

Independent Evaluation of the International Trade Centre (ITC)

Final Report

May 29, 2014

Bernard Wood, Team Leader

Julia Betts

Tom Pengelly

Marie-Jo Char

Joachim Eissler

Immaculee Habiyambere

Cissy Kirambaire

Bui Thi Thu Huong

Ilmari Soininen

Dominic Wall

Elena De Besi

SAANA CONSULTING

Contents

List of annexes to Final Report.....	v
List of boxes, figures, and tables.....	vi
List of acronyms.....	vii
Executive Summary	xi
Introduction	xi
Methodology and limitations	xi
The context: Understanding ITC, its work and place in Aid for Trade.....	xii
ITC’s organisation and management and changes since 2006.....	xiii
ITC’s performance and results since 2006.....	xiv
Summary of findings, supporting evidence and recommendations	xvi
Specific Recommendations	xxii
1. Introduction.....	1
2. ITC’s organisation and management and changes since 2006	4
2.1 What is the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC and how has it changed since 2006? (A).....	5
2.1.1 Governance and corporate accountabilities (A1).....	5
2.1.2 Institutional setting in Geneva (A2)	10
2.1.3 ITC’s place and prospects in global Aid for Trade (A3)	12
2.2 How has ITC’s organisational capacity to carry out its mandate changed since 2006 (B).....	17
2.2.1 Strategic leadership (B1)	17
2.2.2 Organisational structure and deployment of capacities (B2).....	22
2.2.3 Human resources (B3).....	26
2.2.4 Financial management systems (B4)	30
2.2.5 ITC’s technology and information Infrastructure (B5)	32
2.2.6 Project and programme management (B6)	33
2.2.7 Process Management (B7)	42
2.2.8 Inter-organisational linkages (B8).....	43
2.3 How strong is ITC’s organisational motivation to carry out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (C).....	49
2.3.1 Vision and mission (C1).....	49
2.3.2 Culture and incentives (C2).....	51
2.4 How strong is ITC's organisational performance in carrying out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (D).....	53
2.4.1 Effectiveness (D1)	53
2.4.2 Efficiency (D2)	59

2.4.3	Relevance (D3).....	60
2.4.4	Financial viability (D4).....	62
2.5	The Evaluation’s summary ratings on organisational and management Issues	65
3.	ITC’s performance and results since 2006	67
3.1	Introduction	67
3.2	Overall performance of the ITC portfolio	68
3.2.1	Distribution of project expenditure.....	68
3.2.2	Patterns and trends in funding sources.....	71
3.3	Indicative findings against strategic objectives	73
3.3.1	Strengthening TSIs	73
3.3.2	Supporting enterprises.....	73
3.3.3	Inclusiveness & sustainability.....	74
3.3.4	Enhancing policy.....	74
3.3.5	Building awareness.....	75
3.4	Results against matrix indicators and issues.....	76
3.4.1	Appropriate selection of countries/activities/delivery agents.....	79
3.4.2	Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability).....	80
3.4.3	Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use: on-time, on budget delivery	82
3.4.4	Effectiveness of implementation and insights on “value for money”	84
3.4.5	Monitoring and evidence of results/plausible contributions to impacts, including relevant MDGs.....	86
3.4.6	Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda).....	91
3.4.7	Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools.....	95
3.4.8	Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects	98
3.4.9	Main problems or constraints	101
3.4.10	Strengths, key lessons, ITC potential.....	104
4.	Conclusions, Recommendations and Options for Future Directions	107
4.1	Introduction	107
4.2	Understanding ITC and its Work	107
4.3	Main conclusions	110
4.3.1	Performance and results.....	110
4.3.2	Organisation and management.....	111
4.3.3	Integrated main conclusions	112
4.4	Recommendations and Options for Future Directions	115
5.	Evaluation Matrices.....	118

5.1	Matrix 1 - Assessing ITC's Organisation and Management and Changes since 2006	118
5.2	Matrix 2 - Assessing ITC's Operational progress and results since 2006	125

List of annexes to Final Report

Annex I: Staff survey results

Annex II: JAG Survey results

Annex III: General stakeholder survey results

Annex IV: Summary of 2006 evaluation findings

Annex V: The Evaluation approach and methodology

Annex VI: Inception report

Annex VII: Comments from stakeholders and evaluation team responses May 2014

Annex VIII: Examples from past evidence on ITC's contributions to results

List of boxes, figures, and tables

Box 1: Overview of the Methodology for the Independent Evaluation	2
Box 2: JAG survey results	6
Box 3: Examples of ITC’s accountability burden.....	7
Box 4: ITC and the Trade Facilitation Agreement.....	16
Box 5: UN Results Terminology	21
Box 6: ITC staff survey results on human resource capacity	30
Box 7: Examples of ITC Partnerships 2006-2012.....	44
Figure 1: ITC Governance and accountability arrangements.....	5
Figure 2: Aid for Trade ITC’s Strategic Objectives	13
Figure 3: Working together: ITC, WTO and UNCTAD	47
Figure 4: ITC project expenditure by project level (2006-2012)	68
Figure 5: ITC active projects by type (2006 – 2012)	69
Figure 6: ITC active projects by region (2006 – 2012).....	69
Figure 7: ITC extrabudgetary expenditure (net) by region (2006 – 2012)	69
Figure 8: Extrabudgetary expenditure by strategic objectives (2011 – 2012).....	70
Figure 9: Total expenditure (net) from RB and XB resources (2006 – 2012)	71
Figure 10: Window 1 vs Window 2 extrabudgetary resources	72
Table 1: ITC “Staff” (By strict UN definition) and Total HQ workforce	24
Table 2: ITC’s mission, values and strategic approach.....	50
Table 3: Indicators of achievement, 2011.....	53
Table 4: Summary rating scale.....	65
Table 5: Summary ratings on organisation and management.....	65
Table 6: ITC project portfolio by size/level.....	68
Table 7: Top 10 contributors to Window 1(US\$ 000)	71
Table 8: Top 10 contributors to Window 2 (US\$ 000)	71
Table 9: Summary rating scale.....	76
Table 10: Summary ratings for performance and results since 2006.....	76
Table 11: Selection of countries	78
Table 12: Was implementation?	83
Table 13: Factors in implementation	84
Table 14: Evidence on perceptions of impact.....	86
Table 15: Survey of project managers on post-event evaluation	90
Table 16: Coordination/cooperation	92

List of acronyms

AAACP	All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme
ACCESS!	Access for African Businesswomen in International Trade
ACP	Africa Caribbean Pacific
AfT	Aid for Trade
AfDB	African Development Bank
AP	Asia and Pacific
APEX	Export Promotion Agency
ATPC	African Trade Policy Centre
BE	Business Environment (DBIS)
BIR	Business Information Review
BLSC	Bangladesh Leather Service Centre
BOA	Board of Auditors
BRIC	Brazil Russia India China
B2B	Business To Business
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
CBI	Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries
CCITF	Consultative Committee of the ITC Trust Fund
CEDEP	Cambodian Export Diversification and Expansion Program
CEMAC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CHF	Swiss Franc
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CMP	Change Management Process
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPC	Committee of Programme and Coordination
CPD	Consolidated Programme Document
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DBIS	Division of Business and Institutional Support (ITC)
DCP	Division of Country Programmes (ITC)
DED	Deputy Executive Director
DMD	Division of Market Development (ITC)
DPS	Division of Programme Support (ITC)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integrated Study
EC	Enterprise Competitiveness section (DBIS)
ECOWAS	Economic community of West African States
EECA	Eastern Europe and Central Asia
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework
EMU	Evaluation and Monitoring Unit
EnACT	Enhancing Arab Capacity for Trade
EPRP	Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme
ESA	East and Southern Africa

EU	European Union
FCLC	Fiji Crops and Livestocks Council
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FM	Financial management
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
GTAP	Global Trade Analysis Project
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human resources
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IF	Integrated Framework
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMIS	Integrated Management Information System
IPSAS	International Public Service Accounting Standards
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
ITF	ITC Trust Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
IWCA	International Women's Coffee Alliance
JAG	Joint Advisory Group (ITC)
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LDC	Least developed country
LLDC	Land-locked developing country
MAG	Management Action Group
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MINTS	Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey
ML	Management Letter
MLS-SCM	Modular Learning System on Supply Chain Management
MOIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAPD	Needs Assessment and Project Design
NAMC	National Agricultural Marketing Council of South Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTF	Netherlands Trust Fund
NTM	Non-Tariff Measures
OED/SMC	Office of the Executive Director / Senior Management Committee
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIOS	United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services

OLAC	Office of Latin America and Caribbean
PAC	Project Appraisal Committee
PACIR	Program of Support for Trade and Regional Integration
PACCIA / PACT	Programme for building African Capacity for Trade
PBA	Programme-Based Approach
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PCTP	Poor Communities in Trade Program
PCU	Programme Coordination Unit
PQAG	Project Quality Assurance Group
PSC	Programme Support Costs
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the UN
RB	Regular Budget
REC	Regional Economic Community
RBM	Results-based management
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCLP	Supply Chain and Logistics Programme
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Switzerland)
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SC	Sector Competitiveness
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SMC	Senior Management Committee
SME	Small and Medium -sized Enterprise
SPPG	Strategic Planning Performance and Governance
SQAM	Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
SWSP	Sector-wide Silk Project
T4SD	Trade for Sustainable Development
TDB	Trade and Development Board
TEP	Trade and Environment Programme
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TFPS	Trade Facilitation Programme Strategy
TI	Trade Intelligence
TPO	Trade promotion organisation
TRTA	Trade-related technical assistance
TS	TSI Strengthening Section (DBIS)
TSI	Trade Support Institution
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN-CEB	UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDAP	United Nations Development Assistance Plan
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFRR	United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VFM	Value for Money
WB	World Bank
WCA	West and Central Africa
WEDF	World Export Development Forum
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation
XB	Extrabudgetary resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- ES1. This is the Executive Summary of the report of an Independent Evaluation of the International Trade Centre (ITC). The Centre, which marks its 50th anniversary in 2014, is the joint agency of the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations aimed at enabling businesses in developing countries to become more competitive in global markets, speeding sustainable economic development and contributing to the achievement of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. ITC's mission is to enable small-business export success by connecting small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries and transition economies to the global trading system. It gives particular weight to project implementation in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states and sub-Saharan Africa.
- ES2. This Evaluation was commissioned in 2013 as a "lean, progress report evaluation" with three purposes: to assess the changes in ITC since 2006 (when the results of a much larger joint evaluation were released); to evaluate the results of ITC's work over the 2006-2012 period; and to propose appropriate future directions for the organisation. One important part of the exercise is to evaluate ITC in the changing global context of Aid for Trade and trade-related technical assistance, issues that are treated in a special section of the report (2.1.3).

Methodology and limitations

- ES3. The changes in the organisation and its management were gauged against an accepted framework for organisational assessment, while its performance and results were assessed by the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of its activities against specified evaluation questions. The results from these two strands of the Evaluation have been analysed, validated and brought together in this synthesis report in line with the agreed approaches in the Inception Report that guided the Evaluation, and the agreed arrangements are also in place for quality assurance by ITC's evaluation manager (see the Annex on "Methodology Plans and Implementation" for full details).
- ES4. The Evaluation report is not only intended to be lean, but above all useful to ITC's intended beneficiaries, stakeholders and staff. It is realistically and pragmatically geared to the opportunities, capacities and constraints of the organisation, and applies standards for assessment and proposals that fall within the realm of the possible.
- ES5. As a self-contained report, without supplementary volumes of thematic and case studies, it is especially important for the report to present clearly the main strands of the evidence collected and analysed. This is done in the two main chapters on ITC's Organisation and Management and on its Performance and Results. The Final section of the Evaluation report includes a summation of the conclusions built from the detailed findings in earlier chapters to respond to the Evaluation purposes. It ends, in line with the third purpose of offering guidance for the Centre's future directions, with a small number of major strategic recommendations to be considered by ITC's governors and managers. more specific conclusions and recommendations are highlighted throughout the text.
- ES6. It is especially important in the case of this evaluation to stress its limitations, which are enumerated in the relevant sections below and elaborated in the Methodology section/annex. It is sufficient to stress here that the obtainable information base on ITC activities over most of the Evaluation period (especially up to the last two years) was found to be fragmentary at best, and that tracing and interviewing ITC's actual and intended clients, most particularly exporters, proved impossible in all but a very few

cases. The Report refers to possible explanations and steps (some already initiated by the Centre) to help remedy these serious problems for its own operations.

ES7. While flagging these major limitations, the Report nonetheless presents its findings, prefaced by this general caution and each accompanied by unusual, explicit ratings by the Team of the strength of the supporting evidence and the confidence with which the finding can be asserted. It will be noted that only in the area of organisational and management changes is the Evaluation able to rate the confidence level as High, with most areas of findings on results being rated Medium or lower. In turn, the conclusions and recommendations derived from each of these findings are to be treated with commensurate caution.

The context: Understanding ITC, its work and place in Aid for Trade

ES8. The International Trade Centre is distinctive in many ways. It is a small organisation by multilateral standards, with a complex international governance structure and an unconventional delivery model, but a relatively focused mission of providing practical support for trade by developing countries, especially through small and medium-sized enterprises. At its founding, 50 years ago, ITC was seen as a marginal pioneer in trade for development, but it is now surrounded by much larger and well-funded organisations and programmes that have crowded into this area as its strategic importance for development has been recognized. Still, as this independent Evaluation has been able to confirm, the large majority of those who have known – and been able to compare - the ITC's activities in a substantial sample of countries over the past six years have been impressed by the special relevance, quality and thoughtful delivery of its expertise. It can legitimately claim to be the only “100% Aid for Trade” organisation, with important and unique assets.

ES9. However, those who know ITC's work are relatively few and scattered, because that is how its activities have been as well. It struggles to serve a wide and growing set of needs in well over a hundred countries that are eligible beneficiaries, with the predictable result of being thinly spread, only intermittently present, and unable to respond to many deserving requests for support. This situation is not tenable if ITC is to carry out its mission effectively.

ES10. Over the 2006-2013 period, the Evaluation's evidence (across a considerable range of countries, regions, and beneficiary groups) shows that ITC's main lines of business have built on some continuing products and services of strength and developed and adapted a number of new areas and emphases. Real progress has been made in conceptually grouping multiple lines of business around a clearer organising logic in ITC's strategic objectives, but neither that framework nor the breakdown by ITC's different client groups is yet very helpful in broadly understanding or steering the types, scales and instruments of ITC's interventions and the key influences on them. As was the case in 2006, actually identifying, listing and categorizing all of ITC's different projects over the period remains extremely complicated and subject to debate. This has implications for ITC's ability to “market” its products and maximize their usefulness.

ES11. Overall, ITC has not had any systematic means, and only restricted scope, for matching the supply of its services and the demand for them in potential client countries. It still does not have a comprehensive catalogue of the products and services it has to offer, nor a planned approach to needs assessment at either the product or country and regional level, although the latter is now being piloted. Thus its projects since 2006 have been deployed opportunistically according to an imperfect kind of “market” process where and when contacts, political initiatives and especially donor funding possibilities may steer them. This scattering effect has been compounded because the services concerned in ITC are too stretched to be able to meet all the needs (even expressed demands) in any systematic way and partly because the main geographic divisions are

too stretched to be able to identify them and must anyway be cautious about encouraging beneficiary expectations that could not be met.

ES12. To understand this situation properly, it must be emphasized that ITC's technical products and services are still overwhelmingly the main organising and programming elements in ITC's work. No conventional system of "country programming" (with the associated needs assessments) of the kind found in larger development agencies would be feasible for ITC at anything like its present size in more than a very few countries or sub-regions. Some such programming has been tried in a small number of cases over the period, and the results are reflected in these Evaluation findings. On a positive note, this general finding of a project-allocation process largely driven by the availabilities of ITC products and voluntary donor funding has not led to any significant number of cases where the Evaluation has found in its samples that ITC projects were "parachuted" into inappropriate settings, although they may or may not have been the most in need or most promising. The evaluation found that ITC project planners, even when they are using a product or service "off the shelf" generally do undertake at least informal needs assessments in early consultation with partners and intended beneficiaries, and are willing to adapt their approaches as necessary.

ITC's organisation and management and changes since 2006

ES13. Chapter 2 presents this major component of the Evaluation and the Report followed closely the framework of organisational assessment and analysis set out in Matrix 1 in the Inception Report. Building on extensive initial documentary research, more than 60 targeted confidential interviews were carried out, generating informed assessments from a wide number of perspectives as well as opening up extensive further internal documentation. These sources of data are combined and triangulated here with inputs from the Evaluation's operational assessments and surveys including the special surveys of JAG/CCITF members on Governance and Accountability issues, and an updated survey of ITC staff members.

ES14. As will be seen in the different sections of the report, many of these organisational and management issues are inter-linked with each other and with developments in programme design and delivery. The advantage of closely following the sequence of questions and sub-questions specified in the Evaluation Matrix is to ensure systematic coverage, with the disadvantage of some overlaps and duplications, but these would also occur under any alternative structure for the examination. Cross-references are provided in the most important cases.

ES15. In terms of the Evaluation's second main purpose - assessing the changes that have been made in ITC over the period since 2006 - the Evaluation Matrix, adapted from a well-known model for organisational assessment, guided an extensive structured assessment across the four major dimensions of: the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC; the Centre's organisational capacity to carry out its mandate; its organisational motivation; and its organisational performance (closely linked to the other main evidence chapter of the Report). This framework, with a structured set of agreed sub-issues and indicators, yielded a rich and detailed assessment in Chapter 2.¹

ES16. Among the broad categories of the assessment, the enabling environment for ITC's work and its organisational motivation emerge relatively strongly on both current fitness

¹ Summary tables and ratings were introduced in the draft report in order to bring together a manageable and clear set of assessments across the many fronts in this comprehensive Evaluation. Providing ratings is a way to further distil the assessments, but increases the risk of over-simplifying them for readers, and must therefore be interpreted with care. Table 5 in the Report, gives summary ratings of ITC's current fitness and of the changes made since 2006 on the Organizational and Management indicators, together with an explicit rating of strength of the Evaluation's supporting evidence in each area.

and positive change since 2006, with a more mixed but still generally positive picture across the different areas of organisational capacity and organisational performance (with the latter extensively analysed in the evidence in Chapter 3 on Performance and Results.) Although the individual indicators and issues involved are of different orders and importance it is significant that the Evaluation found that “positive change” has been achieved on 23 of them (out of the total of 29) since 2006, while five showed “little or no change” and one showed “major positive change.” No regression was identified on any of these criteria. It is fair and important to note here as well that on many points improvement has accelerated in the latter part of the Evaluation period, since 2011-2012.

ES17. While this is a generally positive if restrained aggregate assessment of change over the period, it gives no cause for complacency when considered alongside the Evaluation’s ratings of the ITC’s “current fitness” in these each of these same areas. Here the ratings were “fair” on 13 of the 29 criteria; “good” on six; “very poor” on three; “poor” on four; “fair/poor” on two; and “excellent” and “fair/good” on one each. The weakest of all the areas assessed, on both current fitness and change since 2006 was that of the Centre’s financial viability. The strongest areas were found in ITC’s short-term client relationships and its vision and mission.²

ES18. The Evaluation’s particular ratings can, and undoubtedly will, be debated, but the overall picture of the Centre’s organisation and management is one of significant progress since 2006, but from a very low base at that time³, leaving substantial further improvement work to be completed. It should be stressed that while improvement in this area naturally focuses on the Centre itself and the responsibilities of its head, management and staff, the Evaluation’s detailed evidence shows how and where ITC’s governors, members, supporters and “parent” institutions have important roles and share in the responsibility for continuing improvement.

ITC’s performance and results since 2006

ES19. This major Chapter of the Evaluation Report is directed to the second overall purpose of the Independent Evaluation: “To support accountability to parent organisations, donors and beneficiary countries of ITC by demonstrating the results and impact of ITC’s activities since 2006.” As agreed in the Inception Report for the Evaluation this assessment of performance and results has been carried out by following the evaluation questions, issues and indicators, data collection methods, key sources and methods for analysis set out in Matrix 2 for the Evaluation. As planned, the major steps involved extensive documentary review and analysis; several rounds of consultations and interviews to come to grips with understanding, categorizing and documenting ITC’s activities; portfolio studies at several levels, country level “ground-truthing” missions to six countries (with two “virtual” missions); and targeted surveys of ITC’s various stakeholder groups.

ES20. The portfolio review took a “funnel” approach. At the wide end of the funnel, the full portfolio review, through structured desk and statistical research and targeted headquarters inquiries, arrived at broad profiles of the entire portfolio of ITC “projects” recorded over the period (nearly 800), tracing patterns and trends in the funding, use, distribution and available results information on products. At the middle level of the funnel, the Team produced detailed working reports on a representative qualified sample of 56 national, regional and global projects active during the evaluation period in 24 independently selected countries (see Annex V for project and country lists). Finally, among the 24 country portfolios, and still following the same structure, the country-based “case studies” (distributed both across regions and types of programs) served at the

² The Team’s average rating for the strength of evidence or confidence level on these findings was 3.58, ranking mid-way between “medium” and “high.”

³ As documented in the 2006 Joint Evaluation

narrow end of the funnel to generate findings grounded more deeply in the concrete experience of projects and their main intended beneficiaries in their actual country contexts.

ES21. The methodological Annex to the Report provides extensive details on how the methodology was designed and then applied in practice, but it is important to signal one substantial variation from the ordering in the Matrix to the presentation of findings here. The original plan to organise the operational assessments around ITC's strategic objectives and related client-groups proved unrealistic because very little of the solid evidence available was sufficient or specific enough to these different strands of ITC work to make this a reliable or useful framework for presenting the Evaluation findings.⁴

ES22. Thus the detailed findings are, as a rule, cross-cutting findings applying to the overall ITC portfolio, sample portfolios and country missions as a whole, noting findings on specific strategic objectives and products-lines where they are sufficiently robust. On the basis of its evidence, however, the Evaluation did venture a further indicative assessment of performance over the period in relation to ITC's more-recently applied Strategic Objectives (see Section 3.3 in the Report). This is also where the Evaluation provides some assessment of the Centre's important "Global Public Goods" trade intelligence products which were not captured through project portfolios studies or country missions.

ES23. **Overall performance of the ITC portfolio:** This mainly quantitative treatment, drawing on all available data, traces the patterns over the period in terms of the distribution of ITC's project expenditure, by project size, by type (country, global and regional), by region, strategic objectives, revenue streams (RB and XB, Window 1 and Window 2 Resources) and by contributors of voluntary funding. In most of these areas there is broadly more continuity than change in trends over the 2006-2012 period, after a reported marked initial increase in in 2006-2007 in the level of Window 1 un-earmarked voluntary funding, to a level that has basically been maintained. Notable features are in the reduced share of expenditure over the period in the Asia Pacific region, and the increased shares expended in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States. The continued pattern of earmarked voluntary funding at roughly double the level of un-earmarked support is also noteworthy. Qualitative assessments of what has unfolded in the portfolio are derived from the regional sample portfolio analyses and country missions.

ES24. **Performance and Results against matrix indicators and issues:** As in the analysis on Organisation and Management, the individual questions, issues and indicators from the Matrix are of different orders of importance that would also be ranked differently by different observers. Nonetheless, an aggregate picture yields a sense of the Evaluation's overall assessment of the current state of the Centre's performance and results and of change since 2006.⁵ ITC's current fitness is rated as "fair" on eight (of a total 26) points; "good" on five; "fair/good" on three; "poor/fair" on three; "poor" on four; "excellent", "very poor" and "can't say" on one point each. With respect to the change since 2006, "positive change" was found on 11 points; "little or no change" on seven; "can't say" on six; and "major positive change" and "mixed" on one point each. No regression was identified on any of these points. It is fair and important to note here as well that on many points improvement has accelerated in the latter part of the Evaluation period, since 2011-2012. Importantly, as well, the evidence base available to support

⁴ These categories have only been used for ITC's planning and reporting in the past two years, and even then imperfectly, and it is not possible to reconstruct any coherent retrospective picture.

⁵ In order to present the composite picture derived from the voluminous analysis in a manageable form, and in spite of the data limitations, the Evaluation was prepared to distil in Table 10 its findings and broad ratings on the performance and results of ITC's activities together with an assessment of the progress made over the past six years. All such ratings must be accompanied by a general caution against over-simplified interpretations and each finding is accompanied by unusual, explicit ratings by the team of the strength of the supporting evidence and the confidence with which it can be asserted.

these assessments was rated by the Team as weaker than in Organisation and Management: the average rating for the strength of evidence or confidence level was 2.45, ranking mid-way between “low” and “medium”.

- ES25. The central conclusion of the Evaluation around ITC’s results over the 2006-2012 period is that the Centre - in spite of limited resources and heavy external and internal constraints - has been able to continue providing high-quality services in its specialized field that are relevant and responsive, effective and relatively efficient. In terms of results, the activities have achieved their intended immediate capacity-building outcomes with clear prospects in most cases of contributing to their higher level goals. There are encouraging examples of direct development benefits in a significant number of instances. The other side of the central conclusion is that ITC’s overall resource situation severely limits the greater use of this valuable asset by the developing countries, reducing its efficiency, contributing to damaging distortions in the organisation and its results, and clearly jeopardizing the sustainability of many of the best contributions it has been able to make. The simple fact is that at any one time, large parts of the operational programmes of ITC are living “hand to mouth” and facing a level of insecurity which makes it impossible to deliver up to its potential and certainly to apply fully the kinds of good practice that ITC’s members press on the organisation.
- ES26. This is not to suggest that ITC should aim to become another large international agency dispensing enormous sums of money, a phenomenon that may well be undermining the development benefits of much of today’s trade-oriented aid. In fact, part of ITC’s special credibility and strength has been its practical, down-to-earth approach and its sense of the discipline of scarce resources, the dominant everyday reality of its small and medium sized enterprise clients, especially in developing countries. But the maxim that “small is beautiful” can be carried too far. It definitely has in the case of ITC, whose supporters have provided it too few resources for the job they clearly want it to fulfil, and sometimes on terms that distract and detract from that desired performance and under constraints that add to excessive bureaucratic costs, delays and restrictions.
- ES27. Nor does this central point suggest that the required improvements will ever be simple or resolved just by ITC’s financial supporters. There are some inescapable limits, conflicting pressures and harsh choices that face ITC in its next stage of evolution. ITC’s management and staff, as well as its governors and supporters, will need to match the Centre’s best performance in its substantive work with excellence in management and accountability and disciplined professionalism.
- ES28. With the changes made over the Evaluation period and still underway in the Centre, its record of performance, and the continuing global growth in interest and support for trade-related technical assistance, the ITC is poised and well-placed to take on substantially larger roles in its fields.

Summary of findings, supporting evidence and recommendations

ES29. Note: Chapter 4 of the Report sets out the higher-level and integrated conclusions linked to the evidence chapters summarized above, and follow them with a linked set of four major strategic Recommendations and 27 supporting action points addressed to ITC management, governors and others. This summary table, a standard requirement for ITC evaluation reports, is more extensive than most, reflecting the comprehensive character of the Evaluation. It is hinged to the main, strategic-level findings and recommendations and action points and the broad sources of supporting evidence and examples, with more specific evidence signposted in the main report. Section 4.2 identifies the specific recommendations highlighted throughout the text of the main report.

Findings: identified strengths, problems/issues	Supporting evidence/examples	Strategic recommendations and action points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing clarity around priority needs in the field, ITC’s comparative strengths and a strengthening capacity for results-based management. • Chronic shortage of adequate predictable funding to support strategic ITC contributions. Related general problem of too-short projects to achieve sustainable results in a field like TRTA. • Lack of strategic approach to country, region and project selection, often driven reactively by funding availabilities and fortuitous contacts. • Demonstrated ITC strengths in providing specialized technical services (ultimately for the private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating and confidence-building improvement in RBM systems, risk management, project cycle management and evaluation in most recent years. • Growing evaluation capacity and emerging body of evaluative evidence on results at different levels, e.g. in Chapter 3 of this Evaluation and Annex VIII, “Examples from past evidence on ITC’s contributions to results.” • Market and evaluation-proven ITC strengths and potentials in the 6 cluster areas, including women and trade and trade and sustainable development. • Near-total dependence on extra-budgetary (and increasingly earmarked) resources for 	<p>1. Move to a strategic base for supporting and deploying ITC’s unique strengths in the global Aid for Trade effort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The six clustered focus areas in the current ITC Operational Plan and Case for Support should be provided with substantial longer-term financial support (5 year minimum) and should be developed and deployed by ITC in genuinely strategic ways for a wide range of countries and regions. • De-emphasize ambitions for conventional country programmes, in favour of capitalizing on proven ITC strengths globally and regionally. <p>To ITC’s Management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Use a small high-level programme-development and support unit, made up of experienced operational officers, to flesh out 6-10 year strategic programmes and longer-term support under the clusters, in pro-active dialogue with potential beneficiaries, operational staff and donors. II. Task this unit with reporting in one year to management and JAG on initial experience, including lessons for the

<p>sector) at regional and global levels, no similar evidence of special ITC value-added or excellence in conventional full-service country programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to muster ITC’s substantive expertise in pro-active strategic dialogue with beneficiaries, actual and potential funders and strategic partners, and fully engage operational staff in improved management systems. 	<p>programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of a record of scrambling to take on funded projects and maintain capacity, and of delays and diversions in key management improvements because of human and financial resource constraints. • Prevalent evidence from portfolio and country studies of insufficient provision for sustainability, follow-up and accompaniment of project benefits. Gaps in funding of essential major projects in 2012. • Evaluation-confirmed and reputational strengths in Aid for Trade (See Section 2.1.3) with strong record under competitive multilateral funding (EIF, STDF) and bilateral support. • Limited and mixed record in more conventional country-programming model, where many others are active. 	<p>responsibilities and working relationships of technical and geographical units, any suggested pruning of non-strategic services or products, and possible structural or other implications.</p> <p>III. Do not accept shorter-term, one-off projects that do not capitalize on ITC’s potential contributions, but instead detract from its strategic effectiveness.</p> <p>To ITC Governors and Supporters:</p> <p>I. Provide substantial funding for the overall programme or individual clusters and designated financing to ensure adequate medium-term support for the internal programme development unit.</p> <p>II. Promote and ensure its active engagement and cooperation with their own and other Aid for Trade supporters championing an ITC role that is ‘outside the box’ of conventional development cooperation agencies and a leader in specialized collaborative TRTA.</p> <p>III. The CCITF, at ambassadorial level, needs to take on a stronger role and deliver on the reciprocal responsibility to ITC to generate adequate, predictable and sufficient funding to support a high quality, results oriented and accountable ITC programme.</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC’s distinctive strengths are in the technical quality of its experts (staff, consultants and others) and their special capacity to work sensitively and effectively in technical assistance with private sector and other main trade actors. • Largely due to strained resources and the scramble for new funded projects, inadequate maintenance, up-dating and accompaniment of ITC’s network of contacts and beneficiaries (especially in the private sector) make this key asset vulnerable. • Unpredictable funding also has negative effects on ITC’s other main asset, its skilled workforce. • There is a clear legacy of some “change overload” in the committed workforce from 2006-2013 period. Anomalies in management practice and in the status and security, recognition and deployment of the ITC workforce. Staff engagement in improving project cycle management and RBM needs to be cemented by useful and useable approaches for an organisation like ITC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent positive readings from project portfolio and country studies and readings of the Aid for Trade “market” on ITC’s special strengths in these assets. (See Section 2.1.3) • Current inability, until the new Client Relationship Management System (CRM) is fully launched and used, to readily identify and contact ITC’s worldwide network of clients and partners for many purposes, including this Evaluation and other ways of tracking ITC’s results, contributing to sustainability problems and low visibility of ITC. • Direct, survey and audit evidence of past conflict and strained staff-management relations (especially in the course of ITC’s “Change Management Process”) but with a record of committed and professional performance throughout and current cautious renewed optimism. • The organisational and performance analyses found no apparent rationales for differences in workforce status, deployment to projects and recognition or improving management practice and organisational structures. | <p>2. Protect and develop ITC’s main and distinctive working assets: its special capacity to deal with the private sector in trade and its excellence in technical expertise and appropriate technical assistance.</p> <p>To ITC management and staff:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Regularly maintain and use the new Client Relationship Management System as an essential pillar of ITC’s private sector advantage and its worldwide network of clients and partners II. Stage and phase further reforms and growth to existing and developing capacities to avoid overload and constant improvisation. III. Building on progress to date, rapidly finalize “good enough” systems of project cycle management, results-based management and reporting and knowledge management together with the other key challenges identified. IV. Resolve anomalies in management practice and in the status, recognition and deployment of the whole ITC workforce and managers. Build in the time, resources and incentives for proper performance appraisal and staff development. <p>To ITC Governors and Supporters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Invest the financial and moral and political support to enable ITC to maintain and build its networks and special, flexible working relationships with private sector actors in trade. II. Allow for the time and resources for the Centre to strengthen quality, plan better, recognise and develop its staff, and to follow-up its projects to evaluate results, accompany beneficiaries and ensure sustainable benefits. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-governance, in the bureaucratic burdens for ITC and its stakeholders of duplicative reporting, and often heavy UN procedures, rules and oversight bodies being applied to a small, responsive, private sector-oriented organisation. • Under-governance in lacking a cohesive, representative and dedicated governing body whose members are closely informed and committed to the mission and work of the organisation and particularly to providing strategic guidance and political support, and assuring adequate and reliable extra-budgetary resources for ITC programmes. Difficulties in engaging most beneficiary country representatives in Geneva, and insufficient continuity of contact in most countries. • Concern in a significant minority of JAG/CCITF members for better information on performance and results for each of the Regular Budget, Window 1 and Window 2, as well as on internal management policies, practices and costs. • Little or no appetite for trying to negotiate new formal governance arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JAG/ CCITF survey results, including on a Geneva disconnect from the formal accountability links in New York. • Uniquely complex governance superstructure in comparisons. • Interviews and documentation on project experience and operational staff concerns, while noting the central administration's apparent satisfaction and readiness to work within the existing system. • Small existing core group of continuously engaged Member country representatives, weighted to contributors of extra-budgetary resources. Imbalance was evidenced in a very limited response of beneficiary country representatives to the Evaluation survey and requests for liaison in their countries, probably due in part to the limited and intermittent ITC engagement in their countries. • Project and country mission evidence strongly confirmed the limited and intermittent ITC engagement in many countries and the resulting lack of visibility, follow-up and accompaniment. • Record after 2006, interviews and survey results. | <p>3. Pragmatically strengthen governance and continue to strengthen accountability while minimizing bureaucracy.</p> <p>To ITC Governors and Supporters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Rather than attempting formal change in ITC's heavy but manageable governance system, convene small and informal, "friends of the Chairs" groups (balanced between engaged beneficiary and non-beneficiary countries) to allow for advance and follow-up discussion of formal ITC governance meeting agendas and management reports, and to encourage active engagement wherever necessary by the representatives of those countries in Geneva, capitals and UN New York. II. Convene a regular annual meeting of the three Heads of ITC, WTO and UNCTAD and their close collaborators, in advance of JAG meetings, which could also serve to ensure synergies among the Geneva trade institutions. III. Be prepared to support necessary adjustments or adaptations in standardized UN requirements to accommodate a smaller, more entrepreneurial, private sector-oriented organisation like ITC. <p>To ITC's Management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Strengthen the information to JAG and CCITF on plans, performance and results - under each of ITC's funding streams, including the Regular Budget - as well as on internal management and economical operation II. Be transparent and assertive about both the real progress and the limits in defining, advancing and reporting results in ITC's work and in making and defending adjustments and adaptations to standardized UN requirements that may be necessary to accommodate its distinctive mission and essential business requirements. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparatively limited size and influence of ITC’s activities within the burgeoning fields of Aid for Trade and trade-related technical assistance, relative to its recognized strengths and track record. • Continuing narrow visibility and recognition for ITC and its work, with a solid and widening foundation with “global public goods” products. • Constraints on ITC presence, continuing contact, alertness to opportunities for engagement (increasingly generated at country and regional levels) and capacity for follow-up and accompaniment of its key clients in beneficiary countries due to the Centre’s general lack of in-country representation. Extreme improbability of sufficient resourcing for many country offices in future, given ITC’s very wide group of eligible beneficiary countries. • Relatively high profile communications and public relations performance in recent years reaching specialist (and occasionally more general) international audiences with a positive message and a number of attention-getting and awareness- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative and qualitative documentation in the analysis of ITC’s Place and prospects in global Aid for Trade (Sec 2.1.3) corroborated by project portfolio and especially country mission analyses. • Documented low awareness and interest in beneficiary countries, beyond immediate clients, even among peer providers and donor representatives in- country. Contrasting evidence of a wider international awareness, use and constituency for ITC’s global public goods products. • Strong evidence from country missions of the constraints in not having in-country representation, but also that even if it were widely possible it could alleviate only some problems. Shown that much of ITC’s technically-led strength is necessarily based in HQ, and has also functioned well in countries. • Cautionary finding that the one past “pilot” experiment with formal ITC de-centralisation was badly designed and prepared, justified and monitored. No evidence was encountered of significant benefits for the region involved, while costs continued. • The organisational analysis found a relatively well staffed and skilled 	<p>4. Move ITC up to the next level of visibility, engagement and effectiveness as a key player in the global Aid for Trade effort.</p> <p>To ITC’s Management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Keep a steady focus and ITC’s substantive expertise and credibility aimed at the strategic horizon suggested in Recommendation 1 and supported by the other Recommendations II. To realistically enhance ITC’s links among beneficiary countries and regions, recognizing its constraints, consider a very few carefully-designed, justified and evaluated liaison arrangements for key regions. III. With JAG and CCITF, enlist a small but representative group of engaged representatives of intended beneficiary countries and institutions, in Geneva and/or in capitals, to advise at regular intervals on cooperation possibilities, strategic design, key contacts and expertise and profile-raising opportunities. IV. Continue to tell the ITC story publicly, highlighting promising innovations and breakthroughs as justified, while also using them to focus attention on the less glamorous, longer-term work of building sustainable results in supporting trade. <p>To All Aid for Trade donors, especially multilateral and large donors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Take greater advantage of ITC in these programmes as a distinctive asset to the global aid for trade effort, with its strengths in skills attuned to practical exporter needs and adaptable to different country situations. II. Call on ITC to support and complement major programmes while helping support the necessary duration and follow-up of ITC’s contributions.
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p>raising “lead stories.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massive growth of Aid for Trade and trade-related technical assistance spending in the past 15 years, with some of the largest providers having only limited recourse to ITC’s specialised services, in spite of their demonstrated strengths. 	<p>ITC communications capacity, featuring the positive but increasingly needing to reflect ITC’s long-term and challenging work of achieving results in trade capacity building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of the pattern of limited funding and partnering with ITC by most of the largest AfT providers, countered by steady support by a number of key bilateral donors, and as a powerful “market test” by the competitive pooled multilateral facilities in EIF and STDF. 	
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Note: 16 narrower, “specific recommendations” are highlighted throughout the text, each preceded by the supporting findings and evidence.

Specific Recommendations

- ES30. **Para. 44. Major AfT providers and ITC.** In many cases, it would appear to make sense for the major trade “hardware” funders to call on a proven and trusted multilateral TA supplier like ITC in its fields of special expertise rather than trying to manage such skills directly or replicate them in-house. To do so, however, will not only depend on ITC being able to clearly define and effectively market its services in line with its strategic objectives, but also on the receptivity of the major providers to call on this resource of the international community to a greater extent, as a “contractor or sub-contractor”, and on ITC’s ability to respond well to such demands. If ITC’s member countries and agencies are persuaded of this case, it will also depend on them to promote and support these linkages pro-actively.
- ES31. **Para. 61. Fleshing out ITC’s theories of change.** ITC’s strategic planning and corporate logframe need to reflect convincing and reliable theories of change (results chain) against corporate objectives, with clear breakdowns of intended results, pathways, assumptions and risks. The staff concerned need to own and apply these linkages in their own work.
- ES32. **Para. 62. Better terminology for results:** The Evaluation recommends that ITC should change its terminology and measures around results to focus on the “outputs” and especially “outcomes” of its interventions, and their contributions to “goals” as defined in the UN system. These are more relevant, realistic and useful than the OECD/DAC definitions, particularly around credible “impacts” of capacity development for trade. Other agencies will come to this realization and ITC could lead in making a sensible change. At the current stage of development of ITC’s system, this change is quite feasible and will pay off amply in a more credible and useful system.
- ES33. **Para. 67. A useful results system.** As in any other organisation moving to a results orientation, the balance now has to be found and shown where the system is demonstrably a useful set of tools for the whole organisation and its stakeholders, and not an expensive add-on or an end in itself. The burden of proof is on the designers of the system and on senior management in mandating its use.
- ES34. **Para. 81. Internal organisation and financing.** The list of issues identified - particularly linked to unclear mandates and responsibilities and the unrelenting pressure of needing to generate project work-months for programmes and extra-budgetary staff – merits serious attention of the Centre’s managers and Members. As part of this, although there are no simple ways of assessing the relative productivity of different parts of the structure, the resources they take up and their contributions to ITC’s overall mission⁶ the Centre’s sharply limited resources mean that this will remain a key issue for continuing scrutiny and improvement.
- ES35. **Para. 105. Connecting up management systems.** The single project cycle management system needs to be matched with associated platforms for sharing / making accessible information, and agreed systems for document storage, in order to fully support a comprehensive function of planning, monitoring, reporting and knowledge management. ITC staff needs to feed and use the system to its potential for better results and accountability.

⁶ For example, simple comparisons of the overall “throughput” of spending by programme branches would yield a grossly distorted picture.

- ES37. **Para. 133. Light, adapted systems:** An organisation like ITC will need to maintain a light, simple, useful system of Project Cycle Management to minimize bureaucracy and maintain its responsiveness and flexibility. For example, the detail of project tracking systems should be calibrated to the scale and complexity of the project in question and focus most on the critical tools and milestones, at design and launch, agreed progress milestones, and closure and follow-up.
- ES38. **Para. 133. Providing for sustainability:** Without exaggerating the ambitions or potential of its projects (especially smaller ones) to shape development results, the issues of how to promote their sustainability and how to follow-up and check on it need to be built into project designs and budgets from the outset, and inculcated and recognised as vital elements of the work of ITC staff. In project design, there should be arrangements (responsibility, resources, time) to ensure follow-up and regular check of the project-generated benefits, from the outset. It is clear that deepening these follow up and learning functions will incur additional cost, but ITC's supporters need to recognize that without them, much of ITC's valuable existing work and its wider potential are simply being largely wasted.
- ES39. **Paras. 148-151. Evaluation systems.** Better coordination between divisions and the corporate Evaluation Unit is needed to maximize the value and efficiency of programme self-evaluations (including mid-term review, completion report, and "impact studies", etc.) ... ITC needs to maintain relevant corporate evaluation plans and tools to provide adequate coverage implement a sound evaluation strategy and support an evaluation culture for learning. ITC's funding and workflow demands need to allow time to apply such good practice in evaluation.... It will be important for ITC to apply the relevant standards of the UN Evaluation Group: to "Ensure that evaluation is part of the organisation's governance and management Functions"; and to "Facilitate an independent and impartial evaluation process by ensuring that the evaluation function is independent of other management functions. The Head of evaluation should report directly to the Governing Body of the organisation or the Head of the organisation to ensure independent and impartial evaluation independent of other management functions."⁷
- ES40. **Para. 178. ITC's critical contacts:** Building and maintaining the Centre's Client Relationship Management system (CRM) is not an administrative burden, but a critical business need for the future of the Centre and almost all of its individual activities. This is not just, or even primarily, an issue for the attention of ITC management but at least as much for individual project managers who must actually take the time and effort to make the necessary inputs and then use the CRM resource to provide more systematic follow-up and greater sustainability for ITC's contributions. It is also an issue of concern to ITC's members and supporters, who will need to allow for the additional time and effort for this painstaking but vital work of benefit to all.
- ES41. **Para. 185. Credible, balanced information on results.** ITC's effective communication of its vision and mission now need to be supported with readily-available and credible information on ITC's results delivered, across its programmes and not just in cherry-picked 'success stories' .

⁷ http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22

-
- ES43. **Para. 217. Underpinning effective evaluation:** In addition to changing the reporting lines of the evaluation function to ensure its real and perceived independence, ITC also needs to implement the following good practices for evaluation: (a) Ensuring adequate financial data on programmes and projects for proper evaluation; (c) Clarifying the respective responsibilities and complementary links between the evaluation and project monitoring functions; (d) Enhance its self-evaluation standards and practices; (e) Providing strong corporate support for dissemination and follow-up of evaluation results and their use in learning and knowledge management systems.
- ES44. **Para. 263. Guarding against aid for trade dependency:** All Aid for Trade providers, and especially the big spenders, share a responsibility to avoid reinforcing a public sector prop for TSIs but instead helping strengthen their private sector roots and nourishment. At a minimum, credible cost-sharing for any outside support should be the rule.

1. INTRODUCTION

1. This is the report of an Independent Evaluation of the International Trade Centre (ITC). The Centre, which marks its 50th anniversary in 2014, is the joint agency of the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations aimed at enabling businesses in developing countries to become more competitive in global markets, speeding sustainable economic development and contributing to the achievement of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. ITC's mission is to enable small-business export success by connecting small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries and transition economies to the global trading system. It gives particular weight to project implementation in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states and sub-Saharan Africa⁸. This Evaluation was commissioned in 2013 as a "lean, progress report evaluation" with three purposes: to assess the changes in ITC since 2006 (when the results of a much larger joint evaluation were released); to evaluate the results of ITC's work over the 2006-2012 period⁹; and to propose appropriate future directions for the organisation. One important part of the exercise is to evaluate ITC in the changing global context of Aid for Trade and trade-related technical assistance, issues that are treated in a special section of the report (2.1.3).
2. Methodology, structure and limitations. The main lines of the Evaluation's methodology are outlined in Box 1 below and elaborated in Annex V. Briefly, the changes in the Centre's organisation and management were gauged against an accepted framework for organisational assessment, while its performance and results were assessed by the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of its activities against specified evaluation questions. The results from these two strands of the Evaluation have been analysed, validated and brought together in this synthesis report. The Evaluation report is not only intended to be lean, but above useful to ITC's intended beneficiaries, stakeholders and staff. It is realistically and pragmatically geared to the opportunities, capacities and constraints of the organisation, and it applies standards for assessment and proposals that fall within the realm of the possible. The structure of the Report is straightforwardly linked to the three purposes set out above. Immediately following this introductory chapter, the changes in ITC since 2006 are analysed in the major chapter 2 on "ITC's Organisation and Management and Changes since 2006". The results of ITC's work over the 2006-2012 period are then analysed in Chapter 3 on "ITC's performance and results since 2006". Finally, Chapter 4, on "Conclusions, Recommendations and Options for Future Directions" assembles the conclusions from these analytical chapters and serves the third assigned purpose of proposing appropriate future directions for the organisation. The Executive Summary distils the main elements of the full report, and key supporting materials are found in the annexes.
3. Regrettably, it is especially important in the case of this evaluation to stress its limitations, which are enumerated in the relevant chapters below and elaborated in the Methodology Box and Annex on Methodology. It is sufficient to stress here that the obtainable information base on ITC activities over most of the Evaluation period (especially up to the last two years) was found to be fragmentary at best, and that tracing and interviewing ITC's actual and intended clients, most particularly exporters, proved impossible in all but a very few cases. The Report refers to possible explanations and steps (some already

⁸ For further institutional information, see: <http://www.intracen.org/itc/about/#sthash.ERt75v2H.dpuf>

⁹ In terms of its scope, strictly speaking, the Evaluation was to cover the period 2006-2012 inclusive, and most of the coverage and analysis of projects focuses on that period. However, since the country missions took place in January-February, 2014 and included a good number of ongoing projects, it would have been artificial and in fact impossible to cut off coverage at the end of 2012, so it was brought as far up to date as solid information would support. On the Organization and Management front, the coverage extended up to November 2013 when the main data gathering and interviews in Geneva were completed.

initiated by the Centre) to help remedy these serious problems for its own operations. While flagging these major limitations, the Report nonetheless presents its findings, prefaced by this general caution and each accompanied, unusually for evaluation or other reports, by explicit ratings by the Team of the strength of the supporting evidence and the confidence with which the finding can be asserted. It will be noted that only in the area of organisational and management changes is the Evaluation able to rate the confidence level as high, with most areas of findings on results being rated as medium or lower. In turn, the particular conclusions and recommendations derived from the findings are to be treated with commensurate caution.

Box 1: Overview of the Methodology for the Independent Evaluation

The agreed Inception Report for the Evaluation included the full outline of the approach and methodology to be followed. During the process, two progress reports were provided to the Head of ITC's Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU) which also supplement this brief Overview (see Annex V).

The figure below from the Inception Report sets out the main building blocks of the methodology.



The expected building blocks were mainly applied as planned. As part of the inception phase, the Team assessed the preconditions for conducting a robust evaluation. The original list of possible evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference needed revision. These issues were documented and discussed during the inception phase and the questions were further structured, refined, and focused in consultation during the inception mission to Geneva and confirmed in the Inception Report, which was the formally accepted to guide the process..

To cover the two specified purposes of the Evaluation (apart from its forward-looking guidance) two evaluation matrices were used: Matrix 1: on Organisation and management (see section 5.1); and Matrix 2: on Operational progress and results (see section 5.2). Used in parallel and then re-integrated at the synthesis stage, these two matrices served as the core framework for the evaluation. Among the building blocks set out above, the Portfolio Review steps were applied to Matrix 2.

The framework adapted for the organisational and management study proved effective, with the understanding that as part of the "lean progress report evaluation" requested, it was not

expected to constitute an exhaustive management and organisational study. As its framework, the team adapted the IDRC organisational assessment tool, reflected in the Matrix 1 questions.

On the other hand, the challenges in assessing the operational performance and results of ITC's activities against the accepted evaluation criteria proved even more difficult than expected. The data weaknesses, especially for the earlier years, around the essential milestones of projects and project cycle management are documented in the Report. Because of their importance for the Centre itself they are directly reflected in the conclusions and recommendations. Thus the original plan to organise the operational assessments around ITC's strategic objectives and related client-groups proved unrealistic.

Following the finalisation of the evaluation matrices, the team began a systematic review of key organisational documents (strategic plans, annual reports etc.), project documents (proposals, progress reports etc.) and other background materials. On the operational progress and results side, the team added a "project story board" technique during early program staff interviews to supplement the initial document review and clarify the distinctive ways in which ITC projects actually operate.

The portfolio review of the operational side took a "funnel" approach. At the wide end of the funnel, the full portfolio review, through structured desk and statistical research and targeted headquarters inquiries, arrived at broad profiles of the entire portfolio of ITC "projects" recorded over the period (nearly 800), tracing patterns and trends in the funding, use, distribution and available results information on products. At the middle level of the funnel, the team produced detailed working reports on a representative qualified sample of 56 national, regional and global projects active during the evaluation period in 24 independently selected countries (see Annex V for project and country lists). Finally, among the 24 country portfolios, and still following the same structure, the country-based "case studies" (distributed both across regions and types of programs) served at the narrow end of the funnel to generate findings grounded more deeply in the concrete experience of projects and their main intended beneficiaries in their actual country contexts. Six of seven planned missions were carried out – in Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania and Tunisia. Special challenges led to substituting two "virtual" missions (in Haiti and Uruguay) in the place of other planned physical mission. The country missions (six physical and two "virtual") assumed an even greater importance than anticipated, as the most important means of consulting beneficiaries and partners in the ground. Guided by standard instruments, these missions included informed respondent interviews or focus groups with 182 representatives of government, TSIs, beneficiary groups, donors, CSOs and other informed observers on the ground, and findings were incorporated into eight internal country mission reports.

In parallel, the team sought to use HQ-level interviews and targeted surveys to triangulate findings. The team carried out seven separate missions to Geneva and engaged with a total of over 150 ITC staff, management, stakeholders and partners in structured interviews and focus groups, all built around the Evaluation matrices. This was in addition to substantive introductory sessions on the Evaluation with the Steering Committee, present and past JAG chairs, developing country Permanent Missions in Geneva, Geneva Week participants from countries without Permanent Missions, and an open session to which all staff were invited. Three targeted surveys were deployed in various languages to JAG members (including a special survey on governance and organisational questions), ITC staff and ITC clients. Response rates to all these surveys were fairly disappointing, especially on the last, but the staff and JAG responses were informative, as reflected in the text and Annexes I and II.

The client surveys, intended to elicit input from wide groups of actual and intended ITC partners and beneficiaries proved almost entirely impossible to administer to those groups, in spite of the combined efforts of the Evaluation Team and ITC staff. The main reason is that ITC does not yet have a useable central base of information on such contacts, although it is working hard to build one, nor was there any prospect of building one up around the Evaluation sample, beyond the extremely useful 182 direct interviews carried out in the country missions. This problem of maintaining contacts, serious for ITC as well as the Evaluation, is addressed in the Evaluation's conclusions and recommendations.

The final steps of the methodology to draft stage focused on aggregating emerging findings to bring together the diverse streams of evidence from the earlier steps. The team cross-checked and assembled findings across component inputs and supplementary materials, then drafting the major policy-oriented synthesis report systematically covering the evaluation purposes, the agreed questions, and the specified criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability).

Following the submission of the draft report, the EMU undertook a quality assessment mission to the Team's HQ in mid-April. The mission report expressed satisfaction with the: i) scope of the evaluation, ii) quality of design, data and analysis, iii) quality of conclusions and recommendations, and iv) candour and impartiality of the draft evaluation report. A number of areas for strengthening were proposed.

From the draft to final report stages, a consultation and validation phase involved stakeholders submitting a total of 239 comments, questions, and suggestions, each of which received a response by the Team, and led to revisions and refinements to the text where required. The compilation of the comments and responses makes up an important part of the Evaluation Report for present and future reference (see Annex VII).

2. ITC'S ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT AND CHANGES SINCE 2006

4. This major component of the Evaluation and the Report has been developed following closely the framework of organisational assessment and analysis set out in Matrix 1 in the Inception Report (included in section 5.1). Building on extensive initial documentary research, more than 60 targeted confidential interviews were carried out, generating informed assessments from a wide number of perspectives as well as opening up extensive further internal documentation. These sources of data are combined and triangulated here with inputs from the Evaluation's operational assessments and surveys including the special surveys of Joint Advisory Group / Consultative Committee of the ITC Trust Fund (JAG/CCITF) members on Governance and Accountability issues, and an updated survey of ITC staff members. Individual interviews cannot be cited as sources, and much internal documentation is informal in character, but key available sources are cited and all questions and challenges raised in the review process of the draft report have received individual responses by the Team.
5. As will be seen in the following chapters of this report, many of these organisational and management issues are inter-linked with each other and with developments in programme design and delivery. The advantage of closely following the sequence of questions and sub-questions specified in the Evaluation Matrix is to ensure systematic coverage, with the disadvantage of some overlaps and duplications, but these would also occur under any alternative structure for the examination. Cross-references are provided in the most important cases. In applying these two major lenses – organisation and management and performance and results - to some of the same issues in ITC, the Evaluation report benefits from having both the “top down” or headquarters perspective and the perspective from a sample of individual countries and projects. As is well known about international development programmes, not only are these perspectives – the formal and systemic and the practical and operational - often different but so are the ways that things actually work, and some such differences are reflected in a number of findings here.
6. In order to pull together these complex and wide-ranging analyses and findings in a coherent and accessible form, a summary table on the Evaluation's Summary Ratings on Organisational and Management Issues appears at the end of this chapter providing the Evaluation's ratings of the Centre's current fitness and change since 2006 on each indicator or issue in the Matrix, together with a rating of the strength of evidence and

confidence in the assessments in each area. A similar summary table is provided later for the findings on performance and results, and some of the differences referred to in the preceding paragraph will be seen in related ratings.

2.1 What is the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC and how has it changed since 2006? (A)

2.1.1 Governance and corporate accountabilities (A1)

7. Little change has taken place in ITC's external governance or accountabilities since 2006, nor in the main concerns diagnosed in the evaluation of that year and generally acknowledged by ITC's stakeholders. Proposals to establish a more conventional governing board or executive committee structure were brought to a standstill by difficulties in agreeing on an appropriate formula for representation. Consequently, as the JAG found in 2008, 'The Consultative Committee remains the oversight body for voluntary contributions to the ITC Trust Fund, while the JAG remains the policymaking organ of ITC', subject to formal ratification, which is not always automatic, by the Trade and Development Board (TDB), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) General Council (GC) and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This leaves ITC, especially as a fairly small organisation, with the unusually elaborate and unwieldy set of governance and accountability arrangements that were already in place in 2006, as reflected in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: ITC Governance and accountability arrangements

Roles/issues	WTO	UNCTAD	UN New York	JAG	CCITF
Roles in human resources consultation/oversight	X (Sect)	X (Sect)	X (Sect)		
Complementarity /consultation around functions/programmes (also with other international, regional and national organisations)	X (Sect)	X (Sect)	X**	X	
Takes part in ITC Oversight Committee	X	X			
ITC accountabilities for strategic programming /reporting	X		X	X	X
ITC financial accountabilities	X		X		
ITC regulatory and audit responsibilities	X*		X (OIOS & External Auditors/ JIU)		
"Governing body" type oversight	X (WTO GC review)	X (TDB Review)	X (CPC to 5 th Cottee. to UNGA)	X	X
Complaint & response mechanisms			X		

* This assumes a partial role.

** This is understood to be a formal role through the UN-wide CPC exercise, not directly related to substantive programme operation.

8. Beyond those initial reform attempts, there is no record of any sustained or renewed pressure either from ITC's members or management to implement the reform proposals, apparently in part out of a continuing concern that opening up these issues in a multilateral organisation could lead to a worse situation rather than an improvement. To test current views of stakeholders on ITC's governance and accountability, the Evaluation carried out a special survey of the member countries and organisations represented on the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) and Consultative Committee for the ITC Trust Fund (CCITF) the ITC-dedicated advisory / governance structures. The respondents did not express major dissatisfactions (see Box 2 below and Annex II).

Box 2: JAG survey results

- In total, there were 22 responses from JAG and CCITF members. There were 16 different countries registered in the survey plus the European Commission (EC), from five regions – Western Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Asia-Pacific. Of these, 12 plus the EC were from donor countries, with four from beneficiary states.
- The majority of JAG respondents rated ITC's reporting and accountability structures positively when considering a number of roles and responsibility. For example, close to 80 percent of respondents stated ITC does 'well' or 'very well' with regard to ITC adhering to its mandate and ensuring transparent communication to stakeholders. The exceptions were in some significant dissatisfaction with information on plans, performance and results under all funding channels, and on internal management. When considering whether ITC 'guards against a conflict of interest': here more than half of respondents stated they were unable to offer an opinion, with just under a quarter claiming ITC do said 'well' or 'very well'.
- In comments left by respondents, half claimed that ITC's governance structure was 'too complicated' and 'complex'. Additionally, another comment stated that there is 'too much oversight' in certain cases, often lacking transparency.
- Asked to rate the effectiveness and efficiency of different bodies overseeing ITC, the majority of respondents considered JAG and CCITF members positively across all questions. Concerning the WTO, TDB and UN CPC/5th committee, a third or more responses were unable to offer a concrete answer, picking 'can't say'.
- In the comments, two respondents state that transparency is lacking with regards to appointments. Additionally, JAG and CCITF bodies are claimed by a couple of respondents to be political and static groups that lack 'interaction' and 'decision making power' with regards to ITC.
- When considering ITC's management, responses are overwhelmingly positive: every single requirement asked – a total of 15 – sees a majority of responses as 'well' or 'very well' of at least 62 percent.
- With respect to comments, a third stated that there had been recent improvements within ITC's management. One comment noted that 'the management including ED are highly accessible, easy to work with and take recommendations into consideration'.

9. Together with the results of interviews with representatives of the ITC's parent institutions and the Centre's management these responses (and Members' comments) show that while all concerned see the governance set-up as complex and sometimes duplicative and onerous, the system is not considered so dysfunctional as to justify the possible risks of trying to disassemble and re-design it. ITC's special joint institutional linkages with both the United Nations and the WTO appear to remain valuable for the legitimacy

of its mission and operations as they were at the Centre's outset, although the linkages with the UN in New York are distant, formal and control-oriented, and the limited special roles of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) are complicated by "cultural" differences and occasional conflicts of interest between the organisations. The WTO, with its one-half share of the ITC's Regular Budget, conveys a clearer sense of understanding and confidence in ITC's mission and work, while also relying to some degree on the UN's procedural oversight and assurance.

10. Reflecting the complex governance and accountability arrangements set out above, ITC faces numerous forms and lines of accountability serving multiple external and internal functions and requirements. Being treated as a UN organisation, it has come to be subject to intensive oversight provided through the multiple UN lines of accountability, affecting not only the 50% of the Regular Budget provided through General Assembly allocations, but essentially every aspect of the Centre's operations, with a number of delegated authorities and few, if any, adaptations¹⁰ for its size and particular operating requirements.

Box 3: Examples of ITC's accountability burden

- ITC's Regular Budget has to be approved by –both the WTO GC and UNGA and their respective subsidiary bodies.
- For the UN alone, the preparation of ITC Strategic Framework requires: Liaising within ITC and with Geneva-based partners during preparation: Liaising with Programme, Planning and Budget Division in New York which reviews it; Presentation to the JAG; Review by the UN Committee of Programme and Coordination (CPC); and review by the Fifth Committee (Member States) which transmits the document to the General Assembly (GA) for endorsement.

11. This complex web of accountabilities might be expected to support the organisation's credibility with overlapping safeguards, or on the other hand to blur and thus weaken real accountability. The Evaluation, and its survey of ITC's governance stakeholders, has not found either decisive positive or negative effects, beyond the considerable additional cost of the time and effort involved in multiple reporting in response to somewhat different schedules and requirements. The multiple reporting lines do allow for all the different stakeholders, sometimes the same ones wearing different hats, to receive full formal reporting and to raise questions and suggestions as they wish.
12. In the Evaluation's assessment, the current situation results in an odd combination of over-governance and under-governance for an institution with ITC's particular characteristics and needs. The over-governance is most evident in the bureaucratic burdens, for ITC and its stakeholders, of duplicative reporting, and often heavy UN procedures, rules and oversight bodies being applied to a responsive, private-sector oriented organisation¹¹. The administrative costs in time and money need to be recognized in considering the effective use of ITC's Regular Budget. At the same time we find that the Centre is under-governed in the sense of lacking a cohesive, representative and dedicated governing body whose members are closely informed and

¹⁰ The Team had originally understood that there were some particular delegations and derogations but the ITC administration, in commenting on the draft Evaluation Report, adaptations is categorical that "ITC is fully bound by the financial and staff regulations of the United Nations." See footnote XXX for the extensive comment around staff regulations and human resource policies.

¹¹ ITC's administrative services have basically contested this finding by the Evaluation Team, while numerous other staff and partners have documented it from their perspectives, as indicated in the analysis here.

committed to the mission and work of the organisation and particularly to providing strategic guidance and the reliable extra-budgetary support that is essential to the Centre delivering strategic and effective programmes. It has found, through both its operational and management analyses, that over the period covered and still today, ITC's ability to be strategic and responsive to demand is jeopardized by insufficient and unpredictable financing, especially in terms of longer-term, un-earmarked project funds. This has led to a chain reaction of serious management difficulties and often enormous pressures to adopt an opportunistic, funding supply-led approach to programming.

13. In practical terms, meanwhile, the Evaluation has found that the most important fora for specialised substantive oversight of the ITC are the JAG and CCITF, for example through their emphasis since 2006 on a stronger results based approach, looking towards reporting on impact, and between them these inclusive groups have the potential to provide the closer strategic steering required. On the other hand the full arsenal of UN systems, rules and processes applied to ITC more than covers other accountability concerns – at corporate and even project levels – while imposing a considerable administrative costs, delays and sometimes reduced effectiveness.
14. At present, in the long intervals between the formal plenary governance meetings, programmatic support and guidance by members is provided informally by a small number of Geneva representatives of donor countries offering un-earmarked or earmarked voluntary financial support, and a small number of representatives of eligible beneficiary countries with a special commitment to the ITC's purposes, even when they are not actually major beneficiaries. The level and profile of responses to the Evaluation's special survey is consistent with this pattern and both suggest a pressing need to widen and strengthen member engagement, particularly from beneficiary countries.
15. While these types of limitations are far from unique among multilateral institutions, the Evaluation finds that they have serious implications for ITC, and recommends consideration of a set of feasible remedial steps. None of them would require radical institutional change, but they do call for healthy innovation and flexible practice, especially in UN systems and mind-sets, to accommodate a smaller, private sector oriented organisation like ITC.

Project, programme and internal accountability

16. Internal accountabilities in ITC are rigorous and punctiliously follow UN systems. However, ITC has worked hard to secure delegations of authority where possible, mostly to the Director of the Division for Programme Support. For example, only grants above \$50,000 need to be reviewed by ITC's Grants Committee. At the same time, lines of accountability have often been blurred. As examples: the budget responsibility for individual projects has rested until 2013 with ITC's Finance section, rather than with Project Managers, even at the project development stage; and proper systems for staff performance management have only just begun to take hold in ITC with the new ePAS system.
17. At the same time, there is evidence that administrative and legal regulations arising from the UN accountability requirements impede efficiency and effectiveness (and demoralize staff) by diverting excessive efforts of hard-pressed operational personnel from substantive work. Whilst internal accountabilities (for example in the minute tracking of every expenditure and adjustment) may support one form of credibility, they are not guided by a mature approach to risk management, especially given the small size and limited means of ITC as well as the entrepreneurial character of much of its work. In effect, when considering or undertaking activities, a determinant question seems to be whether or not they will be in administrative compliance with UN systems, rather than the substantive merits and priority of the work itself.

18. Formal accountabilities for Regular Budget funding of ITC's core administrative costs and managerial capacity (and the core of its "Global Public Goods" work) are covered by the UN and WTO programme, budget, reporting and oversight systems. Although, as in other UN reporting, accountability for results is very broad, ITC's has been gradually strengthening over the evaluation period. The Centre has augmented these formal corporate mechanisms with accountability to interested publics through annual reports which are generally readable and informative – if predictably upbeat - as part of a corporate communications programme that has seen growing investment, professionalism and visibility to key audiences over the period.
19. **Specific conclusion:** In understanding ITC's operational accountability, it cannot be overstressed that the overwhelming majority of the Centre's programme and project activities over the period have been funded by "extra-budgetary resources" or voluntary contributions to the ITC Trust Fund (ITF). The Trust Fund consists of two categories of funds known as "windows". Window I consists of general or "un-earmarked" and "soft-earmarked" contributions from donors while Window II consists of bilateral contributions for specific projects or programmes as well as income earned through Revolving Funds. The varying distribution among these sources over the period is explored in more detail in section 3.2, including the contributions by individual donors to each of the windows. The CCITF provides the forum for accountability for these voluntary contributions as well as opportunities to mobilise pledging, propose overall programmes, and to report on their progress and results.
20. Window 1 resources have been raised at the corporate level, largely managed, programmed and allocated at the level of the Office of the Executive Director (OED) and Senior Management Committee (SMC). Fundraising and reporting activities for Window 2 projects have been carried out at Division or Section level, with varying degrees of oversight and coordination by the OED/SMC. Window 1 contributions to the Trust Fund have been covered by ITC's overall accountability mechanisms, including its own increasingly operative results framework, and overseen collectively by the special forum of CCITF. Beneficiaries, executing agencies and ITC staff have sometimes found it more efficient to work with these systems, without adding individual donors' extra layers of accountability at a project level, which the Evaluation has found to add further layers of work under Window 2. As seen in section 3.2, Window 1 donors over the period have included 15 countries, 11 of which have repeated their support. The Evaluation's Governance and Accountability survey and additional interview input revealed some particular concern about insufficient "burden-sharing" through un-earmarked funding, and a special need for attention and improvement to the Window 1 guidelines and planning and performance reporting for that Window.
21. The same proportion (23%) of the small group of JAG survey respondents – mainly donors - rated the information to JAG/CCITF members either as poor or very poor on Performance and Results for each of the Regular Budget, Window 1 and Window 2, as well as on internal management policies, practices and costs.
22. For earmarked (Window 2 funded) projects, donor engagement in accountability has mostly been intensive, usually encompassing design and log-frame preparation, monitoring and financial reporting, and evaluation. Scrutiny levels are evidently high – sometimes on the ground as well as through headquarters- and there are many individual reporting demands, as evidenced through the differing demands for individual log-frames, donor reports, etc. Some two-thirds of the Evaluation's portfolio review projects and others in country missions were reported as funded, at least in part, through Window 2 where the involvement of project donors could be assessed to different degrees. In almost all of these cases the project donor was closely involved - in a few as the prime mover - in generating the project idea and design, although not in a global programme such as Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs). In most cases as well, individual donors' programming and reporting requirements were found to have added layers of

extra work and in a significant minority of cases serious problems of inflexibility for ITC, executing agencies and/or beneficiaries.

23. Most importantly, however, the assessment of ITC's accountabilities for voluntary-funded activities needs to go beyond the important but relatively narrow issues around additional accountabilities and reporting requirements and the associated workload. The highest stakes are related to the dilution of the Centre's strategic ability to set a coherent, results-oriented direction, with its governance bodies, when in fact substantial shares of its funding come (often off-cycle) with different strategic emphases which distort the needed longer-term orientation to results.

2.1.2 Institutional setting in Geneva (A2)

24. ITC's Geneva setting provides it with a well-connected international location in close proximity to WTO and to UNCTAD as the UN's policy arm specialising in trade and development. Together with those agencies and their respective memberships and associated activities, ITC has come to be part of the Geneva hub of thinking about trade for development and the AfT agendas, with a surrounding constellation of think-tank, association and non-governmental actors in the field. The geographical positioning has provided scope for regular dialogue and joint engagement of the different institutions with their Members, active cooperation and coordination in some cases, and an overall conduciveness to the coherence of the "Geneva Consensus" on trade for development, less controversial than its Washington namesake.
25. However, the Evaluation has found that, even with these relative strengths of ITC's Geneva location, the Centre faces major hurdles in keeping in close-enough touch with its beneficiary members. Like its donor and other non-beneficiary member governments, many developing countries have a relatively strong concentration of their trade representation in Geneva, primarily focused on WTO work. At the same time, many are quite stretched and hard-pressed to take a strong continuing interest in ITC, particularly when it is able to be active only in a minority of countries at a time, and has an intermittent presence in others. The Team (and ITC's own services) encountered this challenge in contacting missions to inform and involve them in the Evaluation, in seeking leads and inputs from key stakeholders in their countries, and in getting their own inputs to the Evaluation surveys which had minimal response from beneficiary government representatives, although all were invited and reminded. Realistically, ITC probably cannot aspire to the level of beneficiary government engagement in the largest development funding agencies. If it is not able either to deploy field representation in a large number of countries, creating and maintaining its own "living" networks of the most interested contacts across countries – while keeping Geneva missions as informed and involved as possible – seems even more essential.
26. The Geneva location as a UN hub also presents clear opportunities for practical efficiency gains, which ITC has worked hard to leverage in recent years - such as through use of the International Computing Centre and engaging with Geneva-based partners to negotiate better airline tariffs, given the volume of its travel.
27. On the other hand, the ITC's Geneva location carries with it some distinct drawbacks. Distance from the UN and its New York operations adds costs and challenges in working with them, especially for a small organisation which cannot afford major liaison investments. Geneva is a high-cost location and physically quite far removed from most of the developing countries that ITC must serve. At the same time, the possibilities for a de-centralized mode of operation have always been restricted by the Centre's limited size and budgets, combined with its primary organisation around technical services rather than geographical programmes.
28. The Evaluation has found no evidence that the one experiment in decentralization (since 2008) with a field-based regional office in Mexico has shown any significant benefits to

the countries it was supposed to serve or to ITC as an institution, at the same time that it does continue to create significant costs. It must be noted that, although this initiative was presented at the time as a “pilot” for possible wider ITC de-centralization, its rationale, intended functions, goals and measures of success were very poorly defined in the supporting documentation obtained by the Evaluation Team, and no useful results were seen to have been documented.

29. While the Mexico office is the only recorded attempt at institutional de-centralization over the period, there have been several kinds of examples of using field-based project support units or personnel in substantial ITC programmes, and several have been encountered in the Evaluation’s project and country programme samples. The Evaluation has assessed these mechanisms as well as how ITC’s centralized location may overall affect the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and potential impact of its work.
30. In five of the Evaluation’s six physical country missions, and virtually all of the project reports where the issue was raised, the lacking (or limited) continuing presence of ITC on the ground was identified as a limitation on its work. Interestingly, the problems were seen primarily in terms of the relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact of ITC’s work, rather than its efficiency.
31. In terms of relevance, the lack of a continuing presence on the ground has reduced ITC’s continuing visibility to potential clients and partners on the ground as well as its ability to follow national developments in its field closely and act on opportunities to contribute. In this regard the Centre has clearly been at a disadvantage both in relation to competing suppliers and in responding in a timely way to national needs and international A4T funding managed on the ground. On the other hand, it is a remarkable finding that in ITC’s actual work on the ground over the period, in two sets of informed respondents only minorities assessed ITC’s “country knowledge” negatively as a factor in meeting project objectives or its “up to date understanding of national and local conditions” as less than good. Some ITC geographic branch staff did signal concern on this. The Evaluation found few other significant examples of weakness in this regard. Beneficiaries and partners on the ground overwhelmingly knew whom to deal with at ITC and how to contact them, and found the accessibility and support of ITC’s technical specialists met project needs. Somehow, then, ITC’s staff and consultants have continued to deliver in relevant and effective ways when called upon.
32. Nor has efficiency been highlighted as a major concern with ITC’s lack of continuing country presence. Once again, the Evaluation’s missions, portfolio studies and interviews and surveys found that the physical distance of Geneva-based ITC personnel was not identified as a problem for the operation of projects, although once again some ITC staff raised concerns. In terms of costs, the great majority of respondents were not aware of the detailed breakdown of ITC project budgets (a significant finding in itself) but the Evaluation Team is not convinced that the cost-effectiveness or “value for money” of ITC activities is reduced by the lack of field presence, measured against realistic alternatives. Extensive comparative experience in other agencies testifies that deploying field staff is expensive, and often raises new challenges of coordination and lines of authority. This would especially be a problem in a specialized, technically-driven organisation like ITC, which could not possibly hope to deploy any staff, let alone technical experts, to all beneficiary countries or even regions. Moreover, field presence does not change everything, as the Evaluation has found in its missions to two countries with quite different ITC programmes – Cambodia and Côte d’Ivoire - where relatively strong project support units have been used in recent years. While these certainly bring some practical benefits for beneficiaries and ITC itself, the main working lines of communication and cooperation continue to be between institutional partners and beneficiaries in-country and the technical services directly concerned in Geneva, and these links do not work very differently than elsewhere. Furthermore, even with this greater field presence, the

same problems are found around ITC's low visibility and influence and, most importantly, around the follow-up and sustainability of ITC's contributions.

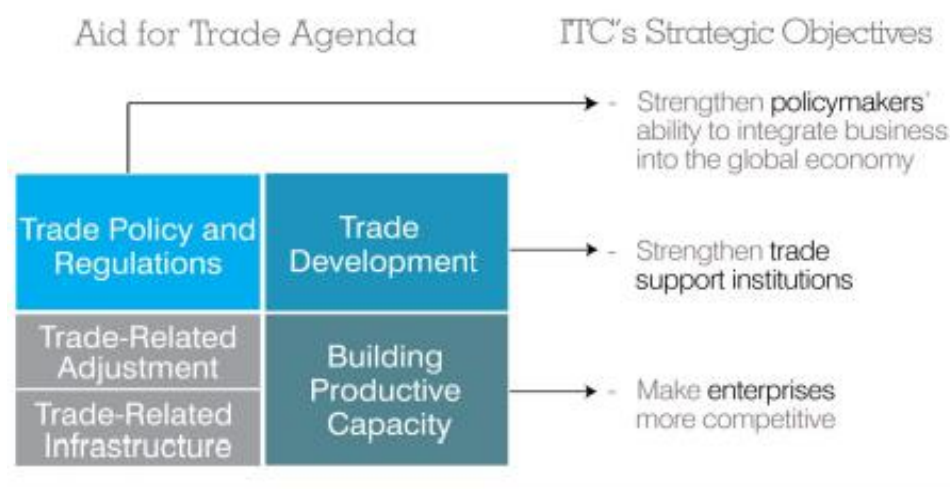
33. **Specific conclusion:** ITC's current inability to ensure follow-up and thus the greater sustainability of its contributions has been clearly identified in this Evaluation as one of the most important challenges facing the organisation in fulfilling its mandate. Its causes and consequences are treated in several areas of the report. Taking all the different elements into account, it is sufficient to say here that the Evaluation does not find that ITC's centralization in Geneva and lack of field staff is in itself a critical factor or that any apparently realistic de-centralization option with ITC's resources would offer a major remedy.

2.1.3 ITC's place and prospects in global Aid for Trade (A3)

34. Fifty years ago and for decades afterward, ITC was one of the first, small pioneers in the broad field or trend of "aid for trade" – using international aid to help improve the trade performance of less-developed and middle-income countries. The field has now grown exponentially in attention and resources for well over a decade. It has been driven by a strengthening consensus around the potential of trade, markets and private sector action to generate growth and reduce poverty, to the point that the programmes of virtually all aid providers and some \$30 to \$40 billion of aid dollars annually now claim to be dedicated to these objectives. Against such a backdrop, the place of ITC - as a technical assistance agency channelling some \$80 million annually - at first glance seems miniscule and a far cry from its leading position of past decades. But this surface picture needs careful examination of both the very large pond of "aid for trade", and the apparently small fish that is ITC.
35. The more formalized international "Aid for Trade (AFT) Initiative", officially launched by the WTO in 2005 at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference aimed to reinforce and harmonize collective global support for trade development. The approach laid emphasis on strengthening both the demand for aid for trade and on the supply – the donor response at the country, regional and global levels, with a special focus on supporting Aid for Trade development in least-developed countries and in some specific areas. The overall AFT initiative also outlined six categories or areas of aid for trade activity: trade policy and regulation; trade development; trade-related infrastructure; building productive capacity; trade-related adjustment; and other trade-related needs.
36. Aid for Trade Global Review fora and publications organised every two years by the WTO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have served to monitor international action and aimed to maintain momentum and improve the effectiveness of A4T efforts. A careful reading of these Reviews and other key studies provides the basis for a proper perspective on the place and prospects of ITC within this multi-billion dollar Aid for Trade "industry". With somewhat like one-third of total Official Development Assistance now being counted as aid for trade, and as much as \$220 billion since 2005, more meaningful parameters are needed to put ITC in perspective.
37. In fact, even with the imprecise statistics available, when aid for trade is broken down by the six broad categories set out in the Initiative both the volumes and niches of different suppliers can be clarified to some degree. An overwhelming share of what is reported as 'aid for trade' falls under the relatively broad categories of "trade-related infrastructure" (52%) and "building productive capacity" (45%). ITC has no role or capacity in the major capital "hardware" investments in trade-related infrastructure or trade-related adjustment. The Centre's disbursements are categorised for these purposes as falling under "building productive capacity" but obviously account for a relatively tiny share of the total. Unfortunately, international definitions and reporting on Trade-Related Technical Assistance (TRTA) as such are also fuzzy, but even within this much smaller, non-capital

share ITC is quantitatively modest. At this level, however, some more qualitative assessments begin to be more possible and meaningful.

Figure 2: Aid for Trade ITC’s Strategic Objectives ¹²



38. Since Aid for Trade came to centre stage internationally, ITC has made a point of stressing that its work is “100% Aid for Trade” and this legitimate claim, together with the Centre’s pioneering history, does translate into a unique clarity of purpose and body of experience among the many providers. The Evaluation has found wide recognition of these traits of ITC through its project and country analyses and surveys. More than this, the Evaluation findings reflect a widespread recognition that ITC’s “brand” includes a special understanding, knowledge and pragmatic, down-to-earth capacity to deal with private sector actors, especially Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), combined with technical excellence in its services. The Evaluation has found that ITC’s “market position” builds on these strengths as well as:

- Its distinctive function in retailing basic trade intelligence, with a capacity to innovate.
- Its tested work with trade support institutions, as key potential facilitators for SMEs.
- A range of specific capacity-building and trade-development products and services for policy makers, trade support institutions and enterprises.
- Growing experience in supporting trade integration at the regional and sub-regional levels.

39. A succession of fresh and timely innovations that have attracted new global attention to the possibilities for trade and development, most prominently the Ethical Fashion Initiative, efforts to achieve economic empowerment of women in trade and link them to international buyers, and path-breaking work directly with enterprises to identify specific Non-Tariff Measures affecting trade. At the same time, in spite of such strengths, ITC remains in relatively small segments of the much larger and still growing global “market” for TRTA. Just how many actors are now in the field is highlighted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)-produced “Trade Capacity Building Resource Guide” a compilation of bilateral and multilateral trade-related technical assistance services now in its third edition.¹³ The 2013 edition of the Guide profiles 42

¹² ITC 2010-2013 Operational Plan

¹³ Available: <http://www.unido.org/tcbresourceguide2013.html>

multilateral and inter-agency programmes and 36 bilateral ones against a dozen areas of Programmes, Services and Activities.

40. Among major multilateral suppliers, WTO and UNCTAD naturally have specialized programmes of technical support in their mandate areas, generally following a logical division of labour among them and ITC. UNIDO has also become a substantial player, building on the trade linkages with its industrial development mandate and expertise, with some close parallels or even overlaps with ITC, but it has also partnered with ITC and contributed financially to its activities. While only some 15% of UNIDO expenditure on technical cooperation activities in 2012 was in the area of trade capacity building, the Organisation has apparently been able to leverage its larger programmes in energy and environment, and industrial activities, to deploy a network of 29 regional and country offices around the world and thus also build its delivery and resource mobilization in trade capacity building.
41. Within its comprehensive development mandate, the World Bank Group is ranked as the largest single provider of AfT. With its first trade strategy in 2011 the Bank identified four priority areas: i) Trade competitiveness and diversification; ii) Trade facilitation, transport logistics and trade finance; iii) Support for market access and international trade cooperation; and iv) Managing shocks and promoting greater inclusion. Regional Development Banks and a wide range of other multilateral organisations now also offer AfT in line with their overall strategies and functional mandates, as does the European Union (EU) and most major bilateral agencies, with Japan, the United States (US) and Germany being the largest contributors.
42. For all these large-scale contributors, the lion's share of their spending is directed to the broader "hardware" categories of AfT, but clearly carries with it substantial expenditures on trade-related technical assistance as well. However, these large contributors have had made very limited use of the specialized services available from ITC. As section 3.2 shows, of these top-spending providers of global aid for trade, only Germany and the EU have been leading contributors to ITC's voluntary funding Windows. Instead, strong support has been provided for ITC's overall programme through Window 1 by Sweden, Norway, Finland, Ireland and Canada, and earmarked Window 2 support most substantially by Canada, the EU, Switzerland, the United Kingdom (UK) and the Netherlands. In scanning the very wide field of other TRTA providers from an ITC perspective, a striking fact is that perhaps only one comparable or "competitive" supplier – the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), financed mainly by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs– has been a similarly specialized stand-alone technical cooperation organisation in the export promotion field¹⁴. CBI operates at roughly one quarter of ITC's annual expenditure with its focus on promoting exports to European markets. It is also noteworthy that CBI and ITC have been close collaborators in a large programme between 2009 and 2013, through a Trust Fund provided by the Dutch Government. A 2013 evaluation of the Netherlands Trust Fund (NTF) II, found that: "In the context of the NTF programmes, CBI and ITC were and are

¹⁴ Another possible comparator, although not so exclusively focused on trade, is the Brussels-based Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE) created in 1977 as an a joint ACP institution to promote private sector development. Knowing that there may be lessons to be drawn from CDE's experience for possible benchmarking purposes the Evaluation Team made numerous requests over more than two months to obtain a copy of a substantial evaluation carried out in 2011 for the EU on the CDE, which had a number of comparable services to the ITC. CDE ultimately denied the request, describing it as an internal document, and the EC provided a copy two days before the submission of this Final Report. A rigorous comparative assessment is obviously not possible, especially taking into account that there were apparently special difficult issues in CDE that are only alluded to, that there has been a major set of changes since, and that the differences in the two organizations are at least as important as their comparable features.. But a quick scan of the report indeed suggests some interesting comparisons and contrasts in the ways in which these two institutions have worked to grapple with some comparable challenges such as overhead cost, the relative focus on activities and results, and de-centralization.. See Evaluation of the Centre for the Development of Enterprise, Final Report, Volume I: Main Report, September 2011, Evaluation for the European Commission by ADE Consortium.

still seen as complementary partners” and “in terms of governance, the CBI/ITC partnership was well coordinated, and allowed for effective and efficient decision making.”

43. If this significant example demonstrates the potential for fruitful complementarity and cooperation even between agencies with such similar missions, there should be much greater potential for the far larger AfT spenders to call on ITC’s specialized skills. ITC’s growing and successful experience in working with EIF and STDF – which are deliberately designed to call on the best skills available rather than building in-house capacity - also offer powerful examples. One of the main themes in the second Global Aid for Trade Review in 2009 centred on the complementary nature of trade hardware and software. While underlining that trade hardware, such as infrastructure (especially roads and ports) across regions remains important, equally crucial is soft infrastructure, also known as trade software. This encompasses training and capacity building for institutions and firms on standards, rules of origin and customs, as well as trade information and identification of market opportunities which helps them to make the most of trade hardware.
44. **Specific conclusion:** From its findings on ITC’s undisputed comparative strengths in a number of these areas, and the profile of the Aid for Trade landscape traced above, the Evaluation finds that ITC has the potential to make wider and deeper contributions to the global Aid for Trade effort. **Specific recommendation:** In many cases, it would appear to make sense for the major trade “hardware” funders to call on a proven and trusted multilateral TA supplier like ITC in its fields of special expertise rather than trying to manage such skills directly or replicate them in-house. To do so, however, will not only depend on ITC being able to clearly define and effectively market its services in line with its strategic objectives, but also on the receptivity of the major providers to call on this resource of the international community to a greater extent, as a “contractor or sub-contractor”, and on ITC’s ability to respond well to such demands. If ITC’s member countries and agencies are persuaded of this case, it will also depend on them to promote and support these linkages pro-actively.

ITC and the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

45. A major recent development with implications for ITC is that, after more than nine years of negotiations, WTO members finally reached consensus on a Trade Facilitation Agreement at the Bali Ministerial Conference in December 2013, as part of a wider “Bali Package”. According to estimates by the Peterson Institute, the trade facilitation agreement could boost global GDP by \$960 billion and create 21 million jobs.¹⁵

Box 4: ITC and the Trade Facilitation Agreement

Trade Facilitation, broadly, has been a core focus of much of ITC’s work over the Evaluation period, and the new Agreement and its wide base of support offers enormous potential for the Centre’s further contributions, particularly in helping SMEs in developing countries over the coming years to understand and use the new rules to expand their exports. ITC already had in place a Trade Facilitation Programme Strategy 2012-2015 (TFPS) and a quiver of ITC “Trade Facilitation Solutions”¹⁶ which aim to increase the competitiveness of the private sector by building export capacity, reducing trade transaction costs and deepening regional integration through trade facilitation measures. Also directly relevant is the ITC Non-Tariff Measure programme, now implemented in 33 countries, aimed at increasing transparency and helping countries better understand obstacles to trade faced by the business community.¹⁷

ITC was well prepared for the conclusion of the Agreement. “WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA): A Business Guide for Developing Countries,” was launched by ITC in six languages just a week after the agreement was signed, aimed at helping business communities in developing countries understand, respond and benefit from the provisions. Even more recently, ITC and UNCTAD signed a partnership MOU reaffirming their collaboration on trade facilitation that will provide an opportunity to donors and other development partners to demonstrate their commitment to the implementation of global trade facilitation reform by working with UNCTAD and ITC. The agencies will collaborate with other organisations and the private sector to advance implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.¹⁸

The new Agreement follows and builds on years of substantial developing country efforts and donor support, but both are now expected to expand considerably, both to cover capital costs and operating expenditures for trade facilitation in many countries. In the words of a U.S. trade representative who helped negotiate the deal: “The buy-in I think is there, and the resources are there, the challenge is coordinating those resources and coordinating the donors.”¹⁹ Once again, if these demand conditions can be fulfilled, and ITC can mobilize its supply response and effective marketing, there is potential for major expansion in its service provision to client countries and regions.

¹⁵ Hufbauer and Schott. “Payoff from the World Trade Agenda 2013.” Peterson Institute for International Economics.

¹⁶ ITC: Moving goods across borders (<http://www.intracen.org/itc/trade-support/moving-goods-across-borders/>)

¹⁷ ITC: Non-tariff measures (<http://www.intracen.org/itc/market-info-tools/non-tariff-measures/business-surveys/>)

¹⁸ UNCTAD-ITC Partnership on Trade facilitation (March 4, 2014)

¹⁹ Dawn Shackelford, quoted in “Walk the talk: Donor commitments on WTO trade deal” (DEVEX, Jan 30, 2014)

2.2 How has ITC's organisational capacity to carry out its mandate changed since 2006 (B)

2.2.1 Strategic leadership (B1)

46. The 2006 Evaluation of ITC centred its “key recommendation” on the needs for “key management and institutional reforms” and “a strengthening of key management processes.” In support of these calls it presented a sweeping range of what it saw as serious shortcomings, accompanied by extremely ambitious proposed solutions. In the same period, weaknesses in ITC's Strategic planning and management were identified in audits and reviews by oversight bodies.
47. ITC's new management at the time clearly took these criticisms to heart and quickly set in motion a wide-ranging set of changes in the Centre's internal functioning and programming, seen as essential to support its external credibility, as well as effectiveness and efficiency. Many changes were presented as being hinged on the 34 recommendations of the Evaluation, with a Transition Team prioritising among these. First among the recommendations for ITC's operations was one calling for a “change management strategy”²⁰ primarily to ensure that ITC staff would be continuously informed and involved during the period of change, with a sense of participation in developing and implementing a strategic re-orientation. What became known in the Centre as the “Change Management Process” came to be understood as encompassing both the attempted changes themselves as well as the intended engagement of staff in those changes. It was ultimately the object of considerable internal controversy and an external audit. This history itself, and the fact that there are differing interpretations of it, need to be borne in mind as the actual changes made and performance over the period are assessed, but this report does not focus on the Process as such.
48. Reflecting prominent themes in at least-one third of the evaluation recommendations, the programme of change included an emphasis on strengthening ITC's organisational and operational coherence (from being a “fragmented” organisation”) as well as improvements in overall management systems and more results-based management. With some support of special extra-budgetary contributions, key emphases were placed on strengthening the Office of the Executive Director and of the internal strategic planning function with an emphasis on Results-Based Management (RBM) through a greater role and increased resourcing to ITC's Strategic Planning, Performance and Governance section.
49. The strategic planning initiatives resulted in ITC 's first four-year Strategic Plan in 2009 (with a successor in 2010) a major step forward for the organisation in defining a clear vision and intended goals over a multi-year period to help maximise organisational effectiveness and efficiency. However, as well as the technical weaknesses noted earlier, the corporate results it contained were not yet connected to the project pipeline of the time. The Plan also contained little forward planning in terms of budgets, which were also not connected to results.

²⁰ “With a major change in management personnel imminent due to retirements, ITC needs to develop a carefully designed change management strategy to build common values for the organisation among staff at all levels and to strengthen formal processes for key management functions.” The Report amplified in this footnote: “Change Management has different definitions in fields ranging from information technology to strategic management. In this context, the term refers to a process of ensuring that staff at all levels are informed and involved on a continuing basis during a period of management or other significant change in an organisation, including involvement and a sense of participation in the development and implementation of a strategic re-orientation.” Joint Evaluation of the ITC, Synthesis Volume, p. xviii

50. Recognising that strategic planning, operations and budgeting process were not synchronized, the change process post-2009 sought to bring the corporate planning, programming and budgeting process into alignment.
51. As a first issue, previously the targets in the UN Strategic Frameworks for the relevant biennia (2010-2011, 2 012-2013) had also been disconnected from programme pipeline – with the result that ITC would find itself having to declare significant over-achievement or under-achievement of these results. This was addressed in 2012, with the corporate results prepared for the 2014-2015 biennium geared for the first time to programme managers' estimates of their results and budgetary 'pipeline' going forward. Thus, the budget and intended results set out in the Strategic Framework for the current biennium are grounded in actual and forward estimates of activity volumes of the period, rather than being disconnected at source. Whilst this process was too late for the current Strategic Plan 2012-2015, it is intended that the successor Strategic Plan will adopt the same model.
52. At the same time, the change process included efforts to revise the role of the Senior Management Committee, which had formerly focused on operational issues and project approvals, regardless of their scale. A more strategic approach to strategizing and planning was sought. According to staff and members of the SMC, for the great part this remains a work in progress today, since almost the totality of projects still have to be approved by the SMC, for example, regardless of scale, although the innovations of the Project Quality Assurance Group (discontinued in late 2013) and the Project Appraisal Committee reportedly made significant inroads into these decisions. It must be noted for example, that as of 1 January 2014, projects up to the \$300,000 level were eligible for PAC approval. With a view to supporting greater organisational effectiveness in applying an "Millennium Development Goals – MDGs - lens" to ITC's work, new efforts also focused on the stronger targeting and assessment of socio-economic benefits in ITC's projects.
53. In sum, the change initiatives reflected efforts, with more centralized leadership, initially to place a coherent framework around disparate activities, followed by a stronger gearing of activities to results. It sought to introduce a proactive and strategic model of strategic planning from what was seen as the former reactive and crisis-management model. Finally, the 2013 Case for Support was an attempt to complete the full integration of the strategic planning process. As elaborated in section D4 below, the Case for Support set out, through a series of intended programmes which support the realisations of ITC's strategic objectives, a mechanism for donors to contribute to initiatives whose intended results, thematic content and programmatic actions are set out *ex-ante*. This was intended to enable donors to steer their contributions to ITC activities aligned to their own strategic aims, and provide ITC with a potentially predictable fundraising model. The Case for Support reflected a key further step in the shift from a reactive to a proactive model, bringing fundraising into the loop of planning, strategizing and programming. An amplified approach, adopted in December 2013, retains the key systematic and proactive elements.
54. JAG reports and interviews indicate that these aspects of the broad change programme since 2006 have supported the building of organisational credibility and effectiveness, with ITC demonstrably responding to calls by donors and beneficiaries' demands for a clear vision and mission, and a greater results orientation with a stronger focus on impact.
55. Key issues outstanding issues in relation to strategic planning include:
 - To what extent is the intended proactive approach realisable in practice? The success or otherwise of the modified Case for Support will provide the litmus test for the final 'closing of the loop' of the strategic planning model – but this all depends on donors being willing to make longer-term and advance commitments.

- Whilst efforts have been made to embed a results orientation strategically, at the operational level these have thus far been geared largely to formal compliance requirements rather than the full understanding and use of a Results Based Management approach in carrying out ITC's daily work, challenges that are analysed further below.
56. In terms of organisational goals, key objectives of ITC's strategic direction since 2006 have been:
- Stressing that ITC is a development agency with a focus on reducing poverty and advancing the MDGs;
 - Responding to the intensifying demand for a "results focus" and demonstrating outcomes for development from its work; and
 - Targeting ITC efforts particularly to Least Developed Countries and Sub-Saharan Africa.
57. A clearer overall mission, vision and "unique proposition" for ITC were first articulated in 2007, partly as a Management response to the challenge in the previous Evaluation to overcome the fragmented character of the organisation²¹. The current statement, somewhat amended since 2007, is: "ITC's mission is to foster sustainable economic development and contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition through trade and international business development." This mission statement is clearly aligned to ITC's mandate of supporting the development of export capacity at country level, with a view to improving international and cross-border trade and ultimately supporting poverty reduction. It provides an overarching framework to which ITC's funded programmes and projects can align.
58. More strategic planning has rightly been seen as a necessary companion to a stronger results orientation, although it was also driven by a need for clearer forward budgeting. In the Annual Reports for 2007 and 2008 some statements of progress relative to the UN Strategic Framework were introduced. Then ITC's Strategic Plans for 2009-2012 and 2010-2013 were its first attempts at coherent strategic planning documents over a multi-year period, to be supported by Consolidated Programme Documents and Operational Plans. The 2010-2013 Strategic Plan set out three strategic objectives:
- i. Strengthen the international competitiveness of enterprises through ITC training and support;
 - ii. Increase the capacity of trade support institutions (TSI) to support businesses;
 - iii. Strengthen the integration of the business sector into the global economy through enhanced support to policymakers.
59. Although the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan provided some output-level indicators under the three category headings of knowledge acquisition, competencies building and multiplier impact, in fact these were a) not aligned with the overarching corporate strategic objectives and b) in many cases, inputs rather than indicators of outputs or outcomes²². The 2010-2013 Strategic Plan lacked a clear overall theory of change, namely: what changes were intended (results); at what levels (output-outcome-impact); how ITC intended to achieve them (pathways); and what assumptions were embedded in its logic.
60. The 2012–2015 Strategic Plan revises and updates the 2010–2013 Plan. It sets out four corporate objectives:

²¹ The ITC unique proposition 'Export Impact for Good' crystallizes the mission in a phrase alongside the vision of ITC as "the development partner for export success."

²² E.g. indicators 11 and 12: 'individuals provide training and/or advisory services' and 'organisations train and advise' respectively.

- i. Improving the availability and use of trade intelligence;
 - ii. Enhancing trade support institutions and policies for the benefit of exporting enterprises;
 - iii. Strengthening the export capacity of enterprises to respond to market opportunities; and
 - iv. Mainstreaming inclusiveness and sustainability into trade promotion and export development policies.
61. Together with the important addition of objective iv, these stated objectives have a stronger results orientation, and greater focus, than their predecessors. Also similarly to its predecessor, and despite a strong contextual analysis setting out ITC's rationale for engagement, the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan still lacks a clear "theory of change" framework around these objectives. It does clarify milestones, which are relevant and appropriate to the strategic intentions, and the 2014-2015 Corporate Logframe provides indicators of achievement against the corporate objectives, but the Strategic Plan document does not contain the clear breakdown of intended results, pathways and assumptions which might be expected. Since most of ITC's longstanding products and services can be seen to fit under these broad umbrella objectives, however, most in the Centre do not appear to see a pressing need to tighten these linkages. **Specific recommendation:** ITC's strategic planning and corporate logframe need to reflect convincing and reliable theories of change (results chain) against corporate objectives, with clear breakdowns of intended results, pathways, assumptions and risks. The staff concerned need to own and apply these linkages in their own work.
62. The corporate results system (see below) has, however, advanced this work since 2012, with a clear breakdown of outputs and outcomes and associated indicators. Recent basic project documents now show links to the broad corporate objectives they are designed to serve – sometimes allocating shares where they are geared to more than one objective. Responding as well to pressure to demonstrate contributions to development results, the ITC has been struggling with its definition of "impact", with an exercise in 2013 setting out to understand and define impact for ITC, as well as measuring it as far as feasible. In dialogue with the Evaluation Team on the wider research and good practice in this area, this exercise has been refined further to reduce the temptation to over-claim and it is progressing in parallel with the Evaluation.
63. In relation to expectations around results in general, the Evaluation's analysis of project portfolios and country missions are at variance with some of the expectations fed by the 2006 evaluation, some stakeholder requests and some attention-getting ITC "success stories". The terminology around managing for development results has sometimes been used and understood differently in ITC and its governing bodies. The Evaluation has found that in a substantial majority of the sample of projects examined and witnessed, most of ITC's attributable contributions to results are, and can only be, aimed at what the UN Development Group properly defines as the levels of "Output" and "Outcome" and "Goal", rather than that of "Impact." A careful reading of those definitions (see Box 5 below) shows that such contributions, rather than lacking purposive force, can be substantial and critical foundations for subsequent achievement of the intended development impacts and this may be particularly the case in some of ITC's capacity-building for trade. **Specific recommendation:** The Evaluation recommends that ITC should change its terminology and measures around results to focus on the "outputs" and especially "outcomes" of its interventions, and their contributions to "goals" as defined in the UN system. These are more relevant, realistic and useful than the OECD/DAC definitions, particularly around credible "impacts" of capacity development for trade. Other agencies will come to this realization and ITC could lead in making a sensible change. At the current stage of development of ITC's system, this change is quite feasible and will pay off amply in a more credible and useful system.

Box 5: UN Results Terminology²³

Outputs are changes in skills or abilities and capacities of individuals or institutions, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention within the control of the organisation. They are achieved with the resources provided and within the time period specified.

Outcomes represent changes in the institutional and behavioural capacities for development conditions that occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of goals.

Goal: A specific end result desired or expected to occur as a consequence, at least in part, of an intervention or activity. It is the higher order objective that will assure national capacity building to which a development intervention is intended to contribute.

Impact implies changes in people's lives. This might include changes in knowledge, skill, behaviour, health or living conditions for children, adults, families or communities. Such changes are positive or negative long-term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental, technological or of other types.

64. In terms of being able to claim some clear results ITC is well-placed among development cooperation agencies, but also vulnerable to unrealistic expectations. The possible chain of causation between some of its capacity-building activities and inputs and resulting tangible development benefits can sometimes be unusually direct and short. Thus, in a simple example, assisting and supporting an exporter to participate in a trade fair can even lead a firm on the spot to sales contracts with rapid revenue growth and job creation, even though these payoffs may not necessarily be sustained. Some kinds of training or market research might lead almost as quickly to such breakthroughs. Most of the time, however, ITC's capacity-building contributions, especially working with policy-makers or trade support organisations, are necessarily less direct and longer-term, but across the sample evaluated many of them are still essential in enabling future export results.
65. With respect to ITC's "results-orientation" while it is true, as the 2006 evaluation found, that most of ITC has long operated in a product-driven and projectized culture, most of its traditional interventions can still be readily linked to the higher level ambitions and strategic direction that are now being more clearly articulated. This is not to say that it is not important to the success and support of the entire organisation to have the means to shape, measure and account for overall performance. Effective strategic information and direction are even more vital for all when constraining choices have to be made.
66. **Specific conclusion:** The Evaluation finds that the increased Management attention to broad strategic direction and results over the period since 2006 has led to progress and ITC is well placed to go further, but a working system for results-based management is not yet fully in place and embedded throughout the Organisation. For many staff members, much of this policy superstructure is seen to remain at a theoretical level, catering to the corporate bureaucracy and outside demands.
67. This is probably in part a normal resistance to change, and partly because the system is seen to touch their own substantive work only by adding a heavy set of planning and reporting demands, rather than practically helping them carry out their tasks, for example by providing relevant and readily accessible information. **Specific recommendation:** As in any other organisation moving to a results orientation, the balance now has to be

²³ UNDP, Results-Based Management Handbook, 2011, pp. 7-8

found and shown where the system is demonstrably a useful set of tools for the whole organisation and its stakeholders, and not an expensive add-on or an end in itself. The burden of proof is on the designers of the system and on senior management in mandating its use.

68. In terms of identifying and deploying ITC's "comparative advantages", the limited strategic planning process until after 2006, and the time taken to conduct and embed this, meant that until 2009 there was a substantial disconnect between the ITC's respective Strategic Objectives and its operational activity. Operational practice remained loosely organised around 17 separate business lines. Combined with weaknesses in knowledge management systems (analysed further below), this meant that the strategic planning process / leadership could not adequately define, capture or interpret ITC's comparative advantage - far less deploy it strategically to maximise results.
69. The development process for the first four-year Strategic Plan for 2009-2012 triggered some assessment of ITC's comparative advantage and of potential entry points for generating results. This was based on, in part, an assessment of ITC's main capabilities and, by implication, its comparative advantage. In turn, a reorganisation of activities took place, around five key competencies or business lines: export strategy, business and trade policy, strengthening trade support institutions and the business environment, trade intelligence, and export competitiveness. These areas were not yet fully geared to the overarching Strategic Objectives.
70. The successor Strategic Plan, for 2012-15, does partly set out a clearer definition of ITC's comparative advantage in a section headed 'ITC and the Aid for Trade agenda'. It explains the role of Aid For trade in supporting the development of market capacities and access, and therefore social and economic development, and ITC's role within the AfT agenda, including its role as the only "100% Aid for Trade" organisation. However, the definition of comparative advantage is geared to ITC's existing activities e.g. its partnerships with the Enhanced Integrated Framework, World Bank and partner UN institutions, as well as its engagement with regional economic integration initiatives. It does not substantively analyse gaps in the Aid for Trade arena, and where ITC could usefully complement existing initiatives.
71. The 2012-2015 Strategic Plan also set out some clear business lines, e.g. under the Strategic Objective of Improving Trade Intelligence, focus areas are listed as Trade Intelligence as a Global Public Good, and A Better Understanding of Women and Trade. These correspond to clear operational areas. These are also connected – though not fully – to a preceding contextual analysis in the Strategic Plan (although the upward linkages in results terms from business lines to objectives are not made clear). Thus these new business lines do provide a further clarification of ITC's comparative advantage. At the same time, systems have been put in place internally for more frequent updates on organisational changes / improvements / strategic opportunities identified. The main vehicles for this have been the SMC and the Management Action Group. These internal updates have allowed for the identification, at management and leadership levels, of ITC's comparative advantage in relation to emerging needs and opportunities in the field. At the same time, given the constant need to connect ITC's strengths with available voluntary funding resources, neither strategic analysis nor internal coordination necessarily extends into deployment of comparative advantage, as the patterns of operational work testify.

2.2.2 Organisational structure and deployment of capacities (B2)

72. In terms of organisational design, ITC has undergone considerable internal reorganisation since the 2006 Evaluation. A new organisational structure was developed in 2008, furthered by an ambitious organisational development programme in the Operational Plan of 2010. Changes rolled out included further measures to strengthen

OED beyond incorporating the strategic planning and results management function²⁴, and developing the role of the geographic sections, together with expectations for a stronger and more strategic SMC. Operational responsibility was devolved down to Divisional Director level, and some technical functions were merged to create new sections e.g. the Enterprise Competitiveness section. A special Large Programmes Group was formed to provide more clout for coordinating such programmes, and it was also initially lodged in the OED for that reason (though later disbanded).

73. In terms of senior staff responsibilities, while the Deputy Executive Director (DED) had previously acted as Chief Operating Officer, this role was assessed as too burdensome to rest on one individual. Consequently, a new Divisional Director role was created, which focused the DED's new role on co-ordination and oversight. Job descriptions at the P5 level were also re-profiled to reflect the business lines, and positions for which there was over 50% change in content were advertised for competition.
74. Assessing changes in the overall strength and distribution of the human resources in ITC for the Evaluation between 2005 and 2013 has proved far more complex than might be expected. ITC's administration focusses on what they strictly define as "staff" ("which has a specific meaning under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules") whereas the Evaluation Team, conscious that much of the Centre's work is carried by other categories of employee, including contractors, consultants and interns, was concerned to try to compare the entire workforce, at least in the Geneva headquarters. The only ready, if imperfect, source for estimating the latter numbers is the internal directory which is updated regularly, and to which the 2006 Joint Evaluation also had to resort. Distribution and changes in the overall distribution of "staff" and total workforce capacities between 2006 and 2012 are summarized in table 1 below. The strengthening of central direction and re-organisation described in this section resulted in some significant staffing changes for different parts of ITC since 2006 although many precise comparisons are difficult because of the new units and responsibilities involved. According to these estimates, the proportion of "staff" in the total workforce at headquarters has risen from 62% to 75% over the period, and now ranges from 63% to 93% in different Divisions.

²⁴ Specifically, the Communications, Monitoring and Evaluation and the Resource Mobilization and Partnership Group were all strengthened and moved in to OED. The secretarial functions of SMC, JAG, CCITF, WTO/UNCTAD oversight and UN Strategic Framework reporting were also all linked together in OED.

Table 1: ITC “Staff” (By strict UN definition) and Total HQ workforce ²⁵

Division	Staff		HQ Workforce	
	2005	2013	2005	2013
DBIS	129	49	242	57
DCP	(Dept. of Operations)	55	(Dept. of Operations)	87
DMD		74		106
DPS	51	69	64	74
OED	25	29	24	44
Total	205	276	330	368

75. OED includes the Office of the Executive/Deputy Executive Director, Communications and Strategic Planning Performance and Governance (SPPG). The staffing complement has grown significantly here since 2005, particularly in Communications, and SPPG as well as in Human Resources in DPS. Some key functions operate with only skeleton human resources e.g. fundraising and Member relations, which has only a single full-time officer in place.²⁶

76. ITC also employs 55 staff (87 people in all) in its geographical (DCP) sections, which liaise with technical officers in the relevant sections on project development, design and implementation.²⁷ However, staff in ITC – both in geographical and technical sections – perceived a lack of clarity around their respective roles, and raised questions about the value that some overstretched geographical sections can add, for example in contextual knowledge and contacts, weighed against instances of duplication and overlap, e.g. on missions.²⁸ It is also unclear from project lists why the management of some projects is ‘housed’ in geographical sections and some others of similar types in technical sections, nor was any clear rationale available from interviews. Similar questions arise around the use of single project-based models and more multi-disciplinary country based models of work. In some countries, with multiple projects operating simultaneously, the lack of coherence among projects has resulted in a non-joined up approach, for example in country missions with staff and one national representative in Geneva complaining of concurrent visits placing unnecessary demands on national stakeholders.

²⁵ IMIS database 31 Dec 2013 and ITC Intranet - List: 20/11/2004 Staff Positions: distribution of all staff resident in Geneva including permanent staff, contract staff, consultants and interns. The early 2014 count on the same basis was derived from the Internal Directory.

²⁶ The ITC administration notes that two positions are authorized.

²⁷ ITC staff have noted to the Team: “There are only 10 Country Managers in DCP and two Chiefs plus the EIF coordinator (plus 1 regional office in Mexico) who perform all of the related functions. Most of other staff is working on project implementation.

²⁸ This issue likely arises due to the breadth of coverage with which DCP officers are tasked. The numbers of staff performing Country Manager functions in the different regions are two each for OEECA and OAP, and four for Africa, with an average of 11 countries each. (. Although ITC may be unlikely to secure sufficient resources to justify fully-fledged country programme capacity, clear decisions on coverage would help maximize efficiency.

77. **Specific conclusion:** Overall the distribution of capacities within ITC has improved since 2008 but is still not optimal. The balance of capacities in sections would merit review, and there is scope for reviewing roles and responsibilities in relation to engagement at country level, to further support organisational efficiency and effectiveness, and to reduce burdens on stakeholders.
78. Organisational structures do not function independently of other key variables in strategic management, and the Evaluation has found that a number of these changes may have helped alleviate problems that were identified in 2006 and before, but not decisively. The Evaluation has found evidence of several major, and inter-related, factors at work:
- i. The critical issue of organisational fragmentation in ITC is reduced, but not resolved. Its most important roots lie in the technical product-based character of most of ITC's work, which tends to build unit identities and loyalties around those products and programmes, a tendency that is accentuated when most units are forced to compete for limited extra-budgetary funds to support virtually all activities and their staff beyond the skeleton maintenance levels. Against these powerful centrifugal forces, even a reasonably successful corporate commitment and campaign to promote a more unified mission faces an uphill battle, and can quickly be set back by severe competitive pressures.
 - ii. Under these pressures, confidence in the rigour and fairness of the organisation's allocative decisions is difficult to maintain under the best of circumstances. In ITC over this period, it has had to contend with rapid and sweeping organisational change in itself, with a concentration of power and resources in the direction and support functions of OED and administration - seen by some in the operational branches as coming at the expense of their own scope and means to act - and with some open conflict and factionalism at various levels, even in the SMC.
 - iii. Whilst the opportunity for project ideas to come from multiple sources is a creative advantage, ITC's challenges of matrix complex management (especially for multi-disciplinary projects) are even more daunting than in most development organisations. The respective roles, authorities and accountabilities of technical and geographical sections in project development / design/ management and quality assurance often need to be worked out case-by-case²⁹ and in a significant number of cases can lead to confusion, conflicts, delays and a loss of effectiveness and efficiency.
 - iv. In the absence of a capacity to mount regional or country programmes, the functions, capabilities and influence of the different geographical sections are not clear, even allowing for a healthy measure of variation among the different regions and programmes they serve. This is especially the case since in most circumstances technical sections deliver and largely manage their own interventions.
 - v. The limited extent of delegation of management authority and accountability to substantive managers, especially in relation to project finance, is outdated and cumbersome, either due to inadequate systems or to a culture of financial micro-management.
 - vi. Perhaps in part due to scarce resources, the mainstreaming across the organisation of cross-cutting priorities such as gender equity and environmental sustainability has been "piggy-backed" on specialized programme capacities in "Women and Trade" and "Trade for Sustainable Development" rather than being served by dedicated structures.

²⁹ Supported by internal research by DBIS

- vii. The product-orientation of most work does allow for sharing of specialized thematic or sectoral knowledge and engagement across countries and regions. More could and should be done to maximise the value of ITC's dispersed knowledge and efforts, for example through more systematic knowledge networks.³⁰ But this would depend on staff having the time and encouragement for this kind of internal capacity-building, which does not exist under the current funding model which requires extra-budgetary ITC staff to continuously justify their roles through sourcing funding for them.
 - viii. The original and continuing logic of some structures, product components and reporting lines is not clear. If product lines were to be substantially expanded or discontinued, it is not apparent how the relevant structures would be reviewed and redrawn.
79. While noting these continuing internal structural challenges it should also be acknowledged, on the basis of the Evaluation's field missions, that most of them rarely seem to come to the attention of beneficiaries and partners. This testifies to a good standard of professionalism and task-orientation among ITC staff.
80. Overall, the Evaluation does not have sufficient evidence to assess whether the distribution of capacities and workload within ITC has improved since 2008 but the balance of capacities in sections would merit further management assessment, with scope for reviewing roles and responsibilities in relation to engagement at country level, to further support organisational efficiency and effectiveness, and to reduce burdens on beneficiaries and partners.
81. There is of course no perfect structure - constant adjustment and adaptation are needed, while wholesale reorganisation usually brings periods of major disruption before stabilization. **Specific recommendation:** The list of issues identified - particularly linked to unclear mandates and responsibilities and the unrelenting pressure of needing to generate project work-months for programmes and extra-budgetary staff – merits serious attention of the Centre's managers and Members. As part of this, although there are no simple ways of assessing the relative productivity of different parts of the structure, the resources they take up and their contributions to ITC's overall mission³¹ the Centre's sharply limited resources mean that this will remain a key issue for continuing scrutiny and improvement.

2.2.3 Human resources (B3)

82. ITC's human resources management processes operate under UN rules and regulations, and mostly apply other UN practices as well. The Centre has some delegation of authorities and no formal application of geographical quotas (apparently offsetting the fact that ITC staff generally do not have the normal right of applying as internal candidates for appointment in the UN Secretariat) but rules such as those limiting the duration of consultancy appointments still apply. Under its relationship with its parent organisations in Geneva, WTO and UNCTAD representatives still sit on certain ITC selection panels, since November 2011 as non-voting members. (Please see the ITC administration comment in the footnote below for the extensive further detail and nuances provided on these points.³²)

³⁰ Research by DBIS in 2012 and interviews

³¹ For example, simple comparisons of the overall "throughput" of spending by programme branches would yield a grossly distorted picture.

³² ITC Administration's comment: "Paragraph [in the draft Report] is incorrect and does not accurately describe ITC's legal framework. As a joint subsidiary organ of the UN (through UNCTAD) and the WTO, ITC is fully bound by the financial and staff regulations of the United Nations. However ITC's broad delegation of authority gives ITC a high degree of autonomy in respect to human resources functions. Human resources policies promulgated by the UN Secretariat do not, by default, apply to the ITC by virtue of section 2.3 of ST/SGB/2009/4 which states:

83. Following the identification of rigidities in ITC's human resource management in the 2006 Evaluation,³³ subsequent audits and reports have focused on some specific problems over the Evaluation period. For example there have been extensive vacancies – 38% in 2010³⁴ - a high rate of staff turnover and poor performance management. Over the subsequent period ITC has seen a gradually improving approach to increasing professionalism in HR management. Changes include:

- The repositioning of the HR function to report to SMC since 2010 (initially monthly, however, following the recent OIOS audit recommendation to cut down on over-detailed reporting, now on a quarterly basis) providing a stronger basis for a management grip on Human Resource issues.
- A staff selection and recruitment strategy now in place.
- A competency-based approach to performance management has been formally in place from 2008 (though the available evidence suggests that this has not been rigorously followed in practice or linked to career development strategies).

“Administrative issuances shall not apply to the separate administered funds, organs and programmes of the UN, unless otherwise stated therein, or unless the separate administered funds, organs or programmes have expressly accepted their applicability“. The result of this framework is that ITC has a very wide authority to set HR policies. Having said that it is important to underline that ITC has no authority to derogate from the UN Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, which must be applied in full. Notwithstanding its considerable delegation of authority, since 2011 ITC has followed an explicit principle of aligning its HR policies, as far as possible, with those of the UN Secretariat. ITC HR policies are usually drafted with reference to the UN Secretariat's provisions on the same subject and are often substantively identical. Deviations are only introduced where there is a specific operational need. Any amendments are subject to senior management review (and Joint Advisory Committee review/input, where appropriate). Staff members are selected to positions and not posts and source of funding during a staff member's contract may change. A lateral transfer between 2 posts with different funding sources is within the authority of the Executive Director. This is not a deviation from, but rather follows, the UN policy and procedures. The distinction from different sources of funding was abolished with the promulgation of the new UN Staff Rules and Regulations effective 01 July 2009. The information about WTO and UNCTAD representatives is incorrect and does not accurately describe the status and role of WTO/UNCTAD representatives on ITC's Review Bodies nor does it reflect accurately the mandate of those Bodies. Additionally and importantly, there is no promotion system at ITC. [Corrected] Promotion does not exist in accordance with the UN Staff Rules and Regulations whereby all fixed-term recruitment including promotions must go through a full competitive process including review from a Central Review Body. On 1 November 2011 (not 2012 as indicated in the draft report), [Corrected] ITC issued its new ITC Staff Selection Policy (ITC/EDB/2011/02 and Central Review Bodies policy (ITC/EDB/2011/04). The mandate of ITC's selection committees was revised and closely aligned to the UN Staff Rules and regulations and the UN policy. The Central Review Bodies were established to review and provide advice to the Executive Director on the recommendations for selection of staff for appointments of one year or longer as follows: Central Review Board (P-5 and D-1 levels) Central Review Committee (P1 to P4 levels) Central Review Panel (G-5 and G6 level) When either the Central Review Board or Central Review Committee reviews and advises on recommendations for the selection of staff to posts financed from the regular budget, UNCTAD/WTO representatives sit on the respective panel as non-voting members. ITC is not bound by any formal geographical quota in respect of recruitment. In addition to the general comment above, note that the ED, under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules has the right to transfer any staff member, regardless of the source of their post funding, to any other post at the same level. No UN staff have a “normal“ right of transfer across the UN. Within the UN Secretariat staff are considered “internal“ candidates in competitive selections. ITC, whose appointments are to service only within ITC are considered “external candidates“ to competitive selections within the UN Secretariat. There are some exceptions to this generality defined by the Secretariat.”

³³ The relevant section of the 2006 evaluation found good morale and commitment amongst Permanent Professional staff, less among General Service staff. The Human Resource Section (HRS) was judged to be well-staffed to perform an administrative role. Management Information about employees - and especially the heavily-used and cost-effective corps of consultants - was found insufficient for a strategic approach to HRM and there was little evidence of strategic thinking about HRM within the organisation. Line management capability was lacking relative to technical expertise. There was no mention of vacancy rates. “The UN Common System is seen within the organisation to be a significant barrier preventing various kinds of change in ITC. In fact, it is by no means the kind of constraint that ITC managers seem to believe it to be. It may be that there would be significant psychological value in the HRM policies of ITC reflecting the nature of the organisation and moving closer towards a World Trade Organisation (WTO) approach to HRM.” See also OIOS risk assessment, 2007; Annual reports

³⁴ Annual report 2010

- The introduction of a new online staff performance management process from 2013, using UN norms and standards.
- A new “People Strategy for 2014-2016”, featuring five goals: Source, attract and recruit world-class talent to ITC on a global basis; Promote excellence in the field of leadership and people management; Encourage and support staff in their continuing professional development and performance improvement; Provide ITC staff with a diverse and supportive working environment; Develop efficient, transparent and responsive human resources processes to support ITC business delivery.

84. The changes implemented so far have contributed to:

- A reducing vacancy rate (to 25% in 2011 and reportedly 10% by December 2013).³⁵
- Mixed performance on gender – with men and women being broadly equally represented across all posts (but a far smaller share of women at higher management levels – with only 13% of officers occupying a P5 level post being female compared to 88% males.³⁶
- Similarly mixed performance in terms of the percentage of ITC staff members from developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs – with 37.7% from these country categories as of March 2013.³⁷

85. The development and finalisation of recruitment and selection policies has however been difficult and contested over the 2008-12 period, with ITC management decisions referred to the UN Management Evaluation Unit or UN Dispute Tribunal on 21 occasions. In the event, all these contested decisions were resolved in favour of ITC.³⁸

86. Recruitment and selection have not been straightforward: the appointment of Regular Budget posts can be a laborious and time-consuming process.³⁹ Consequently, and given the often-short time-frame for some of ITC's funding streams, there is an incentive for managers to recruit consultants instead.

87. The management of unpredictable extra-budgetary posts and consultancies – on which the huge majority of ITC' programme work depends – has been a major constraint for ITC's strategic effectiveness, efficiency and sustainable contributions to development results. As of July 2013, of a total of 297 staff were employed in ITC. Of these, ITC employed 167 staff on fixed term contracts, 77 staff on permanent contracts, 23 on “temporary” contracts and 30 were unclear from the data provided.⁴⁰ This number does not include consultants, of which 385 were hired in the first six months of 2013 alone⁴¹ and 708 in the whole of 2012.⁴²

88. Consequently, the weight of the staffing complement is on ‘fixed term’ or consultancy contracts, many of the former requiring the sourcing of work-months through funded projects, often on short time horizons, given the vagaries of funding commitments and actual disbursements This issue was of widespread concern to ITC managers in interviews, cited as absorbing much energy and effort, with staff at all levels complaining

³⁵ Annual report 2011.and ITC comment. Data available (June 2013) indicated that 21 recruitment competitions had taken place in the first six months of 2013, broadly in line with 49 for the whole of 2012. (Monthly HR report for period ending 30 June 2013).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Annex to the JIU report 2012/10 on: Staff-Management Relations in the United Nations Specialized Agencies and the Common System: Specific Note on SMR at the International Trade Centre (ITC)

³⁹ Sometimes compounded by the extra scheduling required for WTO and UNCTAD to sit on recruitment boards

⁴⁰ Internal HR data, valid to 31.7.2013

⁴¹ Monthly HR report for the period ending 30 June 2013

⁴² Annual report 2012

of major inefficiencies and inequities in terms of security, advancement and career development opportunities. There is also no doubt that the division contributes to high turn-over and vacancy rates, with insecurity of tenure resulting in difficulty attracting or retaining staff who can find greater security or opportunity elsewhere, either within or outside the UN system.

89. The relative roles and terms of Regular Budget and Extra-budgetary staff are not transparently linked to ITC's staffing requirements, with a lack of clear relationships between the Regular Budget / Extrabudgetary Resources (RB/XB) nature of the post and its strategic importance.⁴³ The reactive funding model, once again, has been a major contributory factor here.
90. Beyond the major issue of extra-budgetary staffing, human resourcing at ITC is significantly influenced by the cumbersome UN systems and controls it feels compelled to apply. To cite two conspicuous examples:
- Due in part to limitations in the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), most large programmes have been required to recruit an individual project manager, partly to manage project finance, at an estimated cost of \$140,000 / per year. ITC has 8-9 such projects, incurring a total cost to the organisation for this function in excess of \$1m / year.
 - For consultancy contracts, UN rules prohibit their extension beyond 24 months, meaning that ITC cannot provide continuity of technical assistance specialists for longer-term projects where continuous working each month is not foreseen, but where the total overall duration of work months exceeds 24 months.⁴⁴
91. Finally, the documentation of consultant management has frequently been cited as a weakness in ITC's human resource systems, in the 2006 evaluation and since. For example, the 2012 UN Board of Auditors report cited \$23.0 million paid to consultants during the biennium, but without any systematic basis for the identification of consultants (such as a roster or database of potential candidates) and frequent failure to evaluate performance. ITC has recognised the need for this to be addressed, with its 2013 Risk Map setting out plans for a) a streamlined workflow and b) for increased quality controls and performance assessment - especially since some of ITC's consultants are relatively long-term, up to the 2-year limit. A new online management tool to track both recruitment and performance was developed and piloted in 2013 and rolled out in early 2014. Regardless of these formal concerns, however, the Evaluation's analysis of sample project and country missions has shown evidence of general satisfaction with the actual selection processes (with substantial beneficiary involvement and use of national and regional consultants) as well as the quality and performance of ITC consultants.⁴⁵ Moreover, the assessment in the 2006 evaluation that ITC does not overpay its consultants was supported by complaints from international and national consultants interviewed that ITC rates were not competitive – 'miserly', was the assessment of one TSI manager.

⁴³ In other words, the Evaluation saw no indication of any strategy or plan that specifies strategic differentiation between the tasks and their expected duration to be linked to RB appointments (presumably expected to be longer-term and in some sense "core" to the organization) and XB appointments (presumably expected to be shorter-term and more project linked). If such a strategy in fact exists, and/or the presumptions set out are invalid, it would be important for ITC to clarify in its management response to the Evaluation.

⁴⁴ The ITC administration commented on the draft report, "The Evaluation seems to suggest that ITC has the choice not to follow UN systems and controls. We do not. As a joint subsidiary organ of the UN (through UNCTAD), ITC is fully bound by the financial and staff regulations of the United Nations and must apply the UN systems and controls. Please remove."

⁴⁵ In one instance of poor performance encountered in a country programme, the problem had arisen because UNDP as the delegated procurement agent in-country had insisted on adding candidates from its roster system who proved inadequate.

Box 6: ITC staff survey results on human resource capacity

In terms of the perspectives of ITC staff themselves on the Centre's human resource situation and Staff-management relations, the Evaluation's survey of all staff may shed some light, although the rate of response was relatively light. The results are found in Annex I. It should be noted that all ITC staff were also invited to complete the same general survey as other stakeholders.

92. In terms of staff - management relations in ITC over the 2006-2012 period - despite the efforts made at communication and staff engagement - there is ample evidence that significant staff tensions and resistance arose in the course of the Change Management process.⁴⁶ The evaluation has encountered diverse perspectives on what the real issues of contention and where faults may have triggered this deterioration over the period of stressful change, but it is incontestable that emotions have run high at times, and trust between staff and management (and within management itself) has suffered at least until recently. The Staff Council was particularly active in challenging management decisions in the previous period. Notwithstanding these problems, which clearly hampered the working climate and even some important decisions, the Evaluation found ample evidence from the results achieved that the large majority of ITC staff continued to perform their tasks throughout in a committed and professional manner.
93. The arrival of new Executive Director in late 2013 provided an opportunity to refresh staff-management relations, and to build new levels of internal confidence in the strategic planning and management of the Centre. Under new management, interviewees cited the mood as 'calmer and more optimistic' and the Staff Council and Joint Advisory Committee have reportedly responded in that spirit.
94. **Specific conclusion:** If the Centre can now count on a period of greater stability that will provide a basis for sustained improvement in staffing and staff relations, but such stability is directly dependent on resolving or greatly easing the overarching problem of unpredictable programme funding. Relatedly, the Centre needs to assert the pressing business needs for greater flexibility in applying unwieldy and inappropriate UN-inspired systems. Improvements in these areas would allow the Centre to move away from what is now the functional equivalent of a caste system in employment status, disconnected from considerations of strategy, productivity or performance. Clear, fair and transparent systems, and ongoing communication from the human resource management function will be essential if ITC's management in order to ensure the necessary trust and smooth working relations between staff and management.

2.2.4 Financial management systems (B4)

95. The 2006 evaluation, and a subsequent United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) "risk audit" found ITC's financial management in need of attention, with OIOS rating ITC's Accounting and Financial Reporting as 'moderate risk' in 2007⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ Reflected in e.g. the meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee and in Staff Council minutes and records, as well as in a specific Annex to the JIU report 2012/10 on: Staff-Management Relations in the United Nations Specialized Agencies and the Common System - Specific Note on SMR at the International Trade

⁴⁷ Such shorthand ratings are widely seized upon, but interpreting what they might actually mean in practical terms requires both an examination of the criteria and of comparative performance across a relevant sample of organizations, neither of which most readers will ever undertake.

Since 2006, changes have resulted in a more robust and proactive system. 2012 in particular saw significant change (further detailed below), with the advance setting of a clear budgetary framework for the year (though not fully connected to the programme pipeline, resulting in variations in expected delivery). The 2012–2013 mid-term review of the Regular Budget was presented to the WTO Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration and endorsed. The 2012 Annual Report notes that in 2012, the level of unliquidated obligations for prior years declined, reflecting tighter financial management. Quarterly performance reviews were also introduced, to support monitoring against income for both Windows 1 and 2.

96. In 2013, for the first time, financial forecasts for the year were aligned to project budgets, ensuring not just a stronger emphasis on forward planning, but also a clear connection from the activity pipeline through to the corporate financial framework. This has been commended by the JAG (though it should be noted that the JAG itself does not undertake detailed scrutiny of ITC's budget).
97. **Specific conclusion:** A key issue which ITC confronts in its financing arrangements is predictability. Whilst Window 1 is relatively stable, Window 2 contributions vary considerably, both in terms of volume and timing, and also in terms of the “degree of earmarking” – the restrictiveness of targeting and other conditions attached to the funding. This variability limits the options for ITC in terms of resource deployment for maximum effectiveness.
98. ITC has also pursued the implementation of the International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), as well as Umoja, the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system that is being introduced on an UN-wide basis as a replacement for the current Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), which dates back to the early 1990s. Deployment of Umoja is planned for UN offices in Geneva, including ITC, in July 2015. The implementation date for the adoption of IPSAS, with a first set of IPSAS-compliant financial statements, is 2014. Planning, preparing and implementing such financial system changes is obviously a disruptive and costly undertaking for a small organisation like ITC, and it will be important for ITC management and members to monitor and document both the adjustment costs and the business improvements that are expected to result.
99. Delegation of authority under UN rules: Whilst subject to UN rules and regulations, ITC has achieved some level of financial delegation, with the Director of DPS assuming responsibility under the agreements. ITC has sought to maximise flexibility where it has scope for this, such as through an exemption to the procedures surrounding the Grants Committee; where below \$30,000 the Divisional Director can authorise grants; and between \$30,000 and \$50,000 the Director of DPS can provide authorisation. For grants over \$50,000 the Director, DPS can authorise these, following a positive recommendation by ITC's Grants Committee. However, corporate systems, audits and travel all apply UN procedures.
100. The evaluation has found substantial evidence of rules and regulations – some actually prescribed by the UN, others reportedly self-imposed in a UN-style administrative culture- constraining business practices that would be more appropriate for ITC. Practical examples cited include:
 - The need for ITC to be able to present and defend its budget submissions in four separate fora, two each in New York and Geneva.
 - The regulations surrounding the appointment of RB posts, which can be highly cumbersome and protracted.
 - The detailed and inflexible accountability and permission requirements for items such as budget adjustments and mission travel.

101. The prohibition on appointing consultants beyond a 24-month period. Tension exists therefore between ITC's business and operating model, and the UN rules and regulations and the style of administration by which it is governed. It has contributing to a culture and practices of risk avoidance rather than risk management suited to ITC's requirements. More suitable practices would be expected to permeate through to actual project management, with managers empowered and accepting responsibility for financial management decisions.
102. Given the globally-accepted importance of aid for trade and the UN's own stated priority on deeper collaboration with the private sector, ITC needs to be prepared to document and assert its business needs and secure flexibility where needed.

2.2.5 ITC's technology and information Infrastructure (B5)

103. Information infrastructure is key as part of organisational efficiency, particularly as relates to projects and knowledge management. ITC's technological facilities have formerly been a weakness, with a 2009 self-identification of them as 'chaotic and reactive'. Since 2009, however, ITC has developed its capabilities in this area. The 2009-2012 Strategic Roadmap ("Information-2-Export") recognized that in the previous decade ITC as a whole had not taken advantage of information technology advancements and had followed a more scattered investment approach in technology initiatives. Following the Strategic Roadmap, ITC has moved to upgrade its internal technical systems for greater efficiency and for connecting workflows. Among a wide range of changes ITC has seen: upgrades to the projects portal; a web content management system; databases; client relationship management; and the intranet. Externally, this has allowed for stronger presentation of ITC to donor and beneficiary communities.
104. A new 2014-2017 Strategic Plan also sets out priorities going forward, including a programme-based model (ensuring a consistent workflow from project design through to results reporting). Knowledge Management is also a key area of focus, with ITC's high staff turnover resulting in considerable lost information, and no current central repository. The current gaps in the system, however, reflect continued gaps in internal connectedness, with examples including: a highly limited (and seemingly little-used) good practices site; and information on the main shared drive not being accessible to all staff⁴⁸, since it is organised according to the internal systems of individual functions / units. This has resulted in a filing system which is a) not widely available across the organisation, b) unsystematic and c) with highly varied content.
105. As extensively documented in the methodology section and operational assessments of this Evaluation report, the data-gathering for this exercise itself dealt with both the resources and the many limitations of the Centre's records and information systems as it attempted to document project cycles and performance as well as broader issues and trends. The original Project Portal system, originally designed for tracking financial transactions, has served very imperfectly as the base for the basic management information systems required for the organisation as a whole and individual managers and staff to track, plan and report as needed. ITC's is now seeking to join up the project cycle management process in a single workflow, which should support the streamlining of this key function. It will need to be matched with associated platforms for sharing / making accessible information, and agreed systems for document storage, in order to fully support a comprehensive function of planning, monitoring, reporting and knowledge management. Especially given the nature of ITC's work, and the workload, it will be critically important, as this work proceeds, for all parts of the system to be unambiguously useful and user-friendly to the ITC staff who will need to supply and

⁴⁸ The ITC administration has disagreed with this point, stating that "The file share is accessible to all staff for information that is required across ITC through the H:// everyone file share."

apply the constituent information. Staff, in return, will need to take the time and care to feed and use the system to its potential for better results and accountability. Improvements to date and the path ahead are clear, although firm deadlines cannot yet be set for achieving the desired systems targets. **Specific recommendation:** The single project cycle management system needs to be matched with associated platforms for sharing / making accessible information, and agreed systems for document storage, in order to fully support a comprehensive function of planning, monitoring, reporting and knowledge management. ITC staff need to feed and use the system to its potential for better results and accountability.

2.2.6 Project and programme management (B6)

Project identification and design

106. Successive reviews, including the 2006 Evaluation, have highlighted weaknesses in ITC's project identification and design processes. Specifically, these have been characterised as: the fragmentation of ITC products and services, a lack of clear project intervention logics, the absence of a results-oriented approach, weak monitoring and evaluation, and over-ambitious designs. The 2006 evaluation proposed that two interconnected measures would strengthen project identification and design: more systematic needs assessments and more country-specific projects. After examining six further years of experience, this Evaluation has not found convincing evidence that either of those recommended paths as conceived in 2006 would achieve the desired results.
107. The innovation of the Consolidated Programme Document after 2006 sought to reduce fragmentation and increase coherence. Projects were organised by ITC client groups and by region. From 2007, ITC began to test a pilot country approach in five countries, shaping a framework for a single, coordinated corporate solution.⁴⁹ This included Priority Areas for Action, a logframe and clear linkages between ongoing projects and programmes. The strategic planning process drew links in the project identification process directly to MDG goals reflected in corporate results frameworks, encouraging the gearing of projects to these overarching objectives.
108. Also from 2007 the Project Cycle Management (PCM) approach was developed as part of the Change Management Process Roadmap. This began slowly, but gained momentum from 2009 onwards. The project design process was comprehensively reviewed, and a more systematic approach to PCM adopted. The Project Quality Assurance Group (PQAG) was set up, comprising managers from across technical and geographical sections, as a check to improve design quality. From 2009, all designs had to be passed through the PQAG before going to the SMC for approval. The learning curve was evident here, with a rising proportion of projects meeting the required standard. A longer project cycle was also emphasised for larger projects – up to 5-6 years.
109. From 2009, project templates were also developed for proposals, building in standard reporting requirements. Training was also provided for project designers.⁵⁰ In 2012, a good practice toolkit for project implementation was updated, and a Project Quality Assurance Officer recruited to focus on the application of good practice in project design. Also in 2012, ITC formed the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) composed of managers across ITC, charged with reviewing alignment with corporate objectives and the ways in which PQAG recommendations were implemented in design. The PAC involves detailed analysis of the design, commentary, and logframe design. Projects

⁴⁹ Change Management report 2009

⁵⁰ 2010/2011 Audit Report

budgeted at over \$200,000 were required to pass through both PQAG and PAC before arriving at the SMC.

110. A need to expedite approval processes was however noted by an OIOS audit of programme management processes in 2013. The audit analysed nine projects, and noted that it took around 122 days for the approval of project plans (i.e. from SMC approval of project *idea* to SMC approval of project *plan*). The audit pointed out that *'Monitoring of time is key to ensuring that projects are aligned with expected targets and implemented using resources effectively and efficiently.'*
111. ITC acted swiftly in response, with a project tracking tool deployed to enable the tracking of progress against implementation activities, and to require project designs to clarify implementation and disbursement schedules, risks and mitigation steps.⁵¹ In late 2013, it was decided streamline approvals by phasing out the PQAG, relying on the PAC as the main vehicle for improving project quality.
112. Yet challenges remain. The 2012 Summary of ITC evaluations had found, in an aggregate summary of findings for 2012 project evaluations: weak risk analyses in project design; the lack of clear roles /vision, which impeded efficiency and strategic orientation; slow start-up processes; weak needs analyses underlying design. More currently, the 2012 Board of Auditors report still noted: the risk of inconsistent reviews across different projects (with peer review being unstandardized); an insufficient level of detail in project plans to sufficiently monitor project progress and the delivery of project outcomes (recommending the use of GANTT charts with a completed time schedule: and a lack of clear listing of responsibilities against single individuals). A 2012 presentation to the Management Action Group cited three barriers to robust design: unclear / inconsistent ITC positioning; haphazard intelligence on funding opportunities; and unclear roles and responsibilities in staff-donor relationships, resulting in confusion over the sourcing of funding.
113. Going forward, ITC's Strategic Plan 2012-15 identifies 'Prioritising Quality in project and program management' as a strategic intention: "Over the next two years (2012–2013), ITC intends to prioritize value (quality) improvements over volume expansion of its portfolio delivery. ITC needs to complete its recent move towards large project management through improving the quality of its project design and management." The challenges are recognised, therefore, and the organisation is seeking to address them through a comprehensive response.
114. In terms of the scale of projects identified and designed, there has been a gradual shift in the scale of ITC's projects since 2006. Prior to that date, the project portfolio had mainly been comprised of a set of small-scale, disparate and discrete initiatives, many applying global or generic products, as pointed out by the 2006 Evaluation.
115. A gearing-up in scale was widely perceived, by both ITC's management and its external stakeholders, as essential for a) delivering against the longer-term strategy of ITC in line with global trends / donor requirements and b) delivering results for TRTA. A significant gearing-up took place from 2008 onwards. The BOA report for 2008-2009 noted that larger programmes started to work in 11 countries and three regions. Specifically, these were the Programme for Building African Capacity for Trade, the Enhancing Arab Capacity for Trade and the Netherlands Trust Fund programmes. This shift was reflected in the Operational Plan for 2009, which reinforced ITC's commitment to increasing the scale of its trade-related technical assistance delivery through larger projects and programmes. This was linked to enhancing access to ITC's growing global public goods and stated that projects were no longer developed and implemented in isolation but conceived as "learning pilots" or, more commonly, as components of larger programmes at global, regional or country level.

⁵¹ Annual report 2012

116. In 2009, the share of ITC's budget allocated to larger programmes was expected to be over \$9 million of an expenditure target of \$35 million. Specific initiatives included Programme for building African Capacity for Trade (PACT II), CBI NTF II, Enhancing Arab Capacity for Trade (EnACT), Southern African Development Community Supply Chain Management (SADC SCM), Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD), All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAACP), Agency for the Promotion of Exports (APEX) Brazil and Modular Learning System on Supply Chain Management (MLS-SCM). Analysis of the Operational Plans for 2010 and 2011 shows that this trend continued, as follows:
- 2010: large projects were expected to contribute around \$16 million to the expenditure target of \$40.0 million (gross) or 40%.
 - 2011: large projects expected to contribute around \$22 million to the XB expenditure target of \$44.0 million (gross) or 50%.
 - For 2012, the proportion of the 2012 ITC portfolio made up of large programmes slipped back to 41% and in that year several large-scale projects came to an end. These included the All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme, the Cariforum Creative Industries project and the Supply Chain and Logistics Programme (SCLP). PACT II, EnACT, MLS-SCM (in its current funding phase) and NTF II were also scheduled to conclude in 2013.
117. Anticipating these closures, at least at the strategic level, ITC cited the two following main objectives in its Operational Plan for 2012:
- i. Consolidation of achievements in the remaining project duration and delivery focus on those outputs and activities that deliver impact.
 - ii. Preparation and marketing of succession programmes in close collaboration with partner TSIs, beneficiary governments and donors.
118. Because of these closures, in 2013, only around 36% of ITC's project portfolio was made up of large programmes. This was the lowest proportion since 2009 and was read as indicative of a transition phase between the closures of 2012 and the pause before the pipeline of large programmes under development during 2012 and 2013 began implementation. This included successor phases of some programmes, such as PACT III; NTF III; Women and Trade II; NTM II; MLS-SCM II.
119. According to internal data obtained by the Evaluation team, out of 70 active projects in late 2013: 8 were below \$430,000, 9 were in the range of \$300-\$500,000; 12 were in the range of \$500,000-\$1m; and 41 were \$1m plus. This suggests a significant upwards shift in scale.
120. Alongside the issue of programme scale sits that of duration. Whilst the average duration of ITC projects in 2009 was 2.9 years, this had increased in 2010 to 3.3 years, mainly due to the advent of several large programmes. In 2010, 46% of ITC delivery was made up of projects with duration of 3 years or more; in 2013 this figure stood at more than 50%.
121. The emphasis on moving to large programmes also placed demands on ITC in relation to its project design, development and implementation capacity, with particular concerns related to risk management. This was recognised by ITC management, and the issue of capacity was partly addressed through the setting up in 2010 of a special unit in the Office of the Executive Director to develop methodologies for managing large programmes and projects, at least in their early stages. This group's remit was to develop methodologies for managing large programmes and projects and to give visibility and importance to large projects, therefore enabling ITC management to grasp important lessons on large project delivery. With competing "change management" demands on many fronts for key staff time, however, this group was eventually dispersed

back into operational divisions with a hope of disseminating and mainstreaming good project management practices.

122. Training in results-oriented project design was also conducted in 2012. This was not specific to large programmes, but was extended to all staff above P2 level. 40 staff members were trained in 2012; and 40 who had been trained in 2011 had follow-up training. A “good practice” toolkit for project implementation - again, not specific to large programmes - was also updated in 2012. Training on gender was also conducted for 60% of project managers in 2012.

123. Over the life cycle of the first generation of large projects (2008-2013), ITC initiated and developed a range of internal procedures and practices needed to ensure effective project management and delivery. These were identified in a 2013 OIOS audit as follows:

- Results-Based Management (RBM) methodologies and tools (part of the wider emphasis on RBM, detailed below)
- Training on project management for project managers and project teams;
- An online client relationship management tool; automation and integration of a corporate results reporting tool;
- An online Integrated Reporting Architecture to external stakeholders;
- A Country Needs Assessment methodology; quality assurance review procedures, bodies and personnel;
- Corporate strategic planning and monitoring practices; and enhanced financial accountability through upgraded traceability of funds and financial management controls.
- ITC has made efforts to identify learning from large projects. The 2013 Case for Support highlights some of these lessons:
 - Involvement of local stakeholders in programme design, co-implementation, and financial commitment of counterparts for delivery;
 - Involvement of donors in project design, management oversight and quality assurance;
 - A growth delivery model based on value for money relying on local consultants, lower transaction costs, and economies of scale;
 - A continuous learning process supported by lessons learned from independent mid-term evaluations;
 - Design of next phases of programmes in close collaboration with partner TSIs, beneficiary governments, and donors.

124. **Specific conclusion:** In sum, ITC has had significant experience in up-scaling its projects in the last five years, and has made a number of efforts both to build internal capacity for design and delivery, and to learn lessons from experience. Barriers to capacity remain, and the funding dip in 2012-2013 points to a largely unprepared strategic approach to anticipate large project closure and plan and finance successor operations. At the time of drafting this Report in March 2014, the ITC website lists eight larger programmes and projects, but it is not entirely clear whether all are actually operating or some anticipating renewal or extension⁵². This Evaluation also finds that increasing the size of projects should not necessarily be an overriding objective in itself, but needs to be properly meshed into a prior calculation of strategic priority needs and ITC strengths and capacities. On the basis of the evidence over the period, a more appropriate emphasis lies in greater “clustering” of the funding and overall management of effective product-lines and projects under large regional or thematic programmes of strategic priority.

Project cycle management

125. Whilst major efforts have been devoted to improving ITC’s project identification and design processes, project cycle management has been, and continues to be in 2013, a significant weakness in ITC’s internal systems. It has been identified by many external reviews / audits /evaluations, both at corporate level and for individual projects, as requiring improvement.

126. The specific indications of concerns have included the following:

- i. An OIOS audit 2007 identified 'project and programme management' as Moderate Risk, identifying in particular unclear project governance structure and problematic co-ordination between sections.
- ii. A further OIOS audit of a project in Uganda in 2010 found that key controls relating to programme and project cycle management needed improvement.
- iii. The BOA report in 2012 cited a need for ITC to adopt a recognised project management methodology. Specific weaknesses it identified, and made recommendations against, were:
 - a. The need for project business cases, definition and planning documents to be prepared as individual documents.
 - b. A lack of procedures to scrutinise all significant changes in projects’ key project management documentation.
 - c. The need to establish a standard checklist against which PQAG reviews projects.
 - d. A lack of clarity around how projects were to be monitored, managed and governed and around partners’ specific accountabilities.

127. These concerns were also echoed in 2012 by ITC’s synthesis of the year’s evaluations - 'A lack of a full-cycle, cohesive approach to project and programme planning incorporates many of the stated weaknesses of ITC in the evaluation findings'. Key concerns cited here were:

- Inconsistent management of delivery along the full project cycle, including follow through and co-ordination with other agencies.
- The lack of communications plans and planning.

⁵² Those listed are: Cariforum Creative Industries; EnACT; Ethical Fashion Initiative; NTF II; NTMs; PACT II; Trade and Environment; Women and Trade; and PACIR.

- Weak risk management.
128. Following concerns raised in its 2010 audit of the Uganda programme, in 2013, OIOS undertook a specific audit on project and programme management. It noted some improvements, resulting in a final rating for project management as partially satisfactory. The main positive change observed relating to project management was the establishment of mechanisms to ensure effective internal coordination on project activities and to monitor the delegated authority for approval of grants below the value of \$30,000.
129. Key areas outstanding included:
- The need to strengthen project status tracking.
 - The need to clarify responsibility for closure.
 - The need to clarify the respective roles of DCP and technical section officers in project implementation.
 - The joining up of the IT systems for project management. The RBM platform has been integrated from a user perspective in the Project Portal, while the 'Project Design Portal' and the Projects Portal are not integrated.
130. Project specific and organisation wide weaknesses in the project cycle were also identified during a 2012 OIOS audit of NTF II in the areas of: partner selection, monitoring and evaluation of partners, follow-up of project implementation and procedures for changing project content. Similar issues were raised in a 2013 evaluation of the project.
131. Against this background, in 2013 SPPG initiated a review of the full project cycle with the objective to develop a shared vision for continuously improving project management. Key changes have included:
- A Change Control sheet developed which required explanations for changes in budget / intended results / etc.
 - A project tracking tool deployed to enable the tracking of progress against implementation activities, checklists, schedules, risks and mitigation steps.
 - The wider RBM system to capture results.
132. Yet overall, interviewees agreed that the bulk of energy and effort to date has gone into improving project designs, with further attention needed to both harmonise the design and project cycle management processes, and to bring quality standards into alignment.
133. In the Evaluation's own project analyses and country missions, it has found corroborating evidence of the management weaknesses identified by others over the period, as well as signs of a strengthening base in more recent years. It is important to note, however, that the worrying consequences of these weaknesses, with two important exceptions, have been less in the actual delivery of valuable products and services and more in the areas of control and accountability. While the essential requirements in those latter areas are critical to strategic management and credibility, trying to move from the current situation to an over-elaborate system will guarantee its collapse. **Specific recommendation:** An organisation like ITC will need to maintain a light, simple, useful system of Project Cycle Management to minimize bureaucracy and maintain its responsiveness and flexibility. For example, the detail of project tracking systems should be calibrated to the scale and complexity of the project in question and focus most on the critical tools and milestones, at design and launch, agreed progress milestones, and closure and follow-up. **Specific conclusion:** Overall, the most important substantive concerns revealed by the Evaluation's analyses are related to the sustainability of the valuable contributions that may be made by ITC projects and how the ITC and its

stakeholders can learn from them. **Specific recommendation:** Without exaggerating the ambitions or potential of its projects (especially smaller ones) to shape development results, the issues of how to promote their sustainability and how to follow-up and check on it need to be built into project designs and budgets from the outset, and inculcated and recognised as vital elements of the work of ITC staff. In project design, there should be arrangements (responsibility, resources, time) to ensure follow-up and regular check of the project-generated benefits, from the outset. It is clear that deepening these follow up and learning functions will incur additional cost, but ITC's supporters need to recognize that without them, much of ITC's valuable existing work and its wider potential are simply being largely wasted.

Risk identification and mitigation

134. At the corporate level ITC is covered by an all-embracing UN oversight system for risk identification through BOA and OIOS and devotes a great deal of attention and resources to responding and complying with its prescriptions. In bringing these processes down to the project level, however, several audits and external reviews over the evaluation period have noted weaknesses in the systems for risk management and mitigation.
135. Risk management was identified in the 2007 OIOS audit as a significant shortcoming, and the issue was again highlighted by an OIOS project-level risk audit in 2012 on NTF II Uganda. More comprehensively, the 2012 BOA Report of ITC found that risks were clearly set out in business cases, but specific plans for mitigation were often absent. 'Project initiation documents were unclear if risk mitigation responses had been incorporated in the project strategy and work plan by the Project Manager. In the BOA opinion there is no clear assignment of responsibility to put in place a mitigation action when the risk is identified.⁵³
136. This need for robust risk management and mitigation systems is also recognised by staff, with a 2013 survey of Project Managers identifying the need to develop a structured risk management approach.
137. Although current project design documentation (and PAC and PQAG requirements) to require the identification of risks, these are mostly reflected at tactical / operational level. Major risks, such as those related to the political and/or governance environment, or the political economy, are not commonly addressed. Evaluation reports also indicate that active risk management systems are limited and performance in some projects has suffered for this reason.

Adaptive capacity

138. Given the often fluid and challenging environments in which ITC projects and programmes operate, the capacity to adapt is key to ITC's ability to deliver results. The Evaluation's own analyses in sample projects and countries and many project evaluations draw attention to ITC project managers' and experts' flexibility and willingness and capacity appropriately to adapt to changing circumstances. But this stands in contrast to more limited adaptability at corporate level due to regulatory systems and practices, e.g., on the de facto "sole source" resort to UNDP procurement systems in the field. In some cases, the requirements of sponsoring donors' systems have also limited ITC's required flexibility.
139. Moreover, while project level adaptation has largely been appropriate, partly because of the project management weaknesses analysed earlier, ITC at the corporate level has not always been cognisant of changes occurring within projects. This has resulted in

⁵³ The Synthesis of Evaluations makes the same point

limited up to date management knowledge of institutional performance at delivery level, and consequently highly varied overall delivery against targets. Major examples are found in expected financial expenditure against Proposed Programme Budgets (as occurred in 2012, due to project closures) and also against results delivery (e.g., the targets set in the Strategic Frameworks).

140. To change this, in 2013, efforts were made at systematising adaptation by introducing a Request for Change tool, which project managers are required to complete when significant changes in implementation, budget, etc. occur. The Request for Change tool allows ITC management to have real time information on expenditure, delivery against targets and other dimensions of management information and control.
141. While it provides a far stronger institutional ‘grip’ on and control over ITC’s real-time delivery, the Request for Change sheet was cited to the Team as burdensome and restrictive to use by Project Managers. It is possible that this system has further settled in since and that the minimum thresholds requiring the Request for Change sheet to be completed have become sufficiently known and accepted. It is also pointed out by ITC that the change control process is only relevant for the overall project budget. Adjustments to annual budgets undergo a much simpler process: SPPG presents adjustments “in bulk” to SMC for approval.

Project monitoring and evaluation systems

142. At the start of the Evaluation period and in its early years, project monitoring and evaluation systems were of concern to ITC and external stakeholders and in oversight processes. Early on, in 2007 an OIOS audit reported inconsistencies in programme and project level results indicators and weaknesses in project monitoring and evaluation. In late 2007, JAG delegates requested greater emphasis on strengthening these elements to support the transparent and accountable demonstration of results.
143. From 2010-2011, when efforts to build results systems across ITC began to build momentum emphasis on monitoring and evaluation gained pace. The advent of the RBM system from 2012 supported the monitoring function, with corporate indicators being embedded into project designs and project managers required to report quarterly on results.
144. In terms of results reporting, however, change has happened only gradually. The summary of evaluations in 2012 found generally insufficient attention and discipline to reporting on results. Key underlying issues included data challenges, limited performance information; and weak implementation of monitoring and evaluation at field level (including a lack of involvement of local partners).
145. This Evaluation’s own analyses point to a similar general finding, even keeping in perspective the limits of targeting and reporting results beyond the output level in all development cooperation work. However, rather than simply documenting the limits on the progress made and the remaining shortcomings, the Evaluation has attempted to shed light on the possible explanations and on what should be realistic expectations for satisfactory ITC monitoring and reporting. A first requirement should be for appropriate specification of expected results: to be credible and command the necessary attention to reporting and especially the involvement of local partners, those expected results need to be plausible and measurable, and the time and effort involved in measuring their achievement needs to be proportional to the stakes involved. In other words, a relatively small project – from the perspective of the ITC staff and beneficiaries – should reasonably be expected to have very simple results frameworks and monitoring of outputs as a minimum. The Evaluation saw successful examples in this regard, but also others which fell short. No matter how small a project, adequate monitoring and reporting are unlikely unless time and resources are built in as well as reasonable expectations. In order to go further and monitor outcomes and possible contributions to development

results in most of ITC's larger-scale interventions, project plans, budgets and staff work-plans would need to include provision for carefully maintaining contact with beneficiaries and follow-up missions.

146. In terms of evaluation, Proposed Programme Budgets since 2006 all make reference to evaluation, with a particular focus on self-evaluation. Corporately, and following the findings of the 2006 Evaluation, ITC's Evaluation function was expanded as part of the Change Management process, with a P4 role established, and the function brought under the purview of SPPG (discussed below). By the latter part of the evaluation period, considerable momentum has been built. For example, ITC points out that every large programme in Sector Competitiveness has been subject to evaluation -either self or independent- once in the past 2 years. This was not the case in 2006.
147. ITC has made efforts to embed a culture of evaluation into projects. The 2012-2013 Proposed Programme Budget for example points out that 'Planned discretionary thematic self-evaluations include ITC programmes, work in specific countries or regions, tools and methodologies, policies and strategies, and critical internal processes... The staff time devoted to self-evaluation is estimated to be 60 work-months, 48 of which are charged to the regular budget.' Some effort has been made to ring-fence project budgetary allocations for evaluation. For example, the draft updated Evaluation Policy 2013, which has not been approved by SMC, specifies that 3-5% of project budgets are allocated to evaluation and guidelines on project evaluation budgets are also stipulated in the project design templates. This Evaluation's review of project documents and interviews conducted did not yet reveal widespread evidence or prominence of these self-evaluations..
148. At the same time, there is evidence of unclear lines of authority on project level evaluations particularly when multiple stakeholders are involved - donors, project officers, and ITC's Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU). The Evaluation has also encountered examples where project evaluations have been initiated either without the prior knowledge of EMU and/or undertaken by donors or project officers with little or no advance consultation. Especially in view of ITC's own limited means, it is clear that outside evaluations - including those commissioned by sponsoring donors and especially focusing on major, longer-term projects - form very important strands of ITC's body of evaluative accountability and learning. But good coordination with EMU on the design, coverage and use of these products will maximize their value for all concerned. **Specific recommendation:** Better coordination between divisions and the corporate Evaluation Unit is needed to maximize the value and efficiency of programme self-evaluations (including mid-term review, completion report, and "impact studies", etc.).
149. JAG reports continue to express concerns about ITC's ability to measure its effectiveness at country level, with Member representatives in the 2012 report emphasising that 'ITC needs to continue its efforts to increase transparency and impact measurement'. The 2012 BOA audit commented overall that assessment of the qualitative impact of ITC's projects on international trade was lacking, although it is not clear what would be a reasonable expectation at this level.
150. In sum, in the areas of monitoring and evaluation this Evaluation finds that ITC can and should do more to build on the so-far limited advances made in the 2006-2012 period. In both areas, a small but complex organisation such as this should aim for "good enough" systems that apply sound practice while being practicable and useful to ITC's beneficiaries, staff and stakeholders. Because ITC's project contributions to results are always going to be widely spread with different germination periods, independent synthesis evaluations will be especially important. But a realistic evaluation plan and tools are also needed to support the ITC-wide internalisation of a realistic evaluation culture for learning and implementation and use of a draft evaluation strategy which is sound. ITC's funding and workflow demands must allow time to apply such good practice. **Specific recommendation:** ITC needs to maintain relevant corporate

evaluation plans and tools to provide adequate coverage, implement a sound evaluation strategy and support an evaluation culture for learning. ITC's funding and workflow demands need to allow time to apply such good practice in evaluation.

151. Once such essential minimum coverage is secured, those responsible for ITC's monitoring and evaluation functions should be in a position to be open and assertive in sharing their results and limitations with governance bodies and outside inspection bodies. **Specific recommendation:** It will be important for ITC to apply the relevant standards of the UN Evaluation Group: to "Ensure that evaluation is part of the organisation's governance and management Functions"; and to "Facilitate an independent and impartial evaluation process by ensuring that the evaluation function is independent of other management functions. The Head of evaluation should report directly to the Governing Body of the organisation or the Head of the organisation to ensure independent and impartial evaluation independent of other management functions."⁵⁴

2.2.7 Process Management (B7)

152. At the corporate level, internal decision-making has rested mostly with SMC (comprised of top management and Divisional Directors) and with section chiefs at project level, plus programme managers in the case of large programmes, with key policies and decisions being shared, for example through SMC minutes. The creation of the Management Action Group (MAG) in 2009, a forum of all middle managers chaired by the Deputy Executive Director, was intended as a key mechanism for feeding decisions and information up and down. Participants have appreciated the MAG⁵⁵, noting that this has largely been a forum for information-sharing (and sometimes collegial brainstorming) rather than decision-making.
153. The Evaluation found that SMC minutes over the period indicated that meetings often involved protracted debates and decision-making which could be relatively easily taken at Divisional level - e.g. approvals on relatively small projects. Interviews with SMC members confirmed a sense that some decisions could be further devolved, and there are already indications of much more discipline and focused agendas and discussion under the new management team.

Internal communications processes.

154. In the specific context of the "Change Management Process" (CMP) intended to engage staff in the major transitions after 2006, 100/138 responses in a 2011 OIOS survey disagreed / strongly disagreed that *'The ITC staff feels involved in achieving the objectives of the CMP through feedback and contributions.'*
155. Taking account of this prior dissatisfaction of staff surrounding the Change Management Process and a prioritisation of external communications (reaching out to JAG and external audiences) internal communications has been a focus area for ITC's attention in the recent period,
156. Whilst some efforts were previously made (e.g. the instigation of staff breakfast meetings and Town Hall events since 2007) these were not considered successful. The Town Hall and staff breakfast events were discontinued and the middle management sessions delinked from SMC meetings, lacking a clear remit and without acting as a decision-making forum.

⁵⁴ http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22

⁵⁵ interviews

157. The 2011 OIOS survey on Change Management found that 97/136 responses disagreed / strongly disagreed with the statement that: “The organisational structure that resulted from the Change Management Process facilitates the flow of information throughout the ITC.”
158. From a staff perspective, there has been considerable dissatisfaction at times over the period with internal communications, but with signs of substantial improvement in the more recent years. The externally-conducted Dalberg staff survey (conducted in 2011 and published in in 2012) and the Evaluation’s repeat with the same questions in early 2014 found that:
- 43% of 2012 respondents slightly disagreed / disagreed / strongly disagreed that *'I am satisfied with the information I received about what is going on in my division.* By 2014 the comparable share was only 17%.
 - 44% slightly disagreed / disagreed / strongly disagreed that *'I am satisfied with the information I receive about what is going on in ITC'* - both mostly general / professional staff (not management, who expressed higher satisfaction levels). By 2014 the comparable share was only 12%.
159. With these concerns in view, ITC’s Communications Section in 2013 had placed a significant emphasis on internal communications issues in its planning and activities. ITC’s Internal Communications Strategy that was rolled out in February 2013 led to the launch of a monthly e-newsletter. Town hall meetings were introduced to improve two-way communications. The Strategy contains a detailed analysis of staff feedback on internal communications⁵⁶ and demonstrates an explicit shift from a reactive to a proactive model of disseminating internally-relevant information.
160. Interviews in late 2013 also found cautious but renewed optimism among staff regarding internal communications, with staff indicating a sense of greater openness, and the absence of a culture of blame-laying, under new management.

2.2.8 Inter-organisational linkages (B8)

Role of partnerships, joint ventures and networks

161. The 2006 Evaluation identified the need to clarify partnerships, both with parent organisations (WTO and UNCTAD) and to explore new partnership opportunities as part of sustainability / maximising results. The 2007 OIOS audit saw a need to clarify ITC’s relationship with WTO and UNCTAD, to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
162. Consequently, a Resources and Partnerships Group was established in 2007 as part of the Change Management process. The Group’s main purpose was to develop strategic partnerships and enhance the capability of ITC to mobilise additional resources. With the other pressures under the Change Management process however, effort on this front was eventually scaled back.

⁵⁶ Internal communications strategy, 2013

163. An Initiative on Strategic Partnerships – also part of the 2007 Change Management process had a particular remit to:

- ITC’s past and ongoing collaboration with UN agencies, funds, and programmes, and explore new partnership opportunities.
- Review the role of ITC in “One UN” processes.
- Propose ways of increasing ITC’s visibility within the UN system through participation in the One UN programme ITC’s past and ongoing collaboration with UN agencies, funds and programmes, and explore new partnership opportunities.⁵⁷

Box 7: Examples of ITC Partnerships 2006-2012

In response to a suggestion from the Centre, the Team has added in its final Report the following list of ITC collaborations and partnerships over the period, apart from those with its beneficiaries. While far from exhaustive, the following examples, gleaned from Annual Reports and other ITC documentation, give some sense of the range of the Centre’s working links.

UN System / International Organisations

Since 2006, ITC has multiplied its working relationships with several agencies in the UN system. Among others: joint programmes implemented with UNIDO and WIPO in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and West Africa in 2007; the collaboration between WIPO and ITC in the context of the Caribbean Forum aiming at assessing the export potential of creative industries products in Caribbean countries; with UNIDO and the WCU in the EU-funded PACIR programme in Côte d’Ivoire (2010-2014); the collaboration with UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO in 2010 for the improvement of income opportunities for disadvantaged groups in Viet Nam (also including FAO), and in 2012 under the SECO-EIF Cluster in the area of export led poverty reduction in Lao People’s Democratic Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania. Very significant as an effort to enhance system-wide coherence and synergies among organisations with different expertise, the EU-funded, multi-sectoral interregional programme targeting agricultural commodities in the ACP countries (AAACP) was launched in 2007 and jointly implemented with UNCTAD, FAO, UNIDO and the CFC. Under the UN Special Programme for the Economies in Central Asia (SPECA), in 2010 ITC ensured the participation and effective contribution of the private sector from five Central Asian countries at the first Ministerial Conference for the AfT Roadmap, closely collaborating with UNECE, UNDP and the ITFC among others. ITC also reinforced its collaboration with UN Regional Commissions, particularly through a MOU signed with ECA (2006) and the African Union (2007).

Other partnerships with international organisations also include ISO and the World Bank, primarily in the areas of access to trade and market data for developing countries through the establishment of the World Integrated Trade Solution/Market Assess Map (WITS/MACMap) in 2010.

Bilateral and Regional Organisations

Among bilateral development agencies and national organisations, ITC has gradually intensified collaborations, in some cases going beyond the traditional donor-implementing agency relationship. The partnership with CBI, already well consolidated, has grown stronger since 2009, following the launching of the NTF II and the collaboration in the development of the new CBI’s market intelligence platform, leading to the integration of the ITC TradeMap data and the Answers and Solutions to Market Intelligence Questions (ASQ) product in the platform in 2012. Additional areas of cooperation involve knowledge and experience sharing in managing large programmes and setting up effective systems for impact measurement and, under the T4SD programme, standard benchmarking, decision-making guides for exporters

⁵⁷ 2006 Change Management Report Review

and standards-related capacity building. ITC has significantly partnered with DFID in large programmes such as the Women and Trade and the NTM Programme. Further partnerships include: GIZ, under the Biodiversity Trade programme in Peru (2011); SECO, under the SECO-EIF Cluster; AusAid, through regional interventions in the Asia Pacific in 2009 and 2010, focusing among others on women entrepreneurs from Pacific Island Nations and in collaboration with the World Bank and the IFC. Canada has been the supporter of important programmes such as the Enhancement of Arab Trade Capacity (EnACT) in five Arab countries and ITC's single largest regional programme PACT II (launched in 2008), leading to the establishment of partnerships with key Regional Economic Communities to improve intra- and interregional trade. PACT II is also significant, since it gave impetus to the development of the COMESA Business Council, engaged in public-private dialogue with key private-sector TSIs in the region and paving the way for further collaboration between ITC and regional economic organisations in Africa (among which ECOWAS and ECCAS). In the context of important partnerships with regional economic groupings / organisations, in 2008 ITC signed a MOU with the recently created International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (IITFC) to enhance trade among Islamic countries and focusing on the areas of trade finance, export capacity building, trade information and promotion among members of the Organisation for the Islamic Conference. Further cooperation in the area of trade and finance involved the Islamic Development Bank (in 2007) and the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) with the International Institute for Trade and Development in Bangkok in 2010.

164. In assessing what has been accomplished over the period in terms of partnerships it is of course critical to bear in mind that by definition forging stronger partnerships depend on a sufficient shared knowledge, openness, mutual interest and capacity of the different parties concerned to engage. The types of partnerships actually forged will be shaped by these same factors. In many cases of potential partnership, it must be recognized, the benefits of partnering are simply pushed aside by realities of mutual ignorance and/or vested institutional interests, especially in situations of pressing competition for scarce resources.
165. However, the field of Trade-related Technical Assistance is in fact one where important, perhaps unique, mechanisms for encouraging partnerships have been set up in the form of the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries (EIF) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), both multi-member schemes hosted by the WTO . These initiatives, particularly the EIF, were hammered out and refined over time to seriously promote partnership behaviour in their fields, with all the major agencies and donors being members and separate small secretariats responsible for working independently with partner countries to secure the best services for their needs. As these mechanisms have grown up and gained momentum over the Evaluation period it is highly noteworthy that ITC has been an active – and well-appreciated - partner in both cases, implementing Tier 2 projects under the EIF in six countries so far, and the STDF in in five countries⁵⁸. The Evaluation finds that these partnerships – together with its work under Window 1 - provide perhaps the most objective test and testimony of the Centre's ability to contribute in its field, when competing or inhibiting institutional agendas do not get in the way.
166. Partnerships with other international organisations – as illustrated in Box 7 - and donor agencies have mainly, but not only, been built around specific projects, where ITC has either been in a leading or supporting roles. Such partnerships include: UNDP, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), UNIDO, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), UN Women and the World Bank,

⁵⁸ Documentary research and structured focus group interviews with the EIF and STDF secretariats.

the wide range of donors supporting the CCITF and others (in some instances without financial links) and a number of professional associations, academic institutions and other groups. At the broadest level, it should be noted, ITC is engaged in work on the post-2015 agenda, with the full range of these partners.

167. In relation to UN agencies, funds and programmes, the Evaluation's examination of project and country samples has included a scattering of ITC projects including active engagements with such sister institutions.
168. In most of these, ITC was either called upon under a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to provide specialized and small components of multi-faceted projects, or worked in parallel with other UN agencies on related projects with some measure of continuing communication and coordination. ITC is a member of UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (UN-CEB) Inter-Agency cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, but the Centre's lack of field and perhaps New York presence appears to limit the Centre's visibility and "marketing" possibilities when multi-agency projects are being conceived, designed and - in spite of the hopes for harmonious "One UN" behaviour - being carved up into shares of activity. As a general rule, it also appears that such UN projects are also at a modest enough scale that the extra investment required of ITC to seek them out and compete for involvement would not be economical in relation to other opportunities where ITC's expertise is more recognized and solicited.
169. ITC's special relationships with WTO and UNCTAD over the period encompass both the dimensions of their original "parental" and continuing oversight roles, and their collegial links as the three key specialized international trade agencies all based in Geneva. The 2008-2009 BOA report put a particular emphasis in 2009 on clarifying and defining ITC's partnerships with these bodies. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the Director-General of WTO met with ITC's Executive Director and senior staff at the time, to agree on priorities for the short and medium term. (A similar exercise took place with the World Bank, and agreement was reached on objectives.)
170. Over the period, key areas of collaboration among the three agencies have included:
- Consultation and cooperation on the broad Aid for Trade agenda, including top-level exchanges, most recently around the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
 - Regular WTO and UNCTAD senior and management level inputs into ITC work through participation in key governance and programming, the ITC oversight Committee and certain staffing and recruitment panels.
 - Joint tasking for the monitoring progress towards MDG-8 (partnership for development). Monitoring is designed to provide market access indicators data for LDCs.
 - Cooperation in the work on NTMs: - Prior to 2010, UNCTAD, WTO and ITC jointly designed the new international NTM classification in the framework of a Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) comprising in total 8 international organisations. In addition, ITC and UNCTAD jointly implemented pilot surveys which served to test and refine the classification; and - Since 2010, UNCTAD and ITC collaborate in the collection of NTM data, which is made available through both ITC's MAcMap and UNCTAD TRAINS database.
 - Co-production of annual World Tariff profiles.
 - A 2011 Memorandum of Understanding with UNCTAD, the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to provide access to market data through the Market Access Map application and WB's Integrated Trade Solution .
 - A joint WTO/ITC programme on trade capacity for acceding LDCs.

- The UNCTAD Empretec programme and virtual institute (178 beneficiaries in 2011, 124 beneficiaries trained in 2012).
- Contributions to the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP).
- Joint work on the International Organisation for Standardisation.

171. Overall, WTO and UNCTAD naturally have specialized programmes of technical support in their mandate areas, generally following a division of labour with those of ITC according to their primary functions and clienteles ITC as broadly depicted in the familiar diagramme in ITC Annual Reports (see figure 3 below). As noted as early as 2006 there are inevitably some overlap areas, particularly where ITC's practical work to support exports leads to important policy directions. The Evaluation finds that the institutions should have the ability to manage these frontiers productively. In a relatively few instances ITC and UNCTAD - which are both forced to depend attracting resources for technical assistance projects - come into competition for such support. The Evaluation's finding is that some transparent competition is healthy, as with trade itself, offering options of quality and price to beneficiaries and funders.

Figure 3: Working together: ITC, WTO and UNCTAD



172. Other current strategic partnerships at different levels are detailed at other points in this Report, such as:

- Donor relationships ranging from the strategic, through involvement at JAG level, through to the project level within Window 2, and Window 1 at a broader programmatic level.
- ITC's unique network of TSI partnerships, where a review was undertaken in 2007, and helped lay the base for a later, somewhat protracted but ultimately well-recognized collaborative exercise in benchmarking and performance improvement for Trade Promotion Organisations (TPOs).
- To date, national level dialogue and engagement has been mostly on a projectized level,⁵⁹ with Annual Reports and other public documents citing examples of partnerships forged through projects e.g. the Horticulture Development Council in Tanzania. This has, necessarily, meant some overlap and duplication in dialogue, and a projectized, rather than a strategic, approach. ITC has recognised the issue as a shortcoming, and is attempting to shift dialogue and strategizing at national level upstream. The Needs Assessment and Project Design (NAPD) exercise in pilot countries is the starting point for this, and also an attempt to combine ITC's many analytical and diagnostic tools into a single framework.

⁵⁹ One of the most important exceptions would be in Côte d'Ivoire, where ITC's responsibility for the largest share of PACIR, a multi-year integrated trade support programme of the EU, has allowed it to test a more integrated approach, calling on most of its products and services.

- Partnerships with Regional Economic Communities have also been moving up the agenda. The 2011 Annual Report emphasises these partnerships e.g. through large-scale initiatives such as PACT II, whose mid-term evaluation found that programme has 'built the capacity of the Regional Economic Communities (REC's) to support trade development and Trade Support Institutions (TSIs)'. More broadly at regional level, the 2012 Annual Report also emphasises the strengthening of cross-sectoral partnerships supporting the leather sector and business councils in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region. However, there does not yet appear to be clear corporate strategic approach on how/where/and why ITC should engage with RECs; what the entry points are; and whether approaches need to be differentiated (and how) for different regions.

Client relationships

173. ITC has long had some appreciation of the need to systematize and maintain its records of client contacts. In 2007, a client relationship management system was initiated, but was subsequently paused due to time commitments on other priorities.⁶⁰ From July-Dec 2009, needs assessment meetings took place with ITC staff and preparatory work was undertaken in 2010.⁶¹
174. A pause then occurred until 2011, when a contract was signed and an initial 50,000 contacts from 40 internal databases were standardised, categorised and migrated to the new Client Relationship Management (CRM) database. In 2012, phase 2 functionality was undertaken, with a further 30,000 contacts uploaded and a first round of staff training conducted on supporting and using the system.⁶² Full rollout then took place in 2013, with a second round of staff training, and system programming to feed data into the ITC benchmarking portal, RBM portal and Events calendar. The CRM system was officially launched in July 2013.
175. The current CRM database records data across three fields; event management; corporate reporting and data integration (this includes the recording of data reports for corporate reporting, including RBM, IMDIS and contributions in-kind). Its cost to ITC was \$150,000 in 2013, the sum to which senior management has committed annually. For 2014, the emphasis is on developing a viable support infrastructure (such as CRM section focal points, technical support and maintenance); and to successfully roll out a new interface in February 2014.
176. The CRM database currently holds the addresses and contact details of nearly 80,000 ITC contacts, particularly at country level. Data can be analysed across a range of fields to support initiating contact and engaging with beneficiaries at country level. The system clearly has much potential if properly utilised and systematised, particularly to support the streamlining of contact with beneficiaries. But currently, it is not mandatory for staff to insert records on returning from country-level missions and staff members have commented that some information is clearly outdated. Staff also expressed the opinion that the system represents a relatively high demand for project managers who already have considerable administrative burdens. Though these issues are currently being addressed, it is a race to maintain the essential credibility and usefulness of the system to keep it going.
177. The Evaluation itself had the need, and thus the opportunity to test the CRM system at the beginning of 2014, as the logical resource to find a wide cross-section of ITC's past clients and contacts to be invited to participate in the Evaluation's survey. In part, the Team also resorted to this source in the hope that it might fill in considerable

⁶⁰ Change Management report 2009

⁶¹ CRM progress report 2013/Plan for 2014

⁶² CRM progress report 2013/Plan for 2014

remaining gaps in contact points for past beneficiaries after the search through project files and country mission research. While the office in ITC responsible for the CRM, EMU and others were very cooperative and made considerable effort to make the system work for this purpose, the concerns noted above that had been expressed by staff were fully borne out, and it was found to not yet be a useful resource for these purposes. Information from before 2012 is uneven, poorly categorized and thinly scattered, and it is clear from past experience that major effort will be required to equip and motivate staff to invest the necessary effort to create a “virtuous circle” continually feeding in the high quality information, that will provide the incentive to use it and keep it fed and up-to-date as needed.

178. At the 2012 JAG, Pascal Lamy stated that ‘ITC’s comparative advantage of its vast network of producers, suppliers and entrepreneurs can be used to gather more and better information about the constraints faced by SMEs and the priority action needed for their better insertion into the supply chain’.⁶³ It is one of the central findings of this Evaluation that - given the distinctive characteristics of ITC’s work and particularly its special relative strengths in contacts with TSIs and exporters –a more effective working base for accessing such contacts is one of ITC’s most vital assets. **Specific recommendation:** Building and maintaining the Centre’s Client Relationship Management system (CRM) is not an administrative burden, but a critical business need for the future of the Centre and almost all of its individual activities. This is not just, or even primarily, an issue for the attention of ITC management but at least as much for individual project managers who must actually take the time and effort to make the necessary inputs and then use the CRM resource to provide more systematic follow-up and greater sustainability for ITC’s contributions. It is also an issue of concern to ITC’s members and supporters, who will need to allow for the additional time and effort for this painstaking but vital work of benefit to all.

2.3 How strong is ITC’s organisational motivation to carry out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (C)

2.3.1 Vision and mission (C1)

Vision and clarity of purpose

179. ITC lacked a clearly articulated vision and mission until after 2006 Evaluation, which had found that ITC comprised the ‘*sum of its parts*’. Much of 2007 was therefore devoted by ITC’s senior management to developing the organisation’s Vision of: *The development partner for export success. An associated brand line - ‘Export Impact for Good’ - was also created.*

180. ITC’s current statement of its mission, values and strategic approach are clear, succinct and linked to its mandate, as follows:⁶⁴

⁶³ 2012 JAG report p.6

⁶⁴ Change Management report 2009

Table 2: ITC's mission, values and strategic approach

Mission	ITC enables small business export success in developing and transition countries by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive trade development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions and policymakers
Values	Vision, integrity, excellence, pragmatism, responsiveness
Strategic approach	One to one to many.

181. The Strategic Plan for 2009-2012 reflected the importance of communicating the Vision externally: 'Improved communications will play an increasingly important role in the delivery of projects and in raising awareness of the experience of ITC and its counterparts. A new Unit[s]...main job will be to support divisions to bring our brand essence 'Export Impact for Good', to life.'

182. Communications has consequently been a major thrust of effort for ITC in recent years, with its vision and 'brand essence' of Export Impact for Good at the centre. A Marketing and Communications report was produced (from a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats - SWOT - analysis done by consultants) as part of the transition process after 2006. The Communications Unit was restructured, with e.g. the Web and production functions being housed within Communications, alongside an Editor post with a new role. Funding from the regular budget and some supporting extra-budgetary funds were made available.

183. The 2007 Communications strategy focused on organising advocacy, strategic development and communications functions into a single team; and building a strong Communications platform to include the website, events, publications, speaking engagements and public relations. Results have included the following:⁶⁵

- A Web strategy was also developed in 2009, with the associated 3-year programme of web development started in 2009.
- The quality of Annual Reports was improved in communications terms, with those from 2007-2013 demonstrably focusing on 'good stories', as well as reporting against targets.
- A particularly strong focus was placed on high-profile events as communications platforms, a priority of the previous Executive Director.
- Six new websites were launched, as well as a mobile-optimised version of main ITC website (to which page views increased by 45% during 2012).
- Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn are now also used.
- Seven books and 21 technical papers were published in 2013, and more than 300 news articles and press releases produced (3 times the volume of 2011).
- 3-4 'web highlights' are issued per week.
- Taking full advantage of the communications potential of innovations that have attracted new global attention to the possibilities for trade and development, most prominently the Ethical Fashion Initiative, related efforts to raise awareness and

⁶⁵ Information supplied by Communications section, November 2013

promote more opportunities for women in trade, and path-breaking work directly with enterprises to identify specific Non-Tariff Measures affecting trade.

184. The Communications and Events section is well staffed, with 15 staff in post at the end of 2013, albeit supported by vulnerable resources – XB funds, temporary staff and consultants. In addition, a Chief of CE was only appointed in 2014 (after the section was created as part of the change management process). All the communication documentation produced and observed by the team is of a high professional quality, and reflects ITC's vision and mission clearly. An image of an organisation with a coherent vision and mission etc. – which is '*more than sum of parts*' – is being effectively and professionally promoted therefore - at corporate level, at least. The new Case for Support is also a stronger vehicle for communicating ITC's vision and mission to donors and potential donors.
185. Yet the results of better conveying of ITC's Vision and Mission risks being limited by the fact that no clear 'suite' of ITC offerings of products/services is externally or internally available and ITC's expert staff are hard-pressed to keep up with the projects for which they have support with little capacity to entertain more prospects where more project funding would have to be secured. Beneficiaries or partners cannot currently look up ITC's list of services on its website, or access this through staff. Nor can staff accurately convey to partners what is currently on offer across the organisation or how it would be supported. In its sample of project and programmes, the Evaluation's has encountered several instances of inquiries or even specific requests for ITC engagement where there had been no responses. The risk, therefore, is that the effective communications of the Vision and Mission is undermined by a lack of readily-available substantive information or capacity to follow-up, and that ITC becomes perceived primarily as an effective communicator, but more limited in terms of delivery. Specific recommendation. ITC's effective communication of its vision and mission now need to be supported with readily-available and credible information on ITC's results delivered, across its programmes and not just in cherry-picked 'success stories'.
186. As to ITC's own staff: the 2012 staff survey⁶⁶ found that 74% of staff slightly agreed/agreed/strongly agreed that '*ITC's objectives are clearly defined,*' with all agreeing on the clarity of ITC's vision and mission, but expressing concerns about a) its tangible relationship to their work at project level and b) a lack of confidence in and recognition of the 'values' of ITC, which many did not feel have been commonly reflected in management behaviour towards staff. In 2014 the comparable shares were 85% agreeing/strongly agreeing.⁶⁷

2.3.2 Culture and incentives (C2)

187. Key characteristics, incentives and aspects of ITC's organisational culture identified by stakeholders in Evaluation research and interviews include the following:
188. **A culture of pragmatism where 'doing' is valued** over learning or long-term capacity development. Beneficiaries were generally satisfied with ITC's expertise and infusions of project support, but very often felt that they were left unsupported in the longer-term. Some interlocutors questioned the extent to which ITC actually values, incentivises and leverages intellectual capital - particularly in relation to the changing global environment of Aid for Trade. A positive example was cited of an 'intellectual hubs' - a working group on SME competitiveness comprising eight section chiefs - but in the

⁶⁶ Dalberg, 2012

⁶⁷ See also the "Effectiveness" section below on RBM regarding the gearing of strategic direction and internal systems towards realisation of ITC's vision

main staff and external interlocutors felt that attracting and disbursing money are valued much more highly than building and deploying intellectual capital for the longer term.

189. **A projectized culture** – where serious efforts have been made to transcend the 'artisanal' through institutional reform, but where operational practice lags behind the higher level corporate reforms implemented. Whilst the shift towards larger programmes reflects, in the views of many, a positive trajectory, the project as the main 'unit of analysis' remained central.
190. A culture where **financial aspects are prioritised** – many staff felt that the main incentives at project level centre largely around finance, and particularly the attraction and disbursement of resources. Many staff voiced concerns that staff and sections are ultimately judged on donor delivery – constraining managers in their willingness and ability to recognise and take risks.
191. **A compliance-based and risk-averse culture** – many staff felt that, largely due to its UN identity and to a previous management culture, the institution had not, in recent years, provided a safe and supportive environment in which to take and manage risks, as the nature of ITC's work would favour. The organisational culture was characterised as one of *enforcing the rules*, rather than supporting sensible risk-taking and providing safeguards for this.
192. **A culture of external communication**– communicating a powerful message has become part of ITC's modus operandi, in part due to the competitive environment within TRTA. This needs however to be matched with clear, identifiable service offers to beneficiaries, which is accessible, and with the delivery of clear demonstrable substantive results.
193. **A closed culture** – some external interlocutors felt that, beyond its 'slick messages' ITC is in reality very closed compared to UNCTAD and WTO. Examples were cited of a lack of clear individual contact points for missions; the lack of a clear and easily accessible list of products and services; and a lack of openness over missions to countries, which sometimes take place without the knowledge of the relevant Geneva-based representatives, meaning that dialogue with in-country stakeholders cannot be joined up.

2.4 How strong is ITC's organisational performance in carrying out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (D)

194. Clearly, many of the subjects touched upon in this section of the Matrix are also treated extensively around other topics under organisation and management and particularly in the chapters providing the evidence gathered in the analysis of sample project portfolios and country missions. Nonetheless a synthesis on many of these questions at the corporate level is helpful.

2.4.1 Effectiveness (D1)

Quality and role of corporate results framework

195. ITC's results architecture and systems have been a major thrust of effort since 2008, following the findings of the 2006 Evaluation, which called for ITC to move from a fragmented delivery system to a more coherent model which sought to be *'more than the sum of the parts'*. Yet change did not significantly gather momentum at corporate level until 2011 onwards.

196. As for all UN programmes, ITC is required to prepare its Strategic Frameworks for the UN biennium two years in advance. Its Strategic Frameworks are then reviewed by the UN's CPC and then the Fifth Committee of the UNGA in New York. Within this framework, ITC develops its own results frameworks, reflected most notably in its Strategic Plans, on which the JAG is consulted. For example, the 2011-2013 Corporate Indicators were developed in 2009, and are divided into three groups reflecting the main outputs of ITC's projects and programmes at the time. The next (2014-16) round of corporate indicators were proposed to the JAG in the summer of 2012; went to the CPC in the autumn of 2012; and the new indicators for the 2016-17 biennium were submitted at the beginning of 2014.

197. The UN biennium system has presented difficulties for ITC, given the time-lag between the development of indicators and targets, and the inevitable subsequent variations in realised funding. ITC's funding is often relatively short-notice, meaning that its delivery has in the past been 'out of synch' with the targets cited the Strategic Framework. This has resulted in significant variations in performance against targets. For example, from the 2011 Annual report:

Table 3: Indicators of achievement, 2011

Indicator of achievement	Target 2010-2011	Achievement
Increased number of TSIs having improved their ranking on the ITC TSI benchmarking scheme through support provided by ITC.	18	137
Increased number of enterprises enabled to become export-ready through ITC training activities focusing on export-readiness, delivered directly or indirectly.	990	1700
Increased number of country networks having generated multilateral trading system-related activities through the support of ITC to enable decision makers to understand business needs and create an environment conducive to business.	294	113

198. Compounded with issues of definition and validation, this has led to some concerns about the rigour of the results collated.⁶⁸
199. Following the 2006 Evaluations, and successive calls from the JAG for a stronger results orientation, ITC began from 2009 to modify its corporate objectives and indicators as part of a shift towards a stronger results orientation. 2009/2010 objectives and indicators are reflective of a trajectory towards outputs-level reporting, as opposed to inputs, though the 2010-13 Strategic Plan emphasised '*output oriented annual reporting*' as an organisational goal rather than a results orientation.
200. Pressure from the JAG has continued, however, with minutes of meetings in 2008 onwards requesting still more intensified results orientation. ITC responded proactively, with a 2011 exercise to align project-level outputs with the corporate logframe of the Strategic Plan. This resulted in the alignment of outputs, outcomes and indicators, with all these elements contributing upwards to a corporate logframe.⁶⁹ The 2011 Operational Plan reflected this shift, citing '*Deepening the RBM culture and deepening new performance monitoring tools*' as one of three operational priorities.
201. In continuation, the successor Strategic Plan 2012-15 includes '*Achieving RBM at corporate level*' as a strategic priority under improving corporate efficiency, and indicates (Part IV) a shift towards a corporate logframe approach to become operational for 2014/15 biennium. It also cites a '*Focus on outputs and Impact*' as a core programme delivery response.
202. To operationalise this, the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan commits to a first phase of implementation, measuring results under each of four Corporate Objectives (though the reporting commitment was only to the first three 3 objectives).⁷⁰ Despite the flaws in its results logic described above, e.g. the linkage from indicators to objectives, the 2014-2015 Corporate logframe did provide a first step in a corporate-level approach to results reporting on results.
203. Additionally, prior to 2012, divisional planning was project-based and largely divorced from the corporate planning process. An ad-hoc series of team plans were developed, which lacked clarity concerning their intentions and whether budgetary commitment was available or not. They were also not laterally or vertically connected.
204. 'Section logframes' were developed in 2011 to define the outputs (services) and outcomes that each technical Section would provide to operationalize ITC's corporate strategic framework. These were a foundation of the RBM system and form a key element in ITC's online facility for monitoring the achievement of development results at the project level. Subsequently, Section Plans were developed in 2013. These provided as a planning tool to set out goals, strategies, expenditure, resources, milestones and risks for the biennium 2014-15 (with Divisional Plans aggregating the underlying Section Plans). All TRTA projects were then aligned to these Section Plans, making a clear connection from project to corporate-level objectives – something which had previously been a missing link. This process resulted in the series of targets for the 2014-15 biennium being much more grounded in the programme pipeline – albeit with the remaining difficulties around late funding.
205. A final aspect of improving corporate-level results has been the major effort since 2011 on defining impact. Whilst this has been driven largely by JAG requests, it was also recognised internally within ITC as a weakness prior to JAG interventions. The 2012 BOA report, for example, noted the need for ITC to pursue its efforts to set indicators to

⁶⁸ As reflected in internal emails and interviews

⁶⁹ Annual Report 2011

⁷⁰ 'Sustainable and inclusive trade' (the fourth objective) was limited to refining measurement of baselines and results (because of cited reasons of resource requirements needed, M&E capacities, difficulties of attribution etc.).

assess the impact of its actions on world trade and to further align its intended achievements and the resources allocated.

206. In relation to gender, the 2012-15 Strategic Plan and associated corporate logframe did make efforts to include gender, though mainly from a disaggregation perspective. Under indicators such as “improving availability and use of trade intelligence”, measures include: ensuring accessibility to both men and women as well as providing trade intelligence that is sex disaggregated; under “enhance trade support institutions and policies”, measures include a special emphasis on prioritizing gender-responsive TSI service offers; and under “maximizing ITC impact on enterprise competitiveness and export performance”, measures include systematically delivering TRTA approaches that benefit Women Business Enterprises and sectors with high employment and other economic benefits for women.’ The 2012-2015 corporate indicators ask for disaggregation (itself a step forward for ITC).
207. **Specific conclusion:** Overall ITC has made major efforts to improve the quality and relevance of its corporate results framework in recent years, and to ensure that it reflects both the current project pipeline and issues such as gender. Whilst some technical weaknesses remain – and as detailed below, a ‘results culture’ does not yet fully exist in ITC - the organisation has gone some considerable way to respond to JAG and other demands for better definition, use and quality of results.

RBM system and monitoring/reporting of results

208. ITC’s results based management systems have been critiqued since 2006. An OIOS audit in 2007 flagged as ‘higher risk’ operational policies and procedures partly because *‘Reports for extra-budgetary funded programmes...are financially rather than programme-driven’*. The audit also noted that programmes contain performance indicators that are not easy to measure, unrealistic and potentially irrelevant to the desired outcome or impact. *‘[There is a] high level of reliance on partners in determining success at the end user level.’*
209. The JAG report of 2008 and the preliminary report for 2009 also reflect this concern, commenting that whilst the introduction of results-based management (RBM) was particularly appreciated, some delegates felt that there was still considerable work to be done. Work was suggested on establishing clear baselines for measuring performance, prior needs assessment, verifiable indicators, and links between *‘outputs and outcomes and developmental impacts’*. This concern over reliable results was also raised a year later within the internal Joint Assessment Committee, with emails from the time indicating staff concerns at inconsistent reporting and consequent concerns for ITC credibility.⁷¹
210. A major institutional effort to strengthen RBM has been put in place in ITC since 2011. A project team was established in January 2012 to work on the online architecture, to develop training materials and to devise and implement a training plan for ITC’s RBM system. Key actions have included:
- The development of the ‘RBM portal’, linked to the projects portal, which provides the main online RBM reporting architecture.
 - 60 staff members trained in RBM by the end of 2012, with the aim to reach all relevant staff by end 2013.
 - All projects screened for the relevance and robustness of outcomes and outputs.

⁷¹ Examples cited by staff include concerns around claims about the “impact” of the ethical fashion programme.

- An RBM module and glossary is now available on the intranet which set out for staff how to link a project output, how to edit output indicators, how to link to a project outcome, how to select and edit outcome indicators, and how to report on your project.
 - In December 2012, a staff member was appointed to work explicitly on the maintenance of the online RBM system.
 - ITC's Development Results Webpages were made available to CCITF members in March 2013, and, after receiving their feedback, were made available to the public and formally announced on ITC's website in August 2013.
211. Whilst the system has undoubtedly become more robust, some concerns remain regarding its implementation, as follows:
- Many staff find the current system burdensome and 'overweight' for smaller scale projects in particular.⁷²
 - There is currently a weak link between the project design and projects portal, though this is being addressed.
 - There are questions raised by staff over the extent to which the RBM system really reflects results, when so many results of ITC's programmes are in fact intangible or indirect (such as policy dialogue-related gains, relationship-building, and opening space for legislative reforms). Some staff have concerns that the RBM system is a tool more geared to corporate compliance than project management.
 - There remain weak feedback loops from the RBM system to sections and into learning –the system appears to operate in a relative vacuum in terms of institutional evaluation and learning.
212. **Specific conclusion:** Overall, in 2013, the ITC RBM system was still a work in progress: applying the data generated under RBM into programming has been limited, with a tendency to focus on data rather than use; and unclear feedback loops from RBM system to sections / into learning.⁷³ The Evaluation's assessment from its examinations of project portfolios confirms both the advances being made and the further formal and practical steps still needed. From the project and field perspectives the overarching need is for a results system that is demonstrably a useful and feasible set of tools for the whole organisation and its stakeholders, and not an expensive add-on or an end in itself.

Quality and role of the evaluation system

213. ITC's evaluation system has also played a significant role in the development of the institution's accountability mechanisms since 2006. Following the 2006 Evaluation, as recommended, the Evaluation Function was supplied with a new P4 post⁷⁴ and brought under the institutional reporting line of SPPG, albeit with the intention of operating as an independent function, as recommended by the 2006 Evaluation. The Evaluation Policy was developed in 2008, and presents a clear and robust approach, generally in line with good practice internationally. The Unit was also to be responsible for IMDIS reporting.
214. With other workstreams and competing pressures⁷⁵ ongoing, however, the function was not fully staffed and operational until 2012. Once the full complement of staff was in

⁷² Interviews

⁷³ Recognised in the reflections of the former Executive Director

⁷⁴ Redesignated as wholly responsible for evaluation in 2012.

⁷⁵ E.g. the 2010 Annual report finds that 'due to the reallocation of resources in 2010 to RBM and large programme management, work on evaluations was not completed as planned'.

place⁷⁶, progress was rapid, with a clear workplan developed for 2012/13, although the criteria for programme selections for evaluation are not fully defined or explicit within it and budget costings for evaluations appear relatively low.⁷⁷ Guidelines and templates to support developing terms of reference were also created, and a budget of \$211,931.48 USD was supplied in 2012. A 2012 Annual Evaluation reports was also produced, which draws together lessons learned from individual programme evaluations during the year.

215. During 2011 and 2012 evaluations conducted included EnACT, PACT II, Programme on Trade, Climate Change and Environment; programme on inter-regional trade expansion between Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and francophone countries of the Mekong (OIF); plus evaluations of World Export Development Forum (WEDF) and Poor Communities in Trade Program (PCTP). In 2013, evaluations of ITC's export strategy function and NTF-II were carried out.

216. Whilst the evaluation function is generating a series of robust and useful evaluations, and is synthesising these appropriately for corporate use, the function is not yet fully developed. Specifically:

- Since June 2013, the head of EMU has reported to the head of SPPG - not to the Executive Director, as formerly and as United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards on guarding evaluation independence would require.
- Evaluations often cannot assess Value for Money or efficiency because of a lack of financial data. Financial data is available but not geared to results (no results-based budgeting) and RB costs are often not available.⁷⁸
- The link between the monitoring and evaluation functions is currently unclear. EMU was formerly (until 2013) responsible for IMDIS reporting and the production of the Programme Performance Report, a responsibility which was removed in December 2012. The connections have not been rebuilt, with feedback loops not present and unclear complementarities in their respective roles supporting corporate accountability.
- Whilst many of the components of a robust evaluation function are in place, these are often not fully systematised e.g. selection of programmes for evaluation; use of best practices and learning identified.
- The Annual Synthesis of Evaluations has much potential use for corporate lesson-learning and programmatic improvement, but does not appear to have been widely disseminated, nor its lessons distilled and disseminated by Senior Management.
- The role of EMU in knowledge management and lesson-learning has not yet been clarified, meaning that the links from evaluation to learning are only light-touch (e.g. a web tool).

⁷⁶ An RB-funded Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (P3), appointed in 2012. An XB-funded Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (P2) post was advertised, and was filled in 2014.

⁷⁷ 2012 EMU Workplan

⁷⁸ Not an uncommon issue for agencies.

217. A revised proposed Evaluation Policy for 2013 has been drafted but not yet formally presented for endorsement to the SMC. In part, this may be attributable to a lack of clarity around the resourcing of proposed evaluation roles at Divisional level. The current Policy does require updating, however, in particular articulating clearer links to ITC's monitoring and knowledge management systems. **Specific recommendation:** In addition to changing the reporting lines of the evaluation function to ensure its real and perceived independence, ITC also needs to implement the following good practices for evaluation:

- i. Ensuring adequate financial data on programmes and projects for proper evaluation.
- ii. Clarifying the respective responsibilities and complementary links between the evaluation and project monitoring functions.
- iii. Enhance its self-evaluation standards and practices.
- iv. Providing strong corporate support for dissemination and follow-up of evaluation results and their use in learning and knowledge management systems.

Knowledge management

218. The absence of a formal institutional knowledge management system was identified in 2007 by OIOS audit as higher risk - 'the lack of a formal project or programme management information system may hinder project visibility as it make it difficult for operational staff to stay abreast of projects across ITC.' The further audit of project management in 2013 highlighted that little progress had been made since 2007: 'Knowledge sharing practices needed strengthening...Lack of project closure reports limited the potential for knowledge sharing, including the collection and review of lessons learned and good practices.'

219. Other reports and audits also identify a gap in the systematic collection and sharing of learning and good practices⁷⁹ and a 2013 survey of project managers also identified as a gap the need for the development of a system for knowledge capturing and dissemination along the project cycle.⁸⁰

220. Little progress has been made as yet, however, with the single 'Good Practices' webpage relatively inactive and no guidance provided to staff on how to identify, collate and disseminate lessons learned. The Evaluation Team itself experienced considerable difficulty in its work in accessing shared files from various Divisions, although ITC's administration states that this is not a problem internally.⁸¹

221. Whilst no Knowledge Management strategy has been developed or planned, the IT 2014-17 Strategy does aim at: The design and development of an information architecture that supports the storage of information based on organisation-centric 'Team rooms' focused on business-critical information around organisational work practices; Design and development of corporate search engine to make corporate information more accessible and avoid storage of information in multiple repositories.'

222. However, this proposal has not been accompanied by a robust Knowledge Management strategy endorsed by SMC – meaning, as for the RBM system, that while the architecture may be developed, the institutional mechanisms and systems for accessing, storing and sharing knowledge are not yet fully in place.⁸²

⁷⁹ Analysis of Evaluations conducted in 2012; Auditor's Report for the Biennium 2011-2012

⁸⁰ Workshop on project Life Cycle Management 2013

⁸¹ "The file share is accessible to all staff for information that is required across ITC through the H:// everyone file share."

⁸² ITC administration notes that concerns for knowledge management are prominently reflected in the intranet revitalisation strategy launched by the Communications Section in 2013.

2.4.2 Efficiency (D2)

Financial accountability and reporting systems

223. ITC follows United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules (UNFRR) and its accounting and financial reporting is audited annually by the Board of Auditors. Management letters (ML) and recommendations are made to address identified control weaknesses.

224. The OIOS audit of 2007 identified ITC's Financial Management systems as 'higher risk'. Consequently, the Strategic Plan 2010-13 set out to improve financial management systems to provide its stakeholders and, in particular, donors, with greater confidence. The Strategic Plan recognised that ITC operates in a complex financial environment, receiving funds from a variety of sources with varied timelines and different conditions. It committed to *'take a variety of steps to improve its financial forecasting, project budget control, cash flow management as well as implement the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).'* Specifically, it committed to:

- Improve financial forecasting and cash flow management in order to improve long-term planning.
- Conduct costing studies of ITC operations to enable ITC to have a firm grasp of the costs associated with planned outputs to be delivered from its available resources.
- Continue to improve financial management processes with a balanced approach to delegation to sections and project managers, while intensifying its internal reporting and monitoring procedures.⁸³

225. Measures put in place therefore included:

- Efforts to undertake a robust budgeting exercise in 2013, building the corporate financial forecasting up from project budget forecasting.
- Setting up a programme (in 2008-9) to improve the efficiency of ITC's administrative processes.
- Conducting a cost-transparency project (this was initiated in 2010 but only completed on a pilot basis within DPS in 2012, to support efficiency savings). The cost transparency initiative was reportedly extended to the Communication and Events section in November 2013.

226. The 2008 BOA report identified what it judged as continuing weaknesses in relation to ITC's financial systems. These included: lack of progress made by ITC in reorganising its method of operation and adapting its administrative and accounting procedures to make them compatible with the use of IPSAS; deficiencies in the end-of-year automated processing of IMIS; insufficient effort to increase the level of the operating reserve; the need to develop a policy for the valuation of leave liability; a funding plan for end-of-service liabilities; creating links between budgetary resources and results; and management of field inventory records and non-expendable property. The 2012 BOA report for the biennium 2010-2011 indicates progress against recommendations from its 2010 (biennium 2008-2009) report as follows: of 9 recommendations, 3 were fully implemented, four were partially implemented and two were not implemented. Those relevant to financial systems which were partially implemented were: Analyse the impact of applying IPSAS to administrative and financial procedures; Pursue efforts to increase the level of operating reserve until the prescribed level is reached; Consider ways of creating links between budgetary resources and results. Relevant ones not implemented were: Review its policy for the valuation of leave liability in its implementation of IPSAS;

⁸³ Strategic Plan 2010-2013

Develop a funding plan for the end-of-service liabilities for the consideration of and approval by the General Assembly and the General Council of WTO. These issues have been recognised by ITC, and the 2013 Risk Register sets out a set of specific actions underway to address them.

227. Whilst ITC has made progress in improving its financial systems, therefore, and particularly its financial forecasting and budgeting, there remains considerable room for improvement.

228. Analysis has identified other efforts made by ITC to improve internal efficiencies, including:

- Travel – As a result of several major efforts including the negotiation on airfare with major carriers made jointly with all Geneva based Organisations reportedly saved ITC more than CHF 970,000 in 2012.⁸⁴ In another monitored assessment around travel to the two major 2012 ITC events (WEDF/WTPO). 154,000CHF savings were achieved due to earlier buying of tickets.
- IT – the new IT strategy 2014-17 aims to improve efficiency through a range of actions, including:
 - an integrated project management system which reduces needs for system support, maintenance, upgrades (a single platform);
 - a reduced turn-around timeframe for implementing changes to the business logic across the Programme/Project Life Cycle process;
 - The integration of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Programme/Projects Portal and SharePoint to provide a unified document repository;
 - Efforts to automate many of the smaller administrative process such as Leave Monitoring, Assets Management, Staff Induction and Departures.

2.4.3 Relevance (D3)

Applying key development frameworks (MDG, national priorities)

229. The 2006 Evaluation recommended that ITC explicitly apply an “MDG lens” in the design and implementation of its projects to support the gearing of its programmes to a poverty reduction agenda. In 2007, the JAG reinforced this call, urging ITC to *‘[Incorporate] the MDG lens in its activities’*. It called for more references to MDGs and their measurement, particularly in relation to gender, environment and poverty alleviation.⁸⁵

230. ITC responded in its key strategic and planning documents. The Proposed Programme Budget 2010-2011 (prepared for the UN biennium two years in advance, therefore in 2007-8) made it clear that *‘ITC responds to the Millennium Development Goals, in particular to Goal 8 and target 12, which calls for developing further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system’*. It stated that ITC also, however, addresses Goals 1, 3 and 7, and committed, during the 2010-biennium, to ensuring that ITC’s activities were: (a) targeted at vulnerable groups, especially poor communities (Goal 1); (b) shared by women and men (Goal 3); and (c)

⁸⁴ Quarterly Central Services Report, Division of programme Support 27 February 2013. However, the same report notes that potential savings to be gained by buying tickets more than 16 days in advance had not been realised, with 71% of tickets still purchased within 15 days of departure. SMC then issued a directive for full compliance.

⁸⁵ JAG meeting report 2007

supporting the preservation of the environment (Goal 7). This more explicit gearing of activities to the MDGs was accompanied by specific proposed actions over the biennium, including seeking innovative approaches to link poor producers, in particular women, to global value chains and international markets.

231. The Strategic Plan for 2009-12 continued this trajectory, emphasising ITC's work on poverty alleviation, the empowerment of women and attention to the environment, making explicit reference to the MDGs as a guiding framework. On the other hand, it did not include any explicit reference to the MDGs, or to poverty alleviation, in its 2014-2015 corporate logframe. Nonetheless, the use of the MDGs as a 'guiding lens' at strategic level at least, was refined in specific Operational Plans, with that for 2011, for example, pointing out that, whilst all ITC work operates within the framework of the Millennium Declaration and corresponds to the Aid for Trade agenda, some projects and programmes directly target specific MDGs such as: poverty reduction, women, the environment and the development of an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system. In 2011 ITC work programme included \$13.3 million delivery that directly targeted these specific MDGs. Environmental sustainability also became a theme from 2012-2013 onwards, reflected for example in an indicator in the Corporate Logframe 2014-2015 of 'Number of institutions and enterprises *reporting enhanced environmental sustainability in their export-related operations as a result of ITC assistance.*'
232. Geographically, the 2007 JAG also set ITC a target of 50 per cent as the proportion of ITC country programmes benefiting the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small-island developing states. ITC responded positively to this directive, creating 5 regional sections with responsibility for providing contextual information and analysis to support project identification and design, and to identify, design and implement projects themselves. By 2010, ITC had surpassed the 50% target set, with (according to the 2012-13 Proposed Programme Budget) 55 per cent of its delivery focused on these three categories of beneficiaries.
233. The 2013 Operational Plan continued this trend, with the same commitment to target least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing states (SIDS) and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). 58% of planned delivery in all Window I and ongoing Window II projects was focused exclusively on these priority countries, excluding global public goods and internal organisational development projects. 56% of the 2013 pipeline of Window II projects was focused exclusively on LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and SSA.
234. In late 2013, ITC was adopting a proactive approach to defining its role in the post-2015 development agenda. It became a member of the UN Task Team on the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the Technical Support Team of the General Assembly's Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. ITC leads a Working Group to develop trade-related indicators as input into the Post 2015 process and is a joint-organiser (with UNCTAD and WTO) of the 'Geneva Dialogues' on the Post 2015 Development Agenda that facilitates a multi-stakeholder dialogue on Post 2015.
235. In terms of client needs: ITC has since 2007 conducted a client survey annually, with respondents numbering between 1000 (in 2011) and 2500 (in 2009). Although the representativeness of respondents and rigour of the assessment questions appear questionable (particularly in more recent years) review of these surveys indicates that a range of needs for ITC work have been identified or emphasized, including: support on training and capacity development in areas such as export strategy; market entry and trade intelligence; specific market intelligence; detailed information on markets; programme on SMEs; sector-specific information; support on quality, compliance and procurement; sector strategy support; distance learning; information on ITC services.
236. These surveys are however currently owned by DMD, and it is not clear how the information generated from the surveys is being fed back into product development or

institutional lesson-learning; or indeed how it is being discussed corporately beyond the current brief write-up in the Annual Report.

237. In a more recent development, the 2013 OIOS audit of project management also reported weaknesses in coordination of ITC's projects in beneficiary countries with other UN agencies. Having recognised this previously as a problem, ITC has set in place a pilot Needs Assessment and Project Design (NAPD) process, starting in 2013, as a way of adopting a more proactive approach to strategizing and planning at the country and regional levels. By the end of 2013, nine country-level projects and three large-scale regional-level programmes had been developed through the NAPD framework, with \$25 million in confirmed donor commitments.
238. The new approach seeks to build up from the United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP/UNDAF) to identify needs and entry-points at an early stage, to support the identification of appropriate responses, and to ensure a streamlined response. Whilst this approach risks potentially raising expectations from beneficiaries of ITC, it does promise better coherence and improved efficiency at country level.

2.4.4 Financial viability (D4)

239. As noted earlier, ITC's work is enabled by three sources of funding: the Regular Budget (RB), Programme Support Costs (PSC) and extrabudgetary funding (XB). XB funds are activated through the ITC Trust Fund (ITF). Because of this reliance for some 50% of total expenditure on extra-budgetary resources, ITC operates in a highly competitive external and internal environment.
240. Prior to the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, and particularly within Window 2, ITC's fundraising efforts took place on a largely ad-hoc basis, often grounded within individual sections.⁸⁶ Project managers sought funds whilst planning activities, and donors (or potential donors) were generally identified when project proposals were submitted for approval. Whilst section chiefs were kept informed of corporate fundraising initiatives through the Management Advisory Group, some units had developed their own fundraising strategies, and not shared these with the SMC.⁸⁷ Neither guidelines nor requirements were in place for individual divisions or sections to develop and share their fundraising strategies. A note prepared for this Evaluation points out that; *'Current practice reveals discrepancies between the many channels project managers use to solicit donors for specific projects, and the more co-ordinated approach that is required at corporate level'*. The note also comments that instances of poor communication within ITC have led to conflicts of interest at sector project management level. Potential donors had also complained of multiple uncoordinated demands.
241. Consequently, ITC had no mechanism to maintain a full grasp of ongoing fundraising initiatives with a resulting lack of coordination, monitoring and follow-up. Recognising this gap, the Strategic Plan 2012-15 set *'Improving the pipeline portfolio and multi-year financial management'* as a strategic priority for the organisation. Specifically, it called for the development of a fundraising strategy elaborating framework objectives with the major traditional donors and targeting new potential donors. A new Fundraising strategy was consequently developed during 2012, but was not endorsed by SMC. The 2013 OIOS audit of project management in 2013 also pointed out that, whilst ITC had committed to developing the new fundraising strategy by 2014, it lacked a work plan for its development and had not formalized the approach for integrating the ongoing needs assessment and fundraising initiatives.

⁸⁶ Note prepared for meeting with Evaluation team by External Relations, 15th November 2013

⁸⁷ Ibid; OIOS audit of project management 2013

242. At the same time, and following a record year of expenditure in 2011, ITC developed an ambitious Operational Plan for 2012 with an initial expenditure target of \$48 million (gross).⁸⁸ However, no fundraising strategy was in place to support this, and expenditure tracking in the early part of 2012 showed that this target would likely not be reached – due to the ending of several large programmes. The expenditure target was consequently reduced at the JAG in May 2012 to \$41 million (gross). This was a 15% drop from the initial target.
243. Consequently, in 2013, ITC has developed a Case for Support, which became an official JAG document in May 2013, officially replacing the CPD in dialogue with donors. This was designed as ‘a pragmatic entry point for further discussions with donors on opportunities for large-scale project generation and multi-donor funding’.⁸⁹ The Case for Support set out a series of intended initiatives; their timeframe; budget; beneficiaries; programme intended results and approach; and rationale for donor support.
244. The edition of November 2013 (‘Aid for Trade Partnerships; Working with ITC in 2014-2017’) comprises 27 project and programme concepts, with combined value of approximately \$200m and grouped around 6 ‘impact’ areas, five of which correspond to ITC’s Strategic Priorities as outlined in the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan (Trade and market intelligence for SMEs competitiveness; Connecting to Value Chains; Strengthening trade and investment support institutions; promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade; and public-private partnerships). A 6th area on Regional integration was added in response to a cited JAG priority and the 4th Aid for Trade Global review.
245. This seeks to shift ITC from the largely ad-hoc and reactive model of the past, which has not been coherently managed, into a more a more proactive approach where basket funds for larger programmes are created in advance. In doing so it represents a paradigm shift: a forward-looking model which seeks scale up to a doubling of ITC’s TRTA from 2013-17, implying an annual yearly increase of 20% of extra-budgetary funding. This increase is intended to be achieved through ‘stronger country owned needs assessments, pooling resources for large multi-year programmes and a tailored approach to engage traditional and non-traditional donors’.⁹⁰ An annual Donor Conference will also be held once a year, starting in 2014.
246. To support internal fundraising management, SPPG is planning to develop mechanisms to support a comprehensive recording of ongoing fundraising initiatives, to be revised quarterly, and with pledges against targets to be integrated into Quarterly Performance Reviews alongside actual income for Windows 1 and 2.
247. The Case for Support also targets ‘new’ donors for ITC – the philanthropics, and BRIC countries such as China and India, as well as envisaging partnerships with multinational enterprises and corporate foundations. The Evaluation Team has looked throughout for possibilities for ITC to diversify and strengthen its sources of financing and has recommended seeking counterpart contributions wherever this is possible without ITC pricing itself out of the market among less-demanding aid providers. The advantage is one of increased partner ownership as well as (moderately) increased resources. With respect to ITC charging for its database services, the Evaluation did not conduct a full study, but had no grounds to contest the seven advantages cited for the “free tools for all” proposal in the January 2013 presentation on the “MAR Strategy for Financial Sustainability and Marketing and Communications”.
248. Despite this significant shift, however, ITC’s fundraising section remains significantly under-resourced given the critical importance of this role to ITC’s future sustainability and resourcing levels. At the time of writing the function was served by just one person,

⁸⁸ Note to SMC Performance Review Sept 2012

⁸⁹ Note prepared for meeting with evaluation team, 15.11.2013

⁹⁰ Ibid.

who also served as the secretariat for the JAG, SMC and other bodies. Two posts are reportedly authorized.

2.5 The Evaluation's summary ratings on organisational and management Issues

Table 4: Summary rating scale

Indicator	Rating scale					
Current fitness rating	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Can't say
Change assessed since 2006	Major positive	Positive	Little or no change	Regression	Major regression	Can't say
Strength of evidence/Confidence ranking scale	Very high {5}	High {4}	Medium {3}	Low {2}	Very Low {1}	-

Table 5: Summary ratings on organisation and management

Matrix Indicator/Issue	Current fitness rating	Change since 2006	Strength of evidence
What is the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC and how has it changed since 2006? (A)			
Governance and corporate accountabilities (A1)	Fair	Little or no change	4
Project, programme and internal accountability	Fair	Positive	4
Institutional setting in Geneva (A2)	Good	Little or no change	4
ITC's Place and prospects in global Aid for Trade (A3)	Good	Positive	4
How has ITC's organisational capacity to carry out its mandate changed since 2006 (B)			
Strategic Leadership (B1)	Good	Positive	4
Organisational structure and deployment of capacities (B2)	Fair	Positive	3
Human resources (B3)	Fair	Positive	3
Financial management systems (B4)	Fair/Good	Positive	3
ITC's Technology and information Infrastructure (B5)	Fair	Positive	4
Project and programme management (B6)			
<i>Project identification and design</i>	Poor/Fair	Positive	4
<i>Project cycle management</i>	Poor	Positive	4
<i>Risk identification and mitigation</i>	Poor	Positive	3
<i>Adaptive capacity</i>	Good	Positive	4
<i>Project monitoring and evaluation systems</i>	Poor	Positive	4
Process Management (B7)	Fair	Positive	4

<i>Internal communications processes.</i>	Fair	Positive	4
Inter-organisational linkages (B8)	Good	Positive	4
<i>Role of partnerships, joint ventures and networks</i>	Fair	Little or no change	3
<i>Client relationships</i>	Excellent In short term. Very poor in longer-term	Positive	3
How strong is ITC's organisational motivation to carry out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (C)			
Vision and Mission (C1)	Good	Major positive	4
<i>Vision and clarity of purpose.</i>	Fair	Positive	4
Culture and incentives (C2)	Poor	Little or no change	3
How strong is ITC's organisational performance in carrying out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (D)			
Effectiveness (D1)			See performance chapter
<i>Quality and role of corporate results framework.</i>	Fair	Positive	4
<i>RBM system and monitoring/reporting of results</i>	Poor/ Fair	Positive	4
<i>Quality and role of the evaluation system</i>	Fair	Positive	4
<i>Knowledge management</i>	Very poor	Positive	4
Efficiency (D2)			See performance chapter
<i>Financial accountability and reporting systems</i>	Fair	Positive	3
Relevance (D3)			See performance chapter
<i>Applying key development frameworks (MDG, national priorities)</i>	Fair	Positive	See performance chapter
Financial viability (D4)	Very poor	Little or no change	3

3. ITC'S PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS SINCE 2006

3.1 Introduction

249. This major section of the Evaluation Report is directed to the second overall purpose of the Independent Evaluation: "To support accountability to parent organisations, donors and beneficiary countries of ITC by demonstrating the results and impact of ITC's activities since 2006." As agreed in the Inception Report for the Evaluation this assessment of performance and results has been carried out by following the evaluation questions, issues and indicators, data collection methods, key sources and methods for analysis set out in Matrix 2 for the Evaluation (see section 5.2). As planned, the major steps involved extensive documentary review and analysis; several rounds of consultations and interviews (more than planned) to come to grips with understanding, categorizing and documenting ITC's activities; portfolio studies at several levels, Country level "ground-truthing" missions to six countries (with two "virtual" missions); and targeted surveys of ITC's various stakeholder groups. It is worth re-stating here, as at the beginning of the other main analysis chapter, that by applying these two major lenses – performance and results and organisation and management - to some of the same issues in ITC, the Evaluation report benefits from having both the perspective from a sample of individual countries and projects and the "top down" or headquarters perspective. As is well known about international development programmes, not only are these perspectives – the formal and systemic and the practical and operational - often different but so are the ways that things actually work, and some such differences are reflected in a number of findings here.
250. The methodological Annex to the Report provides extensive details on how the methodology was designed and then applied in practice, but it is important here to signal one substantial variation from the ordering in the Matrix to the presentation of findings here. The Evaluation deliberately aimed to "encourage and test" ITC's emerging results-based orientation⁹¹ by attempting to apply the structure of the strategic objectives and related client-groups to organise the operational assessments under the key questions in Matrix 2. In the course of data-gathering, however, it became clear that very little of the solid evidence available was sufficient or specific enough to these different strands of ITC work to make this a reliable or useful framework for presenting the Evaluation findings.⁹² These categories have only been used for ITC's planning and reporting in the past two years, and even then imperfectly, and it is not possible to reconstruct any coherent retrospective picture
251. Thus the detailed findings which follow are, as a rule, cross-cutting findings applying to the overall ITC portfolio, sample portfolios and country missions as a whole, noting findings on specific strategic objectives and products-lines where they are sufficiently robust.

⁹¹ Inception Report, p.10

⁹² Such an approach would have left numerous gaps and an incoherent picture, simply because of the gaps in evidence.

3.2 Overall performance of the ITC portfolio

3.2.1 Distribution of project expenditure

252. Managing the systematization and analysis of the ITC portfolio at this “wide end of the funnel” has proved to be one of the most difficult challenges in the data-assembly phase. The ITC’s internal “Projects Portal” system offered the virtue of completeness, listing as it did every spending operation launched, with additional details on dates, sources and amounts of funding, etc. This list amounted to some 786 “operations” over the 2006 to 2013 period. Reducing this list further to exclude the 117 projects active only after 2012, as well as 34 projects with not enough data to judge their years of activity, the Evaluation Team performed a trend analysis on the remaining 635 projects (see table 6).

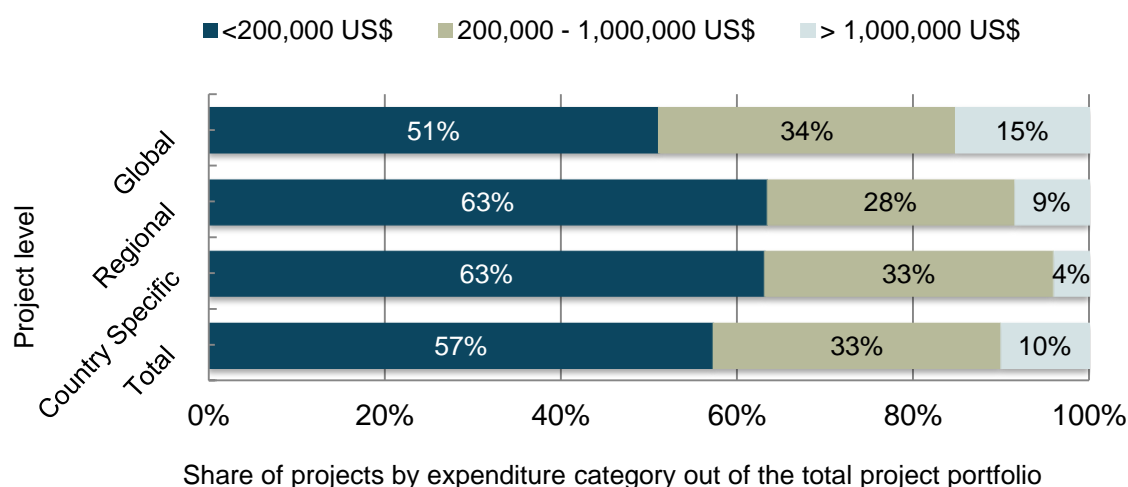
Table 6: ITC project portfolio by size/level

Project Level	Budget/Expenditure			Total
	< 200,000 US\$	200,000 - 1,000,000 US\$	> 1,000,000 US\$	
Global	158	104	47	309
Regional	52	23	7	82
Country Specific	154	80	10	244
Total	364	207	64	635

253. It is important to note that these should be taken only as indicative trends, given the significant issues identified in how projects are recorded into the system. For instance, some regional or global projects triggered all eligible countries (often several dozens) without clear indications of actual country operations. The Evaluation Team has therefore had to make judgment calls.

254. According to the data that could be gathered from the projects portal, the estimated overall expenditure on the 635 projects over the period 2006-2012 amounted to some \$315 million. As indicated in figure 4 below, the majority of this expenditure went to smaller projects – those below \$200,000. Naturally, the country-level projects tended to be smaller in size, while the regional and global projects had higher levels of expenditure for larger projects.

Figure 4: ITC project expenditure by project level (2006-2012)



255. In any given year, there tended to be some 200 active projects, with a low of 179 in 2008 and a high of 229 in 2009 (see figure 5). Of these, roughly half tended to be

reported as “global” projects, though this must be interpreted cautiously given the issues highlighted earlier. Looking at the distribution of projects by region (see figure 6), one detects some interesting trends. For instance, the number of projects active in the Asia-Pacific region has dropped significantly from a peak of 41 in 2006, to only 15 in 2008 and 2012. As well, the number of active projects in West and Central Africa seems to have hit a peak in 2008 and 2009, but has come down since. Looking at the extrabudgetary expenditure (net) by region as reported in the annual reports, this trend is largely confirmed (see figure 7). Interestingly, the share of this expenditure in Arab States has grown from 5-7% over 2006-2009, to 13-16% over 2010-2012 (largely due to the launch of the \$8.4 million EnACT programme).

Figure 5: ITC active projects by type (2006 – 2012)

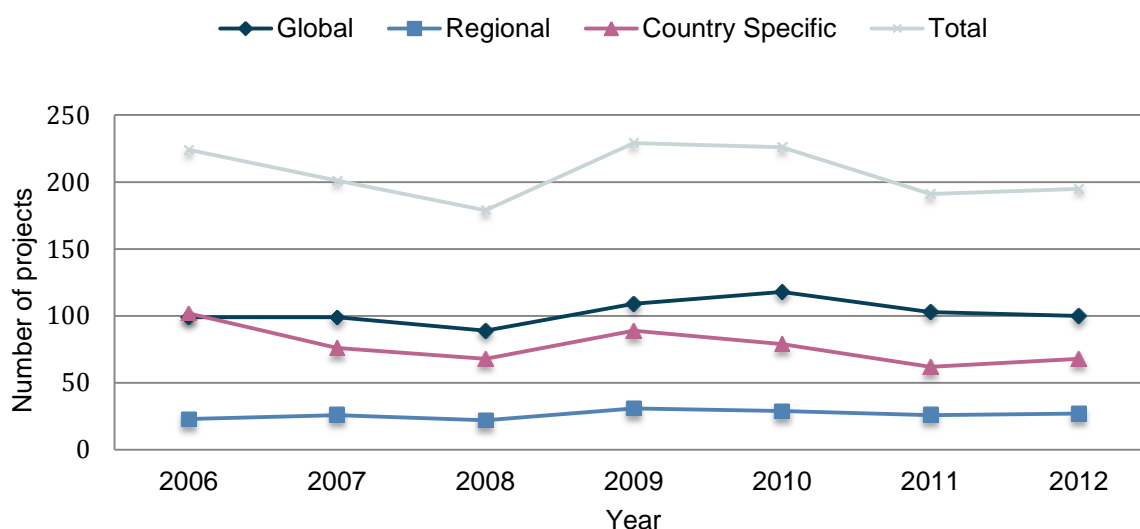


Figure 6: ITC active projects by region (2006 – 2012)

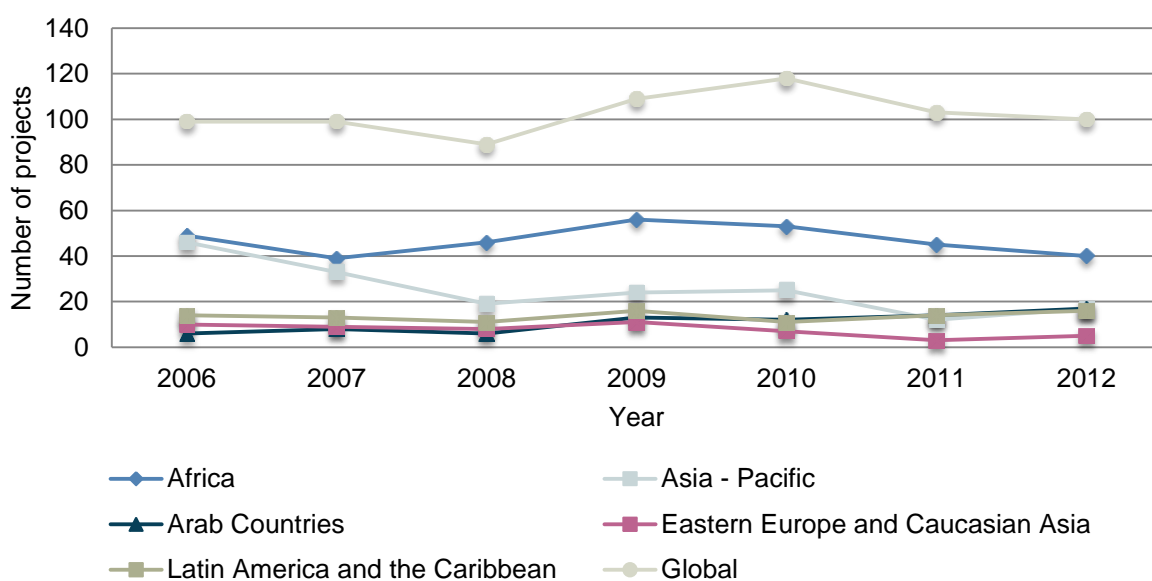
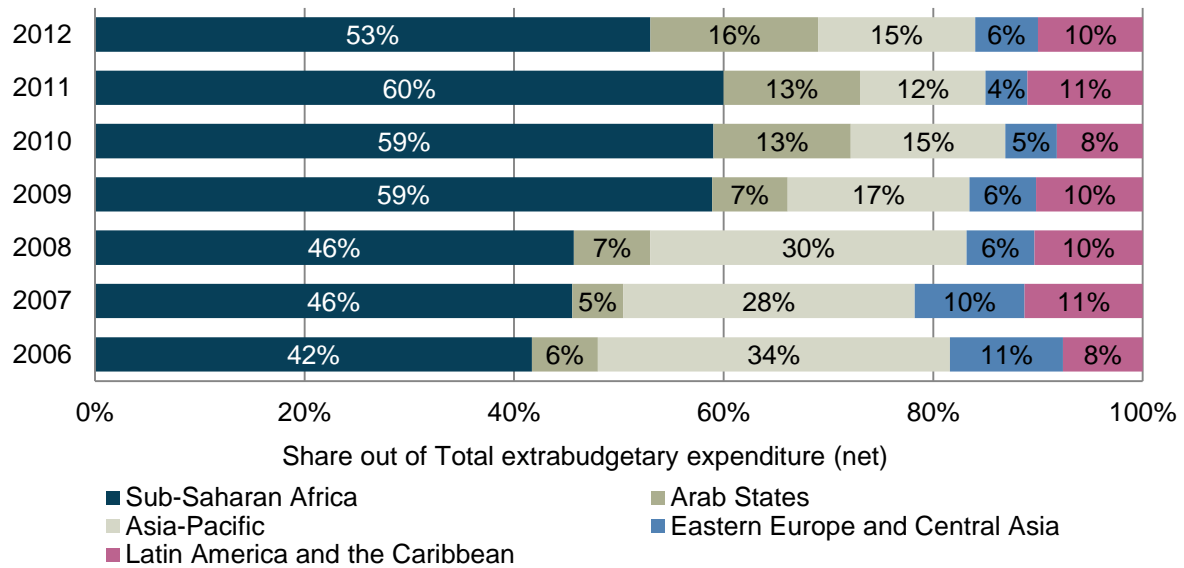
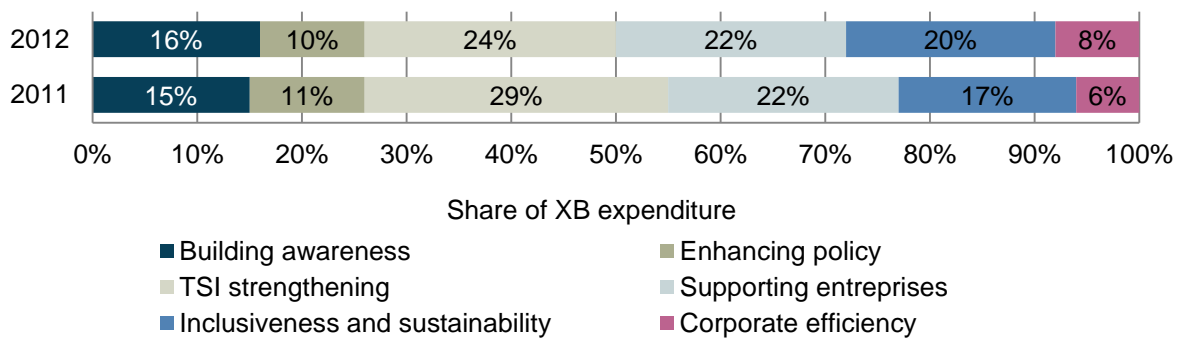


Figure 7: ITC extrabudgetary expenditure (net) by region (2006 – 2012)



256. It was difficult to assess trends in spending along the five strategic priorities (or three core client groups) in a comprehensive manner given the reporting limitations and the fact that many projects/programmes cover several strategic objectives/client groups. Since 2011, the annual reports have categorised projects by strategic priorities, and do provide figures on extrabudgetary expenditure by strategic priority (see figure 8). It is not clear how these figures are derived, and the Evaluation Team views these as indicative.

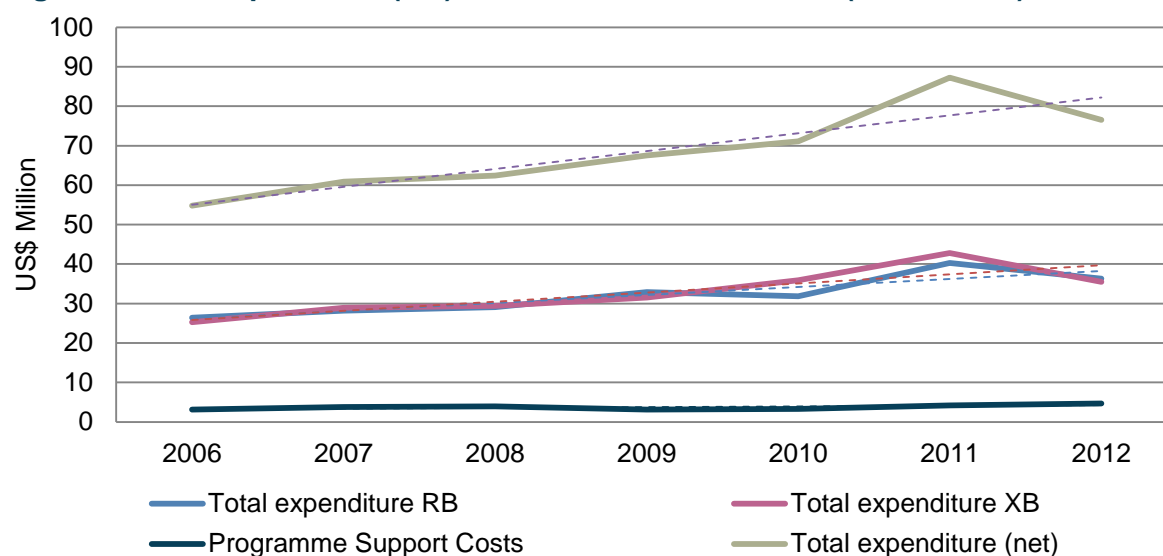
Figure 8: Extrabudgetary expenditure by strategic objectives (2011 – 2012)



3.2.2 Patterns and trends in funding sources

257. Over the evaluation period, approximately 50.5% of the total ITC expenditure excluding PSC was financed through extra-budgetary contributions, and 49.5% from the regular budget contributions from the UN/WTO, with slight variation over the years (+/- 3%).

Figure 9: Total expenditure (net) from RB and XB resources (2006 – 2012)



258. In terms of the extra-budgetary resources, tables 7 and 8 provide details on the top 10 contributors to each window over the evaluation period. For Window 1, un-earmarked and soft-earmarked contributions, the Nordic countries have been the top contributors over the period, providing \$59 million of the \$90 million in total contributions over the period, with Germany accounting for a further \$14 million. For Window 2, contributions for specific projects or programmes as well as income earned through revolving funds, Canada, the EU, Switzerland and the Netherlands have been the most significant contributors, providing a combined \$97 million of the total \$168 million.

Table 7: Top 10 contributors to Window 1(US\$ 000)

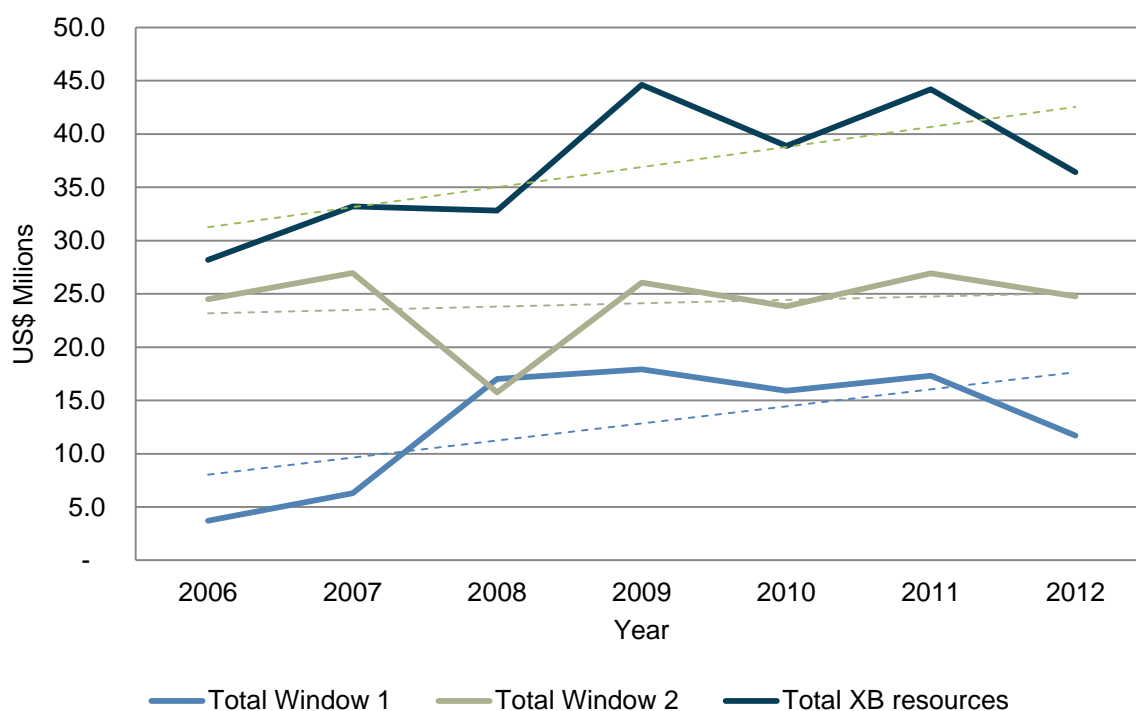
	Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	Share of total
1	Sweden	591	1,571	3,102	4,209	4,248	4,544	-	18,264	20.4%
2	Norway	407	566	3,832	3,701	2,465	2,754	2,012	15,737	17.5%
3	Denmark	1,442	2,074	2,395	2,633	2,298	2,460	2,374	15,675	17.5%
4	Germany	-	-	3,110	2,721	2,535	2,718	2,484	13,568	15.1%
5	Finland	370	377	1,265	2,158	2,177	2,571	-	8,918	9.9%
6	Ireland	185	629	1,399	1,356	999	1,284	1,119	7,082	7.9%
7	Canada	628	817	93	760	931	964	949	5,141	5.7%
8	New Zealand	-	-	193	146	180	-	2,754	3,273	3.6%
9	Netherlands	-	-	699	-	-	-	-	699	0.8%
10	UK	-	-	596	-	-	-	-	596	0.7%
	Rest	74	252	357	70	-	-	-	753	0.3%

Table 8: Top 10 contributors to Window 2 (US\$ 000)

	Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total	Share of total
1	Canada	1,245	925	1,980	10,566	6,180	7,005	1,244	29,146	17.3%
2	EU	4,142	3,703	295	2,992	5,937	6,470	5,026	28,566	16.9%
3	Switzerland / SECO	3,881	4,047	2,443	2,247	2,716	3,880	1,279	20,492	12.1%
4	Netherlands	2,291	3,268	3,619	3,970	-	1,181	4,127	18,456	10.9%
5	UNDP ⁹³	2,152	16,380	1,145	1,742	1,715	1,232	1,667	11,291	6.7%
6	UK	629	301	-	-	3,465	3,255	1,871	9,521	5.6%
7	Germany	3,258	2,883	305	356	329	499	814	8,444	5.0%
8	Sweden	560	2,772	60	-	-	-	4,413	7,805	4.6%
9	France	578	724	1,053	-	323	210	89	2,977	1.8%
10	Norway	1,693	1,173	-	-	-	-	-	2,866	1.7%
	Rest	4,054	5,528	4,847	4,188	3,164	3,199	4,225	29,205	17.3%

259. The ratio of Window 1 to Window 2 in net extra-budgetary resources over the period is approximately 1:2, with significant variation over the years, with Window 2 funding taking on a larger share of the extrabudgetary resources from 2008, as highlighted in figure 10.

Figure 10: Window 1 vs Window 2 extrabudgetary resources⁹⁴



⁹³ Includes UNDP IF and UN One

⁹⁴ There was a reported marked initial increase in in 2006-2007 in the level of Window 1 un-earmarked voluntary funding, to a level that has basically been maintained

3.3 Indicative findings against strategic objectives

260. The limitations on attempting to analyse and assess ITC's results in relation to its strategic objectives and target client groups have been outlined above. In spite of these limitations, knowing that it will be important for many users of the Evaluation to gain the best possible sense of the relative performance of ITC in relation to the strategic objectives, the Evaluation Team has assembled and cross-checked its aggregate readings and summative findings against these objectives from the available evidence and analysis below. These broad generalisations needs to be informed by a careful reading of the subsequent evidence organised against the matrix indicators and issues.

3.3.1 Strengthening TSIs

261. Based on the Evaluation samples and Headquarters (HQ) analyses, the Evaluation has arrived (with a medium level of confidence) at an aggregate assessment of ITC work in this important, high-spending, and widely- applied area of ITC work. It remains a highly relevant and reasonably efficient means for the Centre - and through the Centre the international Aid for Trade effort – to support the export sector in countries and to reach exporting enterprises to support their work directly.

262. Its effectiveness is variable, with much depending on the receptivity and dynamism of the individual partner TSIs, but there is evidence that ITC is moving to become more selective and developmental, with the Benchmarking Programme beginning to show a structured influence. In terms of "impact", projects in this area can point to at least medium results outputs and outcomes that "represent changes in the institutional and behavioural capacities for development conditions" toward their development goals. By definition, of course, support for TSIs is at more than one remove from being able to claim direct development impacts - changes in peoples' lives – but that is by no means to downplay their significance. On the other hand, in the Evaluation's sample, the sustainability of these contributions to such partner institutions on average is still assessed as somewhat low, although the Evaluation did encounter more encouraging examples. The somewhat lower rating reflects a finding that a good number of these institutions have more tenuous links with their own exporter communities (and limited financial inputs from them) and are developing more of a dependency on foreign assistance projects. With its limited means, ITC itself is rarely a major cause of dependency, but has to work within this context.

263. **Specific recommendation:** All Aid for Trade providers, and especially the big spenders, share a responsibility to avoid reinforcing a public sector prop for TSIs but instead helping strengthen their private sector roots and nourishment. At a minimum, credible cost-sharing for any outside support should be the rule.

3.3.2 Supporting enterprises

264. The Evaluation found ample and still growing evidence of the relevance of ITC's activities in supporting exporters, including a range of different services and products, and also evidence of the wide international recognition of this relevance in informed circles. That relevance is confirmed by the relative strengths of the Centre's style of operations in working with the private sector and its networks of exporter contacts, at least in comparison with other TRTA providers.

265. The Evaluation also found, however, that at this point these special strengths are not securely anchored in a much more crowded and competitive TRTA arena. Without overburdening or over-standardizing ITC's services, they need to be more systematically assessed, adapted, pruned when necessary and marketed to respond to much wider potential demand. To do this will require a minimum of "breathing space", assured by

more stable funding than the “hand to mouth” situation that has prevailed over the Evaluation period. Secondly, as the Evaluation found very directly in trying to carry out its own work, the ITC’s network of enterprise contacts is not as up-to-date, accessible, or responsive as it needs to be to maintain and build on this asset. This issue, and the critical importance of the work underway to improve the Centre’s Client Relationship Management system, is addressed at several points in this Report.

266. In terms of assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and sustainability of ITC’s support to enterprises in particular the Evaluation found the base of evidence to be extremely weak, particularly up to 2011, when results reporting began to be more systematized. It has been possible, and tempting, to rely on the abundant anecdotal evidence of interesting and successful training events, trade fair and business-to-business meetings and the like in order to tell a positive public relations story. But such an approach will no longer be enough for ITC to maintain and strengthen its brand in this area with rigorous evidence. In terms of efficiency in particular, operating frugality and more systematic cost-sharing in these programmes will continue to be essential, while recognizing and accepting that this germinal work is not cheap, especially when an organisation’s sunk costs are factored in, as they ultimately must be. With regard to sustainability, even more than for ITC’s other work there is evidence of many “one-off” engagements, with little or no follow-up or capacity for it. The serious cultivation and use of the CRM resource, and the time and space to “accompany” ITC’s enterprise clients for a reasonable distance will be key.

3.3.3 Inclusiveness & sustainability

267. Although social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability were only explicitly added to ITC’s Strategic Objectives late in the period under evaluation their relevance, particularly in regard to the role of women in trade, was strongly recognized and acted upon by ITC earlier in the period. This emphasis reflected a policy concern to put an MDG lens on ITC’s work, as urged by the 2006 evaluation, but even more an evident conviction about the critical role and potential of women in trade, from the economic as much as the equity perspective. It was acted upon by ITC leadership in a succession of projects focused on women in trade, at different levels, including large global projects, such as the PCTP Ethical Fashion Initiative,. In another dimension of social inclusiveness, a number of more recent projects have focused on the role of youth.

268. The high and rising relevance of environmental concerns in trade was reflected in similar ways in dedicated products. Available evidence on the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of these projects is discussed in section 3.4 below. Efforts were also launched aimed at “mainstreaming” gender and environmental considerations across the full range of ITC’s work, and progress on those fronts is assessed in section 2. **Specific conclusion:** In this brief overview, the Evaluation should add its assessment that in both the areas of women in trade and trade and environmental sustainability ITC has made major progress in laying the foundations for credible and much-needed contributions through its project work. As with other areas, the major challenges lie in finding the means to build strategically on those foundations and assure the sustainability of past and future benefits. “Mainstreaming” in ITC can take advantage of a general climate of comparative receptivity in the Centre and among its supporters to serve as a model if it can be captured in a practical approach suited to ITC’s needs and resources.

3.3.4 Enhancing policy

269. Over the Evaluation period the relevance of ITC’s work in supporting policy-makers has been very high, with particularly intense demand around support for the preparation of export strategies and for preparation, negotiation and implementation of WTO

accession requirements for many countries. The broad range of ITC's relevant activities in the area of trade facilitation has been active and shows every prospect of growing more so after Bali. The available evidence round the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of these activities is mixed, but the Evaluation had both other reliable evaluative evidence and direct readings of its own from its portfolio analyses and country missions. In supporting export strategy formulation, for example, it is clear that ITC has evolved and applied a much-appreciated participatory methodology with strong private sector and civil society engagement, well adapted to different country needs. With respect to the various forms of support for WTO accession and implementation, a slightly more mixed picture emerged from the Evaluation's evidence, with satisfaction for the support in the four countries where it was applied, but some questioning in two of the countries as to whether this work was an area of comparative advantage for ITC.⁹⁵ With respect to sustainability, much of the work in these areas is by definition transitional, and should not depend on long-term external support, but there is clear scope for ITC to be able to build in more.

3.3.5 Building awareness

270. ITC's work toward this Objective is mainly comprised of its "Global public goods" - providing and supporting its suite of trade intelligence tools by producing, analysing and disseminating trade intelligence and training for their use; helping countries better understand the non-tariff obstacles to trade faced by their business sectors through the NTM programme; and "stimulating debate on trade issues."
271. The Evaluation has been able to examine the first two functions in some depth and found that the relevance and effectiveness of both over have been high the Evaluation period. In the case of the suite of trade intelligence tools, this finding has been documented through credible user statistics and survey results of users and training participants and corroborated by a varied sampling of direct testimonials to the Evaluation Team. Moreover there is solid evidence of ITC continuing to improve and innovate in the design, coverage and uses of these tools. The Communications Section has worked with other divisions and sections to promote awareness of ITC's technical assistance and advisory services, including on trade intelligence. The NTM programme, launched in 2010, has proved highly effective and widely in demand as a leading tool to diagnose and document these important obstacles – it too has been improved and refined.
272. **Specific conclusion:** Assessing downstream impact from awareness-raising activities is, of course, exceptionally difficult, but there is evidence in both cases of these products yielding clear benefits to exporters as well as helping shape policy debates and influenced decisions. The Evaluation's information on the efficiency of the trade intelligence tools gives confidence, and their main reliance on Regular Budget funding is found appropriate to their role in the ITC arsenal, and provides a welcome assurance of their sustainability. The sustainability of the NTM work is likely high into the medium term, given the demand and initial satisfaction with the results. In the longer-term it will of course depend on both the continuing need for the services and whether and how ITC will be in a position to help with the follow-up to the diagnostics.

⁹⁵ It is important to note in considering these findings that ITC's roles in supporting private sector engagement in accession processes is an area where different and sometimes competing interests and perspectives can come into play.

3.4 Results against matrix indicators and issues

273. More generally, as the introductory chapter of the Report, the Methodological Annex and periodic progress reports have made clear, the Evaluation has coped throughout with formidable deficiencies in the availability, organisation and coherence of ITC data from different sources and informed respondents covering the Evaluation period, although there have been clear improvements in internal data over the past 2-3 years. The Report has documented, diagnosed and suggested ways for ITC to overcome these problems in future.

274. Here, however, it is important to specify again that in spite of the data limitations, the Evaluation Team is prepared to present the following findings on the performance and results of ITC's activities together with an assessment of the progress made over the past six years. All the evidence is prefaced by this general caution and each finding is accompanied by unusual, explicit ratings by the Team of the strength of the supporting evidence and the confidence with which it can be asserted. In some cases the Report will note areas where no finding was possible.

Table 9: Summary rating scale

Indicator	Rating scale					
Current fitness rating	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Can't say
Change assessed since 2006	Major positive	Positive	Little or no change	Regression	Major regression	Can't say
Strength of evidence/Confidence ranking scale	Very high {5}	High {4}	Medium {3}	Low {2}	Very Low {1}	-

Table 10: Summary ratings for performance and results since 2006

	Matrix Indicator/Issue	Evaluation criteria	Current fitness rating	Change since 2006	Strength of evidence/confidence
1	Appropriate selection of countries/activities/ delivery agents	Relevance			
	Country selection	-	Fair	Little or no change	3
	Project identification and selection	-	Fair	Little or no change	3
	Project needs assessments	-	Poor	Little or no change	2
2	Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability)	Effectiveness			
	Responsiveness	-	Good	Positive	3
	Design processes and tools	-	Fair	Positive	3

	Cross-cutting goals	-	Poor/ Fair	Positive	3
3	Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use; On-time, on budget delivery	Effectiveness Efficiency			
	Efficient use of resources	Efficiency	Fair	Little or no change	2
4	Effectiveness of implementation and insights on “value for money”	Effectiveness	Fair/ good	Little or no change	2
5	Monitoring and evidence of results/plausible contributions to impacts, including relevant MDGs	Effectiveness Impact	Poor/ Fair	Positive	3
	RBM, logframes and monitoring	-	Poor/ Fair	Positive	3
	Monitoring	-	Poor	Positive	3
	Follow-up assessments	-	Very poor	Little or no change	3
	Independent and donor evaluations		Fair	Positive	3
	Self (decentralized) evaluations		Poor	Can't say	2
6	Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda)	Relevance Effectiveness Efficiency			
	Value-added in AfT	-	Excellent	Major positive	3
	Internally: within ITC?	-	Fair	Positive	3
	With project partners/beneficiaries?	-	Good	Positive	3
	With sponsoring donor/s where applicable	-	Good	Positive	3
	With other Aid for Trade providers or donors?	-	Fair	Little or no change	2
7	Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools	Relevance Effectiveness Impact			
	Overall assessment of sample projects in achieving objectives	-	Fair/ Good	Can't say	1
	Notable accomplishments in sample projects, innovations, sustainability, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools?	-	Good	Can't say	2
	Policy-maker specific	-	Fair/	Can't say	2

			Good		
	TSIs specific	-	Good	Positive	2
	Enterprise specific	-	Fair	Can't say	1
8	Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects	Effectiveness Efficiency			
	Size of projects	-	Can't say	Mixed	2
	Duration of projects	-	Poor	Can't say	2

275. The findings are derived primarily from project assessments across the sample regional portfolios in the 24 selected countries indicated in the table below. The refined sample of projects analysed is available in Annex IV along with the process of arriving at the final sample. These portfolio studies were then especially deepened and validated by the findings from the six country missions and two virtual mission studies in the eight countries noted with asterisks. Further inputs from survey results are integrated where they are especially pertinent. References to projects and countries in the text are illustrative and not exhaustive, unless specifically indicated otherwise.

Table 11: Selection of countries

	Region	Country		Region	Country
1	Africa (East and Southern)	Ethiopia*	13	AP	Bangladesh
2		Kenya	14		Cambodia*
3		Malawi	15		Fiji
4		South Africa	16	LAC	Haiti**
5		Tanzania*	17		Peru
6		Uganda	18		Uruguay**
7	Africa (West and Central)	Benin	19	Arab States	Egypt
8		Cape Verde	20		Jordan
9		Congo Dem Rep	21		Tunisia*
10		Côte d'Ivoire*	22	EECA	Albania
11		Mali	23		Tajikistan
12		Senegal*	24		Kyrgyzstan

*Countries for missions ** "Virtual" country missions

3.4.1 Appropriate selection of countries/activities/delivery agents

276. This set of issues is primarily focussed on the relevance of ITC's activities, and the supporting questions centred on assessing the strength of beneficiary inputs, needs assessment processes, and the influence of funding availabilities.

Country selection

277. The selection of countries for ITC projects is not shaped systematically, but a shifting combination of case-by-case and policy influences such as general targeting to ITC's priority groups, patterns of past activity, ITC contacts and beneficiary requests, and donor specifications, especially in cases where contributions for projects are earmarked geographically. There is no evidence yet of systematic needs assessments preceding the selection of countries for country-based projects, but some less-formal processes are undertaken in the deployment of effort under regional and global projects.

Project identification and selection

278. In five out of six countries covered in most depth, development needs and priorities addressed by TRTA, and by ITC in particular, were ranked on balance as either Top Priorities and Needs for development or Important Priorities and Needs. Ethiopia represented the only exception, especially concerning Trade Related support to policy-makers which were rated as "Non Important Priorities and Needs".

279. Over 80% of the projects examined, were assessed as being aligned with national/institutional strategies of beneficiaries, although these are generally very broad. In several cases studied, however, projects were directly identified via national sectoral or export strategies (e.g. Uganda), or stemmed from priorities identified within the IF/EIF framework (e.g. in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Haiti, Malawi, Mali, and Senegal).

280. Across the project portfolios, there is substantial evidence of beneficiary input in the identification and project selection stage with two-thirds of reporting projects confirming direct beneficiary input at that stage. In virtually all the cases studied, ITC experts and officials were involved at early stages. Across the country mission portfolio, there is no fixed pattern (and often different perspectives) on who took the initiative for projects. The evidence is that the initiative and initial impetus was generally quite evenly spread among ITC product sections, beneficiary requests and donors or came from a combination of the two or three categories of actors.

281. Some of the larger programmes in the sample in particular (e.g. Program of Support for Trade and Regional Integration - PACIR, AAACP, CARIFORUM creative industries, ITC Africa Network, PACT II, Access for African Businesswomen in International Trade - ACCESS) were substantially initiated by the sponsoring donors as part of their larger global programmes and then developed in a collaborative and iterative process with ITC and beneficiaries in individual countries or institutions,

282. There were also other exceptions reported to the more general mixed-initiative pattern. One was in the case of Cambodia where all projects examined were initiated and developed mainly at the request at the beneficiary Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC), in one project in conjunction with the donor and the ITC. A different type of exception was found in the case of the Ethical Fashion Initiative, where the initial project idea and business plan were brought to ITC by a fashion industry expert based on his identification of a market demand for ethical fashion products by the fashion industry.

Project needs assessment

283. In general, there is evidence of a diverse range of “needs assessments”. They ranged from: specific pre-projects or phases in three countries examined (financed by the same sponsoring donor – State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland SECO); to matching specific needs identified by Diagnostic Trade Integrated Study (DTIS) or national export strategies in nine cases; extensive stakeholder consultations documented in several cases; to more focused consultations in virtually all the remainder. As will be seen in later sections – with the possible exception of the one sub-activity already noted in Ethiopia - the Evaluation did not encounter in its sample any cases where there was evidence or a strong suggestion of unneeded ITC projects. At the same time the level of priority for projects is less clear and the Evaluation sample included cases where sectoral activities selected were clearly agreed as high priorities, and others where they were contested.

3.4.2 Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability)

Responsiveness

284. Broadly, there is evidence of involvement from various stakeholders across the majority of projects in the samples, both at the initiation/development stages and in further stages of the project cycle. However, for several of the older projects there was little evidence, given the limited available documentation/information available.

285. In interesting examples, with the Peru projects, extensive consultations were held in different regions across the country. With the Uruguay programme development activities the key stakeholders were involved starting from the initial stage, including close involvement from the Mission of Uruguay in Geneva. As noted in the Mid Term Review of the PACT II programme, those engaged included a wide range of stakeholders such as regional private sector bodies, regional women business networks, sector associations as well as their national chapters and associated institutions. These private sector and public-private networks were engaged at all levels of the programme. For the Women and Coffee programme the project document specified that the IWCA (International Women's Coffee Alliance) was to be strictly involved in the design and discussion of all components of Phase II of the project. The EnACT programme management based on the use of EnACT Steering Committee was designed to allow for beneficiaries to have a more tangible role in the definition of the programme objectives.

286. An integrated Kyrgyzstan project used distinctive approaches to ensuring effective beneficiary involvement and engagement. In the sectoral work, enterprises were found by word of mouth and advertising and the firms which did participate had to cost-share, so there was a “natural selection” process for building buy-in, interest and trust from these selected enterprises.

Design processes and tools

287. There is evidence of a wide variety of tools and processes used across the projects in the sample. Illustrative examples would include: The Bangladesh NTF II project, in which CBI and ITC had a joint feasibility study mission, in which a Logical Framework Analysis at result level was developed. A needs assessment, problem analysis and SWOT analysis were carried out. The Tanzania horticulture project used ITC project templates in the design of the project and with special regard to linking of ITC RBM to the Results Management System for the UNDAF. The Fiji agricultural services project included a variety of tools for the design of the ITC component need assessment analysis, value chain analysis, stakeholder mapping to design activities for this

component. A Uruguay project used the Business Information Review (BIR) tool that was developed by ITC and is also used in other projects of similar nature and focus.

288. Larger programmes naturally tended to have lengthier design processes. For example in the \$20m PACT II. The Mid Term Review (MTR) reported: “... very close consultations were held with all stakeholders, including government officials, business organisations and SME owners in each country were the PACCIA/PACT was to be launched. This was followed by detailed and in-depth analyses of each country’s requirements to achieve its development objectives through trade, as well as assessments of the specific needs of SME owners in terms of developing capacity to export”. As another example, the EnACT programme included an extensive design process, including consultations with stakeholders in each country. Projects documents point to a very flexible, adaptable and iterative design process, also needed because of the political turmoil that affected most of the EnACT countries from early 2011.

289. Projects examined across the six mission countries were all based on a serviceable design process, including close consultations with beneficiaries and various stakeholders (as in Ethiopia). In the Textile Value Chain Approach (Design and Development Phase) project in Tunisia, amongst interviews and meetings with the Ministry of Trade and key TSIs, a survey of around 120 SMEs from the textile sector served as the foundation for the project design. Quite often, the design process builds on previous needs assessment studies, development frameworks or past successful programmes/projects. For example, the Project for Community Tourism Development in Senegal was designed accordingly to the Enhanced Integrated Framework; the Sector Wide Silk Project II and High Value Silk in Cambodia were designed starting from the Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme (EPRP) and from the National Silk Strategy elaborated in 2006 and updated in 2009; PACTII and Access II project development built upon previous PACT and Access! initiatives, while integrating extensive preparatory work and additional consultations with the three Regional Economic Communities involved, mirroring the enhanced emphasis placed on regional integration.

Cross-cutting goals

290. Cross-cutting issues were considered in design to differing degrees across the portfolio sample and the mission country programmes, the range included:

- A few projects highly targeted to poverty reduction, gender equity and/or environmental sustainability;
- A substantial block of trade promotion projects with reasonably explicit integration of these goals into design;
- A similar group of projects (including some major ones) where hoped-for positive effects in these areas were referred to but implicitly expected to follow indirectly from the economic benefits of trade; and
- A few projects for which the records did not include evidence of taking these factors into consideration.⁹⁶

291. Given the different focus, age, and size of these projects it would not be meaningful to try simply to tabulate these categories, but rather to trace the different patterns with examples and check for trends. Across the country mission portfolio in particular, there is strong evidence that poverty reduction, and, to a lesser extent, gender equality, were considered in the design stage, even if targeted only indirectly. Inclusion of

⁹⁶ As noted elsewhere ITC, like many other development agencies, is unclear about how to effectively “mainstream” cross-cutting goals across its work – distinguishing from carrying out targeted projects - and is wrestling specifically with gender and environmental sustainability.

environmental sustainability concerns in the project design phase, however, was not strong or consistent across the countries.

292. More than rhetorical links to advancing the MDGs were found in several projects, e.g. the Poor Communities in Trade Program (PCTP) aims at contributing to the achievement of key MDGs, as it will develop a form of sustainable global partnership for development (MDG 8), that will contribute to substantially reduce levels of extreme poverty (MDG 1) and will empower women entrepreneurs (MDG 3), whilst contributing to a better environment (MDG 7). The program aims at supporting mostly women entrepreneurs.
293. Poverty reduction was an explicitly important goal for projects in Cambodia (e.g. support to poor silk producing communities), Tunisia (e.g. business development and employment generation in regions lagging behind), Côte d'Ivoire and Tanzania, but mainly treated as implicit and indirect in the very large trade-enabling project in Côte d'Ivoire. In Senegal project development followed the Accelerated Growth Strategy, whose origin draws on poverty reduction and wealth creation. In Ethiopia, the liberalisation of the service sector pursued under the WTO project was considered in line with the poverty reduction strategy of the country. Both PACT II and its gender-oriented component Access! II explicitly aimed at poverty reduction via increased capacity for exports for farmers and producers involved in the textile and leather sectors. In some project cases, (e.g., in Malawi and South Africa) there is evidence that a direct connection to poverty reduction was fed by the UNDAF requirements. In Peru a poverty reduction focus was evidenced in the selection of one of the poorer regions in the country for projects.
294. Although poverty reduction and gender mainstreaming were among the objectives of the EnACT programme and the Strengthening the Textile Value Chain approach in Tunisia (Design and Development Phase), respondents rated the inclusion of cross-cutting issues in the design phase mostly as fair. Large TRTA providers seem to be much better known under these aspects, in particular the World Bank, the EU GIZ, AfDB and UNIDO.
295. Gender mainstreaming in project design was found uniformly positive in Cambodia. However, in the other countries under examination, evidence collected might suggest that gender mainstreaming in project design is ensured only in the case of projects specifically targeting women, such as Access! II implemented in 19 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa) and Women Business Enterprises in Peru. There is some evidence promoting opportunities for women in the design of other projects in Senegal, but very little in Côte d'Ivoire. For the Strengthening the Textile Value Chain approach in Tunisia (Design and Development Phase), youth employment was an important factor, as this project took into account the new economic challenges faced by Tunisia (notably on employment) after the major changes in the political situation. The Uruguay trade intelligence programme included youth and gender as criteria in the selection of training participants.
296. Apart from the ITC's dedicated Sustainable Development projects examined, environmental sustainability was also considered indirectly at best in most of the projects in the sample, with exceptions such as the Haiti mango design. It was noted that projects funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) had required an Environmental Impact Assessment.

3.4.3 Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use: on-time, on budget delivery

297. In this area of the Evaluation, mainly concerned with the efficiency of ITC's operations, the Report is able to rely on a fairly strong base of quantified evidence from project questionnaires and country mission interviews.

298. **Timeliness.** It is not always straightforward to date initial project ideas or track the time from then to implementation, but in general the average is estimated at around one year, though with significant variations across the sample. Unsurprisingly, smaller, less complex projects tended to take less time to launch, whereas larger multi-faceted projects tended to take more. A handful of projects reported delays attributed to funding issues (e.g. SADC SCM) organisational issues for beneficiaries (two clear examples) or a combination of factors (in one case partly attributed to ITC’s Change Management process). Examples cited of “fast track” projects include the Bangladesh NTF II and Cariforum creative industries, as well as a number of standalone single-product projects. Focusing on individual projects 41 respondents (mainly project managers) rated the efficiency (result for the time and effort invested) of the design process as follows: 17% Excellent, 44% good, 17% fair, 12% poor.

299. With respect to the efficiency and flexibility of implementation, and then key factors affecting the results a wider and mixed sample of respondents in interviews and country missions responded as shown below.

Efficient use of resources

Table 12: Was implementation?

	Yes	No	Can't Say	No. of projects
On schedule?	61%	36%	2%	44
On budget?	80%	7%	13%	44
Flexible when needed?	92%	3%	3%	39

300. Overall ITC project implementation was assessed as being on budget in five out of the six countries examined, while evidence provided by respondents is mixed for one country. In two cases, respondents claimed that ITC had left unpaid project balances (e.g. one TSI did not receive expected reimbursement by ITC) but the Evaluation was not in a position to validate such claims. In another case in a mission country, implementation and funding arrangements did not follow the original project design, with the result that beneficiary communities never saw expected local activities funded. At the time of the present Evaluation, the project is yet to be closed officially.

301. With only small numbers of respondents, evidence for on-time project delivery across the mission countries is mixed: in Tanzania, Côte d’Ivoire and Cambodia this was rated overall negatively; in Tunisia and Ethiopia overall positively; in Senegal, it received negative and positive assessments in equal number. However, where the project initiation or implementation was delayed, this was not always ITC’s responsibility. In the case of PACT II, the schedule for project activities kept being changed, but this was due to the overall length of the programme management chain, from ITC to country beneficiaries. On the other hand, political turmoil in the some Arab countries delayed the implementation of the EnACT programme by 9 months, but ITC management allowed for EnACT to maintain its momentum. In Côte d’Ivoire, all projects were executed beyond the expected time specified in the original MoUs because of the major political and military crisis in the country, but ITC was reportedly slower than other agencies to re-start its operations.

302. Except for Ethiopia, evidence from country reports suggests that ITC project management was overall found to be flexible when needed regarding changes in design, budget and schedule.

Table 13: Factors in implementation

How were the results of the project affected by:	Positive	Negative	Can't Say	Number of projects
Technical expertise available	90%		10%	41
Country knowledge	76%	5%	19%	41
Money for travel and other costs	73%	5%	22%	41
Sufficient support staff	64%	21%	15%	42
Client commitment	70%	18%	12%	40
Client capacities	66%	20%	14%	41
Internal negotiations	62%	21%	17%	39
External procurement or contracting	51%	16%	33%	37

- 303.** Overall project management by ITC was on average ranked as “good” across the six countries examined. In Ethiopia, Senegal and Cambodia management and communication were considered satisfactory and budget delivery was timely.
- 304.** Across all countries examined, ITC performed on average between fair and good in the indicators relating to implementation capacity (“Time between project conception and implementation”, “Administrative processes”, “Procurement and Contracting”, “Decision making”, “Duration of Projects”, and “Budget disbursed on time and sufficient”). On the last two counts, considerable concern was expressed in a good number of cases that project durations were too short to achieve intended results, and budgets too low. In Ethiopia and Cambodia performance on these points was rated as good, while in Côte d’Ivoire and Tunisia as fair. For Tanzania, even though there were some delays to start projects, the ITC delays were considered relatively shorter than for other donors. And the projects that usually started late were in some cases extended to compensate for the delayed start. As for the adequacy of funding to proposed objectives, the view is that even though funding may be sufficient to meet stated objectives, it is less than needed to create impact. This was also attributed to the nature and duration of some projects (e.g. in Senegal, all respondents suggested that the training and familiarisation with ITC tools are not sufficient to promote exports).
- 305.** Notably, even with limited or no field presence in most countries, ITC’s country knowledge as well as technical expertise were rated highly, and ITC staff was considered accessible and supportive throughout all the countries examined and across different projects, with critical views from one or two respondents in Senegal. On the other hand, the lack of in-country presence was perceived as leaving no room to assure continuity of projects and develop new ones

3.4.4 Effectiveness of implementation and insights on “value for money”

- 306.** Overall the effectiveness of implementation is considered good in all countries examined, supplemented by strong positive feedbacks that were volunteered on specific projects, regional and country based, and very few noted as ineffectively implemented. However, notwithstanding consistent positive evaluations on the achievement of stated objectives, the aggregate assessment of respondents across the board on the “value for money” in ITC projects presents a less positive if somewhat confused and contradictory picture.

307. The portfolio study, weighted heavily toward project managers' assessments and documentary analysis on this question, came up with the following positive reading across 32 projects: 17% excellent, 53% good, 6% fair, 1% poor.
308. It is important to note that the questionnaire used for this portfolio examination explicitly spelled out the Evaluation's definition of the controversial "value for money" term: "The economical, efficient and effective use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes, compared to possible alternatives,"
309. On the other hand, in the mission countries, respondents' perceptions rated ITC's "value for money" between "poor" and "fair" in Cambodia, "fair" in Senegal and Tunisia and between "fair" and "good" in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Côte d'Ivoire.⁹⁷ The more negative readings are consistent with responses on perceptions regarding the share of project spending reaching the beneficiaries after international overheads, which fared between "poor" and "fair" in Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia, "poor" in Senegal, "fair" in Tanzania and only in Ethiopia "good". In analysing the comments around these responses, recurring themes are criticisms around perceived large shares of the budget going for high international consultant fees and travel expenses including costs for ITC staff to serve projects from Geneva.
310. It is not clear to what extent the Evaluation's specific definition of "value for money" was, or could have been, considered in many of the responses from the field.⁹⁸ What is also unclear is how much information lies behind these perceptions, since the Evaluation found that financial data on ITC project budgets and spending are very often not known to partners and beneficiaries, and cost information on possible alternatives may be similarly lacking. ITC's international consultant rates are almost certainly not higher than comparably skilled alternatives from other agencies, and probably lower.⁹⁹ And the relative costs and benefits of agencies posting field staff – seen by some respondents to be cheaper – are also complicated, depending on the functions involved, etc. There is also evidence from the field missions of ITC's readiness to seek out and use local consultants where available (for instance on the EnACT programme), and at the ITC-wide level the 2012 Annual Report states that in that year, 64% of the experts used were from developing and transition countries (both in terms of number of assignments and work-months).¹⁰⁰
311. In retrospect, the Evaluation's questionnaire design on "the share of project spending reaching the beneficiaries after international overheads" was also probably badly framed, as was initially found when translation proved very difficult. The question reflected a concern, as with all development assistance, that the maximum benefits should reach the beneficiaries and not "stick in the pipeline." What it did not sufficiently take into account is that ITC is mainly and explicitly a provider of specialized services, rather than finance, with minimal amounts of money in most cases to help support the technical assistance beneficiaries to take part.
312. In sum, the Evaluation's unclear evidence on this important "value for money" question raises a major cautionary note about how that concept is used and interpreted in the evaluation of an international technical assistance provider such as ITC. But the important fact remains for ITC that there are significant perceptions among some of its stakeholders that it is a less-supportive "donor" or at best a high-cost service provider, even while they recognize its expertise and effective delivery. Bearing in mind the important caveats about trying to use data on overheads and consultant and other input costs to assess value for money and the fragmentary character of the data available, the

⁹⁷ It is important to stress that these were informants' perceptions, often noting that the informants had limited access to financial information, and were not broken down by individual projects.

⁹⁸ In an attempt at brevity, the definition was not spelled out in the field instruments.

⁹⁹ As the 2006 Evaluation suggested.

¹⁰⁰ ITC Annual Report, p. 105

Evaluation did collect some data on overheads and other costs from some Programme / Project Evaluations (see “Examples of overhead costs in ITC projects”, page 70 of Annex VII)

3.4.5 Monitoring and evidence of results/plausible contributions to impacts, including relevant MDGs

313. In some of the questions around this important set of issues the Evaluation also found significant differences of perspective between headquarters and the field, or between ITC and its clients with respect to evidence on impacts, and especially on sustainability. Across the Evaluation’s portfolio assessments of projects since 2006, a direct question was asked in HQ interviews and document review about evidence of projects’ impacts in relation to key development goals, with the following results:

Table 14: Evidence on perceptions of impact

Is there credible evidence on the project’s	Yes	No	Can’t Say	No. of projects
Economic impact	23%	32%	45%	44
Social impact	18%	34%	48%	44
Environmental impact	7%	31%	62%	42
Sustainability	42%	18%	40%	45

314. These HQ findings, cross-checked against the results of the Evaluation’s “ground-truthing” field missions outlined below, reflect several important points.

315. The fact that the largest share of responses in all but one case falls into the “can’t say” column is a credible result which indicates two realities at once. First, that it is early and often would stretch credible evidence to claim such impacts from many TRTA projects in such a period; and second, that ITC’s available means for tracing and demonstrating such results are anyway still under-developed.

316. Taking account of the points above, the Evaluation finds these indications of significant but not massive economic and social impacts from ITC projects to be positive and credible. The much lower claim of evidence on environmental impact is also highly plausible, since this goal has only been articulated more recently for ITC work and, apart from the dedicated projects, the expected chain of causality is still much less clear than for economic and social impacts. Of course, the negative findings on all these questions are somewhat difficult to interpret as they might be taken either to mean that there is no impact or that credible evidence is lacking, or both.

317. What is more challenging to interpret – alongside the readings from the Evaluation’s field missions - is the strength of the positive finding from the HQ perspective as to evidence of the sustainability of benefits from ITC projects.¹⁰¹ This contrasts with the Evaluation’s general reading from the ground, detailed below, that sustainability is not ensured at all for most projects. On further analysis, the Evaluation finds this contrast to be an important reflection of the different ways this question may now be seen from HQ and the field. From the HQ perspective, the question may well be interpreted as meaning,

¹⁰¹ In retrospect once again, when such differing evidence emerges, it would have been desirable to have much more precise definitions on all such issues, but this would never have been possible in such a comprehensive evaluation. It is very important, of course, to note the highly varied character of ITC’s services, for which definitions of sustainable benefits would also differ greatly.

“has this project left some enduring benefits?” to which the answer would certainly be expected to be positive in a large share of cases. From the more immediate field perspective, the Evaluation found that the question was interpreted more as meaning, “have enough of the expected benefits of the project been securely put in place, and/or arrangements made to follow-up, to say that its intended results will be sustainable?”

Specific conclusion: In terms of project duration, the finding from the field missions was widely one of concern that projects had been terminated too soon, and not followed up enough, or at all, to protect and build on the gains that had been made in trade development work that is mostly longer term by nature.

318. Importantly, even though the question was not explicitly asked in these terms, there was no suggestion in the Evaluation’s evidence of negative, unintended impacts from ITC’s activities.
319. All of these points in turn underline the importance of ITC having the best possible systems to monitor, measure and demonstrate credible results from its work. The Evaluation gave considerable attention to ITC’s progress on these fronts in all parts of the review of performance since 2006. Key breakdowns and examples from the Evaluation’s evidence base are summarized below.
320. **Economic and social impact:** on average, respondents in the on-the-ground mission countries arrived at either positive perceptions (Senegal), the view that it is too early to say (Tanzania, Côte d’Ivoire), or mixed judgements - positive/too early to say (in Ethiopia and Cambodia) or fair/too early to say (in Tunisia). The results in the virtual mission countries also differed: in Haiti, the assessment of clear contributions to long-term country capacities in the economic, social and environmental areas ranged between poor and very poor; in Uruguay, on the other hand, the assistance of ITC is assessed as contributing positively or very positively to the country’s long-term capacities in the economic, social and environmental areas, as well as providing a clear contribution to social, economic and environmental results as a direct outcome of its projects. In Senegal some evidence of direct economic impact was judged as clear, with rapid increases in sales for SMEs that benefited from business development trips to Europe and America; for Ethiopia market linkages were built both in the PACT, Access! and Women in Trade programmes. Except for Cambodia, where all respondents answered positively, there is no homogenous perception of social impact (including changes in gender relations), following ITC projects in the countries examined. In Tanzania and Côte d’Ivoire, all respondents said it is too soon to say anything firm in this regard and little evidence was found in Senegal. In Ethiopia, respondents involved in PACT II and Access II valued the social impact as “positive” while a respondent from the WTO Accession project reported it as too early to form an opinion. In Tunisia respondents on average valued social impact between “fair” and “poor” or, once again, as impossible to say due to the short time elapsed from projects’ completion, or the limited scale and influence of ITC projects in the country.
321. **Environmental impact:** apart from targeted projects, the readings regarding environmental impact across the mission country portfolio either see no evidence (Ethiopia, Cambodia, Tanzania, Haiti) or cannot assess this due to the short time elapsed from the projects’ end (Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Tunisia), with the Uruguay results (noted above) seeing some evidence of benefits, presumably longer-term.
322. **The sustainability of project benefits:** the Evaluation’s general reading from the ground is that sustainability is not ensured at all for most projects. The reasons cited include: the lack of country strategies in which scattered initiatives can be anchored and built upon for the longer-term, short time frames and, in most cases, no provision for ITC to follow-up, assess and help sustain benefits achieved. Some believe (cited in Cambodia) that the benefits of ITC projects are difficult to sustain because of what are seen as ITC’s high costs. In Senegal, the enterprises met appreciated highly the services rendered to them during the projects’ implementation a few years back.

However, they expressed a need for a regular check up by ITC to consolidate the achievements and develop new strategic directions to enhance trade. In Uruguay there is (early) evidence of high sustainability: the platform for trade intelligence is reported to be actively used and maintained by the counterparts and key beneficiaries, and the Training Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Uruguay is replicating the ITC training course. In Cambodia, the limited project funding available for activities in the target communities and further follow-up reduced the potential for sustainability.

RBM, logframes and monitoring

323. Overall, feedback on ITC's RBM system was limited: it was "not relevant" for many as the ITC RBM system was not in place until 2012, after many of the sample projects were over. Moreover, many informants outside ITC were simply unaware of the system.
324. In the limited assessments that were obtained (18) of ITC's RBM systems in projects the overall ratings (not counting "can't say" responses) were as follows: excellent 17%, good 55%, fair 22%, poor 6%. In Peru it was noted that the RBM System is a significant process by ITC, but corporate outcome indicators of ITC and project indicators needs to be still better aligned and defined (fine tuning). On the Meso Level (level of TSIs) indicators are better defined.
325. On the usefulness of the logframe in projects, there were more responses (28) with the following ratings: 11% excellent, 54% good, 29% fair, 7% poor (not counting "can't say" responses).
326. Across the mission countries, the log-frame, indicators and actual monitoring and reporting for the overall country portfolio are rated on average as good, except for Uruguay (time/effort for monitoring and reporting between fair and poor). In Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia they were considered between "good" and "excellent", while in Tunisia the log-frame was not shared with all beneficiaries or was not completely clear to them. In Tanzania, the log frame was shared with the first level beneficiaries, while the second level beneficiaries depended on the capacity of the latter to disseminate and clarify this type of information. Reporting for some projects was regular though the reporting frequency was not specified for some projects Monitoring was done on a regular basis in Tanzania, Tunisia, Senegal and Ethiopia (although the modalities were not known in detail by most of respondents). In Ethiopia it was stressed that the baseline and outcomes of the projects are intrinsically hard to quantify so although the logframe and reporting mechanisms are in place it is hard to objectively assess how well the project has fared. In Côte d'Ivoire the dominant multi-faceted project followed and was monitored against the logframe agreed with the EU, and monitored through the high level steering committee. In Tunisia, projects were closely monitored as per donors' requirements (e.g. EnACT funded by CIDA and the Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers funded by SECO). The situation in Cambodia is not clear. In Uruguay, for a smaller project which was very focused, the indicators provided in the original project document were useful and well defined to monitor the implementation of the project

327. Related and additional issues that were registered included: insufficient clarity and articulation (Benin); lack of baseline data and vague indicators, political factors not taken into account (Peru); complexities in aligning ITC and donor frameworks (Kyrgyzstan, and NTM programme); challenges in taking time to critically think about developing a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework and actually sustain regular monitoring and reporting under pressure of crises (as in Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC). On the positive side, according to the external Evaluation Report on Bangladesh NTF II, the quality of monitoring data and information collected improved once 2011 RBM was developed. It recommends, “all reporting should systematically use the RBM framework to report on results with close management oversight.”
328. Influenced by the project/programme logframes and M&E systems applied, including project donor systems in some cases, different monitoring and reporting mechanisms were put in place, depending largely on the size of the project. Regular and detailed reporting to mixed steering committees was found (e.g. in EnACT, Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers, PACIR, and Tanzania horticulture), to monthly and quarterly reports (cases in South Africa), to more informal and less frequent monitoring arrangements (reported in Haiti and Kyrgyzstan), to some cases where it was not clear how outputs/outcomes would be monitored (e.g. one reported in Cambodia). Some project donors exerted substantial influence on reporting demands. E.g. CIDA and EU-financed projects tended to have clear reporting and M&E frameworks (e.g. PACIR, EnACT and in Fiji).
329. In some less-frequently monitored projects it was reportedly the result of a trade-off between using the set amount of money for core activities vs. M&E, but some did rely more on evaluations. In one Senegal project the high turnover of people managing the project and a non-involvement of local people and disconnection from the field limited timely reports and monitoring, and these issues are unlikely to be unique.
330. Going beyond conventional monitoring, the Ethical fashion Initiative reports carrying out regular work of “social impact assessment” through a new methodology developed by the programme. ITC claims that this “Performance, Compliance, Monitoring and Evaluation protocol” enables the initiative to monitor, evaluate and provide feedback on compliance with fair labour standards and the impact the Initiative has on people and the communities they live in. The two examples obtained by the Evaluation Team document the short-term results of individual export orders completed.

Follow-up assessments and evaluations

331. In around two-thirds of projects examined, the Evaluation found little or no evidence of resources being provided or plans made for post-completion follow-up or exit/sustainability strategies, and even proper completion reports were not available for many projects. This applied in all mission countries except for Tunisia and partially Cambodia. In Senegal, Uruguay and Côte d'Ivoire arrangements for follow up were considered poor or very poor. In Senegal the only substantive contact remains with the EIF for the formulation of a new project on the mango value chain, but the CBI also has a project in process for the follow up of the activity on the mango value chain under the NTF II. Respondents in Tunisia recognised ITC ability to follow up well on projects.
332. Larger programmes tend to have MTRs and evaluations (PACT II, EnACT, NTF), and EU-funded projects are also required to have evaluations, but apparently more targeted to strict budget closing routines and schedules than follow-up assessments. The Cariforum creative industries project will be evaluated in 2014, but no funds were allocated for follow up assessment.
333. In one very interesting model, NTF II evaluations include a first evaluation on accountability and governance/management (2013), with a second evaluation planned to assess impact two years later (2014-15).

334. In some of these cases, the evaluations clearly have a view to testing the feasibility and approach for follow-up or successor programmes. The AAACP programme included an additional follow-up project called “Project development – Capitalising on Results from the AAACP Programme” (\$45k) encompassing both the development of the 10th EDF cotton project and a separate report drawing conclusions and lessons learned, disseminated in the final report and evaluation with the EU. In some cases, (e.g. in Central Asia and Tunisia) it is pointed out how good continuing relationships with beneficiaries and the donor, and evident satisfaction, has led to follow-up activities. More typical by far was the finding in one South Africa project “No budget was provided for this. There was no concrete exit strategy in place. However, the local national experts and the [institution] were advised to follow up the farmers.” In the case of two projects, one in Egypt and the second one in Tunisia, only the first phases (Phase 1) were completed, due to unavailability of funds / approval of the implementation of subsequent phases. In particular, in the case of the HP-ITC Partnership for Micro Enterprise Acceleration, in Egypt, remaining funds were returned to the donor, and overall the project was considered by respondents as lacking ambition and accompanying measures to beneficiaries after completion.
335. At the level of small training workshops and other event-based activities, the Evaluation had seen examples of post-meeting evaluation questionnaires in a number of projects and did test to see whether it had been standard practice to administer and then use them in learning for future events. A very brief survey and request for examples was sent to 79 project managers, and 25 responses were received. Table 15 below summarizes the quantitative responses which were supplemented by thoughtful answers to the open-ended questions, including on ways that the results are and can be used. Six officers responded to the request to provide a total of 12 sample evaluation forms/questionnaires that they have used.

Table 15: Survey of project managers on post-event evaluation

	Always	Mostly	Sometimes	Never
For workshops, seminars and training events, do you now (from 2006 up to now) collect participants’ feedback at the end of the events?	71%	21%	7%	0%
Prior to 2006, would this have been done?	43%	21%	36%	0%
Do you summarise the responses/feedback?	86%	14%	0%	0%
Do you retain the participants’ names and contact information?	71%	14%	14%	0%

336. The self-selected respondents are likely to have applied these tools more than the average. But the Evaluation found this input sufficient to demonstrate that there are at least strong pockets of good practice in ITC to systematically secure and use feedback on shorter-term training, workshops, business-to-business meetings and the like, importantly including the retention and following-up contacts. Without attempting to over-standardize instruments or approaches, there are key elements, learning and resources for ITC in this type of immediate follow-up to activities. Without huge investment of time or money this could be scaled up considerably and to very good effect.
337. In relation to larger projects examined, in PCTP Ethical Fashion, reportedly nine seminar/workshops have been implemented so far in Haiti. Before and after each order a small “impact” assessment was done to gather data on living standards, income, social problems, gender status, community health, sanitation, environmental problems, the ability to pay for medical expenses and children’s education. Independent inspectors

evaluated change. For T4SD in Peru no follow-up assessment has been conducted after the project (in this case the three training workshops) were completed. Seminar participants completed a seminar evaluation form right at the end of each workshop. But there is no standardized procedure to go back (e.g. 3-6 months after) and to ask the participants what they have done with the information/knowledge they acquired during the training workshop and what changes they have made.

3.4.6 Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda)

338. The Evaluation's assessment of ITC's coordination and cooperation with other actors began by adding the key dimension of coordination and cooperation within ITC itself, bearing in mind the 2006 evaluation's findings about the Centre's fragmented character, and also recognizing that many of its outside relationships are in fact carried separately by individual technical or geographic sections.
339. Around these questions there do not seem to be major disconnects between the top-down perspective, gleaned from documents and interviews at ITC HQ, as summarized in Table 16 below, and the findings from the Evaluation's country missions, elaborated in the discussion that follows.
340. Internal coordination is ranked very positively (89% excellent or good) but this average reading should bear in mind that some-single discipline projects do not require much internal coordination as they are basically run by single sections, so the rating for complex, multi-disciplinary projects would be somewhat less upbeat. Nonetheless, in spite of evidence of inevitable tensions over responsibilities, leadership, shares of funding, etc., the picture of coordination over 2006-2012 is far from the atomised, semi-chaotic view that might have been taken from the 2006 finding. ITCs special challenges of matrix management with scarce resources are still apparent, as are the still-uncertain roles and capacities of some of the geographic sections and the uncertainties about how ITC can best manage large projects. With a few exceptions, it is important to note that internal coordination difficulties in Geneva were rarely registered by ITC's partners and beneficiaries on the ground.
341. Regarding the collaboration and cooperation between ITC its key stakeholders and partners across the Evaluation's mission countries, average ratings were good or between good and excellent, except in Tanzania (where cooperation was rated on average between poor and fair), as elaborated below.

Table 16: Coordination/cooperation¹⁰²

	Excellent	Good	(Excellent + Good)	Fair	Poor	# of responses
Internally: within ITC?	37%	53%	(89%)	11%	0%	38
With project partners/beneficiaries?	37%	45%	(82%)	11%	8%	38
With sponsoring donor/s where applicable	32%	58%	(90%)	6%	3%	31
With other Aid for Trade providers or donors?	20%	44%	(64%)	32%	4%	25

Internally within ITC

342. Illustrating the special challenges with coordinating large, multi-disciplinary projects, PACT II was reported as difficult especially given the additional dimensions of working with the principal beneficiaries and outside collaborators in the RECs. Coordination by the geographic section was reportedly complicated by a succession of leadership and personnel changes. With EnACT there is a perception of a lack of overall internal visibility - technical sections are only aware of the activities they are involved in and are therefore unable to seek synergies. Concerns included a “lack of communication”, the absence of formal performance agreements between technical sections and the Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) and a subsequent lack of internal buy in of EnACT.” In one Tanzania project diverging interests and demands were reported to have created a fractured approach making the inclusion of field inputs difficult.” On the other hand, the evidence shows that when things work well in multi-disciplinary projects, some country offices may be able to play important roles in coordinating and promoting synergies. In one example, Peru projects reportedly benefited from good cooperation between sections (the Office of Latin America and Caribbean –OLAC-, Sector Competitiveness – SC-, Enterprise Competitiveness – EC- , and TSI). At least in part because of language requirements, projects in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, appeared to have stronger and more successful coordinating roles by the geographical section.

343. In another interesting finding about internal collaboration and cooperation two important, and newer, ITC product lines were identified as needing much more internal knowledge, as a basis for external advocacy and marketing. On NTMs it was stressed that “It is very important that country officers know about the tool (NTM Survey) and also understand how it works and how it is applied in order to be able to tell their contacts in the respective countries about it (marketing aspect). They need to feel comfortable with it and also comfortable to be able to explain it to somebody who has never heard about the NTM Survey.” On T4SD, the Evaluation heard, “Communication within ITC is key. It is important that staff in other sections (geographic as well as technical/product sections) know about the tool and how it is used (e.g. usage, key benefits, etc.). We still feel that many ITC officers are not sufficiently aware about our offering (in this case about the standard Map) and therefore think that it would be a very good idea to organise training for ITC staff as well. In the case of Peru for example, the OLAC Section knew about the tool and was able to discuss it with the client who subsequently requested it.”

With project partners/beneficiaries

¹⁰² As one check on the representativeness of the sample, across the 33 projects with responses on this point in the portfolio sample, cooperation/coordination was rated by ITC informants, relative to other ITC projects in their experience, as smooth or very smooth for two-thirds of projects and difficult for one-third.

344. Illustrating some of the positive readings found across different regions and types of project: The Uruguay assessment found an ‘excellent working relationship between the OLAC Section and technical sections within ITC’ and good relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and national Training School. Moreover, the proactive role of the Mission of Uruguay in Geneva could be an example for other countries on how to interact with ITC. In the DRC SME finance project, the ministry of SMEs welcomed the project and accepted to champion it and to help scaling up of the project. TSIs, banks and financial institutions, and other AfT organisations were all cooperative. Within UNDP, the cooperation was good but strained under financial pressures. In the Bangladesh NTF II project, ITC’s strong network and know-how for Business to Business (B2B) were highlighted. In Benin, working with EIF, the objectives and activities implemented by ITC for this project well fit into ITC areas of expertise (supply side, business environment and market entry) and levels of intervention (in this project, at the enterprise and institutional - TSIs- level). Four of ITC’s sections (EC, SC, Trade Intelligence - TI- and TSIs) were interlinked in project implementation. The Evaluation found evidence that the beneficiary is satisfied with ITC’s customised approach, quality and timeliness of project outputs. A challenge for ITC is to build strategic partnerships with key actors such as the Chamber of Commerce. In Peru, meanwhile, the evidence is clear that Trade and Environment Programme (TEP) had a constructive working relationship with PROMPERU.
345. On the other side of the coin, coordination with project partners and beneficiaries can be extremely difficult, even blocking forward movement. In Haiti, cooperation with the public authorities rates only either fair or poor. For example, in the project development for Institutional Strengthening of the MoT, the DTIS of the Ministry was carried out and provided input for project development, but validation by the Ministry was still missing many months later in spite of follow-up efforts. Overall, in Haiti various factors which seem crucial to a successful TRTA, and cooperation/coordination with policy-makers in particular, which were missing in the case of ITC. These include: lack of key persons/contacts of reference in the country knowledgeable about the complexity of the Haitian institutional infrastructure and Haitian overall context; competition with other donors, where larger donors drew away the attention of Haitian counterparts to the detriment of ITC projects; and communication and coordination with a national consultant coordinating a project in Haiti was very difficult and complicated official relations. As noted, in PACT II the different challenges of working effectively with RECs were a complicating factor. In Senegal, earlier collaboration between the Government and ITC was found to have faded due to lack of responsiveness by the authorities and enterprises not being pro-active, compounded by ITC’s lack of continuing presence. One association interviewed cited trying to be kept on an ITC mailing list without success.

With sponsoring donor/s where applicable

346. Corroborating the positive overall rating above, the Evaluation has not found evidence of any serious problems in coordination and cooperation with a significant range of different sponsoring donors over the sample. The official survey responses of JAG members generally confirm this picture from the donors’ side. But this reading also bears closely in mind the special stake but lesser project-by-project engagement of the “un-earmarked” Window 1 donors, and the important confidence-building concerns that many supportive donors have signalled about the need to further improve ITC’s overall reporting of plans, performance and results through all its funding channels, as well as internal management. This finding comes in spite of all the normal pressures and complications that always arise in international development programmes and projects. The challenges most often identified in these collaborations have tended to be around schedules and meshing RBM and reporting requirements, with mention of a need to coordinate better around some evaluations. In Benin (and a range of other countries) ITC’s selection to work on EIF projects has highlighted its credibility and competencies and reinforced its positioning in the country. The fact that ITC is responsible for

implementing six EIF Tier 2 projects, for a total value of \$11.7 million is noteworthy here, even though only one – in Cambodia - falls within the Evaluation’s sample. In Bangladesh NTF, ITC has had a strong strategic partnership with CBI and wants to replicate this type of partnership in other areas. As noted, TEP partnered closely with SECO and with GIZ in Peru and ensured a dovetailed approach on supporting the effective trade promotion of biodiversity based products.

With other Aid for Trade providers or donors

347. Table 16 above shows a lower response rate and a somewhat less positive, but still not negative, rating of ITC’s collaboration and cooperation with other AfT donors and providers. This is consistent with the evidence from the country missions. The overall picture that emerges is one of largely parallel operations by providers in countries, occasionally collaborating or competing directly, but more often with each operating in its own sphere of specialization, with little reference to or knowledge of other providers at work. The structures and processes for aid coordination and harmonisation expected under the Paris Declaration were generally not found prominent in relation to TRTA in the sample countries, with the exceptions that the national EIF and donor facilitation structures in some of the LDCs can clearly play these roles, and that in Cambodia, there is strong national ownership and leadership from the responsible Ministry.
348. With respect to the larger providers of aid for trade financing, a similar situation seems to prevail in these countries, with a tendency for them to mount large “full-service” projects with major financial aid and internalized or contracted technical assistance support as needed. There are important exceptions, which call on other specialized international resources - as in substantial regional and national programmes deployed by the EU, Canada, Switzerland and others - but this is still not widespread practice for most such large donors. Moreover, in this still compartmentalized Aid for Trade environment in countries ITC, with its specialized areas and lack of country presence, is less visible than most others, sometimes becoming known and called upon, even for major engagements, through haphazard contacts and recommendations.
349. Looking across the country mission findings ITC’s risks for duplication or competition with other TRTA providers were found to be high in Tanzania, Tunisia and Ethiopia and very high in Haiti. Some specific findings in this area from the portfolio analyses and country missions are as follows: in Fiji, coordination has proved an important challenge as ITC is implementing only one component of a larger umbrella project and there is a large number of development projects in the agro-food sectors; in Côte d’Ivoire parallel cooperation under the same large umbrella EU project has worked well with the World Customs Organisation and reasonably well with UNIDO.
350. In Cariforum, ITC also created useful links with WIPO, working in their complementary areas; in Benin it is seen as a challenge to ensure alignment between ITC activities and other TRTA projects / programmes being implemented by other partner agencies (bilateral: particularly France, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium; multilateral; and Non-Governmental Organisations - NGOs); in Tanzania, the chances of duplicating efforts were found to be worsened by the physical absence of ITC from the country although cooperation between TRTA providers was found to have improved much over the recent years; respondents in Haiti indicated that TRTA in the country is either duplicating or competing - there is little cooperation and coordination, notwithstanding the presence of a donor coordination group in the country. ITC’s efforts are seen to have suffered from the presence of much larger donors which capture the attention of local counterparts (public sector, or other stakeholders and beneficiaries), affecting the quality of project implementation and potential project impacts. For example, when the Tropical Fruit Export project was being implemented, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) started to implement a similar project with a budget 10 times larger, diverting the attention of the local counterparts from their work

with ITC. In Cambodia there is strong evidence of TRTA providers cooperating satisfactorily under the coordination of the Ministry of Commerce Before the DTIS in 2007, all TRTA providers were working separately, but the DTIS has empowered beneficiaries to take the initiative for project ideas and thus articulate requests for more articulated and systematic development interventions, with potential for synergies; In Ethiopia, coordination is very limited, even if TA providers are aware of each other's actions (e.g. interventions of ITC and the African Trade Policy Centre –ATPC- in the Economic Community of West African States –ECOWAS- were not programmed for synergies) and even accounts of duplicate requests by Government for funding the same project.

3.4.7 Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools

Overall assessment of sample projects in achieving objectives

351. For reference: The Evaluation's project questionnaire called for a general assessment of each project's overall performance in achieving its objectives. Based on both formal reporting and monitoring, and often anecdotal and reputational feedback, depending on the size and character of the project, it allowed for the fact that a good number of the projects are still underway. On this basis, it was possible to compile this very broad assessment for 34 projects. The result was as follows:

352. 21% excellent (7 projects), 68% good (23 projects), 6% fair (2 projects), 6% poor (2 projects) - (34 where responses available)

Notable accomplishments in sample projects, innovations, sustainability, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools

353. The Evaluation posed an open question on these issues and gathered numerous examples in response, which the Team assessed as credible on the basis of the evidence. Given the nature of these examples they are presented in the form of a list and naming the countries and projects concerned without trying to consolidate or editorialize around them.¹⁰³

- Cambodia: from EPRP to Sector-wide Silk Project (SWSP) I, II to Cambodian Export Diversification and Expansion Program (CEDEP), project designs of later projects have learnt from previous one to improve project quality in several specific respects.
- Jordan ENACT: The National Trade Observatory as a new tool. Design, quality and packaging of products improved. Focus on new themes and markets initiated. The PCU demand-driven approach helped to give momentum to EnACT and move quickly from a slow to a faster pace implementation.
- Tunisia: A "Network of trade/economic intelligence created in Tunisia, sectoral strategies, developed by local consultants based on ITC Methodology.
- Côte d'Ivoire: a distinctive combination of technical excellence and participatory methodologies with evident respect for partners and beneficiaries.
- Peru: Provision of holistic and comprehensive solution tailored to the needs of exporting SMEs in a sustainable manner (inclusion of macro, meso and micro level)

¹⁰³ Note: Some additional comments of relevance here were added to survey responses, particularly by JAG members and staff, and were taken into account in drafting. The comments referred to here were examined to ensure that the promised confidentiality could be maintained,.

and involvement of TSIs. Good flexibility, good use of local resources and local expertise, establishment of networks of experts and institutions to work with during the project implementation.

- Uruguay: Sustainability: The replication of the developed training course by the Training Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; The link between the Training Institute and the trade information platform that has been developed for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by ITC in the context of another project in Uruguay (linkage and synergies of two projects); Inclusion of Webinar: a good ‘test case’ for other similar projects in the near future
- AAACP: Multiple positive references are made to the ITC-style participatory sector value chain development programming process. In relation to the overall AAACP Programme, the involvement of 5 major international organisations with specific areas of expertise has constituted an innovative approach, allowing for the implementation of complementary/joint activities and the exchange of information under the programme umbrella.
- PACT II: Good practices as reported in the MTR, p. 52:
 - Openness to change and willingness to incorporate relevant activities both within and outside the programme
 - Sector and value chain analysis approach
 - Train the trainer approach: Skills and competencies become embedded within the regions and more readily transferred where needed
 - Promoting a results culture
 - Incorporating gender
 - Aligning with partner strategic priorities.
- PCTP: "Ice-breaking in the field of poverty alleviation": enabled beneficiaries to earn higher income through their own work with observed levels of increased self-esteem. Infrastructure has been provided to the informal sector to become formal, and thereby created a bridge into the value chain. "Furthermore, this sector which used to be high risk has been reduced to low risk." The project has been very market led, and a major innovation was to work in the informal sector and create ethical fashion.
- T4SD Peru: Notable accomplishments in the project, specifically: 1) Content of tool (knowledge about standards is extremely relevant to Peru, include them in database) 2) First time that Peru had access to database in one central depository (compared to information scattered over different sources); 3) Data is organised in a user friendly manner and easy to analyse;
- Women and coffee: As part of the Women and Trade Programme, the Global Platform elaborated by ITC serves as a channel for linking women in coffee into global supply chain.
- In Ethiopia, ITC was perceived to be the best organisation to support TRTA across different projects, due to its unique focus on women and its innovative tools for market research.
- Cambodia. Recognition that ITC technical expertise is very competitive, especially in value chain analysis, market research and establishing business linkages, so that it should concentrate on these parts of the value chain rather than on support to production.
- Haiti ITC's consideration of gender and poverty reduction issues in the design and implementation of their projects rated well.

Policy-maker specific

- South Africa SADC SCM: the project created linkages for the farmers with the Perishable Products Export Control Board and the Department of Trade and Industry. These institutions can offer additional support to the farmers, post project

life. A supply chain consultant and a national advisor were put in place to provide on-going support to the farmers. The National Agricultural Marketing Council of South Africa (NAMC) was a key player in the project and will provide continuous support to the farmers.

- NTM: Learning from the NTM Survey in Uruguay to improve the methodology and sampling process, define the ToRs of local consultants and local survey companies taken into consideration in subsequent NTM surveys that have been conducted in other countries.
- Côte d'Ivoire and Tunisia: Key roles in support to Export Strategy formulation in model consultative process with sustained, top-level political engagement and effective public-private dialogue.

TSI specific

- Malawi SQAM: A major achievement of the project is that it laid an important foundation to mobilize interest and participation of relevant enterprises in Malawi in meeting international standards. The project raised considerable awareness among institutions and in particular at the Malawi Bureau of Standards on how conformity assessment bodies (ISO 9001) are essential to support exporters to demonstrate compliance with market requirements at reasonable cost and within a reasonable time period. The project took steps to establish Quality Management (ISO 9001) and HACCP-based food Safety Systems and, therefore greatly contributed to improve the overall quality, food safety and hygiene of the local food production with relevant export opportunities.
- Benin: A notable accomplishment has been the establishment of the Trade Information System directed to strengthen and make more effective/efficient the action of TSIs in supporting SMEs. Extremely important appears to be the establishment of a single Beninese Export & Investment Promotion Agency, as proposed by the ITC to further tackle the confusion and lack of clear division of responsibilities and roles that characterises TSIs in Benin.
- DRC. Major arbitration centres were supported for training and availability with legal instruments and materials to enable practise of mediation and arbitration. Though the project was stopped, activities continued.
- Côte d'Ivoire, Impressive small innovation in mediation training and support as sub-component of PACIR.
- Mali export agency development: the Agency (APEX) was created and staffed.
- Bangladesh leather: the Bangladesh Leather Service Centre (BLSC) is the first institution in Bangladesh which could provide quality testing service for leather products which until then had been done in Hong Kong or India
- Fiji: "TSI (FCLC – Fiji Crops and Livestock Council) created and operational. Ministry of Health Food safety auditors trained and certified; 4 of 8 mobile applications delivered and operational; Food safety + Access to finance counsellors created and operational.

- Kyrgyzstan: Destroyed monopoly on standards accreditation bureau. ISO 9000. The beneficiary textile firms increased productivity 40-50% and national expertise strengthened. Design of booths with own expertise, getting into more demanding trade fairs.
- Tunisia: ITC approach to develop and diversify markets, implemented in the framework of the Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers project, was definitely adopted by the TSI.

Enterprise specific

- Ethiopia: Sustainability – the new functions of the coffee cupping stations have given them a more important place in the coffee industry in Ethiopia and this has secured their sustainability. Coffee buyers pay for the grading service, thus providing incomes for the staff and running costs.
- DRC SME finance: The project's major innovation was the combination of ITC – local service providers (business and financial advisors) to provide a holistic intervention to the SMEs. Though the project was stopped, activities continued on a small scale.

3.4.8 Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects

354. The Evaluation did not generate a large volume of inputs related directly to the questions of scale. With respect to a specific question about the potential for scaling-up ITC's activities, the country mission analyses arrived at quite nuanced conclusions.
355. Four of the country analyses found that, on the record of projects examined, they should be scaled-up and replicated more widely (Cambodia, Ethiopia, Senegal and Tanzania). It was specifically noted in the Cambodia assessment, however, that any scaled-up project should be re-designed to assist in making the benefits more sustainable, and in fact this same concern is also evident in the other country analyses, with the possible exception of Uruguay.
356. The Tunisia analysis states that ITC would need to better develop links with other donors and/or UN agencies before committing to larger projects, alongside greater means to raise funds.
357. The Ethiopia and Tunisia reports both highlight the need for ITC to have greater in-country capacity, via greater presence in general and stronger country Project Managers. The lack of national hubs is seen as a current obstacle to scaling-up projects.
358. The Uruguay analysis suggests that, based on projects in the country, future projects should be scaled-up, although any attempts will depend on budgets.
359. On the basis of the record in Haiti to date, the issue of scale is clearly a secondary consideration to being able to secure the effective and sustained engagement of Haitian partners and beneficiaries. The findings rather suggest that, in general the country is confronted with too much uncoordinated aid (in which ITC is hardly a factor) without the means to manage and absorb it.
360. When asked if ITC has the potential capacity to mount multi-year country programmes, four of the country analyses were positive. However it was noted that ITC would have to build up its capacity to carry them out effectively – they suggest by deepening/developing an in-country presence and boosting financial capability. The lack of assured funding and short-term reliance on project donor support was highlighted by all country reports as a barrier to larger and longer-term projects, contributing toward the small-scale and niche nature of the ITC.

361. Finally, however, in Côte d'Ivoire, the one case where ITC has actually operated for several years a large scale, multi-year and multi-disciplinary programme - in effect an integrated country programme in the Centre's field - the effects on performance of having scaled-up are far from conclusively positive. Nor has a lack of country presence been a constraint there, since the National Coordination Office for PACIR has served this function, with dedicated support in the Africa Office at HQ. Even here, however, the programme faces the same constraints of fixed term funding commitments and the related inability to anchor and sustain promising benefits of activities beyond a funding cut-off date.
362. Looking beyond the mission country analyses to the record and prospects of ITC's large projects as such, the Evaluation had a reasonable basis for assessment in its coverage of the activities of all of the recent large projects in individual sample countries, supplemented by overall briefings on all but one of them. In fact, the "bottom-up" country based perspective on large projects has been a useful ground-truthing check, alongside the more in-depth coverage of PACIR as the single-country large project. On the basis of this examination the Evaluation has found that there have indeed been substantive benefits to ITC's contributions from large projects, apart from the issue of scale itself. In each of the cases, it has been possible to see evidence of most of the lessons from large projects highlighted in ITC's 2013 Case for Support, namely:
- i. "Involvement of local stakeholders in programme design, co-implementation, and financial commitment of counterparts for delivery.
 - v. Involvement of donors in project design, management oversight and quality assurance.
 - vi. A growth delivery model based on value for money relying on local consultants, lower transaction costs, and economies of scale.
 - vii. A continuous learning process supported by lessons learned from independent mid-term evaluations.
 - viii. Design of next phases of programmes in close collaboration with partner TSIs, beneficiary governments, and donors."
363. On examination, most of these advantages can be seen to come with a longer project or programme time frame, and a less penurious and rushed approach to high-quality interventions for longer term benefits. ITC needs to strengthen these attributes across all of its work, and in fact will not be able to properly sustain separately-funded large projects if the expert services it relies on to carry the large project contributions are otherwise forced to continue operating on a shoestring. Needless to say, if large projects are not clearly oriented to ITC's mission, strategic objectives and priorities, they have a large potential to divert the Centre off-course. The Evaluation does not have a clear finding on the management arrangements for these large projects over the period, noting that they are each different, and in most but not all cases mainly anchored with lead technical sections. The Evaluation has not encountered evidence of major problems arising, with the exception of a period of disruption in the staffing of one managing section. Nonetheless, the question does arise as to whether there might be advantages in ITC being able to deploy special management capacities and experience in larger project management to supplement, and in some respects free, the technical services to focus on their special strengths.
364. Other significant findings about the size and duration of ITC projects are briefly noted below:¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Note: Some additional comments of relevance here were added to survey responses, particularly by JAG members and staff, and were taken into account in drafting. After examining these comments to ensure that the promised confidentiality can be maintained, the Evaluation Team will be prepared to make an unattributed list of such comments available, either with the Final Evaluation report or as a follow-up.

-
- Malawi: In regards to strengthening laboratories, the duration of the project is very critical, as it takes a minimum of 5 to 10 years for a laboratory to reach accreditation. It is therefore important to ensure an adequate duration of the project, receive a commitment from the government to support the intervention and know the absorption capacity of the main.
 - SADC SCM: The project targeted emerging farmers that were already marketing their products (albeit with challenges). This category of farmers was more enthusiastic and already had some productive capacity and market. This made uptake easier and faster.
 - Cambodia: In retrospect they would start the project at a bigger scale. 29-39 weaving groups are too small a part of the whole weaver community in Cambodia. They also would have more capacity building activities for the Ministry of Commerce.
 - Egypt Marketing Centre: The project needed bigger disbursements – and fewer milestones: The budgeting mechanism through grant disbursements to the institution based on the achievement of too many activities / milestones reportedly caused delays in project implementation and excessive administrative burden
 - Haiti: important to pay more attention at the design stage to avoid setting objectives that are too ambitious given the existing budget and challenges to be faced and resisting obvious overlap and duplication (e.g. similar projects implemented for the same sector, in this case mangos).
 - Peru: This relatively small project could be used to develop a larger and longer-term follow-up project in this country to achieve and see real impact on the ground.
 - Cariforum: Focus on one component rather than on all 3 components of the project, given the short implementation period. Look for more market opportunities within the project. Conduct an impact /follow-up assessment to learn from what has worked and what has not in order to improve the products and services offered by ITC.
 - PACT II ACCESS: Concerted effort by management is needed in a regular dialogue with stakeholders and their top managements to mobilise funding to implement what has already been developed. The demand is very big out there in countries - ITC needs to capitalise achievement and generate innovation in processes and substance.

3.4.9 Main problems or constraints

365. The Evaluation posed open questions on these issues and gathered numerous examples in response, which the Team assessed as credible on the basis of the connected evidence and useful. Given the nature of these examples they are presented in the form of a list and naming the countries and (where possible without jeopardizing confidentiality) the projects concerned without trying to consolidate or editorialize around them. Although there is inevitably some overlap or repetition in responses to the different open-ended questions, these have not been edited out when they shed useful light on more than one subject.¹⁰⁵

Major lessons on constraints/issues

366. In all mission countries and in many other cases:

- i. ITC, its services, successes and brand are too little known in developing countries to be called upon as they should. They may be known to some experts in trade and investment agencies in these countries, but presidents, prime ministers, ministers of trade, commerce and investment do not know them very well. And in some cases heads of donor agencies in-country have never heard of ITC. Building their image at the highest levels in-country among leaders, ministers, ambassadors and heads of development cooperation agencies (in capitals and in developing countries) will be important for the long term prospects of ITC.
 - ii. Given its resource constraints in individual countries, ITC may want to build its local capacity in developing countries, by maintain a small team in key regional hubs in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean - perhaps within regional economic communities or regional development banks. This could improve knowledge of ITC among a broader base of local actors in trade policy making and export promotion and at the same time give ITC a better handle on the realities on the ground in developing countries.
 - iii. Investment is an important element in improving the prospects for improved export opportunities for developing countries. ITC should consider partnering with UNCTAD and others to improve the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to and between developing countries.
- Kenya NTF II: Managing risks proactively could have helped define practical and realistic mitigation measures to put the project back on track. Need to recognize early on critical issues that have a direct impact on achieving results and take immediate corrective actions. Too many events happened which had a direct impact on putting at risk the implementation- recognising early on such shortcomings would have helped adjust the project, its logframe and RBM Framework to focus on specific results that were achievable during the available period of time.
 - Malawi: Adequate timeframes. As outline earlier, a minimum of 5 to 10 years was needed to achieve the objectives.
 - SADC SCM: Manage expectations and focus on what is achievable.

¹⁰⁵ Note: Some additional comments of relevance here were added to survey responses, particularly by JAG members and staff, and were taken into account in drafting. After examining these comments to ensure that the promised confidentiality can be maintained, the Evaluation Team will be prepared to make an unattributed list of such comments available, either with the Final Evaluation report or as a follow-up.

- Uganda NTF II: There is need for donor flexibility. The lack of flexibility of the NTF II donor in terms of not allowing the carrying over unspent balances in the year affected the achievement of outputs, as some activities were not implemented, bearing in mind the project's late start.
- DRC: Avoid total dependence on fixed project funding, ITC's inability to sustain needed activities and benefits leads to unmet expectations image and a compromised image.
- DRC: UN system support is needed in managing conflict. UN and the local authorities could have saved the project which could positively impact on livelihoods of many people.
- Senegal: ITC needs to work better with francophone countries.
- NTF II Bangladesh: Procedures and documentation requirements can be too heavy. Evaluation Report recommended that when possible, the MoU be used to channel funds to the field instead of going through the UNDP offices as the MoU are longer lasting and allow for a more efficient way of managing the funds at national level.
- Cambodia: In two projects the partner capacities were identified as major constraints. In a society where the personal relationship plays a big role at work, decision-making is sometimes difficult and corruption is at high risk. Long-term projects require long-term commitment: ITC's dependence on funding and lack of representation in country are the main disadvantages compared to other TRTA providers.
- Tunisia: Focusing on results also entails a careful selection of aid beneficiaries. The evaluation found that the involvement of the private sector could have enhanced the effectiveness of ITC projects.
- Haiti: Critically important to select good national consultants and not to underestimate the challenges of implementing projects in countries with very weak institutional setting and very weak institutional capacities, especially in crisis or post-crisis situations.
- Peru: The current pilot efforts undertaken by ITC to structure its needs assessment and project design activities will help to do this type of projects even more efficiently in the future.
- PCTP: Haiti: Presence on the ground and good local consultants who know key institutions and end beneficiaries are crucial in Haitian conditions. Donor coordination and cooperation are poor and there is damaging competition among donors. Enterprises (in the formal or informal sector) are not used to working together - this individual approach needs to be overcome when working together to fulfil regional or international orders.

Possible better alternatives

367. Many important responses were received to the question "how would you try to achieve the aims of this project differently today?"

- Ethiopia: ITC would not try to achieve the aims of the project differently. They are committed to continue to provide support if the private sector continues to request it.
- Ethiopia: Need to recruit a local person to communicate with the beneficiary on a face to face basis.
- SADC SCM: Provide longer project implementation period and more physical follow up with beneficiaries and partner institutions.
- Uganda NTF II: Ensure a needs' assessment is done prior to design.

- Benin: By working directly with local SMEs: Less workshops, more coaching and “learning by doing” approaches.
- DRC: By mobilising funding to be managed by ITC and make sure at least the planned activities are carried out.
- DRC: In these conditions, roadblocks are in the daily routine work. More regular high-level dialogue is needed for early detection of conflicts or project failure.
- Bangladesh: In the Leather Service Centre for Export Development project, instead of creating a new structure/institution within the government system, project should support creating an institution with the private sector, outsource more to private sector. Côte d’Ivoire: From officials, do not count on government for continuity in this work, private sector institutions must be enabled to carry the load.
- Bangladesh: automating the linkage with the 40 beneficiary companies would help.
- Tunisia: Focus on the national/regional expertise – (use them more) to help/improve sustainability – Should be more in line with national priorities – Adopt a market driven approach.
- Kyrgyzstan: Focus more on helping change the mentality of the private sector actors.
- Haiti: Less ambitious objectives, fighting harder against uncoordinated overlap and duplication.
- Peru: Anticipate the potential to develop larger project, and remain in specific country and sector for a longer period to achieve and see real impact on the ground
- Peru: More direct contact with SMEs as part of this project in order to ensure the services are delivered appropriately to them. ITC was not responsible for the component dealing directly with SMEs.
- Peru There should be a budget included to conduct an assessment of impact, for lesson-learning, innovation, and accounting for results and expenditures.
- Uruguay: Sort out any contractual issues more quickly to avoid having an operational partner waiting. Include a budget in the project design phase that would allow for a follow-up assessment (e.g. by external consultants).
- AAACP: Work out a detailed collaboration protocol between ITC’s sections involved. Be more specific on only certain countries and partners, following up especially with those that showed strong commitment and ownership (Partially the case in the new EDF 10 cotton project). Moreover, expand on the south-south cooperation component, relying more on south-south cooperation partners, who are at the same time the major markets for African cotton.
- Cariforum: Focus on one component rather than on all 3 components of the project, given the short implementation period. Look for more market opportunities within the project. Conduct an impact assessment/follow-up assessment to learn from what has worked and what has not worked in order to improve the products and services offered by ITC.
- PACT II ACCESS: Mobilise funding to implement what we already developed to capitalise achievement and respond to growing demand.
- PCTP Ethical Fashion: Started immediately with the social enterprise, instead of going to the UN body. Involve the industry in a fair labour framework from the beginning onwards through a pilot. Also, private sector investors should have been brought in.

- Six out of seven country mission analyses cite ITC's lack of local involvement as a weakness, focusing on links with partners and country presence, strongly implying that more such presence is needed. Experience in Côte d'Ivoire, and in part Cambodia, suggests that such a presence is not a "silver bullet" to meet ITC's challenges on the ground.
- The Haiti and Uruguay analyses specifically point to a need for assigned budgets for follow-up activities after completion of projects, and this is consistent with findings across missions on concerns for completion, follow-up and supporting sustainability.
- The need to overcome the lack of independent funding and immediate reliance on donors was highlighted by all country analyses as a barrier on the types of projects and their scale, contributing to the small-scale and niche nature of the ITC.
- ITC would have to build up its capacity to carry out longer-term projects (more than 2-3 years) effectively.

3.4.10 Strengths, key lessons, ITC potential

Overall

368. In response to a question as to whether ITC had proved the best agency to provide the services required, almost all project questionnaires identified the project fitting into ITC's comparative advantage compared to other TRTA providers.

- PCTP: Only ITC could have done this type of project. By being a bridge between the WTO and UN, ITC is a unique provider as it focusses on poverty alleviation through trade.
- Egypt: Yes. Comparative advantage: ITC is the only agency/institution delivering such products/services (notably e-solutions).
- Kyrgyzstan: Yes. ITC does have a competitive advantage in former Soviet states, especially with a strong pool of consultants. Other donors/organisations are not focused on SME activities in the region.
- Overall, the Evaluation's did not get an adequate sample of rated responses explicitly assessing ITC's relative performance in trade Intelligence; support to policy makers, strengthening TSIs; and support for SME exporters to support quantified findings on that score.
- All of the mission analyses and a large majority of project reviews reports on balance ranked technical expertise as a particular strength of ITC.
- The Tanzania analysis highlighted ITC's strengths as being its difference from other major donors: The procedures are 'less cumbersome' and more flexible compared to other donors; the organisation supports sectors that are 'neglected' by others.
- Other strengths mentioned include: ITC's export database for researching (Cambodia); ability to deal with the private sector and "respectful" methodology (Côte d'Ivoire); Market Analysis Tools (Ethiopia); High innovation (Senegal); use of local and regional consultants whenever possible (Tanzania); sustainable products (Tunisia).
- The Uruguay analysis cited ITC's impartiality as a strength of the organisation. In terms of potential, the report claimed respondents feel ITC should become a 'long-term development cooperation partner agency', with multi-year country program capacity, or instead a multilateral agency providing specialized services. Additionally, some respondents believe ITC could build strategic alliances with

other TRTA providers to ‘offer a more holistic approach towards trade and private sector development.’

- JAG respondents highlighted several of their perceptions of ITC’s strengths: 1. Technical knowledge and policy advisory skills in trade/export promotion; 2. Professional and committed staff to the overall objective of ITC. ‘ITC training programs are excellent. Partnership with the private sector. IT tools [are good].’ ‘Strong focus on private sector development, especially SME development, building trade capacity through increased productive capacity.’
- In terms of key lessons, four missions recommend that ITC develop deeper links with the countries they are involved, via either greater local presence (Tanzania) and/or deepening links with national/local beneficiaries and stakeholders (Côte d’Ivoire, Tunisia and Ethiopia).
- A wide range of mission and project analyses agreed that there was potential for ITC to work more in partnerships with other providers in relevant areas.
- The Ethiopia analysis states that ITC suffers from continuously piloting projects; instead, it recommends ITC move to scaling-up projects and a greater focus on implementation.
- It was suggested that ITC take initiatives to develop ties and work with national trade promotion agencies from developed states. These agencies are keen to boost bilateral trade between their own country and various developing states. There is potential for ITC to work with and obtain funding from these agencies, making use of its trade analysis tools with them, for example.
- In rating the quality of ITC’s management in their respective projects, four reports stated ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.
- The positive ratings from the majority of analyses regarding ITC’s technical expertise, country knowledge, tools and training courses suggest that the organisation is highly regarded with respect to its general level of expertise.
- Ratings were more mixed concerning the organisational and administrative element of ITC, although most reports posted positive ratings.
- A number of JAG and staff respondents enumerated further prospects and challenges, such as the following:
 - ‘Increased collaboration with bilateral donor on the ground on an array of activities in addition to training. Potential for new sources of funding for such projects. Potential for work in trade capacity building, for example in helping to facilitate TF advocacy in countries on the part of business/trade associations. ITC excellence in training could perhaps be useful to trade facilitation roll out - could collaborate with another organisation on the design and roll out of training. Could look at how to collaborate with UNECE to design a workshop applying the UNECE TF implementation tool to select countries. Would like to see more in the way of supply chain efforts and partnerships with private companies. Global Platform of Action for Sourcing of Women Vendors is good example of this. More can be done.’
 - ‘ITC could also partner with major exporters and businesses in-country, and not just with SMEs. 2. New sources of funding can come from (i) multilateral organisations; (ii) advanced developing countries [such as the BRICS and MINTS]; (iii) philanthropic institutions [like Warren Buffet, Gates, Rockefeller, Rothschild]; (iv) some financial and in-kind contributions from recipient governments; (v) private sector firms from the OECD trading in developing countries [public-private partnerships]. 3. Scaling up opportunities: Scale up programmes/projects that have directly delivered development outcomes and

that have or can have a catalytic impact on national policy and programmes; and a good chance to leave sustainable outcomes behind after ITC.4. More partnerships - with Regional Economic Communities (e.g. EAC, SADC, ECOWAS) and Regional Development Banks.'

- 'Greater focus on needs assessment and developing projects in collaboration with project partners'
- 'More demand for TSI strengthening; More training in general; Trade intelligence/data; More work on services; More direct engagement with partners in countries (including coordination with other donors)'
- 'Meeting its commitment to allocate at least 50% of its budget to supporting LDCs, LLDCs; SIDS and SSA. Visibility at WTO Meetings, events, etc. getting the ITC message across and ensuring ITC is in the vanguard addressing TRTA needs.'
- 'To ensure social and economic impact, ITC should start including new types of stakeholders in the discussions about client needs, including NGOs, unions etc. We all know that trade is not per se a good thing. Yet, we only listen to the government and the private sector (including their representatives in TSIs). However, as UN organisation we should not ignore that sometimes there are tensions between private sector needs/concerns and the broader society interest/welfare. ITC cannot turn a blind eye to this, at times, important dichotomy. In this context, I see the new push for "partnerships", especially with big multinationals, rather critical (also for ITC's good reputation as a neutral provider of technical assistance).'
- 'Improve awareness of ITC activities and potential among SMEs' Associations in Donor Countries.'
- 'ITC has a good niche within the UN system on supporting export oriented SMEs. Work can be significantly expanded and replicated further - and new funding sources possibly identified through partnerships with the private sector. Nevertheless, the small size of ITC is also a strength that brings it flexibility. To some degree, it could be argued that ITC is too small to be a full-fledged UN organisation, but too big to be a "NGO" -type of organisation supporting SMEs. To scale-up ITC would need effective collaboration with other UN/international organisations.'

4. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTIONS

4.1 Introduction

369. This Final chapter of the Evaluation report includes a summation of the conclusions built from the detailed findings in earlier chapters to respond to the Evaluation purposes of assessing ITC's performance and results over the Evaluation period, and the changes that have taken place in the organisation and management of the Centre over that same time. The chapter then brings together the central conclusions from these two sides of the Evaluation. It ends, in line with the third purpose of offering guidance for the Centre's future directions, with a small number of major strategic recommendations and targeted action points for how they could be implemented by each of the key stakeholder groups involved. Many other specific conclusions and recommendations are highlighted throughout the Evaluation's analysis and its reporting of inputs by the stakeholders consulted.

370. First, however, the Evaluation provides a section outlining its own hard-gained conclusions about how ITC actually works. This is important both to provide the essential context for the central conclusions and recommendations that follow, but also to disentangle the surprisingly complex picture of this organisation which does not fit any standard mould, and is often only partly understood even by many of its stakeholders and close collaborators.

371. Note to readers: The findings, conclusions and recommendations in this Report are clearly linked and traceable because of its clear structure and logic. Because it is a such a wide-ranging and integrated study, the links are numerous and often inter-related. As requested by ITC's Evaluation Unit, throughout this chapter, selected key references to the evidence for the conclusions and recommendations are signposted in the square brackets to paragraph numbers in the preceding evidence chapters. These references obviously cannot be exhaustive.

4.2 Understanding ITC and its Work

38, 368 372. The International Trade Centre is distinctive in many ways. It is a small organisation by multilateral standards, with a complex international governance structure and an unconventional delivery model, but a focused mission of providing practical support for trade by developing countries, especially through small and medium-sized enterprises. At its founding, 50 years ago, ITC was seen as a marginal pioneer in trade for development, but it is now surrounded by much larger and well-funded organisations and programmes that have crowded into this area as its strategic importance for development has been recognized. Still, as this independent Evaluation has been able to confirm, the large majority of those who have known – and been able to compare - the ITC's activities in a substantial sample of countries over the past six years have been impressed by the special relevance, quality and thoughtful delivery of its expertise. It can legitimately claim to be the only "100% Aid for Trade" organisation, with important and unique assets.

12, 31
32, 76
78, 81
168 373. However, those who know ITC's work are relatively few and scattered, because that is how its activities have been as well. Many mistakenly think that it is, or should be, a donor organisation like others. It struggles to serve a wide and growing set of needs in well over a hundred countries that are eligible beneficiaries, with the predictable result of being thinly spread, only intermittently present, and unable to respond to many deserving requests for support. This situation is not tenable if ITC is to carry out its mission effectively.

374. Over the 2006-2012 period, the Evaluation's evidence (across a considerable range of countries, regions, and beneficiary groups) shows that ITC's main lines of business have built on some continuing products and services of strength and developed and adapted a number new areas and emphases. Some progress has been made in conceptually grouping multiple lines of business around a clearer organising logic in ITC's five announced strategic objectives, but neither that framework nor the breakdown by ITC's different client groups is yet very helpful in broadly understanding or steering the types, scales and instruments of ITC's interventions and the key influences on them. As was the case in 2006, actually identifying, listing and categorizing all of ITC's different substantive projects over the period remains extremely complicated and subject to debate. This has major implications for ITC's ability to "market" its products.
375. At different points the Evaluation analyses ITC's work through all several different lenses that can be applied, but for the most important purposes in this section it focuses on the three categories below, which largely but not uniformly coincide with different sources of funding as shown. This broad categorisation of ITC's performance can shed special light, bearing in mind that the alternative of categorizing the work by ITC's Strategic Objectives had no real basis prior to 2011 and still does not provide a solid enough framework for documenting or assessing ITC' activities.
376. First, ITC's "global public good" products, while accounting for a modest share of funding and staffing, have continued to provide a backbone of basic trade intelligence in forms and with user-support that make them more accessible to a wide range of clients, particularly in developing countries. There is convincing global evidence of the wide relevance and direct value of these services to exporters, officials and other key audiences, although the Evaluation found limited evidence that other projects in the countries studied promoted the use of these products as much as they could. Moreover, innovative lines of this trade intelligence work in the areas of 'voluntary import standards' and non-tariff measures encountered by developing country exporters have added new dimensions to ITC's arsenal of valuable trade intelligence and are well-appreciated and used. Significantly, the traditional lines of trade intelligence work are the most important products and services financed from ITC's assessment-based Regular Budget, accounting for a small share of that half of total ITC expenditure. Once they had begun to prove their value, the innovative lines of work on NTMs and voluntary standards have also attracted extra-budgetary funding from ITC donors, in varying proportions and durations.
377. Second, ITC's wide array of "responsive" projects has not been found to be quite as scattered as it appears at first glance but it has remained "diffuse and dispersed", as was found to be the case in the major 2006 evaluation. It is diffuse in the sense of employing more than 50 different products and services – there is no definitive list – and dispersed in being spread over an average of 200 projects for each of the years evaluated. To some degree this reflects a tendency for the Centre, as a UN organisation, to try to distribute its fully-programmable resources to a wide group of eligible beneficiaries. On the other hand, this body of work is held together by some strong strands of expertise and experience in ITC, embodied in the professionals in technical services, in tested tools and generally effective consultants, as documented in this report. To the extent that ITC has been able to strengthen its strategic results orientations over the period, this is the broad area of its work that can be most readily oriented to support the priorities set, subject to the "fit" with priorities of clients and partners, including the priority beneficiary groups of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Sub-Saharan Africa, landlocked and small island states. Even here, however, the imperative of short-term fund-raising is ever-present, and there is evidence of multiple funding-driven involvements, not guided by strategic priority setting or

systematic needs-assessments. ITC's approach to partnerships also seems to have been guided by a "wide net" approach, reaching out to many established and new partners of various kinds, but without an apparent strategic view of the rationale or priorities for such partnerships.

378. Overall, ITC has not had any systematic means, and only restricted scope, for matching the supply of its services and the demand for them in potential client countries. It still does not have a comprehensive catalogue of the products and services it has to offer, nor a planned approach to needs assessment at either the product, country or regional levels, although the latter are now being piloted. Thus its projects since 2006 have been deployed opportunistically according to an imperfect kind of "market" process where and when contacts, political initiatives and especially donor funding possibilities may steer them. This scattering effect has been compounded because the services concerned in ITC are too stretched to be able to meet all the needs (even expressed demands) in any systematic way and partly because the main geographic divisions are too stretched to be able to identify them and must anyway be cautious about encouraging beneficiary expectations that could not be met.
- 106, 123
172, 193
209, 237
- 12, 240
241, 245
- 76, 340
342
379. To understand this situation properly, it must be emphasized that ITC's technical products and services are still overwhelmingly the main organising and programming elements in ITC's work. No conventional system of "country programming" (with the associated needs assessments) of the kind found in larger development agencies would be feasible for ITC at anything like its present size in more than a very few countries or sub-regions. Some such programming has been tried in a small number of cases over the period, and the results are reflected in these Evaluation findings. On a positive note, this general finding of a project-allocation process largely driven by the availabilities of ITC products and voluntary donor funding has not led to any significant number of cases where the Evaluation has found in its samples that ITC projects were "parachuted" into inappropriate settings, although they may or may not have been the most in need or most promising. The evaluation found that ITC project planners, even when they are using a product or service "off the shelf" generally do undertake at least informal needs assessments in early consultation with partners and intended beneficiaries, and are willing to adapt their approaches as necessary.¹⁰⁶
- 78, 363
- 32, 353
293, 320
361, 367
- 283
380. Third, ITC-implemented projects supported through "donor- earmarked" funding have consistently accounted over the period for a larger share of spending – roughly double - the Window 1 resources that are fully programmable by the Centre. A large proportion of ITC's "large projects" category has been funded from these sources. Although these large infusions of earmarked funding have clearly steered substantial shares of ITC activity in certain geographic and thematic directions, the Evaluation has not found any major instances where earmarked-funded projects have clashed with the explicit strategic objectives and priorities of the Centre, insofar as these have been set. Moreover, on balance, a number of these large earmarked projects have benefitted from the higher levels of commitment and resources available to the sponsoring donors to supplement the "barebones" management that ITC is able to afford on its own from the Regular Budget¹⁰⁷.
- 259

¹⁰⁶ The in-depth country mission studies picked up spontaneous positive references on ITC's adaptability in at least half of the eight countries studied.. Interestingly, some ITC staff were more skeptical in their interviews and survey responses about ITC's readiness to adapt its products.

¹⁰⁷ The 2013 Case for Support highlights some of the lessons from large projects (mainly but not only supported through earmarked funding with active involvement by sponsoring donors): Involvement of local stakeholders in programme design, co-implementation, and financial commitment of counterparts for delivery; Involvement of donors in project design, management oversight and quality assurance; A growth delivery model based on value for money relying on local consultants, lower transaction costs, and economies of scale; A continuous learning

- 165, 279
346
381. There are important differences in the degree to which different sources of funding may throw off the balance of ITC work in relation to its agreed strategic priorities. For example, the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries (EIF) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) are channels for multilateralized funding through quality assured programmes that are fully consistent with ITC’s strategic objectives and geographical orientations. Broad regionally or thematically-focused voluntary support, or support for attractive and innovative programmes run a greater danger of “cherry picking “ and leaving aside “orphan” bread-and-butter activities that may not be attractive to donors but still essential to beneficiaries. Moreover, ITC’s ability to deliver earmarked programmes and projects depends on being able to draw upon an adequate core capacity, which is not now assured.

4.3 Main conclusions

4.3.1 Performance and results

- Sections
2.4 & 3.3
- 352, 353
368
- 64, 313
337, 353
- 22, 23
121, 214
382. The central conclusion of the Evaluation around ITC’s results over the 2006-2012 period is that the Centre - in spite of limited resources and heavy external and internal constraints - has been able to continue providing high-quality services in its specialized field that are relevant and responsive, effective and relatively efficient. In terms of results, the activities have generally achieved their intended immediate capacity-building outcomes with clear prospects in most cases of contributing to their higher-level goals. There are encouraging examples of direct development benefits in a significant number of instances. The other side of the central conclusion is that ITC’s overall resource situation severely limits the greater use of this valuable asset by the developing countries, slowing management improvements, reducing its efficiency, contributing to damaging distortions in the organisation and its results, and clearly jeopardizing the sustainability of many of the best contributions it has been able to make. The simple fact is that at any one time, large parts of the operational programmes of ITC are living “hand to mouth” and facing a level of insecurity which makes it impossible to deliver up to its potential and certainly to apply fully the kinds of good practice that ITC’s members press on the organisation.
- 244, 353
383. This is not to suggest that ITC should aim to become another large international agency dispensing enormous sums of money, a phenomenon that may well be undermining the development benefits of much of today’s trade-oriented aid. In fact, part of ITC’s special credibility and strength has been its practical, down-to-earth approach and its sense of the discipline of scarce resources, the dominant everyday reality of its small and medium sized enterprise clients, especially in developing countries. But the maxim that “small is beautiful” can be carried too far. It definitely has in the case of ITC, whose supporters have provided it too few resources for the job they clearly want it to fulfil, and sometimes on terms that distract and detract from that desired performance and under constraints that add to excessive bureaucratic costs, delays and restrictions.
384. Nor does this central point suggest that the required improvements will ever be simple or resolved just by ITC’s financial supporters. There are some inescapable limits, conflicting pressures and harsh choices that face ITC in its next stage of evolution.

process supported by lessons learned from independent mid-term evaluations; Design of next phases of programmes in close collaboration with partner TSIs, beneficiary governments, and donors.

- ITC's management and staff, as well as its governors and supporters, will need to match the Centre's best performance in its substantive work with excellence in management and accountability and disciplined professionalism.
385. The support for these conclusions on ITC's operational performance is found in the detailed evidence chapter on the Centre's performance and results derived from the extensive documentary research, portfolio analyses, country missions and informed respondent interviews and surveys. The assessment was organised against the agreed Matrix 2, covering all key aspects of performance and results with specified evaluation questions, issues and indicators, data collection methods, key sources, and methods for analysis. The assessments were made against the accepted development evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The summary results are presented in Table 10, together with the Evaluation's ratings of ITC's 'current fitness' and the 'change assessed since 2006' on each of these criteria. The Table also rates the strength of the evidence obtainable on which the Evaluation could base its assessments, a very important provision since there were major weaknesses encountered in locating all the required materials and informed respondents on ITC activities, facts which have important implications for ITC itself and are reflected in some key conclusions and recommendations of the Evaluation.
386. The individual questions, issues and indicators from the Matrix are of different orders of importance that would also be ranked differently by different observers. Nonetheless, an aggregate picture yields a sense of the Evaluation's overall assessment of the current state of the Centre's performance and results and of change since 2006. In Table 10, ITC's current fitness is rated as "fair" on eight (of a total 26) points; "good" on five; "fair/good" on three; "poor/fair" on three; "poor" on four; "excellent", "very poor" and "can't say" on one point each. With respect to the change since 2006, "positive change" was found on 11 points; "little or no change" on seven; "can't say" on six ; and "major positive change" and "mixed" on one point each. No regression was identified on any of these points. It is fair to note that on many points improvement has accelerated in the latter part of the Evaluation period, since 2011-2012. Importantly, as noted, the evidence base available to support these assessments was rated by the Team as relatively weak, the average rating for the strength of evidence or confidence level was 2.45, ranking mid-way between "low" and "medium".
387. Bearing in mind this broad picture, and drawing attention to the detailed analysis and many ideas contained in the full chapter, the Evaluation focuses below on a small number of strategic recommendations and options aimed at improving ITC's performance and results, supported by specific and interdependent action points addressed to ITC's management, its governors and supporters, and other stakeholders.

4.3.2 Organisation and management

388. In terms of the Evaluation's second main purpose - assessing the changes that have been made in ITC over the period since 2006 – the Evaluation Matrix, adapted from a well-known model for organisational assessment, guided an extensive structured assessment across the four major dimensions of: the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC; the Centre's organisational capacity to carry out its mandate; its organisational motivation; and its organisational performance (closely linked to the other main evidence chapter of the Report). This framework, with a structured set of agreed sub-issues and indicators yielded a rich and detailed assessment that is summarized in Table 5, with ratings of ITC's current fitness and the changes made since 2006, together with an explicit rating of strength of the Evaluation's supporting evidence in each area.

Table 5

389. Although these indicators and issues too are of different orders and importance it is significant that the Evaluation found that “positive change” has been achieved on 23 of them (out of the total of 29) since 2006, while five showed “little or no change” and one showed “major positive change.” No regression was identified on any of these criteria. As with changes in performance and results, it is fair to note here as well that on many points improvement has accelerated in the latter part of the Evaluation period.
390. While this is a generally positive if restrained aggregate assessment of change over the period, it gives no cause for complacency when considered alongside the Evaluation’s ratings of the ITC’s “current fitness” in these each of these same areas. Here the ratings were “fair” on 13 of the 29 criteria; “good” on six; “very poor” on three; “poor” on four; “fair/poor” on two; and “excellent” and “fair/good” on one each.¹⁰⁸ The weakest of all the areas assessed, on both current fitness and change since 2006 was that of the Centre’s financial viability. The strongest areas were found in ITC’s short-term client relationships and its vision and mission. The Team’s average rating for the strength of evidence or confidence level on these findings was 3.58, ranking mid-way between “medium” and “high.’
391. The Evaluation’s particular ratings can, and undoubtedly will, be debated, but the overall picture of the Centre’s organisation and management is one of significant progress since 2006, but from a very low base at that time¹⁰⁹, leaving substantial further improvement work to be completed. It should be stressed that while improvement in this area naturally focuses on the Centre itself and the responsibilities of its head, management and staff, the Evaluation’s detailed evidence shows how and where ITC’s governors, members, supporters and “parent” institutions have important roles and share in the responsibility for continuing improvement. The major recommendations below will include a small number of key strategic priorities for further improving organisation and management, while many other “specific recommendations” or suggestions are integrated into the main analysis and highlighted.

4.3.3 Integrated main conclusions

392. Bringing together the Evaluation’s key conclusions on the Centre’s performance and results with those on its organisation and management since 2006, the overall picture that emerges is one of continuing valued contributions in its specialized fields of trade support, with improving management and accountability on almost all fronts over the period, accelerating in the latter years from 2011 to 2013. There is growing demand for the kinds of services ITC provides, and the Centre should be well-placed to respond to this demand, given its strengthened management base and providing that it can secure sufficient and predictable funding that allows for it to pursue coherently its strategic objectives and priorities. The key challenges identified for ITC’s strategic management, effective performance and sustainable growth in the coming five to ten years are in the following areas:
- Strengthening a coherent and pro-active programming approach geared to exploiting ITC’s unique characteristics and strengths and its strategic objectives and priorities, in place of scattered, reactive and often funding-led selections of countries, projects and partners that have often prevailed over the 2006-2013 period.

¹⁰⁸ The Team broke down the criterion of “client relationships” into its short term and longer-term aspects, with different ratings, yielding a total of 30 instead of 29.

¹⁰⁹ As documented in the 2006 Joint Evaluation

- Fully rooting the developing RBM system in the work of the Centre, (around sharper goal-setting and reliable theories of change) in ways that are useful and useable for staff, supporters, partners and beneficiaries.
- Strengthening project management from identification and design to risk management, implementation with local partnership, monitoring and reporting results, self-evaluation and independent evaluation.
- Building and “mainstreaming” appropriate and sustainable ITC approaches to addressing key cross-cutting issues: poverty reduction, gender, youth, environment and climate change.
- Giving much greater attention, time and resources to sustainability and exit strategies around ITC interventions, as well as to knowledge sharing and learning and to employee development.
- Supporting more strategic and expanding substantive work for ITC with the most streamlined, responsive and flexible governance and administrative arrangements possible for a smaller, private sector organisation working within the multilateral and UN system.

- 78, 363 393. More broadly, combining the Evaluation’s analyses of the organisation and management of the ITC with the performance and results of its activities also leads to an overarching question about the overall roles and identity of the ITC as an institution, up to now and into the future. As a result of ITC’s modest, pioneering origins in the Aid for Trade field, its early experience was as a small technical assistance organisation geared to providing small-scale, practical TA projects for exporters. As the field and ITC itself grew, it added more functions, including authoritative retailing of basic trade intelligence, and acquired a reputation and capacity to work on a larger scale with more widely-applied global activities and larger regional and thematic projects. It also experimented with levels of diversified activity in some countries that began to resemble the more familiar “country programmes” of many other development agencies, but without the long-term programme structure or field presence that are normally expected. Moreover, ITC’s main strengths over this Evaluation period have still been found (as they had been in 2006) to lie in its specialized technical services and products, and this fact is fully reflected in its internal structures and functioning.
- 38 et seq. 394. With the changes made over the Evaluation period and still underway in the Centre, its record of performance, and the continuing global growth in interest and support for trade-related technical assistance, the ITC is poised and well-placed to take on substantially larger roles in its fields.
395. One key enabling condition for this to happen will be for ITC’s stakeholders to decide - as they were challenged to do in the “key recommendation” of the 2006 evaluation - whether key management and institutional reforms now justify increasing the scale of ITC’s programming, and, if so, that “ increased harmonization of donor support for ITC be undertaken as a priority, if possible in the form of a Programme-Based Approach (PBA), with the objective of reducing transaction costs and improving overall programme coherence and effectiveness.”
- 121, 214
38 et seq.
351, 352
353 396. This independent Evaluation in 2014 has found that in fact ITC is caught in a vicious circle that stands in the way of realising its potentially greater contributions and even fully implementing the key management and institutional reforms that have been initiated. In absolute terms, the ITC model is not cheap, especially with the additional encumbrances of working from within the UN system with the private sector, but it is contributing results in aid for trade that others have not and it could do much more. If

- Box 2, 82
& footnote
- there is an essential measure of flexibility and solid evidence of financial transparency and economy, ITC's stakeholders and managers seem ready to accept the bureaucratic threshold cost of doing multilateral business.
- 121, 174
214, 237
397. But at this stage, ITC needs to be able to reap substantial economies of scale by using its improving management base. Without higher levels of funding, and especially of longer-term and less-earmarked funding, a large share (probably a majority) of ITC's expert capacity will have to continue to operate on the kind of opportunistic, "hand to mouth" basis that has prevailed over the past six years, and this model in turn will make it much more difficult to achieve the stronger results orientation and enhanced performance that its stakeholders seek. As another illustration of the vicious circle, the Evaluation found several instances over the period where important reform efforts underway had to be shelved in order to tackle others, and many cases where high-performing officers have had to be deployed to too-many tasks, reducing their overall impact.
398. Finally, there is also another vital set of questions to resolve around the basic roles and identity of the larger and modernized ITC that could meet critical needs in the coming years. In order to improve improving overall programme coherence and effectiveness, the 2006 evaluation placed its principal emphasis on "a greater focus on country-specific projects" as the key to effective programme development.
- 30-33
78, 360
399. Overall, this Evaluation's findings, in the light of six further years of experience, lead to agreement with the 2006 evaluation's conclusion that ITC's stakeholders face major strategic choices in the types and levels of activity for the future. In fact, it goes further to find that the present situation is simply unsustainable. On the other hand, the present Evaluation has not found evidence to support the feasibility or even necessarily the desirability of the 2006 emphasis on "increasing the share of activity devoted to in-country projects."
400. Instead of automatically accepting this conventional wisdom on the character and role of development agencies, the Evaluation's evidence argues for examining several broad directions and options that would take account of the distinctive demonstrated strengths and constraints in ITC's technical and management capacities. But it will need to do so more strategically: any future directions will need to build in greater continuity, follow-up and sustainability to overcome the most important shortcomings highlighted across the board in assessing ITC's performance since 2006. Building, maintaining and using 'living' rosters of ITC's key contacts will be a minimum requirement to offset the lack of continuing field presence. In terms of resources, the strategy should not be premised on disbursement growth in itself. Instead they should be focused on assuring sufficient resources and opportunities to capitalize on ITC's unique strengths to improve the quality and results of the huge global volumes of Aid for Trade funding which badly need better direction and quality assurance. ITC's stakeholders will be vital not only to assuring the resources, but also the opening up the opportunities for the Centre to play this unusual but much-needed role.
401. The report has set out the detailed Evaluation evidence that supports these central conclusions, and its four major strategic recommendations and 27 targeted action points for future directions that are outlined below.

4.4 Recommendations and Options for Future Directions

402. The following high-level recommendations and action points have implications for ITC, its members and supporters and others, and the internal and external actions suggested will need to support each other to succeed. Many other specific recommendations are highlighted throughout the Evaluation's analysis and its reporting of inputs by the stakeholders consulted.
403. **Strategic Recommendation 1:** Move to a strategic base for supporting and deploying ITC's unique strengths in the global Aid for Trade effort. The six clustered focus areas in the current ITC Operational Plan and Case for Support should be provided with substantial longer-term financial support (5 year minimum) and should be developed and deployed by ITC in genuinely strategic ways for a wide range of countries and regions. De-emphasize ambitions for conventional country programmes, in favour of capitalizing on proven ITC strengths globally and regionally. 373-381
382-387
395-400
404. Recommended Actions:
- **To ITC's Management:** Establish and empower a small but high-level programme-development and support unit, made up of experienced operational officers. The unit would be dedicated to fleshing out 6-10 year strategic programmes and longer-term support for them under the clusters, in pro-active dialogue with potential beneficiaries, operational staff and donors. It would more systematically mesh assessments of priority needs and ITC's proven capacities as well as building in greater sustainability of project results. Task this unit with reporting in one year to management and JAG on initial experience, including lessons for the responsibilities and working relationships of technical and geographical units, suggested pruning of non-strategic services or products, and possible structural or other implications. Shorter-term, one-off projects should not be accepted where they do not capitalize on ITC's potential contributions, but instead detract from its strategic effectiveness.
 - **To ITC Governors and Supporters:** Provide substantial funding for the overall programme or individual clusters and designated financing to ensure adequate medium-term support for the internal programme development unit. Promote and ensure its active engagement and cooperation with their own and other Aid for Trade supporters (especially large multilaterals) championing an ITC role that is 'outside the box' of conventional development cooperation agencies and a leader in specialized collaborative TRTA. The CCITF, at ambassadorial level, needs to take on a stronger role and deliver on the reciprocal responsibility to ITC to generate adequate, predictable and sufficient funding to support a high quality, results oriented and accountable ITC programme.
405. **Strategic Recommendation 2:** Protect and develop ITC's main and distinctive working assets: its special capacity to deal with the private sector in trade and its excellence in technical expertise and appropriate technical assistance. 372, 376-381
382, 388-391
392-401

406. Recommended Actions:

- **To ITC Governors and Supporters:** Invest the financial and moral and political support to enable ITC to maintain and build its networks and special, flexible working relationships with private sector actors in trade. Without abandoning ITC's traditional frugality among international agencies, allow for the time and resources for the Centre to strengthen quality, plan better, recognise and develop its staff, and to follow-up its projects to evaluate results, accompany beneficiaries and ensure sustainable benefits.
- **To ITC's Management and staff:** Stage and phase further reforms and growth to existing and developing capacities to avoid overload and constant improvisation. Complete, regularly maintain and use the new Client Relationship Management System as an essential pillar of ITC's private sector advantage and its worldwide network of clients and partners. Building on progress to date, rapidly finalize "good enough" systems of project cycle management, results-based management and reporting and knowledge management together with the other key challenges identified (in para. 392 above) for ITC's strategic management, effective performance and sustainable growth in the coming five to ten years. The measures taken should all be geared to their realistic "do-ability" and usefulness in day-to-day operations in the Centre as well as to its basic accountabilities. Resolve anomalies in management practice and in the status, recognition and deployment of the whole ITC workforce and managers. Build in the time, resources and incentives for proper performance appraisal and staff development.

407. **Strategic Recommendation 3:** Pragmatically strengthen governance and continue to strengthen accountability while minimizing bureaucracy. 372, 380-381
382, 383
388-391, 392

408. Recommended Actions:

- **To ITC Governors and Supporters:** Rather than attempting formal change in ITC's heavy but manageable governance system, the ambassadorial chair and past chair of the JAG and the chair of the CCITF could together convene small and informal, "friends of the Chairs" groups (balanced between engaged beneficiary and non-beneficiary countries) to allow for advance and follow-up discussion of formal ITC governance meeting agendas and management reports, and to encourage active engagement wherever necessary by the representatives of those countries in Geneva, capitals and UN New York. A regular annual meeting of the three Heads of ITC, WTO and UNCTAD and their close collaborators, in advance of JAG meetings, could also serve to ensure synergies among the Geneva trade institutions. Engaged Members should be prepared to support necessary adjustments or adaptations in standardized UN requirements to accommodate a smaller, more entrepreneurial, private sector-oriented organisation like ITC.
- **To ITC's Management:** Following up the few areas of concern signalled in the Governance survey, further steps are needed to strengthen the Information to JAG and CCITF on plans, performance and results - under each of ITC's funding streams, including the Regular Budget - as well as on internal management and economical operation. The strengthened continuing dialogue proposed under Recommendation 1 would help avoid this reporting and discussion being only intermittent and one-way. Management should be transparent and assertive about both the real progress and the limits in defining, advancing and reporting results in ITC's work. ITC management should also be assertive in making and defending adjustments and adaptations to standardized UN requirements that are necessary to accommodate its distinctive mission and essential business requirements.

-
409. **Strategic Recommendation 4:** Move ITC up to the next level of visibility, engagement and effectiveness as a key player in the global Aid for Trade effort. 18, 27-29
31-33, 155
168, 181-185
192, 381
410. Recommended Actions:
- **To ITC's Management:** While carrying out existing commitments and meeting immediate needs, keep a steady focus and ITC's substantive expertise and credibility aimed at the strategic horizon suggested in Recommendation 1 and supported by the other Recommendations. To realistically enhance ITC's links among beneficiary countries and regions, recognizing its constraints, consider a very few carefully-designed and tested liaison arrangements for key regions. These could build on streamlined geographic offices, and/or targeted representation in key centres, applying lessons from the ill-prepared and apparently ineffective experiment with the Mexico City office, as well as other ITC experiences with in-country and regional support. Working with JAG and CCITF, enlist a small but representative group of engaged representatives of intended beneficiary countries and institutions, in Geneva and/or in capitals, to advise at regular intervals on cooperation possibilities, strategic design, key contacts and expertise and profile-raising opportunities. Continue to tell the ITC story publicly, highlighting promising innovations and breakthroughs as justified, while also using them to focus attention on the less glamorous, longer-term work of building sustainable results in supporting trade. Manage further growth carefully, using and building the essential workforce and organisational capacities, without over-extending them.
 - **To All Aid for Trade donors, especially multilateral and large donors:** Take greater advantage of ITC in these programmes as a distinctive asset to the global aid for trade effort, with its strengths in skills attuned to practical exporter needs and adaptable to different country situations. Financing through such channels as the STDF and EIF (as an 'honest broker' for key TRTA to LDCs) as well as a number of existing major programmes funded by donors have shown how to make good strategic use of ITC's assets. Call on ITC to support and complement major programmes while helping support the necessary duration and follow-up of ITC's contributions.

5. EVALUATION MATRICES

5.1 Matrix 1 - Assessing ITC’s Organisation and Management and Changes since 2006

	Key aspects	Issues/ lines of enquiry	Data collection methods	Key sources	Methods for analysis
A. What is the enabling environment for organisational performance in ITC and how has it changed	A1. Governance and accountability structures and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Role and functioning of governance structures and processes</i> in supporting organisational credibility, effectiveness and efficiency (formal rules; UNCTAD-WTO-UN relationships; roles of JAG and CCITF) • <i>Role and functioning of external accountability requirements and processes</i> in supporting organisational credibility, effectiveness and efficiency (e.g. reporting demands UNCTAD-WTO-UN accountability, oversight role of JAG) • <i>Internal, administrative, political, audit and budget requirements</i> (regular and extra-budgetary) and effects on efficiency/effectiveness • Overlaps or gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Informed respondent interviews / focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoUs, JAG session reports (formal and informals); strategic plans, CCTIF reports, financial reports, annual reports and recommendation (UN, WTO and UNCTAD). UN strategic frameworks, biennial plans etc., management and governance decisions, change management documentation and previous evaluations • Interviews with senior management • Interviews with Steering Committee, WTO, UNCTAD, country missions, donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 year on year comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources • Selective benchmarking as possible
	A2. Institutional setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effects of the surrounding environment</i> (Geneva location, connectedness to partners, role within the UN/multilateral system) in supporting organisational credibility, effectiveness and efficiency (supportive factors/ barriers) • <i>Influence of key development agendas</i> on organisational priority-setting (e.g. MDGs, Paris/Busan, AfT agenda, UN systems reform) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Informed respondent interviews / focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMC meeting minutes, annual reports and recommendations, JAG session reports (formal and informal), UN strategic frameworks and biennial plans, change management documentation and previous evaluations • Interviews with senior management and operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, JAG, WTO, UN, country missions and donors • Key MDG/post-2015 /Busan/AfT/UN reform (e.g. QCPR) documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources

	Key aspects	Issues/ lines of enquiry	Data collection methods	Key sources	Methods for analysis
	A3. ITC comparative advantages/ reputation	As identified by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients and potential clients • ITC personnel and management • UN partners (UNCTAD, WTO) • Donors • Country mission and survey informants • Other stakeholders • Whether/how/where capitalised upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis, including updating the “comparative advantage” assessment from 2006 • Informed respondent interviews / focus groups • Targeted survey (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, CPDs, and annual reports, 2006 comparative advantage assessment • Strategic objectives and operations of other AfT institutions • Interviews with UN partners, donors, country missions and other partners • Survey responses (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational analysis of AfT agenda and players • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
B. What is ITC’s organisational capacity to carry out its mandate effectively and how has it changed since 2006?	B1. Strategic leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Role of organisational goals</i> in providing strategic direction (clarity, credibility, results orientation, ownership) • <i>Effects of leadership and strategic planning process</i> on building organisational credibility, effectiveness and efficiency (change management process; gearing to results) • <i>Role of leadership and strategic planning</i> in identifying/ deploying ITC’s comparative advantages and opportunities, as well as tackling weaknesses and capacity to design and conduct activities under a single, coordinated perspective • <i>Resource allocations deployed</i> at strategic level for maximum effectiveness (the achievement of strategic goals) and efficiency (timeliness, cost-efficiency etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Informed respondent interviews / focus groups • Targeted survey (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, CPDs, case for support, change management documentation, previous evaluations • OIOS audits and evaluations • Interviews with senior management and operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, UN partners, donors, country missions and other partners • Previous staff surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	B2. Organisational structure and deployment of capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Design of organisational structure</i> vis-a-vis its fitness for purpose (achievement of organisational goals / mandate realisation) • <i>Distribution and balance of capacities</i> vis-à-vis optimisation for organisational effectiveness and efficiency (HQ / regional balance; experience with the decentralisation pilot in Mexico; project and country-linked capacities, management layers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Informed respondent interviews / focus groups • Targeted survey (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC organisational structure and business lines, strategic plans, CPDs, case for support, change management process documentation, previous evaluations • OIOS audits and evaluations • Interviews with senior management and operational staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different

	Key aspects	Issues/ lines of enquiry	Data collection methods	Key sources	Methods for analysis
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with Steering Committee, UN partners, donors, country missions and other partners Previous staff surveys/targeted survey 	sources
	B3. Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Volume / recruitment of expertise and skills</i> commensurate with achievement of strategic results (technical and managerial, recruitment policies, contracting, tenures, vacancies, etc.). <i>Role of UN rules and procedures</i> in ITC human resource planning, policies and procedures Diversity and gender mainstreaming planning and accountability mechanisms in place, institutionally owned and operationalized Quality and use of professional development and performance management /assessment systems in supporting organisational effectiveness and efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic documentary analysis Analysis of HR statistics Informed respondent interviews / focus groups with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITC HR policy documents and UN/WTO rules and procedures, gender / diversity plans and policies ITC HR statistics OIOS audits and evaluations Interviews with management ,and operational staff, particularly HR Performance management / professional development frameworks, systems, mechanisms Previous staff surveys/staff management committee records and minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results Triangulation among different sources
	B4. Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of financial planning, accountability and monitoring systems in transparency and organisational credibility/efficiency <i>Influence of surrounding UN systems</i> on financial management systems and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic documentary analysis Financial and budget analysis Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITC FM (budget preparation and implementation control, accounting) , case for support and project cycle management procedures OIOS audits and evaluations Interviews with DPS staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results Triangulation among different sources
	B5. Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Availability of technology and information systems</i> to support organisational efficiency, credibility and transparency (internal and external; information availability and dating) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of IT management policies and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of RBM system, intranet and website OIOS audits and evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend

	Key aspects	Issues/ lines of enquiry	Data collection methods	Key sources	Methods for analysis
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systems • Analysis of intranet and website • Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with DPS, senior management and operational staff, key external partners (UN, country mission and donors) • Previous staff and client surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview results • Triangulation among different sources
	<p>B6. Project and Program Management</p> <p>*also covered extensively in operational analysis – HQ analysis to focus on process rather than content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Function of project identification process</i> in supporting demand-driven approach / deployment of ITC’s comparative advantage / optimal use of capacities • <i>Influence of scale of projects identified / designed</i> (including experience with larger and regional projects) in gearing ITC capacities for optimal use / maximum effectiveness and efficiency • <i>Volume and quality of skills training and development</i> in supporting robust project intervention logics (MDG-guided) and designs (guidance manuals, toolkits, equity and gender etc.) • <i>Role of project cycle management process</i> in supporting efficient implementation processes and tracking implementation/results (also equity and gender considerations) • <i>Extent of adaptive capacity</i> and ability to take corrective actions in the light of contextual change • <i>Selection processes for delivery channels and partners</i> as appropriate for implementation context / maximisation of efficiency (TSI and others) • <i>Role of project and programme monitoring and evaluation systems</i> in optimising effectiveness and efficiency (independent evaluations, management responses, equity and gender considerations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic review of key documents (process / project and programme) • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC programme cycle management / monitoring and evaluation procedures • Sample of project/programme documentation, monitoring reports and evaluations • Interviews with selected DCP and DBIS operational (business line) staff • Previous staff/client surveys • Previous client surveys • Survey responses (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	<p>B7. Process Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Role of internal decision-making processes</i> in enhancing effectiveness and efficiency (decision-making flows, communications of decisions) • <i>Functioning of internal communications procedures</i> in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Analysis of intranet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of planning, communications, M&E, internal review and management documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis

	Key aspects	Issues/ lines of enquiry	Data collection methods	Key sources	Methods for analysis
		<p>enhancing efficiency and effectiveness (speed and frequency of communications, accessibility of information)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use of internal oversight</i> to optimise systems and processes (review types, content, information capture and flows) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of intranet • Interviews with DPS, senior management, and selected operational staff • Previous staff surveys/ staff management committee meeting minutes • Previous evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	<p>B8. Inter-organisational Linkages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Role of partnerships, joint ventures and networks</i> in supporting inter-agency coherence and co-ordination and the achievement of broader results (WTO-UNCTAD, One UN, inter-agency cluster work, TSI partners) • <i>Functioning of client relationship management systems</i> in supporting organisational credibility and legitimacy (design, implementation, training) • <i>Role of regional and national level partnerships</i> in driving coherence / co-ordination / the achievement of results at regional / national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic documentary analysis • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, annual reports, CPDs, MoUs, etc. • Project and programme documentation (key partnerships and networks) • Relevant meeting minutes (partnerships and networks) • Client management system and records • Interviews with senior management and selected operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, JAG, WTO, UN/UNCTAD and other partner institutions (UNIDO, ICTSD, IFC/WB, STDF, CBI, regional development banks and institutions, etc.) • Previous staff/client surveys • Previous evaluations • Survey responses (country level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of how partner organisations are chosen and the criteria applied; • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources

<p>C. How strong is ITC's organisational motivation to carry out its mandate effectively and how has it changed since 2006?</p>	<p>C1. Vision and Mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Influence of ITC's vision</i> in promoting clarity of purpose to its main audience and an understanding of being 'greater than the sum of the parts' • <i>Extent of understanding / 'buy in'</i> of ITC's vision among key partners and staff • Extent to which strategic direction and internal systems are geared towards realisation of ITC's vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of management and governance decisions • Systematic document analysis • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, annual reports, CPDs, etc. • Change management documentation • Interviews with senior management and selected operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, JAG, WTO and UN • Previous staff /client surveys • Previous evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	<p>C2. Culture and incentives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any key defining characteristics and values of the organisation • (E.g. transition from the 'artisanal'; equity and diversity including gender) • Nature of incentives and disincentives as identified by staff and partners • (E.g. Performance, retention, recruitment etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document analysis • Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, CPDs, etc. • Interviews with senior management and selected operational staff • Interviews with key partner organisations • Previous staff/client surveys • Previous evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
<p>D. How strong is ITC's organisational performance in carrying out its mandate and how has it changed since 2006? (These issues are also covered extensively, from the delivery and project level up, in the operational analysis set out below.)</p>	<p>D1. In relation to effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quality and role of corporate results framework</i> in shaping ITC's strategic direction / ownership and 'buy in' (including results orientation, integration of equity and gender considerations) • <i>Quality and role of RBM system</i> in enabling continuous monitoring/reporting of results, (impact-level gearing, equity and gender considerations) • <i>Quality and role of independent evaluation function</i> in supporting accountability and achievement of results, and influencing strategic decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document analysis • Analysis of RBM system • Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC RBM and Evaluation systems, policies, reporting lines and documentation • OIOS audits and evaluations • Interviews with governance stakeholders, senior management and selected operational staff • Previous evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	<p>D2. In relation to efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of financial accountability framework and systems in enabling oversight of administrative efficiency • Deployment of cost transparency mechanisms and systems to support internal accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Informed respondent interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC financial reports, annual reports, strategic plans and cases for support • OIOS audits and evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous ITC evaluations • Interviews with DPS and selected operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, JAG, WTO and UNCTAD, donors 	<p>interview and survey results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation among different sources • •
	D3. In relation to ongoing relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of key development frameworks (MDG, national needs) in identifying and adapting to client (beneficiary) needs and priorities • Prioritisation of interventions for maximisation of development results • Application of key AfT frameworks to respond to the changing environment (trade negotiations etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys • Findings from project portfolio analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC strategic plans, CPDs, annual reports and cases for support, previous evaluations • Change management documentation • Interviews with JAG,WTO and UNCTAD, donors and other informed sources on needs and priorities in Aid for Trade • Interviews with DPS, DBIS and DCP senior management and selected operational staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources
	D4. In relation to financial viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of resource mobilisation strategy on the generation of required resources for short, medium and long term, growth • Extent of diversified resource flows (sources of resources mobilized/available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITC financial reports, annual reports, strategic plans and cases for support • OIOS audits and evaluations • Previous ITC evaluations • Interviews with DPS, senior management and selected operational staff • Interviews with Steering Committee, JAG, WTO and UN • Interviews with current and potential donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 comparative and trend analysis • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources

5.2 Matrix 2 - Assessing ITC's Operational progress and results since 2006

ITC's expected accomplishments Linked to the three core client groups	Issues/indicators As relevant, applying primarily the criteria of relevance (R), effectiveness (F), efficiency(C), impact (I) and sustainability (S)	Data collection methods	Key sources (primary & secondary data sources)	Methods for analysis
Policy makers Supporting policymakers in integrating the business sector into the global economy ¹¹⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate selection of countries/activities/ delivery agents (beneficiary input/ needs assessment process// influence of funding) [R] • Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability) [F] • Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use; On-time, on budget delivery. [C] • Effectiveness of implementation (beneficiary assessments will be central) and insights on “value for money” [F] • Monitoring and evidence of results/plausible contributions to impacts, including relevant MDGs. [F,I] • Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda) [R,F,C] • Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools [R,F, I] • Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects [F,C] • Main problems or constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document review • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys • Portfolio analysis/ country case missions 	<p>Secondary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports, strategic plans, CPDs, case for support • Prior evaluations of programmes/projects • Existing client surveys • Relevant OIOS audits <p>Primary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with selected managers and staff from DCP, DMD and BE (DBIS) • Interview/survey results from selected developing country policymakers (e.g. ministries responsible for trade and SME issues, national export agencies, etc.) • Interview/survey results from selected informants on the ground (e.g. policy advisers, donors, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 year on year comparative and trend analysis to measure progress • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources • Selective benchmarking as possible • Impact contribution analysis
TSIs Developing the capacity of trade support institutions to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate selection of countries/ TSIs/ activities/ delivery agents (beneficiary input/ needs assessment/ / influence of funding /certification processes) [R] • Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document review • Informed respondent 	<p>Secondary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports, strategic plans, CPDs, case for support • Prior evaluations of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 year on year comparative and trend analysis to measure progress

¹¹⁰ NOTE: this should include trade intelligence activities (available to all client groups) and policy products

<p>ITC's expected accomplishments Linked to the three core client groups</p>	<p>Issues/indicators As relevant, applying primarily the criteria of relevance (R), effectiveness (F), efficiency(C), impact (I) and sustainability (S)</p>	<p>Data collection methods</p>	<p>Key sources (primary & secondary data sources)</p>	<p>Methods for analysis</p>
<p>support businesses</p>	<p>sustainability) [F]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use. On-time, on budget; Delivery [C] • Effectiveness of implementation (beneficiary assessments will be central) and insights on “value for money” [F] • Monitoring and evidence of results/plausible contributions to impacts, including relevant MDGs [F,I] • Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda) [R,F,C] • Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools [R,F,C] • Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects [F,C] • Main problems or constraints 	<p>interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted surveys • Portfolio analysis /country case missions 	<p>programs/projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and RBM reporting • Existing client surveys • Relevant OIOS audits <p>Primary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with selected managers and staff from DCP, DBIS (in particular TS), and DMD • Interview/survey results from TSIs (management and operations levels) • Interview/survey results from selected SME stakeholders • Interview/survey results from selected informants on the ground (e.g. advisors, donors, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources • Selective benchmarking as possible • Impact contribution analysis
<p>Enterprises Strengthening the international competitiveness of enterprises (and growing exports)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate selection of countries/ sectors/ activities/ enterprises/ delivery agents (beneficiary input/needs assessment processes/ influence of funding) [R] • Rigorous and responsive design (including the basis for RBM, integrating gender equity, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability) [F] • Adequate capacity to implement and efficiency of resource use. On-time, on budget; Delivery [C] • Effectiveness of implementation (beneficiary assessments will be central); Insights on “value for money” [F] • Monitoring and evidence of results, possible impacts including relevant MDGs [F,I] • Effectiveness of coordination/cooperation with other actors, national and international (value added in AfT agenda) [R,F,C] • Notable accomplishments, innovations, sustainability issues, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document review • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys • Portfolio analysis/ country case missions 	<p>Secondary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports, strategic plans, CPDs, case for support • Prior evaluations of programmes/projects • Monitoring and RBM reporting • Existing client surveys • Relevant OIOS audits <p>Primary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EC, DCP (regional sections), and selected DMD where relevant • Interview/survey results from SME operators, chambers of commerce, and other private sector bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 to 2012 year on year comparative and trend analysis to measure progress • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources • Selective benchmarking as possible • Impact contribution

ITC's expected accomplishments Linked to the three core client groups	Issues/indicators As relevant, applying primarily the criteria of relevance (R), effectiveness (F), efficiency(C), impact (I) and sustainability (S)	Data collection methods	Key sources (primary & secondary data sources)	Methods for analysis
	quality improvements or expanded uses for existing tools [R,F,I] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications for the size and duration of ITC projects, outlook and obstacles for large projects [F,C] • Main problems or constraints 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview/survey results from selected informants on the ground (e.g. policy advisers, donors, etc.) 	analysis
Integrated overall performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to combine different skills to deliver, coordinated and coherent solutions [F,C,S] • Overall coherence of projects and programmes [R,I] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic document review • Informed respondent interviews • Targeted surveys • Portfolio analysis/ country case missions 	<p>Secondary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reports, strategic plans, CPDs, case for support • Prior evaluations of programmes/projects • Existing client surveys • Relevant OIOS audits • Central RBM reports to date <p>Primary Data Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with EC, DCP (regional sections), and selected DMD where relevant • Interview/survey results from SME operators, chambers of commerce, and other private sector bodies • Interview/survey results from selected informants on the ground (e.g. policy advisers, donors, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis of: 2006 to 2012 year on year comparative and trend analysis to measure progress • Analysis and interpretation of interview and survey results • Triangulation among different sources • Selective benchmarking as possible • Impact contribution analysis

