidies.

95. Positively integrating developing countries – especially LDCs and small economies – into the global services economy and increasing their participation in services production and trade is essential. Development of the services sector provides the backbone of an integrated and effective economy. The services sector, particularly infrastructure services can help improve efficiency and competitiveness in all sectors of the economy, as services constitute essential inputs to other many products and services. The sector generates opportunities for greater income, productivity, employment, investment and trade, and also furthers achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the provision of essential services including education (Goal 4), energy (Goal 7), transport and telecommunications (Goal 17). Diversification into the services sector is conducive to integrating developing countries, especially LDCs and small, structurally weak and vulnerable States, into the global services economy. In order to generate the expected development benefits, services trade liberalization needs to be properly paced and in sequence with the establishment of effective regulatory and institutional frameworks. This poses important challenges for developing countries, including the establishment of national services policies to build up productive capacity in services and the negotiation of services agreements at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. Maximizing the

positive and pro-development contributions of the services sector requires good regulation and institutions capable of promoting domestic supply capacity.

96. The provision and utilization of trade preferences for LDCs (duty-free, quota-free) is a key goal of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2021, as further reaffirmed in Goal 17.12. At the South–South level, UNCTAD provides technical support to the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP) participants. Following the successful conclusion of the Sao Paulo Round of GSTP negotiations in December 2010, UNCTAD continued to support GSTP participants in their efforts towards effective implementation of the Round and in follow-up discussions. UNCTAD assisted them in coordinating and backstopping their activities in various GSTP activities.

97. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD support on trade negotiations aims at helping developing countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs) and their regional groupings, Africa, small and vulnerable economies to build analytical, human, regulatory and institutional capacities in multilateral and regional trade negotiations, services regulatory and institutional frameworks at the national levels, WTO accession, supporting regional cooperation mechanisms as well as utilization of trade preferences. The support provided assists countries in identifying negotiating priorities and negotiating and implementing bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements in a coherent manner that reflects their critical development concerns and interests, especially by building productive capacities and creating employment. This enables countries to derive greater benefit from international trade and the international trading system, including in meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Greater attention is also given to enhancing the development impact of South–South and South–North trade.

98. UNCTAD support in the area of services is aimed to enhance expertise and human, regulatory and institutional capacities to and preparations for (a) regional negotiations with a view to developing a regional framework on services trade; (b) participation in WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services negotiations; and (c) responding to the challenges associated with parallel negotiations between the multilateral track and regional tracks. Its work on regulations and institutions in infrastructure services was particularly timely and relevant in view of the need to strengthen infrastructure services to increase competitiveness and to contribute to sustainable development and access by the poor to essential services.

99. The objective of UNCTAD support for the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and other preferential arrangements is to help developing countries, in particular LDCs, to increase the utilization of GSP and other trade preferences. Such support includes raising awareness and enhancing understanding among exporters and government officials in beneficiary countries of the trading opportunities available under the schemes; strengthening understanding of technical and administrative regulations and laws governing preferential market access, in particular rules of origin; and disseminating relevant information for users of preferential schemes.

100. The objective of UNCTAD support for GSTP is to increase trade among developing countries by facilitating market access negotiations and the operation of GSTP and benefiting from it, and to provide substantive and administrative support to GSTP participants for them to implement the results of the third round of negotiations.

101. **Outputs.** The main outputs in 2021 in the area of trade negotiations and the international trading system are reported as follows:

Trade systems

102. In 2021, the important focus of UNCTAD work has been in support of the African Union Members and Commission as well as the RECs and their secretariats to identify trade and development policies and negotiating strategies at national, regional, and international levels to address the challenges faced by African economies, build resilience, and foster sustained economic growth. African countries also benefited from UNCTAD activities supporting developing countries generally and LDCs. UNCTAD pioneered in providing technical and substantive support to pan-African negotiations aimed at the

establishment of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). In cooperation with the African Union Commission, UNCTAD supported African countries in the areas of trade in goods and services, in finalizing market access offers and implementing tariff reduction commitments in a manner supportive of their development needs. UNCTAD supported selected African countries in their formulation and implementation of national trade policy framework geared towards sustainable development.

103. UNCTAD continued to monitor and assess the evolution in international trade and the trading system from a development perspective. In 2021, UNCTAD continued to deliver policy discussions within the online platform entitled “UNCTAD Trade Policy Dialogue” and promoted focused and candid debate on new and emerging issues affecting developing countries, including Africa. Such discussions were held on the following topics: “World Economic Situation and Prospects 2021 on Trade” (3 March 2021), “Applying a gender lens to financial inclusion” (28 April 2021) and “Tear down this wall – Challenges with trade-related regulations” (31 August 2021).

104. UNCTAD in cooperation with the United Nations ESCAP organized “Global online course on negotiating regional trade agreements for trade in times of crisis and pandemic” (22 November–14 December 2021). The objective of the course is to strengthen the capacity of trade negotiators and trade policy officials in designing and drafting legal provisions of RTAs so that trade agreements can promote greater preparedness and resilience of RTA parties to cope with future pandemic and crises.

105. At multilateral level, UNCTAD continued to provide technical support to developing countries and groupings in their engagement in multilateral and regional trade negotiations and the implementation of the resulting trade agreements. Under the Commercial diplomacy component of the European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, UNCTAD continued to support the Government of Angola in trade negotiations, regional integration, and Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations with the European Union. Guidebook on Trade Impact Assessment for Angola was produced and published in November 2021. UNCTAD provided technical and advisory support to Mozambique under the European Union–UNIDO project to support Mozambique in implementing safeguards. The draft law on Trade Remedies and Safeguards Measures for Mozambique was delivered on 9 September 2021.

106. In 2021, UNCTAD organized or contributed to the following meetings:

- (a) Scotland (United Kingdom) round table on the Vision for Trade (16 March 2021);
- (b) Sudan WTO accession Round Table with Development Partners (29 March 2021);
- (c) Launching ceremony of the Mozambique project Promove Comércio (29 March 2021);
- (d) Participation in the first session of the Mozambique Technical Committee (29 April 2021);
- (e) Participation in the peer review for the *Economic Development in Africa Report 2021* (22 April 2021);
- (f) Technical support for Angola on EPA SADC–European Union impact study (11 May 2021);
- (g) Angola – Workshop on Regional Integration – Preparing for the SADC–European Union Economic Partnership Agreement accession negotiations (29 June 2021);
- (h) Mozambique – first training on trade remedies (21–25 June 2021);
- (i) Mozambique – second training on trade remedies (27–30 July 2021);
- (j) Participation in a consultative meeting on the sustainability impact assessment of Angola’s accession to SADC–European Union EPA (21 July);
- (k) Coordination meeting (UNCTAD, Ministry of Industry and Commerce and Trade Law Centre (TRALAC)) under the Mozambique project to discuss the preparation of

a revised draft law on Trade Remedies and Safeguards Measures (Implementation Act) (2 August 2021);

(l) Participation in a consultative meeting on United Nations system support to trade policy formulation for the acceleration of the Sustainable Development Goals in Namibia (10 August 2021);

(m) Advisory support on AfCFTA National Implementation Strategy for Namibia (20 August 2021);

(n) Namibia – Capacity-building Workshop on Policy Formulation and Sustainable Development Goal Acceleration by United Nations Namibia (25–29 October 2021).

107. UNCTAD assisted more than 20 countries acceding to WTO, including all LDCs negotiating or preparing for accession. UNCTAD technical assistance on WTO accession targets building human resources, regulatory, policy and institutional capacities in WTO acceding countries to deal more effectively with the challenges of the international trading system and take advantage of emerging opportunities as well as to implement their obligations associated with WTO membership. The technical assistance provided by UNCTAD has increased the awareness among the acceding country's negotiating team and stakeholders of the multifaceted issues in the accession process and has enabled them to better understand WTO rules and disciplines, including the special and differential treatment and other developmental provisions. It has therefore enabled them to participate more effectively in the accession negotiations. The programme further assists countries in maintaining coherence between undertakings at multilateral and regional levels including South–South.

108. In 2021, the following activities were undertaken on WTO accession:

(a) Meeting with the Chair of the Working Party on the WTO Accession of Iraq and the then Acting Secretary-General of UNCTAD – 23 June 2021;

(b) WTO Round Table with development partners on the Sudan WTO accession (29 March 2021).

109. In support of Iraq and the State of Palestine which are in the process of WTO accession, UNCTAD launched in early 2021 a Development Account Project (13th tranche) in post-conflict Arab countries.

Services, development and trade

110. UNCTAD carried out numerous activities aimed at enhancing national and regional capacities of developing countries on trade policy and trade negotiations as they relate to services. Technical assistance and customized support, including specialized training, was extended to policymakers and negotiators in developing countries and country groupings such as the LDCs, the African Group, small and vulnerable economies, in defining national and regional strategies and policies to build services supply capacities and in preparing themselves for General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade negotiations and debates. Advisory services were provided to developing countries regarding debate on GATS and regional trade negotiations, defining strategies for services negotiations at the national, regional and multilateral levels, and at the interface between regional services negotiations and GATS negotiations and debates.

111. UNCTAD supported African countries with respect to services policy issues and negotiations at the regional and multilateral levels. In cooperation with UNECA and AfDB, UNCTAD provided input into the 2021 Assessing Regional Integration in Africa report (ARIA X). UNCTAD provided support to strengthen the capacities of national and regional policymakers and stakeholders to measure and analyse value chains and design services policies aimed at enabling higher integration into global and regional value chains under the UNDA project “Strengthening services trade policymaking for Africa’s integration into regional value chains in support of the 2030 Agenda”. UNCTAD participated in the “National Validation Workshop, Ethiopia’s transport services sector: Value chain analysis and COVID-19 impact and response studies” (8–9 June 2021).

112. UNCTAD has assisted member States in exploring the potential role of services in structural transformation and diversification. This support is relevant to reduce vulnerability to economic shocks and promote a more resilient and inclusive post-pandemic recovery. This potential role of services derives from the important inputs that services provide to many productive activities, including in agriculture and manufacturing. These linkages can improve productivity, efficiency and the ability to integrate value chains. Services were responsible for two thirds of total productivity growth in developing countries between 1991 and 2013. In 2021, UNCTAD assisted countries in these topics through two initiatives:

(a) Delivered a short course for Geneva-based delegates on “Services value added in exports: Policies for development” on 7 May 2021. This course discussed the potential of servicification for diversification, and the policies that can enable this potential for post-pandemic recovery.

(b) Discussed with countries in the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI/LAIA), in a meeting on 1 December 2021, the particular opportunities associated with knowledge-intensive services. This included the potential to promote the upgrading of all sectors using these services’ inputs and the required policy considerations.

113. On 22–24 September 2021, UNCTAD organized the Global Services Forum and, according to participants, increased understanding on how services transform and diversify economies and trade for post-pandemic recovery. To this end, this fifth edition of the Forum identified related policy options, strategies and partnership opportunities. The Global Services Forum held eight events over three days for more than 500 participants:

(a) Services-led transformation for post-pandemic recovery, high-level pre-event to the fifteenth Ministerial Conference of UNCTAD

(b) FIREFLY Cultural Exhibit, with the participation of performers from Barbados

(c) Governance and export performance of modern services in Latin America and India.

(d) Create, Innovate, Recover: digitalizing creative industries for a sustainable recovery in Africa

(e) More resilient and sustainable tourism for the post-pandemic recovery

(f) Promoting the participation of developing regions in global ICT-enabled services trade

(g) Towards a New Framework for Services Policy Review, UNCTAD Brainstorming Workshop

(h) Business opportunities in the new era of global services.

114. UNCTAD has also provided assistance to member States on the important role of financial services in providing inputs to all economic sectors. This assistance centred on how banking, securities and insurance services can facilitate domestic and international transactions, mobilize, and channel domestic savings and broaden the availability of credit for firms and households. Access to financial services can also contribute to facilitated, speedier, safer, and less costly remittances and to maximizing the development role of remittances. In 2021, UNCTAD undertook the following initiatives:

(a) Organized a dialogue on “Applying a gender lens to financial inclusion” under the “Trade Policy Dialogue” series, on 28 April 2021. This debate shared lessons from UNCTAD study on “Financial inclusion for development: Better access to financial services for women, the poor, and migrant workers”. The dialogue aimed to discuss the importance of financial inclusion for women’s empowerment and the policies that can be considered to address this issue.

(b) Participated in the Digital Currency Global Initiative, led by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), particularly on the analysis of the possible effects of digital currencies on financial inclusion.

115. UNCTAD has underlined the linkages between trade, services and migration. This was to highlight the potential development benefits of these linkages for migrants, their countries of origin and of destination. These potential opportunities include strengthening trade flows through migration and diaspora engagement, facilitating safe and less costly remittance transfers, and maximize the development impact of remittances. These benefits are aligned with promoting migration as a choice, improving the life of migrants and their families, encouraging brain circulation. Trade in services agreements can contribute to governing temporary labour migration, for example with provisions related to the recognition of qualifications. In 2021, UNCTAD continued to develop the following partnerships and initiatives to support member States in exploring the development benefits of the linkages between trade, services and migration:

(a) Participated in the United Nations Network on Migration, including preparing the United Nations Secretary-General report on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and contributing to the preparatory process for the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF);

(b) Participated in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD);

(c) Collaborated with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in preparing the “Toolkit for Integrating Migration into Private Sector Development and Trade Interventions”.

Market access and trade preferences

116. With regard to GSP and other trade preferences, UNCTAD has continued to promote enhanced awareness among developing countries on ways to better utilize the preferences available under GSP and other preferential schemes through the periodic provision of information on a dedicated website, administrative support on certificates of origin, collection of data, publication of handbooks on GSP schemes and technical cooperation and capacity-building services. UNCTAD ensured the dissemination of relevant information by updating and revising GSP handbooks of individual GSPs and related schemes and preparing related studies. In 2021, the following publication were prepared: GSP Handbook of the European Union. UNCTAD also continued to compile and update the GSP database based on data submitted by GSP donor countries, which provide useful information on trade conducted under each preferential scheme.

117. With regard to the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP), UNCTAD continued to act as the secretariat of the GSTP, providing support to the participants in the operation of GSTP Agreement and their efforts to revitalize the GSTP as a unique platform of South–South trade cooperation. Outreach efforts were conducted to raise awareness on the necessity of revitalizing GSTP. For instance, bilateral meetings conducted with Sao Paulo Round agreement participants in February–March 2021: Argentina, Brazil, India, Malaysia, Morocco, Paraguay, Republic of Korea and Uruguay. UNCTAD drafted technical note on Sao Paulo Round agreement’s state of play. A new GSTP website was developed.

118. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD contributed positively to the strengthening of capacities of developing countries to participate effectively in the international trading system. It contributed to enhancing the understanding of developing countries’ trade negotiators, policymakers and stakeholders on developmental implications of trade negotiations and improving their ability to analyse, formulate and implement trade policies and strategies in promoting their developmental interests. UNCTAD has helped to understand the emerging issues in the international trading system, such as the WTO reform, in particular the debate on the categorization of developing countries in the use of special and differential treatment in future trade agreements and the importance of aligning multilateral, regional or bilateral trade agreements with national goals on inclusive and sustained development. UNCTAD activities in these areas have sustained positive impact and strengthened human, institutional, and regulatory capacities in trade-related policies and negotiations in developing countries, particularly on trade and development, national trade policy formulation and implementation, and multilateral and regional trade negotiations with special focus on LDCs, Africa and small and vulnerable economies

119. Comprehensive and innovative UNCTAD work on services supported developing countries efforts to develop services sectors and take measures to strengthen their contribution to inclusive development, achieve economic diversification and employment creation. UNCTAD support for trade policymakers and trade negotiators in continuing to articulate their interests in the GATS negotiations has helped them to maintain the development focus in the detailed negotiations. As participation in multiple negotiations is a major challenge, UNCTAD support has helped countries and regional integration groupings to ensure greater coherence in priorities pursued multilaterally, regionally and bilaterally. UNCTAD assistance was important in facilitating enhanced extensive multi-stakeholder consultations on services development.

120. UNCTAD support in the area of market access and trade preferences has contributed to building the knowledge base and to wider dissemination of GSP-related information, including through the preparation of GSP handbooks, and collection and analysis of GSP trade data, as well as improved understanding and awareness of GSP among exporters and government officials in some individual beneficiary countries. UNCTAD contributed to making LDC preferences more effective. UNCTAD support provided to GSTP participants has ensured the operation of the Agreement and effective follow-up of the Sao Paulo Round results. Further efforts are needed towards the effective implementation of the Sao Paulo Round results, which could provide an important impetus for robust expansion of South–South trade and deepening South–South cooperation.

A10 Sustainable trade and the environment

Table A10

Sustainable trade and the environment

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/0T/7BS	Climate change programme	2007–	Norway
INT/0T/HAI	BioTrade Facilitation Programme: Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development	2019–	Switzerland
INT/0T/HBD ^a	Sustainable manufacturing and environmental pollution programme	2018– 2021	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
ROA-1819 (K11)	Evidence-based and policy coherent oceans economy and trade strategies	2018–	Development Account
RLA/0T/JAJ	UNCTAD-OECS Blue BioTrade project / Seizing the trade and business potential of Blue BioTrade products for promoting sustainable livelihoods and conservation of marine biodiversity in selected Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Countries	2021–	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

121. **Development context.** As the world has prospered and developed over the last decades, climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation have increased dramatically and impacted, particularly, the most vulnerable and the poorest segments of the population of developing countries. Concomitantly, this is worsened by unsustainable

and irresponsible production and consumption patterns that increase pressure over natural resources extraction and expand solid waste and marine litter.

122. The Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development recognized that countries' transition to a green economy can make increasing contributions to sustainable development and poverty eradication. Sustainable products, defined as "internationally traded goods and services that are sustainably produced and promote sustainable consumption", offer considerable export opportunities for developing countries. Many sustainable products are produced in rural areas by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and by lower- and medium-skill workers, which can contribute significantly to many areas of sustainable development including: environmental protection, sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of biodiversity, economic diversification, job creation and poverty reduction. To seize these opportunities, developing countries need to strengthen their capacities to identify their production and export strengths.

123. While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a major setback for sustainable development everywhere, there have been temporary gains observed on Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13 and 14 in the year 2021 as an increased number of bold commitments were made over the past year towards achieving climate neutrality by mid-century (or 2060), including pledges made at the World Leaders' Summit on Climate at COP26,¹⁶ the WTO Ministerial Statements on Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions¹⁷ and Plastic Pollution on Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade,¹⁸ the new mandate to forge an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution by 2024 under the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference.¹⁹ These might provide the needed momentum for accelerated action on the climate, plastic pollution and marine biodiversity goals.²⁰

124. UNCTAD – through its mandates on ocean and circular economies, biodiversity conservation, and plastic pollution under the Bridgetown Covenant²¹ – recognizes that transforming to a sustainable economy requires efforts to preserve both land and marine ecosystems, while responding to climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges. Ensuring conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources, including addressing the discharge of plastic litter and other waste, significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, as well as ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns can contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication through economic diversification, employment creation, export earnings, environmental protection, and social equity.

125. **Objectives and features.** Programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment aim to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in designing and implementing mutually supportive trade, environment, climate change and sustainable development strategies while integrating sustainable development objectives at all levels. UNCTAD explores trade opportunities arising from multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment-related negotiations. It also promotes sustainable trade in sectors that contribute to further economic growth, job creation and opportunities for social inclusion, and biodiversity conservation.

126. UNCTAD work is based on requests from developing countries to examine the development impact and economic repercussions of existing and potential multilateral environmental agreements, as well as trade and environment negotiations and how best to address the challenges and seize the opportunities related to trade. Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals and the principles under the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNCTAD facilitates

¹⁶ <https://unfccc.int/cop26/world-leaders-summit>.

¹⁷ <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/MIN21/6R2.pdf&Open=True>.

¹⁸ <https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/MIN21/8.pdf&Open=True>.

¹⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/ocean2022>.

²⁰ See *Sustainable Development Report 2021, The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals*.

²¹ Building upon the Nairobi Maafikiano and the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

multilateral and expert processes in areas in which the environmental aspect is central to trade. Making economic growth compatible with sustainable development requires adequate policies and mechanisms, and UNCTAD programmes and initiatives on sustainable trade and the environment work towards stimulating economic diversification, creating jobs, raising income levels, fostering environmental protection and conserving biodiversity resources, thereby improving living standards.

127. UNCTAD supports and contributes to this work through:

(a) The Oceans Economy and Fisheries Programme,²² which supports developing countries in seizing economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources. It promotes the sustainable trade of products and services in ocean-based economic sectors by analysing, developing and adopting oceans economy and trade strategies and enhancing national implementation capacities as well as empowering small-scale coastal producers from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to produce and trade queen conch (*Strombus gigas*²³) products in domestic, regional and international markets under the Blue BioTrade environmental, social and economic sustainability criteria, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

(b) The Circular Economy Programme,²⁴ which contributes to reducing pollution and waste to protect the environment, reduce pressure on strained ecosystems and conserve natural resources. Through the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) project, UNCTAD is assisting developing countries in their transition to a circular economy by improving the utilization of resources, adopting technology-based solutions and cleaner production methods, diversifying exports, and reducing the levels of environmental pollution generated by manufacturing.

(c) The Global BioTrade Programme:²⁵ Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development, which promotes sustainable biotrade and provides key stakeholders with the ability to seize and capitalize on trade opportunities from linking biodiversity and sustainable development, thereby advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the Aichi Targets and the Post-Aichi framework.

128. **Outputs.** UNCTAD has continued to implement technical cooperation activities and undertaken advisory services and consultations delivered online whilst simultaneously harnessing digital technology transformation brought on by the pandemic effectively. Efforts were undertaken to continuously adjust work programmes, consensus-building and technical cooperation activities in consideration of its partners' varied levels of access to digital technology and COVID-19 measures implementation. The main outputs in 2021 in the area of Sustainable Trade and Environment are reported as follows:

(a) "You cannot protect what you cannot measure." UNCTAD lays the foundation for international classification of goods and/or services that can be directly applied to mapping ocean economy sectors in the report "Towards a harmonized international trade classification for the development of sustainable ocean-based economies",²⁶ which aims at filling information and data gaps in trade in ocean-based sectors to facilitate its sustainable development within and across borders.

(b) UNCTAD continues to implement the Development Account project on Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) aimed at building capacity in identifying oceans-based products and services with potential in Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica.

²² <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/oceans-economy>.

²³ An Appendix II CITES-listed species which is a highly appreciated seafood delicacy with important non-food uses, including therapeutic products and handicrafts in the Caribbean.

²⁴ <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/circular-economy>.

²⁵ <https://unctad.org/project/global-biotrade-facilitation-programme-linking-trade-biodiversity-and-sustainable>.

²⁶ <https://unctad.org/webflyer/towards-harmonized-international-trade-classification-development-sustainable-ocean-based>.

In 2021, a total of 579 stakeholders, of which, 40 per cent is female, benefited from project activities, particularly:

(i) The OETS Regional experience sharing online workshop, titled “Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS): Caribbean and Central American experience sharing workshop - looking back and forging ahead”,²⁷ was held from 23 to 24 September 2021 to facilitate the sharing of experience and information on project activities and outcomes, and to promote UNCTAD XV quadrennial conference within the region. At the workshop, participants highlighted the need to strengthen capacities of coastal developing countries, in particular small island developing States (SIDS), in adopting, elaborating, and implementing OETS. They also highlighted the need to assist States to develop comprehensive ocean governance and legal and institutional frameworks as these are necessary for the sustainable management of their maritime domains, including the development of blue economies.

(ii) OETS report on “Impact and implications of COVID-19 for the ocean economy and trade strategy: Case studies from Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica”²⁸ was published in December 2021 following consultations with Governments and relevant stakeholders of the priority sectors with a view to presenting several recommendations at the global, regional, and national level for redevelopment, sustainability and resilience for countries that heavily depend on the ocean economy and related trade.

(iii) Launch of “Pura Vida”, in Costa Rica, the first ever seafood and aquaculture collective mark differentiates high quality Costa Rican seafood and aquaculture products that promote social, economic, and environmental sustainability. This collective brand is promoted in the country by the Ministry of Foreign Trade (COMEX), the Costa Rican Fisheries and Aquaculture Institute (INCOPESCA) and the National Chamber of Exporters of Fishery and Aquaculture Products (CANEPP). A trademark book²⁹ and a set of bylaws³⁰ for the collective trademark were produced and published to support the pre-registration phase of the process.

(iv) An OETS Barbados report on large pelagic longline fishery.³¹ The Government of Barbados and UNCTAD-DOALOS produced an in-depth country-specific ocean governance, sectoral and value chain assessments conducted under the UNCTAD oceans economy pillars (economic, environmental, social, scientific, and governance). The plan of action identifies key strategic objectives and areas of action based on the findings of the OETS report, as well as implementing agencies and potential estimated costs. Two other similar OETS reports have already been validated and published for Belize³² and Costa Rica³³ in 2020.

(v) Launch of priority actions for OETS implementation in Barbados³⁴ to: conduct research and experimental fishing to explore the market potential for both local and export of Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*); and update a 2008–2010 study

²⁷ See <https://unctad.org/meeting/oceans-economy-and-trade-strategies-oets-caribbean-and-central-american-experience-sharing>.

²⁸ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditcted2021d4_en.pdf.

²⁹ https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/ditc-ted-11112021-CostaRica3-Libro_Marca_PVSA.pdf.

³⁰ <https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/ditc-ted-11112021-CostaRica3-fish-Reglamento.pdf>.

³¹ <https://unctad.org/webflyer/oceans-economy-and-trade-strategy-barbados-large-pelagic-longline-fishery>.

³² <https://unctad.org/webflyer/oceans-economy-and-trade-strategy-belize-marine-fisheries-and-seafood-processing-sectors>.

³³ <https://unctad.org/webflyer/oceans-and-trade-economics-strategy-costa-rica-tuna-mahi-mahi-swordfish-and-coastal-fish>.

³⁴ <https://unctad.org/meeting/stakeholder-inception-meeting-national-analysis-transform-longline-fisheries-barbados>.

titled “Economic Valuation of the Barbados Longline Fishery-Landings, Costs, Net Profit and Return on Investment”.

(vi) Proposal for a climate resilient multispecies finfish management plan in Belize³⁵ to support the development of the finfish fishery and the establishment of a robust data collection programme for finfish. Based on a data collection methodology developed by the project, data gathering for finfish landings was implemented from June to September 2021, with a report of the results of the exercise disseminated in 2022.³⁶

129. The UNCTAD OECS-Blue BioTrade project has resiliently delivered its outputs in the face of the twin major challenges that struck the Caribbean in 2021: the COVID-19 pandemic and the volcanic eruption of La Soufrière. A total of 174 stakeholders, of which, 51 per cent is female, from 11 countries or territories – Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and other OECS members, namely Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Montserrat – benefited from project activities, including the following:

(a) Regional stakeholder webinar on blue biotrade and biotrade principles and criteria, including CITES requirements, was held in March 2021 to provide stakeholders the platform to know about the economic opportunities and enhance sustainability through the application of the biotrade principles and criteria to marine biodiversity-based products and services (in this instance, the queen conch). The draft stakeholder mapping of queen conch value chains in beneficiary countries was also presented and validated at this webinar.

(b) The Stakeholder Maps on the Queen Conch Value Chains was published in September 2021, providing an overview of the queen conch value chain in the countries of Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and identifying a set of 24 novel findings, and challenges and opportunities around the socio-economic and environmental aspects of it.

(c) The assessment of the queen conch value chain and its blue biotrade potential in Saint Lucia presents a detailed value chain analysis of the queen conch production in Saint Lucia based on the 2020 biotrade principles and criteria, CITES, regulations and the Regional Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plan. The report provides ten bespoke recommendations to, inter alia, (i) create a more sustainable queen conch value chain; (ii) enable access to international and regional markets; and (iii) prevent a potential CITES trade suspension.

130. The UNCTAD Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) project³⁷ aims to: (a) generate cutting edge scientific evidence that can improve existing knowledge of the environmental health and socioeconomic impacts of selected trade-exposed manufacturing sectors across target countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia; (b) identify suitable technology-based solutions to address the most pressing environmental health issues associated with manufacturing in target countries, as well as invest in developing business processes and systems that will result in the uptake of pollution control solutions; and (c) address the issue of plastic pollution, focusing on identifying and supporting the development of solutions towards material substitution and enhanced biodegradation options. The project engaged in various work teams composed of a total of 115 members, of which, 49 are females (43 per cent female participation). The SMEP project has disseminated the products of the above areas in 2021 through the following publications and workshops:

(a) The role of exports in manufacturing pollution in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia identifies the role of trade and value chains in driving manufacturing pollution in SMEP countries,³⁸ examines the trade-growth-pollution nexus, and the importance of

³⁵ <https://unctad.org/webflyer/towards-climate-resilient-multispecies-finfish-management-plan-belize>.

³⁶ See https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditcted2022d1_en.pdf.

³⁷ <https://unctad.org/project/sustainable-manufacturing-and-environmental-pollution-smep>.

³⁸ Corresponds to 13 countries subdivided into SSA SMEP countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia) and SA SMEP countries (Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan).

developing productive capacities and robust governance on public and private matters. Four countries (Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania) have been selected for an in-depth assessment on (i) Environmental Law and Public Governance, (ii) Private Sector Governance, and (iii) Life Cycle Assessment.

(b) Four factsheets on the role of exports in manufacturing pollution have been published for Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania. The analyses provide key information on relevant sectors that impact the countries' pollution level, energy and water consumption and waste generation vis-à-vis public and private governance. It is envisaged that the dissemination of knowledge products such as these can assist countries in the process of identifying suitable and sustainable technological solutions to address plastics pollution and bolster their economic growth.

(c) Two technical workshops held in December 2021 exploring the aspects of manufacturing and plastics pollution in SMEP target countries.

131. UNCTAD SMEP project targets 13 beneficiaries: Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In 2021, a total number of 334 stakeholders participated in project activities, of which, 57 per cent is female.

132. Joint action by Oceans and Circular Economy programmes to support efforts of member States to tackle marine and terrestrial plastic pollution. This joint effort aims to identify material substitutes that could be produced and utilised in developing countries to reduce and substitute plastics that may end in wild marine and terrestrial ecosystems due to insufficient recycling and solid waste management. It also aims to facilitate the emergence of coherent multilateral responses within the United Nations and the multilateral trade system.

(a) Material substitutes to address marine plastic pollution and support a circular economy explores options to promote plastic substitutes along with the issues, challenges, and considerations that policymakers are likely to face, particularly from a trade and sustainable development perspective. It provides preliminary assessment of market and trade-related trends in selected examples of plastic substitutes with an emphasis on natural fibres of export interest to developing countries and identifies a few knowledge gaps that might need to be addressed in future to constructively inform policymaking initiatives on plastic substitutes.

(b) Enabling concerted multilateral action on plastic pollution and plastics substitutes identifies the current plastic pollution challenge and the role of trade, explore options for devising a more coherent and concerted governance action within the United Nations and the multilateral trading system and to share findings on the potential of plastics substitutes to reduce plastic pollution and enable local sustainable manufacturing development in selected developing countries.

133. UNCTAD continued to coordinate the "Global BioTrade Programme: Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development" and provided technical assistance in implementing biotrade and its updated "BioTrade Principles and Criteria" in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Biotrade experiences, lessons learned, and methodologies were disseminated in different events organized by partners and other organizations in the Latin America and the Caribbean and Mekong regions. UNCTAD also held dialogues with biotrade stakeholders and partners in disseminating best practices of how biotrade is enhancing companies' resilience to COVID-19.

134. UNCTAD continued to engage and consult with biotrade partners and key stakeholders in its efforts to contribute to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which will define targets and pathways for the conservation and management of biodiversity for the next decades for the Convention of Biological Diversity. Two online workshops were organized: (a) an online workshop on trade and biodiversity for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework on 24 March 2021 which explored the role of sustainable trade within the post-2020 GBF and its implementation; and (b) a workshop on trade and biodiversity, Evidence and options for using sustainability standards to strengthen the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, held on 22 September 2021, brought together

experts and stakeholders to emphasize the importance of sustainable trade for the post-2020 GBF and how voluntary sustainable standards can be used as effective tools for achieving biodiversity targets.

135. The Fourth Stakeholders' Steering Committee (SSC)³⁹ meeting was held virtually on 5, 6, 20 and 26 May 2021. The meeting provided a platform for international coordination in promoting sector collaboration, coordinating joint initiatives in more than 60 countries, identifying and addressing emerging issues and sharing knowledge, lessons learned and best practices.

136. The study on the "Implications of the African Continental Free Trade Area for Trade and Biodiversity: Policy and Regulatory Recommendations"⁴⁰ was published and a launch webinar was held on 10 November 2021. The webinar presented main findings and recommendations from the publication covering topics including tariff reduction commitments and non-tariff barriers to trade (NTBs), intellectual property rights, investment, competition policy, and treaty provisions from a trade in biodiversity/biotrade perspective.

137. The sixth BioTrade Congress⁴¹ was organized virtually on 9 December 2021. Under the theme of trade and biodiversity for a positive future, discussions centred on how trade contributes and impacts nature's contribution to people. The parallel sessions organized by partners included frontier topics such as traceability, standards and certification schemes, evolving tools and approaches for biodiversity and trade, oceans economy and blue biotrade and circular bioeconomy.

138. In addition, UNCTAD organized and/or substantively contributed to the following event/meetings in 2021(n):⁴²

(a) UNCTAD [roundtable on the role of exports in manufacturing pollution in developing countries](#), held online on 8 December 2021.

(b) UNCTAD and the UNEP Forum on Trade, Environment and the Sustainable Development Goals (TESS), an [informal roundtable on material substitutes to single-use plastics in developing countries](#), held online on 7 December 2021.

(c) UNCTAD, UNEP TESS and the Government of Ecuador [high-level meeting on how cooperation on trade can contribute to the UNEA process on plastic pollution](#), held online on 2 September 2021.

(d) The Brazilian Centre for International Relations (CEBRI) and the Energy Security and Climate Change Programme at the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (EKLA-KAS) [webinar on the role of the Circular Economy in the fight against climate change](#), held online on 25 August 2021.

(e) Globefish Insight [launch of UNCTAD-FAO report: Export of fish and fish products from India - Non-tariff measures](#), held online on 20 July 2021.

(f) UNCTAD, United Nations DOALOS, the Government of Belize (the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, Belize Fisheries Department, the Directorate General for Foreign Trade of Belize (DGFT)) and the Environmental Defence Fund (EDF) [Adaptive Multispecies Finfish Management Workshop](#), held in Belize City and online on 29 June–2 July 2021.

(g) UNCTAD SMEP [national report validation workshops in Kenya, Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania](#), held in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Addis Ababa and online on 24–28 June 2021.

(h) UNCTAD, the Graduate Institute, UNEP TESS and Geneva Environment Network (GEN) [webinar and launch of the report, "How can trade policy help tackle plastic](#)

³⁹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/fourth-stakeholders-steering-committee-ssc-meeting-biotrade>.

⁴⁰ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditctedinf2021d3_en.pdf.

⁴¹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/biotrade-congress-vi-trade-and-biodiversity-positive-future>.

⁴² Under (f): (Inputs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).

pollution? Trends, actors and policy options for international cooperation”, held online on 17 June 2021.

(i) UNCTAD [high-level panel discussion on harnessing the benefits of the ocean economy for sustainable development \(an UNCTAD XV pre-event\)](#), held online on 9 June 2021.

(j) UNCTAD and Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) [webinar on promoting substitutes and alternatives to plastics for clean waters and sustainable economic development in the Caribbean Basin](#), held online on 29 April 2021.

(k) UNCTAD, FAO and the Asia–Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) [webinar on fisheries subsidies and the current negotiations at the World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#), held online on 31 March 2021.

(l) UNCTAD and the United Nations Global Compact, [webinar on amplifying female representation in key areas of the blue economy to ensure equal opportunities for all](#), held online on 16 March 2021.

(m) Chatham House [second annual Circular Economy Conference](#), held online on 24–25 February 2021.

(n) UNCTAD [webinar on circular economy and textiles](#), held online in partnership with the World Bank on 26 January 2021.

139. **Results and impacts.** Pioneering UNCTAD work on oceans economy as well as its strategic inter-agency partnerships with key institutions involved in the economic aspects of the ocean has provided a global platform to showcase multi-stakeholder and coordinated international action on the trade-related aspects of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (life under water). In its 2019 and 2022 iterations – the third⁴³ and fourth Ocean Forums,⁴⁴ Chairs’ summary and recommendations were adopted⁴⁵ as reports and presented to Kenya and Portugal as co-conveners of the United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July 2022.⁴⁶ Both Governments also sponsored the Forum, with Portugal providing an extraordinary voluntary contribution of €55,000 in 2020 and in 2021. Both documents were taken into consideration and allowed clear references to trade, maritime transport, and to sustainable ocean economy at the UNOC Lisbon Declaration⁴⁷.

140. UNCTAD sustainable trade and environment work in capacity-building and provision of technical assistance and cooperation with developing countries through its robust, cutting edge and groundwork research (15 publications in total for 2021), online and hybrid (in-person/online) trainings and events in the national, regional and international levels (18 in total for 2021) have: (a) increased awareness and understanding of environmental, socioeconomic impacts of sustainable trade, consumption and production across target countries; (b) strengthened and/or improved the capacity of stakeholders in defining policy and regulatory options and implementing priority actions to support sustainable trade in products and services in ocean-based economic sectors, as well as addressing plastic pollution through the development of material substitution and biodegradation options; and (c) served as a dissemination tool with positive feedback from stakeholders.

141. Nearly 1,600 stakeholders (of which, 50 per cent is female) have participated and benefited from UNCTAD support on oceans and circular economy. This has allowed deeper understanding on policy, experiences and data relevant to contemporary environmental challenges such natural resources depletion, climate change, pollution and poverty.

⁴³ <https://unctad.org/meeting/3rd-oceans-forum-trade-related-aspects-sustainable-development-goal-14>

⁴⁴ <https://unctad.org/meeting/4th-oceans-forum-trade-related-aspects-sustainable-development-goal-14>

⁴⁵ 3rd Oceans Forum Chair conclusions (<https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/4th-Oceans-Forum-ChairsSummary-v7.pdf>) and 4th Oceans Forum Chair conclusions.

⁴⁶ <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/ocean2022>

⁴⁷ https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/UNOC_political_declaration_final.pdf.

142. The UNCTAD and Organisation of East Caribbean States (OECS) blue biotrade project is envisaged to advance to its second phase with funding from the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, ensuring sustainability of the project beyond the current pilot phase (2020–2022). This will allow the OECS countries to exchange good queen conch management practices compliant with CITES requirements and develop soft linkages among them to facilitate policy sharing for sustainable development and the conservation of this valued species in the Caribbean. Likewise, the findings and results of the UNCTAD-DOALOS Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) project will be taken onboard and managed by the target beneficiaries and relevant divisions/ministries. Close coordination with the government, private sector and grassroots stakeholders (fisherfolk communities) is the cornerstone of both projects' activities.

143. The UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative has been instrumental in helping women in rural Namibia profit from biodiversity-friendly trade. The sustainable use and trade of indigenous plants has created valuable economic opportunities for 2,500 Namibian women and their communities. The importance of biotrade was recognized by the biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), particularly in the decisions of the Conferences of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the draft long-term strategic framework for capacity development to support implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

144. The implementation of UNCTAD programmes on sustainable trade and the environment is anchored on partnerships with like-minded organizations and institutions in delivering results. Partnerships with biotrade practitioners and stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources and trade of its derived products and services continue to play an important role in further strengthening governance frameworks, mechanisms, and networks in scaling up the biotrade agenda. In implementing the work on oceans economy and fisheries and SMEP, partnerships proved crucial in developing a coherent strategy, coordinating actions, and implementing activities in achieving Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13 and 14. Such partnerships played an important role in further strengthening governance frameworks, mechanisms, and networks in scaling up UNCTAD agenda on sustainable trade and environment.

A11 Investment promotion and facilitation

Table A11
Investment promotion and facilitation

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/1BN	Capacity-building in investment promotion	2001–	Multi-donors
INT/OT/KAU	Capacity Development Programme for Investment Promotion Agencies of Least Developed Countries	2021–	EIF UNOPS
INT/OT/BAQ	Capacity-Building in Investment for Development	2011–	Multi-donors
ROA-1819 (M11)	Facilitating investment into Sustainable Development Goals sectors in developing countries	2018–	Development Account

145. **Development context.** Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a critical source of finance for developing countries, but the competition for FDI is fierce. This has resulted in proactive policies by these countries to attract and retain foreign investment, including investment in Sustainable Development Goal sectors, in order to generate inclusive and

sustainable economic growth and build resilient infrastructure while safeguarding the environment.

146. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD work on investment promotion aims to assist developing countries in strengthening their capacity to create and manage the policy and institutional framework for attracting and retaining foreign investment and in developing an operating climate in which international business can thrive and contribute to sustainable development. The investment promotion programme provides tailor-made training, advisory and networking services and prepares publications related to investment policies, investment promotion strategies and practices, investment facilitation, aftercare services, and institutional arrangements and good governance in attracting and retaining sustainable FDI. Special attention is being paid to strengthening investment promotion programmes in least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS).

147. **Outputs.** In 2021, the main outputs of the programme were as detailed below.

Publications and training material

148. *Promoting Investment in Health Post-Pandemic: A Global Trend?* This issue in the IPA Observer series looks at the growing attention by IPAs for the health sector as a response to the COVID-19 crisis. It covers the health subsectors that IPAs are promoting, the investors that they are targeting and the different incentives to attract investment in health. It also features case studies from developed and developing countries.

149. *Brochure on the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards 2021.* The brochure gives an overview of all the themes of UNCTAD's Investment Promotion Awards since 2002 and a listing of winners of over 70 awards and special recognitions.

Workshops, seminars and conferences

150. UNCTAD and the Mauritius Economic Development Board hosted an online Regional Seminar on Facilitating Investment in Sustainable Development Goal Projects: Spotlight on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region (28 and 29 April 2021). Eighty-seven investment promotion officials and representatives of regional and international organizations participated, including 41 women. The programme focused on regional cooperation and featured best practice case studies of investment facilitation in the blue and green economy and in healthcare.

151. A virtual workshop was held in partnership with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, on Digitalization of Investment Promotion: Strategies, Good Practices and Lessons Learned (18 October 2021). The workshop gathered 150 participants of which 60 were women.

152. An online IPA Executive Meeting was held, as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, on New Investment Strategies in the Post-Pandemic Era (19 October 2021). The event featured dialogues among experts and IPA executives on the importance of a country image to attract investment and on different ways to improve an image in a cost-effective way. The meeting attracted 63 participants, including 23 women.

153. UNCTAD hosted the Global Investment Promotion Conference 2021 (19 October 2021) online, as one of the flagship events of the 7th World Investment Forum. The conference included high-level sessions with the Prime Minister of Aruba and the Vice-Minister of Tourism of the Dominican Republic, as well as CEOs of global companies and high-level officials from international organizations on promoting investment in the health sector and on attracting and retaining investment in tourism. In total, 230 investment promotion stakeholders, including 80 women, attended the meeting.

154. Following on from the conference UNCTAD hosted the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards for best practices in the promotion and facilitation of investment in healthcare and in the blue economy. Winners of the United Nations Award on Excellence in Promoting Investment in Healthcare were the Costa Rica Investment Promotion Agency (CINDE), Invest in Holland and Invest Korea. Special Awards for Promoting Investment in

the Blue Economy went to the Mauritius Economic Development Board and the Seychelles Investment Board.

155. A virtual meeting was held in partnership with UN-Habitat, as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, on Facilitating the Special Economic Zone-City Link (20 October 2021). The meeting brought together city leaders and CEOs of special economic zones (SEZs) and IPAs from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America to debate on sustainable urbanization and the facilitation of investment by cities, SEZs and IPAs in Sustainable Development Goal-related sectors. The event gathered 60 participants including 25 women.

156. A High-level Interregional Dialogue on Facilitating Investment in Sustainable Development Goal Projects (20 October 2021) was held online as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum. It brought together IPAs from the Southern African Development Community, the East African Community, and the Caribbean to discuss IPA challenges in facilitating investment in Sustainable Development Goal projects as well as regional and interregional cooperation in this area. Sectors that were covered included renewable energy, digital infrastructure, health, food security and the blue economy. The seminar gathered 90 participants, including 43 women.

157. An LDC ministerial and business executive round table (22 October 2021) was organized online in partnership with UN-OHRLLS, as part of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum. Presentation on the role of FDI in economic recovery were given by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the High Representative of UN-OHRLLS, LDC ministers and business executives. The roundtable gathered 105 participants, including 50 women.

158. UNCTAD organized an online webinar for the Eswatini Investment and Trade Promotion Authority (EIPA) and other investment stakeholders to present a strategy for mainstreaming, promoting, and facilitating investment in Sustainable Development Goal projects in Eswatini (8 December 2021). The webinar gathered 31 participants (14 women), including members of EIPA, several representatives from Eswatini ministries, the local private sector and the UNDP Sustainable Development Goal investor map programme.

159. UNCTAD organized an introductory workshop entitled “Investor Targeting in Agribusiness” (14 December 2021) for the Agency for Private Investment and the Promotion of Export of Angola (AIPEX). The workshop is the first in a series of technical assistance interventions recommended in UNCTAD’s Investment Policy Review of Angola. The hands-on training included online tools for market research and investor targeting. The workshop gathered 25 participants, including 10 women.

160. During 2021, UNCTAD contributed to virtual meetings organized by partner organizations, including the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), the ANIMA Network of Mediterranean IPAs, and the Islamic Development Bank; and worked together with other UN entities, such as the International Labour Organization and the Enhanced Integrated Framework-World Trade Organization to provide training to IPAs.

Advisory services

161. From April to June 2021, UNCTAD conducted a survey among 53 IPAs on promoting investment in healthcare focussed on the targeting of investors in the sector, investment facilitation services provided, and incentives offered. In addition, an online review of healthcare related activities of 188 agencies was carried out. Results of the surveys were used in advisory services and capacity-building activities, were published in the IPA Observer series, and were the basis of the selection of IPAs for the United Nations Awards 2021 on Excellence in Promoting Investment in Healthcare.

162. An advisory report was prepared for the Uganda Investment Authority on Promoting and Facilitating Investment in the Uganda Health Sector. The report includes an overview of the Uganda healthcare landscape, priority health subsectors and an action plan for the promotion and facilitation of investors in health-related projects.

163. An advisory report was prepared for the Eswatini Investment and Trade Promotion Authority on A Strategy for Mainstreaming, Promoting and Facilitating Investment in

Sustainable Development Goal Projects in Eswatini. The report outlines a strategic approach to attract and facilitate Sustainable Development Goal-related projects with a special focus on agriculture and agribusiness.

164. In 2021, UNCTAD started a new initiative, creating a global alliance of special economic zones. The alliance is dedicated to advance a new generation of SEZs for sustainable development. It will enhance global networking to facilitate trade and investment promotion, spur collective policy advocacy for SEZs and support programmes for the exchange of best practices and modernization of the zones. The initial members of the global alliance of special economic zones, which include UNCTAD and global, regional and national SEZ associations, presented the initiative during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum (21 October 2021). The official launch of the initiative was held on 17 May 2022 as an online event.

165. Under an interregional project for the facilitation of investment into Sustainable Development Goal sectors in developing countries that started in 2018, eight online investment guides or iGuides were developed in the Caribbean for Barbados (2020), the Dominican Republic (2021), Guyana (2021), Jamaica (2021), Saint Lucia (2019), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2019), Saint Kitts (2020) and Curaçao (2019). The project also built capacity in the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA) to design and develop iGuides, so that more countries and territories in the region can be added to its iGuide platform. In addition, the project developed iGuides in two SADC countries, Mauritius (2021) and Namibia (2021). The iGuides developed in 2021 for the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Mauritius and Namibia will be launched in the second half of 2022.

166. The UNCTAD sustainablefdi.org website is specifically designed for IPA professionals, policymakers and other investment stakeholders. It features a resource centre, UNCTAD activities on sustainable FDI, a network of IPA contacts, training material, and a window on the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards, showcasing best practices. In 2021, the sustainablefdi.org platform had over 4,600 visitors (with more than 225,000 page views) from 171 countries and territories.

167. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD investment promotion and facilitation training and regional and global events on trends and best practices attracted in 2021 over 840 participants (41 per cent women), including IPA officials, policymakers, diplomats, SEZ representatives and other stakeholders. Events organized by partner organizations in which UNCTAD provided substantive inputs had over 300 participants.

168. A selection of comments by client institutions and partners on events and publications:

(a) “Congratulations, such a useful publication [Investing in the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Diplomats] should be widely promoted. Thank you for the great effort of putting this information together.” Regional Director, Annual Investment Meeting, United Arab Emirates, April 2021.

(b) “We held an excellent workshop yesterday on economic diplomacy and this [publication- Investing in the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Diplomats] is an excellent resource to add.” Advisor, Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade, April 2021.

(c) “Interesting handbook developed by UNCTAD on the role of diplomats in attracting investments in the Sustainable Development Goals.” Division Chief, IMF.

(d) “The presentation by UNCTAD showed a very strong tool and I will ask my people to start using it right away.” CEO, Regulatory Agency for the Certification of Cargo and Logistics, Angola, commenting on the UNCTAD workshop in Luanda on investor targeting in agri-business.

(e) “It was truly an honour to be part of the Global Investment Promotion Conference and well done for the organization and the programme.” Executive, Malta Enterprise, October 2021.

(f) “Thank you for the opportunity to share the Eswatini experience during the high-level interregional dialogue on facilitating investment in sustainable development goal projects and I also learned a lot from the others. This gave me confidence as we will embark on the journey to identify, promote, facilitate, and monitor Sustainable Development Goal projects.” Senior Executive Manager, Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority.

(g) “Allow me ... to extend our deepest appreciation for the continuous support and great partnership of UNCTAD. ...we hold collaboration with UNCTAD in the highest regard and we are looking forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership and synergies.” Executive Director a.i., WAIPA.

A99 Other

Table A99
Other

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
<i>Division on Investment and Enterprise</i>			
INT/0T/BAQ	Capacity-building in investment for development	2011–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/H CJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2018–	Netherlands
RAS/0T/EAY	ASEAN Investment Report 2015–2017	2015–	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<i>Division on International Trade and Commodities</i>			
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/0T/IBM	Fourth UNFSS Flagship Report on Voluntary Sustainable	2020–	United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards
<i>Division on Technology and Logistics</i>			
INT/0T/7CB	Special Trust Fund for Activities related to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development with regard to follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society	2007–	Switzerland
ROA-2124 (D13)	Technology assessment in the energy and agricultural sectors in Africa to accelerate progress on Science, Technology and Innovation	2021–	Development Account
<i>Division on Globalization and Development Strategies</i>			
BAR/0T/JAX	Promoting Economic Diversification and Resilience in Barbados for Sustained Recovery from COVID-19 Shock	2021–	China
INT/0T/HBY	South–South Integration and the [Sustainable Development Goals] SDGs: Enhancing Structural Transformation in	2019–	Department of Economic and Social Affairs

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	key partner countries of the Belt and Road Initiative		
ROA-1617 (L10)	Development policies for sustainable economic growth in Southern Africa	2016–	Development Account
ROA-2124 (E13)	Mobilizing resources for a Green New Deal: partnerships in Asia for a decade of action in the era of Coronavirus	2021–	Development Account

1. Trade and creative economy

169. **Development context.** Over the last 15 years, the topic of creative economy has become well-inserted into the international economic and development agenda. Today, creative industries are among the most dynamic sectors in world trade. UNCTAD research shows that between 2010 and 2015, creative goods exports outpaced global merchandise exports. In terms of creative services, exports had an annual growth rate of 4 per cent between 2011 and 2015. The creative economy generates jobs, innovation and trade, while contributing to social inclusion and cultural diversity.

170. Recognition of the scope, role, and impact of the creative economy on countries' socio-economic development has only accelerated, alongside increased demand for insight into the creative economy. The creative economy is thus increasingly high on both the global agenda and that of emerging and developing economies seeking to diversify their economies.

171. In December 2019, the United Nations General Assembly adopted for the first time a resolution on the creative economy (A/RES/74/198). This resolution, which was backed by 81 countries and agreed by consensus, highlights the creative economy as an important tool for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and declares 2021 the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development. This resolution requests that UNCTAD inform the General Assembly in a dedicated section of the *Creative Economy Outlook* of UNCTAD on how the implementation of General Assembly resolution 74/198 "is aligned with and advances the 2030 Agenda, including recommendations on concrete actions that would help Member States and the United Nations system to accelerate their efforts in the implementation of the Agenda".

172. **Objectives and features.** Since the creation of the creative economy programme in 2004, UNCTAD has played a leading role in supporting developing countries to enhance understanding of the economic contribution of the creative industries from a trade and development perspective through capacity-building, analysis and consensus-building.

173. The programme's core focus is on trade in the creative industries and the role of the creative economy in the growth of developing economies. UNCTAD data-driven insights on trade in creative goods and services make a unique contribution to understanding the creative economy.

174. Reliable and consistent data on the trade in creative goods and services remain the key drivers of the UNCTAD creative economy programme. A key component of the UNCTAD creative economy programme is its proprietary statistical database on trade in creative goods and services. The data offering is one of our key unique selling points. However, data need to be interpreted, analysed and used to inform decision-making at both the policy and practical levels. Flowing from UNCTAD data offering on the creative economy are a range of services that make use of this data to provide effective support for member States that is aligned with the three pillars of UNCTAD, including (a) advisory services; (b) policy-orientated research; (c) improving market access; (d) building synergies; (e) intergovernmental debates; (f) promoting entrepreneurship; (g) capacity-building; and (h) sharing knowledge.

175. The UNCTAD creative economy programme generates economic information through a trade lens, to understand past trends and project into the future and to promote data-led understanding of trade in creative goods and services, intellectual property, ideas and imagination. This information is translated into insight for countries wanting to expand and support their creative economies. It also:

- (a) Promotes the creative economy as a new source of growth;
- (b) Supports government initiatives for the development of integrated creative economy public policies and institution-building;
- (c) Liaises with Governments, artists, creators, academia and civil society to strengthen the creative economy in developing countries;
- (d) Provides demand-driven policy advice and technical assistance to Governments;
- (e) Builds synergies within the United Nations system through the United Nations Multi-Agency Informal Group on Creative Industries;
- (f) Organizes and/or participates in international conferences, national seminars or sectoral workshops;
- (g) Promotes networking through the UNCTAD creative economy network; and
- (h) Contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goals 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16 and 17.

176. **Outputs.** As a leading agency in the implementation of the United Nations resolution on the creative economy, UNCTAD assisted member States to better understand the role of creative economies as drivers for sustainable development and contributed to increasing the visibility of local initiatives and best practices through many seminars, initiatives and events implemented during the year. The focus was on the contribution of the sector to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and how the creative sector can be further supported in the recovery period through the development of digital policies, educational initiatives, and financing programs. UNCTAD also continued its work of updating the definition and taxonomy of creative industries for improving the statistical framework for measuring the trade flows of creative goods and services. An informal group of experts on the creative economy (42 experts) from developing countries was set up by UNCTAD with the aim to arrive at an encompassing and methodological definition of the creative economy and creative industries (and by extension related goods and services). The results of the group will be delivered in 2022. Also in 2021, UNCTAD concluded the publication entitled *Creative Industry 4.0: Towards a New Globalized Creative Economy*. This report looks at the implications for the Creative Economy of the rapid changes in automated technology and advanced internet communication that came to be known as Industry 4.0. The publication was released in 2022.

177. The creative economy programme expanded significantly the UNCTAD creative economy network, a network of people, Governments and organizations, to promote international cooperation, strategic alliances, research exchanges and advocacy. This work is relevant as it facilitated the sharing of knowledge and helped stakeholders to keep up to date on industry developments.

178. In alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, UNCTAD (a) engaged virtually with counterparts of the G20 Taskforce to contribute to the T20⁴⁸ insights and policy briefs entitled “Creative Economy 2030: Inclusive and resilient creative economy for sustainable development and recovery” ; (b) contributed to the Creativity, Culture and Capital platform and publication to showcase the potential of impact investment in the creative economy to drive social and environmental change in collaboration with Nesta, Compromise Foundation and Upstart Co-Lab; (c) contributed to the concept note on

⁴⁸ T20 brings together leading think tanks and research centres from around the world, with the aim of contributing, through research and policy proposals, to the Group of 20 leaders’ reflections on the big issues related to global governance.

“Building back better: towards a more resilient and impactful culture sector, throughout COVID-19 and the Decade of Action”; (d) Contributed to the Policy brief for the United Nations Economist Network on Creative Economy organized by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; and (e) continued ongoing research on methodologies to measure creative industries in developing countries.

179. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the creative economy (A/RES/74/198) requests the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in consultation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and relevant entities of the United Nations system, to inform the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session of the implementation of the present resolution, through a dedicated section of the *Creative Economy Outlook* (UNCTAD), elaborating in particular on how the resolution is aligned with and advances the 2030 Agenda. UNCTAD established an informal group of United Nations agencies with proposed issues for contribution to the *Creative Economy Outlook*, which will report back to the General Assembly in 2022.

180. In 2021, UNCTAD collaborated with members of the creative economy network by organizing and contributing to the following activities:

(a) The “4th Trade Policy Dialogue: Welcoming the International Year of Creative Economy” organized by UNCTAD on 25 January 2021 in collaboration with the Mission of the Sultanate of Oman and the Mission of the Republic of Indonesia.

(b) The discussions on the “Special Reform Legislation: Philippines Creative Industries Bill” held on 18 February. It was organized by the AmCham-RESPOND Project to discuss a Special Reform Legislation to support the creative industries.

(c) The session on “Impact Investment and Creative Industries” held on 8 March 2021, within the context of Culture Summit Abu Dhabi 2021. It was organized by the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi and partner organizations include UNCTAD, UNESCO, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, the Economist Events, Google, Louvre Abu Dhabi, Emirates Diplomatic Academy and Berklee Abu Dhabi.

(d) The “Sustainable Innovation Forum” held from 15–21 March. It was organized by UNCTAD and the Centre for Sustainable Design, University of Creative Arts, Surrey (United Kingdom).

(e) The “Conversation with Women in Creative Economy” held on 31 March. It was organized by Most Influential People of African Descent (MIPAD) and UNCTAD.

(f) The session on “How the Digital Economy Advances Creative Industries” held on 29 April. It was organized by the International Centre of Creativity and Sustainable Development (ICCSA) under the auspices of UNESCO.

(g) The celebration of the United Nations World Bee Day on 20 May. It was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia in collaboration with the creative economy programme of UNCTAD.

(h) The “Bergen International Summit 2021: The Power of Art and Culture in Transformation” held on 26 May. It was organized by the City of Bergen, Norway in collaboration with UNCTAD.

(i) The “Creating Creatives to Capital in the United Nations Year of Creative Economy” held on 26 May. It was organized by MIPAD and UNCTAD.

(j) The “YMCA Youth led solutions: The Future of Work Summit” held from 7 to 9 June. It was organized by Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), United Nations, The Aspen Institute, Global Shapers Community and the University of San Francisco.

(k) The “Creative Economy for Sustainable Development: Let’s Connect!” on the occasion of the 2021 United Nations High-Level Political Forum held on 9-11 July. It was organized by the Republic of Indonesia and UNESCO.

(l) The “Creative Economy and IP: Supporting Creative Businesses and MSMEs” held on 27 July. It was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Ministry of Economy of the UAE, WIPO, and UNCTAD.

(m) The “Great World Forum of Arts, Culture, Creativity and Technology (G-FACCT)” held from 8 to 11 September in Bogota, Colombia. It was organized by the Ministry of Culture, Colombia in collaboration with the United Nations Office for South–South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

(n) The “International Year of Creative Economy: Reactivation and Modernization in the post-pandemic” held on 8 September. It was organized by the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, the Ibero–American General Secretariat and UNCTAD.

(o) The “Future Unlocked! Cultural and Creative Sectors as Agents of Change” held from 12 to 15 September. It was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia in collaboration with UNCTAD.

(p) The “2021 CIFTIS, International Creative Economy (Beijing) Forum” held on 21 September. It was organized by the municipal government of Beijing, World Trade Point Federation and UNCTAD.

(q) In relation to UNCTAD XV, opening event of the Creative Industries and Trade Digitization Forum jointly with Barbados, held on 29 September. It was organized by UNCTAD and Barbados as host country. The meeting was opened by the Prime Minister of Barbados. The aim was to advance support and understanding of the creative economy as a route for economic diversification and inclusive development.

(r) The Ceremony of Annual recognition week of MIPAD following the opening of the seventy-sixth United Nations General Assembly, held from 1 to 4 October. It was organized by MIPAD and UNCTAD.

(s) The World Conference on Creative Economy, held from 7 to 9 December in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It was organized by the United Arab Emirates in cooperation with Indonesia, UNCTAD and the Friends of the Creative Economy.

Inter-agency collaboration events

181. To highlight the resilient and transformative role of culture as an accelerator of Sustainable Development Goal implementation, UNCTAD strengthened the collaboration with several United Nations agencies:

(a) UNCTAD contributed to the General Assembly high-level event on culture and sustainable development, on the theme of “Building back better: towards a more resilient and impactful culture sector, throughout COVID-19 and the Decade of Action”. It was organized through the Office of the United Nations President of the General Assembly, in cooperation with UNESCO and UNCTAD on 21 May.

(b) The “Africa Dialogue Series OSAA - Cultural identity and ownership: reshaping mindsets” was held on 26–28 May. It was organized by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), African Union, UNESCO and UNCTAD. The Dialogue is a stage for African voices to debate African problems and to advocate African solutions including in the creative industries sectors.

(c) The “Building back better with the creative economy” event was held on 17 June. It was organized by the General Delegation of Wallonia–Brussels in Geneva in partnership with UNCTAD and UNESCO.

(d) Under the UNCTAD Global Services Forum, the International Dialogue on Digital Transformation and Creative Industries: Create, Innovate, Recover: digitalizing creative industries for a sustainable recovery in Africa was held on 23 September. This event, co-organized by UNIDO, Sound Diplomacy and UNCTAD, focused on Africa and drew on various case studies from East and West Africa.

(e) In May 2021, UNESCO launched the Inter-Agency Platform on Culture for Sustainable Development (IPCS) building on its global and specialized mandate in culture. The platform aims to federate efforts, strengthen collaboration, and maximize

coherence of related United Nations-wide action on harnessing culture's contribution for sustainable development across the United Nations system. UNCTAD participated in the first and second meeting held on 11 May and 30 September 2021 respectively. UNCTAD also contributed to the 1st thematic Workshop on Culture for Reduced Inequalities held on 3 November and the second thematic Workshop on Culture for Dialogue and Peace held on 7 December.

(f) Webinar "First International Forum on Creative Economy" was held in Aguascalientes, Mexico from 25 to 26 November. It was organized by UNESCO Mexico in collaboration with UNCTAD.

(g) UNCTAD continued to participate in the Steering Committee meeting of the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. The United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion is an initiative of United Nations agencies and allied organizations designed to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals through coordinated action in the fashion sector. UNCTAD contributed to the "Sustainable Recovery through Sustainable Fashion" event held on 7 September 2021. It was organized by United Nations Environment Group and United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion. The aim is to facilitate an exchange of different approaches to address the environmental facets of the Sustainable Fashion Nexus, especially in pursuit of sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 context, and with an emphasis on the United Nations system's programmes.

European Union–UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Creative economy component

182. The UNCTAD creative economy component under the European Union–UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II is intended to support the Government's objectives to promote the cultural and creative industries of Angola and encourage economic diversification. It will directly contribute to the implementation of Programme 1.7.2: "Promotion of Cultural and Creative Arts and Industries" under the National Development Plan 2018–2022 of Angola. The objectives of the Angola creative economy component, which are in line with the objectives of the overall Train for Trade II Programme, are: (a) to assess the trade (export) potential of the creative economy of Angola; (b) to identify key bottlenecks that undermine efforts to harness the socioeconomic potential of the creative economy of Angola; and (c) to build the institutional and human capacities of Angola to formulate and implement policies and strategies to unlock binding constraints.

183. In 2021, under creative economy component UNCTAD carried out following activities:

(a) Training on Governance on the Cultural and Creative Industries sector delivered online from 22 July to 19 August. The course aims to enable participants from the public and private sectors to jointly build capacity for a better governance of the Angolan cultural and creative industries and to improve their capacity to create and co-manage policies and mechanisms for cultural and creative industries.

(b) Training on Cultural and Creative Entrepreneurship and Exports delivered from 2 to 24 September 2021. The primary objective of the course is to enable participants from the public and private sector to jointly strengthen skills in cultural and creative entrepreneurship through learning and exercising entrepreneurship behaviour, business modelling, market value chain, co-production, copyrights and intellectual property rights and marketing skills. The second objective is to improve participants' understanding on how to export cultural and creative products and services through learning and exercising, export preparation (including national and international regulation), market research tools, understanding of markets, international co-production links and international branding.

(c) Training on International dimensions of the cultural and creative sectors, culture, diplomacy and branding held on 7–29 October 2021. This is a short course for public and private actors engaging in the process of supporting the internationalization of the cultural and creative sectors in Angola. It explores international cultural relations, public/cultural diplomacy and nation/city/region/place branding, aiming at supporting entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial practices contributing to the development of the creative economy and cultural ecosystem of Angola.

(d) Training on Cultural and Creative Tourism delivered from 30 November to 22 December. This course is designed for public and private actors on the tourism, cultural and creative sectors of Angola. Throughout eight thematic modules, the training will explore the relationship between tourism, culture and development. The aim of the training is to support skill development on local, regional, and national policy design and implementation, and to promote new opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment in creative tourism.

(e) Biennale of Luanda 2021: Partnership Sessions held in Luanda, Angola from 27 November to 2 December. It was organized by UNESCO in collaboration with United Nations agencies.

184. **Results.** UNCTAD assisted Angola policymakers in assessing enabling policy instruments and frameworks for creative economies and increased capacities for a better governance of the cultural and creative industries sectors in a way that maximizes the potential of development gains, especially job creation and poverty reduction. This capacity building support has strengthened skills of stakeholders in entrepreneurship, market access, diplomacy and tourism branding,

2. Voluntary sustainability standards

185. **Development context.** With the growing demand for sustainably produced products among consumers, major retailers are inclined to opt for products that can provide verifiable and trustable sustainability claims. This, however, has become more challenging with the growth in globalization and global value chains (GVCs). One of the tools that can be leveraged to verify product sustainability claims is voluntary sustainability standards (VSS). VSS aim to ensure that a product in question is produced, processed or transported following certain sustainability qualities, such as minimal or zero environmental impacts. While there are multiple instruments that enable sustainable value chains and sustainable trade, the UNCTAD VSS programme aims to pursue this objective by exploring the complementary interplay between GVCs and VSS. VSS foster sustainable production and consumption and can also help to empower developing countries to effectively use GVCs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The work links directly to Sustainable Development Goal 12, responsible production and consumption.

186. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD, in support of UNFSS, conducts analysis, provides an intergovernmental forum for discussion on issues and best practices related to VSS, and undertakes multiple capacity development programs. Further, it enables collaboration and dialogue among other United Nations agencies working on a similar agenda to support trade and strengthen the national capacities of developing countries. By establishing country-specific platforms on VSS in developing countries, UNCTAD is also supporting developing countries to understand the use of these standards and fostering sustainable trade. In addition, via the established community of academics from various disciplines, UNCTAD is pioneering the research on relevant issues around VSS and ensuring a holistic understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with VSS.

187. **Outputs.** Within the framework of the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS), supported by UNCTAD, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the following activities were implemented in 2021:

(a) UNFSS conducted its Academic Advisory Council (AAC) meeting from 4 to 5 November 2021.⁴⁹ It was co-organized with the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies and the German Development Institute (DIE) and hosted at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. The meeting brought together an international mix of academic (members of the AAC) and policy experts from various disciplines and backgrounds to consolidate VSS knowledge and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of VSS impact and effectiveness. The meeting was conducted in a hybrid

⁴⁹ Meeting Summary Report: <https://unfss.org/2021/11/24/research-frontiers-on-the-adoption-impact-and-effectiveness-of-voluntary-sustainability-standards/>.

format with participants both online and offline. Academic and policy sessions were organized in the meeting to foster a debate and progress on VSS as a tool to enhance sustainable development and sustainable trade which is a key concern among major developing countries.

(b) The UNFSS and UNCTAD organized a series of round-table discussions that leveraged the expertise of the AAC members on:

- (i) Sustainability standards and environmental concerns on 10 February 2021;⁵⁰
- (ii) Sustainability standards and social concerns on 4 May 2021;⁵¹
- (iii) Sustainability standards and economic concerns on 17 June 2021.⁵²

(c) In addition, along with key partners, UNFSS produced a series of two podcasts. The first⁵³ was in collaboration with the University of Leuven and covered the debates surrounding trade policy and VSS and the second podcast⁵⁴ focused on VSS and trade with respect to the developing countries.

(d) UNFSS conducted an online Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Workshop, from 14 to 16 September 2021, on Understanding the Role and Impact of VSS to trade in the APEC Region. This workshop was participated by National Standards Bodies of the 21 APEC Member Economies. After the successful organization of the workshop, there is an upcoming publication of APEC Compendium of Best Practices: Mainstreaming VSS to Trade in the APEC Region. This compendium aims to provide global best practices to facilitate VSS as a market development and trade tool aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

(e) In April 2021, UNCTAD published a report on the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Export Potential to the European Union.⁵⁵ The report assesses the CARICOM agricultural products – herbs and spices, cocoa, sugar cane, coconut and aquaculture export potential to the European Union through the utilization of VSS. The European Union is the second most important export market for CARICOM countries, after the United States of America. It is important to note that the impact of the European Union Directives is very significant for CARICOM since the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between them expressly refers to the concept of sustainable development.

(f) UNCTAD, in support of UNFSS, published the “Better Trade for Sustainable Development⁵⁶” report. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the potentials and constraints of VSS in making international trade more sustainable, in particular with regards to developing countries and development opportunities. It investigates the means of maximizing VSS contribution to sustainable development and minimizing their risks. It also presents, based on the literature, the evidence we have on the economic, social and environmental impacts of VSS on the ground. Furthermore, it investigates the barriers to VSS uptake specifically in developing countries and proposes structural approaches that can be considered for enhancing the potential of VSS. The report was launched in a webinar⁵⁷ followed by a discussion on the potentials and constraints of VSS in making international trade more sustainable with regards to developing countries and development opportunities.

⁵⁰ <https://unfss.org/2021/01/12/sustainability-standards-and-environmental-concerns-an-academic-roundtable-discussion/>.

⁵¹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/sustainability-standards-and-social-concerns>.

⁵² <https://unfss.org/aac-roundtable-sustainability-standards-and-economic-concerns/>.

⁵³ <https://unfss.org/2021/03/23/podcast-feature-trade-policy-and-voluntary-sustainability-standards/>.

⁵⁴ <https://unfss.org/2021/12/15/podcast-feature-voluntary-sustainability-standards-and-trade-in-developing-countries/>.

⁵⁵ See <https://unctad.org/webflyer/caribbean-community-caricom-export-potential-european-union>.

⁵⁶ See <https://unctad.org/webflyer/better-trade-sustainable-development-role-voluntary-sustainability-standards>.

⁵⁷ See <https://unctad.org/meeting/better-trade-sustainable-development-role-voluntary-sustainability-standards-vss>.

(g) UNCTAD co-authored the chapter “Understanding smallholder farmer access to VSS-compliant markets”⁵⁸ in the Standards and Poverty Reduction report. It explores this issue and draws results from field studies and interviews with stakeholders from developing and least developed countries. The study is based on information from interviews and surveys with the main actors in the value chains of six countries. This includes producers/producer organizations, governments, VSS/certification bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), financial service providers, and buyers. Fifty-seven such actors in the following six commodities and value chains in six countries were interviewed to understand the situation of smallholder farmers: Cambodia (rice); Colombia (avocado); Guatemala (banana); Guinea-Bissau (cashew); India (cotton); and Rwanda (coffee). The interviews and analysis were done via leveraging the UNCTAD Voluntary Sustainability Standards Assessment Toolkit.⁵⁹

(h) UNFSS, through UNCTAD’s leadership, organized the 2021 International Women’s Day Feature⁶⁰ – a virtual webinar that focused on Applying Gender Lens on Sustainability Standards and Certification Systems for International Trade. The objectives of the dialogue were: (i) to raise global awareness on the issues most women entrepreneurs and exporters face with regards to sustainability standards. Even if they can see the benefits of complying with these standards, the issue they are often faced with is the lack of means of financial, capacity and institutional support; (ii) to put forward policy recommendations at the national level on ways to facilitate a better infrastructure that eases women entrepreneurs to certify their products; and (iii) to discuss differentiated impacts of standards compliance for women in international trade and its best practices to foster gender equality and women empowerment.

(i) The UNFSS supports capacity-building efforts that are driven by the national platforms. These national platforms develop a multi-stakeholder engagement that institutionalizes the adoption of sustainability standards that also reflects the national priorities. The National Platform and Initiative Cooperative Network (NPICN) meets three times a year. They typically provide a neutral forum to collect and exchange information on national standards, assess the needs of decision-makers and other stakeholders, link national demands with international expertise and build institutions to strengthen communications. Currently, there are established platforms in Brazil, China, India and Mexico and VSS programme initiatives held in Indonesia, Malaysia, South Africa, Viet Nam and CARICOM.

188. **Results and impacts.** The UNFSS, under the guidance and leadership of UNCTAD, has served and will continue to serve as a partnership forum to enable the development of beneficial voluntary sustainability standards, through the NPICN. It also ensures that a holistic dialogue on VSS is maintained via the established AAC. As a result of these activities that was aimed at developing a better understanding of domestic and international voluntary sustainability standards and ensuring effective use of such standards for sustainable development, the UNFSS has received a request from the Director-General of the African Regional Standards Organization (ARSO) to be part of the NPICN, with the hopes of tapping on useful UNFSS resources such as the AAC, and knowledge-exchange with the other established platforms. These will set a direction for ARSO to mainstream the established regional VSS, Eco Mark Africa. It is in the interest of UNFSS to grow the National Platform and Initiative Cooperative Network (NPICN) as it is believed to have positive spill over effects towards the alignment of the Sustainable Development Goals from a global trade perspective.

189. For the online capacity-building workshop conducted for the APEC region, the responses gathered about the entire three-day workshop through the post workshop survey have shown a successful overall conclusionary remark. In the survey, respondents were asked to rate their awareness of VSS before the workshop from (very unaware = 1) to (very

⁵⁸ See <https://unctad.org/meeting/sustainability-standards-and-smallholder-farmers-opportunities-address-poverty-through>.

⁵⁹ See <https://vssapproach.unctad.org/toolkit/>.

⁶⁰ <https://unfss.org/2021/02/24/applying-gender-lens-on-sustainability-standards-and-certification-systems-for-international-trade/>.

aware = 5). Only 24 per cent of the respondents were aware of VSS before the workshop, whereas the respondents that were very unaware and were very aware of VSS before the workshop were evenly distributed at 6 per cent each. Respondents were then asked to rate their level of understanding of VSS after the workshop. Based on the survey results, the respondents have not only increased their awareness about the existence of VSS but have also gained the depth of understanding and comprehension, especially on the barriers and enhancers (in their own words) that would deter or motivate SMEs from complying with VSS within their respective economies. This can help with the next steps to mainstream the uptake of VSS.

190. The AAC public online round-table discussions received over 1,000 registered participants, covering almost all parts of the world and across sectors, which reflects that topic surrounding VSS is becoming commonplace. UNCTAD would continue raising the needed awareness and, more importantly, equipping policymakers with adequate evidence-based information.

3. Investment trends and issues

3.1. *Technical assistance on data collection on foreign direct investment and activities of multinational enterprises*

191. **Development context.** Scarcity, unreliability and inconsistency in existing data reporting systems can cause severe problems in formulating policies and strategies regarding FDI. There is also a shortage of studies on the role of FDI and its impact on sustainable economic development and contribution to the transfer of technology, human resource development and export performance. In response to recommendations made by the Expert Meeting on Capacity-Building in the Area of FDI: Data Compilation and Policy Formulation in Developing Countries (December 2005) and endorsed by the tenth session of the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues (Geneva, 6–10 March 2006), UNCTAD continues to provide technical assistance in the area of FDI statistics.

192. **Objectives and features.** The overall objective of the project is to increase FDI inflows to developing countries, in particular LDCs, by formulating FDI policies based on quality FDI data and information on multinational enterprises operating in a region or country. This project aims to enhance the capacity of government agencies in these countries to compile, disseminate and analyse data on FDI and multinational enterprise activities by implementing internationally recommended methodological standards and enabling national authorities to maintain high-quality and up-to-date databases. It also intends to strengthen networking among national authorities involved in FDI data compilation and reporting and in FDI policy issues and investment promotion activities, to facilitate the exchange of experience.

193. **Outputs.** In 2021, technical assistance focused on improving FDI data collection methodologies through verification of data sent by national authorities and standardization, by requesting countries to report FDI data based on directional basis rather than asset or liability basis, showing a synergy between research in the UNCTAD *World Investment Report* and Global Investment Trends Monitor and technical assistance on improving FDI data.

194. UNCTAD continued inter-agency cooperation in the area of FDI technical assistance by participating online in the Working Group on International Investment Statistics of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the IMF Balance of Payments Committee and joint European Central Bank/Eurostat Task Force on Foreign Direct Investment. In 2021, UNCTAD also participated in drafting Directions Notes for the Update of the OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment, fourth edition.

195. UNCTAD, in collaboration with the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), provided technical assistance to improve collection of FDI statistics and activities on multinational enterprises to Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries. During the seventh UNCTAD World Investment

Forum, a Symposium on FDI Statistics and Development Impact was organized, which was focused on the issues of FDI data compilation and analysis and its role in the formulation of FDI policies from a development perspective. In addition, the symposium discussed how to make the existing FDI data more relevant to Sustainable Development Goals to improve monitoring of investment and financial flows into developing economies.

196. **Results.** According to UNCTADstat data centre, in 2021 the FDI tables were the most visited tables on the UNCTAD website, accounting for almost a fifth (17 per cent) of all page views.

3.2. *Technical assistance on ASEAN Investment Report series*

197. **Development context.** An important pillar of UNCTAD activities is to support developments in member countries through analytical work and technical cooperation. In this context, UNCTAD has been providing technical assistance to ASEAN for the preparation of the annual ASEAN Investment Report since 2012. The ASEAN Investment Report (AIR) series provides up-to-date analyses on FDI and operations of multinational enterprises in the region. It also serves as a policy decision-making input and an analytical instrument for improving the competitiveness of ASEAN to attract FDI.

198. **Objectives and features.** The objective of AIR is to present analyses of the latest developments in FDI and the regional investment environment in an integrating ASEAN, including implementing an ASEAN investment work programme in relation to the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint and the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement. The report aims to provide analytical inputs for discussion by relevant ASEAN bodies of key investment issues and related policy. The ASEAN Report is distributed by the ASEAN Secretariat to its Member States.

199. **Outputs.** As part of technical assistance to ASEAN, and in preparation for the ASEAN Investment Report 2020–2021 on Industry 4.0, UNCTAD benefitted from cooperation with the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Investment, the ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN–Australia Development Cooperation Programme (AADCP) II secretariat in Jakarta. In April 2021, UNCTAD carried out a peer review of the Report with the ASEAN secretariat and member states. In May 2021, UNCTAD presented the preliminary findings of the report to the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Investment, which was participated by more than 40 officials, about 50 per cent of them women, from ASEAN Member States. The ASEAN Investment Report 2020–2021 was published in September 2021 and was launched during the same month at the ASEAN Ministerial Investment Council (virtually). It was subsequently made publicly accessible through the UNCTAD and ASEAN Secretariat’s website. The report was also presented at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit (virtually) in October 2021.

200. **Results.** The 2020–2021 ASEAN Investment Report was well received by stakeholders. Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN stated “...we would like to thank UNCTAD for the continuing support and contribution to the publication of ASEAN Investment Report (AIR) series... [which have] throughout the years provided concrete recommendations...to assist ASEAN in its investment-related policymaking. The theme of this year’s AIR on the role of FDI in Industrial 4.0 transformation comes at a critical time as ASEAN strives to recover from the unprecedented impact of the pandemic... the recommendations in this report have been crucial for ASEAN policymakers to consider the appropriate steps going forward.”

3.3. *World Investment Report series*

201. **Development context.** As the focal point in the United Nations system for investment and technology, UNCTAD promotes understanding of key issues, particularly on FDI-related matters, and assists developing countries in attracting and benefiting from FDI and building their productive capacities and international competitiveness. The World Investment Report series provides up-to-date and comprehensive data on issues pertaining to FDI and multinational enterprises, analyses trends and developments in FDI, examines the implications of activities by multinational enterprises related to these trends, and assesses both international and national policy issues of relevance to developing countries.

It serves as a policy decision-making input and an analytical instrument for improving national capacities to attract and benefit from FDI, and as a capacity-building tool.

202. **Objectives and features.** The *World Investment Report* (WIR) series is a key instrument in helping policymakers improve their understanding of emerging FDI-related issues and policy implications for development and, as a result, enhance their ability to formulate FDI policies that will contribute to development objectives. The series therefore serves as an essential tool for the formulation of FDI policies, which feeds into UNCTAD technical assistance work. The preparation involves the following interrelated activities:

(a) *Policy analysis and research:* An extensive peer review of the *World Investment Report* outline, drafts and final text. The preparation of each chapter and section involves dialogue with relevant stakeholders to ascertain facts and determine trends, including with experts (especially those from developing countries), on the topics analysed;

(b) *Capacity-building workshops and seminars:* These enable policymakers, researchers and other experts from developing countries to directly contribute salient experience, knowledge and information for each edition of the *World Investment Report*. As such, these activities constitute a key element of the peer review process;

(c) *Dissemination of the report's findings and results:* Dissemination begins with the organization of press conferences in national venues and increasingly through webinars on the report's launch date, followed by seminars/workshops for policymakers in developing countries. These workshops allow stakeholders from developing countries to discuss the results of the research and policy analysis, including ways and means of using them in concrete policymaking and implementation;

(d) *Dedicated expert networks:* In order to maintain the report's consistent quality, dedicated networks of experts are maintained and supported through a range of activities, including seminars and conferences.

203. **Outputs.** The substantive theme of the *World Investment Report 2021* is investing in sustainable recovery. The report takes stock of COVID-19 crisis, including its impact on FDI and on prospects for international production to 2030. The investment policy chapter looks at investment policy responses to the pandemic, trends in international investment agreement (IIA) and investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) cases and takes stock of efforts being made towards IIA reform. The report also includes a chapter, added at the request of the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/75/207), on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on investment in sustainable development, and proposes concrete recommendations for the promotion of Sustainable Development Goal investment.

204. The report was released on 21 June 2021. To facilitate global media coverage, nine sets of press releases were prepared and translated into official United Nations languages. Numerous webinars and high-level discussions were organized to disseminate the findings of the Report, which was also presented and discussed during the thirty-second special session of the Trade and Development Board in September 2021. The theme chapter and the findings for Latin America were discussed in a televised interview with Bloomberg TV El Financiero in Mexico, attracting a large audience and reactions in social media outlets such as Twitter. The findings of the theme chapter, and the regional highlights, were also discussed with the regional community in a seminar organized by the Asian Development Bank. Furthermore, based on the Report, a seminar was held for the Latin American SEZs community on reconfiguration of global value chains and investment in productive capacities in October 2021. Other presentations were organized with the academic community and subject experts that included more than 200 participants.

205. Informal discussions were held (August 2021) with the President of the Dominican Republic, and high-level officials, on the findings of the *World Investment Report 2021*. Consequently, the President of the country agreed to participate at the opening of the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum in October 2021 to discuss issues related to investment in sustainable recovery and the regionalization trends of regional production, in which he stated "UNCTAD work is crucial to understanding the magnitude of current problems, but also to proposing the industrial and investment policy orientations necessary to promote a more robust and sustainable recovery."

206. **Results.** By the end of 2021, the *World Investment Report 2021*, including overview, factsheets, data and statistics and chapters were downloaded 96,881 times. Its findings were reported in 3,347 press articles across 122 countries in 24 languages. In 2021, the United Nations General Assembly (GA) adopted a resolution on Promoting investments for sustainable development (A/RES/76/197). The resolution acknowledges UNCTAD work in this area and the policy actions proposed in the WIR 2020 to facilitate a “big push” in private sector investment in the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, it takes note of the policy proposals put forward by UNCTAD in the WIR 2021, in particular the action plan for investment in the Sustainable Development Goals, and calls upon UNCTAD to work in collaboration with multiple stakeholders to help developing countries avail themselves of the recommendations. Lastly, it requests that UNCTAD “inform its seventy-seventh session of the implementation of the present resolution... through a dedicated section of the WIR, with a special focus on how to overcome the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on promoting investments for sustainable development as well as concrete recommendations, including on strategic sectors to investment for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.”

207. Positive feedback on WIR:

(a) “We commend the 2021 World Investment Report, which confirm its relevance as the key publication on investment data and investment policy trends.” European Union Statement during the seventy-first executive session of the Trade and Development Board, February 2022.

(b) “The WIR is influential worldwide and has a large readership in China.” Vice Minister and Deputy China International Trade Representative, China, during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, October 2021.

(c) “I would like to highlight the annual WIR which offers valuable guidance.” Federal Minister of Economic Affairs and Energy, Germany, during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum, October 2021.

3.4 *Special economic zones in Africa and the AfCFTA*

208. **Development context.** Special economic zones (SEZs) have been increasing in Africa in recent years. However, not all of them are successful and many of them remain underutilized. This can lead to unnecessary public costs in the form of unrequited upfront investment in zone infrastructure or foregone tax and customs revenues. Moreover, the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is also set to impact SEZs in Africa significantly depending upon the final decision for the treatment of goods emanating from zones. Currently, a large number of countries on the continent are in need of technical advice and capacity-building for better planning of SEZ regimes, revitalizing underutilized zones, and helping zones adjust to the new trade regime under the AfCFTA.

209. **Objectives and features.** In this context, UNCTAD, with the support of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) developed a policy handbook to guide governments with respect to SEZ planning and operations, with a particular focus on helping zones adjust to the changes brought in due to the implementation of the AfCFTA. In the second phase of the project, capacity-building events are organized to disseminate the findings and policy recommendations of the handbook and train a whole range of stakeholders working on zones in Africa.

210. **Outputs.** In 2021, UNCTAD with the support of GIZ, developed a Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa: Towards Economic Diversification across the Continent. In addition to providing best practices and policy recommendations across a wide array of topics relevant to SEZs, it also features case studies from a number of different zones within and outside of Africa. The handbook was launched at the UNCTAD World Investment Forum in October 2021, in a policy event with stakeholders, including high-level representatives from African member States, SEZ managers, SEZ associations, United Nation bodies and specialized agencies. The handbook has provided a timely opportunity for a high-level exchange on the development of SEZs on the continent, with a focus on the opportunities and challenges in the context of the implementation of the AfCFTA.

211. As part of the technical capacity building events, a national workshop was held at Kilinto Industrial Park, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2021. The event, jointly organized with GIZ and the African Union Commission (AUC), included presentations of the findings of the Handbook to a diverse audience of policymakers and practitioners involved with SEZ issues and planning from Ethiopia, as well as academic training sessions and SEZs-site visits. By the end of the workshop, participants and their respective counterparts were equipped to provide best practices and recommendations for the AUC and the AfCFTA secretariat on SEZs to consider. In November 2021, UNCTAD, in partnership with the AUC, organized a webinar on the margin of the fourth African Union High-Level Symposium on Special Economic Zones in Africa. The Symposium focused on fostering a dialogue among African policymakers, SEZs managers, ministers in charge of industrialization and economic diversification, leading industrial companies, and experts, with the aim to strengthen the capacity of members states for designing, developing, and operating innovative and sustainable SEZs in Africa. The high-level panellists also discussed how SEZs can contribute to deepening the regional value chains integration, as well as promoting sustainable and greener industrialization, after the full implementation of the AfCFTA.

212. **Results.** The handbook and the related technical cooperation have a particularly strong emphasis on helping SEZs adjust to the new trade and investment environment in Africa, after the full implementation of the AfCFTA. The case studies developed for a number of African countries provide the basis for solid advice on lessons learned and the way forward. During the workshop held in Addis Ababa, the Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining expressed: “I am glad that our partnership with UNCTAD and GIZ has led to this Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa. I am confident that this book will contribute toward enhancing understanding of the issues and challenges affecting the performance of African Special Economic Zones and the parameters under which their efficiency could be further improved.”

3.5 *The international transmission of gender policies and practices: the role of multinational enterprises*

213. **Development context.** Women’s economic empowerment is central to the realization of an inclusive and sustainable development as envisaged in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The private sector plays a pivotal role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and particularly in advancing the position of women in the economy. In this context, multinational enterprises (MNEs) can, through their policies and practices, foster gender equality in the workplace in host developing countries.

214. **Objectives and features.** The report “Multinational Enterprises and the International Transmission of Gender Policies and Practices” analyses the role of MNEs in transmitting gender equalizing policies and practices across their network of affiliates, and along their supply chains. The report puts forward concrete policies and recommendations that leverage the unique position of foreign groups in supporting women empowerment in the workplace in developing economies, based on solid and novel research.

215. **Outputs and results.** The report provides policy recommendations based on high-quality technical academic research on the role of foreign direct investment and multinational enterprises to spread gender equality and female empowerment around the globe. The concrete guidelines and policy recommendations rely on the results from original research produced for the report. The case studies provide evidence across developing countries, focusing on different mechanisms MNEs can influence gender practices in host countries, such as Bangladesh, Brazil, Costa Rica, South Africa and Viet Nam. The report covers important areas where policy can contribute to the positive transmission of labour market practices toward women. Key policy implications arising from the empirical evidence in the report include promoting strong local labour policies; facilitating absorptive capacity; fostering linkages between multinational and domestic firms; enhancing transparency in gender-related policy and practice; and encouraging gender provisions to be integrated in international agreements. The report serves as basis for technical assistance on policy development promoting transmission of positive practices.

216. The report was launched on the occasion of the International Women’s Day on 8 March 2021. It served as a key background document for the high-level policy panel event at the UNCTAD World Investment Forum 2021, including public and private sector stakeholders. The findings of the report were presented during the IMD Business school (Lausanne) event for business leaders held in September 2021, contributing MNEs’ strategies to advance and adopt diversity and inclusion strategies globally in their sectors. Furthermore, the case studies and policy recommendations served as background document for the WTO Public Forum’s session, “From gender research to action for a post COVID-19 resilient world”, which took place in September 2021.

4. Macroeconomic and development policies

4.1. *South–South integration and the Sustainable Development Goals: Enhancing structural transformation in key partner countries of the Belt and Road Initiative*

217. **Development context.** Even after achieving better growth performances since the turn of the millennium, developing countries still face multiple challenges in economic and social advancement, which calls for an appropriate policy response at all levels. However, effective and development-friendly policy formulation requires local knowledge, experience and strong capacity. In this regard, experience sharing and capacity-building has become increasingly important as it can improve the policymaking capability of developing countries in identifying key binding constraints, external vulnerabilities and drivers of structural transformation in sustaining dynamic growth so as to reshape better economic and social policies. In contrast to learning experiences from developed countries, peer learning among developing countries could play a distinctive role given similar challenges and opportunities faced by the South in today’s globalized world.

218. Against this backdrop, this project facilitates peer learning from the successful structural transformation experience of China among the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partner countries. The BRI initiated by China provides a unique opportunity to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing among southern countries in building a community of shared future. On the one hand, while many developing countries are still struggling with their development challenges, China has progressed rapidly in past four decades. Its annual GDP growth rate has recorded as 9.5 per cent on average and has lifted over 700 million people out of poverty since 1978. It has been widely acknowledged that the effective development policy of China is essentially attributed to its policy experimentation and adaptation to the local circumstance, which can provide a reference point for other developing countries when they design their growth policies. On the other hand, BRI has mobilized enormous development financing resources through trade, FDI, debt, infrastructure financing, technology transfer, industrialization cooperation, and so on, which also provides a “learning-by-doing” opportunities beyond the projects per se as operating and managing those projects inevitably involve knowledge and experience sharing among all BRI partner countries.

219. **Objectives and features.** This project addresses the growing realization that meeting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals is inextricably linked with the process of structural transformation. The project takes an innovative South–South approach to capacity-building by distilling lessons from a country with first-hand experience in the transformation process, and which is engaged in an ambitious foreign economic policy centred on cross-regional infrastructure connectivity and productive investment known as the Belt and Road Initiative. Beyond BRI’s headline investment figures, the large number of developing countries involved in the initiative means that it carries deeper implications for South-South economic cooperation and integration. Of the six economic corridors that constitute BRI, four solely involve developing countries. Despite the great development potential from BRI, however, limitations in government capacity in many partner countries – particularly in the policy areas of investment, trade, finance/debt, and technology – could constrain or even block the potential transformative impacts of the BRI (and of foreign direct investment more generally). The main objective of the project is therefore to enhance the capacity of developing countries to strengthen their policies for structural transformation through learning from successful experiences of other developing countries, particularly from

China. The project has identified three initial pilot developing countries: Ethiopia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. To unlock the transformative effects of BRI engagement, partner countries can find guidance and encouragement from a deeper understanding of past and current policy reform experiences of China – experiences which allowed China to not only attain the predecessor to the Sustainable Development Goals, the Millennium Development Goals, but also to go well beyond them.

220. **Outputs.** In 2021, the project published 26 policy papers in the areas of macro and finance; trade and industry; digital economy and debt sustainability for the project countries, i.e. China, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. These papers also include sharing of policy experiences with respect to economic recovery post-COVID-19 in these countries as well as other countries like Malaysia. To capture the valuable policy experiences of structural transformation of a developing country, namely China, UNCTAD project team launched a publication on the structural transformation of China and what can developing countries learn. To facilitate wider dissemination of these policy learning, UNCTAD has launched a BRI platform.

221. Unsustainable debt is emerging as a major policy challenge in many developing countries. To address this, the project has also prepared a report on debt sustainability in pilot countries which was discussed in a South–South sharing of policy experiences on debt sustainability meeting and launched on the BRI platform.

222. Policy experiences were also shared on long-standing gender issues for example gendering the national budgets. and a report on mainstreaming gender in national policies was launched and discussed in a hybrid meeting organized by the project.

223. Based on the research work, the project also organized three UNCTAD XV pre-events in September 2021 with the theme of macroeconomic policy framework, digital policy as well as global value chains and industrial policy.

224. **Results.** The project has organized more than 20 webinars/conferences in which 85 per cent and more participants/policymakers have reported improved understanding of the successful policies adopted by China. The project also received demands for sharing successful policy experiences from other developing countries. To cater to this demand, the project has prepared and launched policy briefs from countries like Malaysia, Mozambique, Pakistan and South Africa.

225. The success of the project can also be measured by the requests/demand being received by other countries to be a part of this learning process. Requests have been received by countries like Algeria and Pakistan.

4.2. *Promoting economic diversification and resilience in Barbados for sustained recovery from COVID-19 shock*

226. **Development context.** Since 2008, when Global Financial Crisis (GFC) erupted, Barbados has been facing lasting challenge of weak economic growth, which has been exacerbated due to COVID-19 shock. In 2020, the country's annual output grew at 17.6 per cent, which was followed by a weak recovery at 1.4 per cent in 2021. Beyond the pandemic shock, the Barbados economy is also facing other persistent challenges. For example, like many other small island developing States (SIDS), Barbadian economy structure is quite narrow and highly dependent on limited sectors like tourism and external markets. Meanwhile, some of the major macro-economic indicators are in negative territory such as limited fiscal space and high debt level.

227. **Objectives and features.** Against this backdrop, the project aims to assist Barbados to combat COVID-19 pandemic particularly the associated economic shocks, overcome the lasting binding constraints through formulating targeted economic strategies, building policy capacities, and promoting South–South cooperation. The project will draw on the findings and recommendations from UNCTAD research work. The Bridgetown Covenant will provide overall guidance to the project implementation, in which UNCTAD member States have agreed that economic diversification can support the transformation process for a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable world.

228. The project will contribute to the project country's efforts in reaching sustained economic growth after the pandemic shock and achieving 2030 Agenda in the medium and long run. To fit the development context identified above and achieve the main objective of the project, the project strategy will therefore include three components. First, the project will conduct an in-depth and evidence-based research on Barbados economy to provide dedicated policy recommendations in enhancing economic diversification and resilience. Second, the project will assist the project country to improve the policy research and formulation capacities. Third, the project will, based on the project activities in the project country, advocate and support the economic cooperation and integration among developing countries.

229. **Outputs and results.** Implementation of the project started in 2021. Several policy papers have been prepared in 2021. These papers provide overall analysis of the project country's economy and propose policy recommendations on economic diversification and enhancing South-South economic cooperation, which provide a solid foundation for the next stage implementation. Prior to UNCTAD XV, the project organized a pre-event titled "Enhancing Economic Resilience in Small Island Developing States: Perspective from South-South Cooperation", in which high-level policymakers and researchers from government, academia and United Nations agencies discussed the vulnerabilities of SIDS, sharing national experience in promoting economic diversification and resilience, and the role of South-South cooperation in supporting efforts of SIDS in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

4.3 *Productive transformation policy reviews*

230. **Development context.** Developing and emerging economies are increasingly looking for mechanisms to identify ways of adding value to current production patterns and capturing higher gains from trade and foreign direct investment (FDI), while at the same time generating growth patterns that are environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. After decades in which development was considered a spontaneous process which would have been automatically achieved by letting the (global) markets function freely, there is a growing recognition that government choices and institutions play a pivotal role in shaping developing trajectories and in determining the capacity of each economy to generate jobs, distribute wealth and respect the environment.

231. While there is a growing consensus among developing and emerging economies that improving the current production, consumption and trade patterns is necessary for development, "what to do" and "how to do it" in the best way and taking into account the impacts of new technologies, changing demand patterns and the overall changing global economic landscape are still open questions. In fact, one of the first demands that the countries participating in the OECD Initiative for Policy Dialogue on Global Value Chains, Production Transformation and Development have expressed has been the need to develop a new policy assessment and guidance tool to support the process of strategy setting and implementation in the realm of production transformation, with a view to supporting the process of policy dialogue and knowledge sharing and generation. The Production Transformation Policy Reviews (PTPRs), conceptualized and developed by the OECD, UNCTAD, UNIDO and other international partners represent a reply to this pressing demand.

232. **Objectives and features.** The Production Transformation Policy Reviews are a policy assessment and guidance tool to support the policy dialogue exercise of knowledge sharing and peer-learning and to increase the evidence on varieties of development trajectories. PTPRs aim at providing a guiding framework to identify options and actionable policy responses to promote structural transformation and upgrading, based on comparative assessment of countries' assets, upgrading potential and priorities. PTPRs are carried out on a demand-basis, through peer review. They draw on country specificities and global opportunities benchmarking. They are featured as a key tool in the United Nations (2021) Smooth Transition Strategy Guidance Note and can be instrumental to the Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (SGSF).

233. **Outputs and results.** In 2021, UNCTAD along with the OECD Development Centre, UNIDO and UNECA completed and launched the PTPR of Egypt under the theme

“Embracing Change, Achieving Prosperity.” The PTPR was the product of a 21-month policy support process explicitly requested by the Government of Egypt that was represented by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) at the launch. The report uses a forward-looking framework to assess the country’s readiness to embrace change. This includes an analysis of the game-changing potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and perspectives on agro-food and electronics, as well as identifying priorities for future reforms.

234. In 2021, UNCTAD also started its work on the PTPR of Bangladesh through a special session of the seventeenth plenary meeting of the OECD Policy Initiative on country strategies for economic transformation devoted to the forthcoming report. The PTPR of Bangladesh was requested by the Ministry of Commerce of Bangladesh and is being implemented by UNCTAD under the leadership of the OECD development centre in collaboration with the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP), UNIDO and WTO/EIF, and with the support of the European Union.

4.4. *Mobilizing resources for a Green New Deal: partnerships in Asia for a Decade of Action in the era of coronavirus*

235. **Development context.** This project focuses on how to raise the necessary financial and technical resources for a Green New Deal in Asia and is therefore extremely topical and relevant for development given that the Sustainable Development Goals set out an ambitious agenda for a more sustainable and equitable future but no road map. The Green New Deal framework reinforces the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals and provides practical and policy recommendations on how to achieve them. This is particularly important in Asia and the Pacific, as this region will be the centre of any successful efforts to combat global warming. It is also the centre for some of the most interesting and innovative new forms of development finance. The beneficiary countries in this region generally and in the project particularly have all set out ambitions relating to low-carbon or zero-carbon futures and have varying degrees of success thus far in moving towards that.

236. **Objectives and features.** The project aims to bring together the two usually somewhat disconnected topics of public finance and industrial policy, in order to help bring about transformation through a just process of transition. The perspective is on actions that can be achieved over the next decade. The objective is defined into two project outcomes. Firstly, at the national level, to help policymakers and leaders from the financial sector and industry enhance their technical capacities to identify, design and implement policies to help finance and implement the Sustainable Development Goals, by means of a green new deal, over the next 10 years. Secondly, at the regional level, to enhance cooperation between countries and regional financial institutions (in particular development banks), to support the development of regional policies to help finance and implement the Sustainable Development Goals by means of a green new deal, over the next 10 years.

237. **Outputs.** During 2021, progress was slower than initially envisaged due to the ongoing restrictions relating to COVID-19, especially in the Asian region where this project is focused; but nonetheless some important steps were achieved. During 2021, the key accomplishments focused on (a) arranging and starting field studies of target countries to ascertain pressing needs and existing capacities and to identify constraints and opportunities facing public and development banks and industrial policymakers; and (b) conducting thematic studies to draw lessons and share successful experiences from countries and sectors that are relevant for the target countries. Fieldwork and desk research was already well underway in Fiji and beginning in Sri Lanka.

238. Four of six thematic studies planned were already contributing important learnings to the development debate as well as helping inform future work. This included a global first study on public, private and green financing mechanisms in the hard-to-abate sector of petrochemicals, which is important for the low-carbon pledges made in recent years by industry and governments. Its findings were disseminated at several international conferences. A mapping of the existing landscape of green financial institutions and initiatives throughout the entire region of Asia and the Pacific is further contributing to better understanding. Another study on public banks and their rapid response to the demands of COVID-19 was disseminated widely and new work began taking it to a higher

level with ongoing work by a network of international researchers outside the project budget.

239. **Results.** Given the slow start due to COVID-19 related restrictions, it is too soon to shed much light on results or achievements at the outcome level, however we did fill some important gaps in knowledge and achieve some useful and relevant increases in understanding thanks to the conceptual papers completed and disseminated. These included the finding that public banks played an essential role in most government's responses to COVID-19 – they were both the sources of finance and the means of implementing government policies to address the sudden shock in liquidity, and to provide support to firms, households, other banks and indeed many governments. This is making a useful contribution to the debate about the future role of public development finance. In addition, the papers and findings presented online and available online have been downloaded a very large number of times and, from feedback received, are contributing to a better understanding of the issues.

5. International cooperation on science, technology and innovation under the auspices of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

5.1. *Activities related to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development with regard to follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society*

240. **Development context.** The World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003, and Tunis, 2005) was the first major United Nations event that discussed the potential opportunities and developmental impacts posed by information and communications technology. The Summit established a vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society. In 2015, this vision was reaffirmed by the General Assembly in the outcome document of its overall review of implementation of Summit outcomes. The years since the Summit have seen significant changes in the nature of the information society. Technologies which were in their infancy at the beginning of this century have become mainstream, and in some cases already been displaced by later innovations. Digital innovations are transforming lives and offering new opportunities to reinforce and invigorate efforts to achieve the Goals. However, effective policy development and programmes are required to realize the potential of information technology to enhance development, inclusion and empowerment, and to address the potential harms.

241. **Objectives and features.** A trust fund was established in December 2007 aimed at supporting the work of the Commission in assisting the Economic and Social Council in the system-wide follow-up to World Summit on the Information Society outcomes. The objective of the work of UNCTAD, as the secretariat of the Commission, is to support the work of the Commission as mandated by the Council in its resolution 2006/46. The Council guides the work of the Commission in this area through its annual resolution on the assessment of progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to Summit outcomes. The resources of the trust fund support the elaboration of the annual reports on the implementation of such outcomes and the participation of experts and non-State stakeholders in the work of the Commission, and other related activities.

242. **Outputs.** In 2021, the secretariat supported the 24th Commission to review the follow-up of the implementation of Summit outcomes in May. It also supported the Commission on the implementation of the request made by the General Assembly in the outcome document of its overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit (General Assembly resolution 70/125). It further provided substantive support to the General Assembly President's Thematic Debate on Digital Divide held in April 2021.

243. **Results.** The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2021/28, noted the role of the Commission in assisting the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment of progress made in implementing Summit outcomes. The extension and reaffirmation of the mandate given to the Commission by the Council in its resolution 2006/46 demonstrates the recognition of the valuable work carried out by the Commission. This work has been strengthened due to the support of the Trust Fund.

5.2. *Technology Assessment in the energy and agricultural sectors in Africa to accelerate progress on Science, Technology and Innovation*

244. **Development context.** A technology assessment can catalyse a broader social, political, and inter-institutional debate on the divergent views of pros, cons, and associated uncertainties across alternative directions for interlinked technological and socio-technical change. Models of technology assessment incorporating citizen and decision-maker participation with technical expertise, can make vital contributions to informing policy makers working on innovation policies and strategies, and key sectoral policies such as energy and agricultural policies. Only a few countries in the world have consolidated capacities for technology assessment in place, and it is often not being conducted in developing countries owing to a lack of capabilities and institutions. In particular, the potential impacts of many new and emerging technologies are unclear, leading to the need for robust mechanisms to evaluate such technologies. Building the capacity to assess the impact of technologies is a vital part of the process of building science, technology and innovation (STI) capacity, in particular the capacity to assess the usefulness of a technology as part of the “technology transfer” process which involves identifying, accessing, learning and diffusing technologies that may be useful for addressing a country’s economic, social and environmental challenges.

245. **Objectives.** The objective of this project is to strengthen capacities of national STI policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in developing African countries in designing and implementing policies which are based on a clear understanding of the socioeconomic and environmental implications of new and emerging technologies in the energy and agricultural sectors so that their benefits can be harnessed, and their potentially negative effects, minimized. In the mid-to-long-term, countries can develop institutional capacities to continuously scan, monitor and assess the impacts of technologies as part of forward-looking development strategies.

246. **Outputs.** The project began its implementation in three beneficiary countries (Seychelles, South Africa and Zambia) in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic forced a greater reliance on virtual platforms for delivery of planned activities. In 2021, the technology assessment methodology was prepared, and an online peer review meeting was held. A national stakeholder consultative workshop was held in South Africa in virtual mode. At the workshop, participants learned about the methodology of conducting technology assessment, discussed the current use of technology in the country’s agriculture and energy sector and brainstormed what new frontier technologies could be considered for technology assessment.

247. **Results.** Participants in the national workshop in South Africa had a better understanding of the notion of technology assessment, including its distinction from other approaches such as technology needs assessment and technology foresight. They also acquired knowledge of the steps to undertake a technology assessment. The workshop laid a good foundation for the following activities to be implemented in the country under this project.

5.3. *CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme*

248. **Development context.** Food security is a grave concern for developing countries, particularly least developed countries (LDCs). It is increasingly at risk due to climate change. More and more developing countries are tapping into science, technology and innovation solutions to monitor crops more efficiently to ensure good yields and counter increasing challenges stemming from climate change. Earth observation and crop monitoring on a massive scale are neither easy nor inexpensive exercises, but both hold immense potential for better food security planning and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet, many developing countries do not have access to the required tools, either due to technology deficits or costs. To address this challenge, UNCTAD is partnering with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) to undertake the CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme (CropWatch-ICP), an initiative that resulted from discussions during the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD). CropWatch is

a system that uses satellite data to monitor crop conditions and integrates this with other climate-related data on drought, pest and disease for better farm management.

249. **Objectives and features.** The programme aims to build developing countries' capacities in better crop monitoring and food security early warning. It will specifically help participating countries to independently monitor their crops in real and near real-time in direct support of Sustainable Development Goal 2, end hunger and achieve food security. Contribution is also expected to Sustainable Development Goal 5 through at least 25 per cent of participants being females and to Sustainable Development Goal 17, target 17.10 (trade) through the increase in export of crops resulting from enhanced agricultural production thanks to crop monitoring.

250. The CropWatch–ICP will allow developing countries that need CropWatch to access the technology directly and use it for crop monitoring purposes, both during and after the programme is delivered. The programme will also provide developing countries with trainings on the system to understand its underlying techniques. Hence the programme involves a real transfer of technology and knowledge to participating countries. Moreover, the programme is developed for these countries' specific needs. The programme will provide participating countries a customized and localized Cropwatch system to cater to each country's unique situation and challenges. The data collected during this programme will be held by the developing countries.

251. **Outputs.** The programme started with a training in March 2021. In May 2021, 24 participants from 12 developing countries – Afghanistan, Algeria, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Africa, Syria, Thailand, Türkiye and Zambia – completed a two-month online training workshop on the application of a crop monitoring system using satellite data. Participants learned the theory, methodology and application of the CropWatch system. In 2022 the programme will go into the next phase - virtual field missions and CropWatch customization for technology transfer. The programme planned physical knowledge trainings and field visits by experts to customize the CropWatch system for individual participating countries. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these activities were replaced with virtual ones.

252. **Results.** Using the CropWatch system as well as their acquired knowledge and skills, the participants from six countries have submitted their analyses and data of their own countries to the global CropWatch bulletin, which provides an overview of the status of crops and agroclimatic conditions in each country. The two-week training has also aroused the interest of some participating countries' policymakers in using the Cropwatch system.

5.4. *Training programme on national science, technology and innovation strategy and policy for sustainable development*

253. **Development context.** Technology is a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda and is one of the areas for partnerships under Sustainable Development Goal 17. Strengthening science, technology and innovation (STI) policy capacity in developing countries is central to improving STI performance in support of sustainable development. UNCTAD, as the secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, has collaborated with the Government of China to strengthen South–South cooperation in the area of science, technology and innovation through training workshops on national science, technology and innovation strategy and policy for sustainable development and on operation and development of science and technology parks and incubators.

254. **Objectives and features.** The programme aims to build the capacity of high-level policymakers through international cooperation between Member States of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The workshops are expected to help participants improve their capacity to formulate, implement and evaluate STI strategies and policies, with a view to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The physical workshops, which are held in China, showcase the implementation of the policies of China on science technology and innovation for sustainable development as well as science and technology parks and incubators through policy-oriented lectures delivered by

policymakers, practitioners and academics and on-site visits to high-technology parks, universities and enterprises. The programme provides a platform for CSTD member States to learn from each other and share successes and lessons in using STI to promote their national development.

255. **Outputs.** In October 2021, the workshop was held virtually for two weeks. Twenty-five officials including 7 females participated in the workshop. They are mostly mid-level officials engaged in the STI policymaking coming from 22 CSTD member States in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. The presentations at the workshop ranged from technological issues in STI for rural and agricultural development, to specific policy questions such as policy evaluation and long-term STI planning. Participants also shared national experiences by presenting their countries' STI development strategies or policies.

256. **Results.** Participants rated the workshops highly and requested continued training. They felt strongly that new knowledge gained from the workshop, for example, incorporating evaluation in STI policymaking and tackling STI with a unified and integrated approach within a government, would help them greatly in framing and implementing STI policies in their respective countries.

5.5. *Young Female Scientist Programme and Young Scientist PHD Programme*

257. **Development context.** Technology is a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda and is one of the areas for partnerships under Sustainable Development Goal 17. Science, technology and innovation (STI) play a central role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda. Research capacity on STI is important to a country's STI capacity and sustainability of the national STI system. Sustainable Development Goal target 9.5 particularly calls for enhancing scientific research in developing countries, for this has a significant bearing on the development of productive capacities in developing countries, which in turn greatly impact on economic growth in these countries. Moreover, female engagement in STI research is still limited while closing this gender gap is necessary to harnessing STI for truly inclusive and sustainable development for all communities and all countries, which will also contribute to the achievement of gender equality and gender empowerment set forth in Sustainable Development Goal 5. In this context, UNCTAD as the secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) joined hands with the University of Okayama (Japan) by launching two programmes in November 2020: (a) The Young Female Scientist Programme for CSTD member States in Africa and Southeast Asia, which offers short-period joint cutting-edge research activities at the University; and (b) the Young Scientist Programme offering PhD courses at the University for young scientists from developing countries. Objective and features. The objectives of both programmes are to enhance scientific research capabilities in developing countries through contributing to building human capital in science, technology, and innovation-related fields in these countries and close the gender gap in scientific research. The programmes are featured with joint cutting-edge research as well as advanced educational programmes. The research and education courses are designed and implemented such that the outcomes would contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals through selected research areas and advanced study courses. The CSTD established, through this programme, a new mode of global collaborative research useful for the post-COVID-19 era.

258. **Outputs.** In 2021, the Young Female Scientist programme received seven young female scientists from Botswana, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Thailand. They conducted cutting-edge research in their respective scientific fields guided by researchers in Okayama University through virtual modalities, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Most of the participating scientists selected their research on health and life sciences, which is expected to contribute to their country's implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 3. Under the Young Scientist Programme, one young researcher from Nigeria is pursuing physically a 3-year doctoral degree in wastewater treatment at the University of Okayama, expecting to contribute to implementation by Nigeria of Sustainable Development Goal 6.

259. **Results.** The seven young female scientists are using the knowledge and skills they have acquired through their respective research under the guidance of researchers from the

Okayama University. Some of them have, with agreement from their guiding researchers in the University, planned to continue research collaboration with the University. The programme also improves their access to research networks in their specialties.

II. Theme B: Tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience

260. Poor people or nations are more vulnerable to external shocks. Eradicating poverty and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would require joint and persistent efforts to tackle the specific challenges faced by weak and vulnerable economies. To build their economic resilience, structurally weak economies need to develop sound strategies to diversify economies and build productive capacity. To combat climate change, it is important to develop climate-resilient transport infrastructure and identify best approaches to mitigate climate change while enhancing economic development prospects.

261. UNCTAD technical assistance addresses the specific demand from LDCs, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and post-conflict States to help them better tackle vulnerabilities and build resilience. In particular, UNCTAD improves the capacities of developing countries to effectively manage debt; supports commodity-dependent developing countries in their diversification efforts; promotes sustainable and resilient transport; and assists LDCs in trade policymaking, market access and achieving structural progress towards and beyond graduation.

262. In this section, six products under the theme “Tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience” are reported on. The reports highlight the main technical cooperation activities carried out in 2021 and key results to date. Technical cooperation projects that are pertinent to the aforementioned theme but not linked with any of the existing products under this thematic area are reported on under “B99 Other”.

B1 Support to graduation from least developed country status

Table B1

Support to graduation from least developed country status

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ROA-1819 (F11)	Helping least developed countries (LDCs) pursue structural economic progress toward and beyond graduation	2018–	Development Account
ROA-1819 (I11)	Strengthening services trade policymaking for Africa’s integration into regional value chains in support of the 2030 Agenda	2018–	Development Account

263. **Development context.** The process of graduation out of the LDC status is accelerating. While only six countries graduated from the LDC category during the first 50 years of existence of the category (1971–2021), at present 16 countries are at some point of the graduation process. Graduation has gained increasing attention from the international community, as evidenced by the strong focus on graduation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, adopted in March 2022, and its graduation target (contained in para. 276).

264. Graduation has become more challenging in view of the worsening international context faced by LDCs, due to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to the middle-term consequences of the war in Ukraine. International demand for LDC products tends to weaken, international financial flows towards LDCs tend to slow down, while the cost of servicing their expanding external debt is rising dangerously and challenging debt sustainability.

265. The increasing servicification of economies worldwide implies that services are now an important piece of the development puzzle, and most certainly, part of COVID-19 recovery efforts. There is a need to unlock the full potential of Africa's services sector, assess its contribution to economic performance and understand the linkages to the productive sectors to support timely policy-making processes at a time when the continent has embarked on services trade liberalization under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

266. Unlocking the potential of services trade requires that the potential is understood and supported in African policy-making processes. A major challenge in this regard is assessing the contribution of the services sector in the economy and understanding the complexity of global and regional services value chains which are essential for services to thrive. The UNCTAD and Economic Commission for Africa project on "Strengthening services trade policymaking for Africa's integration into regional value chains in support of the 2030 Agenda" endeavoured to address this disparity. In particular, it proposed to strengthen capacities to measure the value added that is generated by the services sector and the degree to which developing this sector may improve the tradability of goods and services, and to support developing the necessary policy frameworks to enable the sectors growth. With the onset of covid-19, the project has also assessed the impact of the pandemic on specific services trade sectors (transport, tourism and financial services), and the prospects for a sustainable recovery.

267. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD technical assistance on graduation aims to assist (pre-)graduating countries to identify their policy priorities to ensure that they achieve graduation with momentum. This requires aligning graduation-related policies and programmes with broader and longer-term development plans. Achieving graduation with momentum makes graduation irreversible and poses the bases for continuous progress towards sustainable development in the post-graduation phase. UNCTAD technical assistance work relies largely on the analytical work undertaken by UNCTAD under mandate from the United Nations General Assembly and takes the form mainly of studies (especially vulnerability profiles, strategies for graduation with momentum and specific national thematic studies), policy dialogue with national policymakers and advisory missions.

268. The UNCTAD–UNECA project on services trade in Africa aimed to support six African countries (including four LDCs: Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mali and Togo) and regional economic communities with tools and methodologies to gain a better understanding of services value chains in three selected key services sectors (financial, tourism and transport services) which are critical to enable trade and, at the same time, can generate important sources of income and sustainable livelihoods for Africans.

269. Specifically, the project aimed to (a) strengthen the capacities of national and regional policymakers and stakeholders of target African countries to measure and analyse the value added generated by the selected services sectors and support policy frameworks to maximize their contribution to national and regional value chains; (b) stimulate knowledge sharing across countries, lessons learned, and best practices, disseminated through regional economic communities and an online knowledge sharing platform; and (c) share challenges and opportunities emanating from data collection exercises on trade in services and the outcomes of efforts to help quantify services value chains in each of the project countries. The project also included an assessment of the impacts of COVID-19 on the targeted services sector and identified policy options to build resilience in the project beneficiary countries. It also addressed Africa's services sector in light of the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area and post-COVID-19 impacts.

Outputs

Technical assistance in 2021 to LDCs facing the challenge of graduation from LDC status

270. Vulnerability profiles of graduating countries. UNCTAD prepared the vulnerability profiles of the following countries pre-qualified for graduation from the LDC category: Bangladesh, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The profiles are mandated by the United Nations General Assembly in order to identify vulnerabilities that may

jeopardize graduating countries' path towards sustainable development even after graduation. The identified vulnerabilities provide the key bases for the formulation of a strategy of graduation with momentum. Therefore, they need policy attention from LDCs themselves and from their development partners. They were submitted to the Triennial Review of the List of LDCs by the Committee for Development Policy, held in February 2021. The profiles were published in full and in abridged forms.⁶¹

271. UNCTAD organized in each beneficiary country a series of policy consultations and webinars with national authorities (high-level and mid-level) and development partners to discuss the main findings and recommendations of the Profiles, as well as the policy priorities in the coming years.

272. Smooth transition strategy of Bhutan. UNCTAD assisted the government of Bhutan in the preparation of a Smooth Transition Strategy for the country's graduation out of the LDC category. It prepared a white paper which provides analytical elements serving as background for the preparation of the country's strategy and organized a policy dialogue session thereon with the national government.⁶²

273. Policy priorities for pre-qualified countries. UNCTAD organized policy dialogues with national development stakeholders (ministries, academia, civil society, press) in the following countries pre-qualified for graduation from the LDC category: Comoros, Senegal and Zambia. Using the findings and policy recommendations of *The Least Developed Countries Report 2021: The Least Developed Countries in the Post-COVID World – Learning from 50 Years of Experience*, the policy dialogues discussed priorities for these countries' accelerating their structural transformation in the run-up for possible graduation in the medium term, in view of the past 50 years of development experience of LDCs.

274. Dealing with the impact of COVID-19 on the graduation process of Angola – UNCTAD assisted the Government of Angola to steer its graduation path in view of the COVID-19 shock by preparing a study on the impacts of the pandemic on the country's economy and society. It served as basis for policy discussions held in 2021 and 2022.⁶³

275. Impact on graduation on Asian LDCs' textile and clothing industry – In order to assist graduating countries to prepare for the consequences of graduation on their most important manufacturing export industry – textiles and clothing, UNCTAD prepared a series of studies on the expected consequences of the loss of LDC treatment on that industry in Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Nepal. It was discussed with national authorities and policymakers through webinars, to raise their awareness and preparation for graduation. It was a project undertaken in collaboration with WTO, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ITC.⁶⁴

Activities and outputs 2021 on services trade in Africa

276. Following the organization of the national workshop on measuring value chains of the target services sector and exploiting its potential in 2019 in each of the six partner countries, UNCTAD and UNECA contributed to drafting technical reports and empirical studies on value chain analysis in the tourism, transport and financial service sectors in the respective countries.

277. In 2020, UNCTAD and UNECA started to undertake sectoral COVID-19 impact and response studies and held bilateral consultations with member States for information sharing and the broader dissemination of the study results. The studies analysed COVID-19

⁶¹ See <https://unctad.org/webflyer/vulnerability-profile-bangladesh>, <https://unctad.org/webflyer/vulnerability-profile-lao-peoples-democratic-republic>, <https://unctad.org/webflyer/vulnerability-profile-myanmar>.

⁶² The document is available at: <https://unctad.org/webflyer/towards-smooth-transition-strategy-bhutan>.

⁶³ The study is available at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/economic-and-social-impact-and-effect-covid-19-angola-2021>.

⁶⁴ The resulting studies are available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/2022/un-joint-study-on-the-textile-and-clothing-sector-in-asian-graduating-least-developed-countries-challenges-and-ways-forward/>.

impacts at national and regional levels, focusing on the target services sectors in the project beneficiary countries and shed light on policy responses. In addition, in mid-2021, the two institutions, in collaboration with beneficiary countries, organized hybrid national validation workshops to shed light on the extent of the impact of COVID-19 on the transport/financial services sector and what should be done to facilitate a quick recovery and build resilience to future shocks.

278. In November 2021, UNCTAD and UNECA, in collaboration with beneficiary countries, organized multi-stakeholder workshop on measuring the contribution of the services sector to national and regional value chains in Nairobi. This multi-stakeholder is for policy makers and experts from African member States, regional economic communities, the private sector, academia and development institutions with an interest in regional integration issues, and in particular the services sector.

279. During the last semester of 2021, the two institutions, in collaboration with beneficiary countries, were supporting the preparation of policy action plans on promoting regional value chains and global value chains on the tourism, transport, and financial sectors in the Gambia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Togo. During the process, UNCTAD and UNECA adopted a novel approach by embedding within key services sector ministries project experts/personnel to help sensitize/train government staff in the use of the project tools and contribute to the crafting of national strategies.

280. Finally, the project has set up an online knowledge-sharing platform on regional and global value chain analysis. It provides comprehensive material on the experiences, lessons learned and best practices in quantifying target services value chains in the project countries to support similar exercises in other sectors and countries. Participants have been trained to utilize appropriate tools and acquire the knowledge necessary to support policymaking in services value chains.

281. The project on services trade in Africa was closed at the end of December 2021. UNCTAD and UNECA plan to disseminate the lessons learned, recommendations, and policy actions from this project to other African countries to develop trade in sector services and their implication in the global values for sustainability development.

282. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD technical assistance activities on graduation have taken policy dialogue in beneficiary countries to another level. Rather than focusing uniquely on the short-term consequences of the loss of LDC treatment in trade, finance, technical assistance and technology (as done by the graduation support activities of other agencies), these countries are taking a longer-term and more strategic view of the graduation process. Beneficiary countries have become more aware of the underlying vulnerabilities of their economies and societies, and of the need to address them in order to achieve graduation with momentum. These countries' appreciation of the value added of UNCTAD technical assistance manifests itself in the establishment of ongoing policy dialogue between them and the UNCTAD secretariat on issues of trade, investment, industrial policy and financing for development in the context of graduation.

283. The UNCTAD–UNECA project on services trade in Africa delivered training via national workshops to over 200 participants from Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, on measuring and analysing global and regional value chains, and contributed to evidence-based services trade policies. Also, participants have benefited from a better understanding of challenges related to data gaps in Africa's services sector and the necessary tools and methodologies to help address them.

284. In Ethiopia, the UNCTAD report findings and recommendations drawn from the Measuring global value chains in the transport sector in Ethiopia study and the subsequent Policy Action Plan for Transport Services have been well-integrated and fed into the recent 10-year national transport plan, which includes six strategies, 22 substrategic goals and 98 interventions in the transport services and logistics industry. The project's engagement over three years with ministerial and related transportation private sector entities, has made a valuable contribution to the 10-year national transport plan exercise of Ethiopia (2020–2030), which asserts that the transport sector will play a leading catalyst role in the overall prosperity journey of the country.

285. In Mali, the project on trade in services in Africa, through its various activities, including studies on global value chain analysis in the tourism sector, the impact and policy implications of COVID-19 on the development of the tourism sector in Mali, served as a source reference and basis for the production of its national tourism development programme. Also, UNCTAD has contributed to the production of the Malian national tourism development programme through drafting at the Government's request a policy action plan for the tourism sector in Mali. The project enhanced the position of Mali as a regional hub of cultural tourism services by strengthening the linkages between tourism, the creative economy/industry and contributing to the sustainability of cultural tourism.

B2 DMFAS – Debt Management and Financial Analysis System

Table B2

DMFAS – Debt Management and Financial Analysis System

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/2AO	Strengthening the debt management capacity of developing countries	2002–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/HCB	Strengthening Public Debt Management in Selected Low and Middle-Income countries	2018–	Switzerland
INT/0T/IAB	The Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) Programme	2019–	European Union
ANG/0T/9AJ	instalación del SIGADE 5.3 y capacitación avanzada para la gestión de la deuda con enlace a sistemas integrados	2009–	Angola
BKF/0T/GAG	Mise en œuvre du SYGADE 6 et renforcement des capacités en matière de gestion de la dette au Burkina Faso	2018–	World Bank
BDI/0T/JAI	Renforcement des capacités de gestion de la dette au Burundi	2021–	Burundi
ETH/0T/HBA	Public Finance Management (PFM): DMFAS Ethiopia	2018–	Ethiopia
GAB/0T/9AT	Renforcement des capacités d'études et modernisation des outils informatiques de gestion de la dette (Gabon)	2015–	Gabon
GUI/0T/IBZ	Mise en œuvre de l'assistance technique nécessaire à l'installation du SYGADE et au renforcement des capacités de gestion de la dette	2021–	France/Expertise France
LAO/0T/IBR	DMFAS 6 upgrade for the Lao People's Democratic Republic	2020–	World Bank
PHI/0T/ABK	Strengthening debt management in the Bureau of the Treasury (Philippines)	2011–	Philippines
PHI/0T/HAO	DMFAS 6 implementation	2019–	Philippines

286. **Development context.** Effective debt management is an intrinsic part of sound public financial management and overall good governance. It is crucial for ensuring sustainable debt levels, identifying risks of debt crises and limiting their impact. It is also

critical for the effective implementation of the emergency financing and debt moratorium measures adopted by the international community as a response to the COVID-19 crisis.

287. The critical role of debt and good debt management has been underlined in target 17.4 of Sustainable Development Goal 17, which recognizes the importance of assisting developing countries to attain long-term debt sustainability and reducing the risk of debt distress. Furthermore, the United Nations General Assembly⁶⁵ has emphasized “that debt sustainability is essential for underpinning growth, underlining the importance of debt sustainability, debt transparency and effective debt management to the efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”. It also reiterated “that timely and comprehensive data on the level and composition of debt are necessary for, inter alia, building early warning systems aimed at limiting the impact of debt crises”.

288. In recent years, serious concerns have been raised by the international community about the overall outlook for external debt sustainability in developing countries, and these problems have been aggravated by the pandemic. The stronger reliance on public borrowing to meet COVID-19 public spending-related demands has been accompanied by rising levels of public debt, increasing debt repayment burdens and higher risk of debt distress.

289. Furthermore, there are major concerns about problems with debt data transparency in a number of countries. It is widely recognized that in these circumstances, the effective management of public resources and liabilities and debt data transparency have become even more necessary in the face of increasing pressures on public finances and increased borrowing to meet COVID-19 public spending-related demands. Capacity to record, monitor and report effectively on public debt remains crucial to mitigating the risks to debt sustainability while countries need to borrow significantly to address the socio-economic effects of the pandemic.

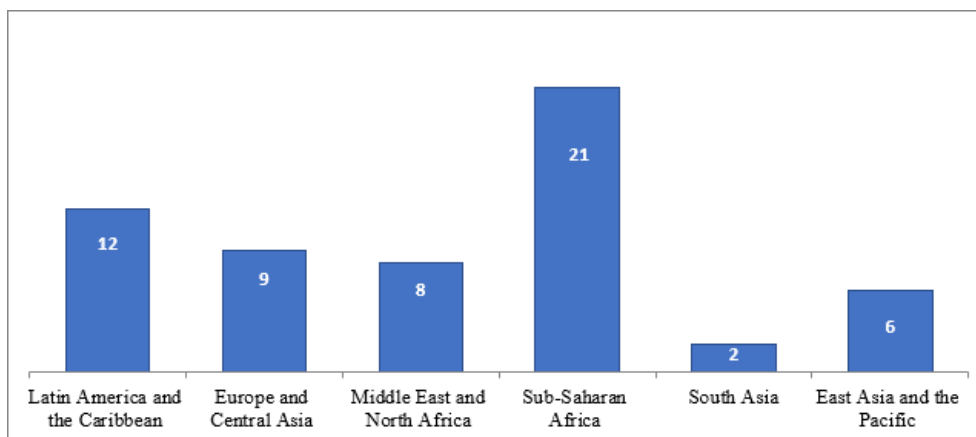
290. In 2021, DMFAS user countries’ priority continued to be maintaining such capacity to ensure that comprehensive, accurate, timely information on public debt is available in support of policy decisions and risk management in the context of the pandemic.

291. In response to countries’ needs, the Programme provided continuous support and guidance on ensuring the completeness of public debt records and timely reporting and on the preparation of information needed for decision-making and for recording the results of the debt reorganization process into the debt database, including under the Debt Service Suspension Initiative.

292. **Objectives and features.** The DMFAS Programme is a leading provider of technical cooperation and advisory services in the area of debt management. It offers a set of proven solutions to improve the capacity of beneficiary countries to manage public debt, handle the day-to-day management of public liabilities, produce reliable debt data and perform basic debt analysis for policymaking purposes. The Programme works directly with 58 countries, including two new countries, namely Guinea and Kyrgyzstan (see figure).

⁶⁵ United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/193, on external debt sustainability and development, adopted on 17 December 2021.

Geographical distribution of active Debt Management and Financial Analysis System users, 2021



293. **Outputs.** In 2021, the DMFAS Programme continued to provide effective support to the 58 countries actively using its software. Remote delivery of technical support and capacity-building activities also replaced traditional face-to-face training when it became impossible due to travel restrictions, although the programme began a gradual return to field activities at the end of the year.

294. The Programme delivered country-specific technical assistance and trained 613 debt officers, of which 46 per cent were women, from 32 countries through 34 capacity-building activities in the field or remotely. Increased remote support included support to set up remote access to DMFAS databases and through its help desk, which responded to 258 requests during the reporting period. During the year, the Programme actively managed 28 active technical assistance projects and signed four new projects and six addenda to existing projects

295. The Programme worked in close cooperation with other international bodies, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and regional institutions to enhance coordination and avoid duplication. For example, in 2021, the Programme co-delivered activities with the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa.

296. **Results and impacts.** For the DMFAS client countries, concrete and sustainable results included improved external and domestic debt data recording, enhanced reporting and improved debt analysis capacities in line with the recording and reporting components of the public financial management value chain as defined under the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Programme. The Programme's main results are highlighted below:

(a) Complete, reliable and up-to date databases: 93 per cent of countries have developed comprehensive and reliable debt databases in respect of government and government-guaranteed external debt. Seventy-one per cent of DMFAS 6 user countries whose debt management office is responsible for monitoring domestic debt were using DMFAS to manage their entire domestic debt portfolio.

(b) Improved production of debt statistics: 42 countries regularly produce statistical bulletins on debt.

(c) Strengthened analytical skills: 37 countries regularly produce a debt portfolio analysis.

(d) Improved capacity for effective debt reporting: the pandemic has impacted the capacity of countries to fulfil their reporting requirements, and 95 per cent of DMFAS client countries with low or middle-income levels effectively reported to the World Bank through the Debtor Reporting System. In 2021, 71 per cent of DMFAS clients participating in the World Bank Quarterly External Debt Statistics database reported on a timely basis.

(e) **Financing:** The Programme worked actively with current donors and to attract new donors, resulting in France becoming a new donor to the central trust fund.

(f) **Results-based management (RBM):** The DMFAS Programme applies comprehensive RBM to its strategic planning and project implementation. This includes clearly defining the objectives, results, measurable indicators and means of verification that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress. It also defines the assumptions that represent the pre-requisites for the achievement of the expected results, and the associated risks. Where applicable, baselines are used to benchmark progress over time. The year 2021 is the second year of implementation of the four-year strategic plan for the period 2020–2023.

B4 UNCTAD contribution to the Enhanced Integrated Framework

Table B4

UNCTAD contribution to the Enhanced Integrated Framework

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
DRC/OT/HAY	Technical assistance on trade policy, EIF	2018–	United Nations Office for Project Services, Switzerland
HAI/OT/HAE	Technical assistance on trade policy – Haiti, EIF	2018– 2021	United Nations Office for Project Services, Switzerland
RAF/OT/JAU	Facilitation du transit, du transport et des échanges en Afrique de l’Ouest pour une meilleure participation aux chaînes de valeurs	2020–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
RAS/OT/JBL	EIF – Regional Project “A New Trade Policy and Strategy for ASEAN LDCs on market access and related issues”	2020–	Enhanced Integrated Framework

297. **Development context.** The EIF is a multi-agency and multi-donor programme for the coordinated delivery of trade related technical assistance and institutional capacity-building for LDCs. It aims at enabling LDCs to mainstream trade into their national development plans, so that countries can mobilize the potential of trade to promote economic growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction at the domestic level and to become more active players in the multilateral trading system. In this context, UNCTAD continues to actively participate in the EIF Board by contributing to the LDC friendly operationalization of the EIF. In addition, UNCTAD assists the LDCs both in terms of capacity-building for the ownership of the EIF through its Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) updating process and by providing the trade policy, the market access and the strategy advisory services.

298. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD provides tailored assistance in response to specific requests from EIF participating countries. The main objectives of these technical assistance are the capacity-building of LDCs for a better integration into multilateral trade and for their development through the DTIS studies, trade policy, market access, etc. In providing such assistance, UNCTAD uses a mix of national and international expertise to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and maximize results – the approach also contributes to national capacity-building.

299. **Outputs.** In 2021, UNCTAD provided technical assistance to several least developed countries (LDCs), notably to Benin, Burkina Faso and the Niger, through a regional project on “Transit, transport and trade in West Africa for better value chain participation”; and to Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, by developing and implementing a regional project on “A New trade policy and strategy for ASEAN LDCs on market access and related issues”.

West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger

300. Since the last reporting period, the project has made progress towards implementing the expected outcomes and outputs, as reflected by different indicators and metrics. Nearly all of the accomplishments and activities expected in the project have been completed according to the timeline of the progress performance report.

301. Coordination between beneficiary countries for the implementation of a functional transit programme has been improved by creating one coordination mechanism in support of promoting cross-border road transport and transit and one document (workplan, transit text or transit manual) on the transit programme. Progress has also been made in the development of a road map for customs connectivity through SIGMAT between beneficiary countries. Support for the implementation of SIGMAT between the Ouagadougou–Lomé and Niamey–Cotonou corridors has been provided. The implementation of a functional transit programme was also supported by the development of a common strategy simplifying customs and border regulations between beneficiary countries. One work plan has been developed to simplify customs and border regulations and two actions have been taken to improve coordination in border management between beneficiary countries.

302. In addition to the results achieved towards the implementation of a functional transit programme between beneficiary countries, progress has also been made in the coordination of cross-border land transport, transit and trade facilitation operations along the borders of the three beneficiary countries.

303. Finally, improvements of the legislation and regulatory practices on transit, land transport and trade have been developed by reviewing provisions of Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) articles to identifying complementarity among the implementation of WTO TFA and the AfCFTA, and by conducting consultations related to TFA articles. In support of interconnected Single Windows, a coordinated action has been undertaken in support of the implementation of interconnected one-stop shops.

304. The project successfully created synergies with partners such as the World Bank, GIZ, ECOWAS, and WAEMU to revamp its overall strategies in addressing trade facilitation related issues in the three beneficiary countries. Indeed, in 2021, based on the recommendations of the EIF Secretariat, UNCTAD enhanced the project work plan, logical framework, monitoring and evaluation plan, and budget to reflect not just the ongoing related projects in the region but also to alleviate the impact of COVID-19.

ASEAN LDCs: Cambodia and Lao People’s Democratic Republic

305. ASEAN LDCs need to design a coordinated trade policy response to face the challenges of preferential trade erosion due to different neighbouring countries concluding FTAs with the QUAD countries (i.e., Canada, the EU, Japan, and the US) and at the same time, the impending graduation of the ASEAN LDCs from their LDC status. Specifically, the project will provide targeted research and capacity building initiatives to support the Ministries of Commerce of Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and WTO delegates of ASEAN LDCs to achieve several outcomes, especially: (a) extended cumulation with the European Union for ASEAN LDCs and improved trade relations on market access; (b) improved Japan GSP and Japan–ASEAN LDC bilateral trade relations; (c) improved SPS in accessing China and neighbouring markets by leveraging the WTO SPS committee; and (d) a better understanding of e-commerce WTO negotiations. The budget for this project is \$200,000.

306. Since the last reporting period, the project has made significant progress towards implementing the expected outcomes and outputs, as reflected by different indicators and

metrics. Nearly all of the accomplishments and activities expected in the project have been completed according to the timeline of the progress performance report.

307. Market access capacities of ASEAN LDCs have been supported through rules of origin, extended cumulation, SPS and e-commerce. This was achieved by one proposal on cumulations to the European Union and by two proposals on rules of origin to Japan submitted to trading partners during WTO or bilateral meetings. Specific market access challenges provided by the private sector were diagnosed with one briefing based on utilization rates of trade preferences and specific SPS requirements. Evidence-based policy inputs on rules of origin, extended cumulation, SPS and e-commerce were compiled and shared through the dissemination of an ASEAN Free Trade Areas (FTAs) Handbook and three presentations.

308. To better support the project beneficiary countries, in October and November 2021 respectively, an Executive workshop on rules of origin for least developed countries and in selected mega-regionals – African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and an executive round table on rules of origin were held in collaboration with the European University Institute to discuss issues in relation to the rules of origin.

EIF Board Meeting

309. On June 17, UNCTAD participated in the EIF Board Meeting. During this meeting, the EIF Board members discussed about different issues. First, the Executive Secretariat for the EIF (ES) gave an update on the strategic context, COVID-19 impacts on the programme, the key results achieved in 2020, the delivery of the project road map, the partnerships, the value for money, the outreach and resource mobilization, risks, challenges and immediate priorities. Then, the EIF secretariat gave an update on the financial status. During this EIF Board Meeting, two decisions have been taken. First, extension of the project approval timeline until December 2021. Second, the EIF board members decided to temporarily stop EIF project implementation in Myanmar until October 2021. Finally, the EIF secretariat presented the EIF programme evaluation and gave some key dates for the next steps.

310. On 12 November 2021, UNCTAD attended another EIF board meeting. Among the things that were discussed were the results of the programme evaluation. Written comments on the updated version and a revised evaluation document were shared to the evaluators at the end of November.

EIF Working Group

311. On 9 June 2021, UNCTAD participated in the pre-EIF Board Consultative meeting together with other EIF Agencies. This meeting aimed to present the main issues to be discussed at the EIF Board Meeting, the key decision points and some updates on the programme operations.

312. On 4 October, a meeting was held with the members of the EIF working group to discuss several topics such as: the introduction to the new representatives from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Niger; the EIF risk management systems with the presentation and discussion of EIF risk policy paper; the presentation on the update to the project completion report template and guidance document; other monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) updates and key elements of the MEL report to the EIF Board and the discussion on the future of the Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation. Comments were formulated on the latest version of the report.

Haiti

313. In 2021, UNCTAD resumed the activities in the Haiti project on the formulation of Haiti's trade policy. The project hired two international consultants to draft a technical analysis with the following goals: strengthen the permanent institutional negotiation mechanism adopted by the Government; highlight the framework of the commitments made by Haiti in line with the national institutional framework; allow executives from the various

stakeholder institutions to have a better understanding of trade policy and negotiation issues.

314. **Results and impacts.** In 2021, all of these listed activities were carried out by UNCTAD in the context of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). Although efforts are still needed to assist LDCs in their integration into global trade, an increasing number of least developed countries have made progress in mainstreaming trade policies into their national development plans as well as identifying trade-related priorities and implementing the action matrices. In addition, LDCs have increasingly been able to identify their main constraints in participating to international trade and developed initiatives to foster productive capacities at sub-regional level and regional level.

B5 Market access, rules of origin and geographical indications for the least developed countries

Table B5

Market access, rules of origin and geographical indications for the least developed countries

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ROA-1617 (A10)	Programme on Statistics and Data	2016–	Development Account

315. **Development context.** Least developed countries (LDCs) are granted preferential tariff treatment in the markets of developed and developing countries under several schemes and arrangements. Among them are initiatives such as the Generalized System of Preferences, the European Union’s “Everything but Arms” initiative, the African Growth and Opportunity Act of the United States of America, trade preferences under African, Caribbean and Pacific States – European Union Partnership Agreements and other preferential trading arrangements that have rules of origin as key components. Nonetheless, LDCs are still facing significant obstacles to market access.

316. UNCTAD provides policy advice and technical assistance to help developing countries comply with requirements on rules of origin under preferential trading arrangements – focusing on product origin – with a view to improving the utilization rates of trade preferences granted to them. Since 2006, for instance, UNCTAD has assisted LDCs that are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the implementation of the 2005 Ministerial Declaration adopted at the WTO Sixth Ministerial Conference (Hong Kong, China) on duty-free and quota-free market access. The declaration called on ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are simple and transparent and contribute to facilitating market access. UNCTAD also provides support in relation to the WTO Ministerial Decision (Bali, Indonesia) on preferential rules of origin for LDCs.

317. In addition to assisting the least developed countries on market access regulations, UNCTAD provides support on geographical indications to enhance export diversification and specialization. Overcoming the limited diversification of LDC exports, the low value added of those exports and the continued challenge of bringing small local producers up front in the global commodity value chain remain concerns. At the same time, the rich biodiversity of several LDCs allows them to draw on their natural resources to create an array of traditional products and preparations with the potential to compete globally and secure higher returns from sales. Benefiting from that natural wealth can require taking steps to gain recognition of quality and generate a solid reputation for specific products in the eyes of consumers and buyers. One important approach can be using geographical indications in combination with a branding strategy for those products.

318. Unilateral trade preferences, if properly utilized, provides LDCs with a comparative advantage by lowering import tariffs. They are nevertheless not a panacea and competition from alike products is fierce. Adopting a regional branding strategy based on geographical

indications (GIs) could be a viable complementary poverty reduction and environmentally sound policy to commercial and subsistence farming in LDCs. Associated origin conveys a certain reputation of a good and spurs trust resulting from a certain type of collective action. This holds especially true in today's globalized world in which consumers want to know where the products they are purchasing come from. Therefore, local producers need to differentiate their products from generic competition. LDCs face considerable challenges when they consider GIs, as institutionalization schemes are still precarious. In fact, LDCs Governments have limited knowledge on GIs, the GI frameworks might not exist or if available, they are incomplete. Moreover, sustainable models of regional branding of agriculture products relying on the notion of terroir might simply be absent or mixed with other models of development farming like organic farming or "fair trade" initiatives. These latter initiatives are not directed at promoting the unique nature of products and the cultural aspects.

319. **Objectives and features.** The main objectives of UNCTAD technical assistance under this programme are to help LDCs better understand the rules and mechanisms of the multilateral trading system in order to access different markets; and to assist rural communities and LDC Governments in enhancing the value of traditional products by exploiting trading opportunities such as geographical indications (GIs) and facilitating compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirement. The principle of country ownership drives UNCTAD technical assistance on rules of origin, market access and geographical indications. For all schemes under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), products exported from a country receiving such preferences must fulfil the rules of origin of the countries granting those preferences.

320. Documenting evidence of compliance with those rules is necessary for products to qualify for preferential tariff treatment. UNCTAD services in support of developing countries and LDCs in this area include (a) providing advice to Governments and the private sector to comply with origin requirements under unilateral (duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) arrangement and contractual trade preferences (free trade areas and regional trade agreements) and (b) delivering tailor-made technical assistance, such as advisory memorandums on policy options in drafting and negotiating preferential rules of origin under different trading arrangements. UNCTAD also carries out tailored services in providing LDCs with specific training material on market access trade preference made available under DFQF and regional trade agreements.

321. Identifying and registering traditional products under a geographical indication requires different steps, such as drafting a "disciplinary of production", the main text that defines a product's unique identity. Being able to convey what makes the product unique geographically can add value to those products. Such information is also useful for customers who can be attracted to those products when they learn more about the characteristics and the origin.

322. UNCTAD provides countries with support in identifying products that could be eligible to use geographical indications – signs used on products with a specific geographical origin and possessing qualities or a reputation based on that origin – and in drafting the legal specifications for those products and introducing a branding policy.

Outputs

WTO LDC Group

323. UNCTAD finalized a study on "Compendium of Technical notes Prepared for the LDC WTO Group on Preferential Rules of Origin". This compendium contains the main notes and technical materials that have been prepared by UNCTAD based on the requests from WTO LDC Group to support the ongoing progress to implement paragraph (b) of annex F of the Hong Kong (China) ministerial decision to ensure that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are transparent and simple and contribute to facilitating market access of the WTO Hong Kong (China) ministerial decision.

Rules of origin and LDCs

324. On 14 October, UNCTAD attended a formal meeting held by the WTO committee on rules of origin. The main topics discussed involved the preferential rules of origin for LDCs, its recent development and the further submission on rules of origin based on the change of tariff classification. The upcoming round table on rules of origin was officially announced on this occasion.

325. During October and November 2021, an executive workshop on rules of origin for least developed countries and selected mega-regionals - African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and an executive round table on rules of origin were held in collaboration with the European University Institute to discuss issues in relation to the rules of origin.

UNCTAD Database on African Continental Free Trade Area

326. UNCTAD is developing a front-end website containing a database where AfCFTA tariff schedule offers and trade statistics could be accessed in real time, through a user-friendly and web-based interface. In addition, UNCTAD will develop an automatic data visualization tool for website to create a snapshot of the product of interest, as well as matching trade statistics within the AfCFTA with product-specific rules of origin and their respective utilization rates.

327. Finally, to ensure maximum visibility and use of this portal by the relevant stakeholders, UNCTAD is planning to publish handbooks and conduct virtual webinars for government agencies and private sector actors.

328. In October 2021, the AfCFTA website containing a database on tariff offers and trade statistics for African countries has been introduced to representatives of AfCFTA countries. A first pre-demonstration session was held on 8 October followed by an official introduction to the public (ministerial delegates) during the executive workshop on rules of Origin (11–12 October). A second pre-demonstration session was held on the 16 November, followed by an official introduction to participants of the executive round table (15–17 November).

UNCTAD database on GSP utilization

329. Since October 2020, ALDC has been working in close cooperation with the Information Technology Services Section in the development of a new front-end design for the UNCTAD database on GSP utilization. This collaboration has been centred around weekly meetings between the two teams to review progress achieved in the previous week and define new milestones for the following week.

330. This new tool will allow government officials, firms and researchers to retrieve in a user-friendly manner data on GSP utilization rates, as well as imports by tariff treatment. For the time being, the coverage is limited to the Quad countries (Canada, Japan, the United States and the European Union) for the period 2004–2018 with 2019 soon to be added. Three functions are already fully implemented, namely:

(a) Utilization by product, which allows to see the evolution of a product - defined as a 2, 4 or 6-digit HS code - imported by a beneficiary country from a preference-giving country (PGC) in terms of GSP Utilization Rate and imports;

(b) Top products imported from a beneficiary, which allows government officials and researchers to see which products were the most traded between a beneficiary and a PGC;

(c) Utilization by country, which shows utilization rates and imports in terms of HS sections.

Handbook on DFQF: Distribution and Training

331. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic and related economic shocks, UNCTAD and the EIF Executive Secretariat aim to assist the LDCs with their economic recovery

efforts by taking advantage of the multilateral trade opportunities arising from the WTO Hong Kong (China) Ministerial Conference initiative on duty-free and quota-free (DFQF) market access. Some LDCs, particularly African countries, have not yet fully exploited the opportunities offered by these unilateral preferences. Hence, from March 2021 to May 2021, 24 webinars were conducted for 15 different African LDC countries on how to make use of DFQF based on UNCTAD Handbook on Duty-Free and Quota-Free Market Access and Rules of Origin.

332. Each webinar consisted of 2 sessions of around 1 hour and 30 minutes each. During the first session, the requirements that exporters need to fulfil in order to benefit from the duty-free quota-free initiative as well as the use of the UNCTAD Database on GSP Utilization were covered. At the end of the session, 20 minutes were devoted to questions and answers and to the distribution of a few exercises to be carried out by the participants on their own between the two sessions. In the second session, these exercises were reviewed, other relevant online resources were presented with hands-on examples followed by a final session of questions and answers.

333. The target audience consisted of representatives of private sector association, exporter associations, trade promotion agencies, major exporters and government officials dealing with trade policy formulation and implementation of trade agreement.

334. Other contributions of UNCTAD were the publications below:

- (a) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa Study;
- (b) “Transport and Transit Facilitation Systems: Lessons from Regional Transport and Transit Systems in Africa”;
- (c) The Case for Geographical Indication Protection of the Mozambique White Prawn Study;
- (d) Handbook on Duty-Free and Quota-Free Market Access and Rules of Origin for Least Developed Countries; and
- (e) “Le processus d’indications géographiques au Bénin” (“The process of geographical indications in Benin” in English).

335. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD technical assistance for market access and rules of origin contributed to helping LDCs better understand market access rules and mechanisms. The research and capacity building activities carried out under this programme enhanced the skills and knowledge of officials from LDCs on specific operationally important areas of international economic law and policy. The analytical and training activities provided the participants with a deeper understanding of alternative approaches and the implications of different trade policy rules and regulations and enhanced their capacity to apply this knowledge in the course of international negotiations and the implementation of the WTO LDC Package resulting from the Bali and Nairobi Ministerial Declaration.

B6 Breaking the chains of commodity dependence

Table B6
Breaking the chains of commodity dependence

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
MLW/0T/JBP	EIF-Transferring technologies and know-how for the development of cotton by-products in Malawi	2021–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
TOG/0T/JBQ	EIF-Transferring technologies and know-how for the development of cotton by-products in Togo	2021–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
INT/0T/9AX	Global Commodities Forum	2009–	Multi-donors

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/HAN	Integrating landlocked commodity-dependent developing countries into regional and global value chains	2018–	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
INT/OT/IBE	Addressing vulnerabilities of commodity dependent developing countries (CDDCS)	2020–	Common Fund for Commodities
ROA-1617 (K10)	Improving the value added of cotton by-products in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)	2016–	Development Account

336. **Development context.** Commodity dependence has different negative impacts on economic development. The volatility of commodity prices affects countries' macroeconomic stability, and through the latter, investment, employment and economic growth. Insufficient value-added activities hamper economic diversification and industrial development. To ensure that commodities positively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is therefore critical to break the chains of commodity dependence. In this regard, strengthening of domestic value chains, diversification and value addition are essential for commodity-dependent developing countries to reduce their economic vulnerability to commodity price fluctuation, while contributing to better jobs and livelihoods for their citizens. UNCTAD assists countries to attain these objectives through its various projects on breaking the chains of commodity dependence.

337. **Objectives and features.** In response to a request for assistance, UNCTAD works with a country to evaluate its needs towards realizing the following four main thematic outcomes:

- (a) Developing value added activities in its commodity sector;
- (b) Establishing development linkages between the commodity sector and the wider economy;
- (c) Diversifying to non-commodity activities;
- (d) Integrating into global and regional value chains.

338. Breaking the chains of commodity dependence operates by strengthening the capacity of policymakers and stakeholders in project countries to assess the economic viability of investments and commercial initiatives that contribute to the programme's four thematic outcomes, as well as to formulate evidence-based policies in support of their development. For instance, the project on "Integrating landlocked commodity-dependent developing countries into regional and global value chains" focuses on promoting the international integration of agri-food value chains by strengthening targeted domestic value chains and the efforts of stakeholders in accessing new international markets in the four project countries (roasted coffee in Ethiopia, maize in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, meat in Mongolia and dried fruit in Uzbekistan).

339. **Outputs.** In 2021, UNCTAD completed⁶⁶ the implementation of the activities of the project "Integrating landlocked commodity-dependent developing countries into regional and global value chains" in the four beneficiary countries. During the period, the project issued six publications, including two multi-country studies and studies of targeted individual value chains in beneficiary countries. The latter were presented and discussed in three national workshops that took place in hybrid or online form in Ethiopia (11 March), Mongolia (28 January) and Uzbekistan (4 February). During these national workshops, the

⁶⁶ At the request of the authorities of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the final activity in the country was implemented on January 20–21, 2022. The final version of one of the multi-country studies was published in February 2022.

quantitative-based findings of the project and the resulting policy proposals were discussed with public and private sector stakeholders, as well as with experts from other development partners. Following the implementation of national workshops, and in line with the project's findings concerning the needs for capacity-building in each country-sector, UNCTAD carried out capacity-building activities in the beneficiary countries for both public and private sector stakeholders, working with domestic partners to maximise the impact on public and private sector stakeholders. In order to help exporters of targeted sectors better integrate into international value chains, UNCTAD also implemented four activities aimed at connecting traders/exporters in the four countries and potential buyers. Finally, on November 24–25, UNCTAD implemented the final workshop of the project in hybrid form in Geneva, bringing together senior officials from all beneficiary countries, development partner experts and academics. During the workshop, two empirical multi-country studies were presented, focusing on the roles of producer groups for increasing the prices received by smallholder farmers, and on the trade costs faced by agricultural exports from landlocked developing countries. The policy recommendations of these studies, as well as the experiences of each of the four beneficiary countries were discussed, in order to strengthen the sectorial policies implemented by each of the latter.

340. The implementation of the project “Addressing vulnerabilities of commodity dependent developing countries”, funded by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), was completed on 30 June 2022. Under this project, a paper reviewing the global debate and experience on commodities and development over the past decades was commissioned. The paper analyses the current global development context and identifies new and emerging challenges and opportunities faced by commodity dependent developing countries (CDDCs). It further explores how such countries can engage in both public and private sectors and civil society to rebalance global value chains in commodity markets. The role that international organizations, such as the CFC itself and international commodity bodies, can play in assisting CDDCs to reduce vulnerabilities, and shake off their dependence on commodities is also investigated. Policy interventions and country experiences that have successfully promoted South–South collaboration for sustainable development in CDDCs are reviewed.

341. The second paper funded by the CFC titled “Climate change: an imperative for green industrial policy in commodity-dependent developing countries?” explores the interaction between economic growth and greenhouse gas (GHG) production. Its objective is to highlight the need for a better understanding of the current and past growth model, which is characterized by high energy intensity and hence strong pollution, given that energy has largely been based on fossil fuels. The study explores the implications of the growth model for commodity-dependent developing countries’ need to industrialize and diversify their economies. The issue of energy transition and its applicability in countries of different levels of development is also explored. The study is being finalized and will be published before the end of the project on 31 May 2022.

342. From the expertise accumulated during the implementation of the project “Improving the value added of cotton by-products in Eastern and Southern Africa”, which concluded in December 2020, UNCTAD formed a joint initiative with the WTO and ITC on the same subject, to carry forward the work and respond to requests from member States for additional technical assistance in this area. The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) funded the initiative’s first phase of work, to conduct feasibility studies with the overall goal of identifying opportunities to increase revenues from cotton, in particular for smallholder and women farmers, by developing and adding value to cotton by-products. WTO implemented the projects to prepare feasibility studies in eight least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa, namely: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mozambique, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Implementation of the studies was completed at the end of 2020. In 2021, EIF funded the preparation of feasibility studies for two additional LDCs, namely Malawi and Togo. UNCTAD is the main implementing entity of the projects to conduct these feasibility studies since February 2021. The draft feasibility studies for both Malawi and Togo were finalized by November 2021. The dates of the national validation workshops for the feasibility studies were held on 15 February 2022 in Lomé, Togo, and 8 March 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi. Logistical preparations for the said

workshops were carried out through December 2021. Both projects were extended for five months up to 25 May 2022.

343. **Results and impacts.** The project “Integrating landlocked commodity-dependent developing countries into regional and global value chains” had two Expected Accomplishments, namely “Improved statistical and analytical capacity of beneficiary countries in effective policy formulation to promote regional and global value chain (RVC and GVC) integration and enhance development linkages”, and “Improved capacity of the private sector in beneficiary countries to assess market prospects, identify market opportunities and overcome market barriers to better integrate into RVCs and GVCs”, which were met in all beneficiary countries. Of particular note are the policy interest shown by the authorities of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Mongolia in the incorporation of the findings and policy recommendations of the project into national policy frameworks, as well as the success of the project in promoting direct contacts between traders/exporters from targeted sectors in beneficiary countries and buyers/importers in key partner countries identified throughout project surveys.

B9 Sustainable and resilient transport and logistics services

Table B9

Sustainable and resilient transport and logistics services

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/9X/31Y	Introduction of multimodal transport and microcomputer software programmes	1993–	Multi-donors
RAF/0T/HAC	Regional Study for “Commercialization of the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor”	2020–	Islamic Development Bank
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account

344. **Development context.** Sustainable development requires that freight transport be aligned with Sustainable Development Goals and climate action targets. This has become more important during the COVID-19 crisis, which has reaffirmed the central role of transport in sustainable development, emphasizing existing challenges and creating new ones. In this context, the UNCTAD transport programme supports developing countries to assess, plan, design and implement effective and integrated policies, measures, and solutions that enable the development of sustainable transport systems. Particular emphasis is placed on maritime transport (shipping and ports), which accounts for 80 per cent of international trade by volume, as well as transit and transport corridors. The programme takes into account cross-cutting issues such as connectivity, accessibility, environment, climate change, digitalization, finance, international maritime and multimodal transport law, as well as promoting seafarers’ rights and labour standards, facilitating crew changes and keeping supply-chains moving in times of pandemic.

345. An important development context in 2021 continued to be the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has led to a major supply chain crisis, with higher freight costs, congestion and delays in ports and intermodal transport systems.

346. An overarching long-term trend and development context that affects international transport is the ongoing energy transition and decarbonization, necessary to mitigate climate change and its impacts. UNCTAD technical assistance, including in collaboration with international partners such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), helps the most vulnerable economies to assess and respond to the challenges emanating from

both, climate change, and from measures that aim at mitigating climate change. Such measures may lead to higher transport costs and lower connectivity, especially for SIDS and LDCs.

347. **Objectives and features.** In 2021, UNCTAD continued its collaboration with the five United Nations regional commissions to help developing countries tackle the trade and transport challenges that resulted from the coronavirus pandemic. Within the framework of the Joint Rapid Response under the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project on “Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics: Contactless, seamless and collaborative United Nations solutions”, UNCTAD produced comprehensive knowledge material and trainings about COVID-19 impacts on the maritime supply chain and responses in the face of the disruption.

348. With climate change being a global challenge and maritime transport an inherently international industry, in line with the long-standing collaboration between the two UN-sister agencies, UNCTAD continued its collaboration with the IMO and contributed expert advice and substantive input into the IMO mandated assessment of the potential impact on States of the proposed short-term IMO greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction measure.

349. As part of its work on transport and transit corridors, UNCTAD in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), continued implementing project activities aimed at supporting the commercialization of the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor in Africa which comprises six countries, namely Algeria, Chad, Mali, the Niger, Nigeria and Tunisia. UNCTAD technical assistance intervention considers ways, namely through corridor management and institutional framework, in which the corridor’s road network could transform and evolve to become a successful regional economic corridor and its functions extend beyond ensuring transport and transit.

350. As part of the transport and logistics related activities under European Union-funded project in Angola, UNCTAD helps improving transport and trade logistics in Angola by (a) enhancing the sector’s economic, social and environmental sustainability performance; (b) devising transport and trade logistics strategies that enable economic and trade development and diversification by identifying and mapping out underlying linkages between economic sectors and transport and trade logistics infrastructure, services and networks; and (c) promoting public-private partnerships (PPPs) in transport infrastructure and logistics infrastructure and services including logistics hubs/platforms.

351. UNCTAD continued to provide advice and policy guidance in response to requests received from various entities, including on port performance; shipping decarbonization; the legal framework for international shipping and maritime law; COVID-19 implications for commercial contracts for the carriage of goods by sea and sale of goods; seafarers issues; competition law issues and the UNCTAD Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences; and issues relevant to ship-source pollution and related environmental challenges. The technical assistance is built heavily on the synergies and collaboration with various partners, including United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNECA, UNESCAP, UNESCWA, UNECE, UNECLAC, UNOHRLLS, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the IMO, and United Nations country teams and the Resident Coordinator Office, as well as regional organizations such as the African Union.

352. **Outputs.** Under the maritime supply chain component of the UNDA project on Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics UNCTAD produced a number of Impact Assessment Reports (one global and three regional) focusing on shipping connectivity, trade and port efficiency. The Assessment reports identified COVID-19 impacts on various aspects of the maritime supply chain as well as relevant response measures that can provide lessons to learn from and good practice. In collaboration with UNESCAP, UNECLAC, UNESCWA and UNECA, regional webinars targeting Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean were delivered in 2020 and 2021. These helped to share insights, disseminate key findings and gather feedback about resilience building needs in these regions. A dedicated survey questionnaire was elaborated by UNCTAD and widely circulated across key stakeholders. Feedback received has further informed UNCTAD work and shaped the thinking. Guidance material codified in “Building Capacity

to Manage Risks and Enhance Resilience: A Guidebook for Ports” has been developed and aims at building capacity of countries to enhance preparedness and future proof their maritime supply chain. The Guidebook and related material, including good practices identified, case studies and risk management tools will be made available on a dedicated UNCTAD website to be launched in July 2022. A dedicated training package will accompany these capacity building tools and instruments

353. Under the collaboration with the IMO, UNCTAD provided a comprehensive assessment of the impacts on countries and States, including developing countries, SIDS and LDCs, and draws upon selected case studies to illustrate the conditions and impacts for specific countries, trades and regional markets. The report was submitted to the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee and helped inform decisions about future decarbonization measures in shipping. UNCTAD’s assessment shows that the impact of the IMO short-term measures, on average, will be relatively higher on SIDS compared to advanced economies. These changes will lead to a potential shift in logistics and trade patterns, including potentially trading more with less-distant markets and some regionalization. The report calls on policymakers to aim at high-ambition reductions of greenhouse gas emissions from shipping and to assist weaker economies in adjusting to the transition.

354. Under the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor (TSR) project, UNCTAD carried out various consultations and finalized assessment report of the corridor, highlighting its performances, challenges and obstacles undermining its operations, as well as potential solutions. In its study, UNCTAD put forward recommendations with a view to establishing a suitable TSR corridor management mechanism as key instrument to promote and commercialize the TSR corridor and its development into an economic corridor.

355. Continuing its work under Angola project namely related to PPPs, UNCTAD provided capacity-building and training activities despite the COVID-19 context. Several capacity-building, training and advisory activities have been conducted, namely, (a) hands-on technical capacity-building webinars (eight in total) on the preparation of PPP projects and practical exercise to apply PPPs methodology through the use of SOURCE platform (a multilateral platform for the development of well-prepared sustainable infrastructure project) and to reinforce the adoption of international best practices on infrastructure projects preparation; and (b) capacity-building and training on PPPs for logistics hubs/platforms in Angola. This activity consisted of two back-to-back webinars. The first webinar aimed at enhancing knowledge on the various concepts of logistics hubs/platforms and the role of PPPs and types of PPPs models that can be applied to design, plan and operate logistics hubs/platforms and was open to the public, targeting stakeholders from public and private sectors involved in trade, transport, agriculture, and logistics activities, as well as in PPPs in Angola. The second webinar focused on Angola, shedding light on the most recent developments in the sector, discussing opportunities, main challenges, and potential next steps for developing logistics hubs/platform projects, including financing options and PPPs. This activity was organized in cooperation with ARCCLA, the Angolan Regulatory Agency for Cargo Certification and Logistics.

356. Under the international commercial transport and trade law component of the UNDA project on Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics, two substantive briefing notes on: “COVID-19 implications for commercial contracts: carriage of goods by sea and related cargo claims”, and on “COVID-19 implications for commercial contracts: International sale of goods on CIF and FOB terms” have been published, as well as one analytical report “Contracts for the carriage of goods by sea and multimodal transport - Key issues arising from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic”. The documents consider key legal implications of the pandemic and related response measures, as well as contractual approaches to commercial risk-allocation, and provide some recommendations for commercial parties as well as considerations for policymakers. Four related online training courses were held in May and June 2022, with overall 224 participants from 60 countries, and a webinar with a focus on policy considerations arising was held, as part of the UNDA closing event, on 21 June 2022. A further report, highlighting contractual approaches to loss prevention in relation to CIF and FOB contracts, is being finalized for publication.

357. As requested in the United Nations General Assembly resolution, on international cooperation to address challenges faced by seafarers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to support global supply chains (A/RES/75/17), UNCTAD monitored and reported on relevant developments regarding the seafarers' crisis, to the General Assembly, through chapter 5 of the UNCTAD *Review of Maritime Transport 2021*. In addition, in December 2021, a related UNCTAD Policy Brief No. 91, containing updated data and information was published, highlighting areas where industry, governments, and international organizations can cooperate to protect seafarers' human and legal rights and implement relevant labour standards, including those agreed in the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006. Related activities also included an online event on Seafarers Issues, organized by UNCTAD in cooperation with ILO and IMO, on the occasion of World Maritime Day on 30 September 2021. In addition, in February 2022, recognizing the critical role of the maritime sector in keeping trade flowing during the global fight against COVID-19, ILO, IMO, UNCTAD, and WHO issued a joint statement, calling on Governments, national and local authorities, and all relevant stakeholders, to take 10 critical actions. These cover key issues such as vaccination, the designation of seafarers as "key workers" to facilitate maritime crew changes and safe movement across borders and recognizing relevant documentation for this purpose, the consistent application of internationally agreed protocols and standards, and continued concerted collaborative efforts to keep seafarers safe and limit the disruption to supply chains, as well as prevent the unchecked spread of emerging variants of concern, which could prolong the pandemic and its wide-ranging socioeconomic consequences. Further work is ongoing for UNCTAD together with IMO, ILO, WHO, DOALOS, the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, etc., including in the context of a United Nations inter-agency task force to examine the implementation and practical application of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 during the pandemic.

358. **Results and impacts.** As part of its collaboration with IMO, an UNCTAD comprehensive assessment of impacts on States of mandatory short-term measures to reduce the carbon intensity of international shipping by at least 40 per cent by 2030, has been an important factor in the adoption of the IMO technical and operational schemes to reduce carbon intensity at the 76th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 76) in June 2021. This important achievement, that will be implemented from 2023, will drive further energy efficiency improvements in the global fleet, which is also expected to reduce GHG emissions from international shipping and ports.

359. Under the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor (TSR) project, UNCTAD and IsDB, as well as other development and institutional partners, will continue to support the TSR Corridor Economic Development initiative. In this regard, the TRL Corridor will organize a high-level meeting in 2022 to discuss and define next steps and follow up activities to support the implementation of the report recommendations towards the main objective of promoting and commercializing the TSR corridor. Discussions with the Resident Coordinator Office in Algeria have also been initiated by UNCTAD to support follow-up activities at national level.

360. Technical assistance provided by UNCTAD in Angola on the preparation of PPPs projects contributed to building awareness and enhancing knowledge of the staff of the PPPs Unit at the Ministry of Economy and Planning (MEP) as well as the Department of Concessions at Ministry of Transport of Angola on how to manage the Angolan portfolio of projects using a digital tool and how to produce reports on the readiness level of the projects during the preparation process. Improved institutional capacities were measured qualitatively through the feedback received by participants, who reported that the training not only enhanced their knowledge about the PPPs project cycle, but also increased their confidence in how to apply this knowledge to projects being developed by the Government in Angola. In addition, the training contributed to the integration of the SOURCE platform into the PPPs programme in Angola, with new funding from the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The SOURCE platform will support the Government of Angola in the development of well-prepared projects to bridge the country's infrastructure gap and the digitalization of its portfolio of projects and project process cycle. In addition, and pursuant

to the webinars, technical visits were organized by ARCCLA to Ethiopia and Rwanda with the support of UNCTAD, as a follow-up on exchange of experiences during the webinar.

361. Work carried out under the UNDA project on transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics helped build capacity to ensure maritime supply chain resilience. The timeliness and importance of UNCTAD technical assistance has been further emphasized by the supply chain crisis that had unfolded in 2021 and disrupted global supply chain and resulted in soaring shipping prices with far reaching implications for inflation, consumer prices and food security. Outputs produced under the project have contributed to raising awareness about the role of shipping and ports for trade and development and the need to keep resilience high on the agenda of policy makers and transport industry stakeholders.

362. As regards the international commercial transport and trade law component of the UNDA project on Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics, the analysis, recommendations and policy considerations included in the substantive reports prepared under the project, also disseminated through capacity building and other activities and advisory services, have helped commercial parties, as well as policymakers, in their understanding of the main types of issues arising from the pandemic in the context of contracts for the carriage of goods and international sales, and to consider potential approaches to addressing some of these issues.

363. UNCTAD work on seafarers' issues associated with the pandemic, has contributed to collaborative initiatives with ILO, IMO, and WHO and helped advance collective action to alleviate the plight of seafarers and keep supply chains open. Relevant outputs highlight areas where industry, Governments and international organizations can cooperate to protect seafarers' human and legal rights and implement relevant labour standards, including those agreed in the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006.

B99 Other

Table B99

Other

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
<i>Division on Globalization and Development Strategies</i>			
PSE/0T/GAA	Assessment of the economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people	2020–	Saudi Arabia
ROA-2023 (Z12)	Response and Recovery: Mobilizing financial resources for development in the time of COVID-19	2020–	Development Account
<i>Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes</i>			
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
HAI/0T/JAO	Haiti Sustainable Development Goals: Policy and Financing Options	2021–	UNDP-HQ- One United Nations
INT/0T/IAH	Finding Opportunities for Niche Commodities from DC in Health Food Markets	2021–	Common Fund for Commodities
RAF/0T/JBS	Developing Integrated Programmes to Alleviate Binding Constraints to Development by Fostering Structural Transformation, Building Productive	2021–	2030 Agenda PDF Sub-Fund

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	Capacities and Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China		
ROA-1617 (M10)	Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries	2016–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (E12)	Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African Least Developed Countries	2020–	Development Account

1. Assistance to the Palestinian people

364. **Development context.** Before the onset of the COVID-19 shock, the Palestinian economy was in disarray and the overall politico-economic environment, and the measures imposed by the occupying power had been worsening. The productive base had been battered and in utter disrepair. Geographical and market fragmentation were deepening. Restrictions on imported inputs and technology were exacting heavy toll on productivity. Loss of land and natural resources to settlements continued unabated. Fiscal resources were leaking to the Israeli treasury and the regional economy in Gaza has been impacted by a blockade and military operations.

365. In addition to the COVID-19 shock, in April 2021 violence erupted in response to Israeli authorities' threat to evict Palestinian families from their homes, in East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood and around the Old City. The violence soon engulfed the rest of the West Bank, where 31 Palestinian were killed, 7516 injured and 798 arrested. Fatalities resulted from the use by Israeli security forces of live ammunition in the context of demonstrations or clashes or in response to attacks or attempted attacks. On the Israeli side, one person was killed and 137 were injured, including 90 members of Israeli security forces.

366. In 2021, the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Occupied Palestinian Territory grew by 7.1 per cent, following a contraction by 11.3 per cent in 2020 due to the pandemic and continued restrictive measures under occupation. The growth reflected low base effects and failed to make up for income lost in 2020, as GDP in 2021 remained below the pre-pandemic level of 5.1 per cent in 2019. The rebound was restrained by a decline in foreign aid; the impact of the military operation in the Gaza Strip in May 2021; and a protracted fiscal crisis. In 2021, GDP per capita remained at not only below the level in 2019, but also below that in 2011, reflecting a decade of worsening political horizons and lost development opportunities. Despite the economic rebound in 2021, unemployment in the Occupied Palestinian Territory remained high, at 26 per cent. In Gaza, the impact of the blockade since 2007 has been compounded with a significant military operation in May 2021 that inflicted serious damage on an already shattered infrastructure. Over half of the workforce was unemployed in 2021, 83 per cent of workers received less than the minimum wage and 60 per cent of the population was classified as poor.

367. Since 2020, the Palestinian Government has been in the grip of one of the deepest fiscal crises in its history. The crisis is characterized by a large financing gap, a precipitous decline in foreign aid and the exhaustion of domestic borrowing sources. In November 2021, the Palestinian Government announced that it could pay public servants only 75 per cent of salaries. By mid-June 2022, the Palestinian Government was still paying public employees 80 per cent of salaries. The fiscal crisis is mainly caused by the asymmetric economic relations established in the Paris Protocol in 1994, which eliminate possibilities for fiscal sustainability by fostering vulnerability and uncertainty.

368. With the decline in foreign aid and the leakage of Palestinian fiscal resources to Israel, the Palestinian Government was forced to bridge the fiscal gap through a

significant increase in borrowing from domestic banks and by accumulating arrears to the domestic private sector and pension fund. By end-2021, overall public debt had reached \$3.8 billion and the arrears stock, about \$3 billion, amounting to a combined 38 per cent of GDP. Meanwhile, domestic debt rose to \$2.53 billion, or 14 per cent of GDP and 23 per cent of total credit and was over the 15 per cent limit set by the Palestinian Monetary Authority.

369. **Objectives and features.** Building on the mandate in paragraph 55 (dd) of the Nairobi Maafikiano, the UNCTAD programme on assistance to the Palestinian people directly responds to the stronger mandate stated in paragraph 127 (bb) of the Bridgetown Covenant, which requests UNCTAD to “continue to assess the economic development prospects of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and examine economic costs of the occupation and obstacles to trade and development, and should strengthen its programme of assistance to the Palestinian people with adequate resources and effective operational activities, including relevant studies as part of the international community’s commitment to building an independent Palestinian State, and with a view to alleviating the adverse economic and social conditions imposed on the Palestinian people, in line with the Accra Accord and the Doha Mandate and the Nairobi Maafikiano”.

370. This programme is also guided by paragraph 31 (m) of the Doha Mandate, paragraph 44 of the Accra Accord and paragraph 35 of the Sao Paulo Consensus. The programme aims to build and strengthen the institutional capacities of the Palestinian public and the private sectors required for building a robust economy to underpin the future independent Palestinian State.

371. The United Nations General Assembly, in seven resolutions – resolutions 69/20, 70/12, 71/20, 72/13, 73/18, 74/10 and 75/20 – requests that UNCTAD report to the General Assembly on the economic cost of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people.

372. In 2021, UNCTAD has been supporting the Palestinian people to build and strengthen the institutional capacities of the public and private sectors. UNCTAD support addresses the constraints and emerging needs of the economy through four clusters:

- (a) Trade and macroeconomic policies and development strategies;
- (b) Trade facilitation and logistics;
- (c) Finance and development;
- (d) Enterprise, investment, and competition policy.

373. **Outputs and results.** In 2021, UNCTAD continued its support to the Palestinian people in coordination with the PNA, Palestinian civil society, international organizations, donors and the United Nations country team with the goal of rehabilitating a war-torn economy and pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals. The programme continued to strengthen its ongoing support to the Palestinian people despite adverse and increasingly difficult field conditions.

374. In early 2021, UNCTAD released a study (UNCTAD/GDS/APP/2021/1) titled “Integrated Simulation Framework – II Model for Palestinian Economic Policy”. The study is the result of the continuous efforts of UNCTAD to enhance and update its macro-econometric model of the Palestinian economy. The updated framework factors in recent structural changes in the economy and explores alternative methodologies and techniques.

375. In June 2021, UNCTAD conducted a workshop at Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) to present the new integrated simulation framework ISFII to Palestinian institutions. The audience consisted of government institutions, think tanks and academic institutions. The participants expressed appreciation of the workshop and MAS and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) requested UNCTAD provide them with the new version of the ISFII.

376. The updated model was shared with MAS and the PCBS as requested, and as was the case with the first model developed by UNCTAD. This will enable the PCBS and MAS to forecast the prospects of the Palestinian economy and provide policy makers and the private sector with practical tools to evaluate key aspects of the Palestinian economy, assess alternative policy options/scenarios, and assist in formulating economic development strategies in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the PCBS the model is run by professional staff trained by UNCTAD, which helped them establish an economic forecasting unit within the PCBS. Continuing cooperation in modelling the Palestinian economy is envisaged between the three institutions, UNCTAD, PCBS and MAS.

377. In response to the above-mentioned General Assembly resolutions, in 2021, UNCTAD submitted a report (A/76/309) to the General Assembly on the economic cost of occupation, focusing on the economic impact of the additional harmful measures and stricter closure policy, imposed following the outbreak of the second intifada. The report estimates the additional poverty caused by the blockade and military operations in terms of (a) the rate and gap of poverty at the household level, (b) the minimum cost of eliminating poverty and (c) the potential economic growth that could have been realized if the additional harmful measures and stricter closure policy, imposed following the outbreak of the second intifada, had not occurred.

378. In 2021, UNCTAD also released a study entitled “The Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: Arrested Development and Poverty in the West Bank”. The study focuses on the cost incurred from the major shock to the West Bank, that is, the restrictions and closure policy implemented by the occupying Power in the aftermath of the second Intifada. The study complements the previous study released in 2020 which focused on the cost of the blockade and military operations in Gaza.

379. In late 2020, UNCTAD received a grant from the Government of Saudi Arabia to sustain UNCTAD professional capacity required for supporting the Palestinian people’s efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The grant funds a project that will provide systematic, evidence-based assessments of the economic cost of the occupation for the Palestinian people. The goal of the project is to facilitate future negotiations towards achieving a just and lasting peace in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Middle East.

2. Productive capacity-building in vulnerable economies

2.1. *Finding opportunities for niche commodities from developing countries in health food markets*

380. **Development context.** For several decades structurally weak and vulnerable economies including landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) have not been able to take full advantage of global trade opportunities and improved market access conditions. This is partly due to their weak productive and supply capacities, and partly due to their weak trade policy formulation and implementation capacities. Beyond domestic constraints, market entry barriers such as non-tariff measures remain hindrances to enhancing their export opportunities. This is despite the fact that they enjoy preferential market access for their exports to major developed country markets particularly in the European Union. Furthermore, geographical challenges such as remoteness from regional and international markets, high cost of transportation and lack of transit-transport systems are detrimental to export competitiveness and development of landlocked developing countries. In some cases, beyond the domestic challenges, regional integration processes have also created complex rules of origin especially in Africa, resulting in trade loss and high transactions costs. Furthermore, many LLDCs remain dependent on primary commodities for most of their export revenue, rendering them highly vulnerable to external shocks. Their persistent underdevelopment and in many cases, long term decline, illustrates how trade could not uplift these countries’ socio-economic conditions. This also indicates the complexity and inter-related nature of the challenges, which undermine the potential and national policy efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

381. The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has further exacerbated these development obstacles. The lack of productive capacities in LLDCs undermined their ability to respond

to the coronavirus disease both in terms of the health response and in terms of building socioeconomic resilience. Furthermore, their vulnerability to external shocks amplified the impact of the fall in commodity prices. In this way, the coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the need to diversify the economy and build productive capacities. This project aims to support these goals by exploring the potential of new products.

382. There is significant potential for horizontal diversification in many of these countries in producing and exporting new and dynamic products, such as health-enhancing foods. In 2020 it was decided to enlarge the scope of this project to include bioprospecting, i.e. the exploration of biodiversity for commercially valuable genetic and biochemical resources. If fully exploited such a potential could help LLDCs to maximize the benefits from international trade, build export competitiveness and join the group of successful exporters.

383. Against this background, this project will help: (a) to identify export potential and competitiveness of a number of structurally weak and vulnerable economies in health-enhancing specialty foods; (b) to map the new and dynamic products as well as export potential with market opportunities, primarily in the European Union; and (c) to build regulatory and institutional capacities of the selected countries to monitor and certify conformity with specialty food standards.

384. **Objectives.** The project aims to build the capacities of selected landlocked developing countries to foster productive capacities and diversify their exports by identifying and harnessing the export potential of health food commodities and nutraceuticals, as well as of bioprospecting. The project draws on global and national studies of the potential of selected LLDCs in developing the health food or nutraceutical sector, as well as bioprospecting, and potential export markets. In addition, the project aims to identify the principal obstacles to the development and expansion of exports in these sectors and propose policies and measures to address them. In this way, the project will assist policymakers from selected LLDCs in designing and implementing policies to build productive capacities, expand and diversify their exports, and achieve structural transformation.

385. **Outputs and results.** In 2021, UNCTAD finalized a publication on “Harnessing the potential of nutraceutical products for export diversification and development in landlocked developing countries (LLDCs): Assessment of Comparative Advantages and Binding Constraints”. The publication reviews the potential of three nutraceutical products in each of six LLDCs: Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Nepal, and identifies policies and measures required to increase exports and strengthen the value added in their production. The publication also identifies relevant standards to be met by nutraceuticals exports of developing countries in key export markets.

386. The study notes that Burkina Faso, for example, could significantly expand its sesame exports by strengthening the use of fertilizer and high-quality seeds, improving access to finance for sesame farmers, and expanding linkages with buyers in Asia. Burkina Faso further has potential to develop the sesame-hulling industry. Achieving these goals, however, will also require greater investments in transport and electricity infrastructure. In the case of Ethiopia, the study highlights the potential of teff to become a flagship export. However, the production of teff faces a number of challenges to expansion: harvesting and processing is artisanal, owing to low levels of mechanization, and the resulting lack of efficiency and quality control threaten to make the grain uncompetitive. To overcome these obstacles, the government should consider liberalizing teff exports, improving mechanization and extension services for teff production, adding teff to the Ethiopian Commodities Exchange, and promoting the production and certification of organic teff. In the case of Bhutan, the study notes that cardamom is a product of great potential significance, as Bhutan is one of only three countries where it is grown. However, cardamom production faces several natural and institutional challenges, particularly climate change, pest control and excessive dependence on the Indian market. Improving extension services to farmers so that they can upgrade quality and yield is crucial. The Government should further bolster the buyback programme for cardamom and crop in case of price drops and reach equivalency agreements on phytosanitary certification with neighbouring countries. Other measures required include investment in new drying mechanisms and strengthening outreach to build rapport between farmers and buyers. And in the

Plurinational State of Bolivia, the study argues that the country could build on its success in exporting bananas to develop other, lesser-known tropical fruits, such as achachairu, guava and passion fruit, which have a potential market in health food stores in developed countries. However, in order to do so, the Plurinational State of Bolivia will need to develop stronger logistical networks. It should also expand its efforts to target health food stores and boutiques. At the local level, the development of cooperatives could help support cost reductions and higher productivity, as well as ensure sustainable production.

387. UNCTAD plans to disseminate the findings of the study and provide for an exchange of views among LLDCs on the potential of the health food sector and the measures needed to harness them. However, to date, the health measures imposed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic have made it impossible to organize national or regional workshops in the beneficiary countries. UNCTAD hopes to be able to organize related technical cooperation and capacity-building workshops as soon as the health situation permits in 2022.

388. Drawing on its work on nutraceuticals, UNCTAD and the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) also proposed the organization of a joint side-event at the forthcoming LDC V Conference, planned to be held in Doha, Qatar, from 5 to 9 March 2023. The side event, entitled “Productive capacities and impact investing in LDCs, with a focus on nutraceuticals and fisheries” will aim to raise awareness about the role of productive capacities and export diversification in development, and outline concrete investment instruments (impact investment) as well as sectors with unexploited potential for value-added and export diversification, such as the nutraceuticals, fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

2.2. *Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries*

389. **Development context.** The key lesson from the research and policy analysis work of UNCTAD is that placing the development of productive capacities at the heart of trade and development policies is essential for LLDCs and other vulnerable economies to address their underdevelopment and to put them on the path of sustainable development. This calls for measuring and benchmarking productive capacities in LLDCs through a careful identification of indicators. Therefore, the ultimate outcome of this project will be a productive capacities index (PCI) constructed and validated for three beneficiary countries. In each beneficiary country, government officials responsible for statistical and development analysis will be trained in monitoring the PCIs, and in their use for generating and implementing development strategies. The project is financed through the tenth Tranche of Development Account and complemented with other project funds (i.e. a project funded by CFC on commodity value chains).

390. By assisting LLDCs to monitor their progress in building productive capacities, the PCI can assist them in achieving several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1 (poverty eradication), Goal 2 (zero hunger), Goal 3 (good health and wellbeing), Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goals 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 10 (reduced inequality), Goal 16 (peace and justice – strong institutions) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The project has gained additional relevance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the need for resilience-building in vulnerable economies. Building productive capacities is a core ingredient of strengthening the ability of economies to absorb external shocks.

391. **Objectives and features.** The main objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of selected landlocked developing countries to develop productive capacities indices⁶⁷ and use them to support evidence-based policymaking. With this objective in

⁶⁷ The productive capacities index is a composite index to measure the state (condition) of productive capacities in economies on the basis of a set of sub-indices, covering areas such as structural economic transformation, transport, ICT, innovation and technology, employment and labour productivity, energy and private sector development, and so forth.

mind, the project assists in defining the conceptual, methodological and statistical framework for identifying, selecting and validating indicators, which will be used in the construction of the Productive Capacity Index.

392. **Outputs.** Following years of preparatory work, on 8 February 2021, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD formally launched UNCTAD new Productive Capacities Index (PCI) at a virtual press conference. The PCI uses data from 193 countries, collected between 2000 and 2018, and 46 indicators, to measure performance across eight categories of productive capacities – natural capital, human capital, energy, institutions, structural change, information and communications technologies (ICT), transport and the private sector. The index scores a country's performance on productive capacities on a scale of 1 to 100, assessing the effectiveness of policies and strategies as well as existing gaps and limitations. The PCI is available on a dedicated webpage (pci.unctad.org), as well as through the UNCTADstat database.

393. Concurrently with the launch of the index, UNCTAD released two related publications: UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index: Methodological Approach and Results and UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index: Focus on Landlocked Developing Countries.

394. The launch of the index was accompanied by a series of outreach activities to inform United Nations Member States, other United Nations agencies, policy experts, as well as the media. As a result, the Index received press coverage in several online publications, including in France, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Greece, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

395. As part of the remaining activities under the project, in April 2021, UNCTAD, with support from UNIDO, delivered two statistical capacity-building trainings on the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) for officials in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Rwanda. The participants were statisticians from the relevant Ministries, as well as the National Institutes of Statistics. In light of the prevailing health situation, the training sessions were held in hybrid format, with participants gathered in Vientiane and Kigali respectively receiving a remote training from UNCTAD and UNIDO colleagues based in Geneva and Vienna. The training sessions were a follow-up to earlier such trainings held in person in 2019 (Lao People's Democratic Republic) and early 2020 (Rwanda).

396. Following the formal launch of the Productive Capacities Index, UNCTAD has continued to support the outreach and dissemination of the new tool. In 2021, UNCTAD has published three policy briefs related to the PCI: Placing productive capacities at the heart of least developed countries' development policy and strategy (Policy Brief No. 86), Enhancing productive capacities and transforming least developed country economies through institution-building: Upcoming United Nations conferences and the way forward (Policy Brief No. 88), and Implementing supportive policies to build a vibrant private sector as a driver of structural transformation (Policy Brief No. 89).

397. **Results.** Following the closing of the UNDA project on "Indices for benchmarking productive capacities for evidence-based policymaking in landlocked developing countries" on 30 April 2021, an external evaluation assessed the project and its effectiveness. Excerpts of the evaluation report include: "The evaluation found the PCI Project highly relevant. The project contributed to address a development agenda that is central to the LDCs and LLDCs and that UNCTAD described already 15 years ago... Most project activities were achieved or are likely to achieve planned objectives as enunciated in the project document and outcomes, in particular against relevant Sustainable Development Goal targets... At global level, the project has contributed significant achievements. In February 2021, UNCTAD launched the Productive Capacities Index database, which covers 8 dimensions and 46 indicators for the period 2000–2018. The project has also produced or participated in several quality publications. Advocacy and outreach activities have contributed to enhance the visibility of the productive capacities and structural transformation agendas."

398. UNCTAD work on the PCI and related technical assistance has elicited significant interest among member States, and UNCTAD has received several requests for productive capacity assessments. UNCTAD has also been able to attract more than \$1 million in

funding from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund for a follow-up project on developing programmes to build productive capacities in several African developing countries (see below). In addition, the PCI has received recognition in the broader United Nations system. The Committee for Development Policy has requested UNCTAD to carry out National Productive Capacity Gap Assessments (NPCGAs) for all LDCs that have met the graduation criteria for the first time in 2021. UNCTAD has begun to respond this mandate by preparing NPCGAs for Angola and Zambia.

2.3. *Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in selected African least developed countries*

399. **Development context.** UNCTAD is implementing a United Nations Development Account project on “Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in selected African Least Developed Countries.” The project beneficiaries are Burkina Faso, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The implementation of the activities of the project began in the first quarter of 2020 and will end in the last quarter of 2023. The three beneficiary countries have a strong commitment to fostering sustained growth, creating decent jobs, and building resilience to shocks through developing productive capacities and transforming the structure of their economies from low to high productivity activities. While some progress has been made over the past few decades, manufacturing continues to play a relatively small role in these economies both in terms of its share of output and contribution to exports.

400. Although the governments of the beneficiary countries understand the importance of productive capacities and the crucial role of trade and industrial policies in fostering them, there is an urgent need for an operational strategy on how to build such capacities in African LDCs. Existing strategic frameworks to develop productive capacities tend to be fragmented, ad hoc and hard to operationalize at the country level. In addition, there tends to be more focus on building new capacities and less on how to maintain and make better use of existing capacities. In this context, there is a dire need for a more holistic and coherent approach to productive capacity development that strikes a good balance between the need to build and utilize existing capacities. The project seeks to strengthen the capacities of beneficiary countries to formulate and implement such holistic and coherent strategies to develop and utilize productive capacities to enhance their prospects of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. More specifically, the project is expected to contribute to Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) and Goal 9 (build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation).

401. **Objectives.** The main objective of the project is to strengthen the capacities of beneficiary countries to build, utilize and maintain productive capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

402. **Outputs.** UNCTAD in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinators Office for the United Republic of Tanzania and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the United Republic of Tanzania organized a Hybrid National Workshop on Coherent Strategies for Developing Productive Capacities in the country. The workshop, which was held on 29–30 April 2021, provided a platform for policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the opportunities and challenges to developing productive capacities in the United Republic of Tanzania. It also sought to identify holistic and coherent strategies to build new productive capacities as well as better utilize existing capacities to enhance prospects of achieving Vision 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

403. During the reporting period, UNCTAD also collaborated with the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Rwanda in the organization of a Virtual National Workshop on Coherent Strategies for Developing Productive Capacities held in Rwanda on 6 May 2021. In addition, UNCTAD collaborated with the Economic Policy Research Network (EPRN) of Rwanda in the organization of the seventh Research Conference held under the theme “Economic policy measures to enhance productive capacities post COVID-19 Crisis.” The conference was held on 27 May 2021 in Kigali, Rwanda. It had the following sub-themes: understanding the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19; the role of leadership at national

and international levels in containing effects of COVID-19; the role of digital solutions in economic resilience and growth; reducing vulnerability post-COVID-19 – new strategies for insertion into the regional and global economy; and investment strategies in the post-COVID-19 for economic growth and job creation.

404. Another activity that was carried out in 2021 under the project was the organization of a seminar for policymakers in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Crafts (MITC) of Burkina Faso on 17 February 2021 under the theme “Virtual meeting on the study of the productive capacities of the Republic of Burkina Faso.” The aim of the seminar was to share the findings and recommendations of UNCTAD studies on developing productive capacities with policymakers in MITC. UNCTAD and officials of MITC also seized the opportunity offered by this meeting to discuss the Government’s key priorities in implementing the 12th Tranche United Nations Development Account project on “Coherent Strategies for Developing Productive Capacities in selected African LDCs.”

405. In addition to the national workshops and meetings organized in 2021, UNCTAD also prepared draft operational strategy papers on enhancing productive capacities in the beneficiary countries. These documents have been shared with the project beneficiaries and will be finalized and published in 2022.

406. **Results.** During the reporting period, significant progress was made in the implementation of the planned activities of the project, which led to positive results in several areas. First, national workshops that enhanced the capacities of policymakers on productive capacities issues were organized for Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The workshops benefited key local stakeholders as evidenced by the positive responses by participants and letters of appreciation from beneficiary countries. In his closing remarks at the workshop, the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM) congratulated UNCTAD for organizing a very successful and productive workshop. He also expressed appreciation to UNCTAD for the tremendous support it has provided to Rwanda in building productive capacities. Regarding the workshop for the United Republic of Tanzania, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Trade expressed appreciation to UNCTAD for the useful technical support provided to the United Republic of Tanzania under the United Nations Development Account Project on “Coherent Strategies for Productive Capacity Development in selected African LDCs.” In addition to the two national workshops, a virtual seminar on Developing Productive Capacities was organized for Burkina Faso to discuss background papers prepared by UNCTAD and exchange views with the Ministry of Trade on productive capacity development issues. Following the seminar, a national workshop involving key local stakeholders is slated for 2–3 February 2022.

407. The second area where some achievements have been made is in contributing to ongoing reviews of trade and industrial development strategies of beneficiary governments. For example, in Rwanda, UNCTAD supported the process through the services of a policy implementation adviser who, on a consultancy basis, provided support to the Ministry of Trade and Industry on productive capacity development issues in 2020 and 2021. A request has also been made by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in the United Republic of Tanzania for a similar assistance and UNCTAD has initiated the process for responding to this request. The outcomes of the national workshops are also important inputs to the ongoing national policy reviews as articulated by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations in Geneva, during her closing remarks at the national workshop for the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, at the Rwanda workshop the Minister of Trade and Industry underscored the importance of the workshop given the fact that it was taking place around the time that the Ministry was revising its trade and industrial policies and so would provide useful inputs into the process.

408. A third area of achievement is the sensitization of local stakeholders on the need to integrate gender issues into the productive transformation agenda both at the design and implementation stages. Gender and its role in effectively developing productive capacities was a core issue addressed in both national workshops for Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania. During the national workshops, it was evident that more work needed to be

done to assist both countries on how to make gender work better for productive transformation. UNCTAD responded to this challenge by preparing and sharing with the Ministries of Trade and Industry in both countries a comprehensive paper on “Harnessing Gender Potential for Productive Capacities Development: A Comparative Study of Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania.”

409. Partnerships played an important role in the implementation of the activities carried. At the national workshops, UNCTAD collaborated with several national, regional and international organizations. For example, there were presentations by the following institutions: the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office; UNDP; UNIDO; UNECA; UNWOMEN; AfreximBank; and the African Development Bank. UNCTAD was also able to mobilize stakeholders from the private sector and other relevant agencies to contribute to the discussions. The involvement of a broad range of stakeholders from various government departments and the private sector provided a platform for exchange of views between the public and private sector, which is an important step towards enhancing policy coherence at the national level.

2.4 *European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II*

410. **Development context.** Angola is an LDC whose economy – while having grown fast in the previous decades – is characterized by overdependence on extractive sectors, weak productive capacities and lack of structural economic transformation. The COVID-19 pandemic has further deepened and exacerbated the country’s trade and development challenges.

411. In 2019, Angola had a GDP of \$88.8 billion which put it in the top 10 African economies and the top 75 world economies by income. However, by 2020, the GDP of Angola fell to 62.3 billion continuing a steep downward trend experienced since 2015. This can be partially attributed to a collapse in international oil demand and prices (the country’s main export) with GDP in oil-exporting countries having contracted by 1.5 per cent in 2020. Furthermore, FDI in Angola has been especially volatile since 2013, following a downward trend and predominantly linked to the petroleum industry. Despite recent efforts, key gaps and bottlenecks in the investment climate persist, including a complex system for FDI entry and establishment, burdensome operational regulations, persistence of restrictive business practices and a lack of institutional capacity and coordination

412. In 2021, the population of Angola was projected to be 32,097,671 people. Despite the country’s high GDP, poverty and inequality among its population remain pervasive. In 2018, 88.5 per cent of the population was living on \$5.50 or less per day, and 49.9 per cent were living on \$1.90 or less. Further, in terms of human development, Angola ranks 148th among 189 countries and is categorized in the lower end of the medium human development range.

413. The National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (NPCGA) of Angola (2022), based on the UNCTAD PCI indicates that in terms of productive capacities Angola ranks 183rd globally and 39th in Africa with an overall Productive Capacities Index (PCI) score of 22.16. In comparison with the LDC group of countries, Angola ranked below their average (24.04). There are differences in performances in Angola between the eight different PCI categories. While the PCI is relatively high for energy, it is still lower than the LDC average for structural change, natural capital, human capital, ICT, transport, the private sector and institutions. The country’s score in the human capital category has been steadily increasing, but Angola still performs below its peers. While the natural capital category is overall high performing, it has fallen behind the LDC average and stagnated since 2015.

414. **Objectives and features.** The European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II – a Programme running over the period 2017–2023 – was designed to respond to the above challenges, and it is therefore more topical than ever. The Programme aims to support Angola in its efforts towards structural transformation, identification of potential non-oil export products and diversification of the economy as well as integration into the regional and global economy. It provides training, capacity

building and advisory activities, as well as knowledge sharing and study tour opportunities for Angolan stakeholders.

415. Train for Trade II aims to improve the capacity of Angola in policy formulation and implementation, which is expected to directly contribute to economic growth, diversification of the economy, job creation, poverty reduction, and improved living conditions for the population. It also aims to ensure equal opportunities for women and young people. In collaboration with the national coordinating entity Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MINDCOM), the Train for Trade II Programme works with various ministries, agencies, private sector entities and non-governmental organizations at the national level.

416. The Train for Trade II Programme consists of seven components, including (a) commercial diplomacy; (b) creative economy; (c) Empretec entrepreneurship training and entrepreneurship policy development; (d) national green export review; (e) investment policy review; (f) trade facilitation; and (g) transport and logistics components, and is part of the overall Trade Support Project (ACOM) financed by the European Union, with a total budget of €12 million, of which \$6.3 million has been allocated to the Train for Trade II Programme, with the additional investment by the European Union in December 2020.

417. **Outputs.** Despite the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Programme continued its activity delivery in online, hybrid and presential format in Angola in 2021. With the partial lifting of internal COVID-19 related measures, UNCTAD was able to implement the remaining four Empretec training workshops in presential format between January and April 2021. These workshops were delivered by the four national Empretec trainers certified by the Programme in 2021, of whom two were also certified as master trainers on that occasion, supported by international master trainers through a video link. In March 2021, the Programme contributed to the Women's month's celebration through a visibility campaign in an Arts Fair as well as a policymakers' workshop discussing women's entrepreneurship and related obstacles. The outcomes of the latter event were codified in a publication contributing to the development of a National Entrepreneurship Strategy (NES) for the country. The NES process was kick-started through a meeting of Working Group leads, with the leadership of the National MSME Support Institution (INAPEM), discussing the mapping of the entrepreneurship ecosystem of Angola drafted under the Programme.

418. Capacity-building trainings were organized with a view to supporting export processes, including on duty-free and quota-free market access and rules of origin; trade facilitation; control and quality in the honey value chain in Angola and public-private partnerships development for transport logistics hubs/platforms. Further, a training of trainers in collaboration with a university in the Huambo province of Angola was organized in view of improving quality control, traceability and certification in the honey value chain. A series of four online trainings was delivered for the cultural and creative industry (CCI) stakeholders of Angola, focusing on governance of the CCIs; entrepreneurship and exports of CCI products and services; international dimensions and cultural diplomacy; as well as cultural tourism.

419. To strengthen the evidence base for policymaking, an impact evaluation was conducted on Angola's accession to the SADC-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement, and several stakeholder discussions and seminars organized in that regard. To facilitate the monitoring of the implementation of the Angola Investment Policy Review recommendations and strengthen national capacities, a meeting was organized to present the UNCTAD live implementation matrix, allowing for real-time updates and exchanges between Governments and UNCTAD on investment policy reforms. Hands-on support is being provided to the investment and export promotion agency AIPLEX to target agriculture subsectors in view of profiling and approaching suitable investors in green national products.

420. The Programme collaborated closely with various other international organizations. In this regard, for instance, UNCTAD provided peer review comments to the World Bank in its process to develop a Diagnostic Trade Integration Study for Angola. The year closed with a meeting of the Ministerial-level ACOM project Steering Committee that among

other issues requested UNCTAD and national implementing partners to produce a productive capacities gap assessment for Angola and a proposal for a next phase of the European Union–UNCTAD support Programme for Angola beyond the currently foreseen project closure in July 2023.

421. **Results and impacts.** Significant progress has been achieved recently in the area of sustainability. A national industry association, Prestígio, has taken over the delivery of entrepreneurship trainings from the UNCTAD Empretec Programme. Mentoring of the institution continues as it will deliver its first training activities independently with the four national trainers trained by the Programme. Two trained master trainers will continue to train additional national trainers for the country, in particular to serve remote provinces. Prestígio is working in partnership with the INAPEM, benefitting from the INAPEM infrastructure for training delivery across the country. Complementing this, UNCTAD is supporting INAPEM to lead the drafting process towards the adoption of a National Entrepreneurship Strategy to ensure a conducive legal and policy framework for entrepreneurship development. The policy drafting is facilitated through a comprehensive process engaging a broad group of stakeholders directly in the policy elaboration process.

422. Simultaneously, progress is being made in the review and consolidation of the curriculum of the National School of Commerce (ENCO) attached to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The status of ENCO was recently upgraded, enabling the delivery of tertiary level training certificates. With this, the Programme works hand in hand with ENCO to develop training modules in support of diversification of the country's economy and exports and the integration of Angola into regional and global value chains. ENCO trainers will be trained to directly deliver such courses meeting international standards.

423. A spring-off of the results of the Train for Trade II Programme, UNCTAD was requested to take up the technical lead position in delivering United Nations system support to the Government of Angola to draft a smooth transition strategy in view of the country's upcoming graduation from LDC status. The analytical pieces required for the process (Vulnerability Profile, Productive Capacities Gap Assessment and a study on the impacts of the COVID-19) were initiated in 2021 and will be presented in 2022 in view of further consultations with the Government and the drafting process.

424. A mapping report of the cultural and creative industries in Angola has been finalized and will be brought to national debates in view of adopting a Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) Strategy. An online training platform has been launched and it is currently delivering trainings in the area of CCIs. A trade facilitation strategy is being drafted while the development of an electronic trade portal to facilitate commerce is being planned.

425. As a follow-up to the honey sector support, an extension services pilot initiative targeting local apiculture producers in the Huambo province is being planned, to be delivered through the local university with UNCTAD's support. A honey sector policy is in preparation in view of helping to kick-start exports. Specific PPP infrastructure projects have been identified and technical support is delivered to prepare the target projects for the appropriate competitive processes and linking with investors. The impact evaluation on the accession of Angola to the European Union–SADC Economic Partnership Agreement has been finalized and the report will be delivered to national policymakers and stakeholders for debates and formulation of national negotiation strategies. Across the board, concerted efforts are being undertaken to identify women beneficiaries and facilitate their participation through various means such as support to transport, facilities, internet access and making time from family responsibilities.

426. Following the results achieved, the European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola was selected as a global Sustainable Development Goal good practice by a United Nations-wide review team led by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Further, the programme's donor and strategic partners, the European Union, pledged support to continue the Programme beyond its current implementation period to help Angola implement its smooth transition strategy and build its productive capacities beyond graduation.

2.5. *Developing programmes to build productive capacities and enhance linkages with China*

427. **Development context.** Many African countries face significant development challenges and have often been unable to harness their economic growth for broader development. Low levels of education and health services, inadequate transport, energy and ICT infrastructure, weak institutions and conflict are some of the challenging factors for many African. Furthermore, their dependence on the exports of few commodities means that the benefits of growth are often highly concentrated in one sector, and that they are vulnerable to external shocks. In the case of landlocked countries, high trade costs compound their existing challenges to achieve market access and make it difficult for them to establish competitive manufacturing industries as a basis for broad-based growth.

428. Overcoming these challenges and achieving inclusive development requires the building of productive capacities, which can support export diversification and structural transformation. The new UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI) provides an analytical tool that can complement qualitative assessments of the most binding constraints to be overcome in each country.

429. In their quest for inclusive development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, African countries may be able to harness their growing trade and investment relationship with China. Total Chinese exports to Africa have grown from \$5 bn in 2000 to \$105 bn in 2018. African exports to China have also increased from \$4.8 bn to \$80 bn over the same period. Similarly, Chinese FDI to Africa grew from \$74 million in 2003 to \$5.3 bn in 2018. Furthermore, in 2013, China proposed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to boost transcontinental integration through improved terrestrial and water routes, accompanied by large investments in infrastructure. Recent analyses have argued that “Belt and Road transport corridors could substantially improve trade, foreign investment, and living conditions for citizens in participating countries” (World Bank, 2019).

430. **Objectives and features.** The project aims to assist eight developing economies in Africa (Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda and Zimbabwe) to harness the transformative potential of Chinese partnership in Africa, including in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, for their economic development.

431. By identifying and analysing the key binding constraints to the fostering of productive capacities and structural transformation in the eight developing countries, the project will assist in multiplying the potential development benefits of the trade and investment relations with China and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The project also assists in developing concrete capacity-building programmes and policy-oriented support to the eight countries to harness closer trade and investment links with China.

432. The planned outcomes of the project will be threefold. First, a detailed analysis of the binding constraints to growth and fostering productive capacities in each of the African developing countries targeted, as well as the identification of key sectors with potential for significant growth and productivity gains, and recommendations for harnessing trade and investment links with China to overcome these constraints. Second, eight country-specific road maps for holistic multi-year technical assistance and capacity-building programmes to support the lifting of binding constraints and fostering productive capacities, as well strengthening sectors and industries with particular development potential. The programmes will draw on UNCTAD expertise across different aspects of development, including investment policy, entrepreneurship development, trade policy, transport and transit policy and automatization of customs systems. Finally, the project will support the capacities of national policymakers to identify binding constraints to development, including through tools such as the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index, and formulate policies to address them, including through partnerships with China and the Chinese private sector, as well as strengthen interministerial collaboration and cooperation with the private sector and NGOs to achieve development objectives.

433. **Outputs and results.** Delivery of the project outputs has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions. However, UNCTAD has taken measures to adapt the project implementation plan and has refocused its initial activities on background desk research to assess the levels of productive capacities in the eight

beneficiary countries by using the new UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index and identifying binding constraints to building productive capacities in some of them. UNCTAD has so far launched studies on the levels of productive capacities and key constraints facing Angola and Nigeria. The studies will also identify policies and measures needed to strengthen productive capacities in the two countries.

434. In addition, UNCTAD sent an assessment mission to formally launch project activities in Kenya in November 2021 followed by a national statistical and policy-level capacity building workshop held in Nairobi from 14 to 17 March 2022. A national policy-level capacity-building workshop was also held in Addis Ababa from 3 to 4 March 2022. These workshops assisted in launching the project which in turn mark the beginning of the implementation of the project in the two countries. Similar activities are planned for Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe before the end of 2022.

3. Trade-related capacity-building in the least developed countries

Trust Fund for the Least Developed Countries

435. **Development context.** Due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on travel, meetings and the movement of goods, services and people, UNCTAD revisited work plans and demonstrated flexibility and agility in reorganizing planned activities. Although the funds were not used in 2021, UNCTAD also undertook a number of activities virtually through innovative collaboration platforms to maximize the connections with member States throughout the pandemic.

436. **Objectives.** Drawing upon longstanding UNCTAD expertise, the Trust Fund aims to assist beneficiary countries in increasing their capacities to achieve accelerated economic growth and sustainable development. The Trust Fund is used to provide technical cooperation assistance and advisory services to those LDCs that request for it in the following areas: productive capacities building; strengthening export supply capacities at the national level, to produce tradeable goods and services on a competitive bases; supporting the Angola Train for Trade II programme; providing trade-related and resilience-building support to those geographically vulnerable LDCs; supporting graduation; conducting research on how best to develop and maximise trade development strategies in the LDCs; among others.

437. **Outputs.** Following the launch in February 2021 of the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI), UNCTAD undertook a series of briefings and statistical workshop for member States in Geneva, New York, Bangkok and Addis Ababa to explain the policy relevance of the new tool, share the innovative resources (including the online database available in the UNCTADstat database and interactive website⁶⁸). These sessions were held virtually to maximize the number of international participants and to facilitate the hands-on demonstration of the statistical tools and resources.

438. Please see the following activities:

(a) 30 August 2021 — High-level webinar on productive capacities-induced structural transformation: On the road to “graduation with momentum”,⁶⁹

(b) 26 May 2021 – UNCTAD XV pre-event: Productive capacities for the new decade;⁷⁰

(c) 11 May 2021 – “Building productive capacities for sustainable development in the LDCs”,⁷¹

(d) 19 February 2021 – UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI) - Briefing for UNCTAD member states;⁷²

⁶⁸ <https://pci.unctad.org>.

⁶⁹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/high-level-webinar-productive-capacities-induced-structural-transformation-road-graduation>.

⁷⁰ <https://unctad.org/meeting/unctad15-pre-event-productive-capacities-new-decade>.

⁷¹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/building-productive-capacities-sustainable-development-lfdc>.

(e) 16 February 2021 – Building productive capacities for sustainable development in the least developed countries: Briefing for New York-based member States.⁷³

439. Following the 2021 Triennial Review of the list of least developed countries by the United Nations Committee for Development Policy, UNCTAD undertook a series of virtual national workshops and dialogues with member States towards the formulation and implementation of a post-graduation strategy.

440. A “Capacity development workshop for the national technical committee on LDC graduation in Senegal” was held on 1 December 2021.⁷⁴ The workshop, jointly organized with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Senegal and the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) Secretariat at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, targets primarily senior officials and members of the technical committee on LDC graduation.

441. The purpose of the workshop was threefold:

(a) To present the findings of *The Least Developed Countries Report 2021* and its implications for Senegal;

(b) To enhance the understanding of LDC graduation process;

(c) To pave the way for better preparedness to achieve graduation with momentum.

442. This event has been followed by a series of other capacity development workshops – scheduled to take place in 2022 in collaboration with the CDP Secretariat and other relevant entities – addressing specific facets of the LDC graduation process and related impacts. The choice of the specific topics is demand-driven and geared towards enhancing the institutional capacities of the inter-ministerial technical committee on LDC graduation.

443. A “Webinar on the Least Developed Countries Report 2021 in the context of the graduation of Zambia” was held on 25 November 2021.⁷⁵ It was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office.

444. The country’s economy was hard hit by the COVID-19 crisis, which aggravated the foreign debt situation and eventually led to the default of November 2020. The country needs to strategically direct its investment in the development of productive capacities so as to recover from the current slump. At the same time, this should allow it to achieve the diversification of the economy and the upgrading of the productive structure over the medium term. Zambia needs to design and implement a strategy for graduation with momentum in the run-up for the likely exit from the LDC category later in the present decade.

445. This event provided an occasion for discussion and yielded elements that will contribute to national debates. Stakeholders involved in the development process of Zambia, especially the national Government, press, researchers, civil society and development partner institutions were invited to participate.

446. On 7 December 2021, a workshop to present the findings of *The Least Developed Countries Report 2021* and its implications for the Comoros was held. ALDC’s activities aimed to promote policy dialogue between national policymakers and UN System officials. This is especially important in the context of the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, the country’s slow pace of development of productive capacities and the forthcoming start of the processes around the country’s graduation from the LDC category towards graduation with momentum.

72 <https://unctad.org/meeting/unctads-productive-capacities-index-pci-briefing-unctad-member-states>.

73 <https://unctad.org/meeting/building-productive-capacities-sustainable-development-least-developed-countries-briefing>.

74 See <https://unctad.org/meeting/capacity-development-workshop-national-technical-committee-ldc-graduation>.

75 See <https://unctad.org/meeting/webinar-least-developed-countries-report-2021-context-zambias-graduation>.

447. As a follow-up, three workshops in support of the Comoros were held on 8 December 2021 in Mohéli and Grande Comore and on 10 December 2021 in Anjouan. They targeted primarily the academic and research communities of the Comoros.⁷⁶

448. UNCTAD also undertook analytical research on the manufacturing sector in graduating Asian LDCs, in particular the textiles and clothing manufacturing subsector. UNCTAD has prepared a series of studies on the impact of graduation from the LDC category on the textiles and clothing sector of graduating Asian LDCs and its indirect impact on other countries and actors participating in the global value chain of these goods. This is a joint study of UNCTAD, CDP Secretariat, WTO and ITC, with inputs from UNIDO. UNCTAD undertook especially the following activities:

- (a) Preparation of a study from the global value chain perspective;
- (b) Preparation of a firm-level study – ALDC contributed to the preparation of firm-level questionnaires to be applied to companies producing textile and clothing in Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Nepal.

449. **Results.** As a result of UNCTAD support, key stakeholders from LDCs, based in Geneva, New York, Addis Ababa and beyond are more informed of the policy issues and challenges facing their countries in the development, maintenance and utilization of productive capacities.

4. Mobilizing financial resources for development

4.1. *Response and recovery: Mobilizing financial resources for development in the time of COVID-19*

450. **Development context.** The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the economic, financial and debt vulnerabilities of low-income and middle-income developing countries (LICs and MICs), leaving their economies ravaged and floundering, and potentially undoing progress made toward sustainable development and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

451. In face of these challenges, the project “Response and Recovery: Mobilising financial resources for development in the time of COVID-19” responds to a call to action by the United Nations General Assembly, made in its resolution 74/270, adopted on 3 April 2020, that calls upon the United Nations system, under the leadership of the Secretary-General, to work with all relevant actors in order to mobilize a coordinated global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its adverse social, economic and financial impact on all societies.

452. The project is linked with many Sustainable Development Goals. It focuses on the mobilization of financial resources for development, one pillar of Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals), specifically targets 17.1, 17.3 and 17.4. Moreover, a successful response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is required for attaining environmentally sustainable economic growth with decent work and simultaneously reducing inequalities. Therefore, the project is also linked to Sustainable Development Goals 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities) and 13 (climate action).

453. The project also contributes to the enhancement of human rights in general and to the achievement of gender equality (Sustainable Development Goal 5). The design of effective policy strategies to face the COVID-19 crisis is crucial to protect the lives of all human beings, hence averting a human rights crisis. Yet, economic crises and the consequent rise in unemployment jeopardize, in particular, gender equality. Women and girls disproportionately work in insecure and precarious labour markets and in the informal sector, earning and saving less, which puts them at greater risk of falling into poverty. In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, women have also been harder hit because of their

⁷⁶ See <https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-unctads-least-developed-countries-report-2021-context-graduation-comoros> and <https://unctad.org/meeting/workshops-least-developed-countries-report-2021-and-outlook-development-comoros>.

representation, together with the youth in service sectors such as tourism. Moreover, the impact of the reallocation of resources and priorities (e.g. sexual and reproductive health services) on their health as well as the increase in unpaid care work, with children out of school, heightened care needs of older persons and overwhelmed health services all working to burden rather than empower them. Last but not the least, during lockdowns, domestic violence has spiked, leading to further oppression and dislocation of women in society.

454. The initiative, under the coordination of the Debt and Development Finance Branch (DDFB) of UNCTAD, brings together UNCTAD and the regional commissions for Africa (ECA), Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), ensuring global reach and regional presence as well as international cooperation and expertise sharing. Each of the regional partners is engaged in mutually enhancing workstreams.

455. UNCTAD provides diagnostics on the COVID-19 pandemic fallout on the macro-financial conditions and debt vulnerabilities of selected LICs and MICs to strengthen their capacity to design responses to the pandemic aligned with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

456. These diagnostics build on UNCTAD expertise in (a) designing global macroeconomic scenarios through the Global Policy Model (GPM); (b) assessing developing countries' financial conditions based on the Financial Conditions Indicator (FCI); (c) analysing the external and public debt capacity of countries to meet the most significant Sustainable Development Goals; and (d) elaborating proposals for improving the international debt restructuring architecture and promoting soft-law principles for responsible borrowing and lending. The project enhances UNCTAD expertise that stems from both the analytical work on macro-financial and debt issues and the intergovernmental work on Financing for Development (FfD) of the Division of Globalization and Development Strategies

457. **Objectives and features.** The objective of the project is to strengthen diagnostic and policy design capacity of the relevant macroeconomic, fiscal and debt financing authorities in selected LICs and MICs in order to respond appropriately and innovatively to the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure a recovery that enables the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

458. The project is organized through three related and mutually supportive thematic clusters that address key macro-financial, fiscal and debt issues arising from the COVID-19 crisis. As an ongoing legacy, the project has a web-based virtual knowledge platform with information on its outputs accessible by member countries and the public.

459. Cluster one, "Macro-financial needs assessments and possible policy responses to the COVID-19 shock", provides an analysis of the COVID-19 pandemic fallout on the macro-financial conditions of developing countries in general, with special attention to LICs and MICs, through three workstreams that assess (a) how the global macroeconomic developments are likely to affect developing countries – based on the UNCTAD Global Policy Model (GPM); (b) the liquidity options available to developing countries in terms of the Global Financial Safety Net (GFSN) – the set of global, regional and bilateral institutional agreements that provides temporary liquidity response in times of financial crises – and effective use of these options on the global, regional and bilateral level – based on the GFSN tracker; and (c) the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the financial conditions of developing countries - based on the new generation Financial Conditions Indicator (FCI) that defines economically meaningful clusters and provides a useful diagnostic tool especially for MICs and LICs with data inadequacies. The main aim of this cluster is to provide diagnostics to design responses to the pandemic aligned with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

460. Cluster two, "Making debt work for development", focuses on sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic given existing and accumulating debt vulnerabilities of selected beneficiary countries. This cluster is organized in three workstreams that provide (a) a Sustainable Development Finance Assessment (SDFA) framework to analyse the development finance needs of beneficiary countries to achieve Sustainable Development

Goals 1-4 without jeopardizing external financial sustainability and external and public debt sustainability. This framework takes as point of departure UNCTAD Gap-analysis tool and goes beyond standard Debt Sustainability Assessments (DSAs) because its focus is on the development finance requirements for sustainable development and considers all sources of external financing; (b) assessment of current initiatives and proposals to address unsustainable debt burdens in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, (c) recommendations on revitalizing UNCTAD (2012) Principles of Promoting Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing in a national and international context; and (d) exploration of innovative financing instruments and other initiatives developed during the Financing for the Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond Initiative (co-convened by Canada, Jamaica and the United Nations) to alleviate the liquidity constraints and debt burdens facing many member States in Latin America and the Caribbean.

461. Cluster three, “Macroeconomic and fiscal strategies to recover from the COVID-19 crisis”, focuses on policy recommendations for recovery for beneficiary countries. Its three workstreams provide (a) policy recommendations on capital account management measures for developing countries and a macroprudential policy options for beneficiary countries in Latin American and the Caribbean; (b) a tax policy framework for beneficiary African countries; and (c) policy recommendations on balanced and inclusive fiscal policy package for beneficiary countries in Asia and the Pacific.

462. **Outputs.** The project was finished in June 2022. It has already delivered almost all practical tools, research papers and other outputs. UNCTAD work mainly focuses on cluster one (Macro-financial needs assessments and possible policy responses to the COVID-19 shock) and cluster two (Making debt work for development). Specifically, UNCTAD delivered in 2021 the following outputs:

- (a) Final extension and modification of GPM model and scenarios, including expert consultation on the model;
- (b) A policy brief on the inequalities in selected developing countries exacerbated through the COVID-19 crisis;
- (c) A policy brief on the challenges to generate decent employment in selected developing countries after the COVID-19 crisis;
- (d) A research paper discussing the impact of a resurgence of trade and investment agreements, especially between advanced and developing countries;
- (e) A research paper on global climate adaptation;
- (f) An African country study based on GPM output and other analysis;
- (g) A real-time GFSN tracker of the liquidity options and use of these options on the global, regional, and bilateral level for all United Nations member countries during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (h) A review of the FCI tool;
- (i) Expansion and application of the FCI tool to data defined clusters;
- (j) Refinement of SDFA framework and pilot test on Ethiopia. This involved utilising publicly available data from the country. This identified various data constraints of developing countries which needed to be taken into account in the SDFA framework.
- (k) Peer review of method and applicability of the SDFA framework by three international experts in November 2021 in which they gave feedback, made suggestions and evaluated the work so far;
- (l) Online workshop on “Enhancing understanding of external financial liquidity and sustainability: Global Financial Safety Net Tracker and Sustainable Development Finance Assessment” held on 13 April 2021. Eighteen researchers and policymakers attended. Six further capacity-building activities are to be delivered during the first half of 2022.

463. **Results.** In 2021, UNCTAD had delivered key outputs for the achievement of project outcomes. Within cluster one, the forward-looking policy scenarios and research

papers based on the expanded and updated version of the GPM as well as the GFSN tracker and the new generation FCI have contributed to enhancing the capability of beneficiary developing countries to undertake macro-financial needs assessments as well as to identify possible policy responses to the COVID-19 shock, considering pre-COVID funding gaps, current global challenges and the 2030 Agenda. Cluster two has provided the first version SDFA framework, the pilot test on Ethiopia (which helped identify data constraints for developing countries) and a peer review of the SDFA framework by three international experts. The suggestions of the expert panel were considered in the final version of the framework, which was then applied to two beneficiary countries, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The point is to enable them to identify their funding and investment needs to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 1 through 4 without jeopardizing external financial sustainability and external and public debt sustainability. These have been conveyed to the relevant authorities and feedback has been received. The final delivery of the SDFA is a policymakers' dashboard. After the conclusion of the project, the SDFA framework will continue to be improved and will be one important tool for the DDFB work on research, consensus building and technical assistance related to debt and development finance.

4.2 *United Nations joint programme Haiti in Crisis: A National Consultation on Reform Priorities and Financing Options for Accelerated Sustainable Development Goal Achievement*

464. **Development context.** The development landscape in Haiti is highly challenging. About 6 million Haitians out of the total population of 11.3 million live below the poverty line. This figure is only marginally better than at the start of this Millennium, and the limited progress is expected to have been entirely eroded as a result of the most recent crises. Haiti had set an objective of becoming a middle-income country by 2030, with extreme poverty then at 3 per cent. Considering demographic growth, it would require the country to grow at 7 per cent per year from now on to reach this target. Since the formulation of the Plan, growth has been just above 1 per cent in the better years, and negative as of 2019. After two successive years of negative GDP growth (mainly as a result of uninterrupted expressions of wide-spread discontent), 2020 saw an additional and major impact of COVID-19 on the economy, with the economy estimated to have lost between 4 to 5 per cent of its value in 2020.⁷⁷ The GDP of Haiti was at \$8,290 million (current United States dollars) in 2019. The country's exports are highly concentrated, with 86 per cent of merchandise exports in textiles mainly targeting the United States market.⁷⁸

465. The February 2020 Integrated Strategic Framework for Haiti, as requested by the Security Council, underlines the importance and urgency for Haiti of addressing the development financing challenge. This includes structural, policy and reform issues. The important responsibility assigned to the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies en Haïti or BINUH), in terms of the Secretary-General's Special Representative's and Deputy Special Representative's "Good Offices" function, provides a major value added to the capacity of the United Nations system in Haiti to advocate for – and obtain commitment towards – those policy change and reforms imperatives, and is thus particularly important and timely for this project.

466. **Objectives and features.** The project will help Haiti to assess financing options for National Sustainable Development Goal Strategy achievement and to formulate and implement comprehensive action plans and, where required, policy reforms to mobilize such funding in a way that is best aligned to national Sustainable Development Goal strategy goals.

467. While the project implementation will be, on the United Nations side, co-led by UNDP and UNCTAD, the entire Haiti UNCT, as well as non-resident agencies with a particularly strong mandate or expertise in this subject area, will be associated with the project and under the leadership of the Regional Coordinator, as co-implementing partners

⁷⁷ Haiti in Crisis: A National Consultation on Reform Priorities and Financing Options for Accelerated Sustainable Development Goal Achievement.

⁷⁸ UNCTADstat database.

or by sharing their accumulated global and Haiti-specific relevant expertise and lessons learned.

468. The project will ensure a broad-based national consultation in defining strategies, priorities and goals, as well as regular exchange with other key partners from the private, the non-governmental or financial sector, multilateral development banks and international partners.

469. At project end, the continuation of regular strategy updating will be fully institutionalized and capacities to support this strengthened. A strong, Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE)-coordinated monitoring and evaluation capacity will be developed, in close association with the Ministries of Economy and Finance, of Commerce and Industry; of Agriculture; of Social Affairs and Labour and others, so as to ensure continuous and joint assessment and strategic updating of financing strategies as well as the fullest possible contribution of all mobilized financing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

470. UNCTAD contribution focuses on exploring and stimulating the potential of the private sector to become a stronger pillar generating funds for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals in Haiti.

471. **Outputs.** After significant delays due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political and security situation in Haiti, the project was formally launched at an event bringing together all stakeholders on 6 May 2021. The Acting Secretary-General of UNCTAD conveyed UNCTAD commitment to Haiti and the project through a video-recorded message, which was played at the event.

472. Despite continued political turmoil (including the assassination of the incumbent President on 7 July) and natural disasters in Haiti, project implementation was scaled up significantly in the last quarters of 2021. UNCTAD completed its analytical study on the potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Haiti, which was published in early 2022. In addition, UNCTAD launched three substantive studies to support the National Sustainable Development Goal Financing Framework in Haiti: (a) a study of the potential of the national economy to support greater domestic resources mobilization; (b) an assessment of the levels of productive capacities in Haiti; and (c) an analysis of the potential of harnessing innovative financing for the development of Haiti. The studies are expected to be finalized by the third quarter of 2022.

473. **Results.** The UNCTAD study on the potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Haiti has been published and will be disseminated and discussed at a national workshop in June 2022. All other studies are expected to be discussed in a national workshop in the second half of 2022, to support the national financing strategy.

III. Theme C: Fostering economic efficiency, improving governance

474. Efficient market and effective and development-focused States are indispensable for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The market can play a useful role in the allocation of resources. However, without proper regulatory mechanisms, there are risks of market failures including abuses of monopoly power, negative externalities and inequality. It is the role of the States to correct market failures, create an enabling legal, regulatory and institutional framework and provide right incentives for market players to contribute more effectively towards sustainable development.

475. UNCTAD technical cooperation supports developing countries in fostering economic efficiency and improving governance. In particular, it helps to establish pro-competitive regulations, facilitate trade and business by removing bureaucratic barriers to trade and investment, mainstream sustainability into international investment agreements and strengthen statistical capacity to formulate sound economic policies.

476. In this section, nine products under the theme “Fostering economic efficiency, improving governance” are reported on. The reports highlight main technical cooperation activities carried out in 2021 and key results to date. Technical cooperation projects that are pertinent to the aforementioned theme, but not linked with any of the existing nine products in this thematic area are reported on under “C99 Other”.

C1 Voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies

Table C1

Voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/8X/603	Training programmes on restrictive business practices (competition and consumer protection policies)	1986–	Multi-donors

477. **Development context.** UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies allow developing countries to benchmark their legislative and institutional frameworks against international best practices. They also provide an opportunity for reviewed authorities to self-evaluate their enforcement performance. The exercises are conducted using an interactive peer review method that promotes knowledge-sharing between competition authorities, on the one side, and consumer protection authorities, on the other side, at the regional and international levels, enhances informal cooperation networks and encourages both North–South and South–South cooperation.

478. **Objectives and features.** The reviews assess the features of the legal and institutional frameworks, the enforcement record and the perceptions of these laws and policies by relevant stakeholders. The reviews identify major procedural, administrative, and legislative changes that might be necessary for a more effective law enforcement and for the optimum functioning of the competition and consumer protection authorities. They provide insights into country-specific constraints, including political and economic challenges that restrict effective enforcement of the laws in question. The reports serve as a basis for the peer review examination during the annual meetings of the UNCTAD Intergovernmental Groups of Experts (IGE) on Competition Law and Policy and on Consumer Protection Law and Policy and during the United Nations Conferences to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices. The presentation and discussion of the peer review report is usually followed by a dissemination of the findings and recommendations in the country and by a technical cooperation project led by UNCTAD to support the implementation of the report’s key recommendations.

479. **Outputs.** In 2021, UNCTAD conducted the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Chile as well as the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Malawi. Moreover, UNCTAD welcomed the requests for the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Thailand and the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Bangladesh, which will be presented and discussed in 2022.

480. *Voluntary Peer Review of Consumer Protection Law and Policy of Chile.* The voluntary peer review on consumer protection law and policy of Chile, the fourth exercise facilitated by UNCTAD until now, was held in July 2021. UNCTAD is the only international organization conducting voluntary peer reviews of consumer protection law and policy.

481. Chile is a country in South America with a population of 17.5 million inhabitants.⁷⁹ It has the highest United Nations Development Programme human development index value⁸⁰ in its region and ranks forty-second globally.

482. The Constitution of Chile does not encompass the protection of consumer rights, however, the Consumer Protection Act (No. 19,496) of 7 March 1997 establishes rules for the protection of consumer rights and mandates the National Consumer Service to enforce them. Act No. 19,496 is supplementary in nature, establishing that its provisions apply only to those aspects of consumer protection that are not covered by sectoral laws. It recognizes the basic rights and duties of consumers, which include: (a) freedom of choice in goods and services; (b) the right to truthful and timely information on goods and services offered, their price, conditions of contract and other relevant characteristics, and the duty to consumers to inform themselves for responsible choices; (c) the right not to be arbitrarily discriminated against by suppliers of goods and services; (d) the rights to safely consume goods and services, and to the protection of their health and the environment, and the duty of suppliers to prevent risks that may affect consumers; (e) the right to adequate and timely redress and compensation for all material and moral damages arising from a breach of any of the obligations assumed by suppliers, as well as access to justice and the remedies provided by law; (f) the right to education on responsible consumption, and the duty to engage in consumer transactions only with established businesses. In addition, it establishes specific rights for consumers of financial products and services, among others.

483. The Consumer Protection Act provides that consumers whose individual, general, collective, or common interests are affected may file individual lawsuits without the assistance of a lawyer before the local police courts. The National Consumer Service, meanwhile, may either initiate proceedings of the same nature before the same courts, acting in the general interest of consumers, or else become a party to any of the suits initiated by a consumer, acting for the benefit of consumers in general. The National Consumer Service is a decentralized public service with legal personality and its own resources. It monitors compliance with the Consumer Protection Act and other consumer-related regulations.

484. Act No. 19,496 was most recently amended by the Act No. 21,081, published on 13 September 2018. This amendment granted the National Consumer Service the following powers: (a) supervisory powers; (b) powers of administrative interpretation; (c) the power to propose legislative amendments; (d) the power to initiate voluntary collective procedures; and (e) the power to evaluate compliance plans.

485. Chile has a sophisticated dispute resolution system that is currently built around two mechanisms, namely, administrative complaints (consumer care platform) and class actions (either voluntary collective procedures or class action lawsuits⁸¹), which are described below. Chile still has work to do before being fully able to offer alternative and out-of-court dispute resolution methods such as mediation and arbitration, including online, for individual disputes.

486. The assessment of the country's consumer protection law and policy concluded that Chile has highly developed and satisfactory consumer protection laws and policies. The institution primarily responsible for consumer protection, the National Consumer Service, is innovative and flexible, and thus capable of adapting to the different needs of citizens and to changing environments. It is very effective in the exercise of its duties, including in providing information to consumers, ensuring the collective defence of their rights, and obtaining compensation for them, and, as a result, has become a benchmark for

⁷⁹ National Institute of Statistics of Chile. Information available at <https://www.ine.cl/estadisticas/sociales/censos-de-poblacion-y-vivienda>.

⁸⁰ United Nations Development Programme, 2019, *Human Development Report 2019. Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century*. Overview (New York).

⁸¹ Class actions are collective or group actions seeking to facilitate consumer damages or remedies. The availability of effective consumer dispute resolution and redress is among consumers legitimate needs addressed by the revised United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (guideline 5, g), available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccplpmisc2016d1_en.pdf.

other authorities. These factors have enabled it to establish a prestigious public profile, both among other public bodies with a stake in consumer protection and among the general public and consumers. In terms of consumer protection, Chile is a leading country in the region and within OECD.

487. The report identified some areas where improvements could be made to strengthen consumer protection, with regard to which various recommendations were formulated. Several recommendations were directed towards the National Consumer Service, as the main consumer protection authority, while others are addressed to the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the Government and the Constitutional Convention.

488. Regarding the legislative framework, it was recommended that considering the inclusion of the consumer protection in the Chilean Constitution, and as part of the constituent process, National Consumer Service should provide technical advice to the feasibility of enshrining consumer rights as fundamental guarantees, based on comparative constitutional law and the particularities of the national system. Also, the legislative and executive branches of the Government should reaffirm the guiding principles of consumer protection law and their cross-cutting applicability to all sectors that have or may have an interest in this matter, especially in the relationship between the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act and the special provisions that affect the protection of consumer rights, ensuring minimum common standards for all sectors. Furthermore, another recommendation suggested participating in the creation and development of consumer regulations, identifying needs in unregulated or underregulated sectors, and developing specific regulations on product safety and e-commerce that take into account the relevant recommendations of OECD and UNCTAD.

489. Other recommendations were issued with a view to improving public policy and institutional framework in the field of consumer protection. They referred to the strengthening of individual dispute resolution mechanisms, promoting the use of consumer arbitration and mediation in areas other than finance and ensuring that arbitration decisions are binding on suppliers, and in this connection, to support the establishment of online dispute resolution mechanisms that would also allow for the involvement of foreign suppliers; and the strengthening of the regular training in consumer protection matters provided for the judiciary by the Judicial Academy and the National Institute of Local Police Court Judges, paying special attention to judges in municipalities with limited human and financial resources and drawing, to the extent possible, on the support of academia. Also, another recommendation was that inter-institutional coordination mechanisms need to be strengthened and implemented by creating a body to coordinate the public policies of all government agencies, with participation at the highest functional level of those responsible for consumer and user protection.

490. Germany, the Republic of Korea and the United States, acting as peer reviewers, raised various questions during the question-and-answer session. They asked the delegation of Chile questions on the surge in consumer claims in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the protection of senior consumers, customer care system, collective redress, channels to convey information to consumers and priorities for research and the strategies for reaching out to consumers. In response to those questions, Chile highlighted the National Consumer Service's (Servicio Nacional del Consumidor – SERNAC) priorities and activities such as the strengthening of complaints handling through emerging technologies, protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers, and consumer education.

491. The UNCTAD secretariat presented a technical assistance project proposal for the implementation of the recommendations, whose objectives are to support the country in improving its legislative and institutional frameworks for consumer protection. In particular, the project seeks to enhance policy coordination among stakeholders and raise capacities of their staff.

492. *Voluntary Peer Review of Competition Law and Policy of Malawi*. The voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Malawi was held in July 2021.

493. The Government of Malawi enacted the Competition and Fair-Trading Act in 1998 and the Act came into effect in 2000, in order to encourage competition in the economy by

prohibiting anticompetitive trade practices, namely vertical and horizontal anticompetitive agreements and abuse of a dominant position, as well as through merger control. It contains provisions on unfair trade practices and on consumer protection. The Act applies to all economic activities within or having an effect within Malawi and does not draw a distinction between regulated and non-regulated sectors. The Act also established the Competition and Fair-Trading Commission.

494. The current supporting policy is provided in Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III 2017–2022, the successor to Strategy I 2006–2010 and Strategy II 2011–2016. During the implementation of the earlier strategies, Malawi recorded commendable growth rates, but these were neither sustained nor inclusive. Phase III provides for the development of new competition policies and legislation and was linked with Malawi National Export Strategy 2013–2018. Notably, the latter recognized competition policy as one of the essential areas necessary to allow the cluster on import substitution, among others, to meet its potential and guideline targets, as outlined in the strategy document.

495. The Competition and Fair-Trading Commission and the Competition Commission of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa are national and supranational institutions dealing with the enforcement of competition law in Malawi. The impact of their co-existence is significant, as approximately 67 per cent of mergers in Malawi are dealt with by the Competition Commission of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

496. The report identified some areas where improvements could be made to strengthen competition policy and law of the region, with regard to which various recommendations were formulated. Those recommendations included the increase of budget and financial resources, the amendment of the current competition law for clearer definition of violations, focus on advocacy component on competition issues, and training on competition and training of trainers.

497. It was also recommended that the competition authority and regulators should be placed under one central ministry in order to avoid competing and conflicting policy objectives and the disjunction between, on the one hand, competition and economic regulation in Malawi and, on the other hand, economic regulation in Malawi and that of the Competition Commission of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.

498. South Africa, the United States and Zambia, and a representative from academia (New York University, Law), acting as peer reviewers, raised various questions during the question-and-answer session. They asked the delegation of Malawi about resources, cooperation, coordination with neighbours in cartel cases, the role of competition policy in the national strategy and whether the Competition and Fair-Trading Commission was well equipped in terms of legal resources, which highlighted the needs to build the technical capacity of the officials and financial capacity, and to increase collaborative efforts at the international and regional levels. It would also help to ease the implementation burden of competition and regulatory authorities as economic entities that serve the same consumers in the economy of Malawi and facilitate the sharing of information and financial and other resources.

499. The UNCTAD secretariat presented a proposal for technical assistance to implement the peer review recommendations on the allocation of resources and the review of the Competition and Fair-Trading Act. The project would aim, in particular, at improving the legal and institutional framework of competition law enforcement to align it with on-the-ground practices and international best practices; and sensitizing key stakeholders in the economy.

500. Regarding the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Thailand, UNCTAD conducted a fact-finding mission to collect data and information; identified the panel of peer reviewers; and is finalizing the peer review report including findings and recommendations on how to improve the consumer protection regime. The final draft is being reviewed for comments.

501. *The voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Bangladesh* will similarly be subject of information gathering from Bangladesh Competition Commission

and from the public and private stakeholders of the country. It should be noted that the peer review being prepared for Bangladesh will include a specific chapter on the relevance of competition law and policy and its effects on economic development and recovery through the promotion of micro and small and medium sized companies. The aim is to broaden the focus of the traditional peer review and to adapt it to the main challenges raised by the economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

502. The presentation and discussions of the reports of the reviews will take place in 2022 during the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy and the twentieth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy respectively, held by UNCTAD.

503. **Results and impacts.** The UNCTAD secretariat outlined two tailor-made technical assistance projects, respectively for Chile and Malawi, for the implementation of the respective peer review recommendations, and invited other authorities and development partners to assist Chile and Malawi in improving policies, enhancing enforcement capacities, and developing a consumer protection and competition culture. Due to the current pandemic situation, UNCTAD already disseminated the findings and recommendations emanating from the review to raise awareness among stakeholders on the importance of the recommended actions, virtually in one case and physically in another case, in September 2021 and January 2022, respectively.

504. Although it is too soon to assess the impact of the peer review in Chile, as legal and policy recommendations take considerable time to be implemented, the Government of Chile already requested UNCTAD to continue supporting the National Consumer Service in technical cooperation and capacity-building, including through specialized training for consumer protection officials.

505. Following the second voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) in 2020, as an ex-post assessment of the first voluntary peer review in 2007, UNCTAD organised a workshop in April 2021 to disseminate the recommendations in order to identify a roadmap and strategies for its implementing.

506. UNCTAD also organised events to disseminate the conclusions and recommendations of the voluntary peer reviews of competition law and policy of Botswana⁸² conducted in 2019.

C2 Business facilitation

Table C2

Business facilitation

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
BHU/0T/HAF ^a	Business Facilitation eRegulations Bhutan (EIF)	2018–2021	United Nations Office for Project Services – Switzerland
CMR/0T/IBH	European Union–Extension du système my business.cm au Cameroun	2020–	European Union
CMR/0T/JBD	E-registrations Cameroon Phase III	2021–	Cameroon
CUB/0T/IAM	SPEED E-regulation	2019–	European Union

⁸² <https://unctad.org/meeting/seminar-competition-and-consumer-protection-botswana-tribunal-members>.

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
LES/OT/HAG ^a	Business Facilitation in Lesotho	2018–2021	Lesotho
LIB/OT/IBS	eRegulation System Libya	2020–	Agence française d'expertise technique internationale
NIR/OT/IAU	Strengthening the Nigeria Trade information Portal (GIZ Germany)	2020–	Germany
TOG/OT/KAM	Renforcement des capacités du Ministère de la promotion de l'investissement (MPI) au Togo	2021–	UNDP-HQ
URT/OT/FBC	UNDAF II, inclusive Growth 2016 DRTF	2017–	One United Nations
INT/OT/6AT	Business Facilitation Multi-donor Fund	2006–	Multi-donor
INT/OT/IBF	European Union-Trade – Establishment of a Trade Facilitation Portal Burkina Faso and Jordan	2020–	International Trade Centre
INT/OT/HCJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2020–	Netherlands
RAF/OT/IAO	UNCTAD – TMEA Cooperation on Trade Facilitation	2019–	Trade Mark East Africa
RAF/OT/ECG ^a	UNCTAD-TMEA Cooperation on Trade Facilitation and Trade and Gender	2016–2021	Trade Mark East Africa
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

507. **Development context.** Simple and transparent government procedures help businesses formalize and grow, integrate into regional trading systems, invest, create jobs, support vulnerable communities and help governments increase revenue. The business facilitation and digital government programme has developed a series of web-based digital government systems to help countries improve their investment, trade and business climates through transparency, simplification and the automation of rules and procedures related to enterprise creation and operations. The programme builds the capacity of government staff to see procedures from the user's perspective, simplify them and place them online. It also helps them to train their colleagues to progressively make entire governments digital, using its easy-to-customize platform that does not require programming skills.

508. The programme helps countries create investment information portals, trade information portals and online single windows. Investment information portals show investors how to register a business and obtain all mandatory licenses step-by-step and with full transparency. Trade information portals show detailed information on import, export and transit procedures and allow countries to comply with article 1, Bali agreement, WTO. For both types of portals, the programme trains and works with national civil servants to thoroughly analyse and document all procedures and then to significantly simplify those procedures by cutting the number of forms, requirements, steps, time, costs, overlaps and redundancies. These can then be automated through online single windows which allow users to create companies entirely online, with one form, one upload of documents and one payment.

509. **Objectives and features.** All tools and services developed by the business facilitation programme aim to make administrations more service oriented, user-centric and efficient, improving the business and investment climate and legal frameworks; lower administrative barriers to business development, in particular for small businesses; and increase domestic and foreign investment and trade, promoting good governance and reducing corruption.

510. The work of the programme contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals: 1.3 (implement appropriate social protection systems), 8.3 (encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs); 16.3 (promote the rule of law); 16.5 (sustainably reduce corruption and bribery); 16.6 (develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions); 16.10 (ensure public access to information); 17.1 (strengthen domestic resource mobilization). The Bridgetown Covenant, paragraph 127 [®] (ii) reinforces the relevance of the programme and calls on the UNCTAD “business facilitation initiatives to assist Governments to improve the business, investment and trade climate, for example, by enhancing transparency and access to trade-related information and regulations and simplification of trade-related administrative procedures”.

511. **Outputs.** In 2021, the programme benefitted over 25 countries and territories. The main outputs include:

(a) Online single windows were launched or expanded with new services in Benin, Bhutan, Cameroon, Cuba, El Salvador, Iraq, Lesotho and Mali.

(b) Investment information portals were launched in Libya, Mexico and Togo.

(c) Trade information portals were launched or expanded with new procedures in the Cook Islands, Cuba, Kenya, Kiribati, Nauru, Nigeria, Niue, Rwanda, Samoa, Solomon Islands, the United Republic of Tanzania, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu and Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania).

(d) Additionally, through a licensing partnership with ITC, trade information portals were launched in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

512. **Results and impacts.** Almost 8 million people visited the information portals worldwide in 2021, an almost 100 per cent increase from the previous year. Furthermore, the programme generated considerable impact on the ground, particularly with regard to the following criteria:

Economic and social benefits

513. In Benin, company registrations increased 91 per cent from 2020 to 2021. Fee income to the Government rose by the same percentage. One third of business owners were women, one half were under 30 and one half were based outside the capital, reflecting the greater ease with which vulnerable populations can access online systems.

514. In El Salvador, company registrations increased 13 per cent from 2020 to 2021. SMEs were also able to register through the system for \$600 million in COVID-19 recovery funds. The assessment and disbursement of the assistance was managed separately by the Government.

515. In Bhutan, by the end of 2021, 52 per cent of those applying to register their cottage industries through the online single window launched earlier in the year were women.

516. In Lesotho, the launch of an online single window for business licenses led to the proportion of women applying for new permits to increase by 31 per cent.

Speed

517. Benin is now the fastest place in the world to register a business online, cutting the time from five days, five forms, 12 documents and long queues to two hours online. This record received international media attention.

518. Bhutan is the fastest place in the world to register a sole proprietorship (cottage industry) online. The time necessary is under one minute. The portal is a big change for the

mountain kingdom's entrepreneurs, who previously had to trek across the Himalayas to one of six government offices and wait for five days for registration.

Transparency

519. Altogether, UNCTAD information portals document 8,000 procedures, with approximately 3,000 steps, 52,700 forms and requirements, 6,099 norms and laws accessible online and over 8000 civil servants and entities with contact data. In 2021, almost 8 million people visited the information portals worldwide, a 100 per cent increase from 2020.

520. The Libya investment information portal gives step-by-step information on 15 procedures related to business creation and operation.

521. The Mexico investment information portal documents 46 procedures related to business creation and operation.

522. The Togo investment information portal documents 35 procedures.

Simplification and harmonization

523. Several countries have eased trade as a result of clarification through the eRegulations/trade portal systems and trade- and investment-related procedures' simplification programmes implemented with respective government agencies.

524. In Kenya, 50 trade-related procedures are now undergoing simplification (eight more than in 2020)).

525. In Libya the number of steps for registering a company went down from 31 to 19 and the requirements from 65 to 30. The total processing time went down from 35 days minimum to 7 days maximum.

526. In Rwanda, 31 trade-related procedures are now undergoing simplification (three more than in 2020).

527. In Togo, 15 investment procedures are under simplification. They will be automated through a new online single window, reducing the administrative burden by at least 70 per cent.

528. In Uganda, 19 new procedures underwent simplification, leading to the elimination of nine more steps and the transformation of 19 steps from physical to online ones.

529. In the United Republic of Tanzania, 17 more steps and 18 more documents were eliminated.

530. In the East African Community countries, the simplification programmes gathered speed and expanded in their scope under the auspices of the national trade facilitation committees.

Automation

531. The eRegistrations system is an e-government system, designed to set up electronic single windows and computerize simple or complex administrative procedures.

532. In Bhutan, entrepreneurs can fill in a form on their phone and receive their business documents by email, all at no cost.

533. In Cuba 12 new services were developed in the Cuban Electronic Single Window for Foreign Trade. They will be made available to the public in 2022.

534. In El Salvador, 10 new services were launched, allowing national and foreign investors to register and operate for Free Zones and gas trading companies.

535. In Iraq, entrepreneurs can register simultaneously with five mandatory registries and pay online.

536. In Lesotho, online business licensing through eRegistrations was extended to new operations such as renewal, transfer or modification of a business licence.

537. In Mali, the Investment Promotion Agency delivered its first electronic certificates authenticated with QR code.

Exchange of good practices and South–South cooperation

538. National experts in Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cuba, El Salvador, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania have trained civil servants of their countries or provinces on the use of UNCTAD business facilitation tools and methodologies. Experts from El Salvador and Guatemala presented their country's experience and trained officials in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

539. A delegation from Burundi visited the one-stop shop for business creation in Benin to understand the simplification and automation of procedures through eRegistrations. Representatives of Lesotho introduced the eRegistrations platform to the one-stop shop for business creation in Namibia.

C3 Trade facilitation

Table C3

Trade facilitation

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
PAR/0T/IBT	Strengthening capacity of National Trade Facilitation Committee in Paraguay	2020–	World Bank
INT/0T/HBG	HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Agreement Capacity-Building Programme	2018–	United Kingdom
INT/0T/ICF	HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Agreement Capacity-Building Programme	2020–	United Kingdom
INT/0T/JBI	Strengthening national capacities (National Trade Facilitation Committees) to ensure a coordinated implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	2021–	Germany, BMZ
RAF/0T/IAO	UNCTAD-TMEA Cooperation on Trade Facilitation	2019–	Trade Mark East Africa
RAF/0T/IBO	Projet d'Appui institutionnel à la mise en oeuvre de l'accord sur la facilitation des échanges de l'OMC en Afrique Centrale	2020–	African Development Bank
RAS/0T/HAQ	Transparency in Trade Regulation and Facilitation in PACER Plus	2018–	Australia, New Zealand
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account

540. **Development context.** The main objective of trade facilitation is to make cross-border trade of goods simpler, faster and cheaper, while maintaining efficient compliance controls such as ensuring collection of duties, taxes, and observing product standards. Thus, trade facilitation has over recent years been recognized as a key element to assist not only

in national trade policy but also as an important element in the national development framework.

541. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of trade facilitation gained further momentum over the last couple of years. Digital, paperless and electronic trade facilitation solutions became important tools to ensure that cross border trade could continue to flow, while at the same time ensuring that the transmission of the coronavirus was minimized.

542. The focus on trade facilitation came to the fore since the entry into force in February 2017 of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). To date 154 of the 164 Member countries of WTO have ratified the agreement and are implementing the obligations contained therein. The agreement aims to reduce trade transaction costs and bureaucratic barriers, speeding up clearance procedures for the cross-border trade of goods, thereby making trade easier, faster and less costly. The alignment of national and regional rules with the multilateral trade facilitation framework, for example through adoption and implementation of regional and subregional trade agreements, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, is instrumental to achieving a harmonized global trade facilitation system.

543. Trade facilitation reforms are associated with several Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 10, aiming at reducing inequality within and among countries, and Goal 16, which promotes inclusive societies, with access to justice for all and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. UNCTAD work supporting national trade facilitation committees (NTFCs) directly supports the compliance with article 23.2 of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, as well as target 17 of Goal 17 on “effective public, public–private and civil society partnerships”.

544. Successfully implemented trade facilitation measures not only boost trade but also improve revenue collection, health, safety and security compliance controls, and they can also assist in making government agencies more efficient. Trade facilitation reforms help small cross-border traders, often women, in particular to enter the formal sector, make international trade procedures more transparent and accountable, promote good governance, generate better quality employment, strengthen information technology capabilities and generally modernize societies by bringing about benefits related to administrative efficiency. These reforms are also a prerequisite for developing countries and LDCs to join global value chains and start trading out of poverty.

545. **Objectives and features.** The Trade Facilitation Programme of UNCTAD aims at enhancing trade facilitation processes and the competitiveness of developing countries, including LDCs, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Its goal is to ensure an increased implementation of trade facilitation reforms by developing countries, improving their capacity to comply with international and regional rules and standards relating to trade facilitation, including World Trade Organization commitments and generally benefit from a transparent and well governed cross-border trading environment.

546. To facilitate the implementation of the technical and institutional obligations resulting from the WTO TFA and regional and subregional agreements in this field, UNCTAD assists developing countries, including LDCs, with a range of activities, as follows: elaboration of needs assessments and national and regional trade facilitation implementation plans; assistance with the ratification, categorization and notification of national implementation obligations; development of project plans; advisory services and capacity-building for countries and their national trade facilitation committees (NTFCs); implementation of management, monitoring and evaluation tools for trade facilitation implementation; assistance to roll out transparency tools; general capacity-building and technical assistance on trade facilitation reforms and simplification; as well as assistance with the implementation of trade facilitation measures at national and regional levels.

547. A main feature of UNCTAD technical and capacity-building in trade facilitation is to assist with the establishment and operationalization of NTFCs. The concept and benefits of such committees, that have an important coordination role in trade facilitation implementation, have been known and promoted by UNCTAD for many years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the NTFCs have become even more important entities at national

levels to contribute to and assist in the coordination of implementation of digital and paperless processes that facilitate trade while at the same time reducing the likelihood of contagion by transport workers and border officials.

548. Based on good practices of existing NTFCs, UNCTAD has developed a comprehensive technical assistance and capacity-building programme consisting of a variety of trainings and tools to assist countries in improving decision-making capacity and implementing skills to fulfil their mandate to establish and operate such committees.

549. UNCTAD has developed an intensive professional programme for NTFCs, including the secretariat and members, the so-called Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees. The main objective of the programme is to help the committees to implement, in a coordinated manner, trade facilitation reforms, including the provisions of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, or those of regional or sub-regional agreements and to be able to efficiently manage and monitor implementation.

550. In addition to the Empowerment Programme, UNCTAD provides support at the regional level, including to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus and other regional organizations. As an example, UNCTAD is strategically advising the EAC for several years on the best trade facilitation strategies at regional level and the harmonization of policies at the national level through national trade facilitation committees composed of public and private sectors involved in trade logistics. By the same token, UNCTAD has supported nine economies in the Pacific to enhance the transparency of its trade procedures within the regional Pacer Plus programme.

551. The Trade Facilitation Programme also assists developing countries in the implementation of specific trade facilitation measures. UNCTAD has assisted with the following activities in 2021: establishing a legal framework for trade-related single windows; undertaking simplification of trade-related procedures; training national transit coordinators; establishing national and regional trade information portals for cross-border trade procedures; establishing national monitoring tools for efficient trade facilitation implementation; supporting regional trade facilitation initiatives and supporting countries in implementing trade facilitation measures in response to COVID-19 through so-call rapid scans of trade facilitation preparedness in crisis situations.

552. The success of the programme rests not least on its strong cooperation with other areas of work within UNCTAD, working on the crossroads of trade facilitation with customs automation, e-commerce, e-governance, transport, business facilitation and non-tariff measures, as well as with external partners such as United Nations regional commissions, United Nations country teams, the International Trade Centre, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the World Customs Organization and other international and regional organizations, such as the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation.

553. **Outputs.** UNCTAD technical assistance and capacity-building work in support of trade facilitation in 2021 continued to be impacted by COVID-19. In response to the global pandemic and the restrictions in organizing national training and capacity-building workshops, UNCTAD's trade facilitation activities have moved to a dedicated e-learning platform that can accommodate a stand-alone virtual environment and that can be combined into a hybrid environment for the future. UNCTAD's training courses in trade facilitation have during 2021 been further refined and developed with the assistance of beneficiary countries and additional modules have been added such as for instance the issue of Trade Facilitation and Gender. All training modules are combined with accompanying webinars and tests with subsequent certification of participants. The e-learning is under continuous development and sessions have, so far, been developed in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

554. During 2021, UNCTAD has trained more than 1,000 trade facilitation stakeholders (around 50 per cent of these were women) from 27 countries through its e-learning programme. Participants were members of national trade facilitation committees; secretariat staff and other staff of relevant entities involved with trade facilitation and representing

both public and private sectors. The material prepared by UNCTAD include 150 videos, 60 quizzes, handouts and further readings to support participants in their e-learning journey. Accompanying the 10 e-learning modules, 195 webinars were organized. In these virtual events, international and national experts adapted the key learning concepts to each country's reality allowing trade facilitation stakeholders to dive deeper into each of the topics and solve any doubts they might have.

555. UNCTAD has continued to provide national trade facilitation committees with tangible tools to ensure that the knowledge acquired in the course of the programme is maintained and transferred, thus contributing to the sustainability of the committees. Concretely, this is achieved by supporting countries to develop national trade facilitation road maps, that will be used as multi-annual work plan for the NTFC to steer trade facilitation reforms, irrespectively of changes that might occur in the NTFC membership.

556. In 2021, UNCTAD further rolled-out its Trade Facilitation Reform Tracker tool which provides NTFCs, with a professional online project-management and monitoring tool to manage and track trade facilitation reform and simplification. The tool has in 2021 been implemented in total in 19 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America to better track, monitor and manage their trade facilitation initiatives.

557. The tool has proven to be critical during COVID-19 for NTFCs to continue activities as many of these committees could not hold regular meetings. It enables coordinated inter-agency implementation of priority trade facilitation initiatives by involving stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Also, it automates task distribution, resource planning, team collaboration and reporting, among others. Moreover, the platform's shared workspace facilitates project documentation and allows for systematic knowledge transfer at NTFCs, giving new members access to current and past projects to help them quickly get acquainted with their roles.

558. Every week, UNCTAD experts meet virtually with the NTFC secretariats in the beneficiary countries using the Reform Tracker. Such weekly support is not limited to training users of the tool, but also includes a range of advisory services in the implementation of trade facilitation reforms and simplifications in line with the provisions of the WTO TFA.

559. **Results and impacts.** The UNCTAD refocus moving to e-learning and supporting NTFCs with professional digitalized management tools has been highly appreciated according to the beneficiary countries. Feedback from counterparts confirms that the introduction of the Reform Tracker as a tailor-made solution that effectively helps NTFCs monitor and evaluate the implementation of their work plans.

560. UNCTAD support for national trade facilitation committees brings also tangible policy results. In 2021, one of the countries supported by UNCTAD ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and 51 new notifications were sent to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee by countries that had received UNCTAD technical assistance in the preparation of those notifications.

561. A total of 37 national trade facilitation committees received assistance from UNCTAD for their establishment or formalization during 2021. In the scope of the projects implemented, UNCTAD supported countries in the drafting or implementing key trade facilitation policy documents, such as international standards, legal instruments, procedures etc.

562. One of the main drivers of trade facilitation is transparency. In that regard, UNCTAD has effectively built capacity and dialogue among the national trade facilitation committees with a public-private partnership approach, as well as through the trade information portals. The trade information portals provide traders with the necessary information on trade procedures for export, import and transit operations. These projects are implemented in cooperation by the Trade Facilitation Section and the Business Facilitation Unit. By implementing a trade information portal, the countries not only become compliant with article 1 of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, but also undertake an important step towards the actual simplification of trade procedures. As of 31

December 2021, more than 20 such UNCTAD supported trade information portals are in operation or being developed.

C4 ASYCUDA – Automated System for Customs Data

Table C4
ASYCUDA – Automated System for Customs Data

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/FAK	Support to the Centre of Excellence, Gibraltar	2017–	National Governments
INT/0T/GAE ^a	Projet d'interconnexion des systèmes informatiques douaniers ALISA/PACIR de la CEDEAO	2018–2021	Economic Community of West African States
INT/0T/HCP	Enhancement of the aCITES system	2019–	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
INT/0T/IBB	Enabling PaP and PdP of ocean cargo through digital B2B exchange between ASYCUDA-GIZ	2020–	Germany
INT/0T/IBL	Trade and customs data extraction tool for regular tariff and trade data notifications to WTO	2020–	World Trade Organization
INT/0T/ICD	Evaluation and Improvement of the Regional transit (SIGMAT) interconnectivity in ECOWAS Region	2021–	World Bank
RAF/0T/IAA	COMESA Trade Facilitation Programme	2019–	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
RAF/0T/IAL	Development of extraction tool for trade-related data African Trade Observatory	2020–	International Trade Centre
RAF/0T/IBC	Etude de diagnostic pour l'interconnexion des systèmes informatiques des douanes	2021–	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
RAF/0T/JAA	Implementation of customs inter connectivity on rail between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire	2020–	World Bank
RAF/0T/KAQ	Implementation of ASYATO in selected African countries	2021–	ITC
RAS/0X/0DX	ASYCUDA implementation and support in the Asia-Pacific region	2000–	Multi-donor

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
RAS/0T/1DA	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Pacific (ASMP)	2002–	Japan
RAS/0T/IAK	The Implementation of the Pacific Trade and Customs Harmonization Project	2019–	Australia
RLA/0T/3AD	ASYCUDA Regional Support Centre for the Americas and Africa	2003–	National Governments
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account
AFG/0T/FAM	Second customs reform and trade facilitation (Afghanistan)	2016–	Afghanistan
AFG/0T/HBU	Afghanistan Fiscal Performance Improvement Support Project (FSP)	2018–	Afghanistan
ANG/0T/CBO	ASYCUDA World Implementation in Angola	2013–	Angola
ANG/0T/HCK	Uniqué Trade System - Preparatory Assistance	2021–	Angola
ANT/0T/DBC	ASYCUDA World (Antigua and Barbuda)	2014–	European Commission
ANT/0T/KBC	ASYCUDA World Upgrade in Antigua & Barbuda	2021–	European Commission
ARU/0T/KAY	ASYCUDA World Consolidation at the Aruba Customs and Excise Department	2021–	Aruba
BAR/0T/CAA	ASYCUDA World Implementation in Barbados	2013–	Barbados
BAR/0T/JBM	Electronic single window	2021–	Barbados
BDI/0T/JAE	Déploiement des modules du guichet unique électronique	2021–	Trade Mark East Africa
BDI/0T/TIAJ	Amélioration de SYDONIA World et mise en œuvre du guichet unique	2019–	Burundi
BES/0T/EAB	ASYCUDA Regional Centre for the Americas – Tax Administration of the Caribbean Netherlands – ASYCUDA World support	2015–	Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba
BGD/0T/FAC	ASYCUDA World – ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Asia	2016–	Bangladesh
BKF/0T/EBM	Formation transit SYDONIA	2016–	African Development Bank
CHD/0T/JAQ	Assistance technique pour la migration à SYDONIA World et pour la mise en œuvre de la réforme douanière	2021–	World Bank
CMB/0T/ICG	Migration to the latest available SuiteWorld release and Development and	2020–	Germany

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	Implementation of an enhanced Risk management feature		
DJI/0T/AAS ^a	ASYCUDA World Technical Assistance and Support	2011–2021	Djibouti
DJI/0T/HBX	Projet d'Appui à la Modernisation de l'Administration Publique – Djibouti	2019–	World Bank
DRC/0T/DBZ	Mise en œuvre des Mesures de Performance	2014–	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRC/0T/HCF	Introduction des pratiques modernes de gestion des sites douaniers	2019–	Trade Mark East Africa
ELS/0T/JAN	ASYCUDA World	2021–	El Salvador
EQG/0T/EAM	Mise en place du SYDONI World à la Direction Générale des Douanes (DGD)	2016–	Equatorial Guinea
FIJ/0T/CBF	Computerization of Customs Procedures and Data and Deployment of ASYCUDA World	2013–	Fiji
GAB/0T/DAH	Mise en œuvre de SYDONIA World	2018–	Gabon
GAM/0T/HAJ	Implementation of ASYCUDA World in Gambia	2019–	Switzerland
GEO/0T/JAR	Development and implementation of new computerized transit system of revenue service	2021–	European Union
GUI/0T/BCX	Implementation de SYDONIA World	2013–	Guinea
GUI/0T/JBA	Projet d'interconnexion, étude de diagnostic	2021–	Expertise France
GUY/0T/GAI	ASYCUDA World Implementation in the Cooperative	2017–	Guyana
HAI/0T/DAO	Consolidation of ASYCUDA World and Simplification of Customs Procedures and Operations in Haiti	2014–	Haiti
IRQ/0T/KAA	Iraq: Modernization of Customs	2021–	Iraq
IVC/0T/4BV	Mise en place de SYDONIAWORLD a la Direction Générale des Douanes	2005–	Côte d'Ivoire
JAM/0T/GAS	Electronic Single Window for Trade	2017–	Jamaica
JOR/0T/AAB	Creation of the regional centre of excellence in the Aqaba special economic zone	2011–	Jordan
JOR/0T/JBN	Trade for employment: Accelerating the clearance process through the use of ASYCUDA World	2021–	Germany
KAZ/0T/FBJ	Implementation of the Single Window	2017–	Kazakhstan

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
KAZ/0T/IAR	Provision of Services on Technical Support and Modernization IS ASTANA-1 KAZAKHSTAN	2020–	Kazakhstan
KAZ/0T/IBU	Support and Development of ASTANA-1 Information System of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2020	2020–	Kazakhstan
KAZ/0T/TJBR	Technical support and modernization services for Automated System of Customs and Tax Administration (Astana-1), 2020–2021	2021–	Kazakhstan
KAZ/0T/KAE	Technical Support & Upgrade of IS ASTANA-1	2021–	Kazakhstan
LAO/0T/HBP	Establishment and maintenance of the ASMA	2019–	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LES/0T/HBF	Technical Consulting Services Agreement (Vanuatu ESWS)	2019–	Lesotho
LIB/0T/8AP	Implementation of ASYCUDAWorld in the Libyan Customs Directorate	2021–	Libya
LIR/0T/8CD	ASYCUDA World project (Liberia)	2008–	Liberia
MAG/0T/EAC	Mise en œuvre de SYDONIA World	2016–	Madagascar
MAU/0T/CAD	Projet de Modernisation des Douanes de la République Islamique de Mauritanie	2013–	Mauritania
MLI/0T/KAG	Renforcement de SYDONIAWorld Mali	2021–	Mali
MLI/0T/KBA	Mise en place du module ASYVal	2021–	Expertise France (with European Union Funds)
MOL/0T/JBE	ASYCUDA World	2021–	Germany
NCA/0T/HBZ	Impèlementation de SYDONIA World en Nouvelle Calédonie	2020–	New Caledonia
NEP/0T/GAU	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Asia	2017–	United Nations Office for Project Services
NER/0T/JAL	ASCYCUDA World, phase III	2021	Niger
PNG/0T/DAX	Computerization of Customs Procedures and Data and Deployment of ASYCUDA World	2014–	Papua New Guinea
RWA/0T/HBE	Rwanda Electronic Single Window – TMEA	2018–	Trade Mark East Africa
SEY/0T/BBO	ASYCUDA project	2011–	Common Market for Eastern and

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
			Southern Africa
SIL/0T/GAH	Public Financial Management Improvement and Consolidation Project	2017–	Sierra Leone
SPM/0T/DAF	ASYCUDA World Implementation	2014–	Saint Pierre and Miquelon
SRL/0T/DBT	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Asia	2014–	Sri Lanka
SUR/0T/BAE ^a	ASYCUDA World Implementation in the Republic of Suriname	2012–2021	Suriname
SYP/0T/4BP	Implementation of ASYCUDA World in the Syrian Customs Directorate	2004–	Syrian Arab Republic
TIM/0T/HCR	Implementation of the Trade Single Window System for Timor-Leste (TL-TSWS)	2020–	Timor-Leste
TRI/0T/BDD	Strengthening customs management capacity (ASYCUDA World consolidation)	2012–	Trinidad and Tobago
TUK/0T/JAF	Implementation of single window for import and export operations	2021–	Turkmenistan
UGA/0T/HCH	Uganda Electronic Single Window – Phase II	2019–	Trade Mark East Africa
VAN/0T/HBJ	Technical Consulting Services Agreement (Vanuatu ESWS)	2019–	Vanuatu
VAN/0T/KAF	EIF–Vanuatu - ASYCUDA - Customs Declaration System Integration	2021–	EIF Enhanced Integrated Framework
VEN/0T/ICE	ASYCUDA World Support to the SENIAT – Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2021–	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
YEM/0T/8BT	ASYCUDA World Project in Yemen	2021–	Yemen
ZAM/0T/HAU	ASYCUDA World support mechanism – Zambia	2018–	Zambia
ZIM/0T/7AC	Implementation of ASYCUDA World in Zimbabwe	2007–	Zimbabwe
ZIM/0T/JBB	Electronic single window	2021–	Zimbabwe

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

563. **Development context.** The ASYCUDA Programme is directed at reforming, streamlining and automating the customs clearance process, increasing trade facilitation and strengthening the institution in member States and the capacities of its personnel. An efficient and effective customs administration is essential to the welfare of any country as it benefits the national economy by collecting revenue, assists the Government in implementing national and international trade policy, protects the country by combating fraud and the illegal trafficking of prohibited and restricted goods, provides statistical information on foreign trade transactions essential for economic planning and supports international trade needs.

564. The ASYCUDA programme is committed to providing sustained support for development, both in-country and remotely. Over a period of 40 years, it has supported the changing and evolving needs, addressed challenges of the customs administrations of 127 countries and territories, and facilitated their international trade. Having originated as a means to help countries build and utilize the data collected at customs ports of entry through databases, the Programme's scope has gradually widened to helping countries manage their economic and financial analysis and planning, as well as assisting the private sector in doing business and including Partner Governmental Agencies in the automation and streamlining of their procedures. It has also expanded in terms of the customs management functions that it supports, from the initial data capture (now uploaded via the Internet) to assisting countries and territories in monitoring trade crossing inwards and outwards of their borders, interfacing customs with Partner Governmental Agencies for exchange of information, making available trade statistics, measuring institutional and trade facilitation benchmarks, and producing data critical to risk management analysis and enhancing the operational performance of customs and its integrity as an institution.

565. As an outcome of the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the mandate of the ASYCUDA programme is reflected in paragraph 127 (c) of the Bridgetown Covenant, as it was in the Nairobi Maafikiano (paragraph 38 (p)). The document states that UNCTAD should "continue to provide assistance to developing countries to design and implement policies and actions aimed at improving the efficiency of trade transactions as well as the management of transport operations; it should also continue to cooperate with member States in implementing the Automated System for Customs Data" (ASYCUDA). The Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, in document A/C.5/64/L.23, also refers to the programme when it encourages the Secretary-General of UNCTAD "in supporting the strengthening of regional economic integration in Africa by providing, within the allocation to the Conference, technical assistance and capacity-building in the areas of trade, customs and infrastructure" (paragraph 82). In the Doha Mandate, specific reference is made to the programme's work, reaffirming, inter alia, the importance and role of the ASYCUDA programme in supporting developing countries, particularly landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, and in continuing its trade facilitation work. The mandate states that UNCTAD should "assist developing countries, particularly landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries, and some countries with economies in transition, to address challenges affecting their participation in trade from geographical constraints, with a view to improving transport systems and connections, designing and implementing resilient and sustainable transport systems, and enhancing transit infrastructure and trade facilitation solutions", "continue its work in the field of trade facilitation, including the Automated System for Customs Data programme" and "advise small island developing States on the design and implementation of policies addressing their specific trade and trade logistics challenges linked to their remoteness and geographical isolation" (paragraphs 56 (h), (i) and (j)). General Assembly resolution 70/1 recognizes "that baseline data for several targets remains unavailable," and calls "for increased support for strengthening data collection and capacity-building in Member States, to develop national and global baselines where they do not yet exist" (paragraph 57). The resolution also makes reference to the need to "support developing countries, particularly African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data" (paragraph 76). In relation to General Assembly resolution 70/1, it is worthy to note the UNCTAD Automated System for Customs Data Software Suite is being implemented in 38 African countries and territories, 39 least developed countries, 34 small island developing States and 21 landlocked developing countries, which makes it a unique possibility as a base repository for the extraction of trade and customs related data to strengthen statistical capacity and to support trade policymakers.

566. Links to Sustainable Development Goals. the use of the ASYCUDA system by customs administrations contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as explained below:

(a) Goal 1. No poverty: customs' contribution to national revenue through revenue collections, and the subsequent investment of revenues into national development programmes;

(b) Goal 2. Improving the food security and food safety through strengthening Customs and inter-agency controls at the borders, automation of issuance and monitoring of use of phytosanitary and veterinary certificates, integrated quota monitoring for agricultural exports and imports;

(c) Goal 3. Ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being, in particular targets 3a and 3d, by automating customs control of movement of excisable goods/tobacco products with ASYCUDA-DCTS and by strengthening of customs and inter-agency controls at the borders of pharmaceutical products, drugs precursors, introduction of electronic certificates for pharmaceutical goods and their efficient control in the single window environment;

(d) Goal 5. Gender Equality, in particular target 5.5, by respecting gender parity and empowering women in appointment of ASYCUDA staff in the field and, promoting and recommending gender parity and women empowerment in Customs local teams.

(e) Goal 6. Clean water and sanitation, in particular target 6.3, by improving water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, as customs apply in their controls the international conventions of Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm;

(f) Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth: customs make a key contribution to facilitating trade, enabling access to global value chains, innovation and employment opportunities;

(g) Goal 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure, in particular targets 9.1, 9.3 and 9.c: the use of ASYCUDA by customs, which has always combined state-of-the-art advanced technologies with proven in-the-field expertise, ensures an efficient and tailored support to countries thus contributing to their ICT infrastructure development and upgrade, including the simplification of customs processes, sustainable modernization and automation initiatives promoting early taking of ownership by governments which contribute towards lowering the international market's barriers to entry for SME/SMIs, especially in the least developed countries and Africa, and by improving regional and cross-border infrastructure;

(h) Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, in particular targets 11.2, 11.5, 11.b: technical assistance in the area of customs promotes the development of customs and trade infrastructure (ports, logistics terminals, warehouses, supply chains in cities), while the use of ASYREC in disaster-prone countries reduces the loss of lives through implementation of integrated policies and plans increasing resilience to disasters;

(i) Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns: customs make a key contribution through more efficient customs and inter-agency controls over chemicals export and import;

(j) Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: customs administrations using ASYCUDA can improve control for ozone depleting substances. One of the main objectives of implementing ASYCUDA is to reduce the use of paper in Government agencies until disappearance;

(k) Goal 15. Life on land, in particular targets 15.5, 15.7 and 15.c: customs contribute to protecting society from unwanted pests and preventing the flow of illicit wildlife products by applying health and agricultural policies, and the International Plant Protection Convention; customs also help to take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products by applying the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Indeed, in 2019, ASYCUDA

developed in cooperation with CITES an automated solution for endangered species import/export permit application, processing, issuance and reporting;

(l) Goal 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, in particular target 16.5, through the use of ASYCUDA systems, automation of processes and reduced face-to-face interaction, customs contribute to reducing corruption and bribery.

(m) Goal 17. Partnerships for the Goals, in particular targets 17.1, 17.6, 17.8, 17.9, and 17.18, through the use of ASYCUDA system: customs contribute, by applying international standards and trade-related agreements, and by collaborating with other national authorities, countries and international agencies such as the World Customs Organization, to increased efficiency and coordination, strengthened resource mobilization and trade facilitation and statistics, which in turn contributes to ensuring sustainable development. In addition, the ASYCUDA programme organizes a multitude of study tours and technical and functional training sessions for customs delegations to visit and learn from experiences of implementing a new technology and/or a new infrastructure in other parts of the world, directly contributing to North–South and South–South international and regional cooperation, ensuring capacity-building and transfer of know-how.

567. **Objectives and features.** The main objective of the ASYCUDA programme is the modernization of customs and of partner governmental agencies for trade facilitation, using information technology to speed up and simplify the goods clearance process. The ASYCUDA system manages the entire customs clearance process, from (and prior to) the arrival of goods up to their warehousing and ultimate release, after payment of duties and taxes. It includes an advanced risk-management and selectivity function and strong anti-corruption features. The implementation of an ASYCUDA project in a beneficiary country is based on the delivery of a comprehensive capacity-building programme, designed to transfer the full ASYCUDA functional and technical know-how to national staff and to ensure that the national team will be able to administer and maintain the national ASYCUDA system without external technical assistance and support.

568. **Outputs and results.** In 2021, Kiribati and Tuvalu fully deployed ASYCUDA World, the 4th generation of Customs processes management system. Countries such as Barbados, Cambodia, the Gambia, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, the Republic of Moldova and Saint Lucia upgraded their ASYCUDA World systems to its latest version. The Central African Republic, Chad and Iraq started the implementation of ASYCUDA World in 2021 with the development of prototype and additional modules as requested by Customs authorities.

569. Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uganda and Vanuatu deployed new tailored modules to enhance their ASYCUDA-based customs-centric single window systems. For instance, in Burundi, the ASYCUDA-based single window was enhanced to allow for the alignment with new regulations implemented at the Ministry of Health and at the Ministry of Agriculture. In Kazakhstan, system was enhanced with an improved and tailored version of the payment and guarantee management module to allow for a better handling of guarantee and management of deferred payments. In Uganda, additional modules were deployed under the ASYCUDA Single Transaction Portal live environment that include the Diary Development Authority, the pre-export verification of conformity for Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) and the Uganda Free Zones Authority (UFZA) and the exemptions management module used by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Uganda Revenue Authority and the Ministry of Finance.

570. Following the successful launch of the ASYCUDA road transit solution in the corridor Abidjan–Ouagadougou in 2020, the tool was extended in 2021 to automate, manage and control rail transit. ASYCUDA assisted Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire in the development and integration of rail transport interfaces for the exchange of rail transit data between both countries' ASYCUDA World systems.

571. In the Republic of Moldova, ASYCUDA conducted an analysis of the current operational environment and Customs procedures related to express consignments for the customization of the ASYCUDAWorld pre-arrival processing module that facilitates the

submission and processing of electronic manifest pre-arrival (import and export). The solution was then integrated into the operational ASYCUDA World environment.

572. ASYADN, an ASYCUDA World module that enables WTO Member States to fulfil their tariff and trade data notification requirements, was successfully deployed in Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar in 2021.

573. In Togo, revenue collected by the Revenue Authority increased by 20 per cent – from 652 billion XOF in 2020 to 780 billion XOF in 2021.⁸³ The Rwanda Revenue Authority collected 1,654.5 billion RWF in the fiscal year 2020–2021, which shows a 9.4 per cent increase in comparison with 2019–2020.⁸⁴ Through the ASYCUDA-based Uganda Electronic Single Window system, in 2021, 23,070 certificates of origin requests, 10,128 pre-export verification of conformity applications submitted by importers and 760 applications from clearing agencies were processed.

574. The United Nations Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation⁸⁵ assesses trade facilitation and paperless trade in the world and monitors the implementation of trade measures. Afghanistan was rewarded a score of 41.94 per cent in 2021 compared to 15.05 per cent in 2019, with an impressive improvement of transparency in trade (from 40 per cent in 2019 to 66.67 per cent in 2021). Kazakhstan went from 65.59 per cent in 2019 to 72.04 per cent in 2021 with an improvement of the cross-border paperless trade (from 27.78 per cent in 2019 to 38.89 per cent in 2021). The Lao People's Democratic Republic was rewarded a score of 63.44 per cent in 2021 compared to 58.06 per cent in 2019. Zimbabwe was rewarded a score of 39.78 per cent in 2021 compared to 30.11 per cent in 2019, with an urgent improvement of the cross-border paperless trade (from 0 per cent in 2019 to 16.67 per cent in 2021). Gabon, thanks but not limited to the national implementation of ASYCUDA World in 2020, was rewarded a score of 38.71 per cent in 2021 in comparison with 12.9 per cent in 2019. Impressive improvements were achieved in terms of transparency (from 6.67 per cent in 2019 to 33.33 per cent in 2021) and paperless trade (from 7.41 per cent in 2019 to 40.74 per cent in 2021).

575. In 2021, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe customs IT officers participated in an ASYCUDA on-line technical training to better configure and tailor ASYCUDA World to their needs and requirements. In Uganda, 90 classroom training sessions for a total of 546 participants were organized by the Uganda Revenue Authority and ASYCUDA. In the Pacific, more than 400 Customs officers and economic operators were trained on the use, configuration and adaption of ASYCUDA World to the regional and national requirements and regulations.

576. ASYCUDA has been populating its e-learning platform with more content. Indeed, 2 additional courses were added for the efficient use of ASYREC and eCITES systems. New video tutorials were recorded and shared, and the functional documentation was revised and adapted to the latest versions of the systems.

⁸³ See <https://bit.ly/35C831n> and <https://bit.ly/3HmtT7j>.

⁸⁴ See <https://bit.ly/3ue7fu2>.

⁸⁵ See <https://www.untfsurvey.org/>

C5 Statistics

Table C5
Statistics

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/IBJ	European Union-Implementation of the action Better Statistics for Gender responsive Trade Policy	2020–	European Union
INT/OT/IBK	Development of a transport cost database for international trade, with a special focus on international shipping	2020–	World Bank
RAF/OT/BCR ^a	Projet UEMOA-CNUCED pour la mise en place des statistiques du commerce international des services	2014– 2021	West African Economic and Monetary Union
ROA-1617 (AL10)	Developing indicator on illicit financial flows and monitoring them in Latin America	2017–	Development Account
ROA-1819 (Y11)	Defining, estimating and disseminating statistics on illicit financial flows in Africa	2018–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (D12)	Data and statistics for more gender-responsive trade policies in Africa, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (K12)	Statistics and data for measuring illicit financial flows in the Asia–Pacific region	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2124 (A13)	Towards integrated national financing framework	2021–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

577. **Development context.** Harnessing the power of data and statistics is a necessary condition to fully implement and monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. This is true for all areas of sustainable development, and particularly for the areas that are most dynamic and where significant changes can be observed in relatively short periods of time, such as trade and its gender impacts, investment and financial issues. Countries require accurate, timely and relevant statistics that could allow monitoring of trends in these areas and studying the impact of economic policies on inclusive development. UNCTAD Statistics is continuously taking actions to assist developing countries that have decided to improve their statistical capacity in the area of trade, investment, finance, gender in trade and sustainable development.

578. Illicit financial flows (IFFs) stemming from organized crime, trade in illegal goods, corruption and illegal and illicit tax and commercial practices raise serious problems for financing development. They compromise sustainable development by diverting resources from social spending and productive investment and by impeding structural transformation. They may also weaken institutions and the rule of law. These risks have been recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where the reduction of IFFs is listed in Sustainable Development Goal target 16.4. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda also highlights IFFs as a threat to the mobilization of resources for development and calls for a redoubling of efforts to substantially reduce IFFs.

579. Data and statistics have not been collected and produced systematically about how women and men participate in international trade and how it affects them. UNCTAD

statistics projects help countries link national statistical data to develop key indicators of gender-in-trade. These indicators inform gender-sensitive trade policy towards enabling better outcomes for women and men. These statistics can also be used to analyse the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and future crises transferred through trade. Having reliable and comparable statistics on gender and trade is a prerequisite for action and reviewing progress towards inclusive trade policy and equitable economic development as part of the 2030 Agenda.

580. Transport costs have an impact on trade competitiveness. These costs vary significantly across different types of countries. Often, small island developing States (SIDS), landlocked developing countries (LLDC) and least developed countries (LDC) spend more than the average country on international transport and insurance costs for trade in goods.

581. **Objectives and features.** The objective of this product is to enhance the capacity of policymakers and other stakeholders to monitor and report progress along the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on trade and development and the interrelated issues of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. Specifically, the project with the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) has the objective of improving the statistical capacity of member States of the WAEMU to establish a harmonized mechanism of data collection, treatment and dissemination of statistics related to the imports and exports of services.

582. The e-learning and other training activities on trade statistics aim at building national capacities to collect, harmonize, analyse and disseminate statistics related to international trade of goods and services.

583. UNCTAD, as a co-custodian of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1 with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), is carrying out two United Nations Development Accounts (UNDA) projects, one with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and another with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and in collaboration with UNODC, to strengthen national statistical capacities to define, measure and disseminate statistics on IFFs. The outcomes of the IFF-related projects would enhance the data infrastructure required to measure Sustainable Development Goal 16 to promote peace, justice and strong institutions.

584. The Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) which assess the financing of national sustainable development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals at the country level highlights the link between domestic resource mobilization and illicit financial flows. Tax and commercial IFFs undermine tax collection efforts while criminal IFFs divert resource towards security spending.

585. UNCTAD Statistics are contributing to “United Nations Joint Fund Support to Egypt for Integrated Sustainable Development Goals Financing” to develop methods for Sustainable Development Goal costing and support measurement of IFFs to address the financing gap.

586. In a joint UNDA project on gender-in-trade, with ECA and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), UNCTAD is developing member States’ statistical capacity to measure the interplay between gender equality and trade policy with official statistics in a coherent approach. The methodology for doing so was developed in a joint project with the European Commission Directorate General on Trade.

587. UNCTAD and the World Bank conducted a joint project to develop methods to calculate transport mode-specific information on transport costs related to trade in goods leveraging a recent upgrade of the United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics database which now includes information on mode of transport for trade flows.

588. **Outputs.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most statistical project workshops and events were held online. The online format allows less time and space for informal discussions and training. Face-to-face meetings are expected to partially pick up in 2022, facilitating more effective work in the pilot countries. The WAEMU-UNCTAD project started in 2014 and its activities continued throughout 2021. During 2021, UNCTAD Statistics have been working on the final phase of the project – the development, testing

and implementation of an IT system, named TiSSTAT, for collecting, analysing and reporting trade in services statistics. The first version of the system was presented and discussed during two online workshops involving participants from the WAEMU Commission, the national statistical offices of the Member States and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in April and May 2021. The first version of TiSSTAT system was successfully installed within the WAEMU Commission during the week of 20 December 2021. A technical document including, the installation guide, the user and administration guide was prepared and shared. While the project was completed in December 2021, UNCTAD and WAEMU agreed to continue the partnership in 2022 to enhance the system, consolidate the work accomplished and strengthen the statistical capacities of WAEMU member States.

589. The training activities on trade statistics were developed by UNCTAD, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division and the World Trade Organization and delivered as part of the Train for Trade Programme. Two global courses were offered in 2021. The participants of all courses involve statisticians from national statistical institutes, customs offices and different ministries that participate in the collection, analysis and dissemination of international trade statistics. In November 2021, UNCTAD Statistics and the Investment and Enterprise Division co-organized an International Workshop on the Integrated Use of International Trade Statistics and Economic Statistics, jointly with UNSD and the National Bureau of Statistics of China and in collaboration with World Trade Organization (WTO). In June 2021, UNCTAD Statistics and Investment and Enterprise Division contributed to a Workshop on Best Practices on Developing Services-related Statistics, organized by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

590. In 2021, UNCTAD and partners in the projects on IFFs put the “Conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows” to a test reflecting concepts and methods adopted by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators in 2019. In May 2021, UNCTAD published draft “Methodological Guidelines to measure tax and commercial IFFs” that 12 pilot countries in Africa and two in Asia started to test in 2021. In spring 2022, the pilots are expected to provide first IFF estimates and Action Plans towards reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1 on IFFs. In February 2021, the report of the High-level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (FACTI) for Achieving the 2030 Agenda endorsed the concept of IFFs as reflected in the Conceptual Framework.

591. UNCTAD Statistics organized two workshops in September and November 2021 to advance IFFs measurement in Egypt with the participation of many national experts and stakeholders. In addition, an expert group meeting was organised in December 2021 to discuss methodologies in depth. In October 2021 a capacity building workshop in Burkina Faso was organised together with UNECA, for national government stakeholders to assess the role of IFFs for domestic resource mobilisation.

592. In 2021, UNCTAD carried out the first pilot in Georgia with ECE to calculate gender-in-trade indicators, and launched four pilots jointly with ECA in Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal, and Zimbabwe. The pilots benefit from methodologies developed by UNCTAD in the joint project with the European Commission. In 2021, UNCTAD organized and participated in several workshops and events to advance development of better data and statistics on women’s empowerment.

593. The development of the transport costs database in a joint project with the World Bank was a significant milestone in 2021 and will be continued to extend the coverage of years in the database in 2022. This database provides the source for the analysis of transport costs related to international trade in goods, and for the estimation of emissions caused by such transport.

594. **Results and impacts.** The UNCTAD–WAEMU project developed a production system for the compilation of trade in services statistics in UEMOA member States in 2021. The countries have carried out two full surveys to collect data on trade in services and will be able to put in place policies adapted to their national priorities and to the goals of the AfCFTA Protocol in Services towards ‘a single liberalized market for trade in services.

595. In relation to the training activities in statistics (part of the Train for Trade Programme), the training programme on international merchandise and services trade statistics (IMTS) have trained 6,304 participants (49 per cent women) from 204 countries in recent years. These courses have been in a high demand by developing countries with the biggest groups of participants from China (16.6 per cent), Indonesia (7.7 per cent), India (2.7 per cent) and Mexico (2.3 per cent). Since 2019, the participation of developed countries has also started increasing. The satisfaction rate of participants has been continuously increasing, from 76 per cent in 2017 to 90 per cent in 2021.

596. The UNDA projects on measuring IFFs made significant progress over the past year with the publication of the methodological guidelines to measure tax and trade-related IFFs, with the support of the inter-agency task force on IFFs, chaired by UNCTAD. All pilot countries in Africa and Asia have mapped available data and reviewed gaps, assessed national capacity and IFF risks, and established national inter-agency working groups for the measurement of IFFs. First IFF estimates are expected to result from the pilots in 2022.

597. The work in Egypt resulted in an IFF risk assessment and the forming of a national technical expert group on IFFs that brings together national experts from different agencies but also international experts, from UNODC and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) in addition to UNCTAD. UNCTAD Statistics presented the first results of Sustainable Development Goal costing for selected Sustainable Development Goal indicators for discussion with national agencies and all entities involved in October 2021. *Pari passu*, a standing Technical Working Group for the statistical measurement of IFFs was established in Burkina Faso including all pertinent national agencies allowing for better inter-agency cooperation moving forward.

598. The pilot study on gender-in-trade indicators in Georgia confirmed the feasibility of linking existing statistical data for new insights. In addition, participants of online workshops organized with ECA and ECE indicated an enhanced understanding of the links between gender and trade and ways to merge data sources for gender-in-trade analyses.

599. Finally, the UNCTAD conceptual framework for measuring gender equality in trade was taken up by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in 2021, as an example and a priority topic for mainstreaming gender across statistical domains. UNCTAD became a member of an Advisory Group of the Statistical Commission on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective and is co-leading a special group on trade, gender, well-being and inclusiveness as part of the update of the United Nations Trade Statistics Manuals.

600. The newly released UNCTAD–World Bank global transport costs database has created interest among users, such as policymakers, researchers, transport practitioners, and industry stakeholders who analyse transport costs by mode of transport, type of commodity or by trade routes. It was also highlighted in a paper as contribution to the IMF climate change indicator dashboard from the economic perspective.

C7 Enabling accounting and reporting on the private sector’s contribution to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Table C7

Enabling accounting and reporting on the private sector’s contribution to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/BCP	Accounting and Corporate Governance Trust Fund	2012–	Germany
ROA -1819 (H11)	Enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America	2018–	Development Account

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

601. **Development context.** A high-quality corporate reporting environment is a critical facilitator for attracting investment, allocating scarce resources in an efficient manner, and promoting financial inclusion and stability. In the past decades, there has been a clear trend towards the implementation of harmonized global standards and codes by UNCTAD member States. Furthermore, because sustainability reporting is the basis for sustainable investments, the area has gained more relevance with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. At COP 26 the Chair of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation Trustees announced the creation of the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB). This will result in the development of global sustainability reporting standards that will very soon become mandatory for listed companies in many jurisdictions worldwide. Consequently, all countries will have to speed up national efforts to establish or strengthen their regulation and institutions and build technical capacity to be able to respond to the new requirements. However, effective implementation of such standards and codes remains a challenge for many developing countries. Elements that have an impact on the corporate reporting environment include weaknesses in legal and regulatory frameworks, lack of human capacity and relevant support institutions, and obstacles to the adequate monitoring and enforcement of international standards and codes. As such, there is a need for coherent efforts to support capacity-building in the area of corporate reporting, with a view to enabling progress towards the convergence of national corporate reporting environments with global standards and codes, including in the area of sustainability reporting. Member States require tools that facilitate identification of gaps through international benchmarking, the elaboration of action plans for accounting and sustainability reporting reform, and the measurement of progress in priority areas.

602. **Objectives and features.** The work programme of UNCTAD on international Standards on Accounting and reporting is based on the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR). The Group of Experts was established with the mandate to assist member States of the United Nations in harmonizing their accounting and reporting practices with international standards and codes to improve governance of enterprises, enhance transparency, and facilitate international investment and strengthen financial stability. ISAR conducts its activities with the support of the UNCTAD secretariat. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ISAR has been focusing its work on harmonization of companies reporting on their contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts achieves this by facilitating intergovernmental consensus building towards convergence of corporate financial and sustainability reporting and in particular on sustainability reporting frameworks; facilitating international coordination and cooperation with the key players in this area; identifying and sharing good practices; developing practical guidance and capacity-building tools and providing technical assistance on issues related to both financial and sustainability reporting. This work is conducted through the annual sessions of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts, as well as associated workshops and roundtables, research activities and technical assistance facilitated by application of UNCTAD tools, such as the Accounting Development Tool (ADT).

603. The ADT enables beneficiary countries to voluntarily assess their corporate financial and sustainability reporting infrastructure, including their national institutions, regulations, human resources, and processes, against international requirements for high-quality corporate reporting. The Tool promotes an open and constructive dialogue among all stakeholders involved, which is required for conducting successful accounting reforms. It provides a quantitative benchmark of a country's position at a particular point in time and, when implemented more than once, allows countries to assess their progress towards

achieving international best practice. The results of the ADT support the elaboration of national action plans and the identification of priority areas where further action is required in order to improve their corporate reporting environment.

604. **Outputs.** In 2021, in addition to its work with the Intergovernmental Working Group of Expert on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, UNCTAD carried out technical assistance and capacity building activities in the framework of the United Nations Development Account project, Enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America and the United Nations-wide project on Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector.

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

605. The thirty-eighth session of ISAR was held in a hybrid format from 9 to 12 November 2021. Distinguished speakers representing major international players in the area of financial and sustainability reporting, public and private sector bodies, the accounting profession, investors, academia and other stakeholders, discussed progress made and main challenges in improving quality and usefulness of sustainability/Sustainable Development Goal reporting by companies; and trends and good practices in climate-related financial disclosures.

606. In accordance with the agenda, several case studies and research conducted by UNCTAD during the intersessional period, on the practical application of the UNCTAD/ISAR guidance on core indicators (GCI) for entity reporting on the contribution towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals were presented and discussed. In particular, a thorough review of GCI case studies prepared by UNCTAD with companies based in different countries, representing a variety of industries and sizes was conducted during the intersession period and a background document was prepared for consideration by the session. The document contained main findings of the practical application of the GCI conducted over the last two years, including evidence collected through technical assistance activities and research, and recommendations on the possible updates of the GCI. On the latter issue, a consultative group meeting was convened by UNCTAD in March 2021 to identify potential updates to the GCI, based on the findings of the case studies, feedback from beneficiary countries and in response to international trends and developments in this area. It was attended by 40 experts, including key stakeholders in the area of sustainability/Sustainable Development Goal reporting, representatives from beneficiary countries and experts involved in the preparation of case studies, with a view to collecting different perspectives and deliberating on possible updates to the core Sustainable Development Goal indicators. During the thirty-eighth session of ISAR, an issues note containing proposals for updating the core Sustainable Development Goal indicators was discussed and an updated version of the GCI will be finalized in 2022.

607. Preceding the session, on 8 November 2021, a technical workshop was conducted on the impact of COVID 19 on company financial and sustainability reporting, jointly organized by UNCTAD and the International Association for Accounting Education and Research.

608. In addition, the ISAR Honours 2021 Edition was held during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum in October 2021. It highlighted key national and international initiatives on promotion and harmonization of sustainability/Sustainable Development Goals reporting by companies, with a view to raising awareness and disseminating best practices in this area. ISAR Honours recognized six honourees, three within the international category and three in the national. Furthermore, an ISAR Honours video was prepared to further disseminate information about this initiative that recognizes efforts to promote sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting at the national and international levels.

Technical assistance on sustainability reporting

609. In 2021, within the scope of the Development Account project, Enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America, UNCTAD continued to implement the ADT in Guatemala and initiated its implementation in Kenya, which took into consideration new developments in accounting and sustainability reporting, drawing on UNCTAD research into corporate reporting and the Sustainable Development Goals.

610. In Guatemala, Kenya and South Africa, national action plans for high quality sustainability/ Sustainable Development Goal reporting were developed. They provided recommendations and detailed activities to tackle key issues in each country based on the assessment exercise and the gaps and priorities agreed during the national consultative workshop. Moreover, the action plans also benefited from reviews by international, regional, and national experts who made recommendations on how to improve it and ensure buy-in.

611. In Guatemala, on 16 and 23 July 2021, UNCTAD in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy of Guatemala and CentraRSE organized virtual meetings to present, discuss and validate the action plan. The second meeting allowed stakeholders to provide additional comments. Sixty-two participants (30 women) from 29 key institutions participated in the sessions. Before the meetings, a series of bilateral meetings took place with key institutions, with a view to ensuring buy-in and endorsement of the action plan.

612. In South Africa, UNCTAD in collaboration with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) organized a virtual meeting to present, discuss and validate the action plan on 14 July 2021. The meeting was attended by almost 20 representatives (with 44 per cent of women representation) from 13 institutions. To confirm the support of the action plan by all key institutions, UNCTAD organized bilateral meetings including with the DTIC, South African Institute of Professional Accountants, South African Institute for Business Accounts, academia, Statistic South Africa and Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

613. In Kenya, on 26 November 2021, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the National Treasury and Finance, organized a physical meeting in Nairobi to present, discuss and validate the action plan. Twenty-one key stakeholders participated in the meeting (with 57 per cent of women representation). Prior to the meeting, UNCTAD organized bilateral meetings with key institutions to check their acceptance and backing of the action plan, including with the National Treasury and Planning, Professional Accountancy Organizations, Nairobi Stock Exchange and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance.

614. In addition, a workshop on enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Latin America took place from 4 to 8 October 2021. The virtual event was attended by 212 people (126 women) from 18 Latin American countries.

Capacity-building activities on sustainability and financial reporting

615. To support capacity-building in sustainability and financial reporting for MSMEs, UNCTAD developed a training that aims to improve financial literacy in the MSMEs, facilitate their access to finance and support financial inclusion, including access to financial aid in the post-COVID-19 resurgence. Based on this training manual, available in English, French and Spanish, trainings of trainers and practitioners were held in Africa and Latin America in all three languages.

616. To further support capacity building in the area of sustainability reporting, the GCI was translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish. Based on this, and related training materials, training for MSMEs were held online in the aforementioned languages. On 9 February 2021, a workshop was delivered in Arabic for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and was attended by 79 people. On 4 March 2021, a workshop conducted in French was attended by 122 participants. On 29 March 2021, a workshop was delivered in China and attended by 150 participants from enterprises, academia, media and other institutions. Lastly, on 4 June 2021, a webinar was delivered in Spanish to provide information on the main aspects of Sustainable Development Goal

reporting and the GCI, highlighting findings from case studies conducted, and discuss further steps on implementation the GCI in the Latin American region, including in the MSME sector. It was attended by 55 participants from 14 countries.

617. In response to requests from countries following a regional workshop on enabling policy framework for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Latin America (4–8 October 2021), and bilateral meetings related to the regional partnership in Latin America, in the context of the United Nations Development Account project on enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America, a virtual capacity-building activity on the GCI and the GCI Training Manual was conducted in Spanish from 23 to 25 November 2021. The training was attended by 298 participants from 15 countries in the Latin American region. Moreover, three national workshops on the core Sustainable Development Goal indicators were held in Guatemala, Kenya and South Africa.

618. In the Eurasian region, a training for SMEs on the GCI was held on 5 November 2021. The training was attended by 200 participants from 11 countries of the Eurasian region. To facilitate capacity-building, cases studies were prepared on the GCI application by the MSMEs in the region. The case studies were conducted on seven selected small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Commonwealth of Independent States region, including Belarus (2), Kazakhstan (2) and the Russian Federation (3), on accounting and reporting on companies' contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal agenda based on GCI and the GCI Training Manual.

619. In November 2021, UNCTAD together with UNITAR launched an e-learning course on the Implementation of the GCI in English and Spanish. By December 2021, 249 people (including 111 female participants) from 83 countries were registered for the English version and 130 participants (including 81 female participants) from 24 countries were registered for the Spanish version. A French version was launched in March 2022.

620. **Results and impacts.** For more than 38 years, the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts has been providing member States with guidance and tools on a number of corporate reporting topics. These products have had a positive impact, assisting member States in implementing International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and other internationally recognized practices, such as guidelines on corporate governance disclosure, and environmental and corporate social responsibility reporting.

621. The thirty-eighth session of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts had close to 255 delegates. It is the largest expert meeting of UNCTAD and one of the longest standing groups of experts in the United Nations system. High attendance underscores its sustained relevance in shaping the international agenda in accounting and sustainability reporting, and its role in bringing the views of developing countries to the standard-setting process. A survey shows that all respondent participants found the session useful or very useful. Over 93 per cent of respondents rated the session's organization, attendance, and substance as satisfactory or very satisfactory. One hundred per cent of respondents rated the technical workshop on the impact of COVID-19 on financial and sustainability reporting useful or very useful.

622. The Group of Experts reached agreed conclusions on all agenda items. Particularly, it acknowledged that reliable accounting and reporting on the financial and sustainability reporting of firms could facilitate directing investment towards economic activities that contribute towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. It noted with concern the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on progress towards realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

623. ISAR expressed its satisfaction with the work conducted by the UNCTAD secretariat during the intersessional period on Goals-related reporting, commended the analysis of the main findings from the case studies conducted to date on pilot testing of the GCI; and welcomed the refinements to some of the indicators proposed by the consultative group. In that sense, it acknowledged the positive impact of the GCI in overcoming fragmentation and promoting harmonization of reporting frameworks and standards on sustainability issues in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and appreciated the development of capacity-building activities to facilitate wider use of the guidance on core indicators.

624. It also acknowledged the work of the UNCTAD secretariat during the intersessional period to further disseminate the accounting training manual, including training of trainers, translation of the manual and related training materials from English into the other official languages of the United Nations, and building an online tool to facilitate the preparation of financial statements by MSMEs. It thus called upon UNCTAD to further disseminate the accounting training manual and related tools to facilitate access to finance for MSMEs.

625. ISAR has called upon UNCTAD to convey to the International Sustainability Standards Board the views of ISAR on sustainability reporting issues, to monitor progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures, to identify good practices in their implementation and to support countries in building the necessary regulatory, institutional, and human capacity for successfully implementing sustainability reporting as well as financial reporting requirements for both the private and public sectors. The group of experts has also called upon the UNCTAD secretariat to continue to support regional efforts and partnerships, in particular among developing countries, aimed at promoting a common approach to sustainability reporting and addressing practical implementation aspects pertaining to policymaking, regulation and institutional and human capacity-building, in alignment with the ADT. UNCTAD has also received additional requests by Member States for accounting and reporting infrastructure assessment from countries in Africa and Latin America.

626. In the context of the Development Account project on Enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America, the regional meeting held in Latin America in October 2021 resulted in the creation of a regional partnership for the promotion of sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Latin America, which aims to improve enterprise sustainability reporting through mutual support, dialogue and sharing of experience and best practices. The inaugural meeting of the Regional Partnership in Latin America took place virtually on 12 November 2021 and was attended by entities from 15 countries in the region. During this first meeting, it was decided that Mexico (the Mexican Council for Financial Reporting Standards, the National Banking and Securities Commission of Mexico, and the Mexican Institute of Public Accountants) will be chairing the partnership the first year (2022).

627. Building the capacity of MSMEs on accounting and reporting is critical for improving access to finance by MSMEs, which is of paramount importance for their survival and to a green and inclusive resurgence. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all capacity-building activities were held online which allowed all those who were interested to participate, thus increasing the number of people trained. As the result of capacity-building activities on accounting and reporting, more than 350 practitioners and experts from 28 countries in Latin America and Africa were trained in accounting for MSMEs. In the area of sustainability reporting, more than 2,200 people from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East were trained on the use of the GCI. An additional 379 people registered to the self-paced eLearning course on the GCI. The increased number of people and institution trained on Sustainable Development Goal reporting has led to an increase in awareness of the importance of Sustainable Development Goal reporting for companies and is also facilitating wider dissemination and implementation of the GCI as requested by the thirty-eighth session of the ISAR. For example, as a result of capacity-building activities carried out in these countries, and based on the feedback survey, over 20 companies in Colombia and Guatemala have already taken steps to implement the GCI. In Kenya and South Africa, a survey showed that more than 400 companies were considering its implementation.

C8 Investment and public health

Table C8
Investment and Public Health

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/BAQ	Capacity-Building in Investment for Development	2011–	Multi-donors
RAF/OT/HBT	AfCFTA support programme to eliminate non-tariff barriers, increase regulatory transparency and promote industrial diversification	2018–	Germany
ROA-2023 (F12)	Investment incentives for local production of essential antibiotics in East Africa	2020–	Development Account

628. **Development context.** Achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring good health and well-being requires considerable investment in the health and pharmaceutical sectors of developing countries. It involves several policy domains and institutions covering health, investment, intellectual property (IP) and trade; and relies on both public and private finance as well as international development cooperation. COVID-19 has amply demonstrated the vulnerability of developing countries with limited or no manufacturing capacity for medicines, vaccines, medical supplies, and other health commodities to global supply chain disruption. There is an urgent need to build geographically distributed innovation and manufacturing capacity for health commodities and their intermediaries, technologies, and the related institutions. UNCTAD seeks to enhance the capacity of developing countries to develop a better framework for investment in health, taking into account their respective development. For this purpose, UNCTAD undertakes research and analysis, provides capacity building and technical assistance, and facilitates policy dialogue to promote coherence in related policies, such as IP, innovation, competition, and emerging technological fields. The programme targets of Sustainable Development Goal 3 (good health and well-being), Sustainable Development Goal 9 (build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation), Sustainable Development Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and Sustainable Development Goal 17 (policy and institutional coherence).

629. **Objectives and features.** The objectives of the programme are the following:

- (a) Development of domestic technological capacities and promotion of investment in health sector;
- (b) Promotion of coherence in industrial and health policies, including in the regulation of investment and IP;
- (c) Promotion of stakeholder ownership to ensure the sustainability of programme activities.

630. The programme undertakes research and analysis, provides capacity building and technical assistance and facilitates policy dialogue in three areas:

- (a) Policy coherence for investment in health, including local production of pharmaceuticals;
- (b) Use of IP rights for industrial development, regional economic integration and value chain development; facilitating collaborations between foreign and domestic enterprises, universities and private sector for technology and innovation; and
- (c) Promotion of investment and IP policy to address the development impact of the digital economy.

631. **Outputs.** In 2021, the work programme involved the implementation of two projects targeting investment in the production and supply of antibiotics in the context of measures to combat antimicrobial resistance, supporting regional cooperation on IP rights in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and supporting the building of vaccines manufacturing capacity.

632. In March 2021, UNCTAD and the World Health Organization (WHO) organized a webinar on building vaccines production capacity in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The event launched a series of consultations with policymakers, investors, vaccine manufacturers and technology providers and involved major actors in the international COVID-19 response such as, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), International Finance Corporation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), African Development Bank (AfDB) and Serum Institute of India. Panellists agreed that there is a merit to build geographically distributed vaccines manufacturing capacity to overcome supply bottlenecks, promote equitable distribution of the benefits of technology, ensure availability of routine vaccines, and build capacity for pandemic preparedness in the long term. They underscored the technological, financial and market complexities of vaccine production and emphasised the need to advance strategic partnerships among manufacturers, investors and technology developers; enabling policies for integrated vaccine ecosystems; designing innovative technologies and prioritizing regional and other approaches that de-risk investment. UNCTAD and WHO reconvened the webinar on 21 October 2021 as a side event to the UNCTAD World Investment Forum 2021. Panellist reviewed the progress made under the various initiatives, including that of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) Manufacturing Task Force, the Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM) of the African Union and Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, CEPI, the European Union, AfDB, BMGF, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), among others. Panellists agreed that global community has taken important steps towards building vaccines production capability in LMICs and that a viable international cooperation has taken shape. However, additional efforts are needed to develop new technologies and expand the global effort beyond Africa.

633. UNCTAD contributed to the debate on IP rights and technology transfer during the Africa's Vaccine Manufacturing for Health Security virtual conference on 12–13 April 2021. UNCTAD emphasized the need for a partnership-based approach between technology developers and recipients, a collaborative approach to research and development, and the need to build triangular relationship between developed country institutions, developing country industries and African investors for a successful partnership on IP rights and technology transfer. Subsequently, UNCTAD was invited to contribute as member of the expert group on technology transfer and IP rights workstream of PAVM to develop a framework for action. In particular, UNCTAD provided advice on modalities of technology transfer, overview of the IP landscape of current WHO-Prequalified vaccines, and issues for modernization of the IP system in Africa.

634. Since 2020, UNCTAD has been implementing a project on “Investment incentives for local production of essential antibiotics in East Africa.” The project aims at addressing the misalignment between incentives for the local production of antibiotics and the objective to tackle antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Pharmaceutical producers in this region tend to focus on a limited range of antibiotics, while neglecting others that are as much needed. Conversely, antibiotics stewardship changes the business model for production and supply of antibiotics. In 2021, UNCTAD successfully advanced in the implementation of the project in the beneficiary countries (Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda) and at the regional level – the East African Community (EAC). Extensive interviews, stakeholder consultations and data collection were conducted. Preliminary findings and recommendations were submitted for peer review during an international expert meeting held virtually on 17 May 2021. The draft finding and recommendations were validated through national and regional workshops held on 21 July 2021 for Uganda, 8 September 2021 for Ethiopia, 13 October 2021 for Kenya and 10 November 2021 for EAC, with the necessary adjustment to address the challenges posed by COVID-19. Additionally, six national consultative meetings were conducted on the regional advisory report. So far, the work of UNCTAD revealed a very complex situation and a strong stakeholder response in

which the implementation of key health related instruments and the strengthening of health system are vital to ensuring responsible investment into antibiotics production. Investment incentives also need to be shaped in a manner that address the unique situation of antibiotics production. UNCTAD strives to finalize its advisory reports and support beneficiaries in the implementation of key intervention areas to align investment and health policy instruments.

635. In promoting regional cooperation on IP rights to enhance regional economic and value chain integration, in 2021 UNCTAD collaborated with AfCFTA Secretariat and UNECA. In addition to supporting the AfCFTA Secretariat, UNCTAD delivered a one-day training on IP rights during the meeting of the Committee on Intellectual Property Rights of AfCFTA on 14 September 2021. UNCTAD took part in the meetings of the IP rights negotiations of the AfCFTA that took place on 19–20 April and 14–16 September 2021 to provide expert advice. The work of UNCTAD on regional cooperation on IP rights is conducted under the second phase of BMZ-funded⁸⁶ project on the AfCFTA support programme to eliminate non-tariff barriers, increase regulatory transparency and promote industrial diversification (2021–2022).

636. UNCTAD is signatory of the interagency statement on promoting local production of medicines and other health technologies (May 2019) together with UNICEF, WHO, UNIDO, UNAIDS and the Global Fund. In 2021, UNCTAD contributed to the World Local Production Forum of the WHO by facilitating a session on financing investment in pharmaceutical sector. As a contribution to the global debate, the UNCTAD *World Investment Report 2021* dedicates a section on assessing the national and multilateral framework for investment in health sector. Accordingly, it identifies the main investment policy trends affecting the health sector, the use of Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) flexibilities, the main bottlenecks for pharmaceutical sector development in LMICs and action areas to overcome the challenges for the pharmaceutical and health sector development.

637. On 12 November 2021, UNCTAD contributed to a meeting of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) on the importance of regional cooperation on pharmaceutical sector development in terms of use of economies of scale, building regional value chain and improving security of supply. UNCTAD outlined five pillars for effective regional cooperation for pharmaceutical sector development: (a) improving the investment environment; (b) removing trade barriers; (c) removing barriers to movement of capital, technology and skilled labour; (d) modernizing IP rights system; and (e) regional medicines regulation and marketing approval.

638. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD has become a reliable partner to key multilateral and regional players on building capacity for pharmaceutical and vaccines sector development. This is demonstrated by invitations received by UNCTAD to take part as partner in key processes including the PAVM of African Union and the World Local Production Forum of WHO.⁸⁷ Moreover, UNCTAD work on incentivising antibiotics production has for the first time exposed the extensive challenge of LDCs and developing countries in designing a proper response to the growing threat of AMR and aligning investment and health policy instruments.

⁸⁶ BMZ is the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

⁸⁷ The outcome of PAVM Framework for Action that covers six areas in addition to the technology transfer IP rights workstream to which UNCTAD contributed as expert was endorsed at the African Union Assembly of Heads of State in February 2022.

C9 International investment agreements

Table C9
International investment agreements

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/0BG	Capacity-Building in Developing Countries in IIA	2000–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/BAQ	Capacity-Building in Investment for Development	2011–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/H CJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2018–	Netherlands

639. **Development context.** The current network of international investment rules is multi-layered and multifaceted. The past years saw dynamic changes to the regime of international investment agreements (IIAs), with intensified efforts at the regional level. At the same time, the number of bilateral investment treaty (BIT) terminations has been increasing. Several notable developments took place in 2021 and 2022 that continued to consolidate the IIA regime.

640. Growing unease with the current functioning of the global IIA regime and the investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) system, combined with the evolution of the international investment landscape, the greater role of Governments in the economy and the current sustainable development imperative led countries to reform their IIA regimes and engage in multilateral discussions for the reform of ISDS system. Today, there is broad consensus that reform is not an option but a must.

641. The COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the need to reform the IIA regime. International investment policies relevant to the health sector address market openness, intellectual property (IP) protection, and the promotion and protection of foreign investments. The main instruments are the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and IIAs. The central challenge is to balance openness and investment protection with safeguarding of national policy space to pursue legitimate public health objectives (*World Investment Report 2021*). To ensure better synergies between IIAs and public health policies, future IIAs could include provisions that proactively encourage and facilitate health-related FDI, while maintaining or strengthening existing safeguards that protect the host States' right to regulate to pursue public health objectives.

642. Integrating sustainable development objectives into IIAs (e.g. the protection of public and environment) requires addressing a number of questions, including how to safeguard the right to regulate while preserving protection; how to enhance legal clarity of certain provisions; how to reform dispute settlement; how to promote and facilitate investment; how to ensure responsible investment; and how to manage the systemic complexity of the IIA regime. As such policy changes are taking hold in new treaties, the large stock of old-generation treaties is lagging behind and becoming an increasing source of friction in the process of modernization of the investment regime.

643. **Objectives and features.** The UNCTAD work programme on IIAs responds to this trend of reform, aiming to make the IIA regime work better for both States and investors, and more conducive to sustainable development. The programme covers activities in the three pillars of UNCTAD work (research and policy analysis, technical assistance and advisory services, and intergovernmental consensus-building). The IIA work programme is guided by the Accra Accord, which established UNCTAD as the key focal point in the United Nations system for dealing with matters related to IIAs (paragraph 151), the Doha Mandate, which ratified it (para. 65 (k)), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which called on UNCTAD to continue its existing programme of meetings and consultations with member States on investment agreements (para. 91), and the Nairobi Maafikiano, which reiterates the call for UNCTAD to continue its existing programme (para. 38 (l)) and to continue

promoting a better understanding of issues related to IIA and their development dimension (para. 55 (hh)). In addition, the Bridgetown Covenant requests UNCTAD to continue its work in the context of the reform of the international investment regime (para.127 (o)).

644. **Outputs.** For 2021, the main outputs are outlined below.

Research work related to technical assistance

645. In addition to regular reporting and monitoring on international investment policy developments, the IIA work programme carried out research and policy analysis, among others, for the following publications:

(a) *World Investment Report 2021.* The *World Investment Report 2021* (WIR 2021) was launched on 21 June 2021. Its chapter on recent policy developments and key issues notes several notable developments took place in 2020 and 2021 that continued to consolidate the IIA regime. These developments include the entry into force of the European Union agreement to terminate all intra-European Union bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and the emergence of new megaregional IIAs, as well as other developments that continue to influence international investment rules such as multilateral discussions for the reform of the ISDS system. The report provides an update on the total number of ISDS cases. The count had reached over 1,100 by the end of 2020, with at least 68 new arbitrations initiated in 2020. Most investment arbitrations were brought under IIAs signed in the 1990s or earlier. Reform-oriented clauses continue to significantly permeate IIAs concluded in 2020. All IIAs concluded in 2020 contain reform-oriented provisions aimed at preserving regulatory space and promoting sustainable investment. The report also discusses the relation between IIAs and the protection of public health in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most IIAs do not take a sectoral approach to the promotion and protection of investments, instead broadly covering all kinds of assets. A number of recently concluded BITs and investment chapters of free trade agreements do, however, carve out regulatory space for domestic health-related measures. For example, more than 92 per cent of IIAs concluded since 2018 contain at least one explicit reference to health in the operative part of the treaty. Countries need to ensure better synergies between IIAs and public health policies by reforming old-generation IIAs to include provisions that proactively encourage and facilitate health-related FDI.

(b) IIA issues notes. The following issues notes were produced:

(i) “IIA issue note: International investment policies and public health” (July 2021). This IIA issues note discusses the interplay between IIAs and public health and reviews public health provisions in IIAs. The issues note also discusses how policy responses taken by Governments to address the COVID-19 pandemic could create friction with existing IIA obligations.

(ii) “IIA issue note: Recent developments in the IIA Regime” (August 2021). This IIA Issues Note analyses key developments in the IIA regime for the year 2021 and highlights the trends towards mega-regional IIAs.

(iii) “IIA issue note: ISDS Facts and Figures 2020” (September 2021). This IIA Issues provides facts and figures on investor-State dispute settlement cases for 2020. In 2020, at least 68 known treaty-based investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) cases were initiated. Most investment arbitrations were brought under IIAs signed in the 1990s or earlier.

(c) Comprehensive updates to the IIA and ISDS databases: In March 2021, UNCTAD updated its IIA Navigator with bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and treaties with provisions (TIPs). To date the database includes more than 3,000 texts of IIAs. In May 2021, UNCTAD updated its Investment Dispute Settlement (ISDS) Navigator. The ISDS Navigator update covers new cases, awards and arbitrator appointments compiled on the basis of public sources and specialized reporting services.

Capacity-building

646. Based on the UNCTAD Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development and its Reform Package for the International Investment Regime as well as UNCTAD IIA

Reform Accelerator options for modernizing the existing stock of treaties, UNCTAD carries out a range of training activities and advisory services. During the reporting period, the following activities were implemented.

Advisory services

647. They include reviews of a country's or region's IIA network; comments on country's or region's model treaties; and other analysis of various aspects of countries' IIA universes, including with respect to the interplay between IIA obligations and measures taken to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Comments are provided with a view to identifying options for maximizing IIAs' sustainable development dimension. The analysis is tailor-made, considering the specificities of each country and/or region and, typically, the submission of written advisory services is complemented by one or several videoconferences, discussing the analysis undertaken on behalf of the country.

648. In response to requests from member States, UNCTAD provided IIA reviews for Seychelles (March 2021) and the COMESA countries (December 2021). UNCTAD also provided comments on the model treaties of Seychelles (March 2021) and Saudi Arabia (August 2021) at their request.

649. Cooperation continued between UNCTAD and the League of Arab States (LAS) on a new Arab Regional Investment Agreement (ARIA). In September 2021, at the request of the LAS, UNCTAD provided a detailed report with comments and guidance on the draft text of the new ARIA. This work follows the recommendations made during a January 2020 UNCTAD-LAS expert meeting on the new proposed ARIA in which LAS member States called on UNCTAD to take the lead in assisting Arab countries in developing policy options to be used in the drafting of the new ARIA.

650. Support was also given to the African Union and other stakeholders with the Investment Protocol of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The Negotiating Principles for the AfCFTA Protocol on Sustainable Investment recognizes the UNCTAD role and support to the AfCFTA and refers to the UNCTAD Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development and UNCTAD IIA Reform Accelerator. UNCTAD continues to provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to the African Union in the process leading to the conclusion of the Protocol.

651. Regional or other training courses hosted or co-hosted by UNCTAD in 2021 include the following:

(a) UNCTAD – Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia workshop on international investment policy reform. In February 2021, UNCTAD in cooperation with the Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA), conducted a hybrid workshop on IIA reform. The workshop highlighted the key features of the new Model BIT of Saudi Arabia and provided guidance and a road map on the most effective ways to reform and modernize the old BITs concluded by the country.

(b) UNCTAD-ITD-Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand workshop on IIA reform. In April 2021, UNCTAD in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand; the International Institute for Trade and Development (ITD) and The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) organized and online Asia-Pacific workshop on "UNCTAD IIA Reform: Improving Investment Policy Coherence and Synergies". The event brought together over 60 Government officials dealing with the reform of investment policies from the Asia-Pacific region.

(c) UNCTAD-Ministry of Finance of Morocco workshop on Investment Facilitation. In June 2021, UNCTAD in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance of Morocco organized a hybrid capacity building workshop for Moroccan negotiators of the WTO investment facilitation framework for Morocco. The workshop focused on key elements found in the framework, and how to ensure that the development dimension of the framework is properly addressed. It also shed light on the potential interaction between the WTO framework and existing BITs, and how to create an effective firewall between them to ensure that provisions in the new framework cannot be used in BIT-based ISDS cases.

(d) UNCTAD–Pakistan workshop on international investment agreements reform. In June 2021, UNCTAD in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Board of Investment (BOI) of Pakistan organized an online inter-ministerial capacity-building workshop on the reform of international investment agreements of Pakistan. Over 50 officials dealing with investment policies from Pakistan discussed the latest trends in IIA reform; UNCTAD comments on the country’s new Model BIT; policy options for holistic reform; the new Pakistan Model BIT; Multilateral discussions on ISDS reform as well as Investment facilitation. In July 2021, the Prime Minister approved the new Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) template for the country.

(e) UNCTAD–Egypt workshop on international investment policy reform. In June 2021, UNCTAD in cooperation with Egypt’s General Authority for Investment (GAFI) organized a hybrid interactive two-day workshop on the reform of the international investment regime of Egypt. The workshop discussed holistic approaches to the country’s international investment policy reform; and provided a strategic framework for IIA Reform of Egypt at the national, regional and multilateral levels.

(f) UNODC-UNCTAD Expert Group Meeting on Corruption and International Investments. The Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (“the Conference”), adopted Resolution 8/9, in which it noted “the positive role of international investments and the importance of minimizing opportunities for corruption and transfer of proceeds of crime”. In this context, UNODC partnered with UNCTAD in May 2021 to organize an online Expert Group Meeting on Corruption and International Investments. The meeting called amongst other points for strong and coherent anti-corruption provisions in IIAs and a better balance between the interests of investors and host States to enable host States to regulate for the public interest, including to prevent and fight corruption. In December 2021, UNODC and UNCTAD organised an expert level event during the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, which took place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The meeting reported to the Conference on the activities and progress made by the Expert Group Meeting on Corruption and International Investment.

652. **Results and impacts.** There is strong evidence that the IIA work programme has a concrete and positive impact. UNCTAD policy tools have shaped investment policymaking at all levels.

(a) Forward-looking IIA reform is well under way and involves countries at all levels of development and from all geographical regions. IIA reform has gained momentum and has become even more urgent today with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. All of today’s new IIAs include several sustainable development-oriented reform elements in line with UNCTAD policy tools (see WIR 2021). Provisions that were considered innovative in pre-2012 IIAs now appear regularly. Highlights of modern treaty making include a sustainable development orientation, preservation of regulatory space and improvements to or omissions of investment dispute settlement. The most broadly pursued area of reform is preservation of regulatory space. As part of broader IIA reform, countries have implemented many ISDS reform elements in recent IIAs.

(b) Since the launch of UNCTAD options for phase 2 of IIA Reform (WIR 2017), a growing number of countries have taken steps to modernize their old-generation treaties. Given that, so far, such reform actions have addressed a relatively small number of IIAs, there is broad scope and urgency to pursue them further. The stock of old-generation treaties is 10 times larger than the number of new reform-oriented treaties. Modernization of these treaties remains an important policy challenge.

(c) UNCTAD high-level IIA conference held on 19 October 2021 as part of the UNCTAD World Investment Forum 2021 brought together over 300 participants from Governments, international and regional organizations, private sector, academia, civil society and media. Speakers recognized that IIA reform remains a daunting task for all member States, with challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. They took stock of ongoing reform efforts in times of COVID-19, both in terms of what IIA reform measures countries and regional organizations undertook or are considering undertaking in response to the crisis, and how to maintain and strengthen the reform momentum in light of

the increased fragility of economies around the world that places added emphasis on the importance of FDI as a means of development finance. The 2021 IIA conference paved the way for further inclusive, transparent, and synchronized IIA reform processes in the pursuit of sustainable development in the post-COVID-19 era.

(d) Feedback from participants in capacity-building workshops and conferences on IIAs is generally very positive, with an average of 90 per cent stating that the courses contributed substantially to improving their understanding of the key issues at stake. An average of over 80 per cent of respondents also indicated that they had reported on issues related to the Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development to colleagues in their departments and 44 per cent noted that the Investment Policy Framework had prompted their country to reconsider its investment policy strategy. To date some 140 countries (including regional economic integration organizations) have used UNCTAD recommendations on IIA reform to (re)design investment policies and IIA treaty clauses.

653. Further evidence and positive feedback include:

(a) “UNCTAD is one of the leaders in IIA reform efforts.” Deputy Head, International Investment and Multinational Enterprises Division, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), Switzerland.

(b) “UNCTAD has been a valuable platform for AfCFTA secretariat, as well as most of the members states of African Union for their technical assistance in the development of investment-related policies and global overview on benchmarks of some policy directions, which can be considered as we develop the AfCFTA protocol on investment.” Director, Directorate of Trade in Services, Investment, Intellectual Property Rights and Digital Trade, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat.

(c) “We would like to invite all the investment promotion agencies to use the resources of UNCTAD on the reform of IIAs, and work for a responsible and sustainable investment framework in all countries.” Secretary, Board of Investment, Pakistan.

(d) “UNCTAD has for many years advocated for a systemic and sustainable development-oriented approach to reforming the international investment regime.” Director, Legal: International Trade, Investment, Dispute Settlement, Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, South Africa.

(e) “I want to end by highlighting how we found to be valuable UNCTAD’s policy tools including its more recent IIA reform accelerator when we provide technical advice and support to our member states with respect to IIA reform.” Director, Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI)

(f) “I would like to note that UNCTAD continues to play an absolutely instrumental role in rethinking the international governance framework, and the systemic reforms that would need the transnational challenges of governing investment for sustainable development. UNCTAD has wonderful reports on these systemic challenges which go far beyond anything addressing the current IIA reform. Therefore, UNCTAD leadership in this respect has been incredibly helpful. What I find to be the most promising and most encouraging are the growing number of states and their institutional supporters like UNCTAD who are putting the sustainable development goals at the heart of their investment policy, and fundamentally rethinking both domestic and international instruments and how they can help to align investment with their sustainable development objectives.” “Notably, UNCTAD has provided a decisive leading role in supporting the IIAs reform by proposing concrete solutions. These positive results should reinforce and encourage UNCTAD member states to continue this reform path, and ensure the current excitement of IIA reforms, bring us to the right destination for all people’s wellbeing.” Sustainable Investment Lead, Economic Law and Policy Programme, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).

(g) “It is fair to say that we (Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore (CIL) rely on materials produced by UNCTAD more than any other international organizations. In the last decades, I don’t think any other organization has done more to create tools for policymakers or their advisors which provide both empirical into the

investment treaty regime and offer practical solutions to states seeking reform. In this respect, UNCTAD has rephrased roadmap for IIA reform to establish comprehensive framework within which policymakers can orient their reforms both at the national and international levels.” Head of Investment Law and Policy, Centre for International Law, and Research Associate Professor (CIL), Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore.

(h) “The work UNCTAD has done on statistics and on cataloguing and provisions of wide range of IIAs is of incredible value.” Senior Adviser, United States Council for International Business (USCIB).

(i) “Governments need to accelerate in terms of quality. It’s not about concluding more IIAs but concluding IIAs with better substantive and procedural quality. For this purpose, UNCTAD has paved a way, and UNCTAD IIA accelerator is the golden standards, showing the governments how to accelerate the reform process in order to push forward the new generation of sustainable IIAs. We hope that UNCTAD will continue to assist developing countries and African countries in this regard. We have been witnessing how the work of UNCTAD has been decisive to allow African countries to have a stronger and better voice in investment law making and take a significant role of IIA reform.” Professor of International Law and Director of the Department of International Law, University of Geneva.

(j) “On behalf of MISA I would like to thank you and The UNCTAD IIA Section for the recent workshop on IIA reform for Saudi Arabia. The workshop has greatly improved our capacity and raised awareness of our negotiators on key issues in IIAs. It has also shed light on our new Model BIT and equipped our team in MISA to go forward with reforming our BIT network.” Deputy Minister, Ministry of Investment, Saudi Arabia.

C10 Competition and consumer protection policies and frameworks

Table C10

Competition and consumer protection policies and frameworks

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/DBG ^a	COMPAL MENA	2015– 2021	Sweden
RAS/0T/IAV	Delivering Block Chain Based Online Dispute Resolution System (BODR)	2020–	Public donation
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (Y12)	Strengthening Social Protection for Pandemic Responses	2020–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2021.

654. **Development context.** Competition law and policy contributes to economic growth and sustainable development through market openness, innovation, and economic efficiency, while achieving consumer welfare. Competition policy complements trade policy, ensuring that the benefits brought by trade and investment liberalization are not hampered by anticompetitive business practices. Consumer protection empowers consumers to play an active role in the market, through informed, responsible, and sustainable choices, and it ensures that unfair commercial practices are sanctioned, and consumers are protected. In a globalized world competition and consumer protection laws and policies are increasingly faced with cross-border challenges, which demand further regional and international cooperation to guarantee a level playing field for business and a high-level of consumer protection across the world.

655. UNCTAD has been implementing the technical assistance projects in both competition and consumer protection areas at national, regional, and international levels. Particularly, the following projects have a strong regional dimension:

(a) The project on “Delivering digital trading infrastructure and online dispute resolution for consumers as means to improve international trade and electronic commerce” which aims to improve consumer trust in electronic commerce in two Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) pilot countries before a potential expansion to other countries from this region;

(b) Technical assistance and capacity-building on competition and consumer protection to Portuguese-speaking developing countries, which builds on the common history and language and the similar culture to promote competition and consumer policies as important instruments within these countries’ development strategies;

(c) UNCTAD, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) cooperation on the development and reform of competition frameworks across the Arab countries that are members of ESCWA, with a strong regional dimension;

(d) The United Nations Development Account (DA) COVID-19 response technical cooperation projects on “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 Resurgence of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Sector” (MSME project)⁸⁸, and on “Strengthening Social Protection for Pandemic Response” (social protection project)⁸⁹, which have a global scope with a strong regional focus, in close cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

(e) Technical assistance to the drafting of the ASEAN Toolkit on Sustainable Consumption, at the request of the Government of the Philippines representing the ASEAN Committee on Consumer Protection and the ASEAN Secretariat.

(f) Competition and Consumer protection policies in Latin America (including the International Forum on Consumer Protection launched under the COMPAL - Competition and Consumer Protection for Latin America programme, and a specific project on Competition Compliance in Latin America in close cooperation with Zurich University of Management and Law - ZHAW);

(g) Advisory services and technical assistance activities on competition policy to the secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfcFTA) and its member States, to facilitate discussions on the protocol on competition of the AfcFTA Agreement.

656. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to anticompetitive and unfair business practices: poor business infrastructure and complex regulatory and licensing regimes make it harder for companies to enter these markets; their policies, laws and regulations are often not sufficiently robust, while their enforcement authorities lack the capacity to effectively detect and address many instances of anticompetitive behaviour; and citizens and businesses are less aware of the importance of competition and do not exercise their rights or fulfil their responsibilities. Increasingly, many competition and consumer protection problems have a cross-border component. Companies and supply chains are international, while competition and consumer protection laws and enforcement authorities are primarily national. Individual countries have struggled to address anticompetitive practices at the international level, which requires regional and global collaboration to set and enforce competition rules. The successful implementation of competition and consumer protection policies results in the elimination of anticompetitive regulation and unnecessary barriers to trade imposed by government policies.

⁸⁸ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/da/global-initiative-towards-post-covid-19-resurgence-of-the-msme-sector/>.

⁸⁹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/da/strengthening-social-protection-for-pandemic-response/>.

657. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in developing countries generated new requests and needs for UNCTAD to provide technical assistance on competition and consumer protection policies. UNCTAD has focused on supporting member States and regional and international organizations in addressing the challenges generated by the crisis and directly related to economic recovery. Particularly, the pandemic led to new COVID-19 related technical cooperation projects aiming to provide support during the crisis and in the economic recovery process, including the United Nations Development Account COVID-19 projects on the MSMEs and social protection, both mentioned above. UNCTAD expertise on competition and consumer protection policies was combined with the expertise of the United Nations regional economic commissions, with which joint work was developed to effectively deliver assistance and capacity-building on the topics of the contribution of competition law and policy to the MSMEs and of consumer protection in the provision of health services (including e-health).

658. On the other side, the travel restrictions imposed due to the pandemic outbreak led UNCTAD to deliver most of its technical assistance activities virtually, which expanded the reach and the size of target audiences worldwide, including the high-level representatives from competition authorities, consumer protection authorities and relevant stakeholders from governmental bodies, academia, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

659. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD aims to assist developing countries in adopting or revising competition and consumer protection legislation and policies to align with international best practices, as well as regional frameworks in these areas. They also play an important role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth, Goal 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure, Goal 10 – reduced inequalities, Goal 12 – responsible consumption and production, and Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals.

660. UNCTAD work on competition and consumer protection policies contributes to the strengthening of the competition and consumer protection systems of developing countries by developing policy, legislative and institutional frameworks; drafting legislation adapted to member States' current challenges, particularly during 2021 where COVID-19 had been a pressing issue for many competition and consumer protection authorities; designing and implementing frameworks to enforce the laws; building human capacities through training programmes; and advocating for a competition and a consumer protection culture to a wide range of relevant stakeholders (governmental bodies, sector-specific regulators, the judiciary, business and business organizations, consumer associations, academia, media).

661. **Outputs.** The project on “Delivering digital trading infrastructure and online dispute resolution for consumers as means to improve international trade and electronic commerce” (DODR project), funded by the China Silk Road Group, focused on the design and implementation of online consumer dispute resolution mechanisms for two pilot member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The aim of this project is to identify best practices and policy options to promote consumer online dispute resolution and to define the legal, technical and infrastructure requirements for the development of such systems, including using emerging technologies such as block chain and artificial intelligence. The DODR project officially targets Indonesia and Thailand as of July 2021, and UNCTAD presented the research output titled “Consumer trust in the digital economy: the case for online dispute resolution”⁹⁰ in December 2021. Also in December 2021, UNCTAD organized the first policy training workshop on consumer dispute resolution for those two beneficiaries, to lay the foundation of knowledge that allows them to contribute to the design of the consumer online dispute resolution system that best suits their reality. The other two main research outputs – one on Indonesian national frameworks for consumer dispute resolution and redress, and the other on consumer dispute resolution in the world – are in its later stage of revision.

662. Under the technical assistance and capacity-building on competition and consumer protection to Portuguese-speaking developing countries, UNCTAD held webinars on competition and consumer protection laws and policies in June and September 2021, which

⁹⁰ Available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ser-rp-2021d15_en.pdf.

covered current challenges of and perspectives for international cooperation in these fields. The project is funded by Portugal and supported by the experience-sharing of Brazil and Portugal in policy areas related to competition and consumer protection and aims at fostering regional cooperation between the beneficiaries and neighbouring countries and other partners.

663. Under the trilateral cooperation agreement between UNCTAD, UN-ESCWA and OECD seeking to support the formulation or improvement of national competition laws, procedures, and enforcement in the Arab countries, the second Joint Competition Forum for the Arab Region was held in March 2021. The Competition Forum aimed to develop a regional multi-stakeholder platform that facilitates the coordination and implementation of competition-related initiatives both at the national and regional level. In this second Joint Competition Forum, Arab countries discussed their latest competition developments, reforms, and measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, and learned from competition authorities from different parts of the world about best practices regarding institutional design, competition law and policy, and effective enforcement. In addition, a webinar on “Understanding competitive neutrality” (November 2021) raised awareness to the importance of competitive neutrality and a level-playing field to economic growth and enabling business environments. Furthermore, the three organizations jointly organized a training course on competition and public procurement⁹¹ for the technical staff of the Arab competition authorities.

664. Under the United Nations Development Account COVID-19 project on the MSMEs,⁹² UNCTAD has focused on the role of competition law and policy in supporting MSMEs in facing and overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic economic impact. UNCTAD (a) conducted national studies on the impact of COVID-19 on MSMEs in Brazil, South Africa and Thailand; and (b) co-organized, in cooperation with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions, regional policy dialogues in Africa, ASEAN, Europe, Latin America and Western Asia to discuss cross-cutting global findings and the conclusions of national studies. UNCTAD already held bilateral consultations with Thailand on the national recommendations. UNCTAD is also working on recommended practices for better access of MSMEs to digital platforms to be presented to member States.

665. Under the United Nations Development Account COVID-19 project on social protection, UNCTAD focus is on the contribution of consumer protection policy to social protection in health services provision (including e-health). A report on the role of consumer protection policies in the provision of health services and e-health was drafted and discussed in regional dialogues in Africa, ASEAN, Eurasia, Europe, Latin America and Western Asia, promoting shared experiences and best practices among representatives in each region. A final report setting the steps and providing guidance on the implementation of selected recommendations related to a social infrastructure for the provision of health services is under way.

666. The ASEAN Toolkit on Sustainable Consumption seeks to enhance the knowledge of government officials and relevant stakeholders – consumer associations and businesses – of sustainable consumption, covering key concepts and principles, best regional and international practices, tools and instruments used in influencing consumer behaviour and its use in selected sectors to enable the definition of the appropriate priorities and policies in this area, strengthening consumer protection through regional cooperation. Its four modules cover concepts and principles of sustainable consumption; best practices that promote sustainable consumption; tools and instruments to influence consumer behaviour, for communication purposes such as product information through labelling and certification, economic instruments (incentives) and regulatory instruments.

⁹¹ The joint course on Fighting Bid Rigging in Public Procurement is available in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) “Learn” Portal, available at <https://learn.unescwa.org/course/fighting-bid-rigging-public-procurement>.

⁹² A report on “The COVID-19 pandemic impact on micro, small and medium sized enterprises” was published on February 2022. Available at: <https://unctad.org/webflyer/covid-19-pandemic-impact-micro-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises>.

667. The Office of Trade and Competition Commission (OTCC) of Thailand has also requested UNCTAD assistance in the preparation of a market study on the COVID-19 impact assessment of the online travel agency (OTA) in the hospitality industry of Thailand. This project is aimed at reviewing the status of the market of pre- and post-COVID-19, assessing the economic impact of the pandemic, identifying competition concerns and developing guidelines for regulating anticompetitive practices in the market. UNCTAD provided OTCC and its research team with guidance in conducting the market study but due to constraints faced by OTCC the report is still under way.

668. UNCTAD continues to work with the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) Commission on the implementation of its new regulations on competition and consumer protection (two regulations and two directives) adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2019, in the framework of the programme for the strengthening of competition and consumer protection policies,⁹³ implemented by UNCTAD with the financial support of the European Union. These community regulations must be transposed by the member States into their respective legislation and, to this end, UNCTAD has organized a series of seminars aimed at raising awareness of a wide range of national stakeholders to the content and importance of the new legislative texts. Between September and December 2021, UNCTAD organized six seminars for Gabonese stakeholders, including the parliament, government ministries and authorities, entrepreneurs, and chambers of commerce on the application of competition rules and of consumer protection rules and on the economic analysis required by competition rules enforcement.

669. UNCTAD has been providing advisory services on competition policy to the secretariat of the AfCFTA and its member States. Since the support to the negotiations of the protocol on competition of the AfCFTA Agreement, technical assistance was required to strengthen the capacities of its secretariat in view of the implementation of an Africa-wide competition policy. Particularly in October 2021, UNCTAD organised a three-day webinar on competition law and policy, which aimed at enhancing the understanding and capacities of officials in the AfCFTA secretariat and its member States.

670. In Latin America, since the end of the third edition of UNCTAD COMPAL regional technical cooperation programme on competition and consumer protection, new activities in this region have been self-funded by beneficiary countries directly. A specific project on Competition Compliance in Latin America has been launched by UNCTAD in cooperation with the Zurich University of Management and Law (ZHAW), a regular partner of UNCTAD, which funds some activities. The objective of this project is to analyse the competition compliance programmes currently being applied in the region and to propose, based on international best practices, a model that promotes convergence to facilitate the enforcement of competition laws in a homogeneous manner.

671. Also, within the close cooperation with Latin American countries in consumer protection, UNCTAD organizes every year the UNCTAD–COMPAL International Forum for Consumer Protection, in partnership with the acting Presidency of the Ibero-American Forum of Consumer Protection Agencies (FIAGC), Portugal at the time. This is the only regional public discussion dedicated to consumer protection, engaging all relevant stakeholders – private sector, civil society, legal and economic practitioners, and academics, apart from consumer protection authorities. In September 2021, the Tenth International Forum on Consumer Protection focused on two axes: improving the formulation of public policy on consumer protection and consumer data protection: successful experiences and emerging challenges.

672. Following the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Botswana conducted by UNCTAD in 2018, a new competition and consumer protection authority and the Competition and Consumer Tribunal were established in Botswana. Upon their request, UNCTAD organized an online training seminar on competition and consumer protection

⁹³ A report on “Economic analysis and competition policy in the framework of the regional project for strengthening competition and consumer protection in Central Africa” was published in December 2021. Available at: <https://unctad.org/webflyer/economic-analysis-and-competition-policy-framework-regional-project-strengthening>.

for the new Tribunal members in March 2021, to enhance the understanding of country's adjudicators of competition and consumer protection laws and policies for the wider benefit of the country's economic development.

673. Upon request, in July 2021, UNCTAD co-organized with the Government of Guatemala a webinar on the importance of competition in public procurement to increase the country's competitiveness, where a national competition law is still in the process of approval. UNCTAD continues to support the Government to achieve a consensus in Parliament towards a successful adoption of the law. Also, at the request of El Salvador, UNCTAD organized an online competition training for judges in the new administrative courts that have recently been created and who will review the decisions of the competition authority. This training covered issues related to competition law enforcement from the viewpoint of judiciaries, such as inspections, interim measures, the scope of review of administrative decisions and sanctions and the calculation methods of fines.

674. Following the success of the first joint workshop last year, UNCTAD co-organized the second joint workshop with European Commission titled "Building effective consumer product safety frameworks together" in November 2021. It addressed the issues for an effective consumer product safety, namely legislative and policy frameworks and cross-border and regional cooperation, aligned with UNCTAD Recommendation on Preventing Cross-Border Distribution of Known Unsafe Consumer Products⁹⁴.

675. Under a 2019 letter of understanding on competition law and policy, UNCTAD is collaborating with the World Bank to develop training courses in Morocco. These courses are aimed at relevant stakeholders, such as the media and the judiciary, to improve communication and understanding of key concepts and crucial moments for access to the files and disseminating information in the first case, and to provide judges and prosecutors with an improved knowledge of competition law, in the second case.

676. Under the memorandum of understanding with the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute (EUI) in 2019, the EUI has offered UNCTAD free seats for developing countries' representatives on their annual competition training programmes in 2021–2022⁹⁵, for strengthening experts from young and small authorities' capacities.

677. **Results and impacts.** Technical assistance is an important pillar of the work of UNCTAD in the field of competition and consumer policies and contributes to significant results achieved to date. The increased number of requests for technical assistance and capacity-building from developing countries during 2021 and especially after the pandemic outbreak, underlined the expertise and the relevance of the technical cooperation services delivered by the Competition and Consumer Policies Branch. The quick adjustment and flexibility undertaken by the Branch team under this pillar of work throughout 2021 allowed UNCTAD to fully correspond to the member States' requests, and to address their needs and their challenges in the best possible manner. UNCTAD strongly supported member States in tackling market disruptions in the form of unfair commercial and anticompetitive practices through advisory services, technical assistance and capacity-building activities conducted online. These services disseminated international experiences and best practices, providing a sound background for policy measures and legislative and regulatory frameworks. The UNCTAD multi-stakeholder approach in these policy areas and the combination of national-level with regional-level activities have been extremely successful in the competition and consumer protection fields. Furthermore, established UNCTAD partnerships with national, regional, and international organizations and institutions, combining knowledge, technical and financial support, allow the activities in question to be carried out in the most efficient way and to produce tangible outcomes.

678. Efficient markets are indispensable for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Competition and consumer protection are two

⁹⁴ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccplpmisc2021d1_en.pdf.

⁹⁵ "Merger Control: Recent Developments and Digital Markets" in February to March 2021, "Florence Competition Autumn School" in October 2021, and "Merger control: Recent developments in Digital markets" in February to April 2022.

disciplines that directly affect business opportunities and consumer welfare and play a direct and important role in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth and reducing poverty, which underlines a need for complementarity in their design and application. UNCTAD considers important to continue to promote synergies between both policies to create a competitive business environment that benefit both consumers and businesses, in the context of the rapid growth of e-commerce and at a time when the development of new business models powered by large digital platforms is dramatically changing market structure and impacting on consumption patterns at a rapid pace.

679. Concretely on the two United Nations Development Account COVID-19 projects, UNCTAD is contributing to the global immediate response to member States in two important and different areas of the pandemic: the health crisis and the economic turmoil that it generated. On the health front, UNCTAD input referred to the role of consumer protection in the provision of basic health services, including policy recommendations suggested to member States, aiming to improve consumer protection in the provision of health services, including in e-health, which led to the interest and technical cooperation requests from member States (Niger, Philippines and Senegal) and the World Health Organization; this was followed by the contribution to a social infrastructure for health from a consumer policy perspective,⁹⁶ corresponding to a request from UN-ESCWA, which is leading the overall project's work stream on social protection. On the socioeconomic front, UNCTAD technical support expects to promote policies that support competition policy towards stronger MSMEs to achieve a successful economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19. The latest products include the publication of the 2021 report on the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on microenterprises and small and medium sized enterprises;⁹⁷ the launch of recommended practices for digital platforms seeking to facilitate the access of microenterprises and SMEs;⁹⁸ and an online course on competition policy and SMEs to improve awareness of competition and SMEs experts. Both products have raised the interest of several member States (Bangladesh, El Salvador, India and Thailand), leading to technical cooperation requests. The cooperation with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions and other international organizations such as World Health Organization (WHO) has already led to increased visibility of UNCTAD work as a focal point for both competition and consumer protection policies within the United Nations system and has widened considerably the cooperation opportunities at different regional levels, which is one of the positive results of the participation in the United Nations Development Account COVID-19 projects.

680. Furthermore, UNCTAD technical assistance activities continue to proceed with a multi-stakeholder approach to advocate for the valuable contribution of competition and consumer policies for sustainable and inclusive economic development and to contribute continuously to an improved competition and consumer protection culture. The series of seminars organized at the end of 2021 for high-level representatives and relevant stakeholder groups of Gabon has provided a good example due to the comprehensive scope adopted for the dissemination of the CEMAC regulations on competition and consumer protection, with a view to its following implementation. At regional level, the trainings held for Portuguese speaking African and other developing countries brought together competition and consumer protection experts and officials to learn from each other's knowledge and experience, benefiting from the support of Portugal and Brazil in both policy fields, and building on a common language, history and culture to foster cooperation.

⁹⁶ Available at https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/ccpb_Social__infra_Health_draft_report_en.pdf, having been launched and circulated for comments from member States and partners.

⁹⁷ Available at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/covid-19-pandemic-impact-micro-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises>, February 2022.

⁹⁸ Launched for comments by member States and partners and available at https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/ccpb_RDP_SME_Launch_en_0.pdf.

C99 Other

Table C99

Others

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
<i>Division on Investment and Enterprise</i>			
INT/0T/BAQ	Capacity-building in investment for development	2011–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/ICC	Sustainable stock Exchanges (SSE) Multi-donor	2020–	Multi-donors
<i>Division on Globalization and Development Strategies</i>			
INT/0T/FAP	Wuhan Globalization Seminars	2016– 2021	China

1. Capital markets and sustainable investment*1.1. Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative*

681. **Development context.** UNCTAD has deepened its work on responsible investment through several channels, particularly the activities of the United Nations Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative. Launched in 2009, the SSE was built on the demand from exchanges for a place to come together with investors, companies and policymakers to share good practices and challenges in a multi-stakeholder environment. The initiative has grown into a global partnership platform including most of the world's stock exchanges. In 2021, the membership of stock exchanges grew to 114 stock exchanges and expanded to include derivatives exchanges with 12 founding members of the SSE Derivative Network.

682. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD work on responsible investment aims to achieve the following objectives through research, consensus-building and technical assistance:

- (a) Providing capital market stakeholders worldwide with proof of concept of supporting the Sustainable Development Goals through capital market regulation, training and education, and market norms;
- (b) Supplying data to help markets better react to sustainability challenges;
- (c) Sharing of experiences and learning from other markets;
- (d) Developing a network support system.

683. **Outputs.** In 2021, the SSE published three major guidance documents. At the request of the United Nations Special Envoy on Climate Action and Finance, the SSE initiative produced two policy guidance documents: (a) a model guidance for stock exchanges on how exchanges can promote the adoption and implementation of best practice in climate related corporate disclosure among their listed companies, with special emphasis on the recommendations of the Financial Stability Board's Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD); (b) an action plan for exchanges with strategies for them to make their markets more climate resilient. A separate research project in 2021 produced a new guidance for derivatives exchanges on how they can best integrate sustainable development into their products and services. The derivatives research was produced in collaboration with the World Federation of Exchanges, the global industry association for exchanges, and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the largest derivative exchange in the world. The SSE initiative also further strengthened its existing online databases including: (a) its stock exchange database with data on the sustainability practices of over 110 stock exchanges worldwide, the most comprehensive dataset of its kind publicly available; (b) its database of stock exchange sustainability disclosure guidance documents, a complete

inventory of all such guidance documents in the world; and (c) security market regulator database of best practices in promoting sustainable finance. In 2021, the SSE also launched a new database on gender equality that tracks the gender balance in boardrooms across all the stock exchanges in Group of 20 countries. In addition, four “policy briefs” were published on the following topics: gender equality, human rights, the net zero movement and climate emissions in public markets.

684. The SSE held a number of events aimed at disseminating knowledge and building consensus on capital market transparency and sustainability, including the following key events:

(a) SSE convened two SSE Climate Advisory Group meetings, in February and two SSE Gender Equality Advisory Group meetings in July.

(b) SSE Ring the Bell for Gender Equality events raised awareness on the business case for women’s economic empowerment and the opportunities for the private sector to advance gender equality and sustainable development in March 2021 at 104 stock exchanges worldwide, up from 73 the previous year;

(c) SSE partnered with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to hold 12 online training workshops on the topic of “TCFD climate reporting” in 7 markets, training over 2,627 participants, including stock exchange officials, security market regulators, investors and listed companies;

(d) SSE partnered with UNFCCC to organize to in-person sessions at COP26, including a technical roundtable on financial innovation to address the climate crisis and a CEO roundtable bringing together leading global exchanges who made a “Net Zero” commitment and joined the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ) led by the UN Special Envoy on Climate Action and Finance.

685. The SSE also provided technical assistance to stock exchanges who are working to develop guidance on sustainability reporting for their market as part of its objective to have all stock exchanges providing guidance on sustainability reporting.

686. **Results and impacts.** In 2021, the SSE organized 29 events, including webinars, in-person events and online training sessions involving more than 196 speakers from the private and public sector including international organizations and the regulatory community. The SSE’s membership increased by 14 per cent to 114 SSE partner exchanges. Six stock exchanges published new guidance for their market on sustainability reporting in 2021. There are now 62 stock exchanges with guidance on sustainability reporting, up from just 14 when the SSE started encouraging exchanges to do this in 2015 (with 80 per cent of these guidance documents making explicit reference to the work of the SSE).

687. SSE work was endorsed by a number of key institutions and private sector partners, including:

(a) “The Training on Climate Disclosure (TCFD training workshop) delivered by the UN SSE to the stakeholders of Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE), Bangladesh (...) were really excellent and the trainers were outstanding. Our participants have learned a lot on this new topic and they will be benefited immensely. We hope to get such more training through the UN SSE to contribute more towards Sustainable Development in our Capital Market.” Managing Director (Acting), Chittagong Stock Exchange, Bangladesh.

(b) “Through these free courses, exchanges contribute to highlighting the importance of climate-related disclosures and help market participants understand what the TCFD recommendations mean and imply for them. By joining forces, the United Nations SSE, IFC and the Climate Disclosure Standards Board (CDSB) have built a relevant and insightful training programme which we would recommend other exchanges to capitalise on in their respective markets.” CEO, Luxembourg Stock Exchange, Luxembourg.

Sustainable Institutional Investment Facilitation programme

688. **Development context.** Capital markets can have a decisive impact on the level and direction of investment. To leverage the potential of capital markets to fill the financing gap

for the Sustainable Development Goals, UNCTAD has been expanding its focus to the upstream segment of the investment chain, centred around the global financial market ecosystem. The Sustainable Institutional Investment Facilitation (SIIF) programme is devoted to promoting the integration of sustainable development, as defined by the Sustainable Development Goals, into the capital market, and facilitating long-term sustainable investment by institutional investors in key Sustainable Development Goal sectors, in particular in developing economies, through policy advocacy, capacity building, dissemination of best practices and partnership with Sustainable Development Goal investors.

689. **Objectives and features.** The SIIF programme is dedicated to facilitating long-term investment by financial institutions in the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in developing countries, and supporting integration of the Sustainable Development Goals in the global capital markets.

690. **Outputs.** In 2021, the SIIF programme developed a framework to assess Sustainable Development Goal alignment of investment funds and evaluated the sustainability performance of over 1,000 sustainable equity funds, which helped enhance the transparency and credibility of the sustainable investment market. To recognize the achievements of outstanding sustainable fund that meet the highest standards of sustainability and impact while outperforming their respective financial performance standards, particularly in developing countries, and to disseminate their best practices, UNCTAD established the Global Sustainable Fund Awards and Emerging Market Sustainable Fund Awards. Six sustainable equity funds were awarded the first awards, including two funds that were dedicated to investment in Sustainable Development Goal-related sectors in emerging economies.

691. The SIIF programme developed a framework for sovereign wealth funds and public pension funds to integrate sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals into their investment decision making process and mapped the progress and gaps in sustainability integration by the world's 80 largest sovereign wealth and public pension funds in reference to the framework.

692. As part of capacity-building efforts, three online workshops were organized, during the seventh UNCTAD World Investment Forum in October 2021, to discuss opportunities and policy tools available for developing economies to attract and facilitate long-term institutional investment in Sustainable Development Goal-related sectors. The workshops attracted the participation of leading institutional investors (such as Amundi, BlackRock, Invesco and Masdar), industry associations (such as the International Investment Fund Association and the European Long-Term Investors Association), and investment promotion agencies from developing countries.

693. **Results.** The efforts made by the SIIF programme in promoting and facilitating long-term investment by financial institutions and the capital market in Sustainable Development Goal sectors, in particular in developing countries, were well recognized by the financial industry and developing countries.

(a) "By providing practical tools and disseminating best practices, UNCTAD plays an important role in facilitating long-term institutional investment in infrastructure, public facilities and other key Sustainable Development Goal sectors in developing economies." CEO of Invest India and the President of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA).

(b) "UNCTAD work in monitoring and assessing the alignment of investment instruments with the Sustainable Development Goals is an important step in bringing more transparency to the sustainable investment market and addressing the greenwashing concerns." Chairman of the European Long-Term Investors Association.

(c) "I am very heartened to see that UNCTAD is recognizing and encouraging the role private savings and investment pools can play in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. Given the unique scaling abilities publicly listed companies have, they represent an important means to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and your

fund awards initiative really shines the light on the role public equity markets/funds can play in achieving them.” Portfolio Manager, Matthews Asia.

2. Addressing challenges and opportunities in economic globalization

Wuhan Globalization Seminars

694. **Development context.** The rapid and successful integration of China into the world economy since the 1990s provides valuable lessons and insights of the opportunities and challenges posed by economic globalization for the process of structural transformation and development. Studying the recent development experiences of China and potential implications for own national development strategies is therefore of great significance for policymakers from other developing nations.

695. The Wuhan Seminars are a training programme, jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce of China and UNCTAD since 2004. The programme is focused on the area of economic globalization and the development experience of China.

696. **Objectives and features.** The main objective of the project is to enable policymakers from developing nations to study China’s development experience in the context of the dynamics of economic globalization processes, and to gain a deeper understanding of strategic requirements for their national development processes in this context. Furthermore, the project also aims at supporting Chinese policymakers in their efforts to keep abreast of ongoing developments in the global economy and to enhance sensitivity to policy options at national levels to meet new challenges.

697. **Outputs.** Entrusted by the Ministry of Commerce of China, the China–Europe Vocational Training Centre and UNCTAD have successfully held and organized well over 20 international seminars on a range of issues relating to economic globalization processes, their impact on trade, industrialization and macro-financial policy spaces in developing countries, as well as lessons to be learned from the development experience of China.

698. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the usual organization of teaching activities and study tours on the ground was not possible because of travel restrictions. A switch to the virtual organization of the seminars also was not feasible, since teaching takes place over several full days per thematic bloc and brings together around 40 to 60 students from all parts of the developing world. This meant that time differences made appropriate coverage of teaching materials and inclusive discussions impossible. In these exceptional circumstances, the Division instead used part of the available funds to produce and prepare inputs and materials for future seminars, in particular in the area of South–South cooperation, on systemic issues in the global economy, and on challenges posed by climate change to developing countries with a focus on policy proposals for mitigation and adaptation to environmental shocks.

699. **Results.** Since the beginning of the project, nearly 1,000 governmental officials from 89 developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and Oceania participated in the programme. The seminar series, including in particular the Economic Globalization series, has persistently received highly positive feedback and remains very popular with participants. The programme overall is very much welcomed by policymakers in developing nations and has, over the years, impacted substantially on training for developmental policy analysis and design.

IV. Theme D: Empowering people, investing in their future

700. The transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It aims at ending poverty in all its forms and improving human well-being. The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would require, on the one hand, sound strategies and policies made by Governments and, on the other hand, the engagement of all people from different sectors of society, including local authorities, business and industry,

non-governmental organizations, women and farmers. To support policymaking and the effective participation of people in this new development process, it is essential to strengthen their skills and update their knowledge base through capacity-building activities.

701. UNCTAD has developed well-targeted technical assistance programmes (including training) to build capacity for various stakeholders including policymakers, academic institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and port operators in developing countries. Furthermore, UNCTAD supports developing country policymakers in mainstreaming gender in trade policy and empowering women in trade.

702. In this section, reports are presented on three products under the theme “Empowering people, investing in their future”. The reports highlight main technical cooperation activities carried out in 2021 and key results to date. Technical cooperation projects that are pertinent to the aforementioned theme but not linked with any of the existing three products in this thematic area are reported on under “D99 Other”.

D1 Trade, gender and development

Table D1

Trade, gender and development

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/CAI	Capacity-Building in Trade and Gender	2013–	Multi-donor
INT/0T/JAC	EIF-Regional Project Promoting Gender Responsive Trade Policy in the LDCs	2020–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

703. **Development context.** Women are important players in trade in their roles as producers, workers, entrepreneurs and traders and their participation in the economy has been a major engine of growth and competitiveness. Yet, women’s potential in trade is too often held back by the many constraints they face.

704. Women are also more vulnerable to economic shocks. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided new evidence of the fact that economic and social crises tend to exacerbate gender inequalities, risking reversing decades of progress: women are more at risk of losing jobs because their participation in the labour market is often in the form of temporary and part-time employment, and they are often less entitled than men to social protection, as eligibility frequently depends upon formal employment. Moreover, female-dominated sectors – such as the services sector, have been the most affected by the pandemic. Finally, containment measures have contributed to an increase in the already heavy burden of unpaid work borne by women, and in the rates of domestic violence.

705. Trade and trade policy can play a key role in fostering a more sustainable and resilient recovery from the pandemic. They also remain a powerful driving force in supporting the global efforts towards the realization of broader women’s economic empowerment and gender equality goals. For this to happen, an in-depth understanding of the gender ramifications of trade policy is necessary to make trade a tool for achieving more inclusive and gender-equal economies after the pandemic.

706. **Objectives and features of the programme.** The Trade, Gender and Development Programme assists member countries in enhancing their understanding of the links between trade and gender, in conducting gender impact analyses of trade policies and agreements, as well as in the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive trade policies. It does so by (a) carrying out analytical activities, (b) implementing capacity development and technical cooperation activities, and (c) promoting policy advocacy and intergovernmental dialogue. Through its work programme on trade, gender and development, UNCTAD

contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8, on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, by promoting the design and implementation of macroeconomic policies, in particular trade policies, that are gender inclusive. UNCTAD work in this area is also strongly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 5 and recognizes gender equality and women's economic empowerment as key elements to achieve the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

707. **Outputs.** In 2021, the trade, gender and development programme assisted beneficiary countries in assessing the gender effects of trade policies, and in devising strategies and policy measures to overcome gender-based constraints that hinder inclusive development. Activities carried out include:

Training

(a) Delivery of standard online course on trade and gender, with optional modules on MERCOSUR and Central America (Spanish only) from 22 March to 16 May 2021. Between 22 March to 16 May 2021 UNCTAD delivered a Spanish iteration of the online course with optional modules dedicated to MERCOSUR and Central America, and hosted 52 participants from 17 countries, 43 women and 9 men. The course consisted in a learning curriculum of 7 weeks based on volume 1 of an UNCTAD teaching manual on trade and gender (standard course), and an additional week based either on the regional module "Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of MERCOSUR" or the module "Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of Central America", focused on examples and case studies from each specific region.

(b) Delivery of standard online course on trade and gender, with optional module dedicated to the LDCs on 31 May–25 July 2021. Between 31 May and 25 July 2021, UNCTAD, in cooperation with the EIF, delivered the 2021 iteration of the "standard" online course on trade and gender with the optional module on the LDCs. The course was delivered in French and English and hosted 163 participants (90 women and 73 men) from 60 countries, 25 of which were LDCs. The course consisted in a learning curriculum of 7 weeks based on volume 1 of the main UNCTAD teaching manual on trade and gender (standard course), and an additional week based on the module "Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of the Least Developed Countries".

(c) Training programme on "Trade rules and procedures, and entrepreneurship" for women small-scale and informal cross-border traders. In February and November 2021, UNCTAD trained 260 women small-scale traders in Kenya, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia as part of the multi-agency project "Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 Microenterprises, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector". The project builds upon the success of a previous project on the same issues carried out by UNCTAD in 2016-2019.

Analytical activities

708. The analytical work conducted by the Trade, Gender and Development Programme in 2021 focused on the drafting of the following studies:

(a) Revision of UNCTAD main teaching manual on trade and gender "Volume 1: Unfolding the links". UNCTAD has been updating "Volume 1: Unfolding the links", its main teaching manual on trade and gender, which was originally published in 2014. The manual introduces conceptual frameworks for exploring the mutual relationship between trade policies and gender and constitutes the basis of UNCTAD online courses. As of February 2022, the document went through a thorough peer review process involving members of the academia, representatives from other international organizations and UNCTAD staff. The document is currently being finalized and will be translated into French and Spanish.

(b) Development of teaching module: Trade and Gender Linkages - An analysis of the least developed countries. In 2021, under a EIF-financed project, UNCTAD published the teaching module "Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)" and translated it into French. The teaching module builds on and adds value to the existing UNCTAD teaching material, applying the analytical

framework to the case of LDCs. The module constitutes the basis of a dedicated online course devoted to LDCs and expands UNCTAD portfolio of teaching resources developed under the Capacity Building Initiative on Trade and Gender.

(c) Development of report “Cross-border Trade in the Pre- and Post-Pandemic Environment Evidence from Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia”. The report summarizes the results of the training activities on cross-border trade organized in 2019 and 2021 in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia and analyses their impacts on its beneficiaries.

Events and workshops – Awareness-raising and policy dialogue on the trade and gender nexus

709. During the period under review the Trade, Gender and Development Programme organized the following meetings and events on the topic of trade and gender:

(a) CSW65 side event, “What future for women small-scale and informal cross-border traders in Africa?”. The event, co-organized with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, was held on 17 March 2021 during the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. The debate saw a discussion on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women engaging in small-scale and informal cross-border trade in Africa. Speakers included representatives from international organizations (UNCTAD, UNECA, IOM), from the private sector (GSMA) and from civil society (Cross-border Traders’ Association).

(b) UNCTAD XV pre-event, “Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of least developed countries”. On 8 June 2021, UNCTAD co-organized with the EIF secretariat a webinar on “Trade and gender linkages: An analysis of least developed countries “. The event - which was at the same time an UNCTAD XV pre-event and a contribution to the UNCTAD initiative “Les 8 du mois, until we’re there”, provided the opportunity for a high-level debate based on the new UNCTAD publication on “Trade and Gender Linkages: An analysis of the least developed countries”. The event was meant to support governments in the LDCs to integrate gender issues into their trade policies, programmes and negotiations.

(c) Gender and Development Forum, in relation to UNCTAD XV. The Gender and Development Forum (26–28 September 2021), prior to UNCTAD XV, provided a critical space of debate and reflection through a gender lens on a wide range of issues - ranging from agriculture to industrial policies, from education and training to labour market needs, from environmental challenges to trade and regional integration. The discussions were framed under the theme “From inequality and vulnerabilities to prosperity for all”, the overall theme of UNCTAD XV. The Trade, Gender and Development Programme organized the high-level panel “Shaping gender-responsive economies and societies – What role for trade?” on 27 September 2021, and the workshop “Our work makes a difference” on 28 September 2021, in which several UNCTAD teams had the opportunity to showcase their work on gender through the voice of their beneficiaries.

710. **Results.** The above activities yielded positive and multiplier effects in terms of enhanced capacities to mainstream gender into trade policy.

Delivery of online courses on trade and gender

711. According to the feedback received on the standard, regional and thematic editions of the online course on trade and gender, the courses succeeded in preparing participants to conduct their own research on the topic, and/or incorporate trade and gender concepts into their policy-related work. The majority of participants reported that they had acquired the necessary skills to assist policymakers in their own country to mainstream gender in trade policy formulation and implementation. The online courses continued to represent a solid tool to close knowledge gaps on trade and gender during the pandemic, when opportunities for in-person trainings were severely reduced:

(a) “Hemos explorados contenidos relevantes para entender el enfoque de género y cómo esto afecta el desarrollo socio económico. En este sentido, nos crea un referente para entender este contexto y nos reta a considerar la equidad e igualdad de género al

momento de desarrollar proyectos y proponer actualización regulatoria y legislativa.” Encargado de comercio electrónico, INDOTEL, Republica Dominicana.

(b) “We have explored relevant content to understand the gender perspective and how it affects socio-economic developments. In this sense, the course represents a reference point for us to understand these issues. It challenges us to consider gender equity and equality when developing projects and proposing regulatory and legislative reforms.” E-commerce manager, INDOTEL, Dominican Republic.

(c) “Me pareció muy bueno el curso, aprendí muchísimo sobre el tema de comercio y genero ciertamente es un tema que tiene incidencia en todos los países, por cuanto la mujer se ha convertido en el motor de desarrollo de los países en vías de desarrollo.” Consejero – Coordinador de Asuntos Regionales, MPPRE, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

(d) “I found the course very good, I learned a lot about trade and gender, it is certainly an issue that has an impact on all countries, as women have become the engine of development in developing countries.” Counsellor – Regional Affairs Coordinator, MPPRE, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

(e) “My participation in the course proved to be a very positive experience. It allowed to strengthen my capacity, and this will have positive repercussions on the quality of my contribution to public policies on gender issues.” Participant from Department of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts, Burkina Faso.

(f) “This was a top-notch course. The concepts were well explained, and the practical aspect was laid out clearly. This helped tremendously.” Managing Director, HEDGE, Ghana.

Training for women cross-border traders in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania

712. Most traders who took part in UNCTAD capacity building activities rated the training outcomes very positively, confirming a remarkable increase in their understanding of their rights and obligations (100 per cent), of applicable trade rules and customs procedures (43 per cent), and of new COVID-19 measures (65 per cent). They confirmed enhanced confidence to cross the border through official border posts (92 per cent), intention to formalize their business within the next 12 months (80 per cent), and improvement in their business model (96 per cent).

713. Quote from a participant in the training organized in Taveta, Kenya, 15–20 November 2021: “I am now more confident than ever in crossing the border to Tanzania and procure goods there, since I have in-depth knowledge of my rights and obligations as a small-scale cross border trader. I trust that my business has a bright future.” Small-scale cross-border trader, Taveta, Kenya.

D3 Entrepreneurship for sustainable development

Table D3

Entrepreneurship development for sustainable development

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
IND/0T/BJJ	Empretec-HiEERA Programme for high-impact women entrepreneurs and women eco-system developers in India	2021–	UN Women India Multi Country Office
SAU/0T/CBI	Entrepreneurship Development Programme	2014–	Saudi Arabia

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	(Saudi Arabia)		
INT/OT/BAQ	Capacity-Building in Investment for Development	2011–	Multi-donors
INT/OT/BBV	Strengthening SMEs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition	2012–	Private sector companies
ROA-1819 (AV11)	Promoting Refugee and Migrant Entrepreneurship in East Africa, the Andean region and the Middle East	2018–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

714. **Development context.** The General Assembly of the United Nations, recalling its resolutions 67/202 of 21 December 2012, 69/210 of 19 December 2014, 71/221 of 21 December 2016, and 73/225 of 20 December 2018, emphasized the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions and acknowledged UNCTAD work in entrepreneurship for development in its resolution 75/211⁹⁹, adopted on 21 December 2020. Recognizing the value of entrepreneurship education and the dissemination of entrepreneurial thinking across all sectors, the General Assembly encouraged UNCTAD to continue with its behavioural approach programme, Empretec, and called upon UNCTAD to continue to assist Member States to identify, formulate, implement and assess coherent policy measures on entrepreneurship and the promotion of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

715. The UNCTAD XV outcome document “The Bridgetown Covenant”, para. 127 (r), mandates UNCTAD, in collaboration with agencies within and outside the United Nations system, to “continue to provide support in the area of development of microenterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups, including women- and youth-owned small and medium-sized enterprises, through”, *inter alia*:

(a) Enterprise development initiatives, including capacity-building and assistance to attract investment capital, grow business linkages with transnational corporations and participate in global and regional value chains;

(b) Entrepreneurship policy support for the implementation of robust national and regional policy frameworks.

716. In addition, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by United Nations Member States in September 2015, also emphasizes the role of entrepreneurship in sustainable development, particularly in Goals 4 and 8, namely:

(a) Goal 4 (ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), target 4.4: “By 2030, sustainably increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.”

(b) Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), target 8.3: “Promote development-oriented policies that support productive capacities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.”

⁹⁹ United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/211 of 29 December 2020 titled “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2020”.

717. These mandates underpin UNCTAD technical assistance work on entrepreneurship for sustainable development.

718. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD assistance to member States in the area includes the identification, formulation, implementation and assessment of coherent policy measures that support entrepreneurship and the promotion of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises. The objective is to support member States, at their request, to design initiatives, and identify measures and institutions that will promote entrepreneurship across six interrelated priority areas¹⁰⁰: formulating national entrepreneurship strategy; optimizing the regulatory environment; enhancing entrepreneurship education and skills development; facilitating technology exchange and innovation; improving access to finance; and promoting awareness and networking.

719. The other pillar of UNCTAD assistance to member States focuses on developing entrepreneurial skills and building local productive capacities of MSMEs, through UNCTAD Empretec and Business Linkages programmes.

720. Since its inception, the Empretec programme has been installed in over forty countries and has been assisting entrepreneurs by establishing self-sustained, local market-driven entrepreneurship development centres (Empretec national centres). In more than three decades of activity, more than 500,000 entrepreneurs have benefited from Empretec workshops and business development services available in the existing network of Empretec centres worldwide, improving their efficiency, and contributing to job creation in the hosting countries.

721. The Business Linkages programme seeks to upgrade the capacity of local suppliers and facilitate their integration into global and/or regional value chains through business links with large international or domestic companies. The programme, launched in nine developing countries, has created substantial and mutually beneficial results, both for small suppliers and large domestic or international enterprises. The programme is increasingly geared to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, leveraging the incentives and resources of the private sector to adopt environmental and labour standards and ensure the beneficial inclusion of the poorest segment of the population, especially in rural settings.

722. As part of the UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, since April 2020 UNCTAD has been coordinating the project “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the micro, small and medium enterprises sector” (MSME surge project). The project is being implemented jointly by UNCTAD together with all Regional Commissions (i.e. ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNESCWA as well as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs). It aims to strengthen the capacity and resilience of MSMEs in UNCTAD member States to mitigate the economic and social impact of the global COVID-19 crisis. During the first and second phases of the MSME Surge project, partner agencies assisted Governments and entrepreneurs by providing targeted advisory and capacity building services. In its third and final phase, the project continued to provide capacity building activities to incorporate policy responses for MSME resurgence and on entrepreneurship skills development, through the UNCTAD network of Empretec centres and experienced International Master Trainers. Other capacity building activities encompassed accounting for MSMEs.

723. **Outputs.** The main outputs in 2021 in the areas of entrepreneurship policies, Empretec and business linkages are reported below. Country-level activities gradually resumed thanks to a general relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Entrepreneurship policies

Ministerial round table on entrepreneurship and sustainable recovery post-COVID-19

724. A ministerial round table on entrepreneurship took place virtually on 20 October 2021, in the context of the seventh World Investment Forum (WIF). The round table discussed the future of entrepreneurship policies and new policy initiatives that could assist

¹⁰⁰ As identified in the UNCTAD Entrepreneurship Policy Framework – EPF, launched in 2012.

MSMEs towards a long-term green, inclusive and resilient recovery post-COVID-19 and in support of Sustainable Development Goals. The round table included addresses by the Ministers of Cameroon, the Dominican Republic, the Gambia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Jordan, Mauritius, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Participants highlighted the important role of entrepreneurship in post-pandemic economic recovery and noted the changing paths of global value chains, increasing regionalization and the role of private sector in economic recovery. Governments were encouraged to bring forward effective fiscal and regulatory measures to support entrepreneurs and the MSME sector. The Minister of SMEs, Social Economy and Handicraft of Cameroon announced “An important pillar of the post-COVID-19 strategy is improving entrepreneurial skills of certain target groups. In that regard, steps are actually on the way for the implementation of the National Plan for the Development of Entrepreneurship in Cameroon, developed with the assistance of UNCTAD.” The Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives of Mauritius affirmed “Our policy for the MSME sector is crafted around our 10-year Master Plan for the SME Sector, which we started implementing in 2017. The document was developed by Empretec Mauritius, a non-governmental social enterprise, supported by UNOPS and UNCTAD”. The meeting concluded with a video, the “Empretec Women in Business: Stories of resilience and success”, which gathered compelling stories from 20 women who were selected from among the over 100 finalists to the Empretec Women in Business Awards through its seven editions, since 2008 until 2020. The video reveals each woman entrepreneur’s personal journey: their dreams, their passions, the obstacles and challenges they have faced and continue to face, and how they have overcome them.

WIF sessions on entrepreneurship in the new health economy

725. Under the framework of the seventh WIF, from 18 to 22 October, three sessions on entrepreneurship in the New Health Economy saw the participation of experts that discussed the role of various ecosystem partners in shaping the new health economy of the Asia-Pacific region, as well as Africa and Latin America. They shared practical experiences and insights on challenges and opportunities facing the health sector, including in responding to the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The participants debated policy reforms needed to scale up innovation and bring significant system efficiencies, better patient outcomes and population health standards through innovation in health care.

WIF session on promoting entrepreneurship for migrants and refugee for inclusive and sustainable development

726. In the context of the seventh UNCTAD WIF, a session on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees for inclusive and sustainable development was organized on 18 October 2021. The objective of this round table, which was attended by 100 participants, was to inspire the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of inclusive entrepreneurship policies and joint solutions aimed at migrants and refugees for socioeconomic inclusion, integration, social cohesion and sustainable development. The event built on the work of the partnership among UNCTAD, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration within the development and roll-out of the policy guidance on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees. It reflected on lessons learned during practical implementation notably in East Africa, the Andean region and the Middle East and outlined key elements for future inclusive entrepreneurship policies.

Angola – National Entrepreneurship Strategy

727. As part of the activities of the European Union-UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, the design of initiatives and measures to promote entrepreneurship is a key element of the UNCTAD Empretec component aimed at supporting the government of Angola to formulate an entrepreneurship strategy. UNCTAD completed a mapping exercise of the key stakeholders operating in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Angola and an assessment of the overall performance of the national entrepreneurial ecosystem, whose findings were shared with Angola stakeholders attending a virtual meeting on 22 June 2021. Leaders of the working groups set up to focus on different entrepreneurship strategy pillars met, with the facilitation of UNCTAD and the

Angolan MSME agency INAPEM,¹⁰¹ to discuss the next steps in the process of developing a National Entrepreneurship Strategy and the roles of the national Working Groups and their leaders. Working Group leaders, in coordination with relevant ministries and agencies, were expected to identify members and other actors to be involved in the analytical and drafting process, which would happen through a regular series of meetings and exchanges.

Ecuador – Regional workshop on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees in the Andean region

728. On 12 October 2021, UNCTAD, in cooperation with the Alliance for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (AEI), launched a Regional Virtual Forum on Good Practices on Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurship in the Andean region. The objective was to showcase good practices that have solved challenges of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and that have supported the development of migrant and refugee entrepreneurship during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the forum sought to showcase regional collaborative initiatives that have forged the inclusion of migrant and refugee entrepreneurs in the different countries of the region. One of the most relevant aspects of the forum, attended by around 260 people was the diversity in the composition of participants who virtually connected from various continents and countries such as Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Italy, Panama, Peru, Switzerland and the United States of America.

Seychelles – National Entrepreneurship Strategy

729. In an effort to formulate a National Entrepreneurship Strategy and promote the MSME sector, the Government of Seychelles, assisted by UNCTAD and other stakeholders, organized a workshop on 11 November 2021 to obtain ideas and suggestions on upscaling entrepreneurship in Seychelles. Information on field experiences, good practices and lessons learned were shared during the workshop and will be used as inputs in the eventual elaboration of the National Entrepreneurship Strategy.

Uganda – Integrated National Entrepreneurship Strategy

730. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives of Uganda, in collaboration with UNCTAD, organized a three-day workshop from 15 to 17 September 2021, to obtain perspectives and recommendations on key priority areas that should be considered in the formulation of an Integrated National Entrepreneurship Strategy. The workshop also discussed how best to integrate migrant and refugee entrepreneurs into Uganda's private sector development policies. The three-day workshop included representatives from various United Nations entities in Uganda, the Government, development partners, financial Institutions, incubators, private sector foundations, Kampala City Traders Association (KACITA) and academia.

E-learning course on policymaking: Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development

731. UNCTAD joined efforts with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to develop the e-learning course "Policymaking for inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurship". The tool is part of the MSME surge project financed by the United Nations Development Account and jointly implemented by UNCTAD and United Nations regional commissions and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with a view to strengthening the capacity and resilience of MSMEs in developing countries to mitigate the economic and social impact of the global COVID-19 crisis. The course is designed for supporting policymakers and practitioners to understand the benefits of promoting entrepreneurship and its impact on sustainable development. It assists policymakers in understanding the measures needed to support entrepreneurship, including developing an action plan, monitoring its implementation and measuring the impact. The governments of Seychelles, South Africa and Uganda participated in a virtual session to promote the e-learning course on 8 July 2021 and illustrated their respective initiatives at the country level. The e-learning course has been made available in three languages:

¹⁰¹ National Institute of Support for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

English, French and Spanish. The virtual launch events for the French and Spanish versions took place respectively on 13 October 2021 and 29 November 2021, registering the overall participation of 340 participants.

Webinar on Entrepreneurship in post COVID-19 resurgence

732. UNCTAD and UNITAR hosted a series of virtual roundtables on the impact of COVID-19 on entrepreneurship and government responses on enhancing MSMEs role in resilient, green and inclusive recovery. The initiative aimed at providing insights to policymakers and MSMEs to better understand and navigate this unprecedented situation. Four separate webinars discussed the following four topics: green entrepreneurship, agri-preneurship, entrepreneurship and fintech, and blue entrepreneurship. The four webinars, organized between February and May 2021, benefited from the active contribution of policymakers, practitioners and entrepreneurs, and attracted 860 participants.

United Nations Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise day 2021

733. The MSME Day was held virtually on 28 June 2021 and brought together over 650 participants from 112 countries. The event focused on placing MSMEs at the centre of a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable recovery and growth. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and an economy that is greener and more equitable, requires resilient and flourishing MSMEs everywhere. A live panel discussion with entrepreneurs from Argentina, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya and Senegal, shared insights on how MSMEs contribute to an inclusive and sustainable recovery. During the high-level plenary segments, leaders from governments, international organizations, business support organizations, and the private sector, shared priorities to support MSMEs on this path. The event was hosted by the International Trade Centre, and co-organized with the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations in New York, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Council for Small Business (ICSB), UNCTAD and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

Empretec

734. The gradual relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions at the national levels allowed for the slow resuming of some Empretec project activities under the installation and consolidation phase, notably in Angola, India, and Saudi Arabia.

735. In the second half of 2021, Empretec beneficiary countries were able to conduct in presence training activities, while UNCTAD continued offering online training-of-trainers (TOTs) activities sessions and technical webinars for its networks of Empretec centres and trainers.

736. Among the achievements of the Empretec programme in 2021, the following had a particular relevance at the global or country level:

- (a) The seventh Empretec Global Summit (virtual format) on 20 April 2021;
- (b) The annual Empretec Directors meeting (virtual format) on 1-2 December 2021;
- (c) Completion of the Empretec training activities in Angola (four workshops) and certification of national trainers;
- (d) Beginning of the Empretec Saudi Arabia consolidation phase, with the successful organization of five in presence Empretec workshops and three TOT sessions for local trainer and trainee trainers;
- (e) On-line TOTs (six sessions) for Empretec trainers and trainee trainers, as part of their upgrading on the new version of the Empretec workshop (E6DM);
- (f) Further development of on-line tools (games and platform) that could be used in future Empretec formats (hybrid or online);
- (g) Finalization of two series of videos on the Empretec competencies framework, to be used as didactic tools in hybrid or on-line training sessions.

737. More specifically the following activities were conducted:

Empretec global network activities

738. On 20 April 2021, UNCTAD organized its seventh Empretec Global Summit, which took place in virtual format. The Summit discussed how the post-pandemic resurgence of the MSME sector could be supported and facilitated by the Empretec programme. The event brought together high-level policymakers, including from Empretec hosting institutions, directors of national Empretec centres and Empretec graduates, as well as other entrepreneurs and key stakeholders from the private and public sectors. Participants engaged in an interactive dialogue on the most effective practices implemented or envisaged to support MSMEs and to seize the moment to enhance their role and impact on sustainable and inclusive growth in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the post-COVID-19 resurgence. Success stories of Empretec graduates during COVID-19 were presented with a view to sharing experiences on how the behaviour-based Empretec methodology contributed to their business' transformation and adaptation during the crisis.

739. Forty representatives from 22 Empretec national centres and one prospective centre (Costa Rica) attended the XXVII annual meeting of Empretec Directors, held on 1–2 December 2021 in a virtual format. The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to highlight the major achievements over the past two years, share updates and news concerning their country programmes and discuss strategic and operational issues related to the Empretec programme and the impact of COVID-19 on the work of Empretec centres. The centres shared experiences and new approaches developed to mitigate the repercussions of the pandemic. Additionally, they elaborated on the opportunities seized and challenges faced during the pandemic. During the meeting, UNCTAD announced the call for nominations for the 2022 Empretec Women in Business Awards. All centres were invited to nominate outstanding women entrepreneurs who benefited from Empretec training. Finally, the meeting discussed UNCTAD progress in developing online games and tools that could be integrated into future virtual Empretec workshops (ETWs). At the time of the meeting, a pilot ETW was being conducted in Brazil, with a view to “road test” developed games and tools during an in-presence six-day training workshop, with a group of entrepreneurs equipped with laptops, tablets and mobile phones. The new set of games and tools is expected to be released in 2022, and tested again during one of the ETWs, before being made available to all Empretec centres worldwide.

740. In the context of the MSME surge project, UNCTAD supported its network of Empretec centres and their trainers to raise awareness of the contribution of sustainable businesses under the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In coordination with the Empretec centre of Argentina, between August and September 2021, UNCTAD organized, four days of online training-of-trainers (TOT) workshops aimed at Spanish-speaking Empretec trainers from Latin America. More than 60 trainers learned and shared their views in group discussions on how to integrate sustainability into Empretec workshops. Other learning sessions for Empretec centres and trainers were also organized by UNCTAD during the month of September. Over 130 participants attended two online sessions on Design Thinking and Business Model Canvas, two tools which have been included in the new version of the Empretec training workshop (E6DM) that some Empretec centres plan to roll out in their countries as in-presence workshops begin to resume.

741. Three online training-of-trainers sessions on Empretec for groups of entrepreneurs with low-literacy and on Farming-as-a-Business were organized between February and June 2021. In April, UNCTAD and the Empretec centre in Benin conducted an online workshop for Francophone Empretec trainers from Benin, Cameroon, Mauritius and Togo.

742. With a view to providing Empretec centres and trainers with new online tools, UNCTAD produced a set of 2-minute animated videos, illustrating Empretec's 10 Personal Entrepreneurial Competencies (PECs). The purpose of the videos is to use them as a didactic tool during Empretec workshops for groups of entrepreneurs in vulnerable conditions. The videos can also be used as promotional tools to introduce Empretec's 10 personal entrepreneurial competencies that are found among successful entrepreneurs, as

well as to inspire potential candidates to attend Empretec training workshops. Another series of ten 20-minute videos was prepared by a group of Empretec international master trainers and finalized in April 2021. The videos will be used, both as a learning tool during Empretec workshops and as promotional material by Empretec centres.

Empretec activities at a national and regional levels

743. The following section provides highlights on Empretec centres and more details about promising initiatives undertaken by some centres per region or geographic areas.

Empretec in Asia

744. In coordination with UN-Women, and through an additional service agreement with its Empretec Programme's national hosting institution – Empretec India Foundation (EIF), UNCTAD supervised the organization and delivery of a series of sensitization workshops, coaching sessions and peer-reviewed analysis of entrepreneurial impressions to selected women entrepreneurs, to support integration of Indian female entrepreneurs into local, regional, national and global industry value chains. A total of eight sensitization (“Primer”) workshops with women entrepreneurs identified among EIF and UN-Women networks were conducted in 2021. Based on the participation, contribution and growth mindset shown in the workshops and in an online platform set up by EIF as part of an ongoing peer-learning approach to habit formation, called Empretec Gym, 15 out of the 75 participants to the Primer workshops were recommended for Coaching on Behavioural Inputs (CBIs) to promote habit formation around good business behaviours over an extended time. All participants continued to learn through peer-learning in the Empretec Gym as part of the development cycle. Seventy-one post-primers, community events, called DRIFT sessions, took place between May and October and saw the participation of all 75 participants.

745. UNCTAD, in coordination with a local implementing partner, began the consolidation phase of the Empretec programme in Saudi Arabia, conducting five Empretec training workshops, under the supervision of two International Master Trainers from Jordan and Palestine, and in collaboration a local team of trainers. Between June and October 2021, 117 local entrepreneurs (60 women) successfully completed the five Empretec training workshops that took place in Riyadh. Participants represented various industries in Saudi Arabia including construction and real estate, food wholesale, consultancy, art and design, technology, and food and beverage. The national trainer and four other local trainee trainers attended three 2-day training-of-trainers workshops, led by the two International Master Trainers who supervised the local team during the Empretec training activities.

746. In December 2021, UNCTAD and the national Empretec hosting institution in Malaysia (NAWEM - the National Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Malaysia), organized a webinar to capture the experience of Empretec graduates in the country. Five women shared inspiring stories that demonstrate how the entrepreneur's behaviours are a key asset for success and growth, regardless of the economic and social environment amidst post COVID-19. The five women business owners became pathbreakers whose competencies and spirit developed at the Empretec Training Workshop allowed them to combine a powerful idea and real-life problem solving skills into an opportunity. Building upon this key entrepreneurial skillset to manage risks, remain innovative, and seizing new digital opportunities is an essential ingredient of a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Empretec country activities in Africa

747. Under the framework of the European Union-UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, UNCTAD organized four Empretec Entrepreneurship Training Workshops (ETWs) in Luanda, Angola, from January to April 2021, thus concluding a series of 14 training workshops planned under the project. The four workshops trained 80 Angolan entrepreneurs. A team of two certified Angolan national UNCTAD–Empretec trainers conducted the 6-day training workshops, with the collaboration of two other local trainee trainers. The team of Angolan trainers was supervised, via remote connection, by UNCTAD–Empretec certified international master trainers from Brazil and Mozambique. At the end of the four workshops, two local trainee trainers received their certification as

Empretec National Trainers, while the other two already certified local Empretec trainers received their certification as National Master Trainers.

748. In February and May 2021, UNCTAD organized two Empretec workshops in Kampala, Uganda, in cooperation with the Office of the Prime Minister, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), under the overall technical coordination of its Empretec centre – Enterprise Uganda. The two workshops were part of UNCTAD assistance to strengthen the capacity of Uganda to formulate and implement inclusive entrepreneurship policies and programmes for ensuring socioeconomic integration of migrants and refugees in local economies. Capacity-building for migrant and refugee entrepreneurs is important for improving their entrepreneurial mindset and enabling them to more effectively access finance, technology, business networks and markets in the host country. Under the framework of the Development Account project “Promoting Refugee and Migrant Entrepreneurship in East Africa, the Andean region and the Middle East”, entrepreneurship training workshops, based on UNCTAD Empretec behavioural approach, targeted mixed groups of local, migrant and refugee entrepreneurs. The workshops’ methodology provided participants with practical tools to critically assess and improve their entrepreneurship competencies, eventually equipping them with the mindset and motivation necessary to bring about concrete and measurable changes in their own business.

749. The Empretec hosting institution in Gambia, GIEPA (Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency), conducted two workshops in June and December 2021 for young entrepreneurs across the Greater Banjul Area.

750. In September and October 2021, the Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion and Development Centre (CePEPE) in Benin, which has been hosting the Empretec programme in the country since the inception, conducted two Empretec workshops using the new training format (E6DM). Forty new Empretec graduates (17 women) successfully completed the workshops in the new format, delivered for the first time in a Francophone country.

751. Three Empretec workshops were also conducted in Cameroon, in coordination with the Empretec local centre, hosted by the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA), between October and November 2021. A total of 55 local entrepreneurs successfully completed the training sessions and joined the network of Empretec graduates.

752. UNCTAD and Empretec Ghana Foundation conducted two Empretec workshops during the month of November 2021 for 61 local entrepreneurs (24 women). Participants met again three weeks after the completion of the workshops to further enhance their personal developments, learn from the experiences of each other, build wider business networks and work towards the attainment of their personal and business goals. Empretec Ghana Foundation also organized a series of training and technical assistance activities with two groups of vegetable farmers in the Ayawaso Municipality in the Greater Accra Region. Sixty participating farmers were drawn from nine operational areas including six registered Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs) who largely produce cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, cucumber, green pepper, okro, and tomatoes. Farming-as-a-Business training workshops and subsequent assistance on good agricultural practices focused on cucumber and okro. The intervention was executed in partnership with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) Unit of the Ayawaso West Municipality.

753. During the months of November and December 2021, Empretec Zimbabwe resumed in-presence training activities and organized two six-day Empretec workshops in Harare and Bulawayo. Fifty local entrepreneurs, mostly women, successfully completed the training activities and received their certification as Empretec graduates.

Empretec country activities in Latin America

754. To continue assisting Argentine entrepreneurs and SMEs, Empretec Argentina developed a series of free virtual training workshops to provide specific tools to local enterprises. From April to June 2021, more than 500 entrepreneurs received training on topics such as the Business Model Canvas, sustainability, innovation, digital marketing and

branding. All workshops were designed and delivered by Empretec certified trainers, making reference to the Empretec competencies framework. Empretec Argentina also launched a virtual campus, through which trainers and participants could interact, exchanging content and knowledge. In April, the centre started a new magazine on innovation for SMEs and entrepreneurs, a quarterly digital publication aimed at showcasing innovative solutions and tools across the Empretec Argentina network.

755. In December, the Empretec hosting institution in Ecuador – Conquito – organized two Empretec workshops in the city of Quito for mixed groups of local entrepreneurs and migrants, mostly from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Thirty participants (21 women) successfully completed the workshops, delivered with the new format (E6DM).

Business Linkages

756. The implementation of a SECO-United Nations Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity in Myanmar, funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), was negatively impacted by persisting travel restrictions due to the pandemic, compounded by the uncertainties brought about by the situation following the February 2021 military takeover. All training and technical assistance activities were postponed and project implementing partners, including UNCTAD, worked on new plans that would take into account the various challenges and restrictions in working with country beneficiaries. Implementing agencies discussed possible activities that could be implemented under the uncertain and unforeseeable health and political situation of the country. In coordination with the Project Management Unit, a new work plan has been discussed and received approval by SECO. Most of the remaining activities will be conducted on virtual platforms, as no physical gatherings are allowed, though the high costs of internet and its low reliability may hinder the implementation of certain activities in the revised work plan.

757. **Results and impacts.** The relevance of UNCTAD work on entrepreneurship policies is attested by a consistent number of requests of assistance from member States. UNCTAD has provided several countries with assistance in designing national entrepreneurship strategies: Angola, Cameroon, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, the Gambia and the United Republic of Tanzania. During the Ministerial Round Table on Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Recovery Post-COVID-19 (WIF 2021), the Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of the Gambia, noted the relevance of UNCTAD work in this area: "...the national entrepreneurship policy has been hailed as a ground-breaking policy as it is Sustainable Development Goals-aligned and also serve as a policy tool used by the government of the Gambia to enhance the growth of the MSME ecosystem in the country in the pre pandemic era." Assistance was provided to Ecuador and Uganda on specific measures targeting entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees, while UNCTAD assistance to the Government of Seychelles focused on the integration of targeted recommendations to support entrepreneurial initiatives in the blue economy. Requests for assistance on developing entrepreneurship strategies were received from Cabo Verde, Iraq, Morocco, Mozambique and South Africa.

758. The UNCTAD–UNITAR e-learning course on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees was translated and offered Arabic and French, in addition to English and Spanish which were developed in 2020. More than 1,000 participants from over 90 countries attended the six-week online courses in the four languages. More than 50 per cent of participants were women and more than 20 per cent were government representatives. Exit surveys indicate that over 90 per cent of respondents found the e-learning course extremely useful and expected to use the acquired knowledge in their professional work. UNCTAD has been using the e-learning course very actively during the implementation of its technical assistance projects. Ahead of national policy workshops, the e-learning course was offered to all participants to have an introduction to the Policy Guide on Entrepreneurship for Migrants and Refugees (launched in 2018 in collaboration with IOM and UNHCR).

759. An assessment of the impact of Empretec training activities in Angola was carried out in the last quarter of 2021, with a view to tracking changes in the group of over 340 Angolan entrepreneurs (*empretecos*) who attended one of the fourteen Empretec workshops held in Luanda, since the inception of the project in 2018. The impact report showed a high

appreciation of the usefulness of the Empretec training (9.24 out of 10) for participants' businesses. The total number of jobs created by established and new companies increased by 67 per cent, and a large share of *empretecos* (85 per cent) reported sales growth after their participation to the Empretec workshops. Opportunity seeking and initiative, Persistence, and Demand for quality and efficiency are the three most important competencies that *empretecos* considered critical for the success of their companies.

760. Empretec Ghana support to farmers' groups, who benefitted from Farming-as-a-Business training and assistance on good agricultural practices, showed remarkable increase in farmers' productivity and incomes for the two target vegetables: cucumber and okra. For instance, for over 90 per cent of farmers, their yield of cucumbers more than doubled thanks to the combination of a more entrepreneurial mindset and good practices. For 73 per cent of them, revenues increased between 75 per cent and 120 per cent.

761. Women entrepreneurs who benefitted from the development cycle for high-impact women entrepreneurs and women eco-system developers, led by Empretec India Foundation were able to connect behaviours with entrepreneurial outcome, regarding a set of behaviours as key to entrepreneurial success. Participants appreciated that the Empretec framework has been beneficial in assessing their own weaknesses and strengths, and that it is centred around their own entrepreneurial behaviours. Many of them were happy to have received an insight into the Empretec competencies framework, confident that it would move some of the suggested behaviours into a habit. Below are some of the testimonies from participating women entrepreneurs:

(a) "The Empretec workshop has been life changing for me. It has opened my mind to so many perspectives about the world and myself, which I never thought I could even comprehend. The workshop has paved a path to help me embrace the entrepreneurial side of me and is giving me the courage to keep growing and discovering every day."

(b) "Upon attending the training, I realized that I had been doing certain things discussed in the workshop, unconsciously for years. The workshop has opened up a new and structured way for me to reflect on my thoughts and actions."

D6 Train for Trade

Table D6
Train for Trade

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/OT/4AB	Mise en place d'un projet de renforcement des capacités de formation portuaire pour les pays en développement (Programme Train for Trade)	2004–	Developing country ports
INT/OT/5BS	Coopération entre l'Autorité Portuaire de Valence (Espagne) et le programme Train for Trade de la CNUCED	2005–	Valencia port authority
INT/OT/6AR	Train for Trade Trust Fund	2006–	Multi-donor
INT/OT/7BR	UNCTAD/ Train for Trade Port Training Programme for English-Speaking Developing Countries	2007–	Ireland
ROA-1617 (A10)	Programme on Statistics and Data	2016–	Development Account
ROA-1819 (N11)	Leapfrogging skills development in e-commerce in South-East Asia in the framework of the 2030 Development	2018–	Development Account

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	Agenda		
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account

762. **Development context.** With a view to supporting the development of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, the UNCTAD Train for Trade Programme proposes tailored technical assistance to best meet countries' needs in key areas pertinent to trade. The programme aims to develop local capacities, knowledge and skills to empower countries to reap the benefits of international trade. The programme promotes national ownership, supports South–South and triangular cooperation and leads to poverty reduction. Specifically, the programme helps developing countries in building sustainable networks of knowledge, developing trade-oriented policies and promoting ICT solutions and innovative thinking to enhance the capacities of international trade players and reduce poverty. In recent years, the Train for Trade programme has enlarged its scope in terms of geographic coverage and themes. The programme comprises 3 main components:

(a) E-commerce, including issues such as the legal aspects of e-commerce, digital identity for trade and development, e-commerce best practices, online Training on the Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy and E-commerce general course;

(b) Trade statistics, including statistics on international trade in services (SITS) and on international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS);

(c) Port Management Programme, including the course on Modern Port Management and a special course on Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics.

763. The Train for Trade programme with its extensive experience on blended learning has contributed to a publication on “Blended learning methodologies for capacity development” by the economic and social entities of the United Nations Secretariat and supported the Development Account Management Team in the organization of a series of e-learning webinars following the presentation of this publication to help the implementing entities of United Nations Development Account adopt an online or hybrid approach for technical cooperation. These innovative ways of delivery are particularly important for implementing technical cooperation activities in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The Train for Trade team also contributed to many online events (such as webinars) organised by different stakeholders in the fields of e-learning methodologies, port management, and climate change effects on port activities.

764. The Train for Trade Port Management Programme (PMP) plays a vital role in supporting port communities in developing countries in quest for efficient and competitive port management. In many developing countries, ports play a key role in connecting them to international trade. Furthermore, 80 per cent of international trade is channelled through ports (this percentage is even higher in LDCs). Hence, the way the maritime sector is organized has a profound impact on trade volumes and transport costs and is therefore decisive for a country's competitiveness. Since the trade and maritime transport sectors are subject to constant regulatory changes, it is paramount that port officials are able to grasp the growing complexities of port management.

765. The activities of the Train for Trade programme in 2021 have contributed to various Sustainable Development Goals, including:

(a) Goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) by actively promoting women participation in all programme activities;

(b) Goal 7 (ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all). In the port of Nouakchott (Mauritania), a member of the PMP, an emphasis has been made on building new installations with a better energy management system to become a more sustainable port and reduce the cost of energy to be more efficient;

(c) Goal 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all) by providing sustainable and comprehensive training, capacity-building and knowledge exchange programme. In Cotonou (Benin), a member port of the PMP, like other ports in the region, the competitiveness is linked to knowledge and capacity development. Similarly, in the Port of Kribi (Cameroon), the ambition is to build a sustainable solution to keep the programme running. In Gabon, the human resource department setup new rules and guidelines to build a better and more dynamic work environment;

(d) Goal 9 (build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation) by encouraging port communities to implement proposals for corrective actions and innovations contained in Port Management Programme participants' dissertations. In Cotonou (Benin) and in Nouakchott, (Mauritania), with the modernization and the capacity of the actors, the port authority is working on building sustainable and resilient infrastructure. In Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire, the dematerialization of the data system goes hand in hand with the construction of resilient and innovative infrastructure. In Gabon, the working conditions of agents is a question of improving and simplifying the daily tasks of the employees;

(e) Goal 11 (make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by developing city-port environmental policies). Ports are seen as a space that should be open to everyone. It is a question of increasing the internal and external visibility of the port, and of promoting the dialogue around its structure with the city, the Ministries, the industries and the citizens;

(g) Goal 14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) by raising awareness of challenges for sustainable ports, including circular economy, air quality, environmental impact, green bank investment, decarbonization, climate change, and so on. The energies needed in a port and its management conducted to find a sustainable way of exploiting its environment, in order to preserve resources in the port and its environment in the sea and on the land;

(h) Goal 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels); and

(i) Goal 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development) by building global partnership and consensus. After one year and a half of participating in the programme, participants create a national network in their port environment. These networks are efficient to improve port management and workflow many years after they graduate. The connection created between mentors and participants as well as with local trainers produce a family and that all the port community benefits from.

766. **Objectives and features.** The Train for Trade programme contributes to the work of development-led globalization, where the development paths are sustainable and inclusive, by disseminating international trade-related knowledge and developing skills and capacities. Train for Trade has proven to be very useful and instrumental in connecting UNCTAD research and analysis with sustainable capacity-building activities in developing countries. Train for Trade activities help to facilitate South–South and North–South collaboration and foster communication between trade and training experts. The UNCTAD Train for Trade methodology includes training of trainers, coaching and blended learning. It provides countries with a public–private partnership model, sustainable training and capacity-building, talent management scheme and systematic methodology combining blended learning and digital technology.

767. The PMP brings together public, private and international entities to share expertise and best practices. Talent management and leadership development is a crucial part of the programme. The PMP operates through three language-based networks (English, French and Spanish) in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. The programme hosts the high-end course on modern port management, which entails a powerful scheme to induce value added solutions in port communities and performance measurement

indicators. It also encompasses a new element on “Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics (BPR)” fully digital and accessible in the three languages of the programme.

768. Partnerships have been established with European ports to share their knowledge and expertise with ports in the South. Annual regional meetings bring together port officials from different countries, promoting sharing of experiences and expertise. South–South collaboration between port communities is promoted as it is crucial for knowledge sharing. For example, exchange of participants is encouraged in order to increase participants’ exposure to different port set-ups, as well as to facilitate the transfer of knowledge. Furthermore, the beneficiary ports of the Port Management Programme (Argentina, Benin, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cameroon, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Mauritania, Malaysia, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania) continued to contribute financially to the programme, including contributions to the Trust Fund. This self-sustaining aspect indicates the level of commitment and interest from the national port communities (public–private partnerships). Partnerships and synergies have also been established with regional organizations, namely the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA); and with international organizations, including UNSD, UNCITRAL, UNESCAP, UNECLAC and WTO. Moreover, the Train for Trade programme collaborates with UNCTAD divisions/programmes according to the mandate/themes and requests from beneficiaries.

769. The PMP also offers training-of-trainer courses and coaching sessions in order to support capacity development of port managers as instructors. The Modern Port Management course targets middle and senior managers and consists of 240 hours of training activities, which are divided into eight modules and delivered over a two-year span. The eight modules of the Modern Port Management course are:

- (a) International trade and transport;
- (b) Organization of a port system;
- (c) Functioning of a port system;
- (d) Challenges of sustainable ports;
- (e) Methods and tools of port management;
- (f) Economic, commercial and financial management;
- (g) Administrative and legal management;
- (h) Technical management and human resources development.

770. To obtain the UNCTAD Certificate in Modern Port Management, participants must complete each module and defend a dissertation. Many former participants in the Modern Port Management programme become instructors and take more responsibility at the senior management level, thereby multiplying the effects of the programme. Other indicators of the effectiveness of the programme in the field are the validation of the quality of participant’s dissertation by international and regional port experts, and the relevance of the dissertations (about 150 each year) to improve services in the port community.

771. **Outputs.** Under the Port Management Programme, the key outputs of the French-, English- and Spanish-speaking networks during the reporting period are highlighted below. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the international exchanges were conducted online in 2021. Thanks to the Train for Trade strategy and experience with blended learning and with the support of certified local trainers, the programme was able to deliver the courses locally and to limit the impact of travel restriction on the programme.

772. With the support of the United Nations Development Account and following the requests from port members of the Port Management Programme, a new special training and capacity-building package called “Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics” (BPR) was developed to build essential skills for port community managers to help protect people and secure vital trade in ports. The new BPR package was first delivered in March 2021 to

port members of the programme for a total of 132 port operators (33 per cent women) from 15 countries to gather feedback and to validate and finalize the materials. It was then followed by a worldwide open course in June–July 2021 for a total of 853 participants (36 per cent women) from 99 countries. An official course launching webinar was also organized on 22 June 2021 with 261 participants (43 per cent women) from 59 countries as part of the series of pre-events leading to the UNCTAD XV quadrennial conference held from

3–7 October 2021. The above-mentioned activities amounted to a total of 4,069 days or 20,222 hours of training and the overall satisfaction rate was at an excellent level of 93 per cent. The courses have been organized again to port communities around the world in English, French and Spanish in March 2022. The project also included the exchange of best practices and new safety standards, and a dedicated webpage on the Train for Trade platform was developed to provide information on port responsiveness against the pandemic including best practices, recommendations, crisis protocols and reference documents in English, French and Spanish. A policy brief on building port resilience has been produced.

773. *French-speaking network.* In 2021, the French-speaking network of the Port Management Programme was composed of the port communities of Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo.

774. In the French-speaking network, 4 exchanges of port instructors were organized (conducted online and face-to-face in accordance with the pandemic situation in each country) involving Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon and Togo, which contributed to South–South cooperation.

775. A Train for Trade coordination meeting was organised in Libreville, Gabon, in November with representatives of Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo. Haiti and Guinea could not send representatives due to the political situations.

776. Virtual meetings with focal points of the French-speaking network for the organization of online national deliveries and juries were organized face-to-face for Gabon and Togo.

777. Gabon and Togo completed their 7th and 10th cycles, respectively, with panels of port experts (in person and online). These events gathered a total of 35 experts from other countries from the network to assess the final work (called dissertations) of participants and to award the Port Certificate upon successful results. A total of 17 staff (11 women) from the port community of Libreville and Port Gentil were awarded the certificate. In Togo, the juries for the 16 ports’ operators (5 women) of the tenth cycle were organized fully online with strong participation from other ports of the network. The participation of port experts from beneficiary countries further contributed to the South–South exchange of knowledge and expertise.

778. *English-speaking network.* The English-speaking network continued to benefit from financial contributions of Irish Aid and the collaboration of Irish ports, namely Port of Cork Company (PoCC), Dublin Port Company (DPC) and Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC), as well as the Port Authority of Valencia (PAV) in Spain.

779. *Ghana.* In cooperation with Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), 19 middle managers (including 5 women) from the port communities of Ghana covering the ports of Tema and Takoradi from cycle 5 of the UNCTAD Port Management Programme took part in the Module 6 entitled “Economic, Commercial, and Financial Management” with the support of certified trainers from the port community (port managers) and external port experts (online). Moreover 69 more participants took part in the BPR component.

780. *Philippines.* Out of the 22 port managers (including 10 women) initially enrolled in Cycle 3 from the port communities of the Philippines, 11 (including 6 woman) managed to present successfully their dissertations (national case study) before a panel of port experts in online setting, in cooperation with the Philippine Ports Authority. A new cycle of the Modern Port Management course was officially launched in December 2021 (Cycle 4), with 18 participants (including 5 woman). Activities were conducted fully online due to the restriction in Manila. Moreover, in relation to the BPR component a total of 386

participants took part in the sessions in 2021. It represents the highest number of participants from a single country.

781. *United Republic of Tanzania.* A large cohort of 31 port managers from Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) took part in the new component on BPR during the 2 sessions organised in 2021 and the follow up webinars. The new Director General of TPA has expressed his intention to resume the training and capacity building cycles for the port community of Tanzania.

782. *Nigeria.* Nigeria Ports Authority initiated the selection of participants and instructors for their cycle 3 of port managers that started in 2022 with 21 representatives. A total of 64 port operators also took part in the new BPR component in 2021.

783. *Indonesia.* Pelindo 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Port Corporations of Indonesia) merged in 2021 into a single group called Pelindo. A very large group of 111 port operators took part in the new BPR component in 2021. Gender representation rose to 31 per cent woman indicating a good improvement from a lower rate of 10 per cent for previous port related activities in 2020. Depending on the Covid 19 situation, the Cycle 5 of Modern Port Management could resume in 2022.

784. *Malaysia.* JohorPort Berhard supported the development of the training package related to BPR by contributing to the design and peer review sessions. A total of 40 participants from Malaysia took part in the digital delivery of BPR.

785. The Danube Commission reiterated its support towards the Train for Trade programme and facilitated the participation of 11 port managers in the BPR component for the river ports of their 11 member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine).

786. *Spanish-speaking network.* The Spanish-speaking network benefits from the collaboration of ports of Spanish ports by means of a memorandum of understanding with Puertos del Estado. The Port Authority of Valencia also gives financial and in-kind contribution to the programme through a memorandum of understanding, and the Port Authority of Gijon provides in-kind contribution.

787. The third cycle of the programme in Argentina was launched further to the official mission of the Port Authority of Valencia and UNCTAD. The national capacities have been strengthened with the incorporation of new port communities in the programme.

788. The national deliveries of the Modern Port Management course were organized through hybrid mode. The senior and middle port managers of port communities in the Plurinational State of Bolivia attended modules 1 to 4 of the third cycle; the Dominican Republic delivered modules 1 to 4 the fifth cycle; the port communities in Peru participated in modules 1 to 4 of the seventh cycle of the course, and port communities in Argentina attended modules 3 to 8 of the third cycle. All the modules were delivered by international experts and local instructors (certified by Train for Trade).

789. The International Coordination Meeting of the Spanish-speaking network was organized 16 and 17 of November 2021 with the participation of representatives of the member countries, the Spanish Port Authorities of Valencia, Gijon and Las Palmas and UNCTAD. The purpose of the meeting was to assess the results of the cycles and to evaluate the scope of strengthening and expanding the programme. The meeting highlighted the rapid response of the programme to enable the continuation of the national activities through hybrid mode during the pandemic crisis. Furthermore, the meeting acknowledged the positive impact of the activities implemented for networking, exchange of information, experiences, and good practices among others. Representatives of the Spanish Speaking network agreed on a draft workplan for 2022 and to continue financing their membership.

790. A Training of Trainers workshop was organized in Gijon-Spain from 18 to 29 October 2021 with the participation of 19 representatives (4 women) from ports of Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Peru. Participants were certified as instructors to deliver Modern Port Management course in their countries.

791. A study tour was organized in Port of Valencia (from 2 to 5 May 2021), with the participation of 11 representatives (4 women) from Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and Peru. Participants were able to visit the installations of Port of Valencia and meet and discuss with the responsible staff of each department.

792. The National Port Authority (APN) and the International Terminal of the South (TISUR) organized the “Basic course of management of innovative ports” in online modality through the Virtual Port Campus of the APN. The course was attended by representatives of the port communities of the southern region of Peru, and it was delivered by national instructors certified by UNCTAD.

793. In 2021, South–South cooperation was carried out with the participation of port experts from the Spanish-speaking network. It provided these countries with opportunities to share and develop knowledge, skills, best practices, awareness on different topics and to reinforce the network’s capability to respond to common challenges.

794. The volume 9 of the UNCTAD Train for Trade Port Management Series (PMS) was published featuring 15 dissertations, which have been judged to be the best from the recent cycles of the French-speaking network of the Port Management Programme. The publication links the recommendations to directly relevant Sustainable Development Goals, including their targets and indicators, and informs of their implementation status.

795. The Train for Trade Port Performance Scorecard (PPS) was updated, and the outcomes reflected in PPS’s newsletter No. 5. Selected results of the PPS were also included in chapter 2 “Maritime transport and infrastructure” of the UNCTAD *Review of Maritime Transport 2021*. The main objective of PPS is to provide members of the programme with a useful tool allowing performance benchmarking and port and regional comparison on a yearly basis. Port Performance Scorecard e-workshops were organized for the Philippines, Indonesia and the French-speaking countries, and with a specific session for Cameroun and Togo.

796. In addition to the Port Management Programme, Train for Trade in collaboration with WTO, UNSD and UNCTAD Statistics delivered two online courses on statistics in English and French in 2021. Train for Trade has trained 2,198 statisticians (49 per cent women) from 170 countries or areas. At the end of the courses, statisticians said that these courses would improve the collection and the reporting of statistics in many countries. Policymakers who followed the course said they now have a better understanding of the statistical reports, which would be taken into consideration in decision-making process.

797. The online course on Statistics on International Trade in Services (SITS) was delivered (in English and French) for 1,142 participants (49 per cent women) from 137 countries. The courses were followed by three webinars (two in English and one in French to increase the outreach and to accommodate for different time-zones) to identify best practices and policy recommendations.

798. The online course on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) was delivered (in English and French) for 1,056 participants (48 per cent women) from 149 countries. The courses were followed by three webinars (two in English and one in French to increase the outreach and to accommodate for different time-zones) to identify best practices and policy recommendations.

799. The online course on eCommerce Best Practices for ASEAN member countries was delivered in April–May 2021 for 139 participants (56 per cent women) from 7 countries. It was followed by the online course on Digital Identity for Trade and Development for ASEAN Plus Six member countries with a total of 229 participants (51 per cent women) from 21 countries. The activities of the DA11 project were concluded with the hybrid restitution workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia 6–9 December 2021 for 110 participants (39 per cent women) from 17 countries. A policy Brief on Digital Identity has been produced.

800. In collaboration with eTrade for all, the first steps of the production of a new course on eTrade for all Core E-commerce Course for Policy Makers were undertaken with on-line brainstorming sessions and webinars with stakeholders from Africa and Latin America to design the skeleton of the course. The course material will be produced in 2022.

801. **Results and impacts.** In 2021, the Train for Trade Programme enhanced skills and abilities of about 4,453 trade practitioners¹⁰² (43 per cent women) from 184 countries and areas through various courses and activities for a total of 29,487 days or 149,079 hours of training with the overall satisfaction rate of 90 per cent. It is summarized in the table below.

Number of trade practitioners who enhanced their skills and expertise through various courses and activities in 2021

<i>Area</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>% Women</i>
Port Management Programme	510	37%
French-speaking network	265	33%
English-speaking network	84	30%
Spanish-speaking network	161	25%
Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics	1,246	37%
Statistics on International Trade in Services blended learning course	1,142	49%
English	987	52%
French	155	30%
International Merchandise Trade Statistics blended learning	1,056	48%
English	916	50%
French	140	29%
E-commerce Best Practices blended learning	139	56%
Digital Identity for Trade and Development blended learning	229	51%
E-commerce Best Practices hybrid workshop	110	39%
E-commerce Generic Course DACUM sessions	21	38%

802. In 2021, the participants of the Port Management Programme prepared a total of 66 dissertations with proposals of improvements to the port communities, which were positively evaluated by local and international subject matter experts. These proposals will have big chance of being implemented by the port authorities.

803. The exchange of port network instructors is an excellent example of South–South cooperation supported by the UNCTAD Train for Trade Port Management Programme. These exchanges allow sharing of knowledge and port practices between countries of the region, which often share common issues.

804. Based on the balanced scorecard concept, 26 indicators were identified, collected and classified into six main categories since 2010: finance, human resources, gender, vessel operations, cargo operations and environment under the Train for Trade Port Performance Scorecard. The global average is calculated based on a five-year rolling back average. The resulting statistics are being used by port communities to help with strategic planning and yearly based performance benchmarking on a regional and global scales.

805. Thanks to the blended-learning strategy embedded in the programme since its inception, the activities were not halted due to the pandemic in 2021. Thanks to the sudden boost of digital tools and the fact that the majority of trade actors started to use more and more new technologies to communicate (Teams, Zoom, WebEx, social applications, etc.), the scope of the programme has been extended to cover a total of 184 countries or areas

¹⁰² If a person participated in more than one training programme in 2021, each participation is counted separately.

across the globe. The Train for Trade platforms have been further developed to cater for larger number of participants and to capture real-time statistics of the events and link them up with the results-based management (RBM) indicators of the programme (79 per cent average test score and 90 per cent satisfaction rate globally). New features have been incorporated into the Learning and Content Management System (LMS) under Moodle open source. The Train for Trade public website has also been improved, with contributions to social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn @TRAINFORTRADE) and multimedia materials illustrating the impact of the programme in member states and providing them with powerful tools and knowledge on trade policies to absorb the economic shock of the pandemic and build back better.

D99 Other

Table D99

Others

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
No projects			

1. Virtual Institute

806. **Development context.** The capacities of developing countries to undertake economic analysis, formulate national policies and implement them to achieve their development objectives is lacking in many respects. Universities and research centres can play an essential role in building such capacities, as they educate future decision-makers and can provide analytical inputs to inform their Governments' economic policy decisions.

807. **Objectives and features.** The Virtual Institute is the UNCTAD programme of support to academia. Its ultimate objective is to help developing countries design evidence-based policies that result in inclusive and sustainable development. To this end, the Virtual Institute offers capacity-building opportunities to academics and researchers so that they may prepare qualified decision-makers and provide analyses to underpin the formulation of economic policies in their countries.

808. **Outputs.** In 2021, the Virtual Institute continued to provide its member institutions with services mainly in two areas: (a) professional development for academics and (b) facilitation of cooperation among the members of its academic network and dissemination of UNCTAD research to the academic community.

809. Due to lack of staffing and funds to manage online courses, no online course was offered in 2021. Nevertheless, the Virtual Institute offered an online seminar to Pakistan, with 80 participants including 35 female and 45 male students, and a virtual study tour to master's students of the University of West Indies during 14–18 June 2021. Nine students participated in the study tour, of which seven were female. Furthermore, the fourth UNCTAD–Institute on New Economic thinking (INET) summer school took place during 1–7 August 2021, with the title “Still Swimming Against the Tide? 40 Years of Thinking on Trade and Development” to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of flagship publication, the *Trade and Development Report*.

810. Additionally, the Virtual Institute organized webinars and provided support to the Division in dissemination of its work through webinars.

811. In particular, the Virtual Institute provided support to the production of the flagship *Trade and Development Report* both in substance, logistics and administrative work, such as hiring consultants, and dissemination of the *Trade and Development Report*. In 2021, the Virtual Institute was more active in providing substantive contributions to the chapter on climate adaptation.

812. The Virtual Institute contributed significantly to the publication of an op-ed on Palestinian oil reserves which was published on Al Jazeera online edition, on 1 June 2021.¹⁰³

813. Again in June, the Virtual Institute in collaboration with the South African Permanent Mission to the World Trade Organization, organized a webinar titled “Building Back Better – Reforming the International Trading System for Recovery, Resilience and Inclusive Development” on 9 June 2021.

814. One of the main events of 2021 was a four-series webinar on industrial policy and structural transformation. The key objectives of the webinar series were the following:

(a) To emphasize what is new in the “new consensus” around industrial policy and to assess and compare the challenges in the design and application of industrial policy in different economic and political circumstances;

(b) To create an open dialogue in which member States can learn from different experiences of industrialization including challenges; and

(c) To produce a couple of opinion pieces to be published in popular media outlets, such as economics columns of newspapers or popular blogs, including the UNCTAD website, for wider dissemination of discussions and ideas.

815. The first in series was global in scope and titled “Is industrial policy the key to building back better?”. It was held on 23 June 2021 and was attended by 348 people from all over the world.

816. The second in series was a regional one on Latin America and organized in cooperation with Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). It was titled “Reclaiming Industrial Policy for Latin American Development” and held on 14 July 2021.

817. The third in series was organized in cooperation with the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance – University of Cape Town, and with the holder of the South African Research Chair in Industrial Development – University of Johannesburg, on 29 July 2021. Its title was “How can Transformative Industrialization and Implementation of the AfCFTA stimulate Africa’s sustainable development post COVID-19?”.

818. The last in the series of industrial policy webinars was organized in October 2021 in collaboration with OECD Development Centre with the title “Policy Dialogue for Green Structural Transformation”.

819. And the Virtual Institute also provided support to other webinars in the Division, some of which are:

(a) “South–South Sharing of Experiences in Macro-Financial Policies for Structural Transformation” which was held on 12 July 2021;

(b) “Enhancing Economic Resilience in Small Island Developing States: Perspective from South–South Cooperation” webinar which took place on 28 July 2021.

820. Finally, the Virtual Institute organized a high-level panel discussion for UNCTAD XV, titled “Scaling up Finance for Development” which took place in October 2021.

821. **Results.** The Virtual Institute has contributed to enhanced teaching and research on trade and development issues at member institutions and increased policy orientation of their work by providing support for the development of both individual and institutional capacities in this area. The multiplier effect of, videoconferences and study tours, as well as the distribution of UNCTAD publications embedded the organization’s research and perspective in graduate programmes at numerous universities in developing countries.

¹⁰³ Available at <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/6/21/palestines-forgotten-oil-and-gas-resources>.

2. Course on key issues on the international economic agenda – paragraph 166

822. **Development context.** Located in the Knowledge Development Branch (KDB) of the Division of Technology and Logistics (DTL) of UNCTAD, the Policy Capacity Building Section (PCBS)—also known as PCBS-P166—delivers the courses on economic development, and trade related, matters. It delivers the short courses for Geneva-based delegates and regional courses for the five developing regions. The beneficiaries are mainly mid-level government officials working at relevant Public Institutions; however, academics at times are considered for participation. The programme also coordinates and works closely with the Permanent Missions to the United Nation based in Geneva over the processes involved for the short courses and regional courses. For instance, the UNCTAD Notification for regional and short courses are communicated to all relevant permanent Missions in Geneva.

823. Paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action was adopted at the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in which it called on UNCTAD to strengthen its capacity-building activities, particularly in providing training courses on key trade and development matters to policymakers across developing countries. The paragraph also underlines that these training courses would draw on the expertise and policy analysis work of the UNCTAD secretariat. This mandate was renewed by the São Paulo Consensus, the Accra Accord, the Doha Declaration and reaffirmed in Nairobi in 2016 at UNCTAD XIV.

824. Most recently, in the Bridgetown Covenant of 2021, and for the first time since its creation, paragraph 166 was given special attention in the context of the technical cooperation work of UNCTAD and in the chapeau on the role of the Conference: “the activities under paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action have proven to be of great importance and utility and should be continued”.

825. Furthermore, the current structure of regional courses is in the UNCTAD mandate and is cross-divisional in content. The curricula are designed and developed by PCBS/P166, in collaboration with the experts from various divisions. During the design phase, collaboration is also sought with the regional economic commissions of the United Nations and with national experts from the hosting countries to ensure perfect relevance and coherence among the various themes of the economic policy framework. Ranging from economic theories to trade policy, FDI, among other topics, the programme focuses on sustainable development as a central theme. In response to the global pandemic, response and building resilience have also been incorporated in the overall curricula of the programme.

826. The curricula for regional courses in 2021 continued to illustrate the formulation of development policies and strategies, placing them within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. It was further developed to illustrate response to the global pandemic and to incorporate resilience in response to multiple economic shocks. To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening the overall framework for development policies with resilience is viewed as an essential component for policymakers to design the overall framework for development policies. The training includes a number of lectures on economic, trade and finance theories and their relevance to policy development, the role of investment and technology, along with detailed case studies and lessons learned from previous policy decisions. It is designed to promote critical thinking, with emphasis placed on policy design, coherence, coordination, implementation, and measurement. Central to the course are simulation exercises, examinations, and critiques of best practices in policy development, group work and debates.

827. **Objectives and features.** The overall curricula of the regional course include three modules: a fully integrated and interrelated approach for several substantive topics developed in the research work of UNCTAD. It is adapted to each developing region and contributes knowledge in understanding contemporary economic issues among trade policy officials, finance and investment experts and academics who work in these areas. The curriculum generated for each region focuses on the development of appropriate trade, finance, investment, innovation, and technology policies that are critical to achieve

economic gains, which in parallel meets the development objectives of participating countries.

828. Achieving macroeconomic stability, with a sound monetary and fiscal regime, is significant in the design of and support for development objectives. Policymakers are encouraged to consider sound fiscal policies to support such initiatives in a changing global environment. The need to stimulate productive investment, develop local markets and promote diversification will require adopting relevant industrial policies. This also suggests that public investment itself should target increasing human capital and providing infrastructure for development and vice versa. At the same time, developing countries must have sufficient policy space in which they can manoeuvre and advocate for their interests, from a national policy prism. This space should be safeguarded, ensuring that “no one is left behind” while taking part in the global economy.

829. Towards achieving developing objectives, the importance of developing a relevant industrial policy is key to the concept of developing and implementing policies for economic growth. For example, the curricula illustrate science and technology impact innovation in agriculture, energy and other areas and their role in providing value added to products that have domestic and international appeal. Remaining competitive, whether in promoting domestic activity or in export-oriented sectors, for example, is crucial to ensuring long-term economic growth. The curricula also focus on the importance of logistics to facilitate trade, to ensure sustainable exports and imports. Trade negotiations, whether at the multilateral, regional or bilateral levels, generate benefits for trade and investment and produce development gains. This area is also an essential part of the course.

830. In 2021, face-to-face and hybrid trainings were delivered as part of UNCTAD regional and short courses. A e-learning module on the history of UNCTAD continued to be utilized to prepare selected participants ahead of the regional course. The module is divided into four parts, covering comprehensive knowledge on the history of UNCTAD, its three pillars of work and structure, the role of UNCTAD and other international organizations and UNCTAD achievements and contributions. The module includes quizzes and a final assessment. Selected participants must successfully complete the final assessment as a prerequisite to the face-to-face sessions scheduled at a later stage in their respective host countries. This module enhances participants’ knowledge on UNCTAD and its mandate, including contributions and achievements, preparing the participants for the course work.

831. **Outputs.** In 2021, two regional courses were held: for Eastern Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region. The forty-fourth regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda for Eastern Europe and economies in transition was held in North Macedonia on 18–29 October 2021 in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, with the support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Twenty-two participants attended the course, representing Albania, Azerbaijan, North Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

832. As for the forty-fifth regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda for Arab economies, it was held in Egypt, on 5–16 December 2021 in collaboration with the Institute of Diplomatic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. Twenty-four participants attended the course, representing Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, the Sudan and Palestine.

833. In total, 46 participants from 15 countries participated in these editions. Out of the total number, 25 participants were women, representing nearly 54 per cent of overall participants.

834. The multi-year venue continued to be an innovative way of raising support, gaining experiences from various economies, and enhancing bilateral cooperation at the country level. The contribution of national experts in shedding light on the national and regional experience is of significance to the programme’s curricula in enhancing knowledge and boosting human capital among policymakers. In 2021, proposals were submitted from Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean for hosting regional courses from 2022–2026. As a result, the Advisory Body of P166 met on 11 May 2021 and established the Foreign Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan, as the future host for the

economies of Asia and the Pacific. They also established the Faculty of Economics, University of Buenos Aires, as the future host for Latin American and the Caribbean: 2022, 2024, and 2026. The proposals submitted by member states showcase their support to P166/PCBS UNCTAD flagship programme, both in terms of finance and human resources.

835. The short courses continued to update Geneva-based delegates on recent UNCTAD research on development, economic, and trade matters. In cooperation with several UNCTAD divisions, eight short editions were offered in the spring and autumn of 2021 on the following:

(a) UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2020 and key trends in ports and shipping in times of the COVID-19 pandemic (2 February 2021);

(b) Harnessing blockchain for sustainable development: prospects and challenges (4 March 2021);

(c) The UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI): A New Tool for Policy Formulation in Developing Countries (16 April 2021);

(d) Services value added in exports: Policies for development (7 May 2021);

(e) Export regulations: Challenges and opportunities: How non-tariff measures impact our daily lives (14 September 2021);

(f) Cross-border data flows and development: For whom the data flow (14 October 2021)

(g) Frontier Technologies: Addressing widening inequalities and Implementing STI policies for leaving no one behind (8 November 2021);

(h) LDCs' structural transformation in times of COVID-19: from boom-and-bust cycles to creative destruction (16 November 2021).

836. A total of 271 delegates from 88 permanent missions participated in these editions. Out of the total number, 94 participants were women, representing nearly 35 per cent of overall participants.

837. For the first short course on 2 February, 28 delegates attended, representing Afghanistan, Armenia, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Hungary, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mongolia, Nepal, the Russian Federation, the Sudan, Togo and Yemen

838. For the second short course on 4 March, 34 delegates attended, representing Afghanistan, Angola, Colombia, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Czechia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Mongolia, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Togo, Viet Nam, Yemen and Palestine.

839. For the third short course on 16 April, 33 delegates attended, representing Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Bhutan, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Gabon, the Gambia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Syria and Yemen.

840. For the fourth short course on 7 May, 27 delegates attended, representing Algeria, Cabo Verde, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Iceland, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Malta, Mongolia, Nepal, the Netherlands, the Niger, Panama, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, the Sudan, Togo, Viet Nam and Palestine.

841. For the fifth short course on 14 September, 31 delegates attended, representing Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cabo Verde, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lesotho, Mongolia, Morocco, Oman, Peru, the Russian Federation, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Yemen.

842. For the sixth short course on 14 October, 39 delegates attended, representing Algeria, Bahrain, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, the Congo, Gabon,

Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, the Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Portugal, Peru, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, the Sudan, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

843. For the seventh short course on 8 November, 39 delegates attended, representing Bahrain, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Indonesia, Ireland, Jamaica, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Mongolia, Nepal, Oman, Portugal, the Russian Federation, South Sudan, Thailand, Togo, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen and Pakistan.

844. For the eighth short course on 16 November, 40 delegates attended, representing Angola, Bahrain, Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lesotho, Malta, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, the United Kingdom, Yemen and Palestine.

845. The short courses provide a platform where UNCTAD experts are given the opportunity to present their recent research to delegates, while the comments and questions from delegates provide relevant input and potential research topics to UNCTAD work. This informed dialogue between UNCTAD researchers and Geneva-based representatives of member States bridges the knowledge gap and ensures information-sharing. These sessions are on average well attended and provide a forum for delegates and UNCTAD research experts to debate and exchange views. In 2021, the impact of the global pandemic was incorporated in all the themes addressed in the UNCTAD short courses, whether held in hybrid, face-to-face, or remote format. Additionally, the programme delivered two extra short courses beyond the usual six, to compensate for the previous year.

846. **Results and impacts.** Following the completion of the short courses and earlier regional courses, most delegates and participants indicated that the courses led to improved knowledge on development, and the issues addressed. For previous regional courses, they have noted a deepened understanding of the importance of the role of international trade in improving economic development, including the links between international economic, social, and financial issues. The approach to link theory, policy and practice in economic policy development was highly rated. Its approach to trade, development and investment at the regional and international levels was also useful for the participants.

847. Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, also in early 2021, the paragraph 166 programme made significant achievements: it conducted a survey of 200 of its alumni on their careers and perspectives during the pandemic, and how COVID-19 impacted their professions, which generated a 40 per cent response rate. The survey respondents indicated that the knowledge gained from previous courses had played an extremely useful role in helping in their response to the pandemic and in formulating relevant policies.

848. The post evaluations of the regional courses continued to illustrate those participants and their sending departments appreciated the debates on development-related topics and the integrated approach of the programme to ensuring that economic gains benefit development. This is inherent in the design of the curriculum, which treats development from the multiple perspectives of trade, finance, investment, and technology. It highlights that the debates and design and implementation of appropriate economic policies can contribute to growth and the development process in general.

849. The Senior Economic Researcher of the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones of Egypt who participated in the 45th regional course held in Cairo indicated, "Although I have attended many training courses, this programme is one of the best I have ever attended, whether in terms of scientific content or terms of the learning systems. The programme links academic knowledge with our practical experience."

850. To recapitulate, most participants expressed that the curricula had surpassed their expectations, as the courses provide overall knowledge on economic issues and development matters. Most participants praised the lessons learned from the experiences of other countries and how economic gains can be achieved. They also stated that they learned

about global economic issues, why economic changes take place and how economies are impacted. Equally important, they indicated they understood how to tackle economic related issues through policy.

851. Following courses held previously, and in an aftermath assessment, several participants in 2021 reported that they were already using the knowledge and tools acquired in their daily work, such as, improvement of economic policy, trade negotiations, policy formulation, strategic planning, attracting FDI, employment creation as well as providing advisory services. Additionally, many noted that the knowledge gained helped them achieve a better understanding of contemporary economic issues and how to cope with the challenges of the new multilateral trading system. Several participants indicated their ability to employ analytical tools in the decision-making process in pursuit of relevant development policies to address economic challenges. Many mentioned the linkages among international trade, finance, investment, technology, and innovation as key pillars of the development strategy. Many also reported a better understanding of the essential role that trade agreements can play in trade negotiations. Overall, participants complimented the curricula's ability to promote debate and highlighted the policy development role-playing exercises as an example of how knowledge could be shared among policymakers, both at the national and regional level.

852. These results and evaluations are in line with the praise received by the programme in the previous years. But, in light of the difficulties met by developing countries to face the consequences of the pandemic, the P166 programme has proven itself to be one of their key tools for policy making in challenging times.
