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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 2022*

* 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
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	PSE	Palestinian Authority
ROK	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
LES	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 2022. 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 implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant and 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 2022 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>
TOG/0T/KAM	Renforcement des capacités du Ministère de la promotion de l’investissement (MPI) au Togo	2021–	UNDP (UNDP)

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

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

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. UNCTAD also provides follow-up support through technical assistance activities to foster their implementation and further build capacity for investment policymaking.

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

(a) *Ensuring country 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 national and foreign private sector, non-governmental institutions and development partners 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 matrix², 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 2022, the main outputs delivered by the programme included:

- (a) Preparation and publication of the report on the implementation of the IPR of Tajikistan;
- (b) Preparation and finalization of the IPR of Togo;
- (c) Introduction of the Live implementation matrix to the Dominican Republic, and implementation of the matrix by Tajikistan.

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

8. 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 of these activities included, at country-level, Angola, Cabo Verde, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nigeria and Tajikistan. Dialogue on investment policymaking at the regional level also took place with countries from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), including the preparation of a project for regional IPRs.

9. The following activities were implemented in 2022 at the country-level and for group of countries.

10. *Angola.* UNCTAD participated in the European Union-Angola Business Forum (24 March), with a view to encouraging European investment in Angola by emphasizing economic prospects and potential. In particular, UNCTAD contributed to the panel on EU-Angola Investment and Trade agreements, with a presentation of the IPR of Angola — produced under the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II. The panel was moderated by the Minister of Economy and Planning of Angola. The forum gathered approximately 1,000 participants comprising Governments from the European Union and Angola, including six Angolan ministers, development partners, international finance institutions, and more than 25 CEOs from private companies. The IPR was also presented during a workshop (19 April) aimed at building capacities for investment promotion. Other activities to strengthen investment policymaking in Angola included training on FDI statistics and on developing tools and strategies to attract institutional investors.

11. *Cabo Verde.* The IPR of Cabo Verde, published in 2018, continues to drive discussions on investment policymaking in the country. On numerous occasions, UNCTAD was invited to participate in United Nations Country Team (UNCT) meetings, including a strategic retreat (24–25 January) aimed at developing the new country programme and fund mobilization efforts. Several elements of the report were highlighted as key for the recovery and to foster sustainable development. The work done in Cabo Verde is an example of solid collaboration between the UNCT, spearheaded by the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), and UNCTAD. It contributed to continued dialogue with authorities on investment policy matters and to the UN country programme.

12. *Dominican Republic.* At the request of the country's investment promotion agency, UNCTAD provided comments on the draft Investment Law. Furthermore, following their request, a training was organized (9 March) for the investment promotion agency on the utilization of the Live implementation matrix.

13. *Haiti.* At the request of the UNRCO, UNCTAD participated in online sessions to discuss strategies to promote development in Haiti (25 February, 8-10 March). Focussing on investment policymaking, UNCTAD highlighted good practices to mobilize resources and promote investment in activities that can contribute to sustainable development. The national dialogue also contributed to highlighting areas where the UN can strengthen efforts through the country programme.

14. *Nigeria.* Following a request from the Government, UNCTAD provided further assistance in the elaboration of the Nigeria Investment Policy. It shared written comments and took part in an online meeting (9 September) to further discuss the articulation and content of the Policy with the national authorities, as well as with development partners.

15. *Tajikistan.* The Government of Tajikistan requested UNCTAD to assess the degree to which the recommendations of the IPR — completed in 2016 — had been implemented. The report noted that despite the pandemic, Tajikistan has continued to reform its investment climate, including through recent reforms adopted to improve the strategic, legal and institutional framework affecting investment attraction and entrepreneurship development. The report also underscores additional actions to take to support the country's objectives and foster sustainable development. The preparation of the report provided opportunities for dialogue on investment policymaking (27 September, 11 and 28 October). *The Report on the implementation of the IPR of Tajikistan* was developed in close cooperation with the UNRCO and the UNDP in the country.

16. *Togo*. At the request of the Government, UNCTAD carried out an IPR of Togo. The IPR is part of a three-components project conducted by UNCTAD, with the financial contribution of UNDP, which consists of the implementation of UNCTAD's eRegulations and eRegistrations tools to simplify and digitalize business procedures, and investment promotion capacity-building activities. The elaboration of the IPR benefited from strong collaboration with the UNRCO in Togo. Two fact-finding missions took place (16–24 May and 19–26 July) with the objective of meeting a large number of stakeholders from the public and private sector, as well as development partners. During the first mission, UNCTAD organized a national workshop (16 May) to discuss strategies and policies on investment for sustainable development, as well as identify the objectives of the country. In addition to legal, regulatory and institutional reforms, priorities that have guided the IPR included the need to promote the development of the local private sector and special economic zones. The recommendations made in the IPR will serve as a basis in the elaboration of an Investment Policy Strategy and an Investment Promotion Strategy by the Ministry of Investment Promotion and the World Bank.

17. *Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member countries*. In 2022, UNCTAD received a request from the Secretariat of ECO to conduct a regional IPR, covering its 10 member countries. Throughout the course of the year, UNCTAD and ECO held several online meetings to discuss the content and process of such review. This led to the development of a detailed project document that was used to obtain high-level buy-in from all member countries, and to approach development partners for their support. Should the mobilization of funds be successful, the project will officially start in 2023.

18. *West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) member States*. In 2021, the WAEMU Commission requested UNCTAD to prepare a regional IPR, covering its 8 member States. Several online meetings were held between UNCTAD and WAEMU to discuss and exchange on the potential content of such review and its related process. This led to the development of a detailed project document which was used to obtain high-level buy-in from all member States and mobilize the required funding for the project, which officially commenced in 2023.

19. **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 and derive larger development gains, while minimizing as much as possible the potential negative effects, in line with UNCTAD's 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

20. 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. Furthermore, the IPR work has also enabled UNCTAD to strengthen its collaboration with UNCT through the UNRCO and the UNDP in many countries. The following endorsements show:

(a) “The IPR, once validated, will form the basis for the elaboration of the investment promotion national policy and, also, for the investment promotion strategy, along with an action plan for the next five years.” Minister of Investment Promotion, Togo, January 2023.

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.

(b) “[The IPR is] an important contribution of the United Nations system to Togo in order to better promote the Togo destination” and “For the first time in Togo, UNCTAD will sign the cooperation framework with the other UN agencies. This happens because of the work done with UNCTAD on investment.” Resident Coordinator a.i., United Nations Togo, January 2023.

(c) “[...] The UNCTAD Report on the Implementation of the Investment Policy Review of Uzbekistan would help to fully understand [...] the policy, legal and institutional framework affecting the attraction of investment.” Note verbale, Permanent Mission of Uzbekistan, April 2022.

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 has published 52 IPRs, involving 56 economies worldwide, and 20 reports on the implementation of the IPR. Assessments conducted in some of these countries showed that to date more than 500 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. Nevertheless, data show that between 2000–2010 and 2011–2021, FDI inflows rose by 39 per cent worldwide while they grew by 80 per cent in 20 countries for which an assessment of the implementation of IPR recommendations has been conducted.

24. Another indicator of the impact of the IPRs 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 IPRs are in the pipeline for 34 countries: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bhutan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Central African Republic, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Fiji, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malawi, Mali, Nauru, Nicaragua, the Niger, Niue, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Somalia, South Sudan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia and Turkmenistan. UNCTAD also received requests for two regional IPRs involving 18 countries – WAEMU (i.e. Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo) and ECO (i.e. Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan).

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 services sector can help improve efficiency and competitiveness in all sectors of the economy, as services constitute essential inputs to many other products and services. The services sector generates opportunities for greater income, productivity, employment, investment, and trade, and also contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by providing essential services including health, education, energy, transport, and telecommunications. Services also play a major catalytic role in the expansion of international supply chains. Positively integrating developing countries – especially the least developed countries and small economies – into the global services economy and increasing their participation in services production and trade is essential. Despite the significant potential of the services sector, many developing countries face challenges in reaping the benefits of services trade for development, owing to their weakness in supply capacities. Maximizing the positive contributions and pro-development outcomes of the services sector requires the coordination of trade policies with several other policy dimensions, good regulation and institutions capable of promoting domestic supply capacity.

27. **Objectives.** UNCTAD work on Services Policy Reviews (SPRs) aims to assist developing countries in assessing their services economy and trade. SPRs review existing policy and regulatory frameworks to inform the formulation of best-fit national services regulatory and institutional frameworks to develop competitive productive capabilities and better engage in international trade negotiations and agreements dealing with services. SPRs are a systematic review of economic, regulatory and institutional frameworks, and support developing countries' informed policymaking, regulatory formulation and institution building, as well as trade negotiations. SPRs serve as a toolkit to allow policymakers and regulators to assess the potential of services productive capacities and trade in order to identify constraints impeding services sector development and ascertain practical solutions and a coherent policy mix of trade and other policies.

28. 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. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD concluded its first Services Policy Review for Uzbekistan. The Review analysed Financial Services Sectors, following the SWOT methodology. It also provides for a detailed set of policy recommendations and an action plan to reform this sector in order to enhance their economic performances and maximize their impact on and value addition to the GDP of Uzbekistan, job creation and poverty mitigation, which contribute to the realization of some key Sustainable Development Goals.

30. UNCTAD addressed requests for information on this technical assistance tool on trade in services and development by potentially interested regions and countries, leading to new requests for technical assistance through a Services Policy Review. This provision of information included the participation in technical meetings with the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) on 1 February 2022, with the Dominican Republic on 29 March

2022, with Barbados on 23 June 2022, with the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Honduras on 16 September 2022 and with Mexico on 10 October 2022.

31. **Results and impacts.** Services policy reviews for selected countries generated important data and information which can be referenced by the beneficiary countries in national services policy formulation as well as in multilateral and regional trade negotiations. UNCTAD ground-level support on services policy reviews, customized advice to specific countries, advisory services and workshops enhanced the technical capacity of trade officials and policymakers to develop the services economy in accordance with their development objectives.

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 (F13)	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

32. **Development context.** Promoting a coherent and integrated approach to national trade policy formulation and implementation became a salient challenge for national policymakers, as an increasing number of countries reformulate their national trade policy frameworks and strategies to better draw development benefit from trade and respond to the imperatives of SDGs, including in progressing towards the achievement of SDG Goal 17.11 on increasing the exports of developing countries, Goal 8 (economic growth) and Goal 9 (industry, innovating and infrastructure). Developing countries continue to face significant challenges in the formulation of development-oriented trade policy frameworks that are best-fit to their national circumstances and development needs. Effectively done, trade policy can drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Linking trade policy and productive capacity and structural transformation is thus crucial for the achievement of SDGs.

33. **Objectives.** Trade Policy Framework Reviews contribute to the (re)formulation and implementation of national trade policy regimes according to a country's own development priorities and needs via research and training activities. 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 to participate effectively in, and benefiting from, international trade.

34. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD delivered the following activities within the framework of a Development Account project (13th tranche) in support of trade policy formulation for post-conflict Arab countries (Iraq and the State of Palestine):

Training workshops and advisory services.

35. *State of Palestine:* Organization of an in-person national workshop (Cairo, Egypt, 30 May-1 June 2022) for 14 Palestinian policy makers, economic experts, and trade negotiators (including 5 women), representing relevant ministries and government bodies. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS). It aimed at upgrading Palestinian officials' technical knowledge and skills in the areas of trade

policy formulation and trade negotiations, with a particular emphasis on services liberalization preparedness, impact assessment, and regulatory mapping.

36. *Iraq*: Organization of an in-person training workshop (Amman, Jordan, 12-15 Dec.2022) to enhance the technical knowledge of Iraqi officials on WTO accession. The training involved simulation exercises and techniques for drafting goods and services offers and strategic considerations to be taken into account in this context. The Iraqi team was composed of 7 officials from the Iraqi ministry of trade, including 4 women.

Research work (impact studies) and training materials.

37. Training Module on trade in services in Arabic, delivered in October 2022 (to be used by both Iraq and the State of Palestine). The Training Module will be published in 2023 as an UNCTAD official document.

38. Research and analysis paper, in Arabic, on trade in services in Iraq to support Iraq WTO accession preparatory work (delivered in November 2022).

39. Study on gender mainstreaming in trade policy in the State of Palestine, titled *Trade and Development in the State of Palestine Through a Gender Lens*. The study has been translated into Arabic and published on the UNCTAD website.

40. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD support on trade policy formulation and implementation has been instrumental in several respects. 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.

41. UNCTAD's capacity building and technical assistance are contributing to the efforts deployed by the beneficiary countries, i.e. Iraq and the State of Palestine to review and reform their trade policies frameworks, including by assessing the opportunities and challenges associated with trade liberalization, in particular in the services trade. UNCTAD advisory missions and specialized training workshops have been found to be very useful in guiding the two countries towards adopting up-to-date trade-related measures and sound business practices. In fact, impact studies completed by UNCTAD in this context, addressed the main restrictions to trade and analysed, through services policy reviews, the prospects for reform to facilitate further trade in several key services sectors in both countries. Furthermore, UNCTAD, helped Iraq in addressing both the strategic considerations, as well as the legal and technical aspects related to the preparation of WTO accession negotiations. Iraqi officials have thus acquired the skills and techniques to deal with the main WTO membership requirements, including drafting of market access offers on goods and services. Negotiating teams in the concerned recipient countries, have been trained to adequately prepare for and negotiate trade agreements, including regional trade agreements (RTAs) and accession to WTO. UNCTAD received testimonial letters from their respective governments to attest on UNCTAD important role and appreciate the support they received from it for the conduct of their trade policy endeavours.

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>
BOT/0T/ICH	UNCTAD STI Policy Review of Botswana	2021–	Botswana

42. **Development context.** The basic assumption that underpins the science, technology and innovation (STI) policy reviews 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 STI for development, sound policy frameworks leading to the development 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.

43. **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.

44. **Outputs.** The STI policy review for Zambia was launched in late 2019. The final report of the review 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 to 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.

45. Based on a request from the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology of Botswana, UNCTAD has undertaken an STI policy review in collaboration with the Ministry's Department for Research, Science and Technology (DRST). Following a restructuring of the government, the DRST was moved to the newly created Ministry for Communications, Knowledge and Technology, which is now UNCTAD's counterpart for STI policy activities. 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. In 2022 a foresight exercise for STI in Botswana was undertaken to stimulate a process of identifying national priorities for research, technology and innovation that would enable Botswana to move towards the future that stakeholders saw as their desired future in 2036. This is the date for their current future vision of the Botswana as outlined in the country's Vision 2036. The lack of clear priorities was identified as a key weakness during the STI policy review process. This was the first time that UNCTAD incorporated a foresight exercise

into a STI policy review process, which UNCTAD has aimed to achieve since the issuance of its 2019 methodology for STI policy reviews. Drafts of both the STI policy review report and the Foresight for STI report went through an extensive process of discussion among national stakeholders during the second half of 2022. Both reports were at the stage of finalization towards year end. The review and the foresight exercise are jointly 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 support the transformation from a natural-resource based towards a knowledge-based economy. This transformation is fundamental to the country's Vision 2036 and national development plans.

46. In 2020, the UNDP and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Technology and Innovation of Angola requested UNCTAD's support in the preparation of a Study on Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Angola. The report of the study was completed in early 2022. It serves as the first step for policy development in Angola and it makes publicly available the information needed by the actors of the national innovation system. The study focused on the national innovation system of Angola and also mapped and provided a rapid diagnostic of the digital and new technologies in the innovation system of the country. Strengthening Angola's national science, technology and innovation system is crucial for inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The focus of the STIP Review is on innovation for economic diversification – in expanding the economy's productive capacities to produce goods and services that are new to the country and in the generation of jobs. Innovation for diversification will ensure sustainable growth in Angola and increase resilience to external economic crisis. The study was presented to the Minister of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation in June 2022 at a National Conference on STI with the participation of the key stakeholders of the national innovation system. At the invitation of the Minister, in March 2023, the study was also presented to the Economic Committee of the Government composed of Economic-related Ministers such as the Minister of Economy and Planning and the Minister of Industry and Trade.

47. In November 2022, a STI policy review was launched for Seychelles with the support of Development Account. The review was conducted upon request from the country. A national workshop was held in the country to initiate the STIP analysis. It is expected to be completed in mid-2023. The review is intended to identify appropriate policies that will spur innovation in Seychelles and overcome its vulnerabilities as a small island country. A STI policy training segment was incorporated into the same workshop, where participants learned the current approaches to STI policymaking in the context of SDGs; innovation and entrepreneurship; and the design of STI policy instruments with focus on governmental support to start-ups, SMEs and innovators, followed by best practices and successful stories from innovation entities in response to crisis and global challenges, and examples of direct policy impact on innovation.

48. **Results.** At the end of 2022, UNCTAD had completed STI policy reviews in 20 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.

49. The STI policy reviews in Botswana and Zambia 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..

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
JOR/0T/JAM	eTrade Readiness Assessment of Jordan	2021–	Germany GIZ
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 GIZ
MON/0T/LAA	eTrade Readiness Assessment of Mongolia	2022–	Republic of Korea, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
RWA/0T/FAV ^a	ICT Policies for Development: E-Commerce Strategy for Rwanda	2017– 20F22	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
TUN/0T/JAK	eTrade Readiness Assessment of Tunisia	2021–	Germany GIZ
INT/0T/FAQ	eTrade for all coordination	2016–	Republic of Korea, Estonia
INT/0T/HCE	Strategic Partnership Netherlands	2021–	Kingdom of the Netherlands
INT/0T/IBN	E-Commerce and the Digital Economy (ECDE) for Development	2019–	China, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland
RAS/0T/KAJ	Pacific Digital Economy Programme	2021–	UNDP MDTF

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

50. **Development context.** 2022 continued to expose growing digital divides and accentuate pre-existing inequalities in the access to, use of and benefits from digitalization. Despite a sustained growth in e-commerce fuelled by the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses in low-income economies have been unable to fully harness the increased demand for online shopping, and much of the value from the data-driven digital economy is being captured by a small number of major global digital platforms. The shift towards online shopping and other digital opportunities thus further entrenched the already strong market concentration of online retail and marketplace businesses.

51. Furthermore, supply-chain pressures from a protracted pandemic in some parts of the world and the war in Ukraine gave rise to a cost-of-living crisis for many, in particular the world's most vulnerable households, prompting concerns of food and energy insecurity and instability of the public financial system. In 2022, human development fell back to its 2016 levels, erasing much of the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The need to recover lost ground in global efforts to meet the SDGs and ensure a more

inclusive and resilient economic recovery from current crises further underscored the role of digitalization and data for development.

52. To reverse current trends towards widening inequalities, policymakers need to adapt existing policies, laws and regulations and adopt new ones aimed at harnessing digital opportunities. Improving the availability of timely, robust and comparable official statistics on the digital economy and digital trade is a prerequisite for enabling policymakers in developing countries to establish benchmarks and better monitor and manage their economies' digital transformation. An innovative and sound approach to digital and data governance for development, further capacity building on various aspects of e-commerce and the digital economy and sustained dialogue are also needed at the international level. In view of the cross-sectoral importance of ICT and data for development and the fact that in developed and developing countries alike, digital transformation continues to outpace policymaking, a coordinated, whole-of-government and multi-stakeholder approach is key. Targeted efforts must also be made to ensure that women have equal opportunities in e-commerce and the digital economy.

53. Against this background, the e-commerce and the digital economy (ECDE) programme delivered on the strengthened mandate that member States gave UNCTAD in the Bridgetown Covenant to assist developing countries seeking to enhance their readiness to engage and integrate into the digital economy.

54. **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 and among 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.

55. **Outputs.** Building on the Digital Economy Report (DER) 2021, UNCTAD provided support to the Indonesia G20 Presidency in 2022 as a knowledge partner for the Digital Economy Working Group's (DEWG) work on data flows. UNCTAD analysis of G20 Members' current laws and regulations in this area fed into the G20 Digital Economy Ministers Meeting and the G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration, which reaffirmed the role of data for development.⁴ UNCTAD was also invited to support the work on data and development under India's G20 Presidency (together with the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology).

56. At the invitation of China, UNCTAD provided technical assistance on digital economy issues for the Trade Ministers' meeting under China's BRICS Presidency. In addition, UNCTAD together with the International Trade Centre (ITC) prepared the BRICS Digital Economy Report 2022, which examines digital market trends and policy developments in the BRICS countries, provides analysis of the current regulatory framework, assesses the present market outlook and identifies structures of cooperation within the BRICS to enhance opportunities offered by the digital economy.

57. UNCTAD deepened its engagement with developing countries on assessing the state-of-play of their e-commerce enabling environment through eTrade Readiness Assessments (eT Readies) and assisting them in the development of E-commerce Strategies and Action Plans to serve as roadmaps of how e-commerce can support their strategic development goals.

58. Four eT Readies, including one at the regional level, were completed in 2022 – for Kenya, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Tunisia and Jordan, bringing the total number of eT Readies conducted to 32. In Kenya, the Government followed up on the eT Ready by developing a draft national E-commerce Strategy in consultation with public and private stakeholders. The strategy aims to be complementary to the regional East African Community (EAC) E-commerce Strategy, which draws on findings from recent studies and assessments conducted by various development partners, including the eT

⁴ See G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration

Readies of the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda as well as the E-commerce Strategy of Rwanda (all led by UNCTAD). In the ECOWAS, the regional eT Ready built on the 8 eT Readies undertaken by UNCTAD for ECOWAS member States between 2018 and 2020 and was the first step towards the development of a regional E-commerce Strategy - the first in West Africa.⁵ In Tunisia and Jordan, Action Plans were developed as a follow-up to the eT Readies to serve as operational and planning tools to mobilize resources for the implementation of selected priority actions and have helped enhance national coordination on e-commerce for development. In the framework of the Pacific Digital Economy Programme (PDEP), jointly implemented with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UNDP, UNCTAD supported Solomon Islands in the development of its first national E-commerce Strategy, which builds on the eT Ready conducted in 2018 with UNCTAD's support and is aligned with the Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap, also drawing on eT Readies conducted in the Pacific with UNCTAD's support in 2017–2020.⁶ Work on new eT Readies commenced in Mongolia, Peru and Mauritania, and the development of an eT Ready Action Plan got underway in Malawi.

59. Through an Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM), UNCTAD continued to foster synergies among development partners, facilitate access to e-commerce capacity-building development solutions and monitor progress on the implementation of eT Ready recommendations in beneficiary countries. The 2nd implementation review was released in April 2022 during the eCommerce Week and confirmed a positive trend in implementation, with an average implementation rate of 59 per cent for the 14 participating countries in 2021, up from 50 per cent the year before. The review highlighted success stories, including the importance of strong political leadership in combination with an effective governance structure. It also pointed to recurring hurdles that require attention, such as insufficient inter-ministerial coordination and weak public-private sector interaction.

60. To further strengthen implementation, UNCTAD in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), a Germany foundation, convened in October a 2-day hybrid meeting of eT Ready Focal Points and other key stakeholders, mainly senior government officials, Geneva-based representatives of Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, representatives of eTrade for all partners and other development partners from headquarters and national or regional offices, as well as UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs). The thematic discussions enabled 47 officials from across various Ministries in 21 beneficiary countries, including 16 women, to share experiences and good practices and identify the types of support they need to play a more active role in the implementation of eT Ready recommendations.⁷

61. The eTrade for Women initiative consolidated its efforts at bringing the voice of women digital entrepreneurs to the forefront of policymaking on e-commerce and the digital economy. The third cohort of Advocates assumed their tenure and championed the empowerment of 61 women digital entrepreneurs across Africa and the Arab Region through 3 regional Masterclasses delivered in collaboration with selected eTrade for all partners. For example, the WIPO Academy contributed to the two Masterclasses organized for Francophone and English-speaking Africa, where it delivered training sessions and ad-hoc support on intellectual property (IP) to 46 women digital entrepreneurs from 14 countries. With support from the UNDP Innovation Lab and UNESCWA, a first Masterclass was also organized for the Arab Region, gathering 15 women digital entrepreneurs from 7 countries.

⁵ The regional ECOWAS E-Commerce Strategy builds on 8 national eT Readies conducted by UNCTAD in the region, namely for Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

⁶ In the Pacific, eT Readies conducted by UNCTAD in Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu and those conducted using UNCTAD methodology in Fiji, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea and Tonga served as a basis for the development of the Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap.

⁷ The meeting was also attended by 21 representatives of Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva, representing 15 countries and one regional grouping, as well as 38 representatives of development partners, including the ECDE Programme's four core donors, 9 eTrade for all partners and the UN Resident Coordinator in Mongolia.

62. Through the eTrade for Women initiative, UNCTAD continued to support women digital entrepreneurs in developing countries through its regional Communities, with the fifth such Community launched for Latin America and the Caribbean in January 2022. Twenty-two Community activities were organized at the national and regional levels, including hands-on workshops on selected business skills, inspirational talks, networking meetings and interactions with policymakers. At the end of 2022, the network had grown to reach almost 200 women-owned digital businesses in more than 40 countries. The regional approach enables a tailored response to the needs of the members of each Community.

63. eTrade for Women members took part in policy dialogue with the eT Ready Focal Points in Iraq and Tunisia held as part of the Masterclass for the Arab region; the Advocate for Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the eT Ready national consultations in Peru; a former eTrade for Women Advocate for Western Africa advised the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of ICT of Côte d'Ivoire on issues related to the regulation of data protection and of telecommunications operators and took part in the consultations on the E-Commerce Strategy of the ECOWAS co-hosted by UNCTAD. At the global level, eTrade for Women contributed to 26 advocacy actions in 2022, to raise awareness of the need for more and better targeted support for women digital entrepreneurs and to call for a bold engagement from global leaders across the board to make the digital economy more gender-inclusive, in line with SDGs 5 and 8. High-level engagements included participation in the UNCTAD-SECO joint seminar on e-commerce (March), Universal Postal Union (UPU) International Women's Day (March), UNCTAD eCommerce Week 2022 (April), and the 8th WTO Aid for Trade Global Review (July), to name a few.

64. Building on the experience of the first cohort of eTrade for Women Advocates, a paper entitled *Fostering Women Entrepreneurship in the Digital Economy* was published in December. It reviews the main obstacles that women digital entrepreneurs encounter in developing countries and explores actionable measures that could be put in place to help more women follow in the footsteps of the Advocates to grow successful digital businesses and become influential players in the digital economy. The study calls for a holistic approach to fostering women digital entrepreneurship: from enhanced and affordable connectivity and better digital skills and access to funding, to more favourable regulations and balanced gender norms. It also highlights the need for more female role models in the digital space.

65. In the area of e-commerce and law reform, UNCTAD continued to assist the Government of Kazakhstan in understanding the implications of the Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on E-Commerce for reform of its national legislation. A workshop was held in Astana in November 2022 to enhance the capacity of 46 Government officials, including 24 women, to define the direction of legislative reform to facilitate e-commerce and align national laws with the JSI consolidated text on e-commerce.

66. The UNCTAD database on the digital economy was updated with statistics on the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) by businesses, until 2021. The data confirmed developing countries' differing experiences in digital transformation and also that only a few developing countries, and no LDCs, regularly collected and reported data on these indicators. Other statistics updated in 2022 include data on the ICT producing sector core indicators, bilateral trade flows by ICT goods categories, share of ICT goods as a percentage of total trade, and international trade in ICT and digitally deliverable services. The latter showed that LDCs are on a different path compared with other country groups when it comes to leveraging digitally deliverable services for trade and development.

67. To help address the challenge of insufficient statistics on the digital economy and trade to inform policy making, UNCTAD launched a new online course based on the revised *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy*. Thirty-eight representatives of National Statistical Offices and other institutions from across 14 Pacific countries and territories, including 25 women, benefited from the first training activities, which were delivered in the framework of PDEP. Also prepared under PDEP, the *Digital Economy Report: Pacific Edition 2022* explored how to prevent the further widening of digital divides and build inclusive digital economies in the region.

68. New developments in the work on measuring the digital economy and trade will serve as a basis for the development of statistical guidelines for measuring the value of e-commerce

sales and purchases and inform deliberations of the UNCTAD Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy. Its 3rd meeting in November saw a proposal for the creation of a Task Group of delegates from interested countries and international organizations to take this work forward.

69. The eTrade for all initiative marked a new milestone with the enrolment of the International Chamber of Commerce as its principal private sector counterpart. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Digital Cooperation Organization joined, raising the initiative's membership to 35 partners committed to helping developing countries harness e-commerce and digital trade for development. The initiative continued to foster synergies for joint projects leveraging different partners' expertise (such as for the eT Readies and eTrade for Women) and to facilitate access to information on Development Solutions in e-commerce and the digital economy.

70. The 2022 edition of the UNCTAD eCommerce Week, which addressed the topic of "Data and Digitalization for Development", took place in a hybrid format in April. More than 2,600 registered participants from 139 countries, including 30 LDCs, and all stakeholder groups, attended one or more of the 8 high-level and 100+ thematic sessions organized by 550 speakers and moderators, including 31 eTrade for all partners.

71. Stemming from the main findings from the COVID-19 and E-commerce: Global Review, UNCTAD, ECLAC and selected eTrade for all partners launched the first phase of the development of a new distance learning Core E-commerce Course for policymakers, to bridge knowledge gaps in how to improve the environment for inclusive e-commerce development. The first phase of the course will target policymakers from Latin America and the Caribbean.

72. **Results and impacts.** The ongoing work of UNCTAD on e-commerce and the digital economy continued to raise considerable interest among beneficiaries, donors and other stakeholders. A renewed commitment was received from Sweden, which joined the ranks of Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Switzerland in the E-commerce and the Digital Economy (ECDE) Programme's Core Donor Advisory Board. New financial contributions were also received from China and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, while the European Union joined Australia in the sponsorship of PDEP. In recognition of the importance of further strengthening UNCTAD's work on e-commerce and the digital economy, member States in December allocated two additional posts to it from the UN's regular budget.

73. The report of the first independent evaluation of the ECDE Programme, which covered the 2019–2021 period, was published in September 2022. It confirmed the high relevance of the Programme, further boosted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and found a high level of user satisfaction with research and analysis products including the DER, as well as a high level of interest and confidence in the Programme's intergovernmental consensus-building work. Activities undertaken under the Programme's technical cooperation pillar, in particular the eT Readies, were found to have contributed to boosting the e-commerce and digital economy agenda within beneficiary countries.

74. The ECDE Programme's first regional sub-programme, PDEP, also underwent a mid-term review in 2022, which covered its inception stage. The review found PDEP to be highly relevant to the needs and priorities of its beneficiaries and reaffirmed the mutually complementary role of e-commerce and financial inclusion in building inclusive digital economies. Programme interventions were also found to have been delivered efficiently and with due regard for gender equality.

75. The UNCTAD secretariat received 9 new requests for technical cooperation from member States from across Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. These ranged from requests for support with conducting eT Readies and preparing E-Commerce Strategies, to requests for technical assistance on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy and developing regional e-commerce frameworks.

76. The DER 2021 informed two United Nations General Assembly Resolutions on information and communications technologies for sustainable development⁸ and made a mark in scholarly research, where it prompted further discussions on the risks of fragmentation of digital policymaking and was cited in the context of an article proposing a research agenda for the digital economy.^{9,10} Policy citations of the DER appeared in documents across a number of countries and organizations, including Estonia, Nigeria, the United Kingdom and the European Parliament, to name a few. By the end of 2022, the DER 2021 had been downloaded more than 120'000 times.

77. The eT Ready Action Plans for Jordan and Tunisia catalysed increased interest from and enhanced cooperation among development partners - including donors, United Nations agencies (through the United Nations RCOs) and eTrade for all partners - to support the implementation of priority actions. Promoting small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) creation and development in the fields of the digital economy and e-commerce, facilitating access to online marketplaces for agri-food companies and developing export markets are among the initiatives identified in the Action Plans that partners have expressed interest in supporting. In Jordan, priority actions were also included in the new United Nations Cooperation Framework, led by the United Nations RCO in Amman.

78. In addition to improving government coordination on e-commerce policies, prompting the development of roadmaps for the implementation of key policy measures, triggering regional e-commerce development initiatives, and enhancing development partner cooperation on e-commerce, the eT Readies continued to contribute to strengthening public-private sector dialogue on e-commerce related policies, empowering women-owned businesses to influence policymakers on e-commerce and the digital economy, and helping better prepare countries to engage and participate in e-commerce negotiations.

79. The impact of this work to date is evidenced by the successful eT Ready implementation experiences of several countries, such as Cambodia, Bhutan, Senegal, Togo and Tuvalu. With 92 per cent of recommendations implemented at the time of data collection for the 2nd eT Ready implementation review (2021), in 2022 Cambodia launched a business-to-business-to-customer e-commerce platform (CambodiaTrade.com), aiming to provide SMEs with better access to markets. According to the Ministry of Commerce's July 2022 iTrade Bulletin, the market value of e-commerce in Cambodia in 2021 had increased to \$970 million, up 19 percent from 2020, and e-commerce revenue in Cambodia is projected to reach \$1.78 billion by 2025. In Tuvalu, the support provided by different eTrade for all partners, ranging from assistance for a national trade development strategy, national e-commerce strategy development, customs automation and legal reform, among others, illustrates the breadth of e-commerce enabling initiatives undertaken as part of the eT Ready implementation process. Most recently, in November 2022 the country signed instruments of accession to the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts as well as the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

80. As part of the implementation of the E-commerce Strategy for Botswana finalized in 2021, one hundred nineteen e-commerce entrepreneurs from Botswana benefited from four UNCTAD-facilitated training courses aimed at enhancing their capacity to build and grow an online business and take it internationally. More than 90 per cent of the course participants rated the training as "very useful".

81. The eTrade for Women activities have proven to be a relevant response to the needs of women digital entrepreneurs. Over 86 per cent of the participants in the 3 Masterclasses held in 2022 who responded to the final evaluation surveys rated them as "extremely useful" in relation to their business and leadership needs. One participant in the Masterclass for English-speaking Africa held in Lagos, Nigeria, in December 2022, reported being deeply inspired by the learnings during the four days, after which she embarked on a mission to create an e-commerce platform for women producers in rural areas of Nigeria. Potential

⁸ A/RES/76/189 and A/RES/77/150

⁹ See <https://www.globaltradealert.org/reports/gta-29-report>

¹⁰ See Journal of Digital Economy, ISSN: 2773-0670, Vol: 1, Issue: 1, Page: 20-31

participants' interest in the Masterclasses spiked in 2022, with over 750 applications received for the three Masterclasses, for a maximum of 25 spots in each event. Members of the communities reported that the targeted support as well as the regular online interactions with like-minded peers have provided valuable opportunities to learn from others, share own challenges and successes as well as identify additional business opportunities.

82. Following the training course on production of statistics on the digital economy in the Pacific, all respondents to the final course evaluation survey reported increased knowledge as a result of the course, while more than half indicated that their national statistical office would be ready to receive further country-specific technical assistance from UNCTAD on producing e-commerce and digital economy statistics. An official request for such assistance has been received from the Samoa Bureau of Statistics. Six months after the completion of the course, participants reported having applied the knowledge they acquired in various ways, from transferring it to other colleagues to undertaking data collection on digital economy statistics; digital economy statistics have reportedly been compiled and disseminated in one of the countries that benefited from the training.

83. As a result of the reports and workshops on e-commerce and law reform in Kazakhstan, the Government now has the relevant elements to make informed decisions in the context of the JSI negotiations on e-commerce and amend existing pieces of legislation with a view to supporting digital trade law reform at the outset of cross-border trade digitalization. Eighty-eight per cent of the participants who responded to the final feedback survey reported increased knowledge as a result of UNCTAD's assistance, with that figure reaching 93 per cent among female participants.

84. The *etradeforall.org* online platform maintained its cruising speed of more than 65'000 visitors annually, with 10 out of the top 20 countries with the most visitors being developing countries. The platform facilitated access to 35 Development Solutions – technical assistance factsheets outlining partners' programmes, 31 of which are also available in French and 26 in Spanish. Twenty-two requests for Development Solutions information or support were channelled through the platform in 2022, creating a direct link between countries seeking assistance and the eTrade for all partner best placed to provide it. The eTrade for all newsletter continued to provide relevant content to a growing audience base (up 44 per cent from 2021). In response to the Programme's active management of the newsletter's content and audience, its 'open' and 'click' rates increased by 32 per cent and 28 per cent respectively on an annual basis.

A6 Investment guides

Table A6
Investment guides

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
No project			

85. **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.

86. **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.

87. 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.

88. **Outputs.** Following a request from respective governments, field missions were undertaken in 2022 in Cameroon and Gabon to research information and train government officials, under an existing partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa. Guides were delivered to the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Namibia.

89. **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>
BAR/0T/LAX	Barbados. Policy-Dev Emergency FFF (OUN SDG-F Emergency Call)	2022–	Joint SDG Fund
MYA/0T/HBI	United Nations Trade Cluster Myanmar	2019–	United Nations Office for Project Services – Switzerland
INT/0T/CBG	Non-tariff measures trust fund (under Transparency in Trade programme)	2013–	World Bank

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/KBJ	Support CEFTA for monitoring and reporting of NTBs and implementation of dispute settlement mechanism	2021–	European Union
INT/0T/LAN	NTM Data update for selected APEC economies and AVE calculation	2022–	National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS, Japan)
INT/9X/00J	Development and Dissemination of Selected Computerized Trade Data	2000–	Multi-donors
RAF/0T/GBK	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
RAS/0T/JBO	Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade (IMPACT)	2021–	European Union
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2023 (G12)	Green trade for sustainable development in Pacific small island developing States of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG)	2020–	Development Account

90. **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, 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. While many of these measures are put in place for legitimate policy objectives, such as ensuring access to or safety of essential goods, they have an impact on sustainable development. For developing countries, understanding the uses and implications of such measures is essential for the formulation and implementation of effective development strategies.

91. **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,¹¹ data collection and dissemination, to research, policy advice and capacity-building in countries and regional integration groupings. UNCTAD leads international cooperation on the development and revision of the International Classification of Non-Tariff Measures and with regional and international partners 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.

92. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD initiated the data collection of non-tariff measures (NTMs) in 20 countries and updated the NTMs data for 22 countries. The UNCTAD database on non-tariff measures, the Trade Analysis and Information System (TRAINS), is the world's largest and most comprehensive, covering over 90 per cent of world trade, and data on non-tariff measures are publicly available through the dissemination tools: TRAINS Portal for non-tariff measures (for policy makers), the World Integrated Trade Solution (<https://wits.worldbank.org/>) platform (for researchers) and the Global Trade Helpdesk (for private sector users)¹². TRAINS Portal¹³, 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, aims to strengthen the transparency of non-tariff measures across countries and reduce access to information cost of traders. Non-tariff measures and trade regulation data on TRAINS Portal are retrieved from the TRAINS Data Entry Tool¹⁴ where data from over 120 countries have been collected using a standardized approach, endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission, that ensures cross-country comparability. The number of users continued to increase to exceed 23,000 in 2022.

93. The Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) continued to work in 2022 jointly with UNCTAD to provide yearly updated NTM data for all its member countries. ALADI also worked towards integrating its database with TRAINS Portal, through a tailor-made application programming interface (API) for automatic transfer of data.

94. Other countries connecting to TRAINS Portal through APIs are Kyrgyzstan and Vietnam.

95. UNCTAD in 2022 continued its capacity-building activities conducted through online training and face-to-face workshops on NTMs. UNCTAD 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 thirty-six participants from 14 Spanish-speaking countries participated in the course. UNCTAD also cooperated with UNESCAP to organize 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. Two hundred and eleven participants from over 80 countries joined the course. Tailor-made courses on the NTM data collection and trade regulations collection were conducted. Overall, over 300 government officials, traders and researchers have completed the courses on non-tariff measures provided by UNCTAD.

96. UNCTAD continued its support to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on the elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which promises to bring gains of \$20 billion each year to the continent.¹⁵ UNCTAD assisted the negotiation of Annex 5 (Non-Tariff Barriers) of the AfCFTA Protocol on Trade in Goods (2018–2020) and the

¹¹ 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.

¹² See <https://globaltradeshelphdesk.org>.

¹³ <https://trainsonline.unctad.org>.

¹⁴ <https://dataentry.trains.unctad.org/>.

¹⁵ 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.

development of the official AfCFTA NTB Online Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Mechanism (2020–2021). All intra-African traders, including MSMEs, women, youth and informal traders, can register and report an NTB through the online platform.¹⁶ In 2022, UNCTAD focussed on the continued capacity building of National Focal Points in Member States / State Parties. These Focal Points are responsible for monitoring and resolving reported NTBs. UNCTAD also continued its support to the AfCFTA Secretariat on the staffing of the AfCFTA Non-Tariff Barriers Coordination Unit and the hosting of the website of the NTB Mechanism. Furthermore, an App was developed to facilitate NTB reporting via smartphones. UNCTAD also fully developed a regional sub-system for the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS/CEEAC) that was formally adopted by the region in 2021. The sub-system is fully integrated in the AfCFTA NTB Mechanism but focuses on intra-ECCAS trade barriers. The ECCAS NTB Mechanism will be launched in early 2023.

97. UNCTAD also supports data collection on NTMs in the AfCFTA Member States / State Parties, based on a mandate in the formal work plan of the AfCFTA Sub-Committee on Non-Tariff Barriers as well as various transparency provisions in the AfCFTA annexes on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, technical barriers to trade (TBT), trade facilitation, customs cooperation and mutual administrative assistance. The work in the AfCFTA is integrated into UNCTAD’s global NTM transparency initiative and promotes inter-agency coordination and policy coherence (Sustainable Development Goal 17.14, indicator 17.14.1). During 2022, new or updated data was published for Chad, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, and Senegal.

98. 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 made significant progress in 2022. With the reopening of borders in the Pacific in the second half of 2022, the first national workshops were held in Papua New Guinea (31 May), Solomon Islands (30 June) and Vanuatu (3 August). NTM data collection kicked-off for the first time in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and the second time in Papua New Guinea and Japan. The data will be published TRAINS Portal¹⁷ in 2023. Moreover, the voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) assessment field trip took place in the fourth quarter of 2022 in Solomon Islands and in Papua New Guinea.

99. UNCTAD works on improving trade facilitation and border/customs procedures under the “Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade” (IMPACT) project, which is a component of the ‘Pacific Regional Integration Support’ Programme (PRISE). Within this multi-divisional project led by ASYCUDA programme, NTM data collection of Samoa, Timor-Leste and Tonga started for the first time. The data will be published on TRAINS Portal¹⁸ in 2023. UNCTAD also provided training in Vanuatu interim Economic Partnership Agreement (iEPA) Awareness session (21 October) as per request by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), another implementing partner of the PRISE. In 2022, the third to sixth Technical Coordination Group Meetings were held with the European Union delegation and the PRISE implementing partners.

100. UNCTAD developed the Non-Tariff Measures Cost-Effectiveness Toolkit to analyse 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. The Toolkit was finalized and adopted by the ASEAN Economic Ministers in 2021. In 2022, UNCTAD held a one-week training and consultation with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia to discuss their continuing cooperation in collecting, updating, and analyzing NTM

¹⁶ See <https://tradebarriers.africa/>.

¹⁷ <https://trainsonline.unctad.org>.

¹⁸ <https://trainsonline.unctad.org>.

data in ASEAN and East-Asian countries. NTM data in Vietnam were updated in 2022, and a full round of data update for ASEAN is foreseen for 2023.

101. Under a United Nations Trade Cluster Project for Trade and Productive Capacity in Myanmar, a Voluntary Sustainability Standards readiness survey was finalized. UNCTAD has also identified the key products for exportation for Myanmar, which are tea, ginger, and avocado. UNCTAD supports the farmers of those products to improve the market access of their products to reach the global markets. Various online and on-ground training material has been developed for farmers to guide them with the role of NTMs and how to access them to facilitate trade. These guides and courses also address the agricultural oversights which make the product unfit for the international market. In addition to this, the data collection and coding of NTM data from Myanmar was undertaken in 2022 for future analysis and utilization.

102. 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 integrates 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 (trainsonline.unctad.org) being managed by UNCTAD. UNCTAD also collected data for 2022 which will be transferring soon to Vietnam's trade portal.

103. 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 Portal containing data for all other countries. It was presented publicly in an online seminar by the government itself in March 2022.

104. UNCTAD supports the negotiations on a reform of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) 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" started in late 2022. Within the framework of the project, UNCTAD organized the 8th round of negotiations on Additional Protocol 7 to CEFTA on a dispute settlement mechanism on 6-7 September 2002 in Tirana, Albania, and engaged legal experts to support the discussions. UNCTAD also assists efforts to resolve barriers reported through the CEFTA Market Access Barriers Database (MADB). UNCTAD develops guidelines, steps and procedures aimed at fulfilling clear and complete support information. The private-public dialogue will be enhanced by developing a strategy for a monitoring and reporting mechanism on NTMs by the private sector.

105. UNCTAD strengthens the transparency in APEC economies and updated NTM data in Canada, started data updates of the United States, updated Latin-American APEC economies and supported transparency in a few other APEC economies. Jointly with the Global Trade Analysis project, of which UNCTAD is a board member, ad valorem equivalent tariffs (AVEs) are calculated.

106. **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 (ERIA) significantly increased transparency in non-tariff measures in the ASEAN region. 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 such as Malaysia 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. UNCTAD and ERIA had a one-week training and consultation in 2022 to go over the status-quo of the project and prepare for the update of the ASEAN NTM data in 2023.

107. The updated NTM data of Australia in 2022 and the start of NTM data collection in seven Pacific SIDS laid a solid foundation to conduct region-wide analysis and policy support that are planned in 2023 and 2024. Moreover, the support to the Pacific SIDS through the Green Trade project and IMPACT project continued creating synergistic effects with other development assistance projects. UNCTAD organized a national workshop in Papua New Guinea and invited UN agencies which provided support to vanilla value chain under the Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade (STREIT) programme to discuss green trade and the challenges facing the vanilla value chain, particularly as an export product. Also, UNCTAD collaborated with the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative (PQII) by sharing information obtained through the NTM data collection, and participating in their workshops and enriching the discussion. Also, it held three coordination meetings with PQII, UNDP and the Pacific Community (SPC) to understand each other's work and identify potential areas to collaborate. Lastly, the VSS assessment field trip in Papua New Guinea helped relevant government officials to understand production and border trade of vanilla and strengthen their commitment to improve policies concerning not only vanilla but also other spices.¹⁹

108. The support projects to the AfCFTA in the areas of NTB elimination and NTM regulatory transparency led to the following results: Awareness raising campaigns on the AfCFTA NTB online reporting, monitoring and eliminating mechanism increased website users from 6,400 in 2020 to 8,200 in 2021 and 10'000 in 2022. UNCTAD's efforts to improve regulatory transparency in Africa has increased NTM data coverage to five additional countries in 2022 with 17 additional countries close to completion. Over 1,200 trade-related regulations were collected, analysed and classified into the International Classification of NTMs.

109. 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. The online NTM course that also addresses COVID-19 impact was delivered in Spanish language in March 2022. One hundred and thirty-six people from 20 different countries completed the three-week online course. Fifty-five per cent of participants were women. Eighty-two per cent considered the course excellent, or very good. Around 89 per cent considered the course increased their knowledge, help them to understand the situation and policy response in their country, and help them understand how UN can help in those situations, extremely or a lot. At least 60 per cent shared that it will have a positive direct outcome in their work. This course has been delivered and tutored jointly by UNCTAD and ALADI, who added a specific module adapted to the region. There has been a request from ALADI to deliver this course again, with updated content.

110. 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

¹⁹ See <https://unctad.org/project/transparency-trade-regulation-and-facilitation-pacific-agreement-closer-economic-relations>.

2022, which is jointly published with WTO and ITC. AVEs of NTMs will support researchers globally to assess the implications of NTMs on developing countries.

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/0X/77I	Technical Cooperation on Market Access, Trade Laws and Preferences	1997–	Multi-donors

111. **Development context.** A universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system continues to be the cornerstone of a global trade partnership, particularly to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 17. While international trade negotiations can open access to new markets, thus creating opportunities, they also represent daunting challenges for policymakers and trade negotiators as new rules and commitments resulting from such negotiations would define a country's participation in international trade. Continued and enhanced support on trade negotiations, including in the context of WTO accession, remains critically important for developing countries, particularly for the least developed countries, Africa and small vulnerable economies.

112. The integration of developing countries into the global services economy through increased services trade requires them to design and implement appropriate policies and regulatory frameworks, negotiate and manage trade agreements that cover services, establish institutional structures, create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, and build competitive services supply capacities. UNCTAD work on services is expected to contribute to achieving several Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 8, Goal 9 and Goal 17.

113. 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.

114. **Objective.** UNCTAD provides capacity-building support aimed at helping developing countries, particularly LDCs, and their regional groupings, Africa, and small and vulnerable economies reap benefits and handle challenges in the areas of multilateral and regional trade negotiations, services regulatory and institutional frameworks at the national level, and WTO accession. UNCTAD promotes coherence of bilateral and regional trade agreements with the multilateral trading system; and supports regional cooperation mechanisms as well as utilization of trade preferences. Given the limited progress in the Doha Round and renewed interest in regional trade arrangements, UNCTAD also places greater emphasis on development impact of regional dimension of trade (South–South and South–North).

115. UNCTAD's support in the area of services is aimed to enhance expertise and human, regulatory and institutional capacities to elaborate and implement national services regulatory frameworks, services sectoral assessments 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; (c) responding to the challenges associated with parallel negotiations between the multilateral track and regional tracks; and (d) coordinating trade policy negotiations with other policy dimensions to ensure the best policy mix that ensures supply capacity in services for direct and indirect trade. In the context of the latter point, the particular objective of the project on the measurement of services value added in exports and analysis of related services and trade policies is to reduce the knowledge gap in developing countries on measuring services value added in exports and on analysing policies that affect this value added. This should allow for evidence-based policymaking, as aimed at in the Goals, in particular with regard to trade and services-related policies that contribute to efficiency, increased productive and export capacity and greater participation in global value chains.

116. 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.

117. 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.

118. **Outputs.** The main outputs in 2022 in the area of trade negotiations and the international trading system are reported as follows:

Trading systems

119. In 2022, the important focus of UNCTAD work has been in support of the African Union Members and Commission as well as the regional economic commissions 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. In 2022 UNCTAD participated in AfCFTA capacity building workshop on trade and competition policy (21–22 March 2022)

120. UNCTAD continued to monitor and assess the evolution in international trade and the trading system from a development perspective. In 2022, UNCTAD continued to deliver policy discussions and promoted focused and candid debate on new and emerging issues affecting developing countries. Such discussions were held during the 4th Training workshop of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) for the French-speaking negotiators, including African countries (30 November 2022) and the Workshop for Islamic Centre for Development and Trade (ICDT) (19–20 July 2022).

121. 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. UNCTAD also provided technical and advisory support to Mozambique under the European Union–UNIDO project to support Mozambique in implementing safeguards.

122. 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. In 2022, the following activities were undertaken on WTO accession:

- (a) WTO Second High-Level Regional Dialogue on WTO Accession for Arab Region (7–9 February 2022);
- (b) Accession of Timor-Leste: 2nd round table with development partners (29 April 2022);
- (c) Consultative workshop on Iraq’s WTO accession (12–15 December 2022).

Services, development and trade

123. UNCTAD supported countries in the Central America Economic Integration Subsystem (SIECA) on assessing the dual relevance of trade in services for development strategies. This included the high importance of exports of services as final products for these countries and the role of imports allowing a broad sourcing of services’ intermediate inputs that feed the whole economy. This second dimension was particularly relevant as those inputs were prevalent in the production and exports of all economic activities. This points to how services can influence the performance of downstream economic sectors, including their diversification and upgrading. UNCTAD contributed with results of these assessments to SIECA flagship publication on the “Current State of Central American Integration”.

124. This technical assistance catalysed the update of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNCTAD and SIECA, signed on 17 October 2022. This may pave the way for future possible work, including on strengthening the performance of inputs from knowledge-intensive services to enhance downstream competitiveness and on improving skills, processes and technology to advance trade in services statistics.

125. UNCTAD 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. 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 2022, UNCTAD assisted countries in these topics through two initiatives:

126. Delivered a presentation on 10 June 2022 in the Global Conference on Economic Geography on how information and communication technology (ICT) services influence the performance of downstream sectors, analysing the case of ICT services inputs used by professional services. UNCTAD verified that higher ICT services inputs in professional services exports correspond to higher competitiveness of these services. This pointed to how development strategies promoting higher digitalization of services in developing economies needed a policy framework to build ICT services’ capacity and reduce the digital divide.

127. Moderated a session on 15 November 2022 in the XI Conference of the Latin American Network of Services Researchers and Policymakers on how services inputs, and particularly ICT services inputs, can contribute to the creative economy.

128. UNCTAD has 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 2022, UNCTAD participated in the following meeting:

129. 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. This included contributions to the “Report of the Financial Inclusion Workstream” published in May 2022.

130. 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 maximizing 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 2022, 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 contributing to the preparation of the United Nations Secretary-General report on the International Migration and Development.

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

Market access and trade preferences

131. 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. 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.

132. 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. In December 2022 Brazil has ratified the São Paulo Round Protocol, the outcome of the Third Round of the GSTP negotiations. The ratification by Brazil of the São Paulo Round is a significant step as it will bring the São Paulo Round Protocol closer into entering into force.

133. **Results and impacts.** Through its integrated analytical and capacity-building activities UNCTAD has strengthened 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 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. Specifically, on WTO accession, 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.

134. UNCTAD work on services, trade and development has helped developing countries better understand this area, and the potential opportunities this field can provide. Greater synergy was created between the three pillars of UNCTAD's work on services. UNCTAD's support to trade policy makers and trade negotiators in continuing to articulate their interests in the multilateral, regional and bilateral services negotiations helped them to maintain the development focus in the negotiations and ensure greater coherence in priorities pursued at multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. The developmental benefits of international migration and related remittances have received added emphasis from UNCTAD in the light of its growing impact on development prospects. UNCTAD's assistance was important in facilitating enhanced extensive multi-stakeholder consultations on services development. Sharing of experiences and lessons learnt had been a special feature of UNCTAD's support, which was repeatedly appreciated by member States.

135. 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–	Portugal
INT/0T/HAI	BioTrade Facilitation Programme: Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development	2019–	Switzerland
INT/0T/HBD	Sustainable manufacturing and environmental pollution programme	2018–	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
RAF/0T/KBE	Inclusion of green initiatives in AfCFTA National Implementation Strategies in 10 African Countries	2022–	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
RLA/0T/JAJ ^a	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	2021–2022	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ROA-1819 (K11) ^a	Evidence-based and policy coherent oceans economy and trade strategies	2018– 2022	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

136. **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, pollution and marine litter.

137. 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. The adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in 2015 put sustainability at the centre of global action with 17 specific global goals. These were reinforced in 2022 by the Stockholm +50 Declaration which recognized the world's dire ecological situation and specifically called for the establishment of a global regenerative economy in line with circularity principles. Essential to those objectives are sustainable products, defined as "internationally traded goods and services that are sustainably produced and promote sustainable consumption", as they 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 aspects of sustainable development including environmental protection, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity, economic diversification and circularity, job creation and poverty reduction. To seize these opportunities, developing countries need to strengthen their capacities to identify their production and export strengths.

138. UNCTAD – through its mandates on ocean and circular economies, biodiversity conservation, climate change, renewable energy, and plastic pollution under the Bridgetown Covenant²⁰ – recognizes that transforming to a sustainable economy requires efforts to preserve both land and marine biodiversity, 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.

139. **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.

140. 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 and sustainable production. UNCTAD also responds to technical assistance request by member countries in those areas. Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, the principles under the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the objectives of

²⁰ Building upon the Nairobi Maafikiano and the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including its Nagoya Protocol, the convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Basel Convention and by the Bridgetown Covenant, UNCTAD facilitates multilateral and expert processes in areas in which the environmental aspects are central to trade.

141. **Outputs.** The Oceans Economy and Fisheries Programme,²¹ 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 all with the framework of UNCLOS. It has developed and maintains the Ocean Trade database in UNCTAD Stats. It also empowers small-scale coastal producers from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to sustainably harvest and trade queen conch (“*Strombus gigas*”²²) by-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). The main outputs of the Oceans Economy and Fisheries Programme in 2022 are reported as follows:

(a) UNCTAD released its ocean trade database, which draws on official statistics from all UN member states in April 2022. The database includes data on trade of goods and services in ocean-based economic sectors.

(b) UNCTAD completed the implementation of the Development Account project on Oceans Economy and Trade Strategies (OETS) in 2022. It aimed at building capacity in identifying oceans-based products and services with potential in Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica. A total of 613 stakeholders, 43 per cent female, benefited from project activities, particularly:

(c) Publication of the OETS report of Barbados in January 2022. The report focuses on sustainable marine fisheries and seafood processing.

(d) UNCTAD organized a stakeholder inception meeting on a national analysis to transform longline fisheries in Barbados on 4 February 2022. In follow-up to this meeting, UNCTAD organized a workshop on the implementation of priority actions on sustainable trade of swordfish and other longline fisheries in Barbados on 22 July 2022. The report entitled “Swordfish market analysis report Barbados” was published in November 2022.

(e) Production of a training toolkit presentation deck on all the results, data, findings, outcomes, and recommendations of the OETS project.

(f) In 2022, UNCTAD organized the 4th Oceans Forum on trade-related aspects of SDG 14 (held in Geneva on 6-8 April 2022). The 4th Oceans Forum was co-sponsored by the Republics of Portugal and Kenya as well as by the FAO, UNEP, the Organisation of African Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Development Bank of Latin America, and International Oceans Institute.

(g) UNCTAD organized at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) 2022²³ one plenary session titled “Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda” as well as 4 side events on trade, oceans economy, fisheries subsidies, and marine biodiversity at the conference. UNCTAD also produced the concept note for the Interactive dialogue 4: Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets of the UNOC 2022 in Portugal (held on 27 June – 01 July 2022).

²¹ <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/oceans-economy>.

²² An Appendix II CITES-listed species which is a highly appreciated seafood delicacy with important non-food uses, including therapeutical products and handicrafts in the Caribbean.

²³ See all UNCTAD activities at the UNOC 2022 here: <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/oceans-economy/oceans-conference-2022>

(h) The UNCTAD OECS in cooperation with CITES Blue BioTrade project delivered all foreseen outputs by the end of 2022. Project activities in 2022 included the following:

(i) Three country study assessments of the queen conch value chain and its Blue BioTrade potential in Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

(j) A summary of country case studies recommendations for exporters and investors.

(k) An OECS Blue BioTrade Regional Plan of Action for queen conch is formulated by stakeholders and validated by beneficiary countries.

(l) UNCTAD, OECS, CITES and SusGren Inc. organised a regional workshop to validate the OECS Blue BioTrade Action Plan for the queen conch value chain in the Eastern Caribbean. The workshop was held physically and online in Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines from 26 to 27 May 2022.

(m) A video titled “Promoting Blue BioTrade in the Eastern Caribbean”²⁴ was produced to explain in layman’s terms the main objectives of the project, key opportunities and challenges and the need to secure CITES compliance for the queen conch value chain.

(n) A queen conch stock assessment was conducted for Grenada including a training for fisheries and a field survey, as well as side events organized respectively at the CITES COP 19 and at the UNOC 2022 (additional activities).

142. The Circular Economy Programme²⁵ contributes to reducing pollution and waste to protect the environment, promote a regenerative economy, 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. UNCTAD is involved in the global circular economy roadmap, which emerged as a result of Stockholm +50. Both the oceans and fisheries and the circular economy programmes cooperate closely to promoting understanding and opportunities in plastic substitutes and related pollution prevention and control services in land and at the sea.

143. The UNCTAD Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) project²⁶ aims to 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. It also identifies 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. Finally, it also addressed the issue of plastic pollution, focusing on identifying and supporting the development of solutions towards material substitution and enhanced biodegradation options. In 2022 the SMEP project accomplished multiple outputs, such as:

(a) Production of four technical videos illustrating the environmental impacts of production and exports in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. A fifth video was produced covering the issue of plastic pollution and the important role played by plastic substitutes made by agricultural, marine, residual or mineral materials.

(b) A workshop organized in cooperation with the World Trade Organization, discussing the issue of material substitutes which can replace plastics in world trade. The workshop was attended by various UN / WTO members, in addition to organizations such as

²⁴ <https://youtu.be/8YOLfBLKKVM>

²⁵ <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/circular-economy>.

²⁶ <https://unctad.org/project/sustainable-manufacturing-and-environmental-pollution-smep>.

UNEP, Pew Charitable Trusts, World Economic Forum, World Customs Organization, ALADI²⁷ and others.

(c) Joint action by Oceans and Circular Economy programmes have resulted in an extended draft report on plastic substitutes, mapping 282 HS codes in international trade of potential plastic substitute materials and products, amounting to a global trade of USD 388 billion. The study also noted stances of higher average tariffs being applied globally to plastic substitutes, when compared to lower import tariffs for single-use plastics, an important finding of actionable policy relevance.

(d) Close cooperation with the Quaker United Nations Office resulted in a SMEP-analysis spinoff study focusing on trade aspects of package-less retail, which are based on reuse models which according to SMEP analysis have the lowest environmental impact when compared to plastic or alternative packaging.

(e) A Dashboard tool has been produced and updated to cover life-cycle aspects of potential plastic substitutes for the 13 SMEP countries. The updated dashboard has been continuously used to present in various fora such as WTO, UNECE and Curtin University Global South Nexus events.

(f) Detailed discussions were held with the Kenya Ministry of Livestock, with the Technical University of Kenya, with the Africa Legal Network and with the Association Africa 21 for the delivery of field technical assistance on the SMEP focus areas of leather, plastics and circular economy. Those discussions evolved into contracts and will become technical assistance activities in Q2 2023.

(g) An event was organized at COP27 involving the Basel Convention, the UN Office for Drugs and Crime, UNEP and UNCTAD. The side event examined the role of plastic pollution mitigation in reducing carbon emissions.

(h) Four peer-reviewed research papers were published based on the SMEP programme. The papers have been developed in consultation with various SMEP stakeholders and experts and have been published at the peer-reviewed Journal of Developing Societies.

(i) A Research Seminar entitled “Tackling manufacturing pollution in the South” was organized on 31 March-1 April 2022 as a follow up to the SMEP paper series, and involved numerous participants from various institutions active in the trade and circular economy practitioners space.

(j) A new agreement with the donor UK-Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) expanded the plastics work of UNCTAD to cover the Indo-Pacific region, focusing primarily on discussions around plastic substitutes in the region. The new activities also foresee two additional studies, on special sectors for material substitution and on services relevant for material substitution.

144. Through structured discussions with national stakeholders, analytical research on trade and climate change, UNCTAD worked closely with 10 African countries (Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Gambia, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Togo, and Tunisia) in 2022 to identify green value chains which are likely to grow under the Africa Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), while also assessing the impacts of climate change on productivity. UNCTAD delivered this work in cooperation with UNECA under the project “Inclusion of green initiatives in AfCFTA National Implementation Strategies in 10 African Countries” which is funded by the Government of Denmark. Work will continue throughout 2023 to develop strategies to promote these value chains and to enhance their resilience to climate change.

145. Also in Africa in 2022, under the National Green Export Review component of the European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, UNCTAD supported the development of a national honey plan and provided training to women in rural

²⁷ The Latin American Integration Association / Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración

communities to enhance honey productivity and quality in view of new opportunities for export.

146. Concretely, the main outputs of these projects in 2022 were the following:

(a) Five regional trade and climate change analytical reports were prepared by UNCTAD staff and distributed to beneficiary countries in Africa covered by the joint UNCTAD-UNECA project.

(b) Using the analytical reports to support discussion and further in-country analysis by national teams, four countries in North Africa, four countries in West Africa, and two countries in Central Africa evaluated and assessed the opportunities and challenges associated with the development of various regional green value chains in their respective regions, and selected two priority green value chains for their region to be promoted and developed under the project.

(c) In Angola, based on analytical work conducted by UNCTAD green non-oil sectors with potential products for export were identified. This work assisted the Government to select priority sectors for development and targeted support under the project. For the honey sector, intensive training of trainers in the Huambo Province was completed in 2022, and pilot extension services were established through the collaboration with a local university - Universidade José Eduardo dos Santos in Huambo to extend training and technical services to a wider region. Inter-ministerial meetings were also facilitated by UNCTAD to support the development of a National Honey Plan. Finally, UNCTAD prepared training materials as well as a guidebook on detecting residues and meeting international residue limits for traded honey products.

147. UNCTAD, through its BioTrade Initiative, has been working to support developing countries in strengthening their capacity to design and implement mutually supportive trade and biodiversity objectives at all levels. In 2022, UNCTAD continued coordinating the Global BioTrade Programme:²⁸ Linking trade, biodiversity and sustainable development. This programme 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 and Aichi Targets as well as contributing to the recently approved Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). A request for the extension of the programme's implementation period until 31 October 2024 with adjusted cost was approved by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). In 2022, through the programme and partners, BioTrade was implemented in over 90 countries. Its research, case studies, lessons learned, and methodologies were disseminated through different events, publications and tools as shown below:

(a) UNCTAD continued to engage and consult with partners and key trade and biodiversity stakeholders in its efforts to enhance the role and contribution of sustainable trade and BioTrade to the GBF. GBF-related events were co/organized, including two official side events within the GBF related meetings in March and December 2022. Under the Monitoring framework for the GBF (CBD/COP/DEC/15/5) adopted at CBD COP15, three UNCTAD and partners complementary indicators were considered: a) *Trends in the legal trade of medicinal plants* (Goal B); b) *Trends of trade and commercialization in biodiversity-based products that is sustainable and legal (in line with BioTrade Principles and/or CITES requirements)* (Target 5); and c) *Number of countries incorporating trade in their national biodiversity policy* (Target 5).

(b) UNCTAD completed and launched its Trade and Biodiversity statistical tool (TraBio) developed jointly by UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative and Statistics Service. The tool is accessible online in UNCTADstat²⁹ and provides members States with information for the SDG and GBF reporting, such as *trends in the legal trade of medicinal plants (see point(a) above)*.

²⁸ <https://unctad.org/project/global-biotrade-facilitation-programme-linking-trade-biodiversity-and-sustainable>.

²⁹ <https://unctadstat.unctad.org/en/Biotrade.html>

(c) The study on the “Implications of COVID-19 for biodiversity-based products and services, including BioTrade” was published and a news article was posted to highlight its launch.

148. **Results and impacts.** 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 (11 publications in total for 2022), online and hybrid (in-person/online) trainings, workshops and side events at the national, regional and international levels (28 in total for 2022) has: (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 and biodiversity 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 in the form of videos and podcast on oceans economy, plastic pollution and plastic substitutes with positive feedback from all stakeholders.

149. Nearly 2,500 stakeholders participated and benefited from UNCTAD support on sustainable trade and environment in 2022. This has allowed deeper understanding on policy, experiences, and data relevant to contemporary environmental challenges such natural resources depletion, climate change, pollution and poverty.

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>
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union (EU)-UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/0T/1BN	Capacity-building in investment promotion	2001–	Multi-donors
INT/0T/KAU	Capacity Development Programme for Investment Promotion Agencies of Least Developed Countries	2021–	EIF UNOPS

150. **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 (SDG) sectors, in order to generate inclusive and sustainable economic growth and build resilient infrastructure while safeguarding the environment.

151. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD’s 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).

152. **Outputs.** The main outputs of the programme in 2022 are detailed below.

Publications and training material

153. *Facilitating Investment in the Sustainable Development Goals*. This issue in the Investment Advisory Series aims to provide practical recommendations for investment promotion agencies (IPAs) to leverage a greater SDG impact from their investment facilitation activities and, in turn, strengthen the SDG impact of their countries' wider investment facilitation ecosystems.

154. *The Digital Transformation of Investment Promotion Agencies*. This issue in the IPA Observer series looks at the strategic approach that IPAs should take to digitalize their operations and services. It covers the response of IPAs to the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide between IPAs in developed and developing countries, and a selection of digital tools used by IPAs.

155. *Investment Promotion in LDCs: A Needs Assessment*. This report presents the findings of surveyed investors and LDC IPAs. It provides insights to what motivates investors in LDCs, the challenges that they face, the SDG impact of investment projects, practices and needs of IPAs in LDCs, and how these institutions could improve their operations to maximize the impact of foreign investment on sustainable development.

156. *Brochure on the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards 2022*. The brochure gives an overview of the themes of UNCTAD's Investment Promotion Awards since 2002, and a listing of winners of the 2022 awards for Excellence in Promoting Sustainable Investment in Agribusiness.

157. *Three pedagogical videos on the promotion and facilitation of investment* were produced for a training course for LDC IPAs. A video on investment in food security was made with the Abu Dhabi Investment Office and Masdar Special Economic Zone as partners and best practice examples. A second video was produced on the promotion of investment in the health sector, with CINDE Costa Rica as a partner and best practice example. A third video on the digitalization of investment promotion and facilitation was made with Invest India and the Estonian Investment Agency as partners and best practice examples.

Workshops, seminars and conferences

158. In February 2022, UNCTAD organized an online workshop entitled *Mainstreaming SDGs in Investment Promotion and Facilitation* for the Eswatini Investment Promotion Agency (EIPA). Three sessions were held on 1, 3 and 7 February for 11 EIPA staff, including 6 women.

159. UNCTAD organized a training workshop on *Investor Targeting for Sustainable Development: Spotlight on Agribusiness* for investment promotion officials from the Agency for Private Investment and Promotion of Exports of Angola (AIPEX), policy makers and stakeholders working in agribusiness, in Luanda, Angola, from 19 to 21 April 2022. The workshop gathered 34 participants, including 17 women. It was preceded by four online hands-on training sessions with AIPEX staff on preparations for an investor targeting strategy for the agribusiness sector.

160. The First Annual Conference of the Global Alliance of Special Economic Zones (GASEZ) took place on 13 June 2022, at the Montego Bay Convention Centre in Jamaica. The conference attracted 750 participants, including the Prime Ministers of Jamaica and Curacao, government ministers, diplomats, business leaders, representatives of special economic zones (SEZs) and investment promotion agencies (IPAs), academics and members of the media. The Conference included a high-level panel on Key Emerging Issues for Special Economic Zones. During the conference, UNCTAD organized a workshop on *SDG Model Zones*. The workshop discussed the transition of SEZs to SDG model zones in their strategic focus, design, governance and operations. The workshop gathered 100 participants, including 40 women. A second workshop was held on *Working Together to Facilitate Investment in the Recovery*. The workshop discussed how investment stakeholders can work together to pool resources and knowledge to channel investment towards sectors that are key to sustainable economic recovery. The workshop benefitted from 50 participants, including 25 women.

161. On 23 June 2022, UNCTAD contributed to the seminar *Business Prospecting for the Relocation of Value Chains Around the Mediterranean Basin* organized in Tunis, Tunisia, by the ANIMA network of Mediterranean IPAs. The seminar benefitted from 40 participants, including 18 women.

162. On 19 July 2022, UNCTAD, in cooperation with the World Free Zones Organization (World FZO) organized a webinar entitled *Global Investment Trends-India Opportunities* for staff of the India Export Promotion Council for Export Oriented Units and SEZs. The webinar gathered 82 participants, including 32 women.

163. On 13 September 2022, UNCTAD, together with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), ILO and UNIDO organized a session entitled *Introduction to the Executive IPA College for IPAs from LDCs* during WAIPA's World Investment Conference 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting attracted 30 participants, including 9 women.

164. As part of a multi-agency project implemented in partnership with ILO, UNIDO, UN-OHRLS and WAIPA, UNCTAD organized online workshops on 20 and 22 September 2022, through the Executive IPA College training platform for 70 LDC officials, including 30 women. The training module *Capacity Building on Investment Promotion and Facilitation in SDG and COVID-19 Related Sectors* included sessions on investment trends, the promotion and facilitation of investment in SDG sectors, partnerships, the impact of foreign direct investment on gender equality and climate change, and digital tools for investment promotion and facilitation.

165. On 19 and 20 December 2022, UNCTAD contributed to a workshop on *Digitalization of Service in Investment Promotion of OIC³⁰ Member Countries*, organized by the Islamic Development Bank in Casablanca, Morocco. The workshop gathered 32 participants, including 11 women.

Advisory services

166. On 13 June 2022, UNCTAD and national and regional associations of SEZs including the Free Trade Zones Association of the Americas (AZFA), the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP), the National Association of Foreign-Trade Zones (NAFTZ) of the United States of America, the World Free and Special Economic Zones Federation (FEMOZA) and the World Free Zones Organization (World FZO), the African Economic Zones Organization (AEZO) and the Green Partnership for Industrial Parks of China (GPIPC) official established the *Global Alliance of Special Economic Zones (GASEZ)*. The alliance is dedicated to advancing a new generation of SEZs to support sustainable development objectives. The alliance represents 7,000 special economic zones, employing over 100 million people in 145 countries. UNCTAD and the World FZO are co-chairs of the alliance and organize regular consultations with alliance members.

167. In September 2022, UNCTAD issued a call for nominations to IPAs and SEZs for the 2022 *United Nations Investment Promotion Awards for Excellence in Promoting Sustainable Investment in Agribusiness*. A total of 26 institutions from 23 countries responded, of which, 10 finalists from nine countries were short-listed. The awards ceremony took place on 14 November 2022, during the 13th session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission. The awards went to three winners, notably, the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil), Egypt's General Authority for Investment and Free Zones (GAFI), and the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC).

168. Under the investment component of the Trade for Trade II UNCTAD-EU programme for Angola, UNCTAD developed an *investor targeting strategy for citrus fruits and fertilizers* with AIPEX and other stakeholders in Angola.

169. The UNCTAD *sustainableFDI.org* website is specifically designed for IPA professionals, policymakers, and other investment stakeholders. It features a resource centre, details pertaining to UNCTAD activities on sustainable FDI, a network of IPA

³⁰ OIC is the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

contacts, training material including videos, and a window on the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards showcasing best practices. In 2022, the *sustainableFDI.org* platform had 2,687 visitors (7,892 page views), 81 percent of which were new visitors, from 153 countries and territories.

170. In 2022, UNCTAD created a dedicated website for the GASEZ initiative. The website features news and events of GASEZ founding members, and resources, including publications, handbooks, and guides, that can help SEZs in contributing to the SDGs. The website went live in May and by the end of 2022 had generated 9,938 views.

171. **Results and impacts.** In 2022, investment promotion and facilitation training - in person and online - attracted 449 participants from over 70 countries, including IPA officials, policy makers, diplomats, SEZ representatives and other stakeholders. Forty-two percent were women. The GASEZ Annual Conference attracted 750 participants, including heads of State, ministers, and CEOs of global companies. Examples of impact from the multi-agency project for LDC IPAs:

172. The UNCTAD-led Capacity Development Programme for IPAs of LDCs funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) started in 2022 and is praised as an excellent example of cooperation between UN entities to support LDCs. Statements on the cooperation between UN organizations (UNCTAD, UN-OHRLS, UNIDO, ILO) and WAIPA in this initiative:

(a) “I am pleased to report that this project has taken off We must redouble our efforts to support investment promotion in the LDCs and let us continue to work together.” High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

(b) “No one organization can overcome the challenges we are facing acting alone. UNIDO greatly appreciates the Enhanced Integrated Framework support for the inter-agency capacity building programme for IPAs in LDCs. Now is the time to upscale investment capacities. We at UNIDO are proud and pleased and confirm again our commitment to work side by side with our sister agencies on this.” Director-General of UNIDO.

(c) “This inter-agency collaboration has enormous potential. The ILO is fully committed to expanding our engagement in this commitment.” Director-General of ILO.

(d) “Thank you to the UNCTAD team ... the programme that we are running together is truly exceptional,” President of WAIPA.

(e) “... I would like to say how pleased I am with this project, ... with all our partner agencies to create that necessary capacity and environment for facilitating sustainable development sector investment in LDCs.” Executive Director of EIF.

173. After receiving training over a six-month period in this multi-agency capacity-building programme for staff of LDC IPAs, graduates of the training programme have been engaged in promoting change in their agencies to focus investment promotion and facilitation more on SDG-related investment. Examples include:

(a) Staff from the *Economic Development Board of Madagascar (EDBM)* committed to further strengthening their work in the area of SDG 8 on *decent work and inclusive growth* by developing and strengthening their engagement strategy with investors on responsible business conduct practices, in cooperation with the private sector and different line ministries. EDBM staff also intends to start documenting and sharing best practices on responsible business practices in the country.

(b) In order to further deepen the impact of FDI on youth in their existing institutional SDG strategy, staff of the *Uganda Investment Authority* is exploring the possibility of developing a Youth Apprenticeship and Entrepreneurship training programme which would link youth business graduates of business studies to small and medium-sized enterprises to get practical skills in management, marketing, and business formalization skills.

(c) Staff from the *Malawi Investment and Trade Centre (MITC)* will further align the work of the agency with the national development priorities and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and strengthen the linkages between investors and local enterprises.

They plan to set up a supplier orientation programme and to further engage with investors on responsible business practices when investing and operating in Malawi. The agency's staff that followed the training also intends to enhance the contribution to SDG 5 on *gender equality* by further tracking the contribution of FDI to gender parity.

174. Other selected reactions to technical assistance projects, publications, and initiatives:

(a) "We are grateful to be one of the beneficiaries of the technical assistance offered by UNCTAD. Our project identification process and aftercare facilitation has changed because of the training received." Executive Manager Investment Promotion, Eswatini Investment Promotion Agency, Eswatini, 7 February 2022.

(b) "We would like to thank you for your continued support and effort in providing publications related to investment that contributes to the SDGs, as well as giving investment promotion agencies a platform to network." Head Investment Promotion Strategy, Invest in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 18 October 2022.

(c) "This is a historic moment for SEZs of the world: Today the Global Alliance of Special Economic Zones has been formally launched, with the support of UNCTAD this is the starting point for a new horizon of collaboration for our SEZs to work together on a global level for the achievement of the SDGs." President, Free Trade Zones Association of the Americas, 13 June 2022.

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>			
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
INT/0T/H CJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2018–	Kingdom of the 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–	Switzerland
<i>Division on Technology and Logistics</i>			
INT/0T/KAL	CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme	2021–	Multi-donors
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>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
<i>Division on Globalization and Development Strategies</i>			
BAR/OT/JAX	Promoting Economic Diversification and Resilience in Barbados for Sustained Recovery from COVID-19 Shock	2021–	China
INT/OT/HBY	South–South Integration and the [Sustainable Development Goals] SDGs: Enhancing Structural Transformation in key partner countries of the Belt and Road Initiative	2019–	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
INT/OT/KBG	Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	2022–	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
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

175. **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. The UNCTAD Creative Economy Outlook 2022 shows that in 2020, creative goods and services represented 3 and 21 per cent of total merchandise and services exports, respectively. The report also shows that creative services were more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic than other services sectors. The creative economy generates jobs, innovation and trade, while contributing to social inclusion and cultural diversity.

176. Recognition of the scope, role, and impact of the creative economy on countries' socio-economic development has 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.

177. 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”.

178. **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.

179. 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.

180. 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 dataset is one of our key unique selling points. The data was last updated in 2022 and is expected to be updated during the drafting of the next Creative Economy Outlook in 2024. However, data need to be interpreted, analysed and used to inform decision-making at both the policy and practical levels.

181. The UNCTAD creative economy programme promotes the data driven understanding of trade in creative goods and services, including intellectual property. This information is translated into insight for countries wanting to expand and support their creative economies.

182. **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.

183. UNCTAD also continued its work of updating the definition and statistical coverage of creative industries for improving the statistical framework for measuring the trade flows of creative goods and services. The informal group of experts on the creative economy (42 experts), set up by UNCTAD, with the aim to review the definition of the creative economy and creative industries (and by extension related goods and services) concluded its work in 2022. The results of the group will be consolidated in 2023. UNESCO and UNCTAD are co-leading a sub-group for the clarification on cultural products resulting from creative industries as part of the Inter-Agency Task Team on International Trade Statistics. In 2022, the group prepared a guidance note that will be incorporated into the updated International Merchandise Trade Statistics Manual.

184. In 2022, UNCTAD also launched the publication entitled Creative Industry 4.0: Towards a New Globalized Creative Economy as a contribution to the World Creativity and Innovation Day. This report looks at the implications of the rapid changes in automated technology and advanced internet communication on the creative economy. The publication was released in 2022. UNCTAD also launched the Creative Economy Outlook 2022: The International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development - Pathway to Resilient Creative Industries. This report provides the latest data and trends on this fast-growing sector and explores how developing countries can capitalize on their creative talents to create new trading opportunities.

185. The creative economy programme expanded significantly the UNCTAD creative economy network, a network of creative industry professionals, Governments and organizations, to promote international cooperation, strategic alliances, research exchanges and advocacy. The network facilitated the sharing of knowledge and helped stakeholders to keep up to date on industry developments.

186. UNCTAD (a) engaged virtually with counterparts of the G20 Taskforce to contribute to the T20³¹ insights and policy briefs on “Jobs and Creative Economy 2030: Inclusive and resilient creative economy for sustainable development and recovery”; (b) contributed to the G20 Working Group on Tourism and Creative Economy; (c) contributed to the publication on “Effective market access for least developed countries’ services exports: An analysis of the World Trade Organization services waiver for least developed countries ”; (d) Contributed to the Policy brief on Creative Economy 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

³¹ Think20 (T20) is an official Engagement Group of the G20. It serves as an “idea bank” for the G20 by bringing together think tanks and high-level experts to discuss policy issues relevant to the G20.

industries through the UNCTAD informal working group on the creative economy and the Inter-Agency Task Team on International Trade Statistics.

European Union–UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, Creative economy component

187. 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.

188. In 2022, under creative economy component UNCTAD drafted a methodological document on mapping creative industries and products, updated the background documents and conceptualised and organised a technical assistance workshop to be delivered in January 2023 in Luanda on Angola’s Creative Economy Mapping and Strategy. The technical assistance will take the form of a national workshop, with the aims to (a) present and validate the final report on “Mapping the cultural and creative industries in Angola” and (b) discuss and agree on a plan for the formulation of a creative economy strategy for Angola. The national workshop will involve Angolan government officials dealing with cultural and creative industries and the tourism sector, and representatives from private institutions and enterprises in the cultural, creative, and tourism sectors.

189. **Results.** UNCTAD has assisted Angolan policymakers in assessing enabling policy instruments and frameworks for creative industries and increased their capacities for a better governance of the cultural and creative industries to maximize development gains, job creation and poverty reduction. This capacity building has strengthened skills of stakeholders in entrepreneurship, market access, diplomacy, and tourism branding.

2. Voluntary sustainability standards

190. **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. UNCTAD VSS program is also the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards, a joint UN platform composed of 6 agencies including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

191. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD 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.

192. **Outputs.** Within the framework of the United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS), supported by UNCTAD the following activities were implemented in 2022:

(a) On 26 October 2022, a conference on Sustainable Trade and Development Opportunities in Brussels, Belgium was held. The Dialogue called upon the expertise of key dignitaries and policymakers to advance the knowledge on leveraging VSS for sustainable trade. The event was attended in person and virtually by around 500 participants. During the dialogue, the UNFSS launched its 5th Flagship Report entitled “Voluntary Sustainability Standards, Sustainability Agenda and Developing Countries Opportunities and Challenges” which aims to investigate the opportunities and challenges associated with Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) for developing countries.

(b) UNCTAD, in support of UNFSS, published the report on “Voluntary Sustainability Standards in International Trade”. The report introduces VSS as instruments for making international trade more sustainable. The report describes VSS, how they emerged and how they have evolved. Further, the report delves into how VSS work to achieve sustainability goals. It describes in detail how VSS operate and the different actors involved in the certification process. Lastly, the report describes the use of VSS by other trade-related policy instruments. It details how VSS are integrated into public policy as complementary instruments to achieve public policy goals.

(c) UNCTAD also published the report “Exploring the role of voluntary sustainability standards in women’s economic empowerment in the agriculture sector in developing countries”. Market demand tools such as VSS have been identified as having the potential to contribute to achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment, while fulfilling parity in the economy. These positive contributions, as identified in this paper includes possible equality in wages and income, and skills upgrading, and the externalities that expand from having better wages and skills. However, research indicating the socioeconomic impacts of VSS is limited in nature and often offers mixed results. This report therefore first demonstrates the role VSS play in fostering Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE); and second illustrates the contribution of VSS to the global agenda of SDG 5: Gender Equality with the available empirical findings on the impact of VSS on gender equality and WEE.

(d) In October 2022, UNCTAD, as Secretariat of the UNFSS, co-organized its second Academic Advisory Council (AAC) meeting together with the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), and the European University Institute (EUI), hosted at the Irish College in Leuven. The meeting was conducted in a hybrid format. The meeting brought together an audience of around 40 experts and included an international mix of academic (members of the AAC), practitioners (members of the UNFSS National Platforms) and policy experts from various disciplines and backgrounds to consolidate the knowledge on VSS, and discuss the contributions of VSS to sustainable development, centered around the theme for discussion: “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of VSS”, structured around the internal and external dimensions of VSS, with a development related lens. This provided an avenue for cross fertilization of thoughts on the issue at hand.

(e) WTO hosted the third edition of its flagship Trade and Environment Week, which took place at the WTO’s headquarters in Geneva and virtually in October 2022. UNCTAD contributed as a panelist to the UNECE session on Environmental, social and governance (ESG) traceability of supply chains. The session showcased the results of the recent blockchain pilots, where companies from the cotton and leather value chains tested the use of blockchain to trace the origin and the social and environmental performance of items. Based on experiences from the fashion industry, speakers will discuss the potential of expanding traceability and transparency approaches to other high-impact sectors, such as agri-food and extractive industries.

(f) The World Trade Organization conducted its first World Trade Congress on Gender in December. As a part of the congress, UNCTAD presented its work on “Facilitating Women’s Economic Empowerment through Trade with Voluntary Sustainability Standards”.

(g) UNCTAD published the report “Reflecting on Sustainability Standards: Trade and the Sustainability Crisis”. This report summarizes the discussions and outcomes of the three roundtables³². It brings different perspectives on VSS together which can inform and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of VSS effectiveness through GVCs. Through this paper, the “effectiveness” of VSS is defined along multiple dimensions, all of which are covered and assessed. A first dimension, goal-attainment effectiveness, focuses on the impact of VSS on a range of social, economic, and environmental indicators. A second dimension, process effectiveness, analyses the degree to which VSS are adopted by economic operators and the drivers for adoption. A third dimension, constitutive effectiveness, focuses on the degree to which VSS change the overall approach of actors involved in the policy process towards sustainability, i.e., the degree to which their theories of change are used more widely. The role of VSS in international trade is also debated and discussed.

(h) UNFSS, through UNCTAD’s leadership, organized the 2022 International Women’s Day Feature – a webinar that focused on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) via leveraging Sustainability Standards and Certification Systems for International Trade. Addressing WEE requires a combination of interventions aimed directly at increasing women’s access and control over economic resources. Thus, UNFSS team presented their work on facilitating VSS uptake with gender considerations in this webinar which were then discussed by invited experts and practitioners. Through this webinar, VSS team grasped the effects of WEE through knowledge exchange and best practices on the ground.

(i) UNCTAD participated in the 8th National Conference on Quality which was held in Madinah in June 2022. The work on Voluntary sustainability standards was presented at the conference and the role that standards can play, linked to the theme "Sustainable Quality for an Ambitious Nation" was highlighted.

(j) 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 10 initiatives being supported, which includes the continental platform in Africa, national platforms in Brazil, China, India and Mexico, and VSS programme initiatives held in Indonesia, Malaysia, South Africa, Viet Nam and CARICOM.

(k) UNCTAD delivered a training on the UNCTAD VSS Analytical Toolkit for the UNFSS National Platform members, which was attended by policymakers and VSS experts from India, China, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Indonesia, and South Africa.

(l) UNCTAD has been supporting LDCs countries through its VSS program, seeking to integrate LDCs countries’ exports into global supply Chains. In 2022, with the support of UNCTAD, the Africa Regional Standardization Organization launched the Africa Continental Platform on Sustainability Standards - a platform that is serving as a mechanism to strengthen the capacities of public and private entities in Africa in terms of sustainability and sustainable trade. This platform includes 33 LDCs countries aiming to foster mutual recognition and harmonization between the standards developed in the Africa continent and the international sustainability standards.

³² 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
- (ii) Sustainability standards and social concerns on 4 May 2021
- (iii) Sustainability standards and economic concerns on 17 June 2021.

193. **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 National Platform and Initiative Cooperative Network (NPICN). It also ensures that a holistic dialogue on VSS is maintained via the established AAC. As a result of these activities 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 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. Through this, the region saw the launch of the Africa Continental Platform on Sustainability Standards. This 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 NPICN as it is believed to have positive spillover effects towards the alignment of the Sustainable Development Goals from a global trade perspective.

194. The Brussels dialogue on sustainable trade and the UNFSS AAC held in Leuven, Belgium, combined received over 500 registered participants, covering almost all parts of the world and across sectors, which reflects that topics surrounding VSS are becoming commonplace. UNCTAD will 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*

195. **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.

196. **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.

197. **Outputs.** In 2022, 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.

198. 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 2022, UNCTAD participated in preparing three Directions Notes for the Update of the OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment, fourth edition.

199. As part of the EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, UNCTAD, in collaboration with Central Bank of Portugal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Angola and the National Central Bank of Angola (BNA), organized a workshop on FDI statistics in Angola. The workshop raised awareness of internationally accepted standards and guidelines regarding the compilation of data on FDI and the activities of multinational enterprises (MNEs), increased the understanding of definitions and methodologies in this area, and provided advice on specific issues and challenges of particular interest to Angola.

200. **Results.** According to UNCTADstat data centre, in 2022 the FDI tables were the most visited tables on the UNCTAD website.

3.2. *Technical assistance on ASEAN Investment Report series*

201. **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.

202. **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 and other stakeholders.

203. **Outputs.** As part of technical assistance to ASEAN, and in preparation for the ASEAN Investment Report (AIR) 2022 on Pandemic Recovery and Investment Facilitation, 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 May 2022, UNCTAD carried out a peer review of the Report with the ASEAN secretariat and the ASEAN Investment Coordinating Committee (virtually), comprising more than 50 officials, about 50 per cent of them women, from ASEAN Member States. The AIR 2022 was presented to the ASEAN Ministerial Investment Council in September 2022 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. It was launched in the same month and made publicly accessible through the UNCTAD and ASEAN Secretariat's website. The report was also presented at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit in November 2022 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

204. **Results.** The AIR 2022 was well received by the ASEAN Ministers and other stakeholders. During the ASEAN Investment Ministerial Meeting in September 2022, the Secretary-General of ASEAN expressed his appreciation to UNCTAD for its continuous support to ASEAN throughout the years, through the AIR series. The theme of the report on investment facilitation comes at a time when the international community is discussing a similar topic at the WTO. An initial assessment of the implementation of the ASEAN Investment Facilitation Framework was conducted as part of the AIR 2022, with specific recommendations made for ASEAN policymakers to consider appropriate steps going forward. An ASEAN investment facilitation portal to monitor investment environment was also developed for ASEAN (ASEAN Investment Facilitation Monitor). In January 2023, the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Investment expressed their wish for UNCTAD to continue to support the publication of AIR, noting its usefulness and resourcefulness to various stakeholders in ASEAN including policy makers and the private sector.

3.3. *World Investment Report series*

205. **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.

206. **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.

207. **Outputs.** The *World Investment Report 2022* entitled *International tax reforms and sustainable investment* provides a guide for policymakers to navigate the complex new tax rules and to adjust their investment strategies. The proposed reforms, planned for 2023 or 2024, aim to discourage multinationals from shifting profits to low-tax countries. The planned reforms will have major implications for national investment policymakers and investment promotion institutions, and for their standard toolkit. In particular, fiscal incentives are widely used for investment promotion, including as part of the value proposition of most special economic zones. Chapter two of the report addresses the issues pertaining investment policy developments both at the national and international levels. In this context, the report also notes that tax revenue implications for developing countries of constraints posed by international investment agreements (IIAs) are a major cause for concern, adding that the international community, in parallel with or as part of the negotiations of the tax reforms, should alleviate the constraints that are placing developing countries at a disadvantage. International investment policymakers and negotiators of international investment agreements (IIAs) need to consider the potential constraints that IIA commitments may place on the implementation of key provisions of the reforms.

208. The report was released on 9 June 2022. To facilitate global media coverage, a set of press releases were prepared and translated into official United Nations languages, as well as blogs and opinion pieces. The press release on investment flows to Africa generated over 14,200 views. Furthermore, numerous webinars and high-level discussions were organized to disseminate the findings of the Report, which was also presented and discussed during 72nd executive session of the Trade and Development Board (agenda item 4) on 19 October 2022.

209. In Ghana, a special policy session on the theme chapter was delivered during the Workshop on the Contribution of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to economic

diversification in Africa in the context of the AfCFTA, to discuss the implications for policymakers and broad SEZs stakeholders community.

210. In Latin America, a policy brief for senior government officials was organized, in August 2022, by the Dominican Republic's National Competitiveness Council, including the head of the Council, the Director of the Investment Promotion Agency (PRODOMINICANA), Vice-Minister of the Economy, and senior officials from the Central Bank, Ministry of Finance, Customs and other line officials, to discuss the implications for the country's key policies and investment promotion strategies. A follow up meeting was organized by PRODOMINICANA in September 2022, in Domingo, that comprised officials from the Central Bank and Ministry of Finance.

211. An academic high-level policy session on international tax reforms and investment for development was organized at the Conference: Reducing inequality – the great challenge of our time, organized jointly with the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), in Bogotá, Colombia. The key findings of the theme chapter and the implications for Latin America were discussed with senior policymakers and renowned international scholars.

212. Policy briefings on the theme chapter of WIR were further organized in Buenos Aires in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and in Kazakhstan in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

213. **Results.** By the end of 2022, the *World Investment Report 2022*, including overview, factsheets, data and statistics and chapters were downloaded 104,907 times. Furthermore, the WIR 2022 was the most visited page on unctad.org; while the news article published for the release of the WIR 2022 (on investment flows to Africa) generated 14,206 views and was among the top 10 news stories in 2022 on unctad.org.

214. In 2022, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on Promoting investments for sustainable development (A/RES/77/155). The resolution notes “the policy proposals put forward in the WIR 2022, in particular that the international community should support developing countries, especially Africa and LDCs, including through scaling up technical assistance to take advantage of international tax reforms” and requests UNCTAD “to inform the GA at its 78th session of the implementation of the present resolution, based on their ongoing research, through a dedicated section of the WIR, with a special focus on promoting investment for sustainable development, including on strategic sectors to invest for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.”

215. At the seventy second executive session of the Trade and Development board, on 19 October 2022, delegates expressed appreciation for the work of UNCTAD on investment and praised the high-quality analysis, relevance and usefulness of WIR22. Delegations expressed support for the measures proposed in WIR22 in response to the international tax reforms and requested UNCTAD to work towards their implementation. In particular, they highlighted the need for UNCTAD to expand technical assistance to help countries adjust investment policies and promotion strategies and tools in light of the changing tax rules.

216. In November 2022, during the 13th session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission delegates were unanimous in acknowledging the World Investment Report, highlighting the forward-looking and insightful analysis of international investment trends and policies that makes the Report a most valuable tool for decision making. Several delegations pointed to the significance of UNCTAD's analyses on capital markets and sustainable finance as a key response to the United Nation's wide efforts to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

217. Positive feedback on WIR:

(a) "I commend the latest World Investment Report 2022 that gives us an important guide and overview on global and regional investment trends, and national and international investment policy developments." Statement by Egypt during the 13th session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, November 2022.

(b) "The WIR 2022 provides data and trends in economic and investment policy; helping us to reflect on a matter that effects all of us." Statement by Spain during the 72nd executive session of the Trade and Development Board, October 2022.

(c) "The WIR 2022 presents the latest trends and policy developments in global investment, explores in an in-depth manner on global tax reform and sustainable investment, and analyzes the impact of such reform on investment policymaking and provides policy recommendations which we highly appreciate...China highly values UNCTAD's annual WIR as it closely monitors hotspot issues in global investment. It is timely, comprehensive, authoritative, and provides important reference for investment policymaking globally, especially for developing countries." Statement by China during the 72nd executive session of the Trade and Development Board, October 2022.

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*

218. **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.

219. 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.

220. **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 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.

221. **Outputs.** In March 2022, the project organised the ‘end of the project’ meeting in a hybrid form. This meeting brought together policymakers and experts from different developing countries to discuss and share their policy experiences in the different areas including macro-economics, industry and trade; digital economy and debt sustainability. Lessons that can be learned by developing countries from successful structural transformation of China were discussed. The meeting also shared successful macro-finance policies in response to the pandemic; and policies which help digital start-ups become unicorns. The report prepared under the project, "China's Structural Transformation: what can developing countries learn?" was presented and launched by the Secretary General.

222. **Results.** The ‘end of the project’ meeting was highly appreciated by the attendees with more than 90 per cent participants/policymakers reported improved understanding of the successful policies adopted by China. The project also received formal requests for sharing successful policy experiences of other developing countries with Algeria and Pakistan. The project was evaluated by an external evaluator. The project was rated “highly satisfactory” in the criteria of efficiency, relevance, effectiveness and partnerships and synergies. The evaluation found “The project was highly relevant to the needs of not just pilot countries of Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and Indonesia, but also to the UNCTAD's mandates and UN's SDG agenda. The project made a substantial progress in achieving six outcomes envisaged under its evaluation results framework. This progress is most visible in increasing knowledge of the targeted audience. Policymakers in the pilot countries had limited knowledge of China's policies in the areas of trade, industry, macro and finance, debt management and digital economy prior to the launch of the project, which improved substantially at the end of project intervention.”

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

223. **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 in 2021. In 2022, even the country reached strong recovery at 10 per cent, GDP in real terms remains about 13 per cent below that of 2008. 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. Going forward, given a more sombre prognosis for a world economy weakened by monetary tightening and continuing supply-chain bottlenecks, growth prospects in the Barbadian economy -which is heavily reliant on foreign financing and on external demand- remain uncertain if not definitively challenging.

224. **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.

225. The project will contribute to the efforts of Barbados 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 Barbados to improve the policy research and formulation capacities. Third, the project will, based on the project activities in Barbados, advocate and support the economic cooperation and integration among developing countries.

226. **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 of 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.

227. In 2022, with the gradual lift of covid related restrictive measures, the project was able to organize in-person activities. According to the activity plan, the project delivered two promotional films themed on the South-South Cooperation, which was launched in Bangkok during the UN Global South-South Development Expo with high-level participants, which includes high-level officials from Barbados and UNCTAD, and in Geneva jointly with G77 and China. Regarding the research part, the project also continued its research work on economic diversification with national consultants which plans to be completed in the form of policy strategies report in 2023.

4.3. *Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda*

228. **Development context.** The vulnerabilities of developing countries have been acutely exposed by the Corona pandemic. In the short run, their already tight fiscal space has been severely squeezed due to liquidity shortages, capital flight, supply chain disruption, debt distresses among others, which have made it particularly difficult to deploy effective stimulus policy packages. Added to this, developing countries are facing an unfavorable international trade environment at both international and regional levels, which further limits the policy space that they need to strengthen economic resilience and diversification. But maybe the most pressing issue is that countries of the developing world are unfairly and disproportionately facing the burden of rising global temperatures and attendant environmental shocks and related damage. Adapting to a changing climate and mitigating the impact will be necessary even as the efforts to shift the global economy to a carbon neutral growth path increase. Because appropriate responses will need to be on the requisite scale and link adaptation measures to wider development goals, effective strategies will need to go beyond market forces and competition to help build the necessary resilience through deliberate policy decisions and public actions, including at the international level. Given these multifaceted and complex challenges, it is more imperative than ever for developing countries to adopt innovative and integrated policy strategies to pursue resilient, green and transformative development. However, many developing country governments are constrained, not only in mobilizing resources, but also by the lack of institutional capabilities.

229. **Objectives and features.** This project focuses on resilient, green and transformative development through formulating effective integrated policy strategies and enhancing regional cooperation to overcome knowledge and capacity gaps and other binding constraints for four selected Asian countries, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, and Pakistan. The main objective of the project is to strengthen regional partnership and national capacities of developing integrated policy strategies in selected countries to achieve the resilient, green and transformative development for 2030 Agenda. In doing so, the project has three phases: first, to undertake research, in cooperation with experts in the 4 project countries, which aims

to improve the understanding of the binding constraints for project countries in pursuing resilient, green and transformative development. In addition to the research work in project countries, the project also conducts research on China's policy framework in promoting high-quality development along with the country's climate agenda. Second phase of the project is to provide, together with national partners, tailor-made integrated green development strategies to overcome capacity gaps in project countries through experience sharing and peer-learning with China (South-South Cooperation). Lastly, phase III will build, based on the project outputs at national level in Phase I & II, a regional partnership network, Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN), which will differ from other green economic partnerships that are typically focused on national level actions, to facilitate policy coordination, and tangible economic cooperation at the regional level including shaping a more development friendly trade policy environment.

230. **Outputs and results.** During 2022, despite significant challenges in some of the project countries, such as the major floods in Pakistan, we made important strides and ended the year with two established local partnerships in Pakistan and Türkiye, two finalized background papers on the binding constraints for these countries, and a successful project launch and plenary discussion in Türkiye. We have also established the project webpage³³ as a platform to share the conducted research.

231. The most prominent event for 2022 was the project launch and a plenary discussion which took place in Istanbul, Türkiye on 26–27 May 2022. These two events brought together local stakeholders from prominent industrial enterprises, academics, and Turkish and Chinese governments, as well as global experts to discuss the challenges and opportunities for green industrialization within the current global context. The event was open to the public and media. The second noteworthy output was establishing a partnership with an institute in Pakistan, Center for Studies in Globalisation and Development (SIGAD) under the umbrella institution of Social Protection Resource Centre (SPRC) in Islamabad. In collaboration with SIGAD, we have determined the themes of sectoral papers to have a better understanding of the policy strategy challenges and opportunities in Pakistan.

232. In 2022, the project team also kicked started the research on China's policy framework and has completed one paper on China's policies in promoting green industrialization.

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

233. **Development context.** This project focuses on how to scale up and direct finance and technical resources for a Green New Deal in Asia and the Pacific. It continues to be 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. Reflecting this, UNCTAD has now rolled out similar projects expanding the theme in different parts of the developing world.

234. The Green New Deal framework and its practical and policy recommendations on how to achieve the SDGs are particularly important in Asia and the Pacific, as this region is central to any successful efforts to combat global warming. It contains countries that are already experiencing negative impacts of climate change; and also, countries that are experimenting with 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.

235. **Objectives and features.** The project aims to bring together the usually 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

³³ Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda | UNCTAD

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.

236. **Outputs.** During 2022, key achievements included fact-finding field missions, country case studies, thematic research studies and dissemination activities. At the start of 2022 travel was still somewhat difficult in the region as Covid-19 was still an issue, but as the year progressed things became more open. A mission, country study and dissemination and feed-back event was successfully completed in Fiji, a country that is leading in the region in terms of innovative finance and climate-related policies on the international stage. We are now engaged in follow-up activities in collaboration with UNDP and the trade Division in UNCTAD. We also successfully completed a field mission to Viet Nam, building on a previously held online meeting with national officials and stakeholders, in collaboration with UNDP. For Sri Lanka, a mission was postponed and should take place in 2023. Other studies undertaken in 2022 include a comparative country study of balance of payments implications for green financing for a number of countries in Asia and Pacific, alongside a study on green industrial and financial policies used to support climate policies and experience in Indonesia. Thematic studies that were completed during the year included a mapping of financial landscape initiatives and instruments in Asia, with the help of the Association of Development Finance Institutions in Asia and the Pacific; a study on green finance and petrochemicals globally and in Asia and the Pacific; and a study on the experience of green industrial and financial policies used to support renewables electrification in parts of India. Finally, a study on the role of public banks during COVID-19 was completed and made available on the UNCTAD website and further disseminated at the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development and through the Trade and Development Report; and through academic meetings and publications. On-going work which began in 2022 included a study on the role of fossil fuel subsidies, and gender impacts of greening industrial policies in selected countries in the region. Other dissemination activities for the work of the project completed thus far included inter-governmental and regional expert meetings held in Geneva and internationally at the Asian Development Bank annual meeting; Finance in Common summit; and the COP27 meeting in Egypt. With these achievements in 2022, UNCTAD is in a good position to continue the work in 2023.

237. **Results and impacts.** The work helps to fill some important gaps in knowledge and achieve some useful and relevant increases in understanding, thanks to the country case-studies that have been completed and those that are under-way, and the conceptual papers completed and disseminated. These included lessons on the need to better align climate related financial policies with development finance; also on some of the technical problems involved in implementing financial and industrial policy, even when there is broad consensus that it is needed. The work on public banks is making a significant contribution to the global Finance in Common forum that is gathering momentum; and the work on transition from fossil fuel dependency provided crucial information for policymaking discussions in light of the forthcoming negotiations towards a new global treaty to reduce plastic pollution. All the various findings thus far have also contributed to UN publications and processes and are hopefully making a useful contribution to the debate about the future role of public development finance and how to link it with complementary industrial and other policies. The papers and findings presented online and available online have been downloaded many 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. *Technology Assessment in the energy and agricultural sectors in Africa to accelerate progress on Science, Technology and Innovation*

238. **Development context.** A technology assessment (TA) can catalyze a broader social, political, and inter-institutional debate on the potential benefits and negative impacts and uncertainties associated with a county adopting for use a technology that is new to them.

Models of technology assessment incorporating the participation of citizens and decision-makers 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 TA in place. Technology assessments are seldom conducted in most developing countries owing to a lack of capabilities and institutions that undertake such assessments. Many of them have never undertaken a technology assessment. The potential impacts on a country in Africa of the adoption of many new and emerging technologies are unclear, leading to the need for robust mechanisms to evaluate those impacts to inform national policymakers and national policies. Building the capacity to assess the impacts of technologies is a vital part of the process of building STI capacity, in particular the capacity to assess the potential positive and negative impacts of a technology as part of the “technology transfer” process.

239. **Objectives.** The objective of this project is to strengthen capacities of national Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in African countries to assess the potential impacts of adopting new and emerging technologies in the energy and agricultural sectors. This will help to inform policymakers in designing and implementing policies which are based on a clear understanding of the impacts of adopting technologies new to them, to harness their benefits and reduce the potential negative effects. In the longer term, countries can develop institutional capacities to continuously scan, monitor, and assess the impacts of technologies as part of forward-looking development strategies.

240. **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 September 2022, the technology assessment methodology was published. Hybrid (physical plus virtual) national consultative workshops took place in Seychelles and Zambia in March and April 2022, respectively. 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 brainstorming what new frontier technologies could be considered for technology assessment.

241. In August 2022, a regional virtual workshop was held to enhance the knowledge of the three participating countries of the steps to conduct technology assessment, in particular the first step of setting up technology assessment governance through the formation of steering committees and expert groups in each pilot country. The workshop was proved to be facilitating as it helped the three countries in the establishment of their steering committee and expert group in the third or fourth quarter of 2022 as scheduled.

242. In addition, there were at least two discussions on the technology assessment methodology with stakeholders in each country during 2022 in order to build their familiarity with the process and lay a strong foundation for moving forward with implementation of the project.

243. **Results.** Participants in the national stakeholder workshops gained an understanding of what technology assessment is and its difference from other commonly used tools such as Technology Needs Assessments or technology foresight. At the beginning of the implementation of the project, few stakeholders had a clear understanding of technology assessment. With the establishment of a steering committee and expert group in each beneficiary country, the countries have embarked on the technology assessment exercise, which will help them understand the socioeconomic and environmental implications of new and emerging technologies in the energy and/or agricultural sectors so that their benefits can be harnessed, and their potentially negative effects minimized.

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

244. **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.

245. **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.

246. **Outputs.** In 2022, the secretariat supported the 25th 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).

247. **Results.** The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2022/15, 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.

5.3. *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 UN 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 SDG 2 "End hunger and achieve food security". Contribution is also expected to SDG 5 through at least 25 per cent of participants being females and to SDG target 17.10 (trade) through the increase in export of crops resulting from enhanced agricultural production thanks to crop monitoring.

250. **Outputs.** In 2022, several pilot countries have undergone field missions and CropWatch customization system. Syria did a virtual fieldwork and system customization in

September 2022, Mauritius has gathered field data on the growth and yield prediction of potato, onion, tomato and pineapple in October 2022, while Algeria did so for olives, potato, cauliflower/cabbage, pomegranate, and cereal in November 2022. In 2023, the programme planned trainings through a physical regional workshop and field visits in Mauritius to strengthen the capacity of participating countries in using the CropWatch system. The regional workshop is a follow-up to initial two-month training in 2021 for 12 developing countries– Afghanistan, Algeria, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Africa, Syria, Thailand, Türkiye and Zambia – and will give opportunity to other CSTD member States which express interest to participate in the programme.

251. **Results.** Three countries (Algeria, Mauritius, and Syria) have conducted a field work to calibrate and customize the CropWatch system to their needs. 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.

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

252. **Development context** Technology is a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda and is one of the areas for partnerships under SDG17. Science, technology and innovation (STI) play a central role in the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) under the 2030 Agenda. Research capacity on STI is important to a country's STI capacity and sustainability of the national STI system. The SDG 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 SDG 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.

253. **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 (SDGs) 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.

254. **Outputs** In 2022, the Young Female Scientist programme received thirteen young female scientists from Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia, South Africa, the Philippines, and the United Republic of Tanzania. They conducted cutting-edge research in their respective scientific fields guided by researchers in Okayama University for around 30 days. Under the Young Scientist Programme, young researchers from Nigeria and the Philippines have benefitted from this programme in pursuing a 3-year doctoral degree. The participants from both programmes have diverse research areas, including medical and health issues, electronic engineering to open data, waste-water treatment, and agricultural extension services.

255. **Results** The thirteen 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, (e.g., Egypt and the Philippines) planned to continue research collaboration between the Okayama University and their respective home institution. The programme also improves their access to research networks in their specialties.

II. Theme B: Tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience

256. 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.

257. 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.

258. 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 2022 and key results to date. Technical cooperation projects that are pertinent to the aforementioned theme but not linked with any of the existing six 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) ^a	Helping least developed countries (LDCs) pursue structural economic progress toward and beyond graduation	2018–2022	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

259. **Development context.** The process of graduation out of the LDC category has gained international attention with the inclusion of a graduation target in the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, adopted in March 2022 (contained in para. 276). Only six countries graduated from the LDC category during the first 50 years of its existence (1971–2021). At present 16 countries are at various stages in the graduation process. Several countries were recommended for graduation in the past but delayed for various reasons including the impact of Covid-19 and the special circumstances of the countries. In the pipeline to graduation are Bhutan (2023); Angola (2024); Kiribati (2024); Sao Tome and Principe (2024); Solomon Islands (2024); and Tuvalu (2024). At its 2021 Triennial Review, the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP) recommended Bangladesh, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Nepal for graduation. The decision on Timor-Leste was deferred until the next triennial review in 2024. The review also found the following countries to have met the graduation thresholds for the first time: Cambodia, Comoros, Djibouti, Senegal and Zambia.

260. **Objectives and features.** Graduating from the LDC category is a milestone towards achieving structural transformation and for many countries, it also marks a significant policy shock emanating from the loss of LDC-specific trade preferences and other international support measures. UNCTAD’s 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 basis for continued progress towards sustainable development in the post-graduation phase. UNCTAD technical assistance work relies largely on the analytical work undertaken by UNCTAD under a 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.

Vulnerability profiles of graduating countries.

261. **Outputs.** In supporting the countries that were found pre-eligible for graduation in 2021, UNCTAD launched consultations in Cambodia, Comoros, Djibouti, Senegal, and Zambia in the process of preparing the General Assembly-mandated vulnerability profiles of the countries to assist them in preparing for the graduation process with the aim of achieving sufficient momentum to sustain structural, social, and economic progress beyond graduation from the LDC category. The Vulnerability Profiles also serve as a contribution to the CDP process of monitoring and assessing the preparedness of the countries to meet the LDC graduation requirements at the next triennial review in 2024.

262. In 2022, UNCTAD undertook inception missions in the context of the Vulnerability Profiles and graduation processes of Cambodia, Comoros, Djibouti, Senegal, and Zambia. The missions achieved the following: i) launched policy dialogue between UNCTAD and national stakeholders on the respective country's eligibility to graduate from the LDC category; ii) raised the awareness of national stakeholders on the processes and consequences of graduation; iii) mapped the next phases of the long graduation process; iv) deepened the stakeholder's understanding and expectations of the graduation process; and v) facilitated access to key national data sources. The national consultations in the five countries contributed to the work of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) monitoring and review of the LDC criteria. UNCTAD also used the national consultation process to continue mobilizing further international support through the inter-agency task force on the graduation of least developed countries, and enhanced collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator Offices.

263. UNCTAD provided inputs and comments to the Graduation Assessment Report which is a synthesis report prepared by the CDP based on the Vulnerability Profiles and the Impact Assessment of Graduation. Building on its mandate, and to strengthen the quality of LDC monitoring and review by the CDP, UNCTAD organized discussions with CDP rapporteurs on 15 November 2022. The discussions were centered on the preliminary findings of the Vulnerability Profiles of the respective countries. The Vulnerability Profiles prepared in 2022 assessed the countries' key vulnerabilities and recommends measures for addressing the identified risks. The reports will feed into national graduation workshops to be held in 2023 in which a high-level policy dialogue among national stakeholders on the graduation process will consider priorities and strategies for the transition towards graduation and beyond the LDC status. It will provide invaluable lessons in selecting suitable transition pathways and appropriate policies and strategies to address any negative impacts of losing international support measures including financial and market access privileges the countries enjoy as LDCs.

Other technical assistance in 2022 to LDCs facing the challenge of graduation from LDC status

264. The Least Developed Countries Report and its overview are regular activities of UNCTAD which continue to shape intergovernmental discussions around the development challenges of the LDCs, their vulnerabilities and the intentional measures required to address them. In this regard, the Least Developed Countries Report 2022 published in November 2022 has been presented to policymakers, academics and other stakeholders in China, Senegal, and Bangladesh. The report carries very favourable statements by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and by distinguished development and environmental scholars, which have been used for the dissemination campaign.

265. UNCTAD's research outputs provide valuable material for capacity development activities and policy dialogues. In 2022, UNCTAD organized a training for G77 delegates in

Geneva using the findings and policy guidance of the Least Developed Countries Report 2022 as background material. Two lectures were conducted on 26 September, in the context of a training course organized by UNCTAD and UNITAR. The topics were: (i) Financial integration, foreign debt and illicit financial flows; and (ii) Development finance, public finance and resource mobilization. The lectures were followed by a lively Q&A session with participants, who judged that the presentations had been very useful for their work. The course was attended by 20 delegates, out of which 13 were women.

266. UNCTAD also participated in a panel discussion during the event “The Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries: Human Rights Related Challenges and Opportunities”, organized by OHCHR as a side event to the 51st Session of the Human Rights Council to commemorate the adoption of the Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries. UNCTAD’s intervention focused on the priorities for developing productive capacities and generating employment in LDCs, and the necessary support that these countries need to receive from their development partners. The event attracted 100 “physical” participants, of which 53 were women, plus online participants.

267. UNCTAD participated in the Peer Learning Group exercise organized by the OECD Development Centre in the context of Bangladesh’s Productive Transformation Policy Review. The meeting focused on the prospects for harnessing digital technologies and mobilizing FDI in Bangladesh and included a discussion of lessons learnt from other countries in the global South (India, Morocco, Singapore). UNCTAD’s intervention underscored the importance of a strategic trade policy framework as one of the main drivers to mobilize FDI; and also highlighted the untapped potential of regional integration for Bangladesh.

268. UNCTAD participated in the 24th Plenary Session of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP), and the discussions highlighted UNCTAD’s inputs to the CDP reviews, including an assessment of productive capacities of 8 LDCs (Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Nepal, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) that were in the process of graduation or have recently graduated. Further consultations were held with UN Resident Coordinator Offices for Angola and Bangladesh, together with the CDP secretariat to launch the country monitoring programmes within the UN system assistance to the graduating LDCs. The subprogramme also participated in the High-level Panel Discussion on Sustainable Graduation in the Challenging Situation: Perspectives from Bangladesh and the Region in the light of the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA), held on 23 May 2022. The event was organized by the Bangladesh Mission in Bangkok during the 78th UNESCAP Commission Session.

Results and impacts

269. UNCTAD finalized the project “Helping least developed countries (LDCs) pursue structural economic progress toward and beyond graduation” in 2022. The project was implemented jointly by UNCTAD and by the CDP Secretariat (UN DESA) and was funded by the 11th tranche of the Development Account. During meetings of the Evaluation Oversight Group, which allowed beneficiary countries to openly express their evaluation of the projects and of their benefits, country officials from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao PDR, and Vanuatu expressed their gratitude and recognition for the activities undertaken under the project and stated the usefulness of these activities for their policymaking, especially in terms of planning and managing the graduation process, so that their respective countries can graduate with momentum.

270. The demand for UNCTAD’s technical support continues to rise compared to extra-budgetary resources allocated for the activities. The rising demand from Member States, UN systemwide partners and other stakeholders points to the need for further UNCTAD engagement in technical cooperation on LDC vulnerabilities and graduation issues. To meet the demand, UNCTAD has at times had to innovate to satisfy critical demands during the most challenging circumstances. For instance, UNCTAD actively participated in virtual consultations on monitoring of countries graduating or that have graduated from the category, including Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Vanuatu.

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
INT/0T/KAD	Support to the World Bank/IMF DMF Phase III Project	2022–	World Bank
ANG/0T/EBG	Fortalecimiento de la capacidad de gestión de la deuda pública de la República de Angola	2015–	Angola
ARG/0T/FBA	Fortalecimiento de la Capacidad de Gestión de la Deuda Pública de la Provincia de Río Negro, Argentina	2017–	Argentina
ARG/0T/8BL	Strengthen Public Debt Management Capacity in Argentina	2008–	Argentina
BKF/0T/GAG	Mise en oeuvre du SYGADE 6 et renforcement des capacités en matière de gestion de la dette au Burkina Faso	2018–	World Bank
CHD/0T/ICB	Renforcement des Capacités de Gestion de la Dette Publique - SYGADE 6	2021–	European Union
DJI/0T/KAK	Renforcement des capacités de gestion de la dette publique du Djibouti : SYGADE 6	2022–	World Bank
EQG/0T/IBI	SYGADE project Equatorial Guinea	2022–	African Development Bank
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
JOR/0T/DAM	Strengthening Debt Management in Jordan	2014–	Jordan
LAO/0T/IBR	DMFAS 6 upgrade for the Lao People's Democratic Republic	2020–	World Bank
MAU/0T/LAI	Renforcement des capacités de gestion du système d'information de la dette	2022–	World Bank

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
NIC/0T/BAG	Strengthening Public Debt management	2012–	Nicaragua
PAR/0T/IBQ	Asistencia en la implementación de la interfaz SIGADE SIARE Paraguay	2020–	Paraguay
PHI/0T/ABK	Strengthening debt management in the Bureau of the Treasury (Philippines)	2011–	Philippines
PHI/0T/HAO	DMFAS 6 implementation	2019–	Philippines
PRC/0T/AAQ	DMFAS project - Republic of Congo	2010–	Republic of Congo
PSE/0T/KBD	Implementing DMFAS 6 at the Ministry of Finance of the State of Palestine	2022–	World Bank
SUD/0T/EAU	Strengthening Public Debt Management in the Republic of the Sudan	2015–	Sudan
SUD/0T/IAC	Strengthening Public Debt Management in Sudan	2020–	Sudan
YEM/0T/KBK	DMFAS version 6 installation at the Central Bank of Yemen	2022–	Yemen
ZAM/0T/BDA	Strengthening integrated public debt management (Zambia)	2012–	Zambia

271. **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.

272. The critical role of debt and good debt management has been underlined in Goal 17.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, 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 Assembly³⁴ 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”.

273. In 2022, the overall outlook for external debt sustainability in developing countries remains of serious concern for the international community, which was aggravated by the pandemic, climate change and the crisis linked to the conflict in Ukraine. The stronger reliance on public borrowing to meet COVID-19 public spending-related demands was accompanied by rising levels of public debt, increasing debt repayment burdens and higher risk of debt distress.

274. Furthermore, there were 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. 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 and global crisis.

³⁴ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 77/153 on external debt sustainability and development, adopted on 14 December 2022.

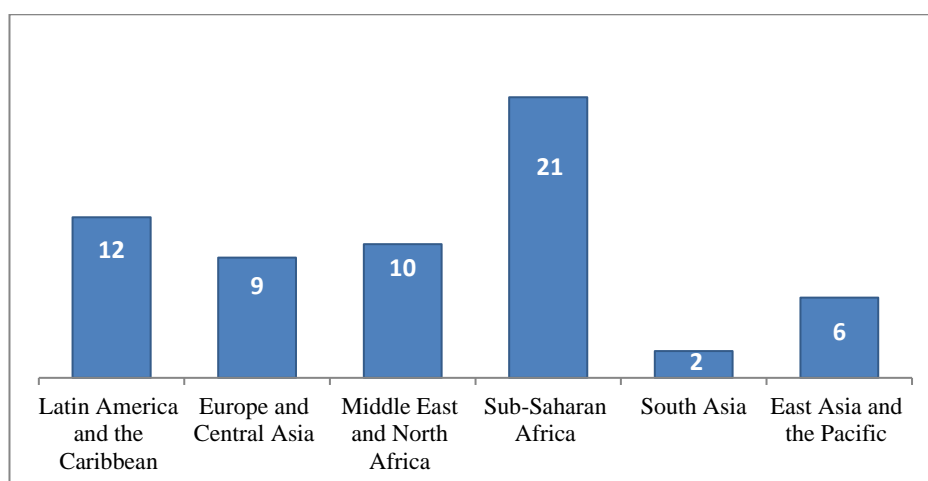
275. Notwithstanding the increasing importance of effective debt management, many developing countries continued to lack the necessary capacity to manage their debt effectively. Faced with increasingly complex debt portfolios, significant weaknesses in legal and institutional frameworks, staffing, skills and systems undermined countries' abilities to manage their public debt.

276. In 2022, the priority continued to be maintaining capacity to ensure that comprehensive, accurate timely information on public debt is available in support of policy decisions and risk management.

277. In response to countries' needs, the Programme provided continuous support and guidance on ensuring the accuracy and completeness of public debt records and comprehensive and timely reporting.

278. **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 60 countries, including one new country, namely Equatorial Guinea and two returning countries Yemen and the State of Palestine (see figure 1).

Figure 1
Geographical distribution of active DMFAS users, 2022



279. **Outputs.** In 2022, the DMFAS Programme continued to provide effective support to the 60 countries actively using its software. The Programme resumed field support which represented W of the activities implemented during the year, and continued to deliver technical support and capacity-building activities remotely when appropriate.

280. The Programme delivered country-specific technical assistance and trained 609 debt officers, of which 48 per cent were women, from 28 countries through 62 capacity-building activities in the field or remotely. Remote support included support to set up remote access to DMFAS databases and through its help desk, which responded to 312 requests during the reporting period. During the year, the Programme actively managed 25 active technical assistance projects and signed four new projects.

281. 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 2022, the Programme signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI) and jointly organized a regional remote DMFAS training workshop. It also participated in 4 partner events including with ESCWA, the West Africa Institute for Financial and Economic Management (WAIFEM) and the Debt Management Facility.

282. **Results.** 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: Ninety-three per cent of DMFAS client countries have developed comprehensive and reliable debt databases in respect of government and government-guaranteed external debt. Seventy-nine 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: Forty-one countries regularly produce statistical bulletins on debt.

(c) Strengthened analytical skills: Thirty-five 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 94 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 DMFAS Advisory Group decided in December 2022 to extend the current strategic plan for an additional year, up to 2024. In addition. As part of its monitoring and evaluation framework, the Programme mandated an independent evaluator to conduct a midterm review of the implementation of the 2020–2023 strategic plan. The conclusions were presented to the Advisory Group in December. The evaluator found that the DMFAS Programme demonstrated a high level of overall effectiveness, efficiency and has made a strategic contribution to strengthening debt data transparency and public accountability in user countries.

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>
MYA/0T/HAW	Trade Policy Advice for Myanmar, Tier 1, EIF	2018–	United Nations Office for Project Services, Switzerland
RAF/0T/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

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
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

283. **Development Context.** The EIF is a multi-agency and multi-donor program 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 advisory services on trade policy, market access and strategies.

284. **Objectives and Features.** UNCTAD provides tailored assistance in response to specific requests from EIF participating countries. The main objectives of this technical assistance are the capacity-building of LDCs for 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.

285. **Outputs.**

West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger

286. In 2022, UNCTAD provided technical assistance to several Least Developed Countries (LDCs), notably: Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger through an EIF-funded regional project on “Transit, transport and trade in West Africa for better value chain participation”. The West African project organized consultative missions (3), in-person workshops (10), meetings with WAEMU (2), additional online/in-person coordination meetings (15), and roadmaps (5) to enhance management of the joint border post of Manville and Cinkassé (Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger and Togo), support customs connectivity through SIGMAT³⁵ between the Ouagadougou-Lomé and Niamey-Cotonou corridors, enhance the understanding of the domestic reforms necessary to improve the implementation of regional conventions on transit and transport and the implementation of a functional transit program, coordinate the implementation of trade facilitation measures (WTO TFA selected articles) and improve countries participation into global value chains and build resilience.

287. During 2022, the project resulted in several deliverables, including an analysis of the legal framework for transport in the Niger and Benin carried out within the framework of a World Bank Trade Facilitation West Africa (TFWA) Project; a study of Burkina Faso’s transport and transit legal framework; an initial analysis of the functioning of the Inter-State Road Transit (ISRT) Convention including the critical analysis of the additional Protocol putting in place the new ECOWAS transit guarantee system; a study on convergence of the sub-regional transport legislative framework, as well as a study measuring implementation of selected articles of the Trade Facilitation Agreement related to transit and transport identified as priorities in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

288. In 2022, progress has also been made in the development of a roadmap for customs connectivity through SIGMAT between beneficiary countries. The support needed for the implementation of SIGMAT between the Ouagadougou-Lomé and Niamey-Cotonou corridors has been identified. A work plan has been developed to simplify customs and border

³⁵ SIGMAT is a French acronym for the “Système Interconnecté de Gestion des Marchandises en Transit”, which translated into English means the “Interconnected System for the Management of Goods in Transit”.

regulations and two actions have been taken to improve coordination in border management between beneficiary countries.

289. In addition to the results achieved towards the implementation of a functional transit program 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 beneficiary countries. Finally, improvements in the legislation and regulatory practices on transit, land transport and trade have been identified by reviewing provisions of TFA articles, to identify complementarity among the implementation of WTO TFA and the AfCFTA and conduct consultations related to TFA articles.

290. Continuous collaboration and consultative meetings with the World Bank Trade Facilitation West Africa programme took place to identify activities on improving the functioning of the Malanville and the Cinkasse Joint Border Posts and developing an intervention strategy to reform the cross-border land transport sector and SIGMAT.

ASEAN LDCs: Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic

291. Under an EIF-funded regional project "A New trade policy and strategy for ASEAN LDCs on market access and related issues", UNCTAD supports the Cambodia and Laos Ministry of Commerce and WTO delegates of ASEAN LDCs to (1) address extended cumulation with the EU for ASEAN LDCs and improve trade relations on market access; (2) improve Japan GSP and Japan-ASEAN LDC bilateral trade relations; (3) improve SPS in accessing China and neighboring markets by leveraging the WTO SPS committee; and (4) have a better understanding of e-commerce WTO negotiations; and (5) address any other emerging issue deemed relevant in this context.

292. In 2022, UNCTAD delivered several activities. The ASEAN LDC Project has finalized a summary and a roadmap for ASEAN LDC on issues including extended cumulation with the EU, Japan GSP and Japan-ASEAN LDC bilateral trade relations, SPS in accessing China and neighboring markets, and e-commerce WTO negotiations.

293. Virtual workshops (3) on ASEAN rules of origin (RoO) issues were held to teach policymakers, industry representatives and representatives from ASEAN with regard to its rules of origin issues. Additional consultative meetings were held with the ASEAN Secretariat, among others, to discuss the issue of e-commerce and SPS. Targeted assistance to Vietnam and Cambodia on the e-commerce negotiations was provided and a needs assessment of Lao PDR both for the Government and their private sectors in implementing their commitments under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement was undertaken. Lastly, e-commerce briefs (2) were drafted. Each of these briefs is tailored to the challenges and opportunities that Cambodia and Lao PDR are facing with regard to e-commerce.

294. **Results and impacts.** The ASEAN LDC Project achieved a significant milestone in assisting Cambodia to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Vietnam. This MoU provides an opportunity for the Cambodian bicycle industry to cumulate intermediate input from Vietnam under the provision of extended cumulation under the EU GSP. The ASEAN LDC Project is extending the technical brief using the WTO website which contains issues raised about China SPS and related literature.

295. Under the regional project on "Transit, transport and trade in West Africa for better value chain participation", the coordination between beneficiary countries for the implementation of a functional transit program has been improved with the creation of one coordination mechanism to support the promotion of cross-border road transport and transit, and one document (work plan, transit text or transit manual) on the transit program.

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>
INT/9X/77J	Trust fund for least developed countries: Core Project	1997–	Multi-donors

296. **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.

297. 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.

298. In addition to assisting the least developed countries with 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.

299. **Objectives and features.** The main objectives of UNCTAD's technical assistance under this program 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.

300. 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 arrangement (DFQF) 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.

301. On geographical indications, 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.

302. **Outputs.**

Building capacity among LDC Group Delegates on Rules of Origin

303. In collaboration with the European University Institute (EUI), an UNCTAD Center of Excellence, UNCTAD strengthened the capacities and assisted the WTO LDC Group Delegates in preparation for the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) and with relevant follow up towards preparations for MC13. Together with EUI, UNCTAD conducts applied research, develops tools and delivers capacity building activities to assist LDC delegates in better participation and leading the work of the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin (CRO).

304. In April 2022, UNCTAD held a virtual training session on the document submission GRO/W/211 to prepare the LDC Delegates' presentation ahead of the CRO Meeting.

305. The LDC WTO group requested assistance from UNCTAD in terms of preparation of substantive documents and to train delegations to make statements at the sessions of the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin (CRO). To this end, in October 2022, a training workshop on rules of origin for the LDCs was held at the EUI in Florence, Italy, with delegates from Africa and Asia in preparation for the WTO CRO meeting. The presented research aimed at identifying best practices and lessons learned on rules of origin and related administrative procedures leading to an increase in the utilization of trade preferences and understanding the extent of differences in rules of origin across preference-giving countries.

Geographical Indications

306. In 2022, the study “The Case for Geographical Indication Protection of the Mozambique White Prawn” was published to support of a sustainable fishery in the country.

307. Support has been provided as part of the consultative meeting of the Pan-African Geographical Indications information hub.

Research on trade preference utilization rates

308. UNCTAD published “The Utilization of Trade Preferences by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Member States”. This study stems from a long-standing relationship between the COMESA and the UNCTAD Secretariat in trade and trade facilitation. It aims at shedding light on one important aspect of regional integration, namely, the effective use of the trade preferences provided by free trade agreements (FTAs) such as the COMESA FTA and other preferential trade arrangements (PTAs) granted by QUAD Developed countries (Canada, European Union, Japan and the United States), such as the Africa Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA), Everything But Arms (EBA), and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) .

Specialized databases on trade preference utilization

309. In 2022, UNCTAD launched a public database to provide detailed data (up to six-digit product-specific data under the Harmonized System) on interrelated trade statistics, tariff offers and rules of origin under the AfCFTA (available at <https://afcfta.unctad.org>). The new database “The integrated trade statistics, tariff offers and rules of origin” aims to boost trade and economic growth. This site contains detailed information on import trends, tariff offers made by Member States under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and related rules of origin. More specifically, it contains data on: imports by product (imports of

a selected AfCFTA member State from an AfCFTA country for a selected product); Top import product by country (the top ten products imported by a selected AfCFTA member State from an AfCFTA country in a selected year; and Tariffs and rules of origin (tariff offers made by a selected AfCFTA member State for product-specific HS tariff lines as well as related AfCFTA rules of origin (RoO)). Data are available at chapter (2-digit), heading (4-digit) and sub-heading (6-digit) level of the HS product classification.

310. UNCTAD updated its public database to provide detailed data (up to six-digit product-specific data under the Harmonized System) on product-specific utilization rates for the QUAD countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (available at <https://gsp.unctad.org/home>). “The Generalized System of Preferences Database” allows government officials, firms and researchers to retrieve in a user-friendly manner data on GSP Utilization Rates as well as imports by tariff treatment. The coverage is limited to the QUAD countries for the period 2004–2019. It contains data on Utilization by Product, Top Products Imported from a Beneficiary and Utilization by Country.

311. **Results and impacts.** As a result of UNCTAD’s support, key stakeholders from LDCs based in Geneva are more informed of the policy issues and challenges facing their countries with regard to rules of origin. The hands-on training and capacity building improved negotiating skills, fortified delegates’ use of evidence-based reasoning and enabled WTO LDC Group delegates to more effectively participate in the Committee on Rules of Origin. They were able to craft statements, hone negotiating tactics and form a more cohesive group perspective. As envisaged in the Bridgetown Covenant, the support of UNCTAD has helped to strengthen and transform multilateralism by raising the ability of LDC delegates to participate more effectively in multilateral trade negotiation processes. It contributed to formulating and negotiating collective positions at the WTO and the result of this work is the (G/RO/95) which has been adopted by all WTO members during WTO MC12.

312. 2022 saw a growing number of technical cooperation requests for the delivery of training, capacity-building activities, and ad hoc research on market access, trade preferences and rules of origin. Requests came from Africa and LDCs (i.e., Countries: Togo, Zambia, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Timor Leste, Angola; RECs such as COMESA, SADC but also Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), AfCFTA Secretariat, Special Economic Zones Association, The Pan-African Geographical Indications information hub, etc.).

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/OT/JBP	EIF-Transferring technologies and know-how for the development of cotton by-products in Malawi	2021–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
TOG/OT/JBQ	EIF-Transferring technologies and know-how for the development of cotton by-products in Togo	2021–	Enhanced Integrated Framework

313. **Development context.** Commodity dependence negatively affects economic development in different ways. The volatility of commodity prices affects countries’ export revenues, creating macroeconomic instability, and through the latter, affects investment, employment and economic growth. Limited 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 domestic value chains, as well as diversification and value addition are essential for commodity-dependent developing

countries to reduce their economic vulnerability resulting from commodity dependence. Diversification and value addition also contribute to better jobs and livelihoods for citizens. UNCTAD assists countries to attain these objectives through its various projects under the umbrella theme of breaking the chains of commodity dependence.

314. **Objectives and features.** In response to requests for assistance, UNCTAD works with countries to evaluate their needs towards realizing the following four main thematic outcomes:

- (a) Developing value added activities in the 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.

315. 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 four thematic outcomes, as well as to formulate evidence-based policies in support of development. For instance, the project on “Integrating landlocked commodity-dependent developing countries into regional and global value chains” focused 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).

316. **Outputs.** 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 document reviewing the global debate and experience on commodities and development over the past decades was elaborated. The document 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.

317. This project resulted also in the publication in May 2022 of an UNCTAD research paper entitled “Growing the good and shrinking the bad: Output-emissions elasticities and green industrial policy in commodity-dependent developing countries”. This paper looks at how CDDCs can balance development with climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability. The issue of energy transition and its applicability in countries of different levels of development is also explored. The study finds that CDDCs should embrace green industrial policies to position themselves as viable producers and exporters of green goods, especially as continued reliance on traditional commodities in an era of green transition may not be a viable long-term option.

318. In 2022, UNCTAD also completed the implementation of two projects on cotton-by-products in Malawi and Togo, funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). Specifically, the projects conducted feasibility studies in both countries 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. The draft feasibility studies for both Malawi and Togo were finalized by November 2021. One feasibility study was published by UNCTAD in June and another in July 2022. National validation workshops for the feasibility studies were held in February 2022 in Lomé, Togo, and in March 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi.

319. **Results and impacts.** The two projects implemented by UNCTAD in Malawi and Togo led to a strengthening of the sectorial policy framework on cotton-by-products in both countries, as indicated by the feedback received from stakeholders benefiting from the activities in the country. In particular, a blueprint on how to better integrate Malawi into regional cotton and cotton by-product value chains by leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) was presented to the Ministry of Trade of this country. Additionally, the creation of a Task Force for the implementation of the project findings was discussed with the Ministry of Trade, with UNCTAD advising on its institutional framework. It is expected that the findings of both feasibility assessments will form the basis for a second phase of capacity-building activities, subject to fundraising.

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
ROA-2225 (E14)	Sustainable smart ports for African countries, including Small Islands Developing States, to "recover better" from COVID-19	2022–	Development Account

320. **Development context.** The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of the transport and logistics sector in global supply chains, trade, and interconnected economies. The pandemic disrupted existing supply chains and business models, including transportation, logistics networks, and trade facilitation capabilities. Today’s global supply chains are more complex and interconnected than ever, making them more vulnerable to a wide range of risks and potential points of failure. As we transition to a post-pandemic world, questions arise about the future of transport and logistics and how the sector should be organized to effectively respond to a future where low-carbon, resilient, and agile supply chains become the norm. In response to these challenges, UNCTAD’s work aims to ensure that transport and trade can withstand shocks and disruptive factors, and that developing countries are able to integrate more effectively into global trading and transport networks. Greater participation in global value chains requires efficient, reliable, shock-resistant, cost-effective, smart, well-connected, socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable, and climate-resilient freight transportation systems. Maritime transport, which carries over 80 per cent of world merchandise trade by volume, plays a crucial role as a catalyst for sustainable development.

321. In 2022, merchandise trade made a faster-than-expected recovery following the initial shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the transport and logistics sector continued to face challenges, including disruptions in supply chains, port congestion, workforce availability, equipment and transport capacity issues, seafarers’ crisis, and rising shipping costs. These factors are affecting the sector’s long-term sustainability and resilience, occurring against the backdrop of heightened climate change mitigation and adaptation

requirements, energy transition pressures, uncertain pandemic, diverging economic recoveries, and geopolitical threats such as the war in Ukraine.

322. One significant trend and development context affecting international transport is the ongoing energy transition and decarbonization necessary to mitigate climate change and its impacts and build the sector's resilience. In 2022, UNCTAD started implementing a new project under the UN Development Account (UNDA) - 14th Tranche, aimed at building capacities and promoting sustainable smart port (SSP) development in Africa (2022–2025).

323. **Objectives and features.** In 2022, UNCTAD continued its efforts to promote sustainable and resilient maritime supply chains and assist developing countries in addressing transportation challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the umbrella of the UNDA COVID-19 response, a joint project on “*Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics: Contactless, seamless, and collaborative United Nations solutions*” was delivered in collaboration with the five regional commissions of the United Nations. In 2022, UNCTAD continued working to provide solutions for developing countries and developed analytical materials and guidance tools to support countries in enhancing their resilience to future pandemic and non-pandemic induced disruptions. The project concluded in 2022 and outputs produced under the project have been widely disseminated while capacity-building activities and training aimed at ensuring sustainable and broader impacts are planned for 2023.

324. In 2022, a new joint UNCTAD-ESCAP project entitled “*Analysis of maritime connectivity in ASEAN and Pacific SIDS*” was launched. The objective of this project is to analyse global and regional trends in shipping connectivity, with the aim of providing valuable inputs for policy discussions at the national and sub-regional levels. The ultimate goal is to improve maritime connectivity in ASEAN countries and Pacific SIDS.

325. Through another new UNDA *Sustainable Smart Ports (SSP)* project, UNCTAD aims to build awareness and capacity among ports and national authorities on the strategic importance of sustainable and smart port and to enhance the energy transition of ports. The aim is also to help assess their potential as key players in the production/usage/distribution of renewable energy (including for shipping) and the integration of green and new technologies. By encouraging ports to adopt renewable energy sources, reduce their environmental footprint, and improve their overall sustainability, the project seeks to contribute to global efforts to mitigate climate change and promote sustainable development.

326. As part of its work on *transport and transit corridors*, UNCTAD continued implementing the project on the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor in Africa in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). This corridor spans across six countries, namely Algeria, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, and Tunisia. The project's objective is to support the commercialization of the corridor, enhance its performance and promote its development. UNCTAD's technical assistance focuses on examining how the corridor's road network can evolve and transform to become a successful regional economic corridor. The intervention considers corridor management and institutional framework as key factors that can extend the corridor's functions beyond transport and transit. By leveraging these factors, the corridor can become a significant economic driver for the region.

327. As part of its work on sustainable *freight transport and finance*, UNCTAD, under the European Union-UNCTAD joint programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, is working towards improving Angola's transport and trade logistics. The organization's primary focus is on enhancing the transport sector's economic, social, and environmental sustainability performance. Additionally, UNCTAD is supporting the government's efforts to promote public-private partnerships (PPPs) in transport infrastructure and logistics, including logistics hubs/platforms. By promoting sustainable practices and facilitating PPPs, UNCTAD aims to boost Angola's economic growth and contribute to long-term development. The project's objective is to establish a more efficient and integrated transport and logistics network in Angola, which will facilitate trade and investment, reduce transportation costs, and improve overall economic competitiveness.

328. UNCTAD continued to provide advice and policy guidance in response to requests received from various entities, including on port policies and port performance; shipping decarbonization; sustainable transport; transport infrastructure finance; corridors and transit;

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. Technical assistance provided builds heavily on the synergies and collaboration with various partners, including United Nations entities such as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UNECA, UNESCAP, UNESCWA, UNECE, UNECLAC, UNOHRLLS, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Additionally, UNCTAD works with United Nations country teams and the Resident Coordinator Office, and regional organizations such as the African Union, ports associations, as well as multilateral and development banks. By leveraging these partnerships, UNCTAD is able to provide comprehensive and effective technical assistance that supports sustainable development in transport and logistics sectors.

329. **Outputs.** Under the *maritime supply chain component* of the UNDA project on “*Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics*”, UNCTAD developed a capacity building guidebook to Manage Risks and Enhance Resilience for Ports³⁶ as well as training material. The Handbook was published in August 2022 and is supported by a dedicated UNCTAD website on Resilient Maritime Logistics.³⁷ The website hosts all knowledge products and capacity-building tools and instruments developed under project, including course material containing six modules. The latter is ready for roll out in 2023 to ensure the sustainability of impacts and a broader reach. Together guidance and material produced under the project aim at building the capacity of developing countries to build more resilient maritime supply chain by helping stakeholders across the maritime supply chain better manage risks, prepare in the face of disruptions, ensure effective response measures and enable rapid recovery. The UNCTAD guidebook for ports features selected case studies and best practices pertaining to port disruption and response from different regions including Africa and Asia, and the SIDS. Three regional webinars were delivered in 2021 and 2022 focusing on Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the Caribbean. These events allowed UNCTAD to share information about the main findings of the analytical work carried out under the project regarding impacts and responses. They also helped to disseminate lessons learned as well as gather feedback and input regarding capacity needs to inform the work on capacity building and ensure tailored and demand-driven tools and guidance. Together, the three webinars brought together close to 400 participants from 85 countries.

330. As part of the UNCTAD-ESCAP joint project on *maritime connectivity in ASEAN and Pacific SIDS*, an analytical paper was produced to assess maritime connectivity in ASEAN members and Pacific SIDS. This assessment included both global and regional benchmarking. Additionally, other analytical inputs were presented and discussed during four national workshops held in selected target countries, aimed at enhancing understanding and promoting policy discussions.³⁸ Other analytical inputs in the form of presentations and comments were also provided during two events at a sub-regional high-level forum, contributing to productive policy discussions.³⁹ UNCTAD is currently in the process of

³⁶ See: <https://unctad.org/webflyer/building-capacity-manage-risks-and-enhance-resilience-guidebook-ports> .

³⁷ See: <https://resilientmaritimelogistics.unctad.org/>.

³⁸ See: 1. National workshop for Cambodia on sustainable maritime and port connectivity for resilient and efficient supply chains. 6 September 2022. <https://unctad.org/meeting/national-workshop-cambodia-sustainable-maritime-and-port-connectivity-resilient-and>.
2. National workshop for Viet Nam on sustainable maritime and port connectivity for resilient and efficient supply chains. 8 September 2022. <https://unctad.org/meeting/national-workshop-viet-nam-sustainable-maritime-and-port-connectivity-resilient-and>.
3. National workshop for Thailand on sustainable maritime and port connectivity for resilient and efficient supply chains. 20 October 2022.
4. Workshop on Sustainable and Resilient Port Development to Support Maritime Connectivity in the Pacific. 06 - 08 December 2022. <https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-sustainable-and-resilient-port-development-support-maritime-connectivity-pacific>.

³⁹ See: Pacific regional forum. Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Maritime Connectivity in the Pacific. 25 November 2022; and ASEAN regional forum. Interactive dialogue on sustainable maritime and port connectivity for resilient and efficient supply chains. 30 November 2022.

compiling all the inputs provided through the joint project on maritime connectivity in ASEAN and Pacific SIDS into a single document. This compilation will include the analytical paper assessing maritime connectivity, as well as the various presentations and comments from the national workshops and sub-regional high-level forum events. By consolidating all the inputs into one document, UNCTAD aims to provide a comprehensive resource that can support evidence-based policy discussions on enhancing maritime connectivity in the two regions.

331. UNCTAD initiated the first phase of the SSP project, which entails the development of a diagnosis/assessment methodology that will serve as the basis for evaluating the SSP status of ports. This methodology will include various indicators such as renewable energy production, consumption and distribution as well as other related criteria. The assessment methodology will also provide recommendations in the form of a matrix of actions that can be taken to achieve SSP status. This methodology will be piloted later on in 3 countries, namely Ghana, Mauritius and Morocco.

332. As to *European Union-UNCTAD joint programme for Angola: Train for Trade II*, UNCTAD provided capacity building and training activities to support the development and implementation of PPPs programme in transport and logistics. Activities conducted in 2022 entailed, among others, webinars, two back-to-back training and workshop activities in collaboration with the Regulatory Agency for the Certification of Cargoes and Logistics of Angola (ARCCLA) and the Ministry of Transport.⁴⁰ More than 250 participants benefited from these activities.

333. Under the international commercial transport and trade law component of the UNDA project on *Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics*, in addition to two substantive briefing notes published in 2021, two analytical reports on “Contracts for the carriage of goods by sea and multimodal transport - Key issues arising from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic”, and on “COVID-19 and International Sale of Goods: Contractual devices for commercial risk allocation and loss prevention”, were published in 2022. The documents highlight key legal implications for different types of commercial contracts and provide advice and guidance on commercial risk allocation through the use of suitably drafted contractual clauses - including latest standard form clauses developed by Industry Associations; together with recommendations for commercial parties and considerations for policymakers. Four related online 4-day training courses were held in May and June 2022, with overall 224 participants from 60 countries, and a webinar for policymakers with a focus on policy considerations arising from the pandemic was held, as part of the UNDA closing event, on 21 June 2022. The four-day training course focused on the implications of the pandemic for some of the key commercial contracts in international shipping and trade, in particular contracts for the international sale of goods on Shipment Terms CIF and FOB and carriage of goods by sea under charterparties and bills of lading. The online training, building on the related analytical documents, combined presentations, case studies and substantive synopses as well as additional materials and was developed and delivered by a renowned team of academic experts. The courses were designed to help in the understanding and assessment of key issues arising from the pandemic for the different types of closely interconnected contracts; the relevant legal implications; as well as contractual approaches to addressing some of these, in particular the use of standard form clauses for commercial risk-allocation between the parties. The courses targeted in particular beneficiaries in developing countries and catered for participants in different time zones (South America, Africa and Europe/ East Asia, Africa, Europe). Drawing on insights gained as part of analytical work and training activities under the project, relevant recommendations and policy considerations have also informed expert deliberations at the 2022 Multi-Year Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation, held in July 2022, and are also reflected in Chapter 7 of the Review of Maritime Transport 2022. Special considerations

<https://unctad.org/meeting/side-event-7th-session-escap-committee-transport-expert-group-meeting-sustainable-maritime>.

⁴⁰ For further information: <https://unctad.org/meeting/training-workshop-foundations-ppps-logistics-hubsplatforms-projects>, and <https://unctad.org/meeting/hybrid-workshop-ppps-models-logistics-platform-development-context-lobito-corridor-angola>.

regarding SIDS have also been integrated on an existing UNDA project website (<https://SIDSport-ClimateAdapt.unctad.org>).

334. In 2022, UNCTAD continued to monitor and report on relevant developments regarding the seafarers' crisis. Relevant initiatives include: a Joint ILO-IMO-UNCTAD-WHO Statement, with 10 recommendations urging continued collaboration to address the crew change crisis, safeguard seafarer health and safety, and avoid supply chain disruptions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and calling on governments, national and local authorities, and all relevant stakeholders, including employers, to take a number of critical actions; an update on international developments in Chapter 7 of the Review of Maritime Transport 2022; as well as participation in the Ad hoc UN inter-agency Task Force on the impact of COVID-19 on seafarers (established by the UN Secretary-General (SG) Executive Committee (EC) decision 2022/03). Under the co-chairpersonship of ILO and IMO, the Task Force is examining the implementation and practical application of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 during the pandemic, including its impact on seafarers' fundamental rights and on the shipping industry.

335. Drawing on UNCTAD's longstanding work on climate change adaptation for seaports, UNCTAD published a Policy Brief "Climate-resilience of seaports: Adequate finance is critical for developing countries but remains a major challenge", highlighting the urgent need for considerably scaling up of investment in adaptation, including in the form of grants, rather than loans, for developing countries. Related issues were also discussed at UNCTAD's Multiyear Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation in July 2022, as part of a dedicated session focusing on Strengthening legal, policy and collaborative approaches to keep trade flowing during the pandemic and beyond. UNCTAD also continued its collaboration with relevant initiatives, including the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action and UNECE Expert Group on Climate Change Adaptation for Inland Transport; and actively participated in related events at the UNFCCC COP 27, including an event on important regulatory developments at EU level in support of climate change mitigation and adaptation for key transport infrastructure.

336. Other collaborative efforts where UNCTAD continued its contribution and provided appropriate technical advice and assistance include the UN-Oceans interagency initiative; UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); UN Global Compact Working Group on Ports Practical Guidance; regulatory efforts under the auspices of the IMO Legal Committee, including in respect of measures to combat fraudulent ship registries/registration and the development an "IMO Claims Manual for the Bunkers Convention"; an UNCITRAL working group on the development of a legal framework for negotiable multimodal transport documents; and ESCAP meetings on harmonizing multimodal legal frameworks in Asia and the Pacific

337. As to the promotion and the commercialization of the TSR Corridor project⁴¹ and recognizing more specifically the growing importance of transport and trade corridors worldwide and the potential benefits of efficient economic corridors, UNCTAD carried a substantive analytical assessment of the TSR corridor, highlighting its performances, challenges and obstacles undermining its operations, as well as potential solutions. In its study, which was published in October 2022,⁴² 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 to become a successful regional economic corridor.

338. **Results and impacts.** The provision and dissemination of information, insights, data, and guidance, including lessons learned and risk management tools, was timely and critical in assisting policy makers and maritime transport stakeholders in developing countries to better comprehend the impacts of COVID-19 on their maritime supply chains. Such resources have enabled them to understand response measures and lessons learned, which is essential

⁴¹ For further information: <https://unctad.org/project/commercialization-trans-saharan-road-corridor-through-development-regional-corridor>.

⁴² <https://unctad.org/news/enhancing-trans-saharan-road-corridor-boost-trade-and-economic-development>, and <https://unctad.org/webflyer/trans-saharan-road-corridor>.

for preparing for future disruptions. Countries and stakeholders in the maritime sector are better equipped to make informed decisions and develop appropriate response measures to enhance the resilience of their maritime transport systems. As a follow-up and for sustainability of impacts and broader reach of this work, UNCTAD will launch, in the course of 2023, a new course on the resilience of ports and maritime supply chains, structured in six modules.

339. 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, as well as documentation, presentations and additional supporting materials used during the training courses held in May and June 2022, which are available electronically on the web for use by any interested parties, 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.

340. UNCTAD's 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, as well as continue to cooperate to protect seafarers' human and legal rights and implement relevant labour standards, including those agreed in the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006.

341. The UNCTAD and IsDB, along with other development and institutional partners, will continue their support for the Trans-Saharan Road (TSR) Corridor Economic Development initiative under the Trans-Saharan Road Corridor project. At the 73rd Ministerial Session of the Trans-Saharan Road Liaison Committee (CLRT) held in Algiers, Algeria on 27 June 2022, ministers and representatives from CLRT member States agreed to facilitate the transformation of the TSR corridor into an economic corridor as proposed in the study. In 2023, the CLRT will organize a follow-up meeting to discuss and define the next steps to implement the recommendations of the report towards the goal of promoting and commercializing the TSR corridor. Additionally, the Resident Coordinator Office in Algeria has included the TSR project as part of country's activities.

342. As beneficiary of UNCTAD's capacity building activities in Angola, the Angolan Cargo and Logistics Regulatory Agency (ARCCLA) reported that the various activities carried out by UNCTAD were very relevant and useful in preparing and launching the first two tenders for the logistics platforms in 2021 and 2022. It also helped ARCCLA to define its long-term capacity building plan. There have been requests from other countries for similar technical assistance in support of the development of PPPs for transport and logistics.

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/OT/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>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
<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
HAI/0T/LAU	Policy-Development Emergency FFF (SDG-F Emergency Call)	2022–	UNDP MPTF
INT/0T/5BP	Follow-up to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2011–2020	2004–	Portugal
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 Capacities and Enhancing Investment Opportunities and Linkages with China	2021–	2030 Agenda PDF Sub-Fund
ROA-2023 (E12)	Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in African Least Developed Countries	2020–	Development Account

1. Assistance to the Palestinian people

343. **Development context.** 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. Growth is projected to weaken over the course of 2022 to about 3.5 per cent as a result of escalating confrontations with the occupying Power and deteriorating global environment.

344. Growth in 2021 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. As the low base effects in 2021 that underpinned growth faded, the 2022 growth is expected around 3.5 per cent. In the medium-term, GDP growth is expected to be in the range of 3 per cent, if the status quo persists, which is barely enough to keep up with a growing population and implies weak labour markets and per capita GDP stagnation.

345. 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. Apart from occupation, fiscal management remains the greatest challenge faced by the Palestinian government because of its impact on the ability to carry out basic State functions and meet obligations to pay civil servants, provide essential public goods and services and develop physical and institutional infrastructure. In November 2021, the Palestinian government announced that it could pay public servants only 75 per cent of salaries. By March 2023, the Palestinian government was still paying public employees 80 per cent of salaries.

346. The fiscal crisis is mainly caused by the economic consequences of occupation. Twenty-nine years have passed since the signing of the Paris Protocol, which was aimed at regulating the economic relations between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority

for a five-year interim period. Nearly three decades later, the Paris Protocol remains the general framework that governs, constrains and shapes Palestinian macroeconomic, fiscal and trade policies.

347. Occupation distorts the Palestinian economy and enforces de-agriculturalization and deindustrialization. Settlements continued to expand and the demolition of Palestinian assets in the West Bank continue. Socioeconomic conditions worsened, food insecurity increased, unemployment remained high and over one third of households fell below the poverty line. The deterioration in economic and political conditions fostered a deep fiscal crisis characterized by a sharp decline in donor aid, a large financing gap and the build-up of potentially destabilizing domestic debt and arrears to the private sector and pension fund. In, 2022 about a quarter of the workforce in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) were unemployed, in Gaza it is even worse as half the workforce was unemployed, and over half of the population were classified as poor.

348. The costly economic, trade and labour market dependence on the economy of Israel continued to deepen. The weak capacity of the Palestinian economy for job creation, under occupation, leaves no choice for a large share of workers but to seek employment in Israel and settlements. The long-standing tendency of the Occupied Palestinian Territory to serve as a reservoir of cheap labour for the economy of Israel has accelerated in recent years. Employment in Israel and settlements has more than doubled since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority despite the exclusion of the workforce of Gaza from employment in the economy of Israel since 2007. The majority of Palestinians are employed as unskilled workers in construction, agriculture, fishing and forestry, mining, quarrying and low-technology manufacturing.

349. Empirical research suggests that employment in Israel and settlements leads to a variety of negative impacts on Palestinian GDP growth. Such employment undermines the competitiveness of the Palestinian economy by dampening incentives to invest in human capital, decreasing the supply of skills and increasing domestic wages without a corresponding growth in productivity. Furthermore, such employment is unpredictable, precarious and sensitive to political and security crises. It cannot be a substitute for rejuvenating the Palestinian labour market by lifting the blockade on Gaza and lifting all economic restrictions throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

350. **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 expanded 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”.

351. The 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.

352. The United Nations General Assembly, in eight resolutions – resolutions 69/20, 70/12, 71/20, 72/13, 73/18, 74/10, 75/20, 77/22 – requests that UNCTAD report to the General Assembly on the economic cost of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people.

353. Over the years, 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; and
- (d) Enterprise, investment, and competition policy.

354. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD continued its support to the Palestinian people in coordination with the Government of the State of Palestine, Palestinian civil society, international organizations, donors, and the United Nations Country Team; with the goal of reviving the war-torn economy and pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals. The programme continued its ongoing support for the Palestinian people despite adverse and increasingly difficult field conditions.

355. In November 2022, UNCTAD delivered two workshops on quantitative aspects of impact evaluation, Methodologies and the Use of Satellite Data in Economic Analysis. The first workshop was held at the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS). Researchers and officials from the office of the Prime Minister (PMO), The Ministry of Finance, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Ministry of Agriculture, MAS, Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ), Social and Economic Policies Monitor Al-Marsad and FAO participated, among other participants. The second workshop was held at Birzeit University targeting the academic community, faculty members, researchers and students from different disciplines. Participants were enthusiastically engaged during the two workshops and the feedback was quite positive. In addition, in November 2022 UNCTAD conducted an Expert Group Meeting to discuss the Economic cost of Occupation for the Palestinian People.

356. In October 2022, UNCTAD signed a grant agreement with the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), the Palestinian premier economic research institution, which will serve as UNCTAD local partner. MAS specializes in applied economic research and social policies and has a well-established capacity and knowledge of the Palestinian economy, its unique context, its constraints, data sources as well as access to leading domestic and international experts. MAS, among other deliverables, will work with UNCTAD to update the latter's macro-econometric model and train Palestinian government staff and researchers on the structure and the use of UNCTAD's quantitative framework ISFII.

357. In response to the above-mentioned General Assembly resolutions, in 2022, UNCTAD submitted a report (A/77/295) to the General Assembly on the economic cost of occupation, focusing on the economic cost of the Israeli occupation of Area C, which accounts for about 60 per cent of the total area of the occupied West Bank. The report estimates the cost of the additional restrictions on economic activities in Area C, using the innovative methodology of night-time luminosity (NTL), captured by satellite sensors over a span of time, to estimate levels of economic activity.

358. In late 2020, UNCTAD received a grant from the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to sustain UNCTAD's professional capacity required for supporting the Palestinian people's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The grant funds a project that provides 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. In 2022, the study (UNCTAD/GDS/APP/2022/1) titled "The Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: The cost of restrictions in Area C viewed from above" was funded by the grant. This detailed study, released in December 2022, elaborates on the cost of restrictions on Palestinian economic activities in Area C.

359. **Results and impact.** In 2022, UNCTAD further enhanced its cooperation with Palestinian institutions through research, technical assistance, and consensus building. UNCTAD's work on Palestine has been used by the Palestinian Government officials, United Nations member States, diplomats, and other UN agencies. UNCTAD's output has been used as a resource for governments, institutions, researchers, leaders and the media. The reports contributed to strengthening international consensus on the question of Palestine and its economic development needs. The reports were also featured in hundreds

of articles in international media and quoted by the Palestinian Prime Minister in multiple occasions, including his statements to the COP27 and the Ad hoc Liaison committee (AHLC) meeting in New York in October 2022.

2. Productive capacity-building in vulnerable economies

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

360. **Development context.** For several decades structurally weak and vulnerable economies including landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) 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 many of them, particularly LDCs, 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 and LDCs 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.

361. The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 has further exacerbated these development obstacles. The lack of productive capacities particularly in LDCs 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.

362. 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 and LDCs, as well as SIDS, to maximize the benefits from international trade, build export competitiveness and join the group of successful exporters.

363. Against this background, this project intends to 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.

364. **Objectives.** The project aims to build the capacities of selected landlocked developing countries and least developed 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, some of which are also LDCs, 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 assists policymakers from selected countries in designing and implementing policies to build productive capacities, expand and diversify their exports, and achieve structural transformation.

365. **Outputs and results.** In 2022, UNCTAD published the report “Harnessing the potential of nutraceutical products for export diversification and development in landlocked developing countries: Assessment of Comparative Advantages and Binding Constraints”. The publication reviews the potential of three nutraceutical products in each of six LLDCs (i.e. Azerbaijan, Bhutan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Nepal), four of which are also LDCs, 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.

366. In 2022, UNCTAD disseminated the findings of the study and provided for an exchange of views among LLDCs and LDCs on the potential of the health food sector and the measures needed to harness them. The study was presented and discussed at the workshop entitled “Strengthening Productive Capacities and Facilitating Structural Transformation in Asia-Pacific Least Developed Countries” which took place in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The workshop responded to the increased needs of LDCs to strengthen their domestic economies, build productive capacities to ensure that they effectively undergo structural economic transformation, graduate from the LDC category with the momentum and ultimately participate in the global economic processes as viable partners at segments of higher value addition. It was intended as an introduction to further actions at the national level to foster domestic productive capacities, support structural economic transformation and enable regional cooperation. The specific objectives of the workshop are: (i) to familiarise policymakers from Asia-Pacific LDCs with the concept of productive capacities and productive capacities index (PCI); (ii) to promote productive capacities in the process of domestic policy formulation to advance structural economic transformation, economic diversification and economic resilience as well as to ensure more effective participation in the global economy; (iii) to understand the factors impeding structural economic transformation in Asia Pacific LDCs; and (iv) to explore pathways to graduate with momentum by accelerating structural transformation and promoting regional cooperation. The report on nutraceuticals was presented as a viable option on the path of economic diversification and structural transformation through development of export-oriented production of high-value agricultural commodities. The workshop was attended by policymakers from the Asia-Pacific countries whose nutraceutical potential as examined – Bhutan and Nepal, as well as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Timor-Leste.

367. UNCTAD organized an event titled “Sustainably harnessing the potential of marine bio-prospecting for socioeconomic development in SIDS” in hybrid format in Geneva on 7 April 2022 at the margins of the 4th Oceans Forum. Presentations were made on the socioeconomic and legal aspects of bioprospecting in SIDS, and experts contributed through a panel discussion.

368. Furthermore, drawing on its work on nutraceuticals, UNCTAD and the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) organized a joint side-event at the LDC5 Conference, held in Doha, Qatar, from 5 to 9 March 2023. The side event, entitled “Productive Capacities and Impact Investing in LDCs: The Case of Nutraceuticals” aimed to raise awareness about the role of productive capacities and export diversification in development, and outlined concrete investment instruments (impact investment) as well as sectors with unexploited potential for value-added and export diversification, such as the nutraceuticals.

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

369. **Development context.** UNCTAD is implementing a United Nations Development Account project on “Coherent strategies for productive capacity development in 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.

370. 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).

371. **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.

372. **Outputs and results.** Within the framework of the project, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of the United Republic of Tanzania, organized a regional workshop on “Coherent Strategies for Productive Capacities Development in African Least Developed Countries” from 12 to 13 October 2022 in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. The regional workshop was a follow-up to the national workshops that were held in the United Republic of Tanzania (April 2021), Rwanda (May 2021) and Burkina Faso (June 2022). The regional workshop brought together officials from Burkina Faso, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, selected non-beneficiary African countries, representatives of the private sector, partner implementing agencies, and international experts to (1) discuss challenges and opportunities associated with developing coherent strategies for productive capacities development; (2) identify recommendations on possible measures and options to address existing constraints on productive capacities development; (3) share best practices and experiences in formulating and implementing holistic and coherent approaches to productive capacities development amongst government officials and stakeholders; and (4) draw lessons for the three project beneficiary countries from the experiences of non-LDCs (least developed countries) in Africa as well as non-African countries that have successfully developed productive capacities. The workshop participants had very high appreciation of the workshop and the presentations and most of the ratings provided were either very good or excellent.

373. In 2022, UNCTAD provided support to the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of the United Republic of Tanzania in carrying out fieldwork in selected cities in the country, with a view to obtaining the private sector’s perspectives on the current and emerging constraints and challenges it faces in boosting productive capacities. A team of officials of the Ministry worked with the Policy Implementation Adviser engaged by UNCTAD to accomplish this task. The officials visited selected local firms in the following sub-sectors: roofing, cement, steel, ceramics, textiles, sunflower, and sugar. The outcome of this exercise fed into policy implementation processes by the Ministry for building productive capacities and fostering industrial and trade expansion in the United Republic of Tanzania.

374. UNCTAD and the Economic Policy Research Network (EPRN) Secretariat in Rwanda co-organized the 8th Annual Economic Research Conference from 26 to 27 May

2022 under the broad theme “The Covid-19 pandemic in perspective: Policies to accelerate economic recovery for the Rwandan and regional economy.” Papers presented at the conference assessed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery measures across various economic sectors and populations to provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the crisis. The research findings discussed at the Conference contributed to policy recommendations to the government on specific short-term, medium-term, and long-term economic policy options to advance a new and inclusive path to recovery and growth in Rwanda and the region. UNCTAD’s support was very much appreciated and the EPRN board issued a certificate of appreciation to UNCTAD management in recognition of the support provided.

375. UNCTAD and the Ministry of Industrial Development, Trade, Crafts and SMEs of Burkina Faso organized a national workshop on developing productive capacities in Burkina Faso from 8 to 9 June 2022. The workshop was attended by officials of various government departments in Burkina Faso as well as academics and representatives of the private sector, women associations, and regional and international organisations such as ECOWAS, West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), UNIDO, UNECA, UNDP etc. The issues covered at the meeting included: the state of industrial development in the country; how to strengthen private sector development; integration of gender into the transformation agenda; improvement of infrastructure; and regional integration. Participants at the meeting found it very useful and 82 percent of the participants surveyed indicated that it improved their ability to formulate policies and strategies. Following the national workshop, the Minister of Industrial Development, Trade, Handicrafts and SMEs of Burkina Faso sent a letter of appreciation to UNCTAD in July 2022.

376. In August 2022, UNCTAD provided advisory services to the Ministry of Industrial Development, Trade, Handicrafts and SMEs of Burkina Faso on productive capacity development issues. UNCTAD hired a Policy Implementation Adviser for the Ministry to assist officials in formulation and implementation of policies for developing productive capacities in the country.

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

377. **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.

378. In 2021, Angola had a GDP of \$67.4 billion, after a dip in 2020, and 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), as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with GDP in oil-exporting countries having contracted by 1.5 per cent in 2020. Nonetheless, Angola is among the top ten economies in sub-Saharan Africa, and in the first semester of 2022 the projected real GDP growth rate was around 3.2 per cent (y/y), driven by the strong recovery of the oil sector. In 2022, Angola was the largest exporter of oil in Africa, having surpassed Nigeria holding this position in the previous years. On the other hand, while the diversification trend is positive with a growth in non-oil exports in real terms since 2016, the country’s economy-wide productive capacities remain below the average for LDCs. Furthermore, FDI in Angola has been especially volatile since 2013, following a downward trend and predominantly linked to the petroleum industry. 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.

379. In 2021, the population of Angola was projected to be 34,503,774 people. Despite the country’s high GDP, poverty and inequality among its population remain pervasive. In 2018, 78 per cent of the population was living on \$6.85 or less per day, and around a third of the population was living at or below the international poverty line. 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.

380. The National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (NPCGA) of Angola (2022), based on the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index (PCI) indicates that in terms of productive capacities Angola ranks 183rd globally and 39th in Africa with an overall 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.

381. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD implemented the cross-divisional EU-UNCTAD Joint Programme for Angola, which has the objective of supporting Angola to foster productive capacities and structural transformation including diversification and help the country link to global and regional value chains through training, technical advice and support to policy development and implementation.

382. 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.

383. 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.

384. The 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.

385. **Outputs.** Research and training materials developed under the Programme in 2022 include the Portuguese translation of the study *Harnessing fishery resources for socioeconomic development: Lessons for Angola and Haiti*; Impact evaluation on Angola's accession to the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement; a Guidebook on Trade Impact Assessment; a Guidebook on honey policy and residue plan development; and a Report on methodology to target investors in citrus fruits and fertilizers.

386. Capacity building trainings in Angola in 2022 covered the following areas: strategy on graduation with momentum; Blue Economy development and meeting international standards for fisheries exports; apiculture sector policy, training (ToTs) and extension services; trade facilitation (ToTs); Rules of Origin; trade impact assessment; logistics hubs development and financing for green sectors; trade-related Intellectual Property Rights; provincial Empretec entrepreneurship training; investment promotion in agribusiness; improving statistics of Foreign Direct Investment; mobilizing institutional investment; and trade negotiation techniques.

387. As part of the United Nations system's support to the Angolan government, UNCTAD has been designated as a technical lead to support Angola's eventual graduation from the LDC category. UNCTAD prepared substantive studies to support evidence-based policymaking to help the Government in its drafting of the planned National Smooth Transition Strategy (NSTS). A National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (NPCGA) has been formulated and validated by the Government of Angola. NPCGA is designed to identify comparative advantages and binding constraints to economic development of Angola as well as mapping intervention strategies. In addition, a Vulnerability Profile and a study on the impacts of COVID-19 in Angola were prepared. These studies, together with the NPCGA were presented and discussed in a national workshop in Angola in April 2022. A further

policy background paper entitled, “Strategy for Graduation with Momentum for Angola - Policies for a Smooth Transition and Beyond” was developed by UNCTAD and submitted to the Government of Angola for use in the graduation process and drafting of the upcoming National Development Strategy.

388. In March and April 2022, UNCTAD delivered a virtual capacity-building workshop on preferential rules of origin in EU-Africa trade. An overview of the rules of origin in EU trade arrangements and other free trade agreements with African countries was presented and discussions were held on the challenges and implementation problems of some of the regulations on rules of origin in EU arrangements with African countries.

389. UNCTAD helped monitor the effective utilization of trade preferences granted under North-South preferential trading arrangements as well as those under the existing Regional Economic Communities (RECs). A report on the utilization rates of Angola its impact on LDC Graduation was produced. The study outcome provided insight into whether trade agreements are functioning correctly to boost intra-African trade and deliver the trading opportunities and economic growth that motivated the political will to launch such trade initiatives.

390. The Programme collaborated closely with various international organizations and UNCTAD’s Centres of Excellence (CoE). In this regard, for instance, UNCTAD collaborated with UNCTAD’s CoE in Viet Nam, the Nha Trang University, the International Standardization Organization (ISO), and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for the workshop on the Blue Economy, with a focus on fisheries sector development and meeting international standards for fisheries exports in October 2022. A report entitled “Harnessing fishery resources for socioeconomic development: Lessons for Angola and Haiti”, was published in 2021 and translated into Portuguese in 2022. The year closed with a meeting of the project Technical Committee where UNCTAD presented the results achieved by the Programme, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations, as well as the next year’s work plan, for comments with a view to preparing the next session of the Steering Committee. The next Steering Committee will approve the work plan of the Programme for 2023.

391. **Results and impacts.** The EU-UNCTAD Programme for Angola has, to date, built the capacities of 2,554 Angolans (32 per cent female) from public sector (55 per cent), private sector (33 per cent), academia (5 per cent), NGOs (4 per cent) and others. Out of these, 875 were trained in 2022, where 22 training activities and action-oriented research on economic diversification, structural transformation and LDC graduation were undertaken. Seventy-three trainers were trained, out of which 37 were trained in 2022, in entrepreneurship, apiculture sector development, identification of green sectors for diversification, trade facilitation and Non-Trade Measures.

392. National institutions have been supported to lead training programmes and policy development processes. Policy support has been provided through eight policy and legislative reviews and technical advice to policy development, while assistance continues in six other policy areas. The Programme has helped to map value chains of eight promising green products and support their development towards exportability. Eighty-five per cent of entrepreneurs trained through Empretec report on increased revenues and a 71.4 per cent yearly gross evolution in job creation in their enterprises. Support was provided to develop PPP projects for financing transport and logistics infrastructure for green sectors’ development and for the country to move towards more organized, evidence-based trade and investment policies.

393. More importantly, UNCTAD’s work in Angola has contributed to improved policy coordination, formulation and implementation by bringing 23 ministries and public and private institutions to work together. It has also enabled all relevant UNCTAD’s divisions and experts to deliver as one on several areas of trade and development that are of interest to Angola.

394. The Programme has helped to draft better policies⁴³ and assisted in their implementation, as well as trained entrepreneurs to reap the newly upcoming opportunities. It has successfully handed over the management of the Empretec entrepreneurship training programme to a national private sector association now functioning as the Empretec Host Institution in the country. At the impact level, the exports of non-oil products of Angola have grown since 2016 in real terms and the value of total exports of the country to SADC countries is on an increasing trend again. The Programme was selected as a global success story in SDG implementation in 2022.

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

395. **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.

396. 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.

397. **Objectives and features.** The project aims to assist eight developing economies in Africa in harnessing the transformative potential of Chinese partnership in Africa, including in the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, for their economic development.

398. 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.

399. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD accelerated the implementation of the Project and continued to cooperate with the following countries: Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia. The productive capacities' gaps and binding constraints to development are now at various stages of being identified and examined. These serve as the background for the subsequent policy formulation, which is already taking place, to alleviate the constraints to development by fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages with China.

400. The National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Angola was subsequently validated by the Government of Angola (April 2022) and a series of detailed policy recommendations were formulated (July 2022) – in relation to economic sectors, supporting economic policies and institutional building as far as long-term sustainability is concerned. Moreover, in the reporting period, capacity-building activities took place in response to the needs of addressing productive capacities' gaps.

401. The policy dialogue on Ethiopia's productive capacities was followed by a training for national expert statisticians to apply Productive Capacities Index to identify and measure binding constraints to development (May 2022). Moreover, the preparations of the background document for Ethiopia's National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment were advanced, whereas additional consultations were held with various ministries to ensure greater cohesion between the Project and development plans of the Government (July 2022).

⁴³ See interactive charts in <https://unctad.org/project/eu-unctad-joint-programme-angola-train-trade-ii> - Progress on policy development.

A final draft NPCGA was presented and validated by national stakeholders in December 2022.

402. The policy dialogue and statisticians' training of Kenya were supplemented by the finalization of a first draft of the background document for Kenya's National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment (September 2022) and additional consultations held with various ministries to ensure greater cohesion between the Project and development plans of the Government (July 2022).

403. The preparations of Nigeria's National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment were supported by the finalization of the background document as well as a needs assessment mission and two workshops, one for policy makers and one for expert statisticians to examine the binding constraints to Nigeria's development and to familiarize experts with the Productive Capacities Index and its application.

404. The National Productive Capacities Gap Assessment of Zambia was finalized. The document identifies Zambia's binding constraints to development and provides policy response in terms of fostering structural transformation, building productive capacities and enhancing investment opportunities and linkages.

405. **Results and impact.** The progress means that countries are increasingly aware of their development challenges and increasingly informed in terms of adequate policy responses to ensure sustainable and inclusive development and achieving Sustainable Development Goals through economy-wide impactful interventions. For Angola, Zambia and ultimately Ethiopia, the process enhances the preparation for the graduation from the LDC category by ensuring smooth transition and graduation with momentum.

406. Through the implementation of various activities, the Project has so far substantially increased awareness of and expertise in identifying gaps and limitations to sustainable development in the targeted countries and enhanced knowledge of policy makers, technical experts, and representatives of private sector and academia in adequate policy response and policy formulation.

2.6. *United Nations joint programme Global Crisis Emergency support for Haiti: sustainable trade and value chain development for diversification of the economy, improved working conditions, rural employment creation and food security*

407. **Development context.** Approximately 90,000 people are directly engaged in the fisheries sector in Haiti, 28 per cent of whom are women who operate in the informal sector and provide livelihoods for over 416,000 people. However, fishing and aquaculture are mainly artisanal in the country, with a significant lack of productive capacity despite their potential. The fisheries and aquaculture sectors have very important economic, social, cultural and food security impacts, particularly in rural communities. These sectors offer real opportunities for sustainable growth, investment, improved post-harvest processing, value addition and employment creation, particularly for women and youth.

408. **Objectives and features.** In June 2022, UNCTAD jointly with the ILO developed a new UN Joint Programme (UNJP) to respond to the call under the UN Joint SDG Fund Development Emergency Modality in response to the global crisis on food, energy and finance. The UNJP works to support enterprise creation and access to employment in the breadfruit sector (lead ILO) and develop the fisheries and aquaculture sector (lead UNCTAD) in selected priority zones of Haiti.

409. UNCTAD's support under this Joint Programme focuses on fisheries and aquaculture sector development, with the objective of mapping the regulatory, policy, and productive capacities need in priority fishing zones, preparing a project document, and forming strategic partnerships with international financial institutions for the funding of future support.

410. The Programme was approved in July 2022 and extended until April 2023 due to the crisis in Haiti and the inability to implement any activities in the foreseen period.

411. **Outputs and results.** In 2022, UNCTAD has helped to develop sector-specific research reports on fisheries and aquaculture sectors' potential and binding constraints, one of which is an international and the other is a national study. The two studies on the fishing

sector call for improved public policy, legislative frameworks and their implementation, modernization of main infrastructures, facilitation of public and private investments in fisheries, reinforcement of government capacity, and incentives to capitalize on the potential of this industry to contribute to the livelihood of coastal communities while improving Haitian food security and generating export earnings

3. Mobilizing financial resources for development

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

412. **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. 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, which called 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 member states.

413. **Objectives and features.** The objective of the project was to strengthen diagnostic and policy design capacity of the relevant macroeconomic, fiscal and debt financing authorities in selected LICs and MICs to respond appropriately and innovatively to the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure a recovery that enables the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

414. The initiative, under the coordination of the Debt and Development Finance Branch (DDFB) of UNCTAD, brought together UNCTAD and the regional commissions for Africa (ECA), Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and ensured global reach and regional presence as well as international cooperation and expertise sharing. Each of the regional partners was engaged in mutually enhancing clusters and workstreams.

415. The project was linked with many Sustainable Development Goals. It focused 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 would be required for attaining environmentally sustainable economic growth with decent work and simultaneously reducing inequalities. Therefore, the project was also linked to Sustainable Development Goals 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities) and 13 (climate action). The project also contributed 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 was crucial to protect the lives of all human beings, hence averting a human rights crisis.

416. **Outputs.** The project finished in June 2022. UNCTAD’s work focused on cluster one (Macro-financial needs assessments and possible policy responses to the COVID-19 shock) and cluster two (Making debt work for development). UNCTAD provided 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. These diagnostics built on UNCTAD expertise in (a) designing global macroeconomic scenarios through the UNCTAD Global Policy Model (GPM); (b) assessing developing countries’ financial conditions based on the UNCTAD 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 enhanced 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

417. Specifically, UNCTAD delivered in 2022 the following outputs:

- (a) A research paper on “Challenges Posed by the Global Development Trajectory from 2022 to 2030” using analysis from the GPM model;
- (b) An African country study on “The Macroeconomic and Social Impact of COVID-19 in Kenya” based on GPM output and other analysis;
- (c) A research paper on “Climate Adaptation: Building resilience through structural transformation” using GPM output and other analysis;
- (d) A real-time GFSN tracker of the liquidity options and a research paper on “No One Left Behind? COVID-19 and the Shortcomings of the Global Financial Safety Net for low- and middle-income countries”;
- (e) A short policy paper titled “Buckle up, it’s a bumpy ride: financial instability and volatility in developing and emerging economies” using the FCI tool;
- (f) A technical paper on understanding, measuring, and analysing financial conditions in developing countries in times of Covid-19 and beyond using the FCI tool;
- (g) A research paper on “UNCTAD Sustainable Development Finance Assessment (SDFA) Framework: linking debt sustainability to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda”;
- (h) A peer review paper of the SDFA framework;
- (i) A user manual on UNCTAD Sustainable Development Finance Assessment Framework Policy Dashboard;
- (j) A short policy paper on “Soft law on sovereign borrowing and lending to sovereigns: Revitalizing UNCTAD Principles on the Promotion of Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing”;
- (k) Six online workshops were organised by UNCTAD between March and June 2022 on various topics under the project: GPM, SDFA, GFSN Tracker and the soft-law UNCTAD Principles;
- (l) An end of project two-day online workshop were held in July 2022 by UNCTAD in partner with ECA, ESCAP and ECLAC, which focused on “sharing lessons and policy experiences for mobilising financial resources for development in the time of crisis”.

418. **Results.** In 2022, UNCTAD delivered key outputs for the achievement of project outcomes.

419. Within cluster one, further analysis of global economic situation as well as country studies using the tools such as UNCTAD GPM, GFSN tracker and the new generation UNCTAD FCI contributed to enhancing the understanding and capability of member States and beneficiary developing countries to undertake macro-financial needs assessments as well as to identify possible policy responses to the COVID-19 shock.

420. Cluster two provided as an output the first version of the UNCTAD SDFA framework that was applied to two beneficiary countries, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to enable them to identify their funding and investment needs to achieve Sustainable Development Goals 1- 4 without jeopardizing external financial sustainability and external and public debt sustainability. The project also delivered a User Manual of the UNCTAD SDFA policy dashboard to allow policymakers in the selected country to assess the impact of different policy choices on external financial and public debt sustainability. The SDFA framework will be enhanced and extended to climate-related SDGs in the 14th Tranche DA project “Mobilizing external financial resources beyond COVID-19 for greener, more equal and sustainable development in selected vulnerable SIDS in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean”, also coordinated by the DDFB. This framework is an important tool for the DDFB work on research, consensus building and technical assistance related to debt and development finance.

421. The end of project online workshop was well-attended and was successful in bringing together member States, academics and policy-makers in developing countries. All participants who responded to the workshop surveys found the tools and the discussion very useful or somewhat useful in helping developing countries build resilience against external shocks. Many experts and policy makers also gave high appraisal of the project (more details can be found in a project brochure⁴⁴). The project also showcased a good example of coordination among UN entities (UNCTAD, ECLAC, ESCAP, ECA) in working together on strengthening diagnostic and policy design capacity of selected LICs and MICs in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean to respond appropriately and innovatively to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2 *United Nations joint programme Haiti in Crisis: A National Consultation on Reform Priorities and Financing Options for Accelerated Sustainable Development Goal Achievement*

422. **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 1 to 2 per cent of its value in 2021. The GDP of Haiti was at \$20,94 billion (current United States dollars) in 2021. The country's exports are highly concentrated, with around 90 per cent of merchandise exports in textiles mainly targeting the United States market.

423. 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 reform imperatives and is thus particularly important and timely for this project.

424. **Objectives and features.** The project helps Haiti assess financing options for National Sustainable Development Goal Strategy achievement and 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.

425. While the project implementation is, on the United Nations side, co-led by UNDP and UNCTAD, the entire Haiti UN Country Team (UNCT), as well as non-resident agencies with a particularly strong mandate or expertise in this subject area, are associated with the project and under the leadership of the Regional Coordinator, as co-implementing partners or by sharing their accumulated global and Haiti-specific relevant expertise and lessons learned.

426. The project ensures 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.

427. At the end of the project, the continuation of regular strategy updating was fully institutionalized and capacities to support this strengthened. A strong, Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (MPCE)-coordinated monitoring and evaluation capacity will be

⁴⁴ <https://mobilizingdevfinance.org/sites/mobilizedevresources/files/2022-09/DA-COVID-pamphlet-final-web-book.pdf>

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.

428. **Outputs and results.** UNCTAD's contribution focused 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. UNCTAD was responsible for preparing five studies to assess the development and financing landscape of Haiti, providing a solid evidence-base for the development of strategies and plans. In 2022, four draft studies and one publication on enhancing economic and export opportunities in key sectors, as well as on innovative financing opportunities and productive capacities prepared in this context were discussed in workshops with the UN Joint Programme's core national implementing partners. As a next step, the studies will be presented and discussed in broad national workshops. However, this workstream got delayed in the second part of 2022, as due to serious security concerns it was not possible to hold meetings in Haiti. The project was in early 2022 extended to June 2023.

III. Theme C: Fostering economic efficiency, improving governance

429. 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.

430. 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.

431. 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 2022 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

432. **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 method combining the exchange of experiences with recommendations for possible improvements either in the formulation of laws or in their enforcement. This interactive method has been reviewed by the Working Group on modalities of UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies, and the “Revised Methodological Guidelines for Peer Reviews”⁴⁵ was presented and agreed in the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Groups of Experts (IGE) on Consumer Protection Law and Policy and the twentieth session of the IGE on Competition Law and Policy in 2022.

433. **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 IGE on Competition Law and Policy and on Consumer Protection Law and Policy and during the Review Conferences. 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.

434. **Outputs.** In 2022, UNCTAD conducted the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Thailand as well as the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Bangladesh. UNCTAD also started preparing the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Gabon and the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Paraguay.

435. Voluntary Peer Review of Consumer Protection Law and Policy of Thailand.⁴⁶ The voluntary peer review on consumer protection law and policy of Thailand, the fifth exercise facilitated by UNCTAD until now, was held in July 2022. The assessment of the country’s consumer protection law and policy concluded that Thailand has highly developed and satisfactory consumer protection laws and policies and solid institutional structures comprising several different authorities, with the Office of the Consumer Protection Board (OCPB) as the focal point. It effectively exercised its duties, like engaging in constructive dialogue and cooperation with businesses and consumer groups, which reduced the number of consumer complaints. Regarding consumer protection, Thailand is a leading country in the region and within ASEAN. The report identified some areas where improvements could be made to strengthen consumer protection. Several recommendations addressed the legal and policy frameworks, while others covered public policy and institutional frameworks.

436. Regarding the legislative framework, it was recommended to unify and expand the definition of “consumer” to address the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers. Also, the review of legislation on consumer goods and services warranties that the Consumer Protection Law be amended to address substantive and procedural fairness better and to ensure that opt-out clauses may not exclude warranties in consumer contracts. Furthermore, another recommendation suggested adapting laws and policies to the special features of e-commerce. Also, clarity when examining the rules of burden of proof was suggested, as well as regulatory development to specify which goods are excluded from cooling-off periods and other return procedures.

437. Other recommendations were issued to improve public policy and institutional framework in consumer protection. They referred to strengthening the primary role of OCPB as regulator and policymaker by allowing other agencies to deliver dispute resolution services to consumers freeing the OCPB headquarters to focus on policymaking. Due to the more than 20 years of experience in complaints handling, it is recommended that the OCPB share its

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https://unctad.org/system/files/informationdocument/ccpb_IGECOM20_Report_WG_Modalities_PR_en.pdf

⁴⁶ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccplp2022d1_en.pdf

mediation experience and knowledge with the related authorities. It is also recommended that capacity-building initiatives be undertaken regarding judiciary members, focusing on consumer protection matters. It was also recommended that OCPB pursues its partnership with business and consumer groups to strengthen educational and awareness-raising campaigns for consumers. Furthermore, another recommendation suggested it was crucial to raise the annual budget of OCPB to a level comparable to countries with a similar level of development. Finally, another recommendation was that inter-institutional coordination must be strengthened, particularly regarding personal data protection.

438. 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.

439. Voluntary Peer Review of Competition Law and Policy of Bangladesh⁴⁷. The voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Bangladesh was held in July 2022. Bangladesh is one of the few least developed countries to have volunteered to undergo this exercise. The report identified some areas where improvements could be made at both regulatory and institutional level, to create a more robust system for the promotion of competition in Bangladesh. The report recommendations included the increase of budget and financial resources to the Bangladesh Competition Commission (BCC) as well as the improvement of salaries to BCC staff, the amendment of the current Competition Act for clearer definition of violations, and operational independence of the BCC.

440. It was also recommended that the BCC publishes guidelines for merger control, abuse of dominance, horizontal or vertical agreements, and sanctions to increase legal certainty, facilitate compliance and promote competition, as well as guidelines based on best practices to ensure market definition. Also, the report recommends defining mandates with sectoral regulators and developing competition culture among involved stakeholders. Regarding capacity building, the report recommends providing tailored training activities on competition, and training of trainers to staff, commissioners, other officials and magistrates sectoral regulator staff and practitioners on a regular basis.

441. The UNCTAD secretariat presented a proposal for technical assistance to implement the peer review recommendations aiming at building capacities to improve competition enforcement through training, evidence-gathering and documentation management.

442. Regarding the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Gabon, which will be held in July 2023, UNCTAD conducted a fact-finding mission to collect data and information; identified the panel of peer reviewers; and worked on the peer review report.

443. In the same line, the process for the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Paraguay has also started and the factfinding mission was conducted in October 2022. UNCTAD started drafting the peer review report.

444. **Results and impacts.** The UNCTAD secretariat outlined two tailor-made technical assistance projects, respectively for Thailand and Bangladesh, for the implementation of the respective peer review recommendations, and invited other authorities and development partners to assist Thailand and Bangladesh in improving policies, enhancing enforcement capacities, and developing a competition and consumer protection culture. UNCTAD is planning the dissemination of the findings and recommendations emanating from the review to raise awareness among stakeholders on the importance of implementing the recommended actions for both countries. The dissemination event in Thailand took place on 25 April 2023 in Bangkok. The dissemination event in Bangladesh will be organized in 2023.

445. Regarding the voluntary peer review on consumer protection law and policy of Chile, which took place in 2021, its first recommendation was to “consider including consumer protection in the Chilean Constitution.” For this, UNCTAD presented the peer review recommendations before the Constitutional Assembly of Chile on 14 January 2022⁴⁸ as part

⁴⁷ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditcclp2022d1_en.pdf

⁴⁸ <https://unctad.org/meeting/dissemination-unctads-voluntary-peer-review-consumer-protection-law-and-policy-chile>

of the dissemination of the review's recommendations. As a follow-up, Chile requested an advisory opinion on the constitutional protection of consumer rights. The opinion analysed the current situation based on answers to UNCTAD's World Consumer Protection Map, showing that 56 per cent of responding countries' constitutions contained provisions on consumer protection, including the vast majority of Latin American countries. The opinion also analysed the experience of Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Spain and proposed two alternative texts in light of Chile's legal and institutional tradition. The proposed provisions on the protection of consumer rights were well received but not retained in the final version, which did not interfere with the applicable consumer protection law.

446. As a follow-up of the voluntary peer review of competition law and policy of Malawi, which took place in 2021, UNCTAD and the Competition and Free Trading Commission of Malawi held an event in Lilongwe⁴⁹ in November 2022 to disseminate the findings and recommendations emanating from the review. UNCTAD also presented a proposal for a technical assistance project to implement the peer review recommendations. During the same event, UNCTAD contributed to the creation of a video to maximize the exposure of the technical cooperation activities undertaken in Malawi.

C2 Business facilitation

Table C2
Business facilitation

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
BDI/0T/LAJ	Projet de développement local pour l'emploi (PDLE)	2022–	World Bank
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
LES/0T/LAW	Joint Programme on National Response to the Food Security Crisis in Lesotho	2022–	UNDP MPTF
LIB/0T/IBS	eRegistrations System Libya	2020–	Agence française d'expertise technique internationale
NIR/0T/IAU	Strengthening the Nigeria Trade information Portal (GIZ Germany)	2020–	Germany
TOG/0T/KAM	Renforcement des capacités du Ministère de la promotion de l'investissement (MPI) au Togo	2021–	UNDP-HQ
URT/0T/FBC	UNDAF II, inclusive Growth 2016 DRTF	2017–	UNDP MPTF
INT/0T/6AT	Business Facilitation Multi-donor Fund	2006–	Multi-donors

⁴⁹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/dissemination-voluntary-peer-review-competition-law-and-policy-malawi-and-follow-technical>

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
INT/0T/H CJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2020–	Kingdom of the Netherlands
RAF/0T/IAO	UNCTAD – TMEA Cooperation on Trade Facilitation	2019–	TradeMark Africa
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

447. **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 section 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.

448. 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.

449. **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.

450. 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 127r (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”. Further, it has shown to have a clear impact on women and young entrepreneurs as well as rural and vulnerable communities.

451. **Outputs.** In 2022, the programme benefited almost 30 countries and territories. The main outputs include:

(a) Online single windows and new online services were implemented in Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Iraq and Mali for business registration; in Bhutan, El Salvador, and Lesotho for business licensing; and in Cuba for trade permits. The electronic single windows serve as a centralized access point for businesses to access and submit all the necessary forms, applications, and documents required by different government agencies.

(b) Investment information portals were launched or expanded with online description of investment and business procedures in Burkina Faso, Comoros, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, and Togo. The information portal is a cornerstone for business facilitation reforms ensuring administrative transparency (guidance for businesses, anti-corruption mechanisms) and a technical platform for public-private dialogue.

(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). All Governments are compliant with Article 1 of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (Publication and availability of trade information). Trade procedures were also documented online as part of the UN joint Programme on National Response to the Food Security Crisis in Lesotho.

(d) Exchange of good practices and South-South cooperation. 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 Colombia, El Salvador Guatemala, Kenya and Mali trained officials in Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, Burundi, and Nigeria.

452. **Results and impacts.** Over 7 and a half million people visited information portals worldwide in 2022, enabling the creation of about 100,000 new businesses through online licensing. In addition, over 700 government officials, 56 per cent of whom were women, were trained on the basic principles of simplification and automation of government services. Furthermore, the programme generated considerable impact on the ground, particularly with regard to the following criteria:

Economic and social benefits

453. In Benin, company registrations increased two and a half times from 2020–2022. In 2022, the online single window MonEntreprise.bj registered 56,579 new businesses. One third of business owners were women (18,763), over 40 per cent were under 30 (23,214) and more than 70 per cent (41,303)⁵⁰ were based outside the capital, reflecting the greater ease with which vulnerable populations can access online systems. Fee income to the Government rose by the same percentage.

454. In El Salvador, company registrations increased by 13 per cent from 2020 to 2022. SMEs were also able to register through the system for \$600 million in COVID-19 recovery funds. The assessment and disbursement of the assistance were managed separately by the Government. Fifty-six per cent⁵¹ of users were women. Moreover, the implementation of a simplified online accounting system called Cuenta Mype has streamlined the process of maintaining up-to-date financial records and generating the necessary statements for SMEs to remain compliant. Among the Cuenta Mype system's users, 58 per cent⁵² are female business owners. Furthermore, UNCTAD supported the National Council for SMEs (CONAMYPE) in drafting the National Formalization Strategy which will be implemented in 2023, and helped set up customer service centers where SMEs are guided on using online services. They can also get information about aid and capacity building programmes offered by different government agencies.

455. In Bhutan, by the end of 2022, fifty-two per cent of those applying to register their cottage industries through the online single window launched earlier in the year were women.

456. In Mali, the electronic single window based on eRegistrations has boosted the number of businesses created by women (+97 per cent) and young entrepreneurs (+35 per cent).

⁵⁰ Source: <https://monentreprise.bj/dashboards/public>

⁵¹ Source: <https://miempresa.gob.sv/> user list in the administrative section

⁵² Source: <https://cuentamype.org/>

Speed

457. 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

458. Altogether, UNCTAD information portals document 11,400 procedures, with over 20,000 steps, 55,400 forms and requirements, 6,969 norms and laws accessible online and over 8,500 civil servants and entities with contact data.

459. In Libya, a local team was set up by the General Information Authority to document new procedures in the investment information portal and maintain the existing data of 15 procedures related to business creation and operation up to date.

460. A new information portal on business related procedures was configured in Jordan and several civil servants were trained on the methodology of information collection and documentation. The portal will be launched and made available to the public in 2023.

461. The Togo investment information portal documents 55 procedures, enabling businesses to obtain detailed and up to date information on administrative procedures online. As a result, less time is spent on understanding the formalities and more time and resources are dedicated to the growth of their business.

Simplification and harmonization

462. 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.

463. In Kenya, 55 trade-related procedures are now undergoing simplification (5 more than in 2021)).

464. In Rwanda, 33 trade-related procedures are now undergoing simplification (two more than in 2021).

465. In Uganda, 31 trade-related procedures are now undergoing simplification (12 more than in 2021).

466. In the United Republic of Tanzania, 17 trade-related procedures are still undergoing simplification.

467. 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

468. The eRegistrations system is an e-government system, designed to set up electronic single windows and computerize simple or complex administrative procedures.

469. In Bhutan, entrepreneurs can fill in a form on their phone and receive their business documents by email, all at no cost. At the same time government employees have been adding new procedures to the platform themselves, without assistance. They aim to include all economic-related procedures by the end of 2024.

470. In Cuba new services were developed in the Cuban Electronic Single Window for Foreign Trade, and 10 new civil servants were trained on service design, system operation and maintenance.

471. In El Salvador, 10 new services were launched, allowing national and foreign investors to register and operate for Free Zones and gas trading companies.

472. In Iraq, entrepreneurs can register simultaneously with five mandatory registries and pay online and it remains the only official way to submit company creation requests in Baghdad.

473. In Togo, 15 investment procedures are being automated through a new online single window, reducing the administrative burden by at least 70 per cent.

474. In Burundi, private sector's operators can register and modify their business online thanks to a new electronic single-window based on eRegistrations platform.

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/OT/FBK	European Union–UNCTAD Joint Programme Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
PAR/OT/IBT	Strengthening capacity of National Trade Facilitation Committee in Paraguay	2020–	World Bank
INT/OT/HBG	HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Agreement Capacity-Building Programme	2018–	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
INT/OT/4CO	Capacity Building in Developing Countries and Least Developed Countries to support their effective participation in the WTO Negotiations Process on Trade Facilitation	2004–	Multi-donors
INT/OT/ICF	HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Agreement Capacity-Building Programme	2020–	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
INT/OT/JBI	Strengthening national capacities (National Trade Facilitation Committees) to ensure a coordinated implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement	2021–	Germany, BMZ
RAS/OT/JBO	Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade (IMPACT)	2021–	European Union
INT/OT/LAL	Accelerate Trade Facilitation	2022–	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
RAS/OT/LAK	PACER Plus UNCTAD Capacity Building Programme 2022	2022–	PACER Plus Implementation Unit
RAF/OT/LAP	Strengthening Capacity of the National Trade Facilitation Committees in the ECOWAS Region	2022–	World Bank

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
RAF/0T/IAO	UNCTAD-TMEA Cooperation on Trade Facilitation	2019–	TradeMark 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
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2225U (U14)	Blockchains for facilitating trade and enhancing competitiveness	2022–	Development Account

475. **Development context.** Trade facilitation aims at making cross-border trade of goods – including import, export and transit – faster, cheaper and more transparent, while at the same time maintaining efficient compliance controls such as ensuring collection of duties, taxes, and observing product standards. This is done through a number of general principles including simplification, standardization, harmonization and modernization, mainly achieved through digitalization and cooperation. These principles help achieve both key objectives, i.e. compliance controls and easier trade. Trade facilitation is today recognized as a critical element in national trade policy and therefore a fundamental factor in the national development framework.

476. The World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WTO TFA), which entered into force in 2017, is the main reason for the increased focus on trade facilitation. To date [as of 5 March; as per <https://www.tfafacility.org/notifications-ratifications/ratifications-list>], 156 of the 164 WTO Members have ratified the agreement. The alignment of the WTO TFA with national and regional rules, such as for example the African Continental Free Trade Area, is important in achieving a harmonized global trade facilitation system.

477. 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, to enter the formal sector, make international trade procedures more transparent and predictable, 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.

478. As a result, trade facilitation reforms are directly contributing to the achievement of 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's work supporting national trade facilitation committees (NTFCs) directly supports Goal 17 on "effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships".

479. **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. The goal is to improve the capacity of countries to implement trade facilitation reforms, including compliance with international and regional rules and standards relating to trade facilitation, principally the World Trade Organization commitments and contribute to creating a transparent and well governed global cross-border trading environment with a view to facilitating global supply and value chains.

480. UNCTAD assists developing countries with a range of activities as follows: (1) elaboration of needs assessments and national and regional trade facilitation implementation plans; (2) assistance with the ratification, categorization and notification of

national implementation obligations; (3) development of project proposals and implementation plans; (4) advisory services and capacity-building for countries and their national trade facilitation committees (NTFCs); (5) implementation of management, monitoring and evaluation tools for trade facilitation implementation; (6) assistance to roll out transparency and simplification tools such as Trade Information Portals; (7) provide capacity-building and technical assistance on trade facilitation reforms and simplification; (8) assistance with the implementation of trade facilitation measures at national and regional levels and finally (9) promoting sustainable and climate-smart trade facilitation reforms.

481. A main feature of UNCTAD's technical and capacity-building in trade facilitation is to assist with the establishment and operationalization of NTFCs, which are mandatory for all WTO members in line with article 23.2 of the WTO TFA and which are also an obligation in many regional trade agreements. 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 and the recent supply chain crisis, NTFCs have become even more important entities at national levels to facilitate the flow of goods, contributing to and assisting in the coordination of implementation of streamlined processes that facilitate trade, including the digitalization of such processes.

482. UNCTAD has established 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. This includes a training programme to professionalize NTFCs and other national trade facilitation stakeholders, the Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees. The main objective of the Empowerment programme is to help the committees to implement, in a coordinated manner, trade facilitation reforms, including the provisions of the WTO TFA, and regional or sub-regional agreements and to be able to efficiently manage, monitor and report on the implementation of these.

483. In addition, UNCTAD supports trade facilitation reforms at regional levels. This includes work with 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 the Central American Economic Integration Secretariat (SIECA). As an example, UNCTAD has for several years been advising the EAC on a regional trade facilitation strategy and how to align and harmonize this strategy with national policies through NTFCs.

484. The UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Programme also assists developing countries in the implementation of specific trade facilitation measures. UNCTAD has assisted with the following activities in 2022: 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; supporting countries in reviewing trade facilitation preparedness in crisis situations; and finally assisting countries in greening trade facilitation reforms through focusing on climate-smart trade facilitation procedures.

485. The success of the programme is largely due to the focus on building and sustaining national capacity through knowledge and technology transfer. In this respect the close collaboration with national partners and donors, as well as strong South-South collaborative learning focus are key success factors. Moreover, the program also relies on an integrated collaborative approach with other fields of expertise within UNCTAD, working on the crossroads of trade facilitation with customs and trade 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, the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation and a host of other international and regional organizations.

486. **Outputs.** UNCTAD's technical assistance and capacity-building work in support of trade facilitation in 2022 continued to further develop the good practices that have been adopted during COVID-19, but at the same time, as a result of the increased lifting of restrictions globally, realigned assistance to include more in-country assistance as appropriate and needed.

487. One of the lessons learned from COVID-19 has been that a large part of capacity building work can be done virtually but that the efficacy of virtual capacity building declines over time with a certain fatigue amongst recipients. Therefore, UNCTAD has increasingly redirected its trade facilitation program towards a hybrid offer, providing a mix of e-learning and residential training.

488. During 2022, UNCTAD trained more than 2,900 trade facilitation stakeholders (around 50 per cent of these were women) from 50 countries (Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroun, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, East Timor, Ecuador, Eswatini, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Gabon, Grenada, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mongolia, Namibia, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Salomon Islands, Samoa, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Somalia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Tajikistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Zambia and Zimbabwe) through its empowerment 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 (80 per cent) and private sectors and academia (20 per cent). The material prepared by UNCTAD includes more than 150 videos, 70 quizzes, as well as handouts and further readings to support participants in their e-learning journey. UNCTAD has added two new e-learning modules to the existing 10 modules and has conducted more than 200 webinars. 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. In 2022, the UNCTAD e-learning platform recorded more than 160,000 downloads.

489. In 2022, UNCTAD further implemented the Trade Facilitation Reform Tracker tool which provides NTFCs with a professional online project-management and monitoring tool to manage and track trade facilitation reforms, including the simplification of trade procedures. The tool is now operational in 22 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America to better track, monitor and manage their trade facilitation initiatives. 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. An example of the South-South cooperation fostered by UNCTAD's trade facilitation work is the quarterly meetings of user countries of the Reform Tracker where representatives of these countries meet, present and discuss their experiences with a view to sharing good practices amongst the users and implementing such practices as relevant and appropriate in other countries.

490. Transparency and predictability are some of the main objectives of trade facilitation. The UNCTAD trade information portal programme effectively builds capacity and dialogue among the national trade facilitation committees based on a public-private partnership approach. The portals provide traders with easy access to information on import, export 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 2022, more than 30 such UNCTAD supported trade information portals are in operation or being developed.

491. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD's hybrid capacity building approach in trade facilitation, largely focused on supporting NTFCs with professional digitalized management tools, continues to be highly appreciated according to the beneficiary countries. Systematically reported feedback confirms that the Reform Tracker as a tailor-made project management, monitoring and report tool assists NTFCs in efficiently undertaking their role to coordinate and facilitate trade facilitation reforms at national level.

492. In terms of policy impact, in 2022 two of the countries (i.e. Guinea-Bissau and Solomon Islands) supported by UNCTAD have ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and 49 new notifications were sent to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee by countries that had received UNCTAD technical assistance in the preparation of those notifications.

493. Fifty countries and national trade facilitation committees received assistance from UNCTAD during 2022 in the area of trade facilitation. This included inter alia the drafting or implementing key trade facilitation policy documents, such as international standards, legal instruments, procedures, NTFC Terms of Reference and work plans, and so on. Below is the feedback received from some beneficiaries.

494. Namibia uses the UNCTAD Reform Tracker, and I am a facilitator for Article 10.1. The Reform Tracker is a very critical tool:

(a) It provides all the updates and new developments to the Trade Facilitation Agreement articles,

(b) It keeps me updated on the progress, what was implemented and what measures are lagging behind.

(c) It also informs me if we have activities that we need to finalize, any documentations we need to provide to serve as proof of carried activities.

495. The Namibia Revenue Agency where I am employed is chairing the National Trade Facilitation Committee and the Reform Tracker assures sustainability of the National Trade Facilitation Committees, as it facilitates project documentation and allows for systematic knowledge transfer. I have learned a lot and interacted further with stakeholders since I joined the Reform Tracker." Senior Customs and Excise Officer, Namibia Revenue Authority

496. The Rapid Scan revealed a lack of awareness by most stakeholders impacted by the regulatory measures put in place to facilitate trade in the wake of the various crises experienced in Zimbabwe, including Covid 19.

497. The Rapid Scan therefore highlighted the need for increased consultation and awareness as well as the need to consider a grace period prior to implementation of those regulatory measures.

498. The National Trade Facilitation Committee of Zimbabwe could be the mechanism to ensure that these consultations take place." Technical Manager at Customs and Excise Division and member of Zimbabwe Trade Facilitation Committee

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/HCP	Enhancement of the aCITES system	2019–	Convention on International Trade in Endangered

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
			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 GIZ
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
INT/0T/LBO	Enabling Pre-Arrival and Pre-Departure processing of Express consignments through digital B2G exchange between ASYCUDAWorld and express operator's platforms	2022–	Germany GIZ
INT/9X/89S	Support for ASYCUDA implantation activities	1988–	Multi-donors
RAF/0T/IAA	COMESA Trade Facilitation Programme	2019–	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
RAF/0T/IBC	Etude de diagnostic pour l'interconnexion des systèmes informatiques des douanes	2021–	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
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-donors
RAS/0T/1DA	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Pacific (ASMP)	2002–	Multi-donors
RAS/0T/IAK	The Implementation of the Pacific Trade and Customs Harmonization Project	2019–	Australia
RAS/0T/JBO	Improving Pacific Islands Customs and Trade (IMPACT)	2021–	European Union
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/HBU	Afghanistan Fiscal Performance Improvement Support Project (FSP)	2018–	UNDP
AFG/0T/LAB	Supporting Community Resilience Programming Strategy (ABADEI Strategy)	2021–	UNDP MPTF

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
AFG/0T/LAV	Afghanistan's Private Sector Capacities and Capabilities for Food Security	2022–	UNDP MPTF
ANG/0T/CBO	ASYCUDA World Implementation in Angola	2013–	Angola
ANG/0T/HCK	Unique Trade System - Preparatory Assistance	2021–	Angola
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
BAR/0T/LAX	Barbados. Policy-Dev Emergency FFF (OUN SDG-F Emergency Call) Food Security and Livelihoods Resilience Through Analytical, Capacity Building and Policy Support in Response to the Global Crisis on Food, Energy and Finance, UNCTAD DTL ASYCUDA	2022–	UNDP MPTF
BDI/0T/JAE	Déploiement des modules du guichet unique électronique	2021–	TradeMark Africa
BDI/0T/KAV	Projet d'Appui au Renforcement de Capacités de l'Office Burundais des Recettes	2022–	African Development Bank
BGD/0T/FAC	ASYCUDA World – ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Asia	2016–	Bangladesh
BKF/0T/KAO	SYDONIA World Burkina Faso	2022–	Burkina Faso
CAF/0T/JBF	SYDONIA World implementation Central African republic	2021–	European Union
CHD/0T/JAQ	Assistance technique pour la migration à SYDONIA World et pour la mise en oeuvre de la réforme douanière	2021–	World Bank
CMB/0T/ICG ^a	Migration to the latest available SuiteWorld release and Development and Implementation of an enhanced Risk management feature	2020–2022	Germany GIZ
CMB/0T/KAS	Improving Small Package e-Trade for SMEs (SeT4SME)	2022–	Swisscontact
CMB/0T/KBL ^a	eCITES feasibility study (the “Activities”) Cambodia	2022–2022	FAO
COI/0T/LAG	Power of Data Revolution Comoros	2022–	UNDP MPTF
DJI/0T/HBX	Projet d'Appui à la Modernisation de l'Administration Publique – Djibouti	2019–	World Bank

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
ELS/0T/JAN	ASYCUDAWorld - El Salvador	2021–	El Salvador
EQG/0T/EAM	Mise en place du SYDONI World à la Direction Générale des Douanes (DGD)	2016–	Equatorial Guinea
GAM/0T/HAJ	Implementation of ASYCUDA World in the Gambia	2019–	Gambia
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
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/JBN	Trade for employment: Accelerating the clearance process through the use of ASYCUDA World	2021–	Germany GIZ
KAZ/0T/EBH	Modernisation of the Customs Procedures and Implementation of the Integrated Customs Component of the Automated System of Customs & Tax Administration (ASTANA-1)	2018–	Kazakhstan
KAZ/0T/IAR	Provision of Services on Technical Support and Modernization IS ASTANA-1 KAZAKHSTAN	2020–	Kazakhstan
KAZ/0T/JBR	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
LEB/0T/5BK	Implementation of ASYCUDAWorld in Lebanon	2005–	Lebanon
LES/0T/HBF	Technical Consulting Services Agreement (Vanuatu ESWS)	2019–	Lesotho
MAU/0T/CAD	Projet de Modernisation des Douanes de la République Islamique de Mauritanie	2013–	Mauritania

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
MDV/0T/HBK	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Asia Region (ASMA)	2018–	Maldives
MDV/0T/KBI	Development of an API for the exchange of customs import declarations and other payments	2021–	Asian Development Bank
MLI/0T/KAG	Renforcement de SYDONIA World 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
MOL/0T/KAP	Contribution Agreement between UNCTAD and EBRD on Digitalization of Customs Service of Moldova	2021–	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
MOZ/0T/KAC	eCITES in Mozambique	2021–	Mozambique
NCA/0T/HBZ	Implémentation 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	ASYCUDA World, phase III	2021–	Niger
PNG/0T/DAX	Computerization of Customs Procedures and Data and Deployment of ASYCUDA World	2014–	Papua New Guinea
PSE/0T/KBM	Strengthen the use of ASYCUDA World in Palestine	2022–	Palestine
RWA/0T/HBE	Rwanda Electronic Single Window – TMEA	2018–	TradeMark Africa
SIL/0T/GAH	Public Financial Management Improvement and Consolidation Project	2017–	Sierra Leone
SRL/0T/DBT	ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Asia	2014–	Sri Lanka
SUD/0T/JBT	MOA on ASYCUDA World Support Mechanism Sudan	2021–	Sudan
SUR/0T/LBD	Strengthening Customs Management Capacity in the Suriname Customs & Excise Department- ASYCUDA World Consolidation	2022–	Suriname
SYP/0T/4BP	Implementation of ASYCUDA World in the Syrian Customs Directorate	2004–	Syrian Arab Republic
TAJ/0T/KBB	Phase four of the Central Asia Regional Links Programme (CARS-4) Tajikistan	2022–	Tajikistan

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
TIM/OT/HCR	Implementation of the Trade Single Window System for Timor-Leste (TL-TSWS)	2020–	Timor-Leste
TOG/OT/KAT	Mission d'assistance technique pour la modernisation de Sydonia World	2021–	Togo
TUK/OT/JAF	Implementation of single window for import and export operations	2021–	Turkmenistan
UGA/OT/HCH	Uganda Electronic Single Window – Phase II	2019–	TradeMark Africa
VAN/OT/HBJ	Technical Consulting Services Agreement (Vanuatu ESWS)	2019–	Vanuatu
VAN/OT/KAF	EIF–Vanuatu - ASYCUDA - Customs Declaration System Integration	2021–	EIF Enhanced Integrated Framework
VEN/OT/ICE	ASYCUDAWorld Support to the SENIAT – Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	2021–	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
YEM/OT/8BT	ASYCUDAWorld Project in Yemen	2021–	Yemen
ZAM/OT/HAU	ASYCUDA World support mechanism – Zambia	2018–	Zambia
ZIM/OT/JBB	Electronic single window	2021–	Zimbabwe

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

499. **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.

500. The ASYCUDA programme is committed to providing sustained support for development, both in-country and remotely. Over a period of 41 years, it has supported the changing and evolving needs, addressed challenges of the customs administrations of 128 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 to 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 (PGA) 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.

501. 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.

502. Links to SDGs. 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 through 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 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) /small and medium industries (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 makes 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 contributes 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 helps 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 contributes 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 contributes, 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.

503. 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, encourage international trade, reduce/eliminate the use of paper, monitor and track goods along the supply chain while preserving the environment and promoting green customs procedures. 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.

504. **Outputs.** In 2022, ASYCUDAWorld was implemented or upgraded to its latest version in Albania, Belize, Chad, Cook Islands, El Salvador, the Gambia, Jordan, Montserrat, the Niger, Niue, Palestine, Rwanda, Tonga and Venezuela. Countries such as the Central African Republic, Iraq, Micronesia, Palau and Tajikistan are setting up the system and its environment with the installation of hardware, development of prototype and additional modules as requested by Customs authorities, and organization of trainings for national customs teams.

505. In Burundi, a Single Window module for the automated management of tax exemptions by the Agency for Development in Burundi was successfully deployed. The Jamaica Single Window for Trade saw the onboarding of new digitized trade services for key cross-border agencies such as the Hazardous Substances Regulatory Authority and the Sugar Industry Authority. In Timor Leste, the Single Window saw the onboarding of the Ministry of Health and the National Directorate of Land Transport. In Vanuatu, a communication platform between ASYCUDAWorld and the Customs Declaration System of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) was installed and enables the electronic exchange of advance data and availability of 100 per cent of postal consignments in the Single Window. In Zimbabwe, the Single Window for Trade based on ASYCUDA technology was launched in 2022.

506. In August 2022, in Bangladesh, the IATA Cargo XML solution in ASYCUDAWorld was launched to help airlines, express operators, freight forwarders and shippers to easily provide customs authorities with information that is technically correct and in line with the standards of international bodies such as the World Customs Organization (WCO) and United Nations.

507. In September 2022, Moldova's customs service started piloting the ASYCUDA Postal Customs Declaration (ASYPCD) module within their customs management system, ASYCUDAWorld to make it easier for smaller firms to engage in e-commerce by making it more affordable and efficient to export their products.

508. In November 2022, Mozambique successfully launched eCITES, the system for the management of permits for the international trade of endangered species developed in cooperation with CITES.

509. In 2022, Togo has become the third country after Cote d'Ivoire and Madagascar to install ASYADN, the software module that facilitates the compilation of trade statistics via the extraction of trade and customs data for WTO.

510. Results and impacts. In Afghanistan in 2022, 33,370 Customs declarations of UN agencies and 984 customs declarations of humanitarian NGOs were cleared through the ASYCUDA exemption system and exempt from taxes.

511. In Antigua and Barbuda where ASYCUDAWorld was implemented in 2018, Customs reported the collection of revenue in 2022 almost returned to pre-pandemic levels with a 12 per cent increase recorded when compared with 2021's performance.

512. In Bangladesh, customs revenue collected in the second semester of 2022 increased by 11 per cent compared to 2021's second semester. ASYCUDAWorld was launched in 2012.

513. Cambodia's customs revenue increased by 17 per cent in 2021–2022. ASYCUDAWorld was launched in 2010.

514. Following the successful launch of ASYCUDAWorld at the International Airport of N'djamena in Chad in 2022, customs revenue doubled.

515. In the Gambia, following the launch of ASYCUDAWorld in 2021, the Association for Customs Clearing and Forwarding Agents registered 127 clearing and forwarding agents and created over 1000 jobs.

516. Papua New Guinea Customs which implemented ASYCUDAWorld in 2018, recorded a substantial revenue growth of 14 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021.

517. In Sri Lanka, 1'178 permit requests for the trade of endangered species were issued in 2022. Annual approval rates increased by 19 per cent in 2021–2022. The average processing time for permits fell from 120 hours in 2020 to 27 hours in 2022. eCITES was launched in 2020.

C5 Statistics

Table C5
Statistics

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
EGY/0T/KAZ	Egypt SDGs:UN Joint SDG Fund support to Egypt Integrated SDGs Financing	2021–	Joint SDG Fund
INT/0T/KBF	Development of an Information System for Trade in Healthy	2021–	World Health Organization
RAF/0T/BCR ^a	Projet UEMOA-CNUCED pour la mise en place des statistiques du commerce international des services	2014–2022	West African Economic and Monetary Union
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 2022.

518. **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.

519. Illicit financial flows (IFFs) 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.

520. 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.

521. Global trade can help ensure a sufficient supply of nutrients and enable countries to have a healthier diet. This is because trade allows the countries to access a larger variety of food, thus enabling them to have a more nutritionally balanced diet. Studies show that global trade can balance food supply and demand across regions and smooth out nutrient intake across countries, but also that low-income countries are the first to fall into food and nutrition insecurity as supply chains get interrupted. Trade-protectionism is not the answer, however, as the most vulnerable countries benefit most when trade increase. It would be important to have move from measuring total calories to more granular analysis of trade in healthy food items to understand the overall health effects.

522. **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.

523. 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.

524. 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.

525. The Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) which assesses 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.

526. 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.

527. 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.

528. UNCTAD, with the support of the World Health Organization, is developing a database on trade in foods classified by their processing level to enable more granular analysis of the health effects of international food trade across countries and over time. These data will be based on the United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics database.

529. **Outputs.** Since the COVID-19 pandemic, more 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 started picking up in 2022, facilitating more effective work in the pilot countries. The WAEMU-UNCTAD project started in 2014 and its activities continued throughout 2021. In 2022, the countries have focused on collecting additional data applying the new IT system, named TiSSTAT, for collecting, analysing and reporting trade in services statistics. Additional countries have requested the possibility to use TiSSTAT for their trade in services statistics. The TiSSTAT system is successfully used by eight countries in the WAEMU Commission. 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.

530. 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 2022. 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.

531. By 2022, 22 country pilots were concluded on three continents in a joint effort by UNCTAD and UNODC and the UN Regional Commissions. The outcomes show that while challenging these flows stemming from crime, illegal markets, corruption and illegal and illicit tax and commercial practices can be measured. In 2022, the UN Statistical Commission endorsed the “Conceptual framework for the statistical measurement of illicit financial flows” reflecting concepts and methods adopted by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators in 2019. The pilots carried out in 2022, tested the draft “Methodological Guidelines to measure tax and commercial IFFs” and will be refined to reflect the lessons learned. Most of the pilots resulted in the first IFF estimates and all prepared Action Plans towards reporting data on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 16.4.1 on IFFs. In November 2022, the 2nd Committee of the General Assembly encouraged all countries to measure IFFs and asked UNCTAD and UNODC to strengthen efforts to support countries’ capacity development.

532. In October 2021 and in March 2022, UNCTAD, jointly with UNECA, organized training workshops in Burkina Faso and Zambia, respectively, to build knowledge and exchange best practices on applying the concepts of Integrated National Financing Frameworks in their efforts to mobilize domestic resource, address the underlying factors of illicit financial flows and strengthen policies toward more efficient financing of sustainable development and other national development priorities.

533. UNCTAD Statistics continued engagement with Egypt to measure IFFs and develop estimates to cost the achievement of SDGs with the participation of many national experts and stakeholders. In addition, an expert group meeting was organised in December 2022 to discuss the outcomes in depth.

534. In 2022, UNCTAD supported a pilot on gender-in-trade indicators in Kazakhstan with ECE following the experience of the first pilot in Georgia, 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 2022, UNCTAD organized and participated in several workshops and events to advance development of better data and statistics on women’s empowerment, and led a subgroup to mainstream gender aspects in the UN Trade Statistics Manuals, coordinated by UNDESA Statistics Division.

535. UNCTAD started the development of a trade in foods database in a joint project with the World Health Organization in 2022. The agencies developed a classification of food items by the level of processing, and this is being used to derive a database on food items.

536. **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. By end-2022, the countries had carried out four surveys to collect data on trade in services and eight WAEMU member states are using the TiSSTAT information system in the

compilation of trade in services statistics. This will fill a major data gap and support efforts 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. In 2022, many countries expressed interest in support to use the system to establish trade in services statistics or enhance them.

537. In relation to the training activities in statistics (part of the Train for Trade Programme), the training programme on international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS) trained 1,128 statisticians (45 percent women) from 163 countries or areas and the programme on Statistics on International Trade in Services (SITS) was delivered for 1,233 participants (43 per cent women) from 157 countries. Since 2016, over 8,500 participants were trained on these two courses in total. These courses have been in a high demand by developing countries but are also increasingly attended by developed countries. The satisfaction rate of participants has been continuously increasing, from 76 per cent in 2017 to 90 per cent.

538. The UNDA projects on measuring IFFs made significant progress over the past year with the testing of the methodological guidelines to measure tax and trade-related IFFs, and their refinement based on the pilots 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 were released in 2022 as a result from the pilots. In 2023, first partial estimates of IFFs are expected to be reported to the global SDG database on indicator 16.4.1.

539. The INFFs related training activities in Burkina Faso and Zambia resulted in an increased number of policymakers (over 40 per country) equipped with tools and skills to measure tax and commercial illicit financial flows, leverage Integrated National Financing Frameworks and related mechanisms to mobilize additional domestic and international resources, and better guide policy design and implementation toward sustainable financing. Burkina Faso further requested UNCTAD's technical assistance to build and strengthen the capacity of national experts on applied research strategies to measure illicit financial flows in the extractive sector as a means to identify and counter terrorism financing in the country.

540. 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. UNCTAD will assess extension of the SDG costing methodology developed with Egypt to other countries in 2023.

541. The pilot study on gender-in-trade indicators in Kazakhstan following the model of 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. Pilots were launched in four African countries and will continue in 2023.

542. The UNCTAD conceptual framework for measuring gender equality in trade was taken up by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, as an example and a priority topic for mainstreaming gender across statistical domains, and was finalised for pilots and publication in 2022. UNCTAD continued as 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.

543. Finally, the new UNCTAD-World Health Organization database on trade in processed foods will be released in 2023 and it will lend itself to rich research on the impacts of international trade on health and nutrition. The database release will be accompanied by an index of trade in processed foods and data-driven analysis of key regional trends, and the effects of trade on healthy nutrition in the most vulnerable countries.

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/0T/BCP	Accounting and Corporate Governance Trust Fund	2012–	Germany
ROA -1819 (H11) ^a	Enabling policy frameworks for enterprise sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting in Africa and Latin America	2018–2022	Development Account
ROA-2023 (W12) ^a	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–2022	Development Account
2124A (A13)	Towards integrated national financing framework	2021–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

544. **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 member States of UNCTAD. Furthermore, because sustainability reporting is the basis for sustainable investments, the topic 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 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. Additionally, seven years after the adoption of the 2030 and Addis Agendas, mobilization of sufficient finance remains a critical challenge in most countries.

545. **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. UNCTAD XV's mandate, The Bridgetown Covenant, reaffirmed the relevance of UNCTAD's work in the area of accounting and reporting in paragraph 127s which calls on UNCTAD to "continue to advance UNCTAD work on international standards of accounting and reporting."

546. 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. Technical assistance has been facilitated using UNCTAD tools, such as the Accounting Development Tool (ADT) and the Guidance on Core Indicators for Sustainability and SDG impact reporting.

547. 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 essential 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 practices. The results of the Accounting Development Tool 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.

548. **Outputs.** In 2022, in addition to its work with the Intergovernmental Working Group of Expert on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, UNCTAD carried out technical assistance.

Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

549. The thirty-ninth session of ISAR was held from 1 to 3 November 2022 in a hybrid format. In accordance with the agreement reached among member States at the thirty-eighth session, the thirty-ninth session of ISAR dealt with the following main agenda items:

- (a) Good practices in and approaches to the practical implementation of sustainability reporting requirements; and
- (b) Review of practical implementation of international standards of accounting and reporting in the private and public sectors.

550. Two background papers were prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat on the main agenda items, and a series of panel discussions facilitated delegates' consideration of the key issues.

551. With respect to the first main agenda item, the Group of Experts welcomed the publication of an updated version of the Guidance on Core Indicators for Sustainability and SDG reporting, which is a helpful tool for countries to engage in sustainability reporting and to support sustainability reporting by SMEs. The Group of Experts encouraged the UNCTAD secretariat to widely disseminate this publication.

552. With respect to the second main agenda item, the Group of Experts requested the UNCTAD secretariat to continue conducting periodic reviews of the implementation of the international financial reporting standards and the international public sector accounting standards. The session also called upon the UNCTAD secretariat to continue identifying practical implementation challenges that developing countries encounter, and to facilitate the sharing of good practices in addressing such challenges.

553. On topics discussed under other business, the session called upon the UNCTAD secretariat to continue conducting further research on assessment of gender balance in the accountancy profession. This is aimed at gaining a more in-depth understanding of the status of gender equality and relevant policies and practices and to presenting findings at a future session of the Group of Experts.

554. To further promote sustainability reporting, the ISAR Honours 2022 Edition was also held during the thirty-ninth session of ISAR. It highlighted key national and international initiatives on promotion and harmonization of sustainability/SDGs reporting by companies, with a view to raising awareness and disseminating best practices in this area. From a total of 60 nominee institution, demonstrating almost 40 per cent growth from the previous year, ISAR Honours recognized six honourees, three in the international category and three in the national category, as well as a special nomination presented in both categories. The increase in the number of nominees from the African and Latin American region is largely due to the support provided by the regional partnerships.

Technical assistance projects on sustainability reporting

555. In 2022, technical assistance aimed to support countries in their efforts to establish or strengthen their national sustainability reporting infrastructure to promote high quality sustainability reports by companies. This included the implementation of strategic activities of the national action plans for high quality sustainability reporting developed for Colombia, Guatemala, Kenya and South Africa; the launching, strengthening and continuous support to the regional partnerships for the promotion of sustainability reporting in Africa and Latin America; and assistance to additional countries who requested support after the regional workshops took place, including Mexico and Cameroon.

National Action Plans for High-quality Sustainable Reporting

556. In Colombia, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the Department of National Planning and the Technical Council for Public Accounting, developed a proposal of a sustainability reporting framework for companies and a detailed mapping of regulators and existing requirements in the country with policy recommendations concerning the body in charge of sustainability reporting. The documents were discussed in bilateral meetings and at a round table held on 8 June 2022, that was attended by 22 participants (10 women) from eight key entities. In addition, a document with recommendations to strengthen the measurement and collection of data on the contribution of the private sector to the SDGs was developed. A second set of meetings took place on 15 June 2022 to discuss recommendations for improvement, and presentations by key entities on their data collection processes and requirements for sustainability reports. 35 participants (17 women) from 15 entities attended the meeting.

557. In Guatemala, UNCTAD, in coordination with the Ministry of Economy and CentraRSE, developed a tailored Guidance for sustainability reporting for companies and a Guidance for the preparation of a corporate governance code. Bilateral meetings with key stakeholders and a round table on 17 June 2022 gathered 25 participants (11 women) from key 10 institutions. Additionally, UNCTAD developed a document with recommendations to improve the data collection mechanism to measure the contribution of the private sector to the SDGs and prepare the Voluntary National Review. The document was discussed at bilateral meetings and at a round table organized on 28 June 2022 which was attended by 19 participants (11 women) from 9 key institutions.

558. A capacity-building workshop for Colombia and Guatemala took place virtually from 22 to 24 June 2022. It discussed international developments in the area of sustainability reporting, provided an overview of the requirements of the ISSB's exposure drafts, and the GCI core SDG indicators. It was attended by 378 participants (218 women) from the public and private sectors.

559. In Kenya and South Africa UNCTAD launched a series of activities to facilitate the action plan implementation in the first half of 2022. For this purpose, UNCTAD established Institutional, Regulatory and Capacity-Building Committees in both countries to prepare a 5 year-plan and allocate responsibilities among the key project stakeholders. Additionally, UNCTAD proposed to organise an Executive Committee to supervise the work of the national groups and review the overall. The national committees have successfully developed a proposal of a sustainability reporting framework based on the UNCTAD GCI framework, prepared a mapping of the key stakeholders and proposed a set of capacity-building activities. As a result, in Kenya, work started on updating the academic and Continuous Professional Education curriculum to ensure incorporation of the SDG/sustainability reporting module for

qualification of accountants and auditors. In South Africa, one of the leading professional accountancy organizations (PAO) initiated an update of the digital reporting platform by introducing the UNCTAD GCI module for enabling enterprise reporting on sustainability.

Regional partnerships

560. With a view to strengthening the regional partnership in Latin America, an electronic platform was developed and launched in May 2022. The platform contains useful resources, presentations and materials and a Forum to foster dialogue and sharing of best practices among members. Currently the partnership has 29 members from 14 countries.

561. The Latin American partnership held virtual meetings from 24 to 25 February, 26 to 27 May, and 6 to 7 October 2022. The session in February was attended by 92 participants (53 women) from 17 countries, and covered central topics such as the SDGs, trends and developments in sustainability reporting, and the development of a taxonomy. Furthermore, the session touched upon national plans for sustainability reporting infrastructure in Latin America, the relevant tools developed by UNCTAD, the perspectives of the regulatory institutions, and addressed the topic of greenwashing. The session in May was attended by 99 participants (53 women) from 17 countries. It actively engaged participants in a poll aimed at crafting a joint response to the ISSB's Exposure Drafts on sustainability reporting. The meeting also addressed the institutional, regulatory, and human capacity components of a solid national infrastructure for sustainability reporting. The session in October featured discussions about assurance, materiality, certification for professional accountants, continuing professional development, and the role of the PAOs. On 7 October 2022, Guatemala was elected as the new Chair for 2023. Seventy-four stakeholders from 13 countries participated in the meeting.

562. At the beginning of 2022 UNCTAD launched the African Regional Partnership (ARP) for the promotion of sustainability and SDG reporting in Africa, which aims to improve enterprise sustainability reporting through mutual support, dialogue and sharing of experience and best practices. The inaugural meeting took place in January 2022 and was attended by 400 participants representing governments, regulators, stock exchanges, PAOs, academia, private sector. Following its launch, UNCTAD organized three meetings to strengthen cooperation among the members, exchange best practice on sustainability reporting and deliver capacity building activities based on the UNCTAD tools and guidance.

563. The first meeting held on 28 April 2022 featured presentations by members on sustainability reporting practices. It highlighted key issues in sustainability reporting practice, including regulatory framework of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting in Kenya, sustainability reporting practices of listed companies in Nigeria, case studies and experiences on implementation of sustainability reporting in South Africa, and proposals for the new regional initiative. The meeting was attended by 69 participants, including representatives of 49 member organizations and 6 observers.

564. The second meeting held on 23 June 2022 focused on promoting the Integrated Reporting practice from other countries. The meeting was attended by 40 members of the partnership.

565. The third meeting was organized in the format of a workshop on Regional partnership as a blueprint for maximising impact for strengthening national sustainability reporting practice and infrastructure took place on 31 October 2022. The meeting brought together members of both the African and Latin America partnerships, further enabling interregional experience sharing.

Other activities in support of sustainability reporting infrastructure

566. UNCTAD supported the strengthening of the sustainability reporting infrastructure for companies in Mexico, by providing policy advice to Mexican counterparts on the drafting of a sustainability reporting framework for SMEs, taking into consideration the GCI. A report containing an analysis of the sustainability information for MSMEs in Mexico and a list of recommendations were prepared.

567. UNCTAD provided technical assistance to Cameroon by conducting a quick ADT evaluation of the national reporting infrastructure that resulted in developing the high-level recommendations for advancing sustainability reporting practice in the country.

568. In Uganda, UNCTAD implemented the ADT tool to identify ways to support the MSME reporting on financial and sustainability disclosures. This work has resulted in developing an initial prototype of an e-accounting digital platform that supports implementation of the Informality Management for Compliance and Revenue Mobilization (IMCORE) Programme on the MSME formalization in Uganda.

569. A series of activities were organized in Kyrgyzstan including a training workshop on sustainability reporting based on the UNCTAD Guidance on Core SDG Indicators, which took place on 13 May 2022, and was attended by over 60 participants. A Training of Trainers (ToT) on SME accounting that was held online from 29-30 June 2022 was attended by 22 participants. A kick-off meeting to launch the ADT assessment of the national reporting infrastructure was organized on 25 November 2022. Forty-two stakeholders representing government, regulators, academia, and private sector joined the meeting. A post-meeting survey noted that over 90 per cent of respondents rated the content as satisfactory or very satisfactory. The national assessment of the financial and sustainability reporting infrastructure is currently in progress.

Capacity-building activities on sustainability and financial reporting

570. To support capacity-building in sustainability and financial reporting for MSMEs, UNCTAD has developed a training that aims to improve financial literacy in the MSMEs and to 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 of practitioners were held in English, French and Spanish, in Africa and Latin America.

571. To support further capacity building in the area of sustainability reporting, the GCI has been translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish. The Core SDG indicators e-learning course is available in a “light version” in English, French and Spanish and the extended version is available in English. During 2022, 635 people (338 women) were trained with e-learning course. This included 263 people (124 women) from 75 nationalities who registered for the extended version in English; 167 people (106 women) from 24 countries who registered for the Spanish version; 33 people (12 women) from 22 countries who registered for the French version and 172 people (96 women) from 69 countries who registered for the light version in English.

572. **Results and impact.** For close to 40 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 standards on financial and sustainability reporting and other internationally recognized practices, such as guidelines on corporate governance disclosure, and environmental and corporate social responsibility reporting.

573. The 39th session of ISAR attracted 495 registered participants from 87 countries, with 35 per cent from Africa, 17 per cent from Asia, 10 per cent from Eastern Europe, 21 per cent from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 17 per cent from Western European and other States. More than 100 participants attended the session in person. Feedback received from participants indicated that 95 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with the substance of the session. ISAR 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 international standard-setting process.

574. The Group of Experts requested the UNCTAD secretariat to continue identifying lessons learned and best practices for strengthening national sustainability reporting infrastructures. This work is aimed at producing practical guidance for member States. Delegates highlighted the important role that regional partnerships can play in this process. The session commended the extensive work conducted during the intersessional period to

support regional efforts on building and strengthening partnerships in Africa and Latin America. The objective of the effort has been aimed at promoting a common approach to sustainability reporting. In this context, delegates welcomed the initiative by the secretariat to develop a brief guide to establishing regional partnerships and maximizing their benefits. The Group of Experts encouraged other regions to form such partnerships and called upon the secretariat to provide support. Furthermore, the session called on the UNCTAD secretariat to stay abreast of deliberations by the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) on the development of sustainability reporting standards for public sector entities. This could include convening - as needed - consultative groups and conveying to the IPSASB the views of the members of ISAR. With respect to the implementation of the ADT, the session requested the UNCTAD secretariat to continue pursuing updates. This will include incorporating lessons learnt and widening the scope of the public sector component. Delegates encouraged the secretariat to facilitate further applications of the ADT, responding as much as possible to numerous requests made by member States. The session invited donors in a position to do so to support the secretariat in this endeavour.

575. As a 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, through workshops, on the use of the Guidance and Training manual on Core indicators for entity reporting on the contribution towards the attainment of the SDGs (GCI). An additional 379 people also registered for the self-paced eLearning course on the GCI. The increased number of people and institutions trained in SDG reporting showed growing awareness of the importance of SDG reporting for companies - as requested by ISAR. As the result of the capacity-building activities, over 20 companies in Colombia and Guatemala already took steps to implement the GCI, while in Kenya and South Africa, a survey showed that more than 400 companies are considering implementing the GCI.

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>
ROA-2023 (F12)	Investment incentives for local production of essential antibiotics in East Africa	2020–	Development Account

576. **Development context.** Investing in health sectors of developing countries is crucial to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for ensuring good health and well-being (SDG 3). The health sector covers the development and manufacturing of health commodities, such as medical supplies and equipment, pharmaceutical products and vaccines; and health services, such as laboratory services, hospitals and clinics. As such, achieving the SDGs requires considerable investment by the private sector, governments and development partners. It also requires coherence in various policy domains and institutions covering health, investment, intellectual property (IP) and trade. However, there are additional factors shaping the development context of investing in health.

577. Health crises, such as the epidemic of HIV/AIDS and the pandemics of H1NI and COVID-19, had invigorated global initiatives for investment in health sectors of developing countries. However, the initiatives appear to slow down once the health crises are under control. Hence, it is vital to foster global partnership to ensure sustainable investment into the health sectors of developing countries in normal times to enhance preparedness for global, regional and national public health crises.

578. COVID-19 and the global inflationary pressures in 2022 have resulted in disruption of supplies and increased cost of health commodities that disproportionately affected

developing countries with limited or no manufacturing capacity for medical supplies, medicines, and vaccines.

579. UNCTAD seeks to enhance the capacity of developing countries to develop a better framework for investment in health, taking into account their respective development needs.

580. **Objectives and features.** The objectives of the programme are the following:

- (a) Promotion of investment in health sectors of developing countries;
- (b) Promotion of coherence in industrial and health policies, including in the regulation of investment and intellectual property (IP);
- (c) Promotion of stakeholder ownership to ensure the sustainability of programme activities.

581. **Outputs.** In 2022, the work programme involved the implementation of three projects on (i) investment in the production and supply of antibiotics in the context of measures to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR); (ii) supporting regional cooperation on IP rights in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and (iii) supporting the building of vaccines manufacturing capacity in Africa in the context of the Partnership for Africa Vaccines Manufacturing (PAVM).

582. UNCTAD continues to support developing countries in addressing the development dimensions of IP rights and advancing the local production of pharmaceuticals as one means to promote access to medicines. From 2 to 4 March 2022, UNCTAD facilitated a series of online regional stakeholder consultations on IP rights organized by AfCFTA Secretariat. In May 2022, UNCTAD provided training for negotiators of the AfCFTA IP rights protocol upon invitation by the AfCFTA Secretariat. The training addressed the international system for the protection of IP rights, the situation in African countries, and the role of regional cooperation.

583. UNCTAD provided legislative advice throughout the year on IP right issues in the process for the development of IP rights protocol. The advice was provided on an ad hoc and case-by-case basis upon request from the AfCFTA Secretariat. The issues included, among others, policy options on utility model protection, the interface between IP rights and public health and research exceptions to IP rights. The AfCFTA IP Protocol was adopted in February 2023.

584. UNCTAD participated as expert member to the IP and technology workstream of the PAVM – an initiative of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). UNCTAD contributed its expertise on the interface between IP, investment and technology during the series of expert meetings held on a weekly basis online from March to April 2022. During the meetings, UNCTAD provided advisory services on technical action areas on IP and technology transfer for vaccine manufacturing.

585. Since 2020, UNCTAD has been implementing a Development Account 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). In 2022, UNCTAD supported the East African Community (EAC) on local production of essential antibiotics considering the need to combat AMR. UNCTAD convened a regional expert meeting from 29 to 30 November 2022, in Nairobi, Kenya, in partnership with the EAC Secretariat and with the participation of international experts from World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Action on Antibiotic Resistance (ReAct) and Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP). A total of 25 regional and international experts debated on how to promote production of essential antibiotics in the region for two days. The meeting was concluded with the successful adoption of a regional framework for production of essential antibiotics and a regional information exchange mechanism on supply of antibiotics. Participants also agreed to promote cooperation on procurement of antibiotics under ongoing initiatives of the EAC.

586. UNCTAD provided training on investment and IP rights for pharmaceutical sector development during a workshop organized by the Secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for companies engaged in the antiviral value chain. The

seminar was held at the Africa Regional IP Organization (ARIPO) academy in Harare, Zimbabwe from 13 to 15 October 2022. UNCTAD provided its input by remote participation.

587. UNCTAD provided various advisory services and technical assistance by participating in meetings and activities of development partners. In particular, UNCTAD:

(a) Contributed to the discussion on the role of partnership for the promotion of pharmaceutical sector development in developing countries during the joint UNICEF–United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)–WHO Meeting for Manufacturers and Suppliers, held on 8-10 March 2022.

(b) Provided training to judges on the interface between IP, competition law and public health, during a training programme organised by the South Centre for judges in Africa on 24 March 2022. Similar contribution was made during the seminar organized by South Centre and – the Court of Appeals for Specialized Cases of Thailand, on 3 - 6 May 2022.

(c) Took part in exchange of information on IP enforcement during the WIPO’s coordination meeting with intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) working in the area of building respect for IP, held on 21 June 2022.

(d) Provided input during a meeting on “Development Partners’ Updates on Vaccine Manufacturing in Ghana” organized by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the government of Ghana, held on 10 February 2022.

588. With a view to advancing UNCTAD’s research and analysis and technical assistance activities on IP and investment for public health, UNCTAD organised informal discussion for consensus building on technical assistance for building vaccines’ production capacity in the low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The informal discussion was organized virtually in collaboration with WHO on 21 April 2022. Eighteen international development partners and private sector representatives took part in the discussion. The informal discussion allowed partners to update and provide feedback to each other on their respective work to promote vaccine manufacturing in Africa.

589. **Results and impacts.** UNCTAD’s involvement in support programme for the development of regional cooperation on IP rights under the AfCFTA is a testimony to the acceptance of UNCTAD not only on its technical competence but also on the contribution it has made to solving development challenges in policy and norm setting processes.

590. To ensure sustainability of impacts, key aspects of UNCTAD’s technical assistance on investment and public health are embedded in the national, regional and international policy processes. The support of UNCTAD to EAC has resulted in adoption of a regional framework for production of essential antibiotics and a regional information exchange mechanism on supply of antibiotics within the EAC policy making processes. The evaluation of the EAC regional experts meeting on incentives for local production of antibiotics, held from 29 to 30 November 2022 shows strong support for the work of UNCTAD. More than 75 per cent of the participants rated the various discussions and aspects of the workshop as very good or excellent.

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/HCJ	Strategic Partnership the Netherlands	2018–	Kingdom of the Netherlands

591. **Development context.** The current network of international investment rules is composed of over 3,000 bilateral, regional and plurilateral treaties, mostly concluded decades ago and in need of reform. The past years saw dynamic changes to reform the regime of international investment agreements (IIAs), with intensified efforts at the regional level. In 2021 and 2022 the number of treaty terminations exceeded that of new IIAs.

592. 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.

593. The climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the need to accelerate the reform of the IIA regime. The current international investment agreement regime can constrain States when implementing measures to combat climate change or protect the environment. It can also constrain other regulatory action in the public interest, including for the protection of public health. The central challenge is to balance openness and investment protection with safeguarding of national policy space to pursue legitimate public health and climate change objectives.

594. Immediate IIA reform steps are needed to alleviate ISDS risks and create the necessary policy space for States to take urgent climate action. In addition, while new-generation IIAs fare relatively better in safeguarding the States' right to regulate, both old and recent IIAs lack proactive provisions aimed at effectively supporting climate action. States may need to fast-track IIA reform to make it more aligned with climate action as well as other public policy imperatives.

595. Integrating sustainable development objectives into IIAs (e.g. the protection of public health and environment) requires addressing a number of questions, including how to safeguard the right to regulate while preserving investment protection; how to enhance legal clarity of certain provisions; how to reform dispute settlement; how to promote and facilitate investment that contribute to sustainable development ; how to ensure responsible investment; and how to manage the systemic complexity of the IIA regime.

596. **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).

597. **Outputs.** For 2022, the main outputs are outlined below.

Research work related to technical assistance

598. 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 2022 (WIR 2022)*. The report was launched on 9 June 2022. Its chapter on recent policy developments and key issues notes several notable developments took place in 2021 and 2022 that accelerated the trend towards reforming the IIA regime. These include the conclusion of new-generation megaregional economic agreements, the termination of bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and multilateral discussions on the reform of ISDS mechanisms. At the same time, greater policy attention to investment facilitation, climate change and human rights is set to recalibrate international investment governance. The report provides an update on the total number of ISDS cases. At the same time, megaregional agreements concluded among a group of countries that together carry significant economic weight and in which investment is only one of several subjects addressed have been proliferating. These agreements' comprehensive nature and geostrategic relevance are increasingly shaping international investment rulemaking and policy. The report also notes that IIAs impose obligations on States that can create friction with taxation measures undertaken at national and multilateral levels and proposes policy recommendations to ensure coherence between the IIA regime and tax reform.

(b) *IIA issues notes and policy briefs*. The following issues notes were produced in 2022:

(i) IIA Issues Note: "Facts on investor-State arbitrations in 2021: With a special focus on tax-related ISDS cases" (Issue 1 - July 2022). The note presents facts on investor-State arbitrations brought under international investment agreements (IIAs), with a special focus on tax-related cases.

(ii) IIA Issues Note: "Review of 2020 Investor-State Arbitration Decisions: IIA Reform Issues at a Glance" (Issue 2 - August 2022). The note reviews investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) decisions rendered by arbitral tribunals in 2020. Thirty-one ISDS decisions on jurisdiction and merits were publicly available at the time of writing. Most claims were based on old-generation IIAs signed in the 1990s or earlier.

(iii) IIA Issues Note: "Treaty-based Investor-State Dispute Settlement Cases and Climate Action" (Issue 4- September 2022). The note looks at the increasing number of past ISDS cases related to measures or sectors of direct relevance to climate action.

(iv) IIA Issues Note: "The International Investment Treaty Regime and Climate Action" (Issue 3 - September 2022). The note analyses the interaction between IIAs and climate action. It takes stock of IIA provisions relevant to climate action and presents policy options for climate responsive IIA reform.

(v) Policy Brief on International Investment Agreements and Climate Action. UNCTAD and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) highlighted key policy recommendations aimed at supporting the reform of IIAs in order to advance climate goals, and to ensure that IIAs do not hinder states from implementing climate measures and accelerating the transition to low-carbon economies.

(c) Comprehensive updates to the IIA and ISDS databases: In March 2022, 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 April 2022, 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 and advisory services

599. 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. Advisory services 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 climate change and 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.

600. In response to requests from member States, UNCTAD provided IIA reviews for ECOWAS countries (September 2022). At the request of Seychelles' Ministry of Investment, Industry and Entrepreneurship Development, UNCTAD conducted a review of the bilateral investment agreements (BITs) concluded by the country (January 2022). Recommendations made aimed at making the model more conducive to sustainable development. It does so by: (i) safeguarding the right to regulate for pursuing sustainable development objectives, while maintaining protection; (ii) reforming investment dispute settlement; (iii) promoting and facilitating investment; (iv) ensuring responsible investment; and (v) enhancing systemic consistency.

601. UNCTAD and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) jointly developed a set of Non-Binding Guiding Principles for Investment Policies to support the improvement of the investment climate in the IsDB member countries. The Guiding Principles were developed as part of the joint UNCTAD-IsDB programme on investment promotion and international investment policies. The Guiding Principles provide guidance for investment policymaking with a view to promoting inclusive economic growth and sustainable development; promoting coherence in national and international investment policymaking; fostering an open, transparent and conducive global policy environment for investment; and aligning investment promotion and facilitation policies with sustainable development goals. The principles were published in January 2023.

602. Cooperation continued between UNCTAD and the League of Arab States (LAS) on a new Arab Regional Investment Agreement (ARIA). In May 2022, UNCTAD co-organized with the LAS in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, the "Second Meeting of the Committee of Experts on Investment and Legal Experts in Arab Countries - Preparing a Draft Arab Investment Agreement". LAS member States called on UNCTAD to continue its cooperation with Arab countries in developing policy options to be used in the drafting of the new ARIA. UNCTAD and the LAS have also jointly developed a set of Guiding Principles on Investment Policymaking for countries members of the LAS. The principles are expected to be finalized in 2023.

603. UNCTAD continued its support to the African Union and the AfCFTA Secretariat on the Investment Protocol of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The negotiations on Investment Protocol of the AfCFTA commenced in March 2021, and subsequent rounds of discussions started in March 2022. The Protocol recognizes UNCTAD's work on IIA reform in its preamble. UNCTAD was part of the task force assisting the African Union and the AfCFTA Secretariat in the process leading to the conclusion of the Protocol. The Investment Protocol was concluded in October 2022 and was adopted by the Heads of the State and Government during the Assembly of African Union in February 2023.

604. Regional or other training courses hosted or co-hosted by UNCTAD in 2022 include the following:

(a) UNCTAD-D8 Organization of Economic Cooperation workshop on IIAs and public health (February 2022). D8 member countries (Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Türkiye) discussed the need for provisions proactively encouraging health-related FDI, as well as the need to strengthen safeguards to

protect host States' right to regulate to pursue public health objectives, including with regards to protecting States from ISDS cases based on legitimate measures taken for the protection of public health.

(b) UNCTAD-International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) workshop on IIAs and climate action (February 2022). The event brought together experts and stakeholders from government, international organisations, civil society and academia to discuss the reform of the IIAs regime for climate change goals. The objective was to share views, experiences and practices on how to ensure that the IIA regime does not hinder governments from implementing measures to mitigate climate change and accelerate a transition towards green investments. It also explored solutions for making existing and future IIAs more conducive to investments that have a positive contribution on the Sustainable Development Goals.

(c) Training on IIA reform for CARICOM countries (February 2022). UNCTAD conducted a training for investment officials from CARICOM countries to examine a series of issues related to investment law and policy, with a focus on IIAs and ISDS reform.

(d) UN-ESCAP Meeting on FDI Network (May 2022). UNCTAD contributed a session on the current developments and challenges in FDI policy making, promotion and facilitation in the region. The training focused on the ways to improve the IIAs system to ensure that it better supports the achievement of SDGs.

(e) Meeting on ISDS in Africa. In May 2022, UNCTAD delivered a session on IIAs and ISDS reform. The workshop shed light on the multilateral reform of the ISDS system and its implications for African countries.

(f) UNCTAD-D8 Organization of Economic Cooperation workshop on IIAs and climate change (June 2022). D8 member countries discussed the need for provisions proactively encouraging FDI in renewable energy, as well as the need to strengthen safeguards to protect host States' right to regulate to pursue environmental objectives, including with regards to protecting States from ISDS cases based on legitimate measures taken to combat climate change.

(g) UNCTAD-International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Capacity Building Workshop for Tanzanian government (June 2022). The workshop shed light on the need to reform old generation IIAs to make them more conducive to sustainable development and provided policy recommendation for effective IIA reform.

(h) Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Investment Forum (June 2022). UNCTAD delivered a training on international investment policymaking with a particular focus on the reform of old generation IIAs and ISDS mechanisms.

(i) UNCTAD - Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA) Workshop on Investment Law and Policy (June 2022). The workshop highlighted the key features of Saudi Arabia's new Model BIT and provided guidance and a roadmap on the most effective ways to reform and modernize the old BITs concluded by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

(j) Expert Group Meeting on the Establishment of a Permanent Organ and Mechanism for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (October 2022). UNCTAD contributed to the OIC Expert Group Meeting on the Establishment of a Permanent Organ and Mechanism for the Settlement of Investment Disputes which was held in Casablanca, Morocco. The meeting discussed the possibility of establishing a permanent organ from the settlement of investor-State disputes between OIC countries.

(k) IISD 14th Annual Forum for Developing countries investment negotiators (October 2022). UNCTAD contributed substantive sessions to the meeting held in Abjua, Nigeria. The forum discussed the latest developments in investment law and policy together with delegates from developing and emerging economies. The objective was to share views, experiences and practices on IIA and ISDS reform.

(l) UNCTAD-Egypt's General Authority for Investments and Free Zones (GAFI)-The Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA) workshop on IIAs and Climate Change, during COP27, in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt (November 2022). The workshop shed light on Egypt's new Model BIT and provided policy recommendations

on strengthening environmental protection provisions in IIAs. It also shed light on Egypt's national investment regulations and incentive schemes for attracting renewable energy investments.

(m) UNCTAD-ECOWAS Workshop on the findings from the "BITs review 2022" report for ECOWAS member States (September 2022). UNCTAD conducted a comprehensive review of the IIAs concluded by ECOWAS. The review analysed 150 mapped bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and provided recommendations building on UNCTAD's Reform Package for the International Investment Regime (2018), UNCTAD's Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development (IPFSD) (2015) as well as UNCTAD's most recent IIA reform tool, the IIA Reform Accelerator (2020). The UNCTAD IIA Review was presented to ECOWAS member states through a joint webinar in December 2022.

(n) UNCTAD – Republic of Korea Workshop on IIA and ISDS reform, FDI and Competition Policy (December 2022). UNCTAD organised an in-person on-the-job training on FDI and competition policy. This event presented amongst others UNCTAD's work on IIAs and current trends in this respect. The event allowed Korean government staff from a range of different ministries to receive an introduction to key issues in IIAs and dispute settlement. It introduces UNCTAD databases related to international investment law and research outputs of the recent past.

605. **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 climate change objectives and 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 2022). 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), and of UNCTAD's IIA Reform Accelerator (2020) 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) 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 IPFSD to colleagues in their departments and 44 per cent noted that the IPFSD had prompted their country to reconsider its investment policy strategy. To date some 143 countries (including member countries of the regional economic integration organizations) have used UNCTAD recommendations on IIA reform to (re)design investment policies and IIA treaty clauses.

606. Further evidence and positive feedback include:

(a) "UNCTAD's IIA Section has been providing important support to the AfCFTA Secretariat on the AfCFTA Investment Protocol. The support of UNCTAD as part of the Investment Protocol Task Force has been instrumental in ensuring that the proposed agreement and its provisions are in line with best international and continental practices in investment rulemaking. We look forward to continuing our cooperation on IIA-related issues." Director, Directorate of Trade in Services, Investment, Intellectual Property Rights and Digital Trade, AfCFTA Secretariat, August 2022.

(b) “Let me take this opportunity on behalf of the Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship & Industry (MIEI) of Seychelles, to express our gratitude for the excellent and very much forthcoming support ... it was not only helping us formulate our Model IIA but actually built our capacity in regards to such investment agreements and it is indeed helping us have greater understanding of the relevant issues when discussing other similar agreements with other countries and also within the AfCFTA. I must also add that we do acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of UNCTAD and your team in the AfCFTA Protocol on Investment, which has in fact been acknowledged within the Preamble of the said AfCFTA Protocol on Investment.” Principal Secretary, Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship & Industry, Seychelles, August 2022.

(c) “The Report and workshop have strengthened the capacity of [ECOWAS] Member States to assess the gaps underlying the existing BITs as well as the associated risks. We also believe that both have positively benefitted our Member States in understanding the latest developments in IIAs formulation that are supportive of the sustainable development objectives of respective Member State and the region at large.” Principal Programme Officer, Investment Promotion, ECOWAS Commission, Nigeria, December 2022.

(d) “UNCTAD is leading the way in accelerating IIA reform for the protection of public policy objectives. Its research, policy analysis and technical assistance is unequalled in making the IIA network work for sustainable development. We hope that UNCTAD will continue to assist developing countries and African countries in this regard.” Professor of International Law and Director of the Department of International Law, University of Geneva, 2022.

(e) “UNCTAD’s work on IIAs and ISDS is useful. For us, it’s the most complete source where we can find accurate and complete information in relation to IIAs, ISDS and investment disputes. The information is complete, reliable and presented in an accessible manner. Therefore, we frequently refer to UNCTAD information in communication to parliament and our internal hierarchy, as well as in pending arbitration procedures. Please continue doing what you are doing as your work proves to be instrumental to support policy making and sustains our arguments in litigation.” Senior Juridisch Adviseur, Ministerie van Economische Zaken en Klimaat, Kingdom of the Netherlands, August 2022.

(f) “UNCTAD’s research and policy analysis on international investment agreements and investor-State disputes is to be commended. The recent work conducted by UNCTAD on IIAs and climate change is timely, informative and valuable.” Deputy Head of International Trade and Investment Rules unit, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery, France, 2022.

(g) “UNCTAD...has been instrumental in working with us in the development of our new international investment policies. We would like to commend the [IIA] Section especially for its cooperation on our new model BIT and its expert advice in the context of the negotiations of the new Arab Investment Agreement.” Deputy of Regulatory and Policy Development, Ministry of Investment, Saudi Arabia, August 2022.

(h) “Over the years, UNCTAD’s work on IIAs has provided policymakers and observers alike with a key source of authoritative data, analysis and guidance, and an important space for policy discussion and lesson sharing. The evidence, credibility and partnerships established through this analytical and normative work have made UNCTAD an essential reference point in international debates about reform of international investment law” Principal Researcher and Head of Programme – Law, Economics and Justice, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), August 2022.

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– 2022	Sweden
INT/8X/603	Training programmes on restrictive business practices (competition policies)	1986–	Multi-donors
RAS/0T/IAV	Delivering Block Chain Based Online Dispute Resolution System (BODR)	2020–	Public donation
ROA-2023 (W12) ^a	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020– 2022	Development Account
ROA-2023 (Y12)	Strengthening Social Protection for Pandemic Responses	2020–	Development Account

^a Operationally but not financially completed or fully completed in 2022.

607. **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 while ensuring 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.

608. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to anticompetitive and unfair business practices: weak 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. Moreover, citizens and businesses are less aware of the importance of competition and therefore, consumers do not exercise their rights while businesses avoid their responsibilities. Increasingly due to globalization, competition and consumer protection issues have cross-border components. 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.

609. **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. UNCTAD also contributes to fostering government officials' capacities and raising awareness among stakeholders involved in these fields. These policies play an essential 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.

610. **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 of online consumer dispute resolution mechanisms for Indonesia and Thailand. UNCTAD hosted its second Annual Conference online in May 2022⁵³ to endorse the project’s annual plan of activities and to present and review the project’s progress. As part of the DODR project’s annual plan of activities, UNCTAD organised the second training workshop on consumer dispute resolution for Indonesia and Thailand in March 2022⁵⁴. The three-day online event aimed to analyse the wide range of experiences on applied technologies, their potentialities, and advantages. The workshop helped government officials draw out a bigger picture of the present landscape of emerging technologies, their uses at the service of consumer dispute resolution, as well as the challenges and best practices.

611. UNCTAD finalized a report on the “National framework for consumer complaints handling and dispute resolution in Indonesia”. UNCTAD also co-organized together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Consumer Protection in ASEAN (PROTECT) Project, an expert online meeting titled “Building online dispute resolution for Southeast Asian consumers” in April 2022⁵⁵.

612. Under the PALOP⁵⁶ project, UNCTAD held a webinar on competition and consumer protection laws and policies in October 2022⁵⁷. During the webinar, more than 50 participants from competition and consumer protection agencies from beneficiary countries discussed best practices and perspectives for international cooperation in both fields. The project is funded by Portugal and intends to foster regional cooperation between the Portuguese-speaking developing countries and neighbouring countries and other partners.

613. Under the trilateral cooperation agreement between UNCTAD, ESCWA and OECD which seeks to support the formulation or improvement of national competition laws, procedures, and enforcement in the Arab countries, the third Joint Competition Forum for the Arab Region was held in May 2022. 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 third Joint Competition Forum, Arab countries discussed competition in e-commerce and digitization, institutional capacity of authorities, and competitiveness and recovery of MSMEs in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, as well as competition provisions in trade agreements.

614. In the framework of the United Nations Development Account (DA) COVID-19 project on the MSMEs, UNCTAD hosted a webinar to launch the report entitled “Harnessing the interaction between digital platforms and MSMEs: Recommended practices for digital platforms” in June 2022⁵⁸. During the online event, UNCTAD presented the recommendations designed to provide competition authorities and governments with an instrument to prevent abusive conducts by digital platforms in their relations with MSMEs, through voluntary or mandatory mechanisms. Also, as this project includes national studies on the impact of COVID-19 on specific SME sectors in Brazil, Thailand, and South Africa, UNCTAD co-organized with the Trade Competition Commission of Thailand and ESCAP a conference in June 2022⁵⁹ to present final products of the project. The reports of the national

⁵³ <https://unctad.org/meeting/dodr-annual-conference-2022-delivering-digital-trading-infrastructure-and-online-dispute>

⁵⁴ <https://unctad.org/meeting/second-online-training-workshop-consumer-dispute-resolution-indonesia-and-thailand>

⁵⁵ <https://unctad.org/meeting/expert-meeting-building-online-dispute-resolution-southeast-asian-consumers>

⁵⁶ Portuguese-speaking African countries (Portuguese: Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa)

⁵⁷ <https://unctad.org/meeting/webinar-competition-and-consumer-protection-policies-portuguese-speaking-countries>

⁵⁸ <https://unctad.org/meeting/webinar-harnessing-interaction-between-digital-platforms-and-msmes-recommended-practices>

⁵⁹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/conference-contribution-competition-policy-resurgence-msmes-post-covid-19>

studies have been published⁶⁰ as well as the global report⁶¹. Moreover, UNCTAD co-organised a workshop on “Linking Competition Policy, Economic Resilience: Benefits to MSMEs” in response to the request from the Philippines in November 2022, in collaboration with the Philippine Competition Commission and the Department of Trade and Industry. Furthermore, UNCTAD designed and implemented an online course on the “Interface between Competition Policy and MSMEs development”⁶². The five-module online course covered the interlinkages between competition policy and MSMEs, MSMEs’ challenges in particular to market access and market positioning, MSMEs and access to finance, digitalization as well as interagency and institutional collaboration. UNCTAD awarded 67 certificates during a virtual graduation ceremony hosted in February 2023⁶³.

615. Under the United Nations DA COVID-19 project on social protection, UNCTAD focused on the contribution of consumer protection policy to social protection in health services provision (including e-health). As a conclusion and covering all discussions undertaken during the project implementation, UNCTAD drafted a report “Social Infrastructure for Health and Consumer Protection in times of COVID-19 and beyond”, setting the steps and providing guidance on the implementation of selected recommendations related to a social infrastructure for the provision of health services. The findings were presented during a webinar in June 2022⁶⁴.

616. The eleventh UNCTAD-COMPAL International Consumer Protection Forum was co-organized with the Paraguayan Secretariat for the Defence of Consumers and Users (SEDECO). It took place online in April 2022⁶⁵ under the theme “Promoting sustainable consumption for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals”. The twelfth edition took place in November 2022⁶⁶ and was jointly organized with the Argentinean Ministry for Economy. It focused its discussions on two axes: consumer protection and digital platforms, including online dispute resolution and over indebtedness and consumer protection.

617. As part of the longstanding cooperation between UNCTAD and SELA⁶⁷, the tenth Annual meeting of the Working Group on Trade and Competition (WGTC) of Latin America and the Caribbean was celebrated in Asuncion, Paraguay in October 2022⁶⁸. The WGTC remains the only forum that brings together government officials in charge of trade and competition from Latin America and the Caribbean to address global challenges in both areas. This tenth edition discussed e-commerce and the digital economy as a route to regional economic recovery.

618. Also in Latin America, together with the ECLAC, UNCTAD co-organized a webinar on the implementation of ex-ante measures and good practices for digital platforms in Latin America and the Caribbean in September 2022⁶⁹. The webinar presented and discussed the UNCTAD recommendations for digital platforms, including the principles and commitments that platforms must respect in their relations with MSMEs.

⁶⁰ <https://msme-resurgence.unctad.org/documents/competition-and-market-access-policies-resurgence-msmes-post-covid-19-brazil>; <https://msme-resurgence.unctad.org/documents/analysis-impact-covid-19-micro-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-msmes-thailand>; <https://msme-resurgence.unctad.org/documents/analysis-impact-covid-19-micro-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-south-africa>

⁶¹ https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditccp2021d3_en.pdf

⁶² <https://elearning.unctad.org/enrol/index.php?id=11>

⁶³ <https://unctad.org/meeting/graduation-ceremony-online-course-interface-between-competition-policy-and-msme-development>

⁶⁴ <https://unctad.org/meeting/webinar-launch-report-social-infrastructure-health-and-consumer-protection-times-covid-19>

⁶⁵ <https://unctad.org/meeting/eleventh-international-consumer-protection-forum-compal-programme>

⁶⁶ <https://unctad.org/meeting/twelfth-compal-international-consumer-protection-forum-latin-america>

⁶⁷ Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (Spanish: Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe)

⁶⁸ <https://unctad.org/meeting/annual-meeting-group-trade-and-competition-latin-america-and-caribbean>

⁶⁹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/implementation-ex-ante-measures-and-good-practices-digital-platforms-latin-america-and>

619. Moreover, UNCTAD delivered a Masterclass on consumer protection at the University of Buenos Aires in November 2022⁷⁰. It reflected on the state of consumer protection in the context of the cascading crises of the war in Ukraine, the climate emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic. UNCTAD also participated in the jury of the annual prize “Citizens to the Fore” organized by the Peruvian consumer protection agency (INDECOPI). The prize’s objective is to raise awareness of, recognize and promote good practices undertaken by businesses and public entities in the interest of consumers with the ultimate aim of encouraging the replication of success stories.

620. Following the two successful workshops in 2020 and in 2021, UNCTAD co-organised the third joint workshop with the European Commission titled “Civil society and consumer product safety” in November 2022⁷¹. It addressed civil society’s role in strengthening consumer product safety and gave special attention to the role of youth and the next generation of product safety ambassadors.

621. On the same topic of product safety, UNCTAD organized an online workshop on “Protecting consumers from unsafe products through import surveillance and cooperation with customs” in April 2022.⁷² At the workshop, product safety officials from member States shared their experiences in identifying and stopping unsafe imported products and described their experiences in cooperating with their national customs authorities. Also, UNCTAD jointly with Consumers International, organized in April 2022 a webinar titled “Trust in cross-border e-commerce: the case for consumer product safety”⁷³. The webinar discussed the policy framework in pursuit of a common agenda to enhance consumer information and data sharing on product safety in online markets, as a way to help digital markets to be more trustful, transparent and fair.

622. UNCTAD has been providing advisory services on competition policy to the secretariat of the AfCFTA and its member States. In March 2022 UNCTAD organised the second training workshop on competition law and policy online in coordination with UNECA, which aimed at enhancing the understanding and capacities of officials in the AfCFTA secretariat and its member States. Moreover, in April 2022, UNCTAD participated in the fourth meeting of the Committee of Competition Policy of the AfCFTA to discuss the draft protocol on competition.

623. UNCTAD's assistance activities include the training of judges in competition law. The review of competition authorities' rulings is a matter for the judiciary, and it is necessary for them to be adequately trained to do so in a judicious manner. In this respect, a specific one-day course for judges on matters related to the application of antitrust rules was organised, in cooperation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and development, in North Macedonia in June 2022. Also in March and October 2022, UNCTAD organised, in cooperation with the Moroccan Competition Council and the World Bank, a one-day training on Competition for the media and a three-day training workshop for Moroccan judges. The judiciary course dealt with various basic aspects of the application of competition law both in the antitrust and merger fields.

624. **Results and impacts.** 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 implemented during 2022. 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 both fields. Furthermore, established UNCTAD partnerships with national, regional, and international organizations

⁷⁰ <https://unctad.org/meeting/unctad-masterclass-consumer-protection-university-buenos-aires>

⁷¹ <https://unctad.org/meeting/european-commission-unctad-workshop-civil-society-and-consumer-product-safety>

⁷² <https://unctad.org/meeting/workshop-protecting-consumers-unsafe-products-through-import-surveillance-and-cooperation>

⁷³ <https://unctad.org/meeting/trust-cross-border-e-commerce-case-consumer-product-safety>

and institutions, combining knowledge, technical and financial support, allow the activities to be carried out effectively and to produce tangible outcomes.

625. The rapid growth of e-commerce and the development of new business models driven by large digital platforms is dramatically changing the market structure and impacting consumer patterns at high speed. UNCTAD's work on consumer online dispute resolution is of utmost importance, not only for consumers to strengthen their confidence in e-commerce, but also for the development of fairer and more reliable digital markets. The DODR project has attracted the attention of several member states, regional organisations, civil society and academia who place their trust in UNCTAD to lead initiatives to discuss the resolution of disputes in cross-border consumer cases. In addition, UNCTAD identified good practices in consumer dispute resolution from developing countries (Brazil, Colombia and Mexico) who shared their solutions to the challenges faced in designing and implementing such mechanisms in their own countries. South-South cooperation was vital for Indonesia and Thailand to overcome difficulties in defining processes, technology and costs of their own online consumer dispute resolution mechanisms.

626. The ongoing work on PALOP project promotes the exchange of experiences among countries with a common culture and a similar level on competition and consumer protection development. This approach encouraged by UNCTAD boosts competition culture in countries where no legal framework of institutions existed by favouring South-South cooperation. The programme attracted more specific formal requests including the assistance of the recently created competition authorities in Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau and the draft of the competition law of Timor-Leste (linked to the country's ongoing accession to WTO).

627. In addition, through the two United Nations DA COVID-19 projects, UNCTAD contributed 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 Consumer protection and health services segment, the project aimed at drawing upon national examples, through the contributions by member States in national jurisdictions, to identify consumer protection rights and recommendations that could improve the delivery of health services through practical examples, taking into account the use of technologies and the opportunities and challenges it entails in this area⁷⁴. Therefore, the outputs provided recommendations on how consumer protection could improve the provision of health services on the one side; on the other side, focused on the possible features of a social infrastructure for health services, again building on consumer rights and on consumer policy.⁷⁵

628. On the socioeconomic front, UNCTAD technical support promoted policies to encourage competition policy to contribute to stronger MSMEs to achieve a successful economic recovery in the wake of COVID-19. A series of events and products were launched as described above that raised the interest of several member States (Armenia, El Salvador, Peru and Philippines), leading to technical cooperation requests. In particular, the active participation of member States in the online course on the "Interface between Competition Policy and MSMEs development" shows a major impact of UNCTAD's work in this area. Sixty-seven participants from 28 countries completed the two-month online course. Forty-eight per cent of participants were women. Sixty per cent considered the course excellent, or very good. Around 70 per cent reported that the course increased their knowledge, helped them to understand the interlinkages between the two policies. At least 60 per cent shared that course would have a positive direct outcome in their work.

629. As a whole, UNCTAD's involvement in the United Nations DA COVID-19 projects together with the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions and other international

⁷⁴ ["Strengthening consumer protection in the provision of health services in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic"](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditclp2023d2_en.pdf) (UNCTAD/DITC/CLP/2023/2, 03 Apr 2023), available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditclp2023d2_en.pdf.

⁷⁵ [Social Infrastructure for Health: Guidance for social and consumer protection](https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/ccpb_Social__infra_Health_draft_report_en.pdf) (UNCTAD/DITC/CLP/2023/3, 20 Apr 2023), available at https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/ccpb_Social__infra_Health_draft_report_en.pdf.

organizations underlined the importance of coordinating cross-thematic efforts to address the recovery of MSMEs post-COVID-19. The projects had several positive externalities such as UNCTAD's increased visibility 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.

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>			
ANG/0T/FBK	European Union (EU)-UNCTAD joint programme, Train for Trade II	2017–	European Union
INT/0T/3AO	Support to the UNCTAD/ICC Investment Advisory Council	2003–	China, Norway
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–	China

1. Capital markets and sustainable investment

1.1. Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative

630. **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 by the UN Secretary General, the SSE was built on the demand from exchanges for a place to come together with investors, companies, regulators, standard setters 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 2022, the membership grew to 118 stock exchanges and 13 derivatives exchanges.

631. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD work on responsible investment, including Sustainable Stock Exchanges initiative, 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.

632. **Outputs.** In 2022, the SSE published a major guidance document on gender equality. In collaboration with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and UN Women, and an international Advisory Group made up of 71 experts from 52 organisations across 34 countries, the SSE initiative produced guidance on "How exchanges can advance gender equality", available in English and Spanish. The SSE also published 4 Market Monitors: (a)

an analysis of boardroom gender equality in G20 markets; (b) an analysis of boardroom gender equality in the top 5 markets in 7 regional or country groupings; (c) an analysis of boardroom gender equality in the 9 largest Latin American markets (published in Spanish); and (d) an introductory FAQ on Voluntary Carbon Markets, published at COP27.

633. The SSE initiative also further strengthened and expanded its existing online databases including: (a) its stock exchange database with data on the sustainability practices of over 121 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; (c) security market regulator database of best practices in promoting sustainable finance; (d) and the gender equality database providing data on boardroom gender balances in over 40 markets around the world. In 2022, the SSE also launched a new derivatives exchanges database and a database tracking support for the recommendations of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). In addition, the SSE convened a 50-member strong SSE Advisory Group to prepare a draft target framework for the Net Zero Financial Service Providers Alliance, part of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero launched at COP26.

634. The SSE regularly convenes relevant stakeholders for the purpose of disseminating knowledge and building consensus on capital market transparency and sustainability, including the following key events:

(a) SSE partnered with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) to hold over 70 online training workshops on the topic of “TCFD climate reporting” in 42 markets, plus 3 regional events (Africa, Central America and Euro-Asia), training over 12,000 participants, including stock exchange officials, security market regulators, investors and listed companies, with an average female participation of 55 per cent.

(b) In March 2022, on the occasion of International Women’s Day, SSE partnered with UN Women, UN Global Compact, IFC and World Federation of Exchanges to convene 110 “Ring the Bell for Gender Equality” events at exchanges around the world to raise awareness on the business case for women’s economic empowerment and the opportunities for the private sector to advance gender equality and sustainable development.

(c) SSE convened four quarterly webinars for SSE Partner Exchanges and other capital market stakeholder, covering the following topics: (Q1) Blue Economy; (Q2) New Developments in ESG Disclosure; (Q3) Forced labour, human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery; (Q4) Gender Equality.

(d) SSE partnered with United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to organize two in-person sessions at COP27, including a technical round table on the role of stock exchanges in promoting innovative climate solutions, and a CEO and Regulator round table on the role of exchanges in creating a net zero world.

(e) SSE produced eight episodes of “SSE TV” interviews with stock exchange CEOs and other high-level stakeholders on sustainable finance and the SDGs.

(f) SSE partnered with IFC, UN Women and the Federacion Iberoamericana de Bolsas (FIAB) to convene a high-level round table of Latin American capital market leaders to address the topic of gender equality in companies in the region.

635. 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.

636. **Results and impacts.** In 2022, in addition to the 70 online training sessions organised, the SSE conducted 10 consensus-building events, including webinars and in-person events involving more than 77 speakers from the private and public sector including international organizations and the regulatory community. The SSE’s membership increased to 118 stock exchanges and 13 derivatives exchanges for 131 SSE partner exchanges in total. Three stock exchanges published new guidance for their market on ESG disclosure for the first time and 9 published updated guidance, closing the year with 67 stock exchanges providing guidance on ESG disclosure, 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).

637. SSE work was endorsed by a number of key institutions and private sector partners, as reflected in the following statements:

(a) “We would like to use this opportunity to give strong support to the UN SSE to continue organizing these excellent workshops [on climate disclosure] for all relevant stakeholders.” CEO, Banja Luka Stock Exchange, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2022.

(b) “The SSE TCFD courses provided Brazilian participants with high-quality training on climate disclosures as well as a deeper understanding of the TCFD recommendations. ...we are keen and proud to keep on working with the SSE to provide a range of world-class courses which will support the transition towards a more resilient and just future.” Head of Sustainability, B3, Brazil, 2022.

(c) “Joining the UN Sustainable Social Exchange initiative could not have come at a better time when there is a global trend towards sustainability-themed products by most Exchanges across the world to support Environmental, Social, and Governance Initiatives (ESG). Being part of this initiative further reinforces our commitment to ESG following the recent approval of Green Bond and Sustainability-themed product rules in the Ghanaian capital market.” Managing Director, Ghana Stock Exchange, 2022

(d) “As a supporter of TCFD, we appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with UN SSE, IFC and CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project) in providing a high quality TCFD training programme.” President and Director, IDX, 2022.

(e) “I applaud the work of the SSE Advisory Group on Gender Equality in supporting the SSE and the IFC in producing this guidance. With this new updated guidance on gender equality, the SSE continues in its tradition of providing exchanges with practical tools to make a difference in their market.” Managing Director, Jamaica Stock Exchange, 2022.

(f) “I would like to acknowledge and thank the UN for leading this extremely important initiative and PSX (Pakistan Stock Exchange) is proud to be part of this global movement. Pakistan is committed to ESG and PSX looks forward to playing a key role in the development of ESG standards, reporting and dialogue in the country. By joining the SSE Initiative, PSX will now be supported in its efforts to effectively take forward the discourse for ESG and encourage listed companies to report on ESG and SDGs.” CEO, PSX, 2022.

(g) “The Saudi Exchange is very proud of its partnership with UN SSE, IFC and CPD, to host TCFD trainings sessions for our market participants in June 2022. The training sessions provided in-depth knowledge about reporting in line with TCFD to ensure that investors can access high-quality information to advise positive climate-related investment. We at Saudi Exchange are pleased to have worked with SSE on making our market more climate resilient and a model to guide other exchanges on climate disclosure”. CEO, Saudi Exchange, 2022.

(h) “Thanks to the collaboration with the UN SSE, IFC & CPD, SIX Swiss Exchange could offer a first training programme to its listed companies in April 2022 regarding the TCFD recommendations. Given the high-quality inputs and insights into the TCFD framework offered by the excellent trainers, the training was very well received by the participants.” Head SIX Swiss Exchange, Switzerland, 2022.

(i) “The SSE programme was an important part of our programme in 2022, allowing us to offer valuable disclosure training to hundreds of NYSE-listed companies and help them generate high-quality reporting on their approach to climate risk.” President, New York Stock Exchange, 2022.

1.2. Sustainable Institutional Investment Facilitation programme

638. **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 (SDGs), 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 SDGs, into the capital market, and facilitating long-term sustainable investment by institutional investors in key SDG sectors, in particular in developing economies, through policy advocacy, capacity building, dissemination of best practices and partnership with SDG investors.

639. **Objectives and features.** The SIIF programme is dedicated to facilitating long-term investment by financial institutions in the SDGs, in particular in developing countries, and supporting integration of the SDGs in the global capital markets.

640. **Outputs.** In 2022, the SIIF programme launched the UN Global Sustainable Finance Observatory (GSFO) to create an enabling ecosystem to support the sustainable finance and related policymaking. The Observatory features a sustainable finance regulations platform, which covers sustainable finance policies and regulations and related best practices in 35 countries and country groupings, representing 93 per cent of global GDP. The Observatory also published the sustainability performance of over 700 sustainable funds, including their alignment with the SDGs and their climate impact, which helped enhance the transparency and credibility of the sustainable investment market.

641. The SIIF programme continues monitoring and assessing sustainable investment and related practices of the world's 100 largest sovereign wealth and public pension funds. Relevant performance of the funds was updated and published in the GSFO with an aim to encourage sustainable investment by institutional investors, in particular in developing economies.

642. The SIIF programme developed a guide to assist institutional investors and financial industry associations, particularly in developing economies, in incorporating sustainable development, as defined by the SDGs, into their investment decision-making and operations.

643. The programme provided technical assistance on sustainability integration strategies and practices to developing country sovereign and public investors, including the sovereign wealth fund of Angola. On 6 December 2022, UNCTAD organized a high-level meeting in Luanda, Angola, to promote long-term institutional investment in infrastructure development, focusing on leveraging international investment through national sovereign wealth funds and other financial institutions and maximizing its contribution to sustainable and inclusive development. Investment opportunities, strategies, and practical measures for promoting and facilitating institutional investment in infrastructure development was discussed. About 100 participants, including senior officials from relevant ministries in Angola, executives from domestic and international institutional investors, and international investment experts, attended the event.

644. On June 21, 2022, the SIIF programme organized a workshop in Paris for institutional investors from both developed and developing countries. Best practices, practical tools and an UNCTAD framework for sustainability integration were shared in the workshop.

645. **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) "The Global Sustainable Finance Observatory makes a timely contribution to the sharing of best practices in sustainability integration and policymaking, as well as data and other tools that can be of huge benefit for developing countries." Ambassador & Permanent Representative of South Africa to the WTO.

(b) "We note with satisfaction the new initiative of UNCTAD, the United Nations Global Observatory on Finance sustainable...The observatory can play a key role in addressing the challenges facing the global sustainable investing." Statement by Cape Verde during the 71st executive session of the Trade and Development Board, February 2022.

(c) "As public institutions and blended finance mechanisms play a crucial role in mitigating risk perceptions in emerging markets and supporting long-term investments, UNCTAD's efforts to facilitate long-term investment in SDG sectors are of great

significance, not only for the host countries but also for institutional investors seeking to invest in developing economies.” Chairman of the European Long-Term Investors Association.

2. Addressing challenges and opportunities in economic globalization

Wuhan Globalization Seminars

646. **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.

647. 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.

648. **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. Since 2022, after consulting with the donor agency, the scope of the project has also been expanded to broader international economic and development issues particularly from South-South Cooperation perspective.

649. **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.

650. 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. In 2022, entrusted by China as the Presiding Country of BRICS, UNCTAD provided technical support to the discussion of the Group’s Trade Ministers Meeting and the meetings of the Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI) of BRICS. UNCTAD also prepared a report on Trade and Environmental Sustainability for BRICS.

651. **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.

652. The technical support and research work provided to BRICS is welcomed and UNCTAD was invited to continue such support to BRICS in 2023 under the Presidency of South Africa.

IV. Theme D: Empowering people, investing in their future

653. 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.

654. 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.

655. 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 2022 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/OT/CAI	Capacity-Building in Trade and Gender	2013–	Multi-donors
INT/OT/JAC	EIF-Regional Project Promoting Gender Responsive Trade Policy in the LDCs	2020–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
INT/OT/LAF	EIF-Trade and Gender Linkages: Exploring the Benefit of e-commerce for Women	2022–	Enhanced Integrated Framework
INT/OT/LAM	Strengthening capacity of women cross border traders in Mozambique	2022–	TradeMark Africa
MYA/OT/HBI	United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, Myanmar	2019–	United Nations Office for Project Services, Switzerland
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2124 (F13)	Trade policies and frameworks to foster regional integration and the achievement of SDGs in selected conflict and post- conflict Arab countries	2021–	Development Account

656. **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 for all countries. Yet, women’s potential in trade is too often held back by the many constraints they face.

657. Trade and trade policy can play a key role in fostering a more sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 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.

658. **Objectives and features.** 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 dialogues. 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.

659. **Outputs.** In 2022, 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

660. Delivery of two iterations of the online course on trade and gender focusing on the Least Developed Countries. The courses were delivered in cooperation with the EIF. The first iteration was held in English (13 June–17 July) and one in French (31 October–4 December). A total of 227 stakeholders participated in the courses. Beyond the pedagogical manuals, trainees benefited from various audio-visual aids developed by UNCTAD, combined with peer-to-peer exchanges with experts, for a concrete application of the themes addressed.

661. Training programme on “Trade rules and procedures, and entrepreneurship” for women small-scale and informal cross-border traders. On 16–21 May 2022, UNCTAD trained 35 women small-scale cross-border traders in Botswana to promote awareness on trade rules and customs procedures, and strengthen traders' entrepreneurial skills and resilience to recover from the COVID-19 crisis. The training was carried out as part of the multi-agency project “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the 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

662. The analytical work conducted by the Trade, Gender and Development Programme in 2022 focused on the drafting of the following studies:

(a) Publication of the introductory teaching module “*Looking at the trade and gender nexus from a development perspective: A brief overview*”, which provides an overview of the trade and gender nexus, outlining main concepts and key analytical frameworks. The module was the basis for the online courses that the UNCTAD Trade, Gender and Development team organized in 2022.

(b) Development of a new version of UNCTAD's main teaching manual on trade and gender “*Linking Trade and Gender towards Sustainable Development*”. The manual draws from country and regional case studies to illustrate how trade and gender are connected through a reciprocal relation, and how these issues are being addressed within trade policy circles. This publication will constitute the basis of future online courses on trade and gender.

(c) Development of the policy review: “*E-commerce from a gender and development perspective*”. The publication examines the opportunities e-commerce offers to women-led and women-owned small enterprises in developing and least developed countries, and the obstacles such enterprises must overcome to engage in e-commerce. It aims to

provide guidance on how to design policies and measures that enhance women's beneficial participation in the economy by leveraging e-commerce.

(d) Development of the country case study "*Trade and Development in the State of Palestine Through a Gender Lens*", which looks at the socioeconomic structure of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) through a gender lens and investigates the interaction between trade and gender. It distinguishes between women's different economic roles as workers and entrepreneurs/business owners, and between different economic sectors such as agriculture, industry, and services.

(e) Implementation of activities related to the project on women in informal cross-border trade in Mozambique. After an inception Mission held in Maputo in June 2022, the Programme started drafting the policy review "*Mozambique's Integration into Regional Value Chains and the Role of Women Small-Scale Cross-Border Traders*". The study looks at Mozambique's integration into international and regional value chains and analyzes the role of women small-scale cross-border traders in them, as well as the barriers they face. It offers policy recommendations towards a better integration of women cross-border traders into regional value chains.

(f) Continued implementation of the SECO - UN Trade Cluster project in Myanmar, with particular focus on female farmers. Interventions aimed to promote ethnic identities, rural economic development and traditional knowledge through the valorization of culinary heritage, and to leverage the productive potential of women farmers through digital solutions. Activities carried out in 2022 included: i) the preparation of a publication providing an overview of culinary traditions and presenting recipes of the most popular traditional dishes collected through interviews and field visits; ii) the development of mobile solutions for female farmers, including educational digital content prepared by UNCTAD on good agricultural practices for ginger, avocado and tea, access to finance and food safety.

Events and workshops – Awareness-raising and policy dialogue on the trade and gender nexus

663. 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) CSW66 side event "Accelerating progress in trade and gender: New policies and data developments?". The event was held on 17 March 2022 during the sixty-sixth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The focus of the discussion was on how gender considerations are being progressively integrated into trade policy by presenting concrete examples and sharing recent progress in producing better statistics about trade and gender.

(b) Within the UNCTAD initiative "Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda", the Trade, Gender and Development Programme delivered a course on 5 April 2022 targeting the Permanent Missions in Geneva: "Women and the COVID-19 pandemic: Building back better, including through trade". The focus of the discussion was the impact of the health pandemic on women, including on small-scale cross-border traders, and how to build back better or differently including by leveraging the opportunities opened by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

(c) Event "Building Back Better and Equal in a Post-COVID World: UNCTAD has a Roadmap". During the event, held at the Annual Conference of the International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE) on 29 June 2022, the team presented a preliminary draft of the study on women in e-commerce.

(d) WTO Public Forum event "Inclusive Trade Agenda: Enabling women traders during crises" held on 27 September 2022. The event, jointly organized by UNCTAD, UNECA and TradeMark East Africa, discussed policies and interventions needed to minimize the pandemic- and war-induced economic shocks, increase the role of cross-border trade for food security, and build more equitable and inclusive economies.

(e) Event at the World Trade Congress on Gender "Gender Gaps in Trade: Does Digitalisation Hold Solutions?", held on 7 December 2022. The event provided an opportunity to present a paper on the challenges and opportunities of digitalization.

664. **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

665. According to the feedback received on the 2022 iterations of the online course on trade and gender in English and French, 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.

Training programme for women cross border traders

666. Most traders who took part in UNCTAD capacity building activities targeting women cross-border traders in Botswana rated the training outcomes very positively (over 90 per cent), confirming a remarkable increase in their understanding of their rights and obligations as traders, of applicable trade rules and customs procedures, and of new COVID-19 measures. They also confirmed enhanced confidence to cross the border through official border posts (97 per cent) and intention to formalize their business within the next 12 months (97 per cent).

D3 Entrepreneurship for sustainable development

Table D3

Entrepreneurship 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
MYA/0T/HBI	UN Trade Cluster Myanmar	2018–	United Nations Office for Project Services
SAU/0T/CBI	Entrepreneurship Development Programme (Saudi Arabia)	2014–	Saudi Arabia
ROA-2023 (W12)	Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector	2020–	Development Account

667. **Development context.** The General Assembly of the United Nations, recalling its resolutions 67/202 on 21 December 2012, 69/210 on 19 December 2014, 71/221 on 21 December 2016, 73/225 on 20 December 2018, 75/211 on 21 December 2020, and most recently resolution 77/160 on 14 December 2022, emphasized the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in achieving the sustainable development challenges. The latest resolution (77/160) recognizes the value of entrepreneurship education and the dissemination of entrepreneurial thinking across all sectors and encourages UNCTAD to continue with its behavioural approach programme, Empretec. Furthermore, it invites UNCTAD to continue to assist Member States in identifying, formulating, implementing and assessing coherent policy measures on entrepreneurship and the promotion of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

668. 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.

669. 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.”

670. These mandates underpin UNCTAD’s technical assistance work on entrepreneurship for sustainable development.

671. **Objectives and features.** UNCTAD’s 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 five interrelated priority areas for the formulation of a national entrepreneurship strategy⁷⁶: optimizing the regulatory environment; enhancing entrepreneurship education and skills development; facilitating technology exchange and innovation; improving access to finance; and promoting awareness and networking.

672. The other pillar of UNCTAD assistance to member States focuses on developing entrepreneurial skills and building local productive capacities of MSMEs and start-ups, through UNCTAD Empretec and Business Linkages programmes.

673. 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 over 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.

674. 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.

675. As part of the United Nations Development Account 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

⁷⁶ As identified in the UNCTAD Entrepreneurship Policy Framework – EPF, launched in 2012.

medium enterprises sector” (MSME surge project). The project, implemented jointly by UNCTAD together with all Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA) as well as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, allowed for the successful development and implementation of capacity-building tools for governments and MSMEs to mitigate the economic and social impact of the crisis and facilitate MSMEs contribution to SDGs implementation. During its third and final phase, the project completed capacity building activities to incorporate policy responses for MSME resurgence and on entrepreneurship skills development, through the UNCTAD network of Empretec centres.

676. **Outputs.** The main outputs in 2022 in the areas of entrepreneurship policies, Empretec and business linkages are reported below.

Entrepreneurship Policies

Angola – National Entrepreneurship Strategy

677. 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. Following 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 (2021), work was undertaken in the area of access to funding and the regulatory environment in preparation for a workshop that took place on 24 February 2023, which brought together Angolan government officials, regulatory agencies, and private institutions dealing with entrepreneurship development. The outcome of the workshop will feed into a report that will serve as a guide for the Ministry of Economy and Planning of Angola and the National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the design of a National Entrepreneurship Strategy (NES).

Seychelles - National Entrepreneurship Strategy

678. On 14 November 2022, Seychelles adopted a national entrepreneurship strategy as part of broader efforts towards achieving the government’s “Vision 2033” for a resilient, responsible, and prosperous nation. The strategy incorporates all key components of UNCTAD’s entrepreneurship policy framework, such as optimizing business regulations, enhancing entrepreneurship education, investing in technology and innovation, improving entrepreneurs’ access to finance, and promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and networking. Seychelles’ national entrepreneurship strategy is the result of collaboration with many partners and the country received support from the UNCTAD-led MSME Surge project to strengthen the capacity of small businesses in developing countries to counter the socioeconomic fallout from COVID-19.

Uganda –National strategy to boost sustainable entrepreneurship and support MSMEs

679. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives of Uganda received UNCTAD’s support to prepare a national strategy to boost sustainable entrepreneurship and support MSMEs in Uganda. The new strategy is aligned with Uganda’s National Development Plan III and based on UNCTAD’s Entrepreneurship Policy Framework (EPF) with inputs from multiple stakeholders. The strategy includes elements to build resilience to current and future economic shocks, including pandemics, food, energy and financial crises, and prioritizes actions to make progress in four areas: the performance and survival rate of small businesses, the number of start-ups, the number of formal small businesses, and coordination and communication on entrepreneurship.

Ecuador – Policy measures for migrants and refugee entrepreneurs

680. In January 2022, UNCTAD, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and the Alliance for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (AEI), and with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), organized an additional policy workshop to finalize an action plan and specify priority policy measures for migrants and refugee entrepreneurs

to better integrate the socio-economic landscape of Ecuador. The workshop was carried out under the project “Promoting Refugee and Migrant Entrepreneurship in East Africa, the Andean region and the Middle East”. As part of the project, the Empretec centre of Ecuador – Conquito – conducted two Empretec workshops for groups of participants including migrants from other Latin American countries. The two Empretec workshops took place in the cities of Ambato (7-12 February 2022) and Guayaquil (14-19 February 2022) and saw the participation of 40 entrepreneurs (27 women).

E-learning course on policymaking: Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development

681. 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 was developed as part of the MSME surge project and is designed to support policymakers and practitioners to understand the benefits of promoting entrepreneurship and its impact on sustainable development. The e-learning course is available in three languages: English, French and Spanish. In 2022, the e-learning course was offered in 120 countries to 347 people, out of which 174 women.

E-learning course on Entrepreneurship for Migrants and Refugees

682. UNCTAD has been actively using the e-learning course developed during the implementation of the project on Promoting refugee and migrant entrepreneurship in East Africa, the Andean region, and the Middle East, at the country level. In 2022, the UNCTAD-UNITAR-UNHCR-IOM e-learning course on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees was offered in 104 countries to 474 participants, out of which 259 were women.

United Nations Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) day 2022

683. UNCTAD celebrated the fifth anniversary of International MSME Day 2022 with a joint UN event in New York in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the UN, and the International Council for Small Business. Partner UN departments and agencies, as well as high-level panellists, stressed the need to move beyond recovery and consider ways in which to lower and eliminate barriers faced by MSMEs, improve the business environment and access to finance, markets and technology in these fragile times. Countries and their development partners should continue to support and empower MSMEs and unlock their full potential through inspiring innovation, creativity and decent work for all.

Empretec

684. Empretec project activities under the installation and consolidation phase, notably in Angola and Saudi Arabia, resumed in 2022, and the remaining capacity-building activities for Empretec centres under the MSME Surge project were completed during the course of the year.

685. Among the achievements of the Empretec programme in 2022, the following had a particular relevance at the global or country level:

- (a) The Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 27-30 March 2022;
- (b) The annual Empretec Directors meeting (virtual format) on 6-7 December 2022;
- (c) Additional Empretec training activities in Angola;
- (d) Consolidation of the Empretec Saudi Arabia programme, with the successful organization of Empretec workshops, TOT sessions for local trainers and formalization of a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Social Development Bank (SDB) as hosting institution;
- (e) Delivery of Empretec workshops for micro-entrepreneurs in Benin, Malaysia and Uruguay, to test the revised training material;
- (f) Four on-line sessions for Empretec trainers and trainee trainers, as part of their upgrading on the new version of the Empretec workshop (E6DM);

(g) Launch of a publication on stories of resilience of women entrepreneurs from the Empretec network.

686. More specifically the following activities were conducted:

Empretec global network activities

687. UNCTAD participated in the 2022 Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 27-30 March 2022. Under the theme “Rethink, Reboot, Regenerate”, more than 100 sessions featuring 200 speakers provided tailored content to founders, investors, policymakers and ecosystem builders. UNCTAD presented its Empretec 2.0 strategy, designed for increased collaboration among empretec centres, the provision of high quality added value services and tools, and for creating strategic partnerships to meet the changing needs of entrepreneurs and governments in a fast-evolving world.

688. As an integral part of its Empretec 2.0 strategy, UNCTAD set up an internal management tool for Empretec centres, called “Empretec Corner”, to facilitate exchanges, information sharing and dissemination of training and non-training material between UNCTAD and its Empretec network, as well as among Empretec centres. It was presented during the 28th annual meeting of Empretec Directors, held from 6 to 7 December 2022 in a virtual format. Representatives from 24 Empretec national centres expressed their appreciation for the strategy as a way to increase the efficiency of global network operations.

689. In the context of the MSME surge project, UNCTAD supported its network of Empretec centres and their trainers to roll out a revised entrepreneurship training workshop for micro-entrepreneurs with content specifically designed to reach groups with low-literacy and numeracy abilities. The updated content and structure of the workshop for micro-entrepreneurs, now aligned to the modernized 6-day workshop (E6DM), were reflected in a new set of training material for Empretec centres, made available in English, French and Spanish. Between March and July 2022, three workshops for micro-entrepreneurs were successfully conducted in Benin, Malaysia and Uruguay, in collaboration with the national Empretec centres.

690. UNCTAD organized four online training-of-trainers sessions on the modernized 6-day Empretec workshop (E6DM) between September and October 2022. The four 2-hour sessions, provided to 54 trainers from 18 countries, completed a series of virtual training sessions started in 2020 under the MSME surge project to disseminate new content, learning objectives and delivery techniques included in the new version of the Empretec training workshop.

691. On 21 November 2022, UNCTAD published “Empretec Women in Business: Building purpose-driven enterprises amid crises”, which showcases how entrepreneurship is becoming more inclusive, equal, representative, and sustainable because of women in business. The stories presented, selected among those of dozens of finalists of the Empretec Women in Business Awards since 2008, are emblematic of the power and creativity of women entrepreneurs and demonstrate their strength and commitment to making a difference.

Empretec activities at a national and regional levels

692. 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

693. In the context of the MSME surge project, UNCTAD supported the organization of an Empretec training workshop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in cooperation with the national Empretec hosting institution in Malaysia NAWEM⁷⁷. The workshop took place in July 2022 with a view to strengthening the centre’s training capacity to continue supporting Malaysian MSMEs, hit hard by the pandemic.

⁷⁷ National Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Malaysia.

694. In 2022, UNCTAD signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Social Development Bank of Saudi Arabia, to cooperate on the implementation of a consolidation project to strengthen Empretec in the country. With the support of the national counterpart, which is also financing the project, UNCTAD organized 10 Empretec workshops between February and December 2022. Two hundred forty-eight local entrepreneurs (118 women) successfully completed the workshops that took place in Riyadh, Buraydah, Damman and Jeddah. Participants came from various economic sectors. In November 2022, UNCTAD and the Empretec national centre organized a training-of-trainers workshop for nine local trainers and trainee trainers, to build capacity and strengthen ties of the team of Empretec trainers in Saudi Arabia. Four new national trainers received their certification, and a national trainer was certified as Empretec National Master Trainer.

Empretec country activities in Africa

695. Under the framework of the European Union-UNCTAD joint Programme for Angola: Train for Trade II, UNCTAD assisted the national Empretec centre with the organization of the first Empretec Entrepreneurship Training Workshop outside the capital city of Angola. In July 2022, 26 entrepreneurs from a variety of industries, including fisheries, agriculture, hotel, and education sectors gathered in Soyo, province of Zaire, to participate in the workshop, led by two certified national trainers. Participants highlighted the quality and usefulness of the training for their entrepreneurial activities. On 3 October 2022, the Empretec centre officially inaugurated their new premises with the participation of representatives from the European Union and the Angolan government.

696. On 11 May 2022, UNCTAD and the Empretec Centre of Benin organized a regional webinar to highlight and exchange success stories and strengthen the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem. The Empretec centres of Cameroon and Mauritius participated in the event, represented by their respective Directors and by some entrepreneurs who described how the pandemic affected their businesses and how they were able to update their business models and identify new market opportunities. A representative from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) presented the organization's start-up programme, an annual competition on innovative business ideas it organizes with the participation of eight regional states. Participants recognized the webinar to be a good example of regional efforts to nurture creativity, networking and innovation as a building block to a thriving entrepreneurial community.

Empretec country activities in Latin America

697. In 2022, Empretec Argentina conducted six Empretec workshops in different municipalities across the country. The workshops targeted different audiences, including a federal incubation programme for technology-based ventures, the business incubator for creative industries. A total of 74 female and 37 male entrepreneurs received Empretec training. In November 2022, the Empretec centre organized a national training-of-trainers workshop with 13 trainers, who gathered to review and exchange experiences on the new E6DM workshop format being rolled out in the country.

698. The Empretec programme of Colombia, hosted by CAFAM⁷⁸, organized 44 Empretec workshops, doubling from the previous year. Empretec workshops usually target vulnerable populations, especially the unemployed, most of whom are women. However, the centre has been expanding its portfolio by adding training activities to support entrepreneurs and MSMEs in creative thinking, intrapreneurship and innovation, as well as writing effective business plans to help launch new companies.

699. The Empretec centre in Brazil, hosted at SEBRAE⁷⁹, conducted two additional pilot Empretec training workshops in a hybrid format, in March and October 2022. The online platform, hosting a workshop management dashboard and interactive exercises (part of the E6DM Empretec workshop), is a key improvement in the centre's digitalization strategy. On average, Brazil trains more than 13,000 entrepreneurs in over 600 Empretec workshops per

⁷⁸ Family Compensation Fund

⁷⁹ Support Service of Brazil for Micro and Small Enterprises

annum. The platform saves time in monitoring participants' progress and processing outcomes, and significantly reduces the use of paper, thus making the workshop more environmentally friendly.

Business Linkages

700. In the context of 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), in 2022, UNCTAD developed content in Burmese language to deliver Farming-as-a-Business courses on the three agricultural value chains – avocado, ginger and tea – through a virtual platform.

701. **Results and impact.** With the adoption of Seychelles' national entrepreneurship strategy, the Minister of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry thanked UNCTAD for the invaluable support, recognizing that: "There is now a strategy to nurture, support and scale up successful entrepreneurs", which can effectively help to "...respond to the needs of entrepreneurs and address the gaps that hinder their progress."

702. Under the framework of the MSME Surge project, UNCTAD trained, in collaboration with its network of 41 Empretec national centres, over 1090 entrepreneurs and trainers from 30 countries. Of this, 64.5 per cent of participants reported to have opened a new business after attending Empretec training, 64.5 per cent of companies increased their turnover, 51.6 per cent of companies increased the number of employees, and 80 per cent increased their personal earnings. Both entrepreneurs and trainers received training with UNCTAD's updated format and materials which were disseminated through online workshops and sessions.

703. The Empretec programme in Angola continued to strengthen its services and reach out to vulnerable groups. One of the beneficiaries of the programme who, before attending the Empretec workshop, used to operate an informal business with a friend, managed to register his business and expand its services in four different provinces in the North of the country. "Empretec changed my life", he says. As part of the team of national certified trainers, he trained over 100 entrepreneurs through the Empretec methodology.

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-donors
INT/OT/7BR	UNCTAD/ Train for Trade Port Training Programme for English-Speaking Developing Countries	2007–	Ireland
ROA-2023 (X12)	Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics	2020–	Development Account
ROA-2225 (F14)	Train for Trade blended learning strategy to boost the digital economy in small island	2022–	Development Account

<i>Project number</i>	<i>Short title</i>	<i>Period covered</i>	<i>Source of fund</i>
	developing States of Africa, the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific		

704. **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 build sustainable networks of knowledge, develop trade-oriented policies and promote 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, the special course on Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics, and the performance indicators.

705. 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 most developing countries). 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.

706. The activities of the Train for Trade programme in 2022 have contributed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as follows:

(a) Goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) by actively promoting women's participation in all programme activities. In 2022 the women's participation in the programme reached 38 per cent.

(b) 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. For example, in Togo the human resource department set up new rules and guidelines to build a better and more dynamic work environment. The port of Buenos Aires-Argentina improved the decision-making process in consideration of the evolution of routes of shipping companies.

(c) 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 dissertations of the participants of the Port Management Programme. In Guinea and Togo, the digitalization of the data system goes hand in hand with the construction of resilient and innovative infrastructure and the improvement of the customer billing system. The port of Buenos Aires in Argentina improved the security of the waterway to facilitate the access of ships to the port. Exolgan Container Terminal in Argentina improved the inspection process of containers to reduce the

time on containers in the port. GRAVETAL, a soja plant producer and exporter in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, implemented the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code in its river port based on new risk analysis integrated in their facility plan.

(d) Goal 10 (reduced inequalities): Tanzania Ports Authority are integrating several measures in their strategy to reduce inequalities in the port community of Dar es Salaam. This includes applying hiring, salary and remuneration policies that do not vary based on social background (gender, tribe, etc.); taking community initiatives with positive impact to everyone, regardless of socio-economic background; and enforcing ethical standards throughout the supply chain by introducing code of conducts and ethics, ethical committee and anti-corruption committee.

(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. The Port Authority of Douala is a long-standing member of the programme with the highest number of port operators certified in the network. Specific activities have been implemented to improve sustainable mobility and reduce congestion for both employees and goods in the port area.

(f) Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production are standards that ports can help to achieve). Ports' members of the network are managing natural resources, chemical waste in a sustainable manner; implementing responsible procurement policies; making sustainable investment in port area; encouraging the circular economy; optimizing port operations; and reducing food wastage and food loss in the production and supply chain. Haina International Terminals in the Dominican Republic, for example, implemented a new procedure for the recovery of waste collection.

(g) Goal 13 (take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts). Ports in Indonesia (Pelindo) are working on reducing CO₂ emissions from equipment, infrastructures and facilities by electrifying terminals, introducing hybrid engine technology, and moving from fossil energy to biofuel energy for shore-to-ship power supplies.

(h) 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. In Libreville (Gabon), Lomé (Togo) and Douala (Cameroon), waste management was assessed by port operators in 2022. It led to specific recommendations to improve and add value to waste in ports and also contribute to its valorization. Terminal Portuario de Perú LNG implemented a new system that reduces the risk of environmental damage during the stay of a ship in port.

(i) Goal 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development) by building global partnership and consensus. After benefitting from 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. Port Jennefer in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, for example, implemented a new procedure to control the import and export of merchandise in coordination with customs and other governmental entities.

707. 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.

708. 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 the course on “Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics (BPR)” fully digital and accessible in three languages (French, English and Spanish) with dedicated platforms and support.

709. 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, Cambodia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Mauritania, Malaysia, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay) 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 (WAEMU or UEMOA in French); 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.

710. 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.

711. 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 a 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.

712. **Outputs.** Under the Port Management Programme, the key outputs of the French-, English- and Spanish-speaking networks during the reporting period are highlighted below.

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 fully deliver all training and capacity building activities and advisory services as planned.

713. With the continued support of the United Nations Development Account and Irish Aid, based on the requests from port members of the Port Management Programme, the special training and capacity-building package called “Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics” (BPR) was organised again in 2022 to build essential skills for port community managers to help protect people and to secure vital trade in ports. The BPR package was delivered in March 2022 to port communities worldwide in the 3 languages for a total of 1,553 port operators and other stakeholders (33 percent women) from 112 economies. The sessions also included follow-up webinars featuring selected case studies of participants that implemented concrete measure to mitigate pandemics effects. The satisfaction rate was 95 per cent and the average score was 79 per cent.

714. The above-mentioned activities amounted to a total of 6,212 days or 31,060 hours of training. The project also included the exchange of best practices and new safety standards with a dedicated webpage on the Train for Trade platform 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 No. 93 on Emerging strategies for ports during the pandemic has been published building on the outcomes of the course.

715. The Train for Trade Port Management Week 2022 took place from 10 to 13 May in Las Palmas de Gran Canarias, Spain. In total ninety-three (93) representatives of forty-one (41) institutions from twenty-three (23) countries of the Train for Trade Port Management Programme attended the conference. The event was conducted in English, French and Spanish. Delegates, including thirteen (13) CEOs of ports, took part in a series of port events to exchange on best practices and lessons learned. During the global coordination meeting held on the third day, recommendations were adopted by the members of the Train for Trade Port Management Programme. The delegates praised UNCTAD for the relevance and impact of its Train for Trade capacity building programme in the beneficiary port communities. The delegates reaffirmed their annual financial support towards the activities of Train for Trade through its dedicated Trust Funds with contributions from the beneficiary members on the cost sharing principle and support from donors and port partners.

716. *French-speaking network.* In 2022, the French-speaking network of the Port Management Programme was composed of the port communities of Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo.

717. In the French-speaking network, 4 exchanges of experiences among 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. And 60 port experts from 15 countries participated in the juries of theses of other Port members.

718. Virtual meetings with focal points of the French-speaking network were held for the organization of online national deliveries. Juries were organized face-to-face for Guinea, Gabon and Togo.

719. 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.

720. *English-speaking network.* The English-speaking network continued to benefit from financial contributions of Irish Aid (100,000 Euro in 2022) 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.

721. Training of Trainers workshop started with modules 1-2 being delivered online to 70 senior managers (18 women) from 9 countries. The workshop welcomed participants from Cambodia, Cameroon (French-speaking network), Ghana, Indonesia, Maldives, Nigeria, Philippines, Serbia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

722. *Ghana*. In cooperation with Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), 18 middle managers (including 4 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 delivery of modules 7 and 8 with the support of certified trainers from the port community (port managers) and external port experts. Moreover, forty-one more participants (39 percent women) took part in the BPR component.

723. *Philippines*. Cycle 4 of the Modern Port Management course with 18 participants (including 5 woman) was finalised in 2022 with the delivery of modules 2 to 8 of the programme and the presentation of the dissertations (case studies). Moreover, in relation to the BPR component, a total of 204 participants (43 percent women) took part in the sessions in 2022.

724. *United Republic of Tanzania*. A coaching workshop was organised in Arusha under Tanzania Ports Authority leadership to increase the pool of senior port managers from their port community. A total of 15 participants (5 women) including 3 from Ghana ports were certified as Train for Trade instructors with the ability to deliver the modules of the Modern port Management course. Ten port managers (3 women) from Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) took part in BPR component in 2022 and the follow-up webinars.

725. *Nigeria*. Nigeria Ports Authority continued the delivery of the modules 1 to 3 with a total of 19 representatives (3 women) from various ports in the country. The trainings were also organised in different locations (Lagos, Warri, Port Harcourt) to provide the port operators with different perspectives of the Nigerian port systems. A total of 38 port operators (29 percent women) also took part in the BPR component in 2022.

726. *Indonesia*. Pelindo (Port Corporations of Indonesia) represented the largest number of participants (346) with 20 per cent woman of the BPR component with a majority of Customs representatives from the multitude of ports and terminal operators. Cycle 5 of the Modern Port Management was organised in 2022 under the lead of the new President Director of Pelindo being himself a certified trainer from the programme during events in our port partners in Ireland in 2009 and 2010. A total of 25 participants followed modules 1 to 4 with woman's participation of 28 per cent representing a substantive increase compared to the 10 per cent from Cycle 4 (2019–2021).

727. *Malaysia*. A total of 13 participants from Malaysia took part in the digital delivery of BPR in 2022. JohorPort Berhad did not initiate a new cycle of the programme.

728. The Danube Commission reiterated its interest in the Train for Trade programme and facilitated the participation of 5 port managers (2 women) in the BPR component for the river ports of their 3 member States (Croatia, Hungary and Serbia).

729. *Spanish-speaking network*. The Spanish-speaking network benefits from the collaboration with Spanish ports by means of a memorandum of understanding with Puertos del Estado (Spanish port regulator entity). The Port Authority of Valencia also gives financial and in-kind contributions to the programme through a memorandum of understanding. Finally, the Port Authority of Gijon and the Port Authority of Las Palmas provide in-kind contribution hosting events and taking part in field missions and activities.

730. The national deliveries of the Modern Port Management course were organized in Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Peru and in the Plurinational State of Bolivia. All the modules were delivered by international experts and local instructors (certified by Train for Trade).

731. The International Coordination Meeting of the Spanish-speaking network was organized on 14 and 15 November 2022 in Cuzco, Peru with the participation of representatives of the member countries, Puertos del Estado of Spain and the Spanish Port

Authorities of Valencia, Gijon, Las Palmas and Santander and UNCTAD team. 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 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 2023 and to continue financing their membership. Representatives from Uruguay were also present in the meeting because they joined the programme as a new member.

732. A Training of Trainers workshop was organized in Valencia, Spain from 11 to 22 July 2022 with the participation of 17 representatives (6 women) from ports of Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Peru and Uruguay. Participants were certified as instructors to deliver Modern Port Management course in their countries.

733. A study tour was organized in Port of Gijon (from 25 to 29 July 2022), with the participation of 9 representatives (2 women) from Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and Peru. Participants were able to visit the installations of Port of Gijon and meet and discuss with the responsible staff of each department.

734. In 2022, 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.

735. The volume 10 of the UNCTAD Train for Trade Port Management Series (PMS) was published featuring 16 dissertations, which have been judged to be the best from the recent cycles of the Spanish-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.

736. The Train for Trade Port Performance Scorecard (PPS) was updated, and the outcomes reflected in chapter 4 “Key Performance Indicators for Ports and the Shipping Fleet” of the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2022. 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.

737. 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 2022. Train for Trade has trained 2,361 statisticians (44 percent women) from 180 countries or areas. At the end of the courses, statisticians indicated that these courses would improve the collection and the reporting of statistics in many countries. Policymakers who followed the course confirmed they now had a better understanding of the statistical reports, which would be taken into consideration in decision-making process.

738. The online course on Statistics on International Trade in Services (SITS) was delivered (in English and French) for 1,233 participants (43 per cent women) from 157 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 challenges, best practices and policy recommendations.

739. The online course on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS) was delivered (in English and French) for 1,128 participants (45 per cent women) from 163 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 challenges, best practices and policy recommendations.

740. The Online Training on the Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy was delivered for 38 participants (66 percent women) from 14 small island developing states.

741. Following the delivery of the course on Digital identity for Trade and Development, the first policy brief on Digital Identity named “Why robust digital identity systems are essential in fostering trade and development” (Policy Brief n°96) was developed to help countries work on this issue. It advocates for a robust digital identity system. Digital

identification can provide a cost-effective means for developing countries to provide citizens with access to rights and services such as banking, schooling, and collecting social benefits. When effectively implemented, participation in the digital economy can be a powerful tool to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

742. In the framework of the UN Development Account project “Train for Trade blended learning strategy to boost the digital economy in small island developing States of Africa, the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific”, an online brainstorming session was organised with experts from Australia and the United Kingdom to redesign the course on Legal Aspect of E-commerce using TFT methodology. The course skeleton based on 9 modules was drafted, and the development of the course started in 2022.

743. In collaboration with the Digital Economy and E-Commerce Branch and UN ECLAC, a new TFT course is under development based on the 7 pillars of the eTrade for all programme. This hybrid component will support policymakers in developing effective measures for e-commerce and inclusive development covering aspects related to ICT connectivity and infrastructure, payment solutions and financing, e-commerce skills and adoption, legal and regulatory frameworks, trade facilitation and logistics.

744. **Results and impacts.** In 2022, the Train for Trade Programme enhanced skills and abilities of 4,788 trade practitioners⁸⁰ (38 percent women) from 194 countries and areas through various courses and activities for a total of 45,623 days or 250,838 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 2022

<i>Area</i>	<i>Total number</i>	<i>% Women</i>
Port Management Programme	826	30%
French-speaking network	316	33%
English-speaking network	228	26%
Spanish-speaking network	282	29%
Building Port Resilience Against Pandemics	1,553	33%
Statistics on International Trade in Services blended learning course	1,233	43%
English	996	46%
French	237	31%
International Merchandise Trade Statistics blended learning	1,128	45%
English	972	49%
French	156	26%
Online Training on the Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy	38	66%
e-DACUM on Legal Aspects of e-Commerce	10	20%

745. The year 2022 was the best year in terms of participation since the programme inception in 1998. In February 2023, the programme also achieved an important milestone of building skills and capacities of over 20,000 trade operators (40 percent women) from 219 countries or areas. In 2022, the participants of the Port Management Programme prepared a

⁸⁰ If a person participated in more than one training programme in 2022, each participation is counted separately.

total of 151 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.

746. 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 for sharing of knowledge and port practices between countries of the region, which often share common issues.

747. Based on the balanced scorecard concept, 26 indicators were identified, collected and classified into six main categories: finance, human resources, gender, vessel operations, cargo operations and environment. The Port Performance Scorecard has been collecting and monitoring port data since 2010 through a dedicated platform (pps.unctad.org) . On this dedicated platform a demo part is accessible to all, while the rest is for reporting members only. The general results with the 26 indicators are published in the Review of Maritime Transport each year and the PPS Newsletter. 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.

748. 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 219 economies across the globe. The Train for Trade platforms have been further developed to cater for a 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 (78 per cent average test score and 88 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>
INT/OT/KBH	Trust Fund for the UNCTAD Virtual Institute on Trade and Development (formerly T6AP)	2004–	Multi-donors

1. Virtual Institute

749. **Development context.** Developing countries lack capacity to undertake economic analysis, formulate national policies and implement them to achieve their development objectives. Universities and research centres play an essential role in building such capacity, as they educate future decision-makers and can provide research and analysis to inform their Governments' economic policy decisions.

750. **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 for academics, researchers, and qualified decision-makers, and provides analysis to underpin the formulation of economic policies in developing countries.

751. **Outputs.** In 2022, the Virtual Institute continued to provide its member institutions with services in the following areas: (a) professional development for academics specializing in topics in which UNCTAD has expertise; (b) facilitation of cooperation between relevant academics within the Virtual Institute network and (c) dissemination of UNCTAD research to the academic community.

752. The Virtual Institute offered an online seminar to students at the Institute for Business Administration in Karachi, Pakistan on the findings of the 2022 Trade and Development Report. Twenty-five graduate students studying international trade and economics at the University of the West Indies visited UNCTAD in Geneva for a study day covering topics including the macroeconomic environment, industrial transformation, and the oceans economy.

753. In August 2022 the Training and Outreach Unit helped to organize the fifth UNCTAD Young Scholars Initiative (YSI) Summer School, on the theme of “Challenges and opportunities of a new international economic order” in partnership with the Macroeconomics branch of the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies and the Institute for New Economic Thinking. This is the Division’s flagship programme to educate young economists worldwide on UNCTAD’s approach to development issues. The 2022 Summer School attracted 989 registrants of whom 544 participants representing 70 countries received a Certificate of attendance. Of the participants, over half were female and over half were from developing countries.

754. Additionally, the Virtual Institute provided support to the Division in dissemination of its work to academic and policymaker audiences and organizing public events, notably for the Trade and Development Report Update in April 2022; the Trade and Development Report in October 2022; the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development, sixth session; and the 13th International Debt Management Conference. Panel discussions were also organized on reform of the Bretton Woods institutions and climate finance and a just transition.

755. The Virtual Institute delivered a bespoke online training programme on the Global Economic System to future diplomats at the Pakistan Foreign Service Training Academy. The programme content was agreed with the Pakistan Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva and with the Academy, and the course instructors were experts from UNCTAD and leading academics within the Virtual Institute network.

756. The Virtual Institute collaborated with the Unit on Economic Integration and Cooperation Among Developing Countries to produce an educational video about UNCTAD’s work on South-South Cooperation, which was first shown at the Global South-South Development Expo 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand in September 2022.

757. **Results and impacts.** The Virtual Institute has contributed to enhanced understanding of trade and development issues among researchers and academics in developing countries and helped them to identify suitable areas of new research and issues to consider within their existing research. Through flagship teaching programmes the Virtual Institute has also helped to strengthen links between researchers and policymakers in developing countries. Dissemination activities including media outreach and web and social media content creation help UNCTAD to reach academics and researchers through different channels and build wider awareness of UNCTAD’s expertise on specific issues.

2. Course on key issues on the international economic agenda – paragraph 166

758. **Development Context.** Located in the Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch (TIKDB) 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-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 Nations 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.

759. In this regard, paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action was adopted at the tenth session of the UNCTAD Ministerial Conference, in which it called on UNCTAD to strengthen its capacity building activities, particularly in providing training courses on key trade and development matters to policy makers 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 UNCTAD 14 of Nairobi in 2016.

760. In the Bridgetown Covenant of 2021, and for the first time since its creation, P166 was given a 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”⁸¹.

761. Furthermore, the current structure of regional courses reflects UNCTAD’s mandate and is cross-divisional in terms of 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 relevance and coherence among the various economic themes and policies. Ranging from economic theories to trade policy, FDI, technology, among other topics, the programme focuses on sustainable development as a central theme.

762. **Objectives and features.** The curricula for regional courses in 2022 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. Additionally, it was updated to incorporate policies for building resilience and responding to multiple economic shocks. To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to address the challenges confronting countries in the post recovery period, policies to develop socioeconomic resilience have become essential components of the overall framework for development policies. The training includes 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, the examination, and critiques of best practices in policy development, group work and debates.

763. The curricula are adapted to each developing region and contribute to enhancing the knowledge and understanding of contemporary economic issues among trade policy officials, finance and investment experts and academics. The overall aim is to enhance their ability to contribute to the achievement of the development objectives of their respective countries.

764. To this end, the curricula of the regional courses include the following three modules:

(a) Module I: Development, development policies and the role of international trade and finance in a globalized world;

(b) Module II: Harnessing benefits from trade: Changing dynamics in the multilateral trading system, trade logistics, regional trade agreements and the digital economy;

(c) Module II: Enhancing productive capacities through foreign direct investment, enterprise development, electronic commerce and the digital economy and science, technology and innovation.

765. These modules aim at achieving macroeconomic stability, with a sound monetary and fiscal policy. This is imperative to the design of and support for development objectives. Policymakers are encouraged to consider sound fiscal policies to support such initiatives in

⁸¹ Paragraph 117

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. Similarly, 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. In a nutshell, investing in human capital, infrastructure, and ensuring policy space, are all prerequisites for development.

766. To achieve development objectives, developing relevant industrial policies is key to the concept of developing and implementing policies for economic growth. For example, the curricula illustrate the impact of science and technology on 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 trade policy and trade facilitation 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.

767. In 2022, face-to-face and online trainings were delivered as part of UNCTAD’s regional and short courses, in addition to an online course entitled “Building resilience and responding to shocks”. Furthermore, an e-learning module on the history of UNCTAD continued to be utilized to prepare selected participants ahead of the regional course.

768. **Outputs.** In 2022, three regional courses were held for Africa, Latin America and Caribbean (LAC), and Asia and the Pacific. The forty-sixth regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda for Africa was held in Nairobi on 11 – 22 April 2022 in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics of the University of Nairobi, with the support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Twenty-five participants attended the course, representing Botswana, Burkina Faso, the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, the Niger, Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

769. The forty-seventh regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda for LAC was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 27 June-8 July 2022 in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics of the University of Buenos Aires. Twenty-three participants from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru attended the course.

770. As for the 48th regional course for course on key issues on the international economic agenda for Asia and the Pacific, it was held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 21 November–2 December 2022 in collaboration with the Foreign Service Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Twenty-one participants attended the course, representing Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lao, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Timor Leste and Vanuatu.

771. In total, sixty-nine participants from 38 countries participated in these editions. Out of the total number, 41 participants were women, representing nearly 59 per cent of overall participants, with an increase of 5 per cent from the previous year.

772. With holding these courses in various capitals in developing regions, the multi-year venue continued to illustrate its innovative approach of raising support, gaining experiences from different 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.

773. The five multi-year venues for the reporting period are:

- (a) The Foreign Service Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan, multi-year venue for the Asia-Pacific region, 2022–2026.

(b) University of Buenos Aires, Faculty of Economics, Argentina, multi-year venue for Latin America and Caribbean, 2022–2026.

(c) Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Economics, North Macedonia, with the support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, multi-venue for Eastern Europe 2021–2025.

(d) The Institute of Diplomatic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt, multi-year venue for the Arab region, 2018–2023.

(e) University of Nairobi, Faculty of Economics, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, multi-venue for Africa, 2019–2024.

774. Similarly, the short courses continued to update Geneva-based delegates on UNCTAD's recent research on development, economic, and trade matters. In cooperation with several UNCTAD divisions, six short editions were offered in 2022 on the following:

(a) Maritime transport for sustainable development: key insights and projections from the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport (23 February 2022)⁸²;

(b) Women and the COVID-19 pandemic: Building back better, including through trade (5 April 2022)⁸³;

(c) Least developed countries: Development challenges and policies in the 2020s (3 May 2022)⁸⁴;

(d) Trade facilitation and non-tariff measures: How to ensure access to essential goods such as food and medical products (15 September 2022)⁸⁵;

(e) Commodity dependence and recent events on commodity markets (10 November 2022)⁸⁶;

(f) Trade Facilitation and Development through Greater Digitalization and Enhanced Connectivity (13 December 2022)⁸⁷;

(g) Considering each short course, a total of 162 delegates from 64 permanent missions participated in these editions. Out of the total number, 71 participants were women, representing nearly 44 per cent of overall participants.

775. 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

⁸² For this course on 23 February, 35 delegates attended, representing Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lesotho, Maldives, Malta, Morocco, Nepal, the Niger, Panama, Peru, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, Sudan, Togo, Türkiye, and Yemen.

⁸³ For this course on 5 April, 33 delegates attended, representing Angola, Bahamas Bahrain, Bangladesh, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, the Congo, Cuba, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Haiti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lesotho, Maldives, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, the Niger, Panama, Peru, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Türkiye, and Yemen.

⁸⁴ For this course on 3 May, 18 delegates attended, representing Albania, Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, the Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lesotho, Nigeria, Panama, the Russian Federation, Togo, Türkiye, and Uganda.

⁸⁵ For this course on 15 September, 36 delegates attended, representing Angola, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Iraq, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Malta, Moldova, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania, Türkiye, Uganda, and Yemen.

⁸⁶ For this course on 10 November, 21 delegates attended, representing Afghanistan, Angola, Canada, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Malta, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Republic of Tanzania, Türkiye, and Yemen.

⁸⁷ For this short course on 13 December, 19 delegates attended, representing Albania, Brunei, Canada, the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Iraq, Jordan, Malta, Mauritania, Nauru, Nigeria, Oman, Peru, the Russian Federation, Türkiye, and Yemen.

from delegates provide relevant input and potential research topics to UNCTAD's work. This informed dialogue between UNCTAD's 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 2022, the impact of the war and conflict, the global pandemic and its post-recovery period, and the sustainable development agenda and its SDGs were all incorporated in the themes addressed in the UNCTAD short courses.

776. Given the ongoing and lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021–2022 the programme expanded beyond its scope to provide policy makers with further opportunities for enhancing their human capital towards building resilience and responding to shocks. For the first time, it rolled out an e-course entitled “Building Resilience and Responding to Shocks” on 11 April–2 May 2022, with the aim to support Geneva-based delegates and capital-based government officials and policymakers in building resilience and preparing for external shocks, whether they originate in the economic, social, environmental or health spheres. With three modules, the online course paid special attention to the shock generated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and discussed the responses by focusing on:

- (a) Vulnerability and resilience: concepts and their implications for policies and strategies for sustainable development;
- (b) Vulnerability and resilience in the response to the COVID-29 shock;
- (c) From COVID-19 to prosperity for all.

777. Over 150 nominations were made by permanent missions in Geneva. After completing the online course, UNCTAD conducted a webinar with all the UNCTAD subject matter experts who provided the material and knowledge on the various issues to address questions by the participants. The combination of the online course and a live webinar was to ensure that the participants will have deepened their understanding of resilience, how to respond to multiple shocks and how to enhance future policies, making them more inclusive and taking an institutional approach.

778. **Results and impacts.** As for every programme that focuses on building knowledge among policymakers, most of the impact of the programme can be assessed only through medium to long-term surveys of the professional activity of participants and their influence on policy. However, shorter-term predictors of long-term impact can be estimated through direct participant surveys. Following the completion of the short courses, regional courses, and the e-course on building resilience and responding to shocks, most delegates and participants indicated that the courses led to improved knowledge on development and the issues addressed. For the 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.

779. The evaluations of the regional courses continued to show that participants and their supervisors 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.

780. One alumni participant from the Ministry of Economic Development of Maldives who attended the 48th regional course held in Islamabad (2022) indicated, “This course has given us more than we have expected in terms of the economic perspectives and insights of the global economic environment, as well as zooming in on various country experiences, enables us to learn about the challenges we face in our countries. It was a fruitful and beneficial learning experience, which exposed us to various aspects of global economy, trade and development. It has also given us a great opportunity to work with very talented and

experienced colleagues from other countries in our region, creating a platform of knowledge sharing and learning from one another. Truly, a very fruitful training course, which will help us in our professional lives."

781. In summary, more than 90 per cent of the participants of three regional courses held in 2022 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 policies.

782. Several participants also 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, including in the post-pandemic recovery. Several participants indicated their improved ability to employ analytical tools in the decision-making process in pursuit of relevant development policies to address economic challenges. Many also mentioned the linkages among international trade, finance, investment, technology, and innovation as key pillars of the development strategy.

783. Many also reported a better understanding of the essential role that trade agreements and the role they 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 levels.

784. These results and evaluations are in line with the praise received by the programme in international fora. Despite 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 policymaking in challenging times.
