Annual Report 2021

Building an inclusive and sustainable recovery
The International Trade Centre is the only international agency fully dedicated to the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through aid for trade. Working with partners to strengthen the competitiveness of MSME exporters, we help to build vibrant, sustainable export sectors that provide entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly for women, young people and vulnerable communities.
Trade impact for good
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For the global economy, multilateralism and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2021 was a year full of complex challenges. A year of optimism and setbacks. A year of innovation and disruption.

For the second year running, the world stopped making progress on the SDGs. While the number of people living on less than $1.90 a day declined relative to 2020, overall levels of global poverty were still far above pre-pandemic trends, reversing years of steady gains. An additional 93 million people worldwide were pushed into extreme poverty because of the pandemic.

COVID-19 lockdowns and related public health measures severely affected national economies, global trade and, in particular, the informal economy. Our core constituency of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) – and the communities whose livelihoods depend on their success – faced disrupted supply chains, energy and commodity price hikes, a squeeze on investment, increased debt and uncertainty.

Climate and sustainability action became ever more important in 2021. Even with a temporary dip in human activities due to COVID-19 restrictions, energy-related greenhouse gas emissions increased by 6% in 2021, reaching their highest level ever. 2021 was one of the warmest years on record.

With less than a decade left until 2030, all of us – international organizations, funders, partner countries, the private sector, civil society – need to work twice as hard merely to recoup lost ground, let alone reset the world on a path to achieve the SDGs.

That’s why, in 2021, the International Trade Centre (ITC) focused on ‘walking the talk’. On building an inclusive and sustainable recovery, focused on the competitiveness and resilience of our MSME clients.

This report showcases ITC’s work during this turbulent year. It illustrates how the delivery of our core services – built over nearly six decades and provided to 130 countries in 2021 – helped chart a roadmap to recovery. How our project delivery and development results gave renewed impetus to achieve the SDGs in an uncertain business and policy environment. How ITC continued to adapt and learn, always responsive to the complex and ever-evolving needs of those firms that are the main source of income for people at the base of the pyramid.

In 2021, we developed and launched our new Strategic Plan 2022–2025. The four-year plan was built on and validated by a consultative process: first within ITC, then to our external partners, both in Geneva and in our funder/partner countries. The Strategic Plan will push ITC’s business model towards creating even more competitive MSMEs, stronger business ecosystems, better regulatory environments and more relevant global public goods. It will create an ITC for the future, with a sharper focus on maximizing the contribution of MSME competitiveness and trade to the achievement of the SDGs.

In 2021, we completed the last year of our previous Strategic Plan by focusing on making ITC’s programmes, tools, staff and advocacy deliver for everyone.

As the digital transformation continued to reshape the development landscape, digital solutions took a leading role in our service delivery. We gave connectivity critical importance as an essential tool to increase inclusiveness. We released an Open Data Portal to enhance the transparency of ITC’s work. Our monthly Trade Briefs series was launched for users to stay on top of cutting-edge trade-related data, analysis and research in real time. By year-end, ITC had reached more than 1.2 million registered accounts for ITC market access tools, with women accounting for nearly 40% of registered users of our global public goods.

We provided more than 5,100 days of trainings and workshops in 2021, including through new e-learning courses and webinars. African MSMEs learned how to benefit from the African Continental Free Trade Area, policymakers and investment promotion agencies gained knowledge on investment facilitation negotiations and quality champions were trained in East Africa to ensure quality and food safety in business.

We also supported MSMEs in taking advantage of new digital tools that can increase efficiency in business processes and allow new ways of interacting with buyers and suppliers. For example, to help small businesses improve traceability in the coffee value chain, we initiated
a pilot project to digitalize the records of almost 1,000 women coffee growers in Rwanda. Through FastTrackTech, we helped tech start-ups raise $5.4 million in investment.

ITC worked to make trade more accessible and inclusive, in particular to women and young entrepreneurs. Our SheTrades Commonwealth project helped achieve $45 million in sales and encouraged 46 governments to use our SheTrades Outlook tool. We added tens of thousands of new members to our youth empowerment platforms.

With environmental risks rising throughout the world, we focused on pivoting our programmatic work and thought leadership towards a greener and more sustainable world.

We published our SME Competitiveness Outlook 2021, showing which green measures could offer MSMEs new opportunities, while also lowering their vulnerability to climate risks, encapsulated in a Green Recovery Plan. Alliances for Action joined forces with partners to boost and promote a sustainable coconut sector across the Caribbean. As custodian of the world’s leading database on sustainability standards in trade, Trade for Sustainable Development launched Standards Map 4.0 with new features and functionalities.

I wish to thank ITC staff in Geneva and in our partner countries who delivered remarkable results in a period of considerable uncertainty. In a difficult year for trade, multilateralism and the SDGs, their professionalism, dedication and sense of purpose brought hope to our clients around the world.

Pamela Coke-Hamilton
Executive Director
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AfCFTA</td>
<td>African Continental Free Trade Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARISE</td>
<td>ASEAN Regional Integration Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>BSO</td>
<td>business support organization</td>
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<td>CBC</td>
<td>COMESA Business Council</td>
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<td>CCITF</td>
<td>Consultative Committee of the ITC Trust Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EATTA</td>
<td>East African Tea Trade Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EFI</td>
<td>Ethical Fashion Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESG</td>
<td>environmental, social and governance</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>GRASP</td>
<td>Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>human resources</td>
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<td>ICS</td>
<td>Initiative for Compliance and Sustainability</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>information and communications technology</td>
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<td>IEU</td>
<td>Independent Evaluation Unit</td>
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<td>ITC</td>
<td>International Trade Centre</td>
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<td>JAG</td>
<td>Joint Advisory Group</td>
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<td>JIU</td>
<td>Joint Inspection Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDC</td>
<td>least developed country</td>
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<td>MARKUP</td>
<td>Market Access Upgrade Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSMEs</td>
<td>micro, small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
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<td>NTM</td>
<td>non-tariff measure</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>programme support cost</td>
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<tr>
<td>RB</td>
<td>regular budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLCP</td>
<td>Social &amp; Labor Convergence Program</td>
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<td>SSCBT</td>
<td>small-scale cross-border trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SkYE</td>
<td>Skills for Youth Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4SD</td>
<td>Trade for Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOAM</td>
<td>Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN-SWAP</td>
<td>UN System-Wide Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>XB</td>
<td>Extrabudgetary</td>
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MSME competitiveness for the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a universal, global development agenda for all United Nations member states and development actors until 2030. They are an interlinked set of 17 global goals supported by 169 targets in economic, social and environmental development dimensions. In 2021, the International Trade Centre (ITC) directly supported 11 SDGs.

ITC contributes to the SDGs by working with policymakers, business support organizations (BSOs), enterprises and market partners to support the trade competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). It has systems in place to monitor results and help the global community track advances towards achieving the SDGs.

ITC is committed to restore the promise of the SDGs in their final decade by supporting accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
How ITC projects link to the Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG 2 - ZERO HUNGER**
- Eleven trade-related policies, strategies and regulations were improved in the agribusiness sectors of Kenya, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania (2.b)
- Under ITC’s Alliances for Action initiative, 1,192 (495 women) farmers/MSMEs in the coconut sector were trained in climate-smart planting, quality management and product development, among other activities (2.4)

**SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY**
- More than 3 million women were connected to markets between 2018 and 2021 (5.5)
- Three SheTrades hubs were established in Rwanda, The Gambia and Uruguay in 2021 (5.5)

**SDG 8 - DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**
- ITC’s market analysis tools facilitated more than $180 million in trade transactions in 2021, registering upwards of 1.2 million users for the first time (8.2)
- More than 1,000 jobs supported under the Fast Tracking Digital Entrepreneurship programme in Africa (8.2)
- Some 1,850 businesses improved compliance with cross-border requirements in 16 countries (8.5)

**SDG 17 - PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS**
- ITC’s South-South trade and investment programme (Partnership for Investment and Growth in Africa and the Supporting Indian Trade for Investment in Africa initiative) facilitated over $90 million of trade and investment (17.3; 17.6; 17.11)
- The One Trade Africa initiative was launched to help MSMEs take advantage of business opportunities under the African Continental Free Trade Area (17.11)
- Regional trade transparency was boosted through the launch of the Eastern Partnership Trade Helpdesk portal and Central Asia Trade Intelligence Portal (17.19)

ITC financial delivery distribution by SDG in 2021

- 37% SDG 2
- 17% SDG 5
- 12% SDG 8
- 9% SDG 17
SDG 1 - NO POVERTY
• More than 200 freelancers from Dadaab refugee camp changed their business operations, with 110 freelancers completing nearly 400 job orders and earning more than $41,000 (1.2)
• Through a partnership with the e-commerce marketplace NOVICA, ITC supported artisans to sell their handcraft goods to customers worldwide (1.2)
• In Colombia, 174 cocoa and coconut producers improved their agricultural practices and 67 lime producers in Tahiti obtained the Colombian Export Authorization Certificate (1.1; 1.2)

SDG 4 - QUALITY EDUCATION
• 170 Somali youth received training for increased employability including digital skills training to work as freelancers/entrepreneurs in the digital space (4.4)
• In 2019–2021, more than 680 digital entrepreneurs acquired technical and vocational skills under the Fast Tracking Digital Entrepreneurship in Africa project (4.4)

SDG 9 - INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
• Under the Market Access Upgrade Programme (MARKUP), 40 companies from East Africa accessed financing exceeding $2.7 million (9.3)
• The Online Payment Solutions Finder was launched to enable businesses to easily find payment platforms for which they are eligible (9.3)
• The Nigerian Export Promotion Council improved the quality of products and leveraged networks to create more market access for Nigerian exporters and improve their organizational effectiveness (9.3)

SDG 12 - RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
• Through the Trade for Sustainable Development programme, ITC supported implementation of the Basic Guidelines for Sustainable Cocoa platform in Peru to improve the quality of cocoa exported by smallholder farmers. In 2021, the project trained 460 technical staff of the cooperatives and supported 510 cocoa smallholders to carry out sustainability assessments of their operations (12.2; 2.3; 2.4)
• 72 entrepreneurs and sustainable sourcing executives completed the newly launched International Executive Programme on Sustainable Sourcing to increase transparency on sustainability standards (12.6; 17.7)

SDG 13 - CLIMATE ACTION
• More than 800 clients of GreenToCompete hubs increased their awareness about the benefits of implementing sustainable business practices (13.3)
• Supported by ITC’s Trade Facilitation programme, Sri Lanka developed a proposal for a modern industrial policy based on digitalization and the green economy (13.3)
• The SME Competitiveness Outlook increased awareness of thousands of users on topics related to empowering the green recovery, with more than 7,000 downloads by end-2021 (13.3)

SDG 16 - PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
• Iraq, Lebanon, Timor-Leste and Uzbekistan progressed towards World Trade Organization (WTO) accession with ITC assistance (16.7; 16.8; 17.10; 10.6)
• 50 WTO Members’ trade negotiators increased their knowledge about implications of the WTO investment facilitation negotiation through regulatory gap analysis and public-private dialogue (16.8)
• More than 400 policymakers increased capacity on making their trade policies more gender-responsive, leading to the development of eight strategies (16.7; 5.5)

Note: Unless otherwise stated, the results refer to 2021 alone. The SDG targets to which the showcased results contribute directly are shown in brackets. The examples are usually the result of multi-year ITC initiatives. The full list and description of targets can be accessed here: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals
ITC interventions: Building an inclusive and sustainable recovery
ITC 2021 results

**Awareness**

- >410,000 active users of trade intelligence, more than 38% of registered users of Global Public Goods are women
- >9.7 million visits to Trade Map

**Knowledge, skills and capacity building**

- >5,100 days of trainings and workshops
- >118,000 SME Trade Academy participants, of whom 23% are certified and 52% are women; many pursue more than one course

**Consensus, plans to act, policy actions**

- >90 cases of trade-related policies, strategies, regulations introduced or changed in favour of MSME competitiveness, with business sector input

**MSME action**

- >25,500 MSMEs improved competitiveness, with more than 5,100 MSMEs having enhanced their environmental performance
- >5,500 MSMEs transacted international business, of which more than 840 did so in compliance with voluntary sustainability standards
- >470 improvements in institutional performance
- >45% interventions in least developed countries
- 35% share of MSMEs owned or operated by women that improved competitiveness
- 40% share of MSMEs owned or operated by women that transacted business
- 3 million women connected to international markets through the SheTrades initiative
- 108,000 active users and 38,000 registered members on Shetrades.com platform

**Key performance indicators**

- $147 million – ITC’s delivery across all budgets (target $141 million)
- $316 million – Extra-budgetary funds secured for 2022 and beyond (target $280 million)
- 88% – Country-specific assistance to priority countries (target >80%)
- 97% – Clients that rated ITC services positively (target >85%)

Source: Report to the Consultative Committee of the ITC Trust Fund for 2021
Transparency in trade

The Transparency in Trade programme aims to improve the trade and investment decisions of companies, notably MSMEs, trade and investment support institutions and policymakers. In particular, it helps MSMEs in developing countries target promising markets, diversify and add value to their exports.

To achieve this, ITC has developed a suite of online tools and databases to make global trade more transparent and facilitate access to new markets. ITC helps its clients use these tools and databases effectively with an online and on-site user support training programme.

**Key results**

- **9.7 million visits** to Trade Map (1 visit every 3 seconds)
- **25% increase** in visits to Trade Map compared to 2020
- **12,022 monthly visits** to Export Potential Map (24% increase relative to 2020)
- **8,721 participants** (48% women) trained in the tools

**Launch of the Trade Briefs online monthly publication**

**Enabled an estimated $182 million in trade transactions**

**Highlights**

The ITC Market Analysis Tools supported the economic recovery through the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling companies to realize an estimated $182 million in trade transactions in 2021 (based on responses from the annual user survey). [https://marketanalysis.intracen.org](https://marketanalysis.intracen.org)

In June 2021, ITC launched the monthly Trade Briefs series, a web-based publication that allows users to visualize monthly variations in trade and market access conditions and explore innovative trade data, analysis and research. The Trade Briefs documented the evolution of global trade in 2021 and the recovery of ITC Export Potential estimates since the beginning of the pandemic. By autumn 2021, world export potential was forecast to be 0.5% above its pre-pandemic level. [https://tradebriefs.intracen.org](https://tradebriefs.intracen.org)

The Export Potential methodology informed product selection for ITC projects in countries including the Philippines, Iraq and Bolivia, and quantified the trade impact of Nepal’s graduation from least developed country (LDC) status. It also formed the basis for a joint ITC-United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) study of how the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can help the continent achieve progress towards the SDGs. [https://exportpotential.intracen.org](https://exportpotential.intracen.org)
Trade Map added data from an additional 10 LDCs in 2021, while Market Access Map created a webpage and online course on understanding the United Kingdom’s economic partnership agreements with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States. [https://www.trademap.org](https://www.trademap.org); [https://www.macmap.org](https://www.macmap.org)

The United Kingdom Trade Partnerships programme further democratized access to quality trade information in ACP states by financing the development of eight customized versions of the ITC Market Analysis Tools for integration into the websites of trade promotion organizations.

The Rules of Origin Facilitator, a comprehensive online resource designed to make trade rules easily accessible to MSMEs, supported research on several rules of origin-related themes, including the harmonization of rules under the AfCFTA. [https://findrulesoforigin.org](https://findrulesoforigin.org)

ITC, mandated by the European Commission, developed an innovative value chain methodology to identify promising intra-African value chains in light of the entry into force of the AfCFTA. The trade agreement creates an unprecedented opportunity to improve Africa’s economic resilience, which can be achieved, in part, by producing essential supplies on the continent with inputs that are available locally, but have typically been exported for transformation.

ITC identified bottlenecks preventing businesses from fully realizing these promising value chains and developed recommendations to overcome them.

The ITC SME Trade Academy online courses on trade flows and access to international markets brought in more than 2,500 participants in 2021. To meet the rising demand for online capacity building, ITC added 62 new trade information-related videos to the Trade and Market Intelligence YouTube channel, generating upwards of 120,500 views. [https://learning.intracen.org](https://learning.intracen.org); [https://www.youtube.com/user/MarketAnalysisTools](https://www.youtube.com/user/MarketAnalysisTools)

### Non-tariff measures in goods and services

The Non-Tariff Measures programme brings the concerns of MSMEs about regulatory and procedural trade obstacles to the attention of policymakers and other stakeholders, enabling concrete responses. It increases the transparency of non-tariff measures (NTMs) through data collection and dissemination as well as business surveys documenting trade obstacles. It also provides thought leadership through applied research and analysis, thus contributing to evidence-based policymaking and reduced trade costs.

#### Key results

- **123 practical actions** were taken in response to information gathered through ITC business surveys
- Businesses reported **185 trade obstacles**, with **77 obstacles** resolved
- The ePing alert mechanism registered **3,000 new users** and more than **100,000 visits**. A Vietnamese version of the platform was launched.
- More than **800 stakeholders** were trained on non-tariff measures
Highlights

Recommendations gathered through the ITC business surveys set the ground for tangible outcomes in 2021. In Niger, a series of stakeholder meetings held over two years ended with a list of 123 concrete actions. For example, the Chamber of Craft Trades of Niger created bank credit solutions to encourage artisans to formalize their activities and address the lack of professionalization and difficulties in accessing loans that they reported.

In Nepal, the national single window was developed and the national trade information portal enhanced with support from the World Bank. Similarly, in Viet Nam, online procedures to enhance competitiveness were also recommended in stakeholder consultations. The local authorities announced the launch of the national single window and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Single Window mechanisms to improve the business environment.

ITC presented the findings and recommendations of the business surveys on trade obstacles in the United Republic of Tanzania and published the survey reports for Oman and Sudan. Survey results show that 36% of Tanzanian firms have fully or partially resolved trade obstacles in the last six years.

ITC’s Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism (TOAM) was a powerful tool for businesses in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region. Local agencies provided a total of 77 solutions, leading to practical changes and improvements benefiting businesses.

In Togo, for instance, the platform helped to end the double payment of custom tariffs during transit procedures. In Guinea, obstacles reported to TOAM led to the provision of an equipped laboratory and trained agents for export product analysis. The platform’s usage continued to grow throughout the West African region last year, with 186 trade obstacles reported by the business community.

https://www.tradeobstacles.org

The ePing online alert mechanism was also a bridge between the public and the private sectors. In 2021, around 3,000 new users registered on the online notification platform, which received more than 100,000 visits over the year. A Vietnamese version of the platform was launched, including translation of sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade notifications for priority products, making the understanding of foreign market regulations more transparent. https://intracen.org/resources/tools/eping

The NTM programme trained more than 800 stakeholders throughout the year, including 470 by ITC certified trainers in Viet Nam and Niger. Through an innovative partnership with the Foreign Trade University in Hanoi and Open University in Ho Chi Minh City, NTM and market access courses are now part of the regular curricula of these universities in Viet Nam.

In terms of information sharing with broader audiences, the NTM dedicated website registered upwards of 38,000 page views and the number of ITC business surveys downloaded surpassed 2,600. Media worldwide published more than 30 articles on programme activities.
Competitive intelligence

Creating a roadmap for an inclusive recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and fostering resilience among small firms that were particularly exposed, hinges on access to robust, accessible and reliable trade intelligence. The Competitive Intelligence programme adapted and tailored its offerings in 2021 to better meet the needs of companies and BSOs by making them available in new languages and building strong partnerships for greater reach and engagement.

Key results

The Eastern Partnership Trade Helpdesk platform was launched since the launch of the Global Trade Helpdesk, there have been 85,000 users across 200 countries. Helpdesk was translated into Portuguese and the online capacity-building programme was expanded, reaching 2,200 entrepreneurs.

Arabic and Portuguese versions of the African Trade Observatory Dashboard were launched and a new monitor module was released. Some 7,000 users have accessed the dashboard since the launch. More than 20 countries actively supported data collection.

Highlights

The latest generation of ITC’s integrated solutions, the Eastern Partnership Trade Helpdesk, was officially rolled out at the sixth European Union (EU) Eastern Partnership Summit in December 2021. This unique regional online platform centralizes trade intelligence for the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) on market opportunities and requirements in the region and the EU.

As the platform is further developed, the improved availability of information will open additional prospects for MSMEs in Eastern Partnership countries to connect to regional and international markets. Customized versions of the helpdesk for each participating country are being developed.

https://eap.tradehelpdesk.org

The Global Trade Helpdesk continued to serve firms and BSOs around the world with timely and relevant trade and market intelligence. Interest in the online platform continued to grow rapidly, reaching 85,000 users across 200 countries since its launch in June 2020.

https://globaltradehelpdesk.org

In 2021, the Global Trade Helpdesk was launched in Portuguese, made possible through collaboration with ApexBrasil. This was the sixth language in which the platform was made available. Since the launch, Brazil has consistently ranked among the top five countries in terms of platform users.

The year also saw a strong performance in outreach and capacity building. A total of 22 webinars were organized in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Urdu, bringing together upwards of 2,200 participants. The platform was presented at numerous events throughout the year, including the World Trade Organization (WTO) Aid for Trade stocktaking event in March.

To complement the English and French versions, Arabic and Portuguese versions of the African Trade Observatory Dashboard were launched in 2021. New features were added to the platform. The beta version of the African Trade Observatory monitor module was rolled out in July on the occasion of African Integration Day. The monitor provides access to a wide range of trade-related information and data and offers an array of strategic insights for policymakers. https://ato.africa

The dashboard was presented to governments and policymakers across Africa, including in Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda as well as the East African Community (EAC) and ECOWAS regional economic commissions. More than 7,000 users have visited the African Trade Observatory dashboard since its release in December 2020, with very strong interest from Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

More than 20 countries actively engaged with the African Trade Observatory project in 2021 to support data collection. The project has begun a second phase, with opportunities for extending coverage to service sectors.

2021 funders for focus area 1: Providing trade and market intelligence

ITC Trust Fund Window 1 funders
Canada, Chile, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

Project-specific funders
CASE STUDY

SMECO 2021: Technical creativity to leverage data towards SME resilience

The challenge

What makes businesses resilient to crises? This question was asked across the world in the wake of COVID-19. To go beyond general statements and provide evidence-based recommendations, the ITC research team leveraged the power of data.

Through its SME Competitiveness Surveys, ITC has long collected detailed information on the multiple elements that determine the competitiveness of a company. When the pandemic hit, the research team quickly deployed a business survey to understand how enterprises were coping with the shock. By combining these two datasets, it was able to show which characteristics make companies competitive in good times, and also resilient in bad times.

The solution

These findings – showcased in ITC’s flagship report, the SME Competitiveness Outlook 2021: Empowering the green recovery – are especially relevant to small businesses, which are often cash-strapped and must choose between short-term needs and long-term priorities.

Importantly, as the world increasingly faces the pervasive effects of climate change, the analysis also used data to understand which green measures can offer MSMEs new business opportunities, thereby increasing their competitiveness, while also lowering their vulnerability to climate risks.

The green business case was compelling for almost two-thirds of the surveyed African companies that had ‘greened’ themselves and reaped short-term economic benefits from their investment. However, the report highlighted how in many cases, MSMEs need targeted support to be included in the green transition. This innovative research resulted in actionable recommendations for BSOs, governments, lead firms and international organizations, presented as the Green Recovery Plan.

The results

Beyond the 7,000 downloads of the report in 2021, the insights provided in the SME Competitiveness Outlook 2021 influenced policymakers and practitioners around the world through novel mediums. Blogs in different media popularized the key messages for the trade and environment policy communities. Results were also shared with hundreds of stakeholders via a podcast, WTO Public Forum and UN Environment events, and two talk shows.

The thought leadership of the report was also encapsulated in a working paper that contributed to global expertise via presentations at four academic conferences.

Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

LINK

https://intracen.org/resources/publications/sme-competitiveness-outlook-2021-empowering-the-green-recovery
CASE STUDY

Trade intelligence for Portuguese-speaking firms

The challenge

Brazil is home to an estimated 12 million small businesses that are the core of the country’s economic fabric, but their participation in exports remains low. This limitation in market diversification was particularly challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic, when forced shutdowns and economic challenges strongly affected the performance of many small firms in Brazil and across the world.

To help businesses find new sources of income and growth, and to foster their resilience in the face of domestic market shocks, Brazilian firms needed access to clear and reliable information about economic opportunities in their region and beyond.

The solution

The Global Trade Helpdesk is a digital platform designed to simplify market research for firms of all sizes, launched by ITC and its partners in June 2020. Available in five languages (Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish), the platform enables entrepreneurs to identify and compare export opportunities by consolidating key trade information from 11 partner agencies into one business-friendly website.

In a single search, firms can access information about imports, export potential, market dynamics, tariffs, regulatory requirements, trade finance providers, potential buyers and more. The Global Trade Helpdesk was endorsed by the 91 members of the WTO Informal Working Group on Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises as a key source of trade and market intelligence for smaller firms in its recommendations of December 2020.*

In late 2020, ApexBrasil asked ITC to make the Global Trade Helpdesk available in a sixth language, Portuguese. The ITC-ApexBrasil team collaborated to develop a new version of the platform.

“Our purpose with this initiative is to facilitate the access of the Brazilian business community to international trade through a robust market intelligence platform. And, as we know, having updated and reliable information about markets is the key to success in international trade.”

Augusto Pestana, ApexBrasil Chief Executive Officer

* Declaration 2 on access to information: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/msmes_05nov20_e.htm
The results

ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton and Augusto Pestana launched the new Portuguese version of the platform in July 2021. While the Global Trade Helpdesk has reached upwards of 100,000 firms and BSOs in more than 200 economies, the launch of the Portuguese version has seen users from Brazil consistently rank in the top five economies accessing the system. ApexBrasil uses the Portuguese version of the platform to engage more with its clients, including through dedicated webinars and trainings, such as with sectoral associations including the Brazilian Association of Machinery and Equipment Industry, which has more than 9,000 member companies.

The future

Aside from its collaboration with ApexBrasil, ITC continues to engage with the International Chamber of Commerce in Brazil and other domestic stakeholders to support Brazilian firms as they prepare to enter new markets. In the coming years, further outreach and engagement is planned with institutions such as the Brazilian Support Agency for MSMEs.

The Global Trade Helpdesk

The Global Trade Helpdesk is an initiative of ITC, UNCTAD and the WTO with the participation of the African Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Chamber of Commerce, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Customs Organization, the World Bank Group and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

“The Global Trade Helpdesk is the first tool I have come across that makes so much critical information available in a single product-level search and that really caters to the business sector by presenting information in an accessible manner.”

Juarez Leal, Senior Adviser, ApexBrasil

LINKS

- https://globaltradehelpdesk.org/pt/
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZroMXC_NTFQ
CASE STUDY

Reporting trade obstacles in West Africa

The challenge

The exchange of information between private and public actors about the obstacles West African MSMEs face is often challenging and can hinder private sector development. Users of ITC’s Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism reported major difficulties in 2021. These included practical cross-border trade issues going unnoticed in policy debates and negotiations, a lack of information on export opportunities or trade agreements, and bottlenecks in infrastructure that often remained unreported to relevant authorities.

The solution

In ECOWAS, TOAM sought to remedy these long-lasting impediments to trade for West African businesses by simplifying the flow of information between the public and private sectors. Through the platform, companies report online the obstacles they face when trading in goods and services. The national authorities are then alerted and can act. Relevant agencies used the information reported on TOAM to promote resolutions and users can track progress on the solutions provided.

The results

In 2021, 77 obstacles were addressed across ECOWAS, leading to concrete improvements for traders in the region. A few illustrative examples follow.

In Benin, the issuance of fraudulent certificates of origin was a barrier for firms seeking to benefit from trade preferences under the West African Economic and Monetary Union. Customs now impose caution payments for importers that are refunded once the certificate of origin is confirmed as valid. This has reduced reported fraudulent certificates, enabling trade under the preferential scheme.

Small companies in the region may struggle to access foreign markets for various reasons. In Togo, fresh vegetables exported to Europe were frequently rejected due to the bacteria Bemisia tabaci. The airport’s inspection services and the Ministry of Agriculture acted to inform on inspection procedures and help exporters of fresh agricultural products build capacity. This enabled businesses to start exporting again and avoid additional financial losses.
Port infrastructure and practices in the region can increase trade costs and time. In The Gambia, demurrage costs at the Port of Banjul slowed operations and delayed ship unloading activities. The Traffic Directorate addressed this problem by dredging the harbour to facilitate ship anchoring. Businesses were also allowed to request priority anchoring for essential commodities.

**The future**

The ongoing development of a new TOAM mobile application will lead to more flexibility. In addition, an offline function will permit users in areas with poor or no internet connection to report obstacles. An important future step will be to develop synergies between TOAM and the AfCFTA. The objective here is to enable the monitoring of obstacles to trade at national, regional and international levels, thereby further reinforcing the platform’s regional dimension.

*TOAM is an excellent tool for policymakers to monitor real obstacles when businesses are conducting trade activities. This will guide policies towards much more efficiency.*

Nimon Christine, National Focal Point of TOAM, Togo

**LINK**

- [https://www.tradeobstacles.org/ecowas/](https://www.tradeobstacles.org/ecowas/)
CASE STUDY

An export training programme for African integration

The challenge

Africa is one of the most dynamic regions and fastest-growing consumer markets in the world. With the AfCFTA coming into force and ratified by an increasing number of African countries, consumers stand to join a historic single market, bringing together people, products and talents from across the continent like never before.

To benefit from the AfCFTA, African MSMEs need to understand what it will take for them to begin trading beyond their national borders. Raising awareness, building capacity and developing skills are essential to equip new African exporters with the tools and knowledge to seize the opportunities provided by Africa’s economic integration.

However, much of the African private sector lacks access to trade-related knowledge and know-how and the varied interests of Africa’s diversity of countries and regions are often not addressed. The few training options available are often incomplete, outdated, ad hoc or offered at prohibitive prices. As a result, many African MSMEs – particularly those owned by women and young entrepreneurs – remain unprepared to take advantage of the AfCFTA.

The solution

To address this issue, ITC’s SME Trade Academy partnered with Afreximbank to create the How to Export with the AfCFTA training programme on the fundamentals of intra-African trade.

The programme consists of a two-week curriculum, divided between a week of e-learning and a week-long in-person workshop. While the e-learning component deals with the fundamentals of intra-African trade, the workshop is designed to be more localized, providing information that is especially relevant and specific to the country in which it is held.

Hosted on the purpose-built online Afreximbank Academy, the e-learning component consists of seven modules available in English and French, covering core export topics with a focus on problem-solving and case studies involving Africa and the AfCFTA. Participants must complete this component successfully to be invited to the in-person workshop.

The workshops are conducted in partnership with selected local training institutions. While ITC leads the first sessions, the workshop includes a ‘training of trainers’ component designed to empower the local institutions to deliver the programme over the long term and at high quality.

This is supported by the digital workshop method, a virtual workshops solution developed by the SME Trade Academy. This method involves providing local trainers with centrally managed and updated digital tools and training that can be replicated across countries, regions and levels of expertise. ITC can thus provide a turnkey solution that ensures scalability and consistency in relation to in-person workshop delivery standards across Africa.

The results

The programme’s pilot phase took place in 2021 in Nigeria, Rwanda and Côte d’Ivoire, with the support of the Nigerian Export Promotion Council, the Rwanda Development Board and the Association for the Promotion of Exports of Côte d’Ivoire. The high level of interest became apparent within a week of its unveiling, with the online Afreximbank Academy recording more than 1,500 enrollees.

Upwards of 150 exporters and training institution representatives benefited from in-person workshops that took place from July–October 2021. The trainees learned how to identify African markets with interesting opportunities for their products, analyse their options for entering these markets and determine their level of export readiness. They also learned how to identify and capitalize on trade finance opportunities and to identify and use the necessary trade documents for the export process.
The future

Following completion of the pilot phase, the How to Export with the AfCFTA training programme will expand in 2022. This will involve promoting the programme to all 55 African Union member states and extending the national workshop component to 12 additional countries. To achieve this, the content of the programme will be translated into Arabic and Portuguese.

“In this training, we have learned a lot. Sometimes when we think of exports, some people are just afraid without even approaching. We had many challenges, but through this training we have found solutions and I think we are going to get results soon.”

Perpetue Muziranenge, coffee exporter at Umuganura Export Company Ltd, Rwanda

LINK
- https://www.afreximbankacademy.org/
Trade development strategy

The Trade Development Strategy programme provides solutions to mainstream trade in national policy agendas. Trade strategies prioritize key sectors for export development and diversification. Target markets are identified and market entry tactics defined.

To maximize developmental dividends, trade development strategies facilitated by ITC are designed to address poverty reduction, gender and youth inclusion and environmental sustainability. This work follows a cycle of research, consultation and tool development. Since its inception, the programme has facilitated well over 100 strategies in about 70 countries and regions.

Key results

- More than 200 practitioners helped craft the national export strategy of Curaçao
- Policy frameworks were reformed in Central Asia to help MSMEs internationalize and enhance competitiveness through digitalization
- More than 2,500 consumers and 600 MSMEs and farmers in Iraq were surveyed for market assessment of high-potential agricultural products. Almost 400 stakeholders reached consensus on competitiveness issues around priority sectors.
- 10 sector export strategies were finalized in Pakistan
- The national export strategy of Curaçao was endorsed in 2021. The strategy, developed with ITC support, focuses on economic diversification and is centred on e-government for business. The strategy formulation process was instrumental in bringing together public and private sector organizations in the country. The first output of the national export strategy, the Strategic Trade Development Roadmap, which specifies priority sectors, trade support functions and overall objectives, was included in the country’s draft project on restructuring the industry and trade sector for 2021–2030.

ITC also helped Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan develop national e-commerce development strategies to enable MSMEs in Central Asia to internationalize by catalysing the region’s digital transformation.

In Iraq, almost 400 public and private sector actors reached consensus on competitiveness issues around two priority sectors: tomatoes and poultry. Eighteen consultations were conducted across the country with 600 MSMEs and farmers, followed by two governorate-level consultations in Mosul and Al-Basrah to discuss opportunities to develop sector value chains. A national consultation refined and validated the strategies and plans of action.

In 2021, business leaders and policymakers in South Sudan began work on the country’s national export and investment strategy through inclusive stakeholder consultations. The strategy is designed to stabilize and diversify the economy and take advantage of the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA. Additionally, a formal public–private trade advisory system was established in Pakistan. Ten sector export strategies were finalized for validation, and eight other priority sectors are in the pipeline.
The programme continued to innovate in 2021, notably through a revamped methodology for green trade strategies, an upgraded strategy implementation management tool and a first artificial intelligence tool to facilitate the identification of constraints and solutions to export development and decision-making. The tool is based on ITC’s database of trade strategy documents from more than 120 countries. https://www.tradestrategymap.org

Key results

- Tajikistan and Pakistan customs reforms, including risk management and authorized economic operator measures, were supported to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement
- 3 export processes were digitalized in Sri Lanka for exporters to apply and receive certificates of origin online, make e-payments and register online
- 4 trade information desks were established for small-scale cross-border traders in ECOWAS
- 550 border officials were trained on gender-responsive trade facilitation
- 5 online trade facilitation portals were launched in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan and the United Republic of Tanzania
- More than 200 MSMEs were coached on export management in Central Asia

Highlights

ITC launched online trade facilitation portals in Burundi, Burkina Faso, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan and the United Republic of Tanzania to boost reforms by digitalizing information and automating processes. It also supported border agencies in Sri Lanka to streamline export requirements.

This included full automation of the certificate of origin issuance and of the registration and monitoring of stakeholders at the National Organic Control Unit, as well as the development of an e-payment gateway for the National Plant Quarantine Service. These reforms are expected to reduce transaction costs and have the potential to help limit the impact of trade on the environment.

Under its mandate to support implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, ITC helped Tajikistan and Pakistan implement customs reforms. In Tajikistan, ITC supported the upgrade of policies and procedures related to risk management and an authorized economic operator scheme. It also trained customs officials to implement reforms and businesses to benefit from them.

In Pakistan, the programme helped the customs administration conduct diagnostic studies for the development of recommendations on upgrading the risk management system and refining authorized economic

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An inclusive export action plan to drive development in Curaçao

Curaçao’s national export strategy focuses on creating new value chains in services exports. To secure stakeholder ownership, each sector and trade support function has a dedicated team with public and private sector representatives.

With ITC guidance, the teams identified competitiveness constraints, policy inadequacies, institutional support limitations and bottlenecks affecting entrepreneurship and export performance. This formed the basis of an inclusive and participative plan of action to achieve strategy objectives. The Curaçao Export Council, which advises the government and private sector, was formalized in 2021 as a legal entity to ensure that this public–private dialogue endures.

‘The export of services offers major opportunities to reallocate labour in the country, generate employment and bring in the foreign exchange that we so desperately need to fortify our financial situation and pay for the imports of goods and services that contribute to the quality of life we desire.’

Ruisandro Cijntje, Minister of Economic Development, Government of Curaçao

The programme continued to innovate in 2021, notably through a revamped methodology for green trade strategies, an upgraded strategy implementation management tool and a first artificial intelligence tool to facilitate the identification of constraints and solutions to export development and decision-making. The tool is based on ITC’s database of trade strategy documents from more than 120 countries. https://www.tradestrategymap.org

Trade facilitation

ITC’s Trade Facilitation programme focuses on the removal of non-tariff barriers to cross-border trade. It leverages the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement to transform the business environment by reforming and simplifying international trade procedures for the benefit of MSMEs.

The programme supports policymakers to design and implement trade facilitation reforms in an inclusive and sustainable manner by overcoming the root causes of cross-border bottlenecks. It helps MSMEs improve their capacity to comply with regulatory and administrative requirements and participate in public–private platforms on trade facilitation.
ITC interventions: building an inclusive and sustainable recovery

ITC also provided assistance to measure average release times at three different ports of entry. The programme supported regional integration in 2021 by streamlining selected value chains and trade flows in East Africa and Central Asia.

In the EAC, coffee export procedures were mapped and benchmarked across member states, with the objective of simplifying formalities and reducing trade costs and time. In addition, ITC facilitated public–private dialogue to analyse trade barriers and made recommendations. As a result, EAC stakeholders secured a ministerial decision and directives requiring the adoption of a risk-based approach to regulatory compliance, the harmonization of documentation and a review of procedural steps related to the automation of coffee export processes.

In Central Asia, ITC helped five countries simplify intraregional trade and trade with the European Union in selected product categories.

ITC introduced new tools to support vulnerable traders by making their export processes more efficient and cheaper. In the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and West Africa, where small-scale traders play a critical role in moving agri-products across borders to food-insecure regions and improving livelihoods, ITC designed a dedicated training programme for these traders.

In addition, through partnerships with regional players, four trade information desks with the necessary infrastructure were established at the Dan Issa border between Niger and Nigeria, with more than 25 desk officers trained to operate them.

In Central Asia, ITC built the capacity of border agencies to address challenges that women traders face. Some 550 border officials were trained on gender-responsive trade facilitation. ITC also improved the export management capacities of more than 200 businesses in the region through on-the-job coaching delivered by local experts.

Supporting trade negotiations and policy reform

ITC’s Supporting Trade Negotiations and Policy Reforms programme helps enhance the capacity of governments in multilateral, regional and bilateral trade negotiations. It also helps countries implement commitments, strengthen domestic policy and regulatory frameworks, and facilitate a conducive environment for businesses to operate, attract investment and trade.

ITC assists policymakers, BSOs and businesses to achieve these objectives on a range of trade policy-related issues including market access, investment, intellectual property, competition, public procurement, e-commerce and inclusive and sustainable trade.

Key results

More than 50 training activities reaching upwards of 4,500 participants were organized to enhance the participation of developing countries in the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development negotiations

5 sessions were delivered on WTO joint statement initiative negotiations as well as training on the e-commerce negotiations

Support was provided for the WTO accessions of Iraq and Uzbekistan, AfCFTA negotiations in The Gambia and COMESA, and implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement in Lao People’s Democratic Republic

3 dialogues were conducted in Nepal, the Philippines and Sri Lanka to align trade policy with industrial and investment policies

3 studies were produced in Nepal and Pakistan on policy reforms for COVID-19 recovery
In 2021, ITC continued its work on WTO accessions by helping Iraq and Uzbekistan prepare relevant documents and assisting Timor-Leste and Turkmenistan in accession negotiations. The programme helped Tajikistan collate material for its first Trade Policy Review.

ITC provided support to improve regional integration in Africa, ASEAN and the Central European Free Trade Association through a range of tools. These included strengthening capacities to participate in regional negotiations, addressing trade barriers, aligning domestic policy frameworks with regional commitments, highlighting investment opportunities to strengthen regional value chains and improving understanding of market access opportunities with regional partners.

Notably, in the context of the AICFTA negotiations, the programme contributed to ITC’s One Trade Africa approach through analytical and technical assistance for The Gambia on services commitments and the COMESA Business Council on rules of origin.

To help develop robust and MSME-friendly trade and investment policies and regulatory frameworks, ITC continued to provide training and analysis in South and Southeast Asia to review regulations and policies across a broad range of trade-related areas, assess them against international commitments and best practices and identify possible reforms.

In addition, a draft national trade policy was developed for the Bahamas, recommendations were formulated to strengthen agricultural-related frameworks for the Central African Republic and sector-specific investment profiles were developed for Bhutan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Ecowas member states.

Resilience and competitiveness are increasingly linked to green and digital transformations. Accordingly, in 2021, ITC supported the integration of digital and environmental considerations in trade policy reform.

On digital, ITC helped revise and draft an implementation plan for Bhutan’s e-commerce policy. It also initiated a gap analysis of Malaysia’s e-commerce framework.

In Sri Lanka, ITC produced a report on integrating green growth and digital trade in the nation’s industrial and trade policy framework. Building on this work, support was provided to the Philippines on how investment policies can best achieve digital trade and sustainable trade.

**2021 funders for focus area 2: Building a conducive business environment**

**ITC Trust Fund Window 1 Funders**
Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

**Project-specific funders**
CASE STUDY

Formalizing small-scale cross-border trade

The challenge

Small-scale cross-border traders (SSCBTs) play a critical role in moving agri-products to food-insecure regions and improving livelihoods in often remote border communities. SSCBTs are ‘subsistence entrepreneurs’ who derive most or all of their livelihood from trading small consignments. They deal in small volumes of goods and often move them on foot, by bicycle, using personal vehicles or with animal-powered transportation. They operate in rural areas that are usually poorly connected to larger cities and far from official border crossings.

SSCBTs are often unable to absorb the costs tied to full compliance with trade regulations and border formalities. They face difficulties with border clearance procedures and lack relevant information on formalities, documentation and fees required at official border crossings. As a result, they often must use informal trade routes, which prevents the full developmental potential of their activities.

In addition, SSCBTs are sometimes exposed to corruption and harassment by border officials, which further discourages them from using official border posts. These challenges adversely affect the activities and livelihoods of these traders, while undermining their ability to formalize and benefit from associated advantages such as access to finance.
The solution

To help build a conducive business environment for all, ITC is supporting the integration and formalization of SSCBTs in West Africa by establishing trade information and border assistance offices at select border points. These offices respond to the concerns of border communities and help SSCBTs complete border formalities.

In partnership with the West Africa Association for Cross-Border Trade in Agro-forestry-pastoral, Fisheries products and Food, ITC built the needed infrastructure and supported the selection and training of officers with the skills necessary to assist SSCBTs.

Trade information officers offer information, training and help to SSCBTs. They provide information on trade laws and regulations, documents, forms and other clearance procedures, appeal and complaint mechanisms and other information needed to complete formal border-crossing processes.

This new service gives traders who are mainly engaged in the informal economy the necessary push to formalize their activities and enhance their economic security. It also enables data collection in the region.

The results

With ITC support, the association installed and operationalized a trade information and border assistance office at the Dan Issa border between Niger and Nigeria in November 2021. The office is equipped with a computer, a printer, a conference room, furniture and sanitary facilities. ITC also delivered a tailored capacity-building programme to equip officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide quality services to SSCBTs. Twenty-five officers from across West Africa will be trained to assist small-scale traders, especially women and youth, with other offices planned.

The future

ITC will continue to help reduce the costs and remove the obstacles faced by SSCBTs in West Africa, notably by simplifying small-scale trading systems and processes, with the goal of supporting their transition towards the formal economy. In the immediate term, ITC will organize further training through workshops to enhance the capacity of officers to respond to SSCBT needs in their region.

LINK

- [https://www.facebook.com/groups/973855236520802/posts/10272665694519089/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/973855236520802/posts/10272665694519089/)
CASE STUDY

Digitalizing trade procedures in Sri Lanka

The challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic has been severe on the Sri Lankan economy and its people. The manual, paper-based systems in place at local institutions require in-person visits, creating major challenges for both traders and officials, especially during lockdowns.

The solution

ITC’s Trade Facilitation for SMEs project, implemented in Sri Lanka with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, known as GIZ, and financial support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, supports the digitalization and streamlining of trade processes to help overcome such challenges.

Full automation of the processing and issuance of certificates of origin

The Department of Commerce is the only designated authority in Sri Lanka to issue certificates of origin under preferential trading arrangements and the EU’s Generalised Scheme of Preferences. All formalities related to certificates of origin are carried out manually.

Following a request from the Department of Commerce, ITC is providing technical assistance to fully automate the process of issuing certificates. This initiative enables exporters to perform the following activities online: register and submit applications, submit supporting information, make payments, receive an electronic certificate, use e-signatures and register for quotas.

The fully fledged system is integrated with Sri Lanka Customs, so the Department of Commerce can check relevant customs declaration message information online.
Development of an e-payment gateway for the National Plant Quarantine Service

The National Plant Quarantine Service is the main border agency responsible for biosecurity and plant quarantine operations in Sri Lanka. As many plant-related commodities are perishable, export certifications and import clearances must be provided quickly and efficiently to minimize losses.

The agency’s payment processes are manual. Realizing the need for an electronic payment gateway, the National Plant Quarantine Service is working with ITC to introduce an e-payment system that covers more than 40 payment flows. The system aims to ensure fast and instant payments using debit or credit cards, increase payment security, reduce transaction costs, enhance transparency and reduce time for reception of a phytosanitary certificate. The system includes an administrative panel for agency officials to track payments and generate reports.

Automation of the registration and monitoring of stakeholders at the National Organic Control Unit

The National Organic Control Unit, established under the Export Development Board, controls and monitors all organic-related activities, including the import and export of organic products. In 2021, there were around 400 organic-certified companies and more than 12,000 organic producers. The registration of stakeholders is carried out manually.

ITC is supporting the National Organic Control Unit to fully automate registration and monitoring processes, allowing the online submission and issuance of forms and certificates as well as electronic approvals and monitoring.

The results

These efforts in Sri Lanka have resulted in reduced time and transaction costs and ensure continued and expeditious service delivery in spite of events such as pandemic-induced disruptions. The streamlined and fully automated systems benefit both traders and government officials.

The future

The project will build the capacity of officials and raise awareness in the business community on the use of these online procedures. The sustainability of the interventions has been considered in project design. This includes the maintenance-related costs of running the systems, which the project will assume for three years.

‘Having an [electronic certificates of origin] system brings many benefits to exporters. […] The system automatically captures the relevant data, which will be helpful to us in carrying out analysis and in taking relevant decisions.’

Shirani Ariyaratne, Head of the Rules of Origin Division, Department of Commerce, Sri Lanka
CASE STUDY

Investment facilitation negotiations at the WTO

The challenge

Global foreign direct investment flows dropped by 40% during the pandemic. Revitalizing these flows into developing countries is vital for their recovery and sustainable development. An important instrument is the Investment Facilitation for Development negotiations at the WTO, which aim to develop guidelines to boost sustainable investment. However, not all Members are adequately equipped with knowledge and resources to engage in the negotiations.

The solution

ITC has partnered with the German Development Institute to build the capacity of developing countries to engage in and benefit from the Investment Facilitation for Development negotiations. The project will provide targeted trainings for the negotiators and policymakers, channel ground-level perspectives through stakeholder consultations, analyse legal and economic issues in expert briefs and support outreach with high-level regional roundtables and regular webinars for investment promotion agencies and the general public.

The results

WTO Members consider this project as the main initiative providing technical assistance on Investment Facilitation for Development negotiations. It has significantly boosted the participation of developing countries in the discussions. Trade negotiators, policymakers and investment promotion agencies gained knowledge through more than 50 events organized under the project that reached some 4,500 participants. LDCs have submitted proposals, developed with the support of ITC, to affirm their reform agenda and advocate for their development needs. The number of participating WTO Members in the negotiations rose from about 100 to 110.

The future

The project will continue to build capacity for the negotiations and support the implementation of the Investment Facilitation for Development agreement at country level, to reduce investment-related barriers and facilitate sustainable investment into developing countries.

‘The joint initiative by the International Trade Centre and the German Development Institute is worthy of praise and I would like to compliment them in particular. The workshops and webinars held throughout this year have contributed substantially to a better understanding of many crucial issues for the design of the agreement on investment facilitation.’

Xiaozhun Yi, Deputy Director-General, WTO

LINK

- https://intracen.org/our-work/projects/investment-facilitation-for-development

Funder

China
Strengthening trade and investment support institutions

The Strengthening Trade and Investment Support Institutions programme seeks to strengthen BSOs as critical multipliers of ITC work. This is done by enabling them to execute and sustain improvements across all their activities. With the right support, businesses can take part in global value chains, attract investors and export successfully.

The programme engages with a wide range of ecosystem actors including government-funded trade and investment agencies, chambers of commerce, sector and business associations, producer groups, cooperatives, incubators and vocational training institutions. ITC helps them to become expert, connected and trusted partners.

**Key results**

- There were 479 cases of institutions having improved operational or managerial performance as a result of ITC support.
- ITC institutional benchmarking methodology was revamped and upgraded to reflect sustainability indicators and adapted to a wider range of BSOs.
- The REACT model was expanded to measure BSO resilience and agility and applied by 49 institutions.
- There were 78 interventions to improve management capacities under the AIM for Results programme with 2,674 participants trained, of whom 47% were women.
- 41 cooperatives and cooperative federations were supported in Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, representing more than 170,000 farmers.
**Highlights**

ITC’s institutional benchmarking model has been an extremely valuable tool since its launch in 2010. The assessment methodology was comprehensively revamped in 2021. In addition to updating and expanding the core assessment, the new methodology incorporated a sustainability ‘deep dive’ covering gender equality, youth empowerment, green growth and social responsibility.

The online platform that hosts the assessment tool was upgraded and now offers more functionality for data analytics, score comparison and networking. The platform also incorporates a new tool for beneficiary BSOs to conduct sophisticated diagnostics of their client MSMEs. [https://www.itcbenchmarking.org](https://www.itcbenchmarking.org)

The programme, and ITC more broadly, underwent a steep learning process in 2021 – a year of adaptation – to ensure that most services could be delivered digitally. For example, a virtual trade promotion manual covering the core principles of digital business-to-business meetings was developed and released and an e-publication on digital commercial diplomacy was produced.

In 2021, ITC adopted a regional approach to its work with BSOs in the EU-funded West Africa Competitiveness programme. ITC was instrumental in establishing a formal network of ECOWAS trade promotion organizations mandated to support regional integration and share opportunities related to implementation of the AfCFTA.

ITC developed the REACT tool to strengthen the resilience of BSOs facing pandemic-related challenges and ensure that they continue to provide relevant business support. This tool measures the responsiveness of BSOs to external shocks and helps build five key attributes: readiness, expertise, agility, connectedness and trust.

The tool was deployed under ITC’s United Kingdom Trade Partnerships programme. Forty-nine beneficiary institutions applied the REACT model and identified structural weaknesses when faced with a crisis. The programme helped address these weaknesses through a series of e-learning courses and webinars.

In 2021, ITC worked with cooperatives to improve their leadership capacity and member management and to develop market linkages with other cooperatives. ITC began a pilot project to facilitate cooperative-to-cooperative trade and knowledge transfer. Supplier cooperatives increased their capacity to collaborate thanks to the project, and buyer and supplier cooperatives were closing or negotiating transactions.

ITC continued to work with cooperatives under other interventions. It provided governance, leadership and member management training and mentorship to 30 farmer cooperatives in Sierra Leone. ITC also supported the cocoa sector cooperative federation in Ghana, which represents more than 100,000 farmers, to improve its organizational strategy.

**2021 funders for focus area 3: Strengthening trade and investment support institutions**

**ITC Trust Fund Window 1 Funders**

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

**Project-specific funders**

CASE STUDY

COMESA: Better delivery from the Business Council

The challenge

The COMESA Business Council (CBC) is a private sector member-based institution of the COMESA Secretariat that works to create an enabling business environment. CBC members, including BSOs and individual companies, were not spared the impact of COVID-19: economic growth in the region slowed to just 0.2% in 2020 compared to 5.6% in 2019.

Amid supply chain and market disruptions, BSOs struggled to support companies due to resource limitations and restricted service delivery channels. Concurrently, CBC and its members had trouble harnessing opportunities emerging from the AfCFTA due to limited understanding of the agreement and low engagement in the development of policy proposals or negotiating positions.

The solution

In response, ITC helped CBC update its strategy and upgrade its service delivery. The council’s corporate strategic plan was realigned and its results framework refined to deliver more business impact. A new customer relationship management system – the result of collaboration between ITC and the Federation of German Industries – was deployed to improve client records, service delivery and reporting. With these corporate upgrades, CBC was better equipped to help its members navigate the pandemic and recover.

ITC also provided technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of CBC to engage in policy dialogue and advocacy on issues affecting the private sector in COMESA. Two papers articulating private sector positions on COMESA and AfCFTA-related issues were produced and validated by the relevant CBC sectoral bodies. The papers were submitted to COMESA policy organs to initiate policy reforms designed to help COMESA firms address the COVID-induced economic crisis and optimize opportunities from AfCFTA implementation.

Moreover, ITC trained and advised CBC and its members on how to use ITC’s Global Trade Help Desk. As a result, participants in the training were able to access and analyse strategic information about markets, export potential, tariffs and regulations, including standards, at a time of disruption. Firms that benefited from this support could better evaluate how to diversify and manage market risks and identify new markets for their products.

The results

The project achieved the following outputs: an upgraded CBC corporate strategy and results framework; the implementation of a customer relationship management system, including training for BSO staff; the development of two policy position papers; and 75 BSO staff and companies, including 32 were women, trained on how to use the Global Trade Help Desk.

The future

There are opportunities for continued support to CBC to effectively conduct its advocacy role in relation to AfCFTA implementation and ongoing negotiations. A similar approach could also be adopted with other regional or continental business councils.

Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland
CASE STUDY

A stronger business organization for East African tea

The challenge

Tea from East Africa is sold today through a manual auction in Mombasa, Kenya. Lengthy bidding results in broker and buyer fatigue, leading to suboptimal results for both sales volume and value. This is just one of the many challenges tea producers in the EAC face and for which a well-managed and effective BSO can bring great value.

The solution

Through the EU-funded Market Access Upgrade Programme, ITC helped strengthen the operational and managerial capacities of the East African Tea Trade Association (EATTA), which plays a crucial role in supporting its 249 members from 10 countries. This assistance helped EATTA become more resilient and improved organizational growth and maturity.

Building on the development of a corporate strategic plan in 2020, ITC helped EATTA enhance its service delivery by improving skills and providing a toolkit for evaluating and responding to member and client feedback. ITC strengthened the performance management framework of the association, introducing SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) targets, while also building knowledge and strengthening client relation management.

ITC and the EATTA board worked together to align staff roles and performance with the annual operational plan. The board also was trained and coached on effective risk management, enabling EATTA to respond boldly to the impacts of COVID-19.

To address the challenges posed by manual auctions, EATTA adopted a strategy to develop a platform for marketing specialty teas. ITC worked with the association to establish a regular market connection service promoting direct trade with global buyers of specialty teas.

The digital platform serves not only as a channel for transactions in specialty teas, but also for developing buyer–seller relationships and promoting East African specialty teas on international markets. This effort will help tea producers diversify their product and marketing options in response to global consumer demand and growth in premium categories as well as the increase in international e-commerce sales.

The results

ITC support has sharpened the managerial and operational performance of EATTA. Concrete outcomes include the development of an online specialty tea direct trade platform, the deployment of a client engagement toolkit and the training of 11 EATTA staff and 8 board members. In addition, new market connection opportunities for the 11 EATTA members that produce specialty tea were created through the platform.

‘ITC’s capacity building helped declutter EATTA’s objectives. This will bring focus so that instead of trying to do many things, we now have the confidence to do a few things very well.’

Edward Mudibo,
Managing Director, East African Tea Trade Association, Kenya
The future

ITC expects to work further with EATTA to explore methods for tea producers in the EAC to connect to markets. The online specialty tea platform will be officially launched in 2022.

LINK
- [https://intracen.org/our-work/projects/eu-eac-market-access-upgrade-programme-markup](https://intracen.org/our-work/projects/eu-eac-market-access-upgrade-programme-markup)
CASE STUDY

Cooperatives collaborate for sustainable trade

The challenge

Cooperatives are important drivers of sustainable economic growth. The resilience of global value chains can be improved through mutually beneficial partnerships between agricultural cooperatives in developing countries and buyer cooperatives globally. While there is interest and potential among cooperatives to collaborate on trade, lack of awareness and trust, and different levels of maturity, can make it difficult for them to work together.

The solution

ITC launched a pilot project to validate an approach for facilitating cooperative-to-cooperative trade and knowledge exchange. It supported buyer and supplier cooperatives to build long-term relationships through knowledge transfer on issues related to improving business, managerial and operational performance.

Numerous virtual sessions were organized between 10 supplier cooperatives from Africa (representing more than 100,000 farmers) with large buyer cooperatives from Argentina, Finland, the Republic of Korea and the United States. ITC presented the cooperative-to-cooperative trade approach at the World Cooperative Congress in Seoul, with more than 300 participating cooperatives. Selected supplier cooperatives were trained and aided to participate at the congress, where they discussed concrete business opportunities with participating buyer cooperatives.
The results

The initiative led to concrete trade opportunities. Two supplier cooperatives are negotiating transactions with two buyer cooperatives. Six large buyer cooperatives with combined revenues exceeding $20 billion have confirmed their interest in collaborating during project implementation. Six supplier cooperatives, representing more than 100,000 coffee and cocoa farmers, have made or are in the process of making improvements to their business operations and practices as a result of lessons learned during the project.

The future

As a pilot project, a fundamental objective of this initiative was to learn and share findings. Five important lessons emerged on ITC’s approach to cooperative-to-cooperative trade.

First, cooperatives prefer to do business with other cooperatives as long as price and quality are competitive. Second, peer-to-peer learning is the perfect entry point. Retail cooperatives, hesitant to enter commercial arrangements with supplier cooperatives immediately, were keen to share good business practices. These sessions helped build trust and mutual understanding.

Third, supplier cooperatives can learn from each other about different management practices. Fourth, it is not just about buyer and supplier cooperatives. Other stakeholders including buying agents, marketing companies and service sector cooperatives must be involved for effective cooperative-to-cooperative trade. Fifth, cooperatives are an effective channel to reach the grassroots and achieve sustainable impact at scale. They are committed to the long-term well-being of their members.

The future

ITC, with partners, can build on this pilot project by expanding into new sectors, countries and types of cooperatives. Larger projects can be developed to broaden the scope of interventions, generate buy-in from more stakeholders and refine the cooperative-to-cooperative methodology, creating business relationships between buyer and supplier cooperatives for the benefit of all.

‘Thanks to the coop-to-coop project for providing us with knowledge, support and exposure to other cooperatives. We have recently signed a contract with one of the largest South Korean consumer coops. We are happy and look forward to engaging further with the project.’

Sholi Coffee Cooperative, Rwanda

Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland
Connecting to international value chains

Value added to trade

The Value Added to Trade programme makes it easier for MSMEs in developing countries to meet market requirements so they can integrate into local, regional and global chains of production coordinated across geographies. The programme helps make businesses more competitive by upgrading sector-level and enterprise-level capabilities to improve the ecosystem in which MSMEs operate at each step of the value chain, and by building public–private dialogue platforms for wide-scale transformational change.

Key results

The programme budget reached $27.2 million in 2021.

Start-ups in the technology sector raised $5.4 million in total investment.

Bhutanese exporters secured $1.3 million of new sales to 16 new markets with buyers of horticulture and handicraft.

Strategies on post-pandemic recovery for the apparel industry were developed and launched in five countries in North and East Africa.

10,000 MSMEs were supported during COVID-19 lockdowns in Pakistan.

More than 350 resource-efficient and cleaner production improvement measures and 100 social corrective action projects were identified in the textile sector.

Digital Freelancer Project, FastTrackTech, Zambia
Highlights

In 2021, many value added to trade projects helped sectors recover from COVID-19. In The Gambia, ITC supported the tourism industry to obtain personal protective equipment and apply safety guidelines to ensure a safe environment for staff and tourists. The programme also helped industries in Egypt, Madagascar, Morocco and Tunisia develop recovery strategies.

In Pakistan, Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) delivered quick support to MSMEs during lockdowns induced by COVID-19. The programme distributed matching grants, assistance on safe operations, training and market linkages and assets that benefited more than 10,000 MSMEs. This helped these businesses increase income, reach new markets and initiate new channels such as e-commerce.

The programme adopted a new focus on niche products. In Bhutan, for instance, ITC worked with niche producers of horticulture to achieve $1.3 million of export sales. Fifteen horticulture producers were directly supported and 1,078 indirectly linked to export markets. In addition, 22 textile MSMEs were trained and coached, and more than 200 artisans connected to export markets.

Private sector competitiveness in Bhutan was strengthened by developing climate-resilient approaches and diversification strategies through adapted branding and certification systems. ITC’s interventions in horticulture improved agro-ecology practices, including for organic, and built farm-level resilience. Sustainable practices were promoted, for example through the use of natural dyeing techniques by Bhutanese textile MSMEs and artisans.

The Global Textiles and Clothing programme helped 65 beneficiary companies in the Middle East and North Africa upgrade their environmental performance. ITC identified more than 350 resource-efficient and cleaner production improvement measures and 100 social corrective action projects.

The Alliances for Action programme helped improve the competitiveness of more than 7,000 MSMEs across a wide range of countries and in an array of commodities such as cocoa, coffee, yarn and processed food.

In Rwanda, for example, ITC offered avocado post-harvest capacity building, resulting in four lead exporting companies reporting cumulative sales of about $750,000 in 2021, with MSMEs and their supplier groups enjoying a 64% price increase. By being included in the operational chains of successful exporting companies, 398 farmers – 158 of whom are women – benefited directly from the higher revenue.

The programme also enhanced its work in the digital and technology sectors. Through FastTrackTech, ITC provided integrated support to established MSMEs and start-ups involving matchmaking, coaching, export plan development and preparing companies to pitch to investors. The programme focused more on helping to facilitate investment, with supported firms receiving $5.4 million in investment.

The Netherlands Trust Fund IV project improved the export competitiveness of the information technology and IT-enabled services sectors in Senegal and Uganda. By project closure, 34 MSMEs in Uganda had engaged in international transactions worth $3.8 million as a result of ITC support. In 2021 alone, an additional 560 jobs were created. In Senegal, 41 MSMEs, including 11 women-owned businesses, had generated international transactions worth $2.4 million.
ecomConnect

The **ecomConnect programme** helps small businesses in developing countries connect to local, regional and international markets in an inclusive and sustainable way, and also market and sell their products through online channels. The programme supports MSMEs through e-commerce training programmes, research, facilitation of innovative solutions, collaborative structures, partnerships and access to digital tools and technologies. It aims to build the world’s largest community of e-commerce entrepreneurs engaged in the sustainable development of small businesses online.

**Key results**

- **22 BSOs** were equipped to assist small businesses engaging in e-commerce. In addition, **100 advisers** were trained on e-commerce and digital trade while **750 MSMEs** were trained and coached in e-commerce and digital marketing.

- Upwards of **9,000 participants** enrolled in e-commerce e-learning courses at SME Trade Academy and more than **1,500 certificates** were issued.

- **40 webinars** were organized on e-commerce and digital trade.

- **The new digital tool** Payment Solution Finder was launched.

- A pilot project on **digital traceability** in the coffee value chain was tested.

**Highlights**

In 2021, ecomConnect worked with the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration and local partners in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama to boost the export competitiveness of **Central American women business enterprises** producing crafts for sale online.

The ITC **e-commerce Leadership** programme gave companies the opportunity to mentor less advanced fellow beneficiaries. A total of 36 firms were enrolled and grouped in teams from different countries to foster interregional collaboration. As a result, 10 websites, 11 Etsy stores and 47 eBay stores were created and optimized. This led to 820 online orders with more than $62,000 in revenue.

Partnerships with NOVICA, eBay, Etsy, PayPal, Payoneer and DHL, which offered women businesses in Central America advantageous deals and promotional help, were extended to Central Asia. As part of the **Ready4Trade Central Asia** project, ecomConnect launched its e-commerce enterprise training services in the region and offered capacity-building, advisory and awareness-raising activities to more than 200 MSMEs and artisans in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The ‘training of trainers’ methodology was adopted, with ITC national coaches helping MSMEs open or optimize online sales channels. ITC also launched the eBay Central Asia Hub in 2021.

With the support of the Women Entrepreneurs Finance initiative, ecomConnect trained 36 advisers in the Middle East and North Africa region on e-commerce topics. These advisers delivered in-depth training sessions and individual coaching on how to start an e-commerce business and create seller accounts on virtual marketplaces to more than 250 small businesses in Lebanon and Tunisia. ITC also helped a group of Tunisian MSMEs form a consortium (Hiral) and sell complementary products online.
Facilitating mentorship, knowledge sharing and interregional collaboration in Central America

After more than two years of training e-commerce businesses in Central America, ITC launched the e-commerce Leadership programme in 2021 to facilitate mentorship, knowledge sharing and collaboration among Central American project beneficiaries. The programme was unrolled as part of the Linking Central American Women Business Enterprises with the Global Gifts and Home Decoration Market initiative. The leadership programme was well received by the participating companies, with a high level of learning and interaction across implementing countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. With the guidance of the mentors, women business enterprises researched new market trends, developed a brand positioning strategy and defined their target audience, enabling them to create new digital channels.

‘The leadership programme is very complete […] It gives us, the mentees, the possibility to apply everything we have learned with the direct support of a tutor who has already gone through the same process. I would love to share what I have learned and help other entrepreneurs grow through e-commerce.’
Lisbeth González, founder of Liz Sirena, Panama

To help small firms improve traceability in the coffee value chain, ecomConnect began a pilot project to digitalize the traceability records of almost 1,000 women coffee growers in Rwanda. ITC cooperated with partners FarmerConnect and Olam to test two systems to export specialty coffee from two women-owned SMEs, Nova Coffee Ltd and Tropic Coffee Ltd. ITC supported Nova to create farmer ID wallets for 80 women coffee farmers. Tropic was trained on Olam’s AtSource platform and databases. Twenty-two farmer groups were created and data were collected on economic, social and environmental metrics.

EcomConnect launched a new digital tool in 2021 called Payment Solution Finder to help small businesses identify which online payment solution is suitable for their operations based on location and sales channels.

2021 funders for focus area 4: Connecting to international value chains

ITC Trust Fund Window 1 Funders
Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

Project-specific funders
European Union, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Chocolats Halba/Coop Genossenschaft, Germany, UNIDO, Republic of Korea, Enhanced Integrated Framework, Qatar Development Bank, Multi-Partner Trust Fund, World Bank, Italy, International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation, Japan, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Standards and Trade Development Facility, United States, Marketing and National Import Board of Grenada, Bhutan, Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa, International Organization for Migration, Saint Lucia Trade Export Promotion Agency
CASE STUDY

Alliances for a bluer, greener Caribbean

The challenge

As we navigate a global climate crisis, small island developing states are at risk. The Caribbean region has not been spared. As the effects of climate change increase, so does the vulnerability of Caribbean production systems, ecosystems, tourism and infrastructure.

While economic and social development remain a top priority, they can no longer be dissociated from environmental protection and management. Climate change adaptation and mitigation need to form an integral part of any development agenda for the region — and that means adopting the concepts of green growth and the blue economy.

The solution

To develop climate-income smart solutions while supporting regional and international trade, ITC formed an alliance with the Alligator Head Foundation and the Coconut Industry Board in Jamaica to diversify farmer livelihoods, restore communities and increase food production through sustainable environmental management from ridge to reef.

Under its Alliances for Coconuts II project, funded by the EU and supported by the Caribbean Forum Secretariat and the Organisation of ACP States, ITC’s sustainable agribusiness initiative Alliances for Action, the Alligator Head Foundation and the Coconut Industry Board have joined forces to strategically boost and promote a sustainable coconut sector across the Caribbean.

One member of the alliance, the Alligator Head Foundation, uses a collaborative approach to protect fish stocks, restore habitats and regenerate local economies. The other, the Coconut Industry Board, is responsible for monitoring and informing the Government of Jamaica on the state of the coconut industry, advising growers on agronomic best practices and providing quality planting materials.

The partnership generates alternative sources of income through coconuts and associated crops. The initiative also builds the capacities of lead farmer groups and communities for conservation from ridge to reef to protect land and marine ecosystems, safeguard and restore biodiversity, and adapt to climate change effects including rising sea levels and natural events such as cyclones and unseasonal rains. Finally, it engages environmentally sustainable partnerships for linkages to green finance and fosters environmental stewardship in communities.

Lead farmers are now adopting ridge-to-reef practices, including intercropping, coconut husbandry and integrated pest management. This reduces environmental degradation in the upland areas (ridge) that affects coastal ecosystems (reef). As a result, these farmers deepen their resilience to climate shocks while improving their incomes through diversification and better productivity.

Alliances for Action develops urgent strategies that protect the Caribbean region and support its inhabitants. This means building sustainable food systems from farm to fork. To complement the ridge-to-reef approach, measures include adding value in-country to avoid overreliance on imported food, enhancing food security and improving access to finance and investment to support sector growth.
The results

The partnership has already supported more than 40 smallholder farmers and their communities in producing and commercializing diversified crops, with upwards of 5,000 combined coconut, scotch bonnet pepper and plantain sucker seedlings distributed. The result: food forests that feed families, bring in extra income and improve soil quality and biodiversity.

Other partners such as the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute and Jamaica’s Rural Agricultural Development Authority help lead regular trainings that build farmer community capacities in Jamaica for long-term, sustainable impact.

The future

Under this partnership, there was joint participation in the Caribbean Community Agri-Investment Forum and Expo in Guyana in May 2022 to mobilize investment and new partnerships. Goals are rapidly being met to boost the Jamaican economy and improve farmer lives and incomes through sustainable stewardship of land and sea. ITC is already building on this successful initiative as a springboard to scale impact across other states in the future, as ITC and its partners replicate activities, setting the stage for a bluer, greener Caribbean.

“The collaboration with the ITC Alliances for Action and the Coconut Industry Board for the past several months has been nothing short of paradigm shifting and very much aligned with the mission of the Alligator Head Foundation working for fish-filled seas, healthy reef and thriving communities. It is essential that we as human beings and in the roles we play be actively engaged in doing all we can to connect to the health of our planet. This collaboration is a clear demonstration of this. It’s been a pleasure to execute this project with both ITC and Coconut Industry Board partnership and support.”

Nickie Myers, General Manager, Alligator Head Foundation, Jamaica

LINK
CASE STUDY

African fintech company raises $2.4 million

The challenge

Almost 80% of Africans do not have a bank account. Mobile payment solutions thus attract huge interest and present great opportunity. Thanks to its payment aggregator, CinetPay makes digital financial services available to everyone. With this product, Idriss Marcial Monthe and his team needed just a few months to gain the confidence of investors and successfully raise a first round of funding.

The solution

CinetPay was founded in 2016 by two ambitious friends in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire: Idriss Marcial Monthe and Daniel Dindji. Aiming to facilitate the collection and transfer of electronic money, the two business partners created a unique third-party payment service provider for merchants, public organizations and schools. Five years later, the fintech start-up employs 70 people in nine African countries and has processed transactions worth more than $30 million.

ITC’s FastTrackTech project supported CinetPay with multiple training and coaching sessions to give the company the best chance to raise funds and expand. Kô Goma, a business strategy consultant working with the FastTrackTech Africa project, coached CinetPay for three months on vital topics such as prioritizing investments abroad, reorganizing support services, simplifying procedures for setting up subsidiaries and streamlining brand communications.

CinetPay now has the potential to become an African fintech leader, Goma says: ‘Cinetpay’s proposal is distinctive because it is oriented towards both the development of mobile money and the establishment of payment terminals at points of sale. CinetPay has found its business model and is ready to scale up. Its story can pave the way for other digital talents in French-speaking Africa.’
The results

The Ivorian fintech company raised $2.4 million in 2021 and is now the leader in digital payments in francophone Africa. CinetPay targets the French-speaking African market and has set up subsidiaries in nine countries: Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Togo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Cameroon, Benin and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The time needed to create a subsidiary has been reduced from 12 to six months. The company has developed an organizational structure that allows it to remain focused on product innovation. All these assets make investors feel secure.

The future

With the Nigerian fintech company Flutterwave among its investors, CinetPay is ready to roll out its services in the remaining French-speaking African markets. The firm also plans to expand its portfolio of services. ITC will continue to accompany CinetPay with coaching on internal growth management and by exploiting opportunities to connect with partners and investors – for instance, at Vivatech 2022, the biggest start-up and tech event in Europe.

‘Investors are looking for market potential, but also for proof that we are able to fulfil our value proposition and constantly innovate. FastTrackTech helped us to carefully prepare our fundraising campaign. Together with one of their experts, we refined our business model, adopted best practices and clarified our international development strategy.’

Idriss Marcial Monthe, co-founder of CinetPay, Côte d’Ivoire

Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

LINK

The challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation. With people and businesses highly connected on an ever-expanding number of digital devices – generating energy and waste – the use of information and communications technology (ICT) worldwide has a growing impact on the environment.

MSMEs have an important role to play in addressing this problem while building resilience to environmental threats. Recent findings show that the contribution of ICT to global greenhouse gas emissions could be as high as 3.9% and is predicted to rise to 14% by 2040.

The solution

ITC developed an ICT sustainability survey to better understand the situation in the African technology sector. Almost 80 tech start-ups and MSMEs in East and West Africa completed the survey between November 2020 and March 2021. Survey results provided valuable insights into the awareness, practices and needs of African firms.

Importantly, the survey highlighted that 97% of tech start-ups and MSMEs wanted to learn how to improve the environmental sustainability of their ICT practices. Electronic waste management, energy efficiency, data storage and sustainability standards were the areas of greatest interest. A lack of awareness and knowledge were commonly cited as reasons companies were not engaged in ICT-related sustainability practices.

The Netherlands Trust Fund IV programme and the FastTrackTech Africa initiative responded by developing a training curriculum, Greening ICT for tech SMES, in partnership with Sustainable Business Consulting in Kenya and Blab East Africa. Three training modules were developed: (i) energy efficiency and sustainable data storage, (ii) electronic waste management and (iii) ICT sustainability standards.

‘We worked on the concept of how greening ICT is a way to reduce costs, lower environmental impact, attract sustainable investment, build brand reputation and attract and retain employees. We do things differently, we are protecting future generations.’

Gladys Kivati, founder of Sustainable Business Consulting, Kenya

While firms are primarily concerned about costs, ‘there are ways of effectively managing operations without going deep into your pocket, things as simple as using the right ICT equipment, turning computers off, making the best use of printers and copiers, or storing data in the cloud’, she added.

The results

In 2021, almost 80 African tech start-ups were trained in one or more module of the greening ICT training toolkit, thereby gaining awareness and key insights on sustainability practices.
The future

Under the Netherlands Trust Fund V programme, which was approved in 2021, more companies in the ICT sector and business process outsourcing will be trained in Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda with an expanded greening ICT training toolkit.

‘I got a lot of insights on things I was not aware of. One thing that really stood out is the amount of hardware waste in the world. Phones are changed every year, there are new laptops, new hard drives and, especially in Africa, we don’t have a lot of facilities that take care of the discarded products.’

Pamela Kalimuika, data specialist at LimaLinks, Zambia

97% interested in learning about sustainability

Only 5% rated their environmental impact negatively

52% in East Africa and 86% in West Africa did not have clear policies in place

Only 13.5% complied with ICT-related voluntary sustainability standards

Almost none were aware of existing recycling practices for electronic waste

Responses to ICT sustainability survey in East and West Africa

LINK


Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland
CASE STUDY

A roadmap to recovery for small farmers in Pakistan

The challenge

Farming MSMEs in Pakistan face numerous challenges including climate change, economic lockdowns from COVID-19, unavailability of raw materials in the market, expensive transportation and fluctuating electricity. The market is especially tricky for MSMEs that sell dairy products as they must deliver milk before it spoils in harrowing temperatures.

The solution

Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress, implemented by ITC and funded by the EU, helps MSMEs in Pakistan (Sindh and Balochistan) by building the capacity of rural MSMEs in agriculture and livestock. Through targeted support, the programme creates gender-inclusive employment and income opportunities in rural areas. One of its mandates is to help rural MSMEs access finance.

Bula Khan, a 42-year-old farmer from a small village in Singh province used to raise livestock animals to support his family, occasionally selling an animal for PKR60,000 ($290/€275). With 211 households and a population of 2,100, the village has few economic opportunities, with most families sustaining themselves through agriculture and livestock farming. Rural farmers in Sindh suffered greatly when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, as transportation from the cities was halted and key inputs such as animal feed were scarce in many markets.

During that time, Bula enrolled in trainings in Thatta on livestock management and value addition arranged by a local non-governmental organization called the Research and Development Foundation on behalf of GRASP. During the trainings, he learned of the project’s matching grant scheme disbursed through KPMG. With 10 years of experience in livestock farming, Bula believed he could take his farm commercial.
The results

Bula was selected and received a matching grant of PKR2.9 million ($13,970/€13,235). There has been no looking back. He bought initially 24 new milk cows and built a new shed with proper water and feeding stations. In addition, he vaccinated his cattle through the programme, boosting their health and resilience to disease.

During the trainings, Bula learned of ways to care for his livestock and how using Wanda, a special feed formula, could improve the cattle’s health and increase milk supply. It takes up to four months for an animal to gain maximum health after being fed, and Bula is confident he will fetch PKR70,000 to PKR80,000 ($335 to $385/€320 to €365) per animal in the Karachi Mandi (cattle market).

Although he spends a lot more money each month on Wanda, the profits far surpass the expenses. He now has more than 100 animals, with cows producing 7 kilograms to 18 kilograms of milk daily. Bula has connected with wholesale buyers from the Karachi Mandi, signing a one-year contract that ensures he earns PKR25,000 ($120/€115) a day, selling all his milk at an average PKR100/kg ($0.48/€0.46). This is 40 rupees more than the price he sold at previously. The contract also saves Bula transportation costs, as agents collect the milk from him every day.

The future

Bula’s profits have soared, but so has the work. He has hired a manager to run the day-to-day operation as well as six women and 12 men as helping hands. He is gearing to apply for the second tranche of the matching grant scheme and has a clear vision on what he wants to achieve in the next five years.

‘I want to invest in milk extraction machines and a commercial refrigerator to sell directly to private companies like Nestlé. If my plan goes accordingly, I hope to hire up to 35 people from my village.’

Bula Khan, a dairy farmer from Sahib Khan Lashari, Pakistan

LINK

Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade

Empowering women to trade

About 90% of the world’s businesses and more than half of global employment are concentrated in MSMEs – yet women run fewer than one-third of small businesses. The ITC Empowering Women to Trade Programme established the SheTrades Initiative in 2015 to create a more conducive business ecosystem for women entrepreneurs to trade and improve the livelihoods of their communities.

The initiative targets all stakeholders across the trade and business ecosystem. It provides women entrepreneurs and producers with access to key knowledge, resources and networks and supports policymakers on inclusive policy reforms. The initiative leverages public and private partnerships to amplify the impact of its work.

Key results

- 3,597 women-owned businesses from Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria were supported in competitiveness capacity building. Sales reached $45 million and upwards of 6,600 jobs were created.
- More than 1,500 women farmers were trained in West Africa and 95% reported sharing newly acquired skills with other women in their communities.
- Almost 1,000 women coffee growers in Rwanda benefited from digital traceability solutions.
- 1,426 women were trained on investment readiness and almost $3.5 million was unlocked in finance for women.
- SheTrades Outlook was rolled out in 46 countries by year-end.
- SheTrades.com reached 100,000 active users with 41,000 profiles of businesses. A total of 27 new entrepreneurship certified courses are available in three languages.
- More than 50 African women business associations were supported to advance AfCFTA priorities.
Highlights

The SheTrades Commonwealth project was completed in 2021. A total of 585 capacity-building activities were delivered, benefiting 3,597 women-owned firms from Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. More than 1,200 women-owned businesses were connected to international buyers through trade fairs, business-to-business events and partnerships with large corporations. In all, $45 million in sales were achieved and upwards of 6,600 jobs were created as a result of project intervention, with 73% of these positions going to women. https://shetradescommonwealth.converve.io

The SheTrades Rwanda project launched the SheTrades Rwanda Hub, a resource centre where women entrepreneurs can access training and information as well as a platform for forging new partnerships. The project also enhanced the capacities of women-led businesses in Rwanda, connecting more than 100 to markets. In addition, almost 1,000 women coffee growers benefited from using new digital traceability solutions, including blockchain technology.

As of end-2021, SheTrades.com had reached 100,000 active users. The platform has developed into a comprehensive virtual learning space with more than 100 modules and webinars. It also provides a self-

Boosting the livelihoods of women farmers in West Africa

In the three years since inception of the SheTrades West Africa project, MSME beneficiaries have generated more than $1.5 million in sales. Among its activities and goals, the project is working to improve the livelihoods of 10,000 women in cashew, shea and cassava value chains in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

By adopting a value chain approach and building partnerships with national institutions and service providers, the project creates lasting change within the business ecosystem and enables poor rural households to better manage risk, ensure food security and increase the quality of produce going to market.

More than 1,500 women farmers have been trained. Survey results indicate that 90% of the farmers supported by the project report an improvement in their household gender dynamics and 95% report sharing their newly acquired knowledge and skills with other women in their communities, thereby significantly multiplying project impact and scale.

‘I thank SheTrades West Africa for the business management training I attended, which gave me the knowledge to lead the development of a financial policy for my cooperative. The changes we have seen in our revenue since this policy was developed are huge. We have good savings and we are spending efficiently.’

Juma Sackila is a cassava farmer from Bomi County in Liberia and head of the PO River Cassava Cooperative
assessment tool where businesses can identify their strengths and weaknesses across a selection of core competences and capabilities. https://www.shetrades.com

SheTrades Invest is dedicated to unlocking finance for women in developing and least developed countries. In 2021, SheTrades Invest trained 1,426 women and held bootcamps on investment readiness in India, Mexico and Viet Nam. Over the year, $3,484,000 in finance was unlocked for women. In addition, the project launched a pioneering report entitled Twelve lessons in gender lens investing with best practices and action points to guide capital providers.

By the end of the year, SheTrades Outlook had supported 46 governments to address gender in trade policies and practices, including through 95 good practices to assess, monitor and improve the institutional ecosystem for women to trade. https://www.shetrades.com/outlook

At the regional level, ITC strived to make the AfCFTA work for women through capacity-building and networking activities for more than 50 women business associations and by producing nine policy briefs. At the national level, by the end of 2021, ITC had supported the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming policies in more than 10 countries, including in national export strategies, AfCFTA national implementation strategies, COVID-19 disbursement packages and public procurement policies.

Poor communities and trade

The Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI) is the operational arm of the ITC Poor Communities and Trade programme. EFI specializes in promoting high-quality production and equitable trade in the luxury fashion and lifestyle sectors as well as in the cultural and creative industries. For more than a decade, EFI has worked in dozens of developing and emerging economies around the world to help designers and entrepreneurs break through and export, creating sustainable jobs and economic development for talented artisans and creatives.

Key results

5,263 jobs were created or supported in 2021, of which 76% were for women

$2.6 million in sales were facilitated during the year

Market expansion in Europe, with 59 retailers and distributors selling Afghan products. More than 1,000 jobs for Afghan women were sustained with upwards of $1.7 million in sales.

Ethical Fashion podcast surpassed 30,000 downloads, reaching audiences in 136 countries

An international fashion firm made a €300,000 investment to support women artisans in Burkina Faso to join the EFI supply chain.
Highlights

EFI continued to create significant jobs, sales and opportunities for budding creatives in 2021, sharpening its focus to help them achieve the social and environmental sustainability requirements that discerning consumers increasingly demand. Skilled artisans and micro-producers in emerging economies create exquisite fashion and luxury goods that charm international consumers. EFI adds value, hones management skills, streamlines sustainable production and opens international sales channels for these products born from uniquely valuable cultures. https://ethicalfashioninitiative.org

The EFI culture project saw outstanding results in Africa and Central Asia. A new generation of fashion and homeware designers gained recognition at home and abroad, spurred on by the EFI Accelerator programme and the conviction among entrepreneurs that opportunities are there to be taken. South African designer and EFI Accelerator laureate Lukhanyo Mdingi won the prestigious LVMH prize. EFI held exhibitions in Paris and Mallorca to showcase designers and artisans from Africa and Central Asia. https://ethicalfashioninitiative.org/business-development/accelerator

Improving textile markets in Burkina Faso

CABES is EFI’s social enterprise in Burkina Faso. It manages a network of 85 weaving cooperatives that regularly produce and trade on the international market, employing 2,400 female artisans.

Through CABES, ITC creates financial, social and environmental value:
- The social enterprise reached financial autonomy in 2021 to fully finance its own working capital and investment in long-term assets.
- The social enterprise invests in human capital, which is calculated using the difference between the national minimum salary and the living wage applied in its supply chain.
- The social enterprise operates in a decarbonized supply chain, with the value of emission reductions (organic cotton, solar panels, recycled water) calculated as a proxy value of conservation.

This intervention in Burkina Faso concretely affects people through trade. The initiative convinced an international fashion giant to invest €300,000 in support of equipment for more women artisans to join the EFI supply chain. CABES is applying EFI’s ESG due diligence toolkit and will soon produce its first corporate sustainability report.

‘Being part of the network of CABES has always been beneficial. It provides me with training opportunities and the regular orders generated by CABES contribute to an important part of my annual income. We have improved the quality of our work thanks to EFI and producing internationally sold fabrics make us feel proud.’

Zalissa Sawadogo is a weaver at the Association Zoodo pour la Promotion de la Femme in Burkina Faso.
The EFI model works in challenging environments such as the Sahel, which suffers from security concerns and political uncertainty. EFI brand partners continued to support social enterprises in Burkina Faso and Mali with new and repeat orders for meticulously crafted fabrics.

The final year of implementation of the EFI Afghanistan project was 2021. Despite facing many hurdles, the project managed to exceed targets and expectations. It sustained more than 1,000 jobs for Afghan women working in fashion and food and generated upwards of $1.7 million in sales for its clients through retail outlets, primarily in Europe.

Demand among consumers in Europe and other Western markets continued to grow for ethical products and fair terms of trade. EFI applied innovative tools to track environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria for consumers to see how their purchases positively affect the lives of artisan communities around the world.

In 2021, EFI completed the ESG Due Diligence and Reporting Framework Toolkit, which now includes a complete set of due diligence and performance management tools. The National Chamber of Italian Fashion (Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana) is testing the toolkit with the Italian fashion industry.

Youth and trade

Young people are central to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both as beneficiaries and drivers. ITC’s Youth and Trade programme aims to economically empower youth in developing countries by equipping them with the necessary skills, mentorship and networks.

The programme works with young people to develop their business skills, employability and entrepreneurial talents, which improves their access to quality jobs and increases their income. To help advance this objective, ITC engages a wide range of partners from policymakers, technical and vocational training institutions, and business support organizations to local employers and multinational firms.

Key results

- Over 8,000 members were added to the Ye! Community online platform. 18 local Ye! chapters are active on three continents.
- Upwards of 100 training activities and networking events were organized through these chapters.
- More than 10,000 youth were trained through ITC’s SME Trade Academy in 2021.
- 9 training packages were delivered to youth hubs to transfer this learning to members.
Highlights

The Youth and Trade programme continued to deliver substantial progress on the United Nations Youth 2030 Strategy in 2021. Digital and hybrid solutions playing a crucial role in service delivery for the benefit of youth.

In April 2021, the programme launched the updated Ye! Community online platform during the 2021 ECOSOC Youth Forum. The team organized a panel session at the forum that discussed innovative approaches to partnerships to showcase and contextualize the launch of the new platform designed to support young entrepreneurs.

By providing a global platform supported by local chapters, the Ye! Community helps overcome the hurdle of youth access to networks. The updated platform gained enormous traction. The community counts 18 chapters and upwards of 30,000 members in some 170 countries, with more than 8,000 members added in 2021. [https://yecommunity.com](https://yecommunity.com)

This wide reach provided a solid basis to understand the challenges young entrepreneurs face. The programme conducted a survey on their financial needs. The findings indicated that most young entrepreneurs seek relatively modest funds (less than $50,000) and that their funding needs are pressing (requiring funds within a year).

Skills for Youth Employment Fund meets labour market needs for job creation in The Gambia

The Skills for Youth Employment (SkYE) Fund is a results-based competitive funding model that ensures skills training programmes are linked with employment or self-employment outcomes. Results-based funding approaches to implement technical and vocational education and training programmes are widely recognized as effective in creating employment for young people in countries with large informal sectors and microenterprises.

In The Gambia, the second round of the SkYE Fund tender was successfully implemented in 2021, with more than 900 youth enrolling in training programmes and close to 500 finding employment within six months of graduation. The rollout of training for the third round of SkYE also began, with another 850 youth enrolled in various skill training programmes and expected to graduate in 2022.

‘SkYE has given me the opportunity to acquire skills useful for my community. Upon completion of the programme, I benefited from complementary grant support for outstanding trainees to start a business. Today I run a fully fledged business where I provide satellite installation, repair services and sale of accessories. I employ three young Gambians and teach satellite installation modules at Sterling Training Centre.’

Muhammed Ceesay is proprietor of Prospectives
With implementation of the AfCFTA, entrepreneurs in the Ye! Community also expressed a desire to better understand the agreement. In response, ITC collaborated with the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development in Africa to produce a report examining how youth stand to benefit. The alliance and ITC, in collaboration with partners, also invited young Africans to participate in the AfCFTA Youth Creative Competition under the theme ‘The AfCFTA: What’s in it for young Africans?’

Building on this experience, the team launched the ITC Youth Ecopreneur Awards. The awards, a green business competition for young entrepreneurs from developing and least developed countries whose companies offer innovative solutions to environmental challenges, received more than 650 applications from upwards of 80 countries. Winners were recognized in three categories: energy, waste and water.

https://social.yecommunity.com/page/youth-ecopreneur-awards

The programme continued to provide a suite of courses on ITC’s SME Trade Academy. These courses have grown greatly in popularity since the pandemic. More than 10,000 youth received completion certificates from SME Trade Academy courses in 2021.

**Trade for Sustainable Development**

The Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD) programme operates as a strategic resource on sustainable development within ITC. With highly specialized technical knowledge and experience in advancing sustainability through trade, T4SD equips MSMEs so they benefit from and participate in more sustainable trade. Globally recognized for its expertise, the T4SD team is the custodian of the world’s most comprehensive, impartial, accurate and dynamic database on sustainability standards in trade. T4SD has been at the forefront of efforts to bring together sustainable development and trade for more than a decade.

**Key results**

- Standards Map reached the landmark of 500,000 visitors. More than 300 standards were referenced with up to 1,600 criteria analysed.
- Almost 1,000 participants from around the world joined the T4SD Forum 2021.
- The SLCP Gateway nearly tripled users to more than 7,500 facilities in 53 countries, generating an estimated $18 million in savings.
- Upwards of 80 professionals convened for the International Executive Programme on Sustainable Sourcing and Trade.
- 25 cooperatives and more than 3,000 producers were reached in the cocoa sector, of which 385 MSMEs reported adopting sustainable farming practices.
Highlights

T4SD celebrated the 10th anniversary of Standards Map, the world’s largest platform for credible data on sustainability standards, by launching Standards Map 4.0 at the T4SD Forum 2021. The forum spotlighted more than 30 speakers and drew almost 1,000 participants. Standards Map 4.0 brings new features and functionalities following feedback received from upwards of 300 stakeholders, partners and standard-setting organizations. https://www.standardsmap.org

T4SD’s collaboration with the Social & Labor Convergence Program (SLCP) made great strides during the year. ITC created the SLCP Gateway, a free online tool that enables factories to securely store and share their verified social and labour assessment data with brand partners. Use of the SLCP Gateway increased dramatically to reach more than 7,500 garment facilities. The bespoke e-learning platform associated with the project was updated in English and six additional languages. https://gateway.slconvergence.org

T4SD supported implementation of the Basic Guidelines for Sustainable Cocoa platform in Peru. The tool, which is integrated in ITC’s Sustainability Map, helps smallholder farmers improve the quality of cocoa for export and increase their income by engaging in higher-value trade. By promoting sustainable practices, it also generates positive environmental spillovers. Through local networks, ITC reached 25 cocoa cooperatives and more than 3,000 producers in 2021.

The Initiative for Compliance and Sustainability (ICS) and T4SD joined forces to improve the transparency and traceability of consumer goods global value chains. To this end, ICS members can leverage the Sustainability Map to upload relevant information on their supplier networks and/ or make this information publicly available by inviting their suppliers to join the platform.

To date, more than 1,400 ICS suppliers have accepted the invitation and their profile can now be viewed on the platform. One ICS member achieved 100% transparency in 2021 by making its network of suppliers publicly available on Sustainability Map. Eight other members are close to reaching 50% transparency. https://www.sustainabilitymap.org

Finally, T4SD demonstrated its convening power by hosting the third annual International Executive Programme on Sustainability Sourcing and Trade, attended by more than 80 professionals from the food and beverage industry. It also hosted the first edition of the International Programme on Sustainable Trade (Programa International en Comercio Sostenible).

2021 funders for focus area 5: Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade

ITC Trust Fund Window 1 Funders

Canada, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

Project-specific funders

CASE STUDY

A gateway for better working conditions in clothing

The challenge

The clothing industry generates annual revenues of around $3 trillion and employs 60–75 million people worldwide, two-thirds of whom are women. The negative social and environmental impacts of the fashion industry have been well documented over the years. Transparency and traceability are priorities to improve the industry’s ability to manage its value chains more sustainably.

In seeking to certify sustainability in garment production, the number of standards with which manufacturers must comply has multiplied. Evidence indicates that social auditing in itself does little to upgrade working conditions in global supply chains. Yet there has been a proliferation of such auditing in the last 20–30 years, subjecting manufacturers to repetitive, duplicative and resource-intensive audits multiple times a year.

The solution

To support greater transparency and traceability in garment value chains, ITC works with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Better Work (a partnership programme between the International Labour Organization and the International Finance Corporation) and industry partners such as the Social and Labor Convergence Program, with funding from the European Commission.

For example, ITC works with SLCP to implement a social and labour assessment and data-sharing platform to reduce duplicative audit costs and improve working conditions in garment and footwear facilities. SLCP, a pre-competitive consortium that includes the largest fashion brands (45% of the industry), has brought the industry together to agree on a common set of requirements for factory social and labour assessment (the Converged Assessment Framework).
The initiative also teamed up with Better Work to align the Converged Assessment Framework with the Better Work factory assessment and enable Better Work factories to participate in the SLCP.

ITC has developed and implemented ‘track and trace’ platforms that leverage its Sustainability Map and offer customized, open self-assessment and data-sharing solutions for textile and clothing value chain stakeholders. Along with these platforms, T4SD offers a training and continuous improvement programme in collaboration with private sector partners in several countries.

“The SLCP Converged Assessment Framework is a multistakeholder industry game-changer that can bring harmonization and convergence to social compliance at a scale not seen before. SLCP shares ITC’s priorities of reducing the cost and frequency of audits while enabling the facilities themselves to be in the driver’s seat when it comes to data ownership and sharing.”

Janet Mensink, Executive Director of SLCP

The results

More than 6,300 garment facilities in 56 countries and regions have used the SLCP Gateway since its 2019 launch to December 2021, generating an estimated $10 million plus in audit reduction savings. In that time, T4SD has trained more than 12,000 garment facilities.

The future

Working with SLCP, the target is for the Gateway to be operational with 25,000 facilities representing around 77% of global production by December 2023.

LINKS

- https://sustainabilitygateway.org/social-labor-convergence-gateway-slcp/
- https://gateway.slconvergence.org/home
CASE STUDY

Digital solutions for gender-inclusive coffee trade

The challenge

Tropic Coffee operates three coffee washing stations in the regions of Ruhango, Nyamasheke and Ngororero in Rwanda. The business works with 3,000 coffee farmers to grow, buy, process and export high-quality coffee. Engaging with large numbers of producers requires a streamlined system to trace different suppliers for the sourcing of quality coffee. To achieve this, Tropic Coffee recognized the need to increase its digital skills and better integrate data management systems to easily track activities from farm to warehouse and improve its traceability records.

The solution

Since joining the SheTrades Rwanda project, Tropic Coffee has participated in various capacity-building initiatives. This included the ecomConnect e-commerce and branding training programme to strengthen its digital identity and marketing materials, including through social media channels. Tropic Coffee also registered on OLAM’s AtSource system – a digital solution to improve supply chain transparency and traceability.

The results

Through the AtSource system, Tropic Coffee secured a new buyer from Australia. The system enables consumers to trace their coffee suppliers and track their environmental footprint to measure their energy use and sustainability impact. Using a digital solution to improve supply chain traceability has also helped the business empower women producers by ensuring they are actively involved in different segments of the supply chain.
The future

Tropic Coffee was supported to comply with the CAFÉ Practice verification programme developed by Starbucks in collaboration with Conservation International to measure farms against economic, social and environmental criteria. The company anticipates that its quality compliance and involvement in AtSource will enable it to access new international markets – for example, by becoming a future supplier of Starbucks.

“The ITC SheTrades Rwanda project has helped us comply with the CAFÉ Practice quality compliance. By increasing our capacity to comply with more stringent market requirements, coupled with our inclusion in the OLAM AtSource system, we have managed to unlock a new international market connection and many more new markets in the future.”

Divine Mutiyimana, Sales Manager, Tropic Coffee, Rwanda

SheTrades Rwanda

Funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework, the SheTrades Rwanda project has built the capacity and skills of women entrepreneurs in the agribusiness sector in digital marketing, packaging and quality compliance. The project has unlocked new market linkages that boost business growth and exports.

90% of participating women entrepreneurs acquired new trade-related skill

More than 100 women entrepreneurs were connected to (digital) market opportunities

Almost 1,000 women coffee growers benefited from digital traceability solutions (OLAM AtSource and Farmer Connect)

Results from October 2020 to February 2022

LINKS

- https://www.shetrades.com/#/publicsuccessstories/71?lan=en
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sqa0TeOkYnw&t=18s
CASE STUDY

Go Digital gives young Gazan refugees hope for the future

The challenge

Safaa Al-Amsi was among the hundreds of thousands of young Gazan women refugees struggling to find a job. Work is scarce in Gaza, where half of the 2.1 million population – including 1.4 million refugees and 1.3 million youth – live below the poverty line. With a youth unemployment rate topping 42% and most manufacturing industries shuttered since the 2006 blockade, young Gazan men and women have little hope for the future.

Like other young Palestinian refugees in Gaza, Safaa faced constant despair, frustration and self-doubt. She felt trapped in a vicious cycle, unable to help her family and give meaning to her life.

The solution

A course in online freelancing changed her destiny. Safaa came across a call for applications for the Japan-funded Go Digital initiative. Like the thousands of other applicants eager to benefit from the project, she wanted to gain the technical and personal skills needed to offer and sell sought-after services in online marketplaces. Working remotely is the only way Gazans can sidestep the blockade and escape the high level of local unemployment.

Go Digital is designed to create online freelancing and self-employment opportunities for refugees in Gaza – especially women and youth. Beneficiaries, like Safaa, attend the five-month vocational training programme so they can take up jobs in online marketplaces. Some trainees learn about web and mobile app development while others choose the search engine optimization, bookkeeping or translation tracks. Technical training is followed by coaching sessions on how to seize online opportunities and manage relations with remote clients.

The results

Safaa, 29, selected the search engine optimization track. Her eyes sparkle when she recalls her first sale as an online entrepreneur. The mother of three is proud that she secured – in less than four months – contracts worth thousands of dollars. She signed a one-year contract with a Saudi Arabian company as a search engine optimization specialist that came with a $500 fixed salary. With overall earnings to date reaching $3,000, she is now helping to support her family financially.
The story of Safaa is not an isolated incident. Other project beneficiaries have had similar experiences. In each of the first two phases of Go Digital (2018–2020), the initiative built the capacities of 110 youth on average. By the end the two phases, more than 70% of the trainees had sold high-quality services through online marketplaces and secured sales of almost $150,000.

By February 2022, Go Digital had trained another 245 young Gazans, arming them with the technical and freelancing skills as well as the emotional intelligence they need to find work. Together, these trainees have earned more than $109,000 delivering services to virtual clients through freelancing platforms and social media. The initiative also gave birth to 10 tech start-ups; five are generating revenues and three have accessed foreign markets.

The future

The satisfaction of her clients and the network and connections she created with trainees in other tracks inspired Safaa to form a team and start an agency called Doctor Web that supports shops. She credits Go Digital with her newfound motivation and discovery of her self-identity. These successes explain why ITC is keen to expand the Go Digital project, systematize the successes achieved to date and help more refugees find work in the future. By making training even more accessible, stepping up support across Gaza and expanding the range of skills offered, Go Digital can further enhance market access opportunities for young people – particularly women and refugees – and sustainably transform the Gazan tech ecosystem.

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<th>Project results</th>
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<td><strong>Programme participants</strong></td>
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**| **Average monthly income** |
| **$402** |

**| **Total income achieved** |
| **$260K** |
CASE STUDY

An entrepreneurship ecosystem map for the Pacific

The challenge

Entrepreneurship support organizations are working to transform the entrepreneurship landscape in the Pacific. However, it is a challenge for these organizations to strategize how to best leverage partnerships without a comprehensive overview of actors in the ecosystem and their characteristics.

The solution

ITC collaborated with the United Nations Capital Development Fund to analyse the key characteristics of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu. The resulting report offers an overview and guide for ecosystem actors for more effective partnerships.

By supplying key information to help understand the ecosystem in which institutions operate, the report helps stakeholders improve the way they: design innovative solutions that target system leverage points taking advantage of the unique value, skills and experience of players; identify the right partners and champions to engage with; and align partners on an ecosystem understanding and transformation vision.

The results

The report presents data collected over three months during which ITC mapped more than 90 organizations, conducted upwards of 60 remote interviews with entrepreneurship support organizations and held eight focus group discussions with entrepreneurs in the targeted countries.

To provide a comprehensive overview of the ecosystem with the available data, ITC’s methodology cross-checked information across three pillars of analysis: (i) service mapping and gap analysis based on desk research and interviews with relevant local institutions; (ii) network analysis to show how institutions in the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the Pacific interact using network analysis techniques and based on the results of a survey distributed to interviewed entrepreneurship support organizations; and (iii) user experience analysis of entrepreneurs navigating the entrepreneurship ecosystem based on insights from focus group discussions.

The report presents short- to long-term recommendations for sustainable development of the ecosystem that are relevant to the seven Pacific island countries. Recommendations and priorities were discussed during a validation session with all involved actors.

The future

Report findings are being used under the new United Nations Capital Development Fund Pacific Digital Economic Programme to plan and implement activities that help enable inclusive digital economies in the Pacific.

LINK


Funder

United Nations Capital Development Fund
Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links

Boosting regional trade

The Boosting Regional Trade programme aims to build regional value chains so MSMEs can access more markets and, in doing so, increase their revenues, improve productive capacities and add value. In 2021, regional programmes such as MARKUP, the West Africa Competitiveness Programme and the Partnership for Investment and Growth in Africa helped achieve this objective. ITC’s One Trade Africa programme contributed towards the operationalization of the AfCFTA.

Key results

- **2,294 MSMEs** from the EAC transacted with international businesses with MARKUP support
- **40 firms** from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania accessed $2.8 million in finance
- In West Africa, **65 workshops** under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme trained more than **580 MSMEs**, BSOs and policymakers
- **3 online investment promotion events** were organized in Eastern and Southern Africa under the Partnership for Investment and Growth in Africa, with more than **200 investors** from China attending
- **1,460 jobs** were created (64% women and 38% youth) and more than **6,000 were committed** in agro-processing and manufacturing in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Zambia

Artisan, Central Asia ©ITC/Abduwali
Highlights

In 2021, ITC continued to support operational changes across sectors to enhance regional integration. MSMEs in the coffee sector in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, the cocoa sector in Uganda, the spice sector in the United Republic of Tanzania and the horticulture sector in Rwanda made measurable changes in their business operations. These include offering new training programmes to farmers and cooperatives to disseminate knowledge as a means to improve quality and post-harvest management.

Improved agricultural practices and quality assurance in the avocado and cocoa supply chains in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda led to greater productivity and increased interaction among MSMEs.

Important milestones were achieved in West Africa under the West Africa Competitiveness Programme. They included the organization of the first West Africa Connect event, which brought together textile, garment and ICT suppliers and buyers, the establishment of the ECOWAS Trade Promotion Organization Network to strengthen business linkages across the region and the ECOWAS Council of Minister decision on amending the statutes of the ECOWAS Business Council.

ITC also helped establish partnerships in the area of access to finance by introducing regional beneficiaries to financial institutions, impact investment platforms and asset managers. In addition, in the area of policy dialogue, experience-sharing sessions were held between regional organizations such as the COMESA Business Council and the East African Business Council.

Supply-demand mapping of the Kenyan tea sector and the Zambian horticulture sector was carried out and presented to investment promotion agencies to support sectoral development. Sustainability mapping of relevant stakeholders was also realized to help investors improve their sustainability and developmental impact in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Zambia.

South-South trade and investment

The South-South Trade and Investment programme promotes sustainable commercial linkages among emerging markets, developing countries and LDCs by facilitating trade and promoting investment and technology transfer.

Key results

- $22.8 million in exports were generated and a further $12 million are under negotiation
- Over $90 million of trade and investment facilitated
- Global Digital Trade Accelerator for MSMEs in developing countries was launched
- 156 women-owned microenterprises were trained in production and marketing, with 45 joining an e-payment gateway
- A tech start-up secured $1.6 million seed funding in the agricultural sector
- Policy guide to make the East African leather and textile sectors more environmentally compliant was launched
- 17 tanneries were supported towards achieving Leather Working Group certificate
Highlights

Despite logistical constraints due to pandemic-related disruptions, new exports were generated across pulses, spices, leather and oilseeds. The rebound in trade transactions was evident, with companies reporting a healthy forward pipeline of sales contracts.

Important investments in spices (moringa and chilli) and culinary research and development were initiated in Madagascar and Rwanda, respectively. The culinary laboratory will work with food processors and chefs across Eastern and Southern Africa to develop flavourings and ready mixes for the fast-moving consumer goods and hospitality industries with inputs grown and sourced in Africa.

ITC and Alibaba.com launched the Global Digital Trade Accelerator for MSMEs in Developing Countries to help enterprises in increase their knowledge of e-commerce practices, improve e-commerce marketing skills, explore business opportunities and generate new exports. Ten MSMEs from developing countries (two each from Latin America, Africa and Central Asia and four from Southeast Asia) were selected to join in this initiative.

Under the Mitreeki initiative’s Fashion and Mentoring programme and the Agro-Processors Advancement programme, 156 women-owned microenterprises in the fashion and agribusiness sectors were supported through capacity development, access to finance coaching and mentoring. A total of 24 Mitreeki alumni are negotiating more than $7 million in funding.

Furthermore, 45 businesses in the garment sector have e-enabled their businesses by achieving payment fulfilment through a payment gateway. All the entrepreneurs that benefited were from the informal sector. All Mitreeki alumni also benefited from being part of business-to-business and business-to-consumer networks promoted by ITC SheTrades.

The programme fully integrated environmental sustainability as a key programme imperative in 2021. Seventeen tanneries were assisted for the procurement of a Leather Working Group certificate and one of the largest textile mills in Kenya acquired internationally recognized environmental certification due to ITC support. In addition, an actionable policy guide to make the East African leather and textile sectors more environmentally compliant was launched during the year.

ITC’s Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa project supported a cohort of recent graduates from the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, to showcase their Agricopter product – a drone with several potential applications including crop spraying, sowing, monitoring and mapping. In 2021, they were introduced to potential investors and secured seed funding of $1.6 million to further develop and scale their product in India and Africa.

2021 funders for focus area 6: Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links

ITC Trust Fund Window 1 Funders
Canada, Finland, Germany, India, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland

Project-specific funders
European Union, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, China, UNIDO, African Export Import Bank, Enhanced Integrated Framework, Germany
CASE STUDY

Central Asia eBay Hub boosts access to markets

The challenge

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance for MSMEs in developing countries to use digital sales channels to survive the crisis and build resilience. These channels can help small businesses reach new potential markets and stay connected with existing customers. Today, global marketplaces such as eBay are transforming the way companies approach international markets and do business.

The solution

To enable artisans and MSMEs in Central Asia to trade internationally and regionally through online channels, ITC’s ecomConnect team launched an e-commerce enterprise training as part of the EU-funded Ready4Trade Central Asia project. The training provided e-commerce capacity building, advisory services and awareness-raising activities to help MSMEs create and optimize their online sales channels.

ITC also supported businesses through e-labs to tackle specific challenges and connect firms to targeted online channels. As part of this initiative, ITC launched the Central Asia eBay Hub in May 2021, jointly with the USAID Future Growth Initiative, to boost visibility and access to global markets.

The results

Through the e-lab, artisans and MSMEs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have acquired the needed skills to trade online. They received tailored one-on-one support to create and optimize their eBay stores and gained access to new customers in the EU and United States. To further assist MSMEs in the region, ecomConnect also launched video tutorials in local languages on how to create/optimize an account and sell on eBay.

To date, more than 150 Central Asian companies have been trained on how to sell on eBay. The 20 best businesses created their eBay online store and were featured on
the eBay hub. These firms have succeeded in selling to international customers in more than 15 new markets. Upwards of 800 products were listed on eBay and sales had reached $20,500 as of May 2022.

As part of Central Asia eBay Hub, a partnership with DHL created opportunities for 150 MSMEs in Central Asia to develop their international client base by providing efficient shipping and competitive rates for their e-commerce activities. In addition, to target the United States market, the Central Asia eBay Hub started a logistics pilot to ensure an efficient delivery service. MSMEs can now ship in advance their products to eBay partner Deliverr in the United States for faster and more effective delivery. Businesses were also supported to access the cross-border payment platform Payoneer.

The future

Following the success of the first group, ITC decided to extend the e-lab to equip 100 additional MSMEs in the five Central Asian countries to reach new markets and benefit from additional e-commerce training and technical support.

‘During the COVID-19 pandemic, many physical stores closed in Uzbekistan and artisans were left without sales. The Ready4Trade Central Asia initiative helped many of our artisans open online stores on eBay and trained them on how to sell online.’

Abduvali Abdukayumov, ITC e-commerce coach and artisan, Uzbekistan

LINKS
- https://ebay-discoveries.com/centralasia/
Cementing regional integration in South-East Asia

The challenge
An overwhelming majority of businesses in ASEAN are MSMEs. They are essential drivers of economic growth and employment creation in the region. An inclusive and sustainable post-COVID-19 economic recovery across ASEAN will require supporting MSME growth and competitiveness to realize export opportunities that are under-exploited. In the Philippines, for example, ITC’s Export Potential Assessment, conducted in 2021, revealed that the country had an unrealized potential of $49 billion.

The solution
The EU-funded ASEAN Regional Integration Support (ARISE) Plus programme is closely aligned with the five pillars of the ASEAN economic community Blueprint 2025, which provides a solid basis for trade-related technical assistance in the region. ITC carries out ARISE Plus projects for the benefit of MSMEs in Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand.

The projects benefit export-oriented sectors and improve competitiveness and integration in regional value chains. They provide support for ASEAN economic integration.

The results
In Lao People’s Democratic Republic, ITC enhanced sustainable trade opportunities in the coffee and wood-processing sectors by helping firms exploit preferential schemes. Notably, coffee producers received capacity-building training to start organic coffee farms.

In Myanmar, 234 MSMEs were supported to improve management practices and export competitiveness. This included assistance to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary measures, with producers of honey and pineapple reporting that they had improved their production practices to meet international requirements. The ITC ARISE Plus projects increased MSME access to digital trade fairs and quality platforms in both Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

In the Philippines, ITC launched the Ye! Boost Accelerator to enhance the capacities of youth-led businesses and start-ups to internationalize through export training, investment readiness and connections with buyers and finance.
In the realm of trade policies and regulations, ARISE Plus projects provided support for implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement and to improve sanitary and phytosanitary control systems and quality compliance in line with ASEAN commitments. This included, for example, strengthening quality-management systems and audit planning in Thailand.

ARISE Plus also provided support to enhance national capacities for trade negotiations, align domestic regulatory frameworks with ASEAN commitments, facilitate digital and services trade, and strengthen competition and investment policies.

The future

Green and digital trade as well as sustainability will increasingly be embedded in ITC interventions in ASEAN. This will be done at the policy, institutional and firm levels through awareness raising, training and advisory support. Sustainability practices and green trade will be leveraged for business competitiveness and export growth while digital trade and connectivity will be promoted in ASEAN regional integration support.

‘I was able to gain a deeper understanding of organic farming and the process of applying for organic certification. In addition, I learned different organic ways to eliminate coffee pests, particularly coffee stem borers, which have been a big issue for us farmers for some time.’

Phaengsy Daochuangdee, owner of Duang Dee Coffee Farm, Lao People’s Democratic Republic

LINKS

- [https://intracen.org/our-work/projects/malaysia-trade-related-assistance-ari-se-malaysia](https://intracen.org/our-work/projects/malaysia-trade-related-assistance-ari-se-malaysia);

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1. Duang Dee hill tribe coffee farm, Thailand  
2. Training on trade policy modelling, Lao People’s Democratic Republic  
3. Wood export workshop session, Vientiane, Lao People’s Democratic Republic  
4. Improving sensory and cupping skills with Specialty Coffee Association Certification, Lao People’s Democratic Republic
CASE STUDY

Creating quality champions in East Africa

The challenge

The word ‘quality’ holds a lot of weight. It can mean different things to different people in different contexts. There is perceived quality – that which is felt when one tastes, smells or holds something. Consumers tend to have the confidence to rely on these senses. However, MSMEs should care not only about the quality of the end product for consumers, but also the internal processes that are used to create that tangible, visceral value for the end user.

Quality compliance is a frequent barrier to successful trade for MSMEs around the world, and this also rings true in the EAC. A scalable solution is needed to increase the presence of a culture that is built on assurances as opposed to inspections, on processes in addition to products.

The solution

Quality Champions was created under the EU-EAC MARKUP programme with the aim of creating scalable and sustainable solutions to quality compliance issues that have hindered the trade success of East African MSMEs. Over 20 months, a pool of Quality Champions were trained and qualified using the latest tools and techniques for ensuring quality and food safety in a business, including in quality control, quality assurance, food safety, Lean Six Sigma, conformity assessment and key standards such as ISO 9001 as well as soft skills, coaching and leadership skills.

As a part of the programme, each Quality Champion implemented a quality-improvement project in at least one business. These projects typically focus on boosting the efficiency of production, reducing waste, ensuring consistent quality and building international market requirements into operations.

Meanwhile, an online toolbox – the EAC Quality for Trade Platform – directly supported the Quality Champions and the enterprises with which they worked. This platform has...
a suite of tools that allow users to discover relevant quality requirements for priority sectors in the EU market (coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and select fresh fruits and vegetables); obtain guidance on quality-related topics and share best practices; connect with relevant institutions or individuals who can offer help; and gain insights from those who have already experienced success.

The results

As a result of the Quality Champions programme, the EAC now has a regional pool of 80 certified Quality Champions, all of whom have both the theoretical and practical experience required to make real quality improvements in existing or aspiring exporting EAC enterprises.

The project implementation phase of the programme has led to dramatic effects on the MSMEs that were supported. All of these results and success stories may be viewed on the Quality Success tool of the EAC Quality for Trade Platform: https://un-consulting.ch/eac/success.

‘The Quality Champions have been fantastic. They went all out to help me put things in place. I can now clearly see all the mistakes we had made in meeting our clients’ demands. Now we know that following the clients’ specifications is the right thing to do.’

June Gathoni, Director of Urban Fresh Ventures, Kenya

The future

The Quality Champions programme was developed with sustainability as a core principle. It has resulted in the creation of four Quality Champions hubs: the National Quality Association of Tanzania, the Rwanda Alliance for Quality, the Association of Quality Professionals in Kenya and the Quality Assurance Association Uganda Limited. All tools and materials used to develop the Quality Champions will be transferred to these hubs.

The hubs include many of the ITC-certified quality champions trained under the programme, who will help disseminate their knowledge and a quality culture in East Africa. Together, they will fill the institutional gap between business as usual and a business environment as it could and should be, one with a culture of quality at its core.

LINKS

- https://un-consulting.ch/eac

Funder

European Union
ITC’s corporate governance reflects its culture, policies and a set of core values embedded in United Nations rules and regulations. ITC seeks inputs from government stakeholders and updates them on developments in its work at annual sessions of the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) and biannual meetings of the Consultative Committee of the ITC Trust Fund (CCITF). The latter also meets informally throughout the year.

The results of the JAG are reported by the JAG chair to the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board and to the WTO Committee on Trade and Development, from where they are directed to the General Council.

The JAG is composed of representatives from UNCTAD and WTO Members. JAG sessions are also open to observers from other intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. The CCITF, which is composed of member and observer states, reviews the use of the ITC Trust Fund, monitoring the general orientation and results of programmes financed through extrabudgetary contributions.

**Joint Advisory Group**


Xiangchen Zhang, Deputy Director-General of the WTO, commended ITC’s array of services and outlined several areas of cooperation between ITC and the WTO, particularly in providing critical intelligence for MSMEs through the Global Trade Helpdesk, the ePing alert system, the rules of origin facilitator and the cotton portal.

**ITC Strategic Plan 2022–2025: An inclusive strategy development process**

ITC launched its new strategic plan, *Building inclusive, sustainable and prosperous economies*, in 2021. The Strategic Plan 2022–2025 sets out a vision and roadmap for the organization’s work. The plan was crafted in close collaboration with stakeholders.

In an inclusive strategy development process from March to November 2021, ITC engaged with employees, member states, partners, clients and the broader trade and development community. The draft strategy was then refined as stakeholders provided feedback and recommendations following wide distribution of a detailed consultative document in July, an initial draft presented to the JAG in November and a more advanced draft to the CCITF in December. In presenting the new Strategic Plan, Ms. Coke-Hamilton encouraged joint action to put ITC’s vision into place.
On behalf of Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant, Pedro Moreno, Director in the Office of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, referenced, among key areas of collaboration, support provided to the Italian G20 presidency to develop a non-binding MSMEs Policy Toolkit, the establishment of 17 trade facilitation portals, the joint publication of the World Tariff Profiles and collaboration on the BioTrade self-assessment tool.

Pamela Coke-Hamilton, ITC Executive Director, took note of concerns about the impact of the pandemic on MSMEs, women, youth and vulnerable communities. Ms. Coke-Hamilton assured that ITC would rise to the challenge by remaining innovative, responsive and engaged on the ground.

Consultative Committee for the ITC Trust Fund

Two regular meetings of the Consultative Committee for the ITC Trust Fund took place online on 24 June and 8 December 2021. The meetings gave CCITF members an opportunity to shape the finalization of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and to discuss various areas of ITC’s work: the One Trade Africa programme, Trade Briefs and the Open Data Portal, among others. In addition, an informal CCITF session was held on 8 April 2021 to discuss ITC’s annual planning as detailed in the 2021 Operational Plan.

ITC reports project related activities and data in the database of the International Aid Transparency Initiative: https://iatistandard.org

The ITC Open Data Portal can be accessed at: https://open.intracen.org
For all ITC interventions, evaluation is a crucial instrument to support organizational learning and knowledge development, and for accountability against expected results. Evaluations inform ITC decision-making in policy, programme and project management. The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) is the custodian of ITC’s evaluation function. The IEU directly manages evaluations and reviews and provides advisory services on evaluation matters within the organization.

A total of 21 evaluations and reviews and 26 project completion reports were undertaken in 2021. Of the 21 evaluations, the IEU initiated or concluded 12 independent evaluations and reviews. Project managers managed three self-evaluations and funders managed six. The graph provides summaries of evaluations and reviews carried out in 2021.

ITC’s evaluation unit actively supported the work of the United Nations Evaluation Group, contributing to the working group on gender, disability and human rights and the working group on ethics. The unit also contributed to corporate reporting on ITC involvement in the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and on implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

In addition, the IEU took part in two Office of Internal Oversight Services evaluations. As the focal point for the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), it further contributed to the completion of four JIU reports and facilitated ITC participation in two additional JIU reviews.
Summary of 2021 evaluation and reviews

2021 Annual Evaluation Synthesis Report

The 2021 Annual Evaluation Synthesis Report assessed the effectiveness of ITC’s Strategic Plan 2018–2021 as a tool to improve the organization’s performance. The report concluded that the Strategic Plan was an effective tool that gave the organization a directional yet flexible operating framework.

At the same time, it highlighted that going forward, strategy implementation requires an adequate framework to bridge high-level medium- to long-term corporate objectives and annual operational goals. The findings of the report informed the design of the ITC Strategic Plan 2022–2025, launched in late 2021.

Evaluation of ITC’s performance in trade and market information

The IEU assessed the suite of market analysis tools provided through ITC’s Transparency in Trade programme. The evaluation found that the tools are widely recognized as providing high-quality, up-to-date and comprehensive trade and market information.

However, it noted that ITC’s traditional comparative advantages in this area have reached a peak as user needs undergo major changes. It found that while ITC had already partly responded to this, further action and enhancement are necessary.

Reviews related to results-based management

In 2019, ITC’s evaluation unit initiated a series of reviews on results-based, management-related issues to address gaps in this area. As part of this series, the following reviews were finalized in 2021: (i) monitoring and evaluation systems in the portfolio of new large EU projects, (ii) INTEGRA project in Guinea, (iii) means of verification of results / how ITC projects measure change and (iv) ITC’s monitoring and evaluation capacity.

To complete this review series, a developmental evaluation was initiated in 2021 to assist three large projects in their inception phase to improve their monitoring and evaluation systems.

Reviews related to sustainability

ITC’s evaluation unit has developed an approach to assess the sustainability of projects 3–4 years after completion. Having tested the approach in 2020, two additional reviews were conducted in 2021. One assessed a project to improve the competitiveness of Senegalese mangoes. The other gauged a project to integrate horticultural value chains in the Tanzanian tourism sector.

Both projects and reviews were carried out in collaboration with the Enhanced Integrated Framework. Implementation of the reviews received considerable support from the trade ministries of the respective countries, which helped strengthen national evaluation capacities.
Sound risk management practices at all organizational levels are key for the credible stewardship of the resources entrusted to ITC. ITC operates a risk management framework to identify, assess, mitigate, monitor and communicate risks that threaten its objectives. This framework consists of the structures, processes and governance arrangements that enable effective risk management and strengthen ITC’s accountability.

As the COVID-19 pandemic persisted through 2021, ITC used the lessons learned in 2020 to inform its risk responses. Operating during the pandemic often required a shift in focus from longer-term goals to priorities that increased the probability of MSME survival in adverse circumstances. ITC also focused on solidifying communication practices on risks. This resulted in substantive updates of risk registers and early warning about new or emerging risks.

In 2021, ITC worked to promote a risk management culture and improve the risk management framework in three areas:

- Building risk knowledge among ITC employees
- Enhanced assessment of escalated risks
- Agile risk management practices in projects

Building risk knowledge among ITC employees

In a complex operating environment like ITC, risk management – and risk assessment in particular – requires a structured approach. This is why ITC integrated risk courses in its mandatory training schedule. One of the key themes of the courses, based on lessons learned and feedback from the previous year, was on raising awareness about the need to be inclusive in risk assessments.

Inclusive assessments ensure that different perspectives on risk probabilities and impacts are equally considered. By showcasing real-life examples of risk mitigation in projects, the training showed that multi-perspective risk analysis increases the quality and effectiveness of risk responses.

Enhanced assessment of escalated risks.

So-called red risks, defined as those with a high probability or possible impact on ITC objectives, are escalated as their mitigation requires input at a senior organizational level.

In 2021, many risks were triggered by the pandemic or post-pandemic conditions in programming countries as well as security risks in operating countries. A crisis management group was formed under the leadership of ITC’s Deputy Executive Director to enable quick senior management decisions with inputs from relevant parties across ITC.

Agile risk management practices in projects

For many MSMEs, anticipating risks and taking calculated risks was a matter of survival in 2021. With COVID-19 contingency plans, ITC shifted its focus towards immediate mitigation measures for its clients. These measures included supporting the long-term sustainability of MSMEs, for example, by addressing liquidity constraints or helping to adapt business models in a changing environment.
In 2021, ITC experienced waves of partial reopening and lockdowns due to the pandemic. As a result, human resources (HR) had to adjust continuously and evolve to ensure effective support to clients, the well-being of employees and ongoing communications for optimal organizational performance. In so doing, HR strategized by focusing on two main areas:

- Knowledge sharing and the development of technological tools
- Strengthening an organizational culture of accountability and career support

Knowledge sharing and technological tools

In 2021, HR initiated the HR Talks series with three main objectives: (i) share information about HR policies and topics, (ii) provide career support and development, and (iii) promote diversity and inclusion. Topics covered included mobility and career options, mental health and well-being, writing job applications, LGBTQI+, people strategy, competency-based interviews and discrimination at the workplace. The series provided an open, safe and informal forum for discussion and engagement.

In addition, several HR briefings on more technical areas (such as dependency allowance and education grant entitlements) were organized to guide staff on mandatory annual submissions and share relevant information for timely submission and processing.

HR invested in various technological tools to permit easy access to information for monitoring and ensuring compliance with key organizational priorities. A performance management dashboard was created to enable access to information on performance management completion rates to help managers ensure full completion. Similarly, the policy on mandatory trainings for different groups of employees was revised to simplify the language and modernize the framework. A dashboard was also created to enable managers to monitor policy compliance.

HR also launched video tutorials as easy-to-access and efficient learning tools on commonly used administrative processes. The tutorials included introduction videos so new employees could hear directly from senior management and divisional and section chiefs and learn about the organization’s work. The videos were fed into the new online induction programme, which offers a comprehensive platform to welcome new ITC staff.
ITC human resources in numbers

- 424 Staff members representing 92 nationalities
- 44 Interns engaged from 24 countries
- 159 Staff members from developing and transition economies
- 23 Staff members from least developed countries
- 58% Interns engaged from 24 countries
- 42% Interns engaged from 24 countries
- 88% UN-SWAP 2.0 compliance in 2021
- 58% Consultants and individual contractors (from 142 countries)
- 42% Consultants and individual contractors (from 142 countries)
- 44% of competitions at professional or higher level won by candidates from developing or least developed countries

Organizational accountability and career support

Robust performance management systems influence employee engagement and help build a culture of accountability. A multipronged approach to strengthen performance management at ITC was introduced to positively impact organizational culture and behaviour, including feedback as an integral part of the organization’s ethos.

Just-in-time training was introduced at each stage of the performance management cycle to instruct on how to develop SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based) workplan goals, hold mid-point reviews and effectively give and receive feedback at end-of-cycle appraisal. A ‘coaching for managers’ training was offered as part of the approach.

Human resources coordinated other initiatives to support career development and reinforce accountability. Career development was embedded in the HR Talks series as well as HR advisory services. Individual career consultations were provided on career planning, application reviews and mock interviews. ITC participated in the United Nations Secretariat’s pilot online mentoring programme, thereby greatly expanding the networking landscape for ITC staff.

In addition, HR offered training on networking and partnerships and coordinated with the United Nations Ombuds Office to provide training on community civility, communication and conflict resolution.

Finally, ITC’s pilot remote internship programme was institutionalized to enable continued access to opportunities for interns from LDCs, small island developing States, post-conflict countries and developing countries. Since the start of the programme, 57 interns have benefited.
Commemorating Black History Month

For the first-ever commemoration of Black History Month at ITC, the Diversity and Inclusion Group hosted three different sessions for colleagues to share, learn and celebrate on the official theme Proud to Be.

The sessions offered a space to honour inspiring black personalities and reflect on personal privilege. They also highlighted the intersectional nature of discrimination through a gamified approach and ended with a music jam session around songs that captured central themes of black history and the global civil rights movement.

Gender equality, diversity and inclusion

Throughout 2021, ITC continued to promote an organizational culture premised on ensuring a safe, inclusive and enabling work environment for all. The Gender Unit along with the Diversity and Inclusion Group accelerated progress and built organizational capacity towards this vision. Their work reflects the commitment of ITC to promoting gender equality, diversity and inclusion and recognizing the intersectional nature of inequality.

Diversity and Inclusion Group

In 2021, ITC formalized the Diversity and Inclusion Group’s role and mandate as an internal advocacy body by developing terms of references. Consisting of the gender, LGBTQI+, disability and accessibility, and racial and geographical diversity focal points, as well as the Chief of Special Projects and the Gender Unit support staff, the group led initiatives to build institutional capacity and awareness around topics of gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

Key activities included, among others:
- communications to all employees around international dates for diversity and inclusion;
- dialogue-based sessions on feminism and male allyship for gender equality;
- a panel discussion with more than 100 ITC employees on navigating racism in the workplace;
- activities around World Mental Health Day and Black History Month;
- a movie screening for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

The group also continued to expand its dedicated intranet page, serving as a one-stop-shop for information and resources related to gender, diversity, and inclusion.

“I wish I had been more honest about how racism has affected me in the workplace. I think I was raised to act like it doesn’t matter to me and just bounce back.”

Addressing Racism in the Workplace ITC event, June 2021

©Shutterstock.com
Mentoring Programme for Women

The Mentoring Programme for Women remains central to ITC efforts to strengthen organizational culture and advance gender parity. In its third iteration in 2021, the programme significantly expanded its scope, increasing the number of participants from 120 to 176. The World Health Organization joined as a new partner organization, along with 2020 partners the Organization of Women in International Trade, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and UNAIDS.

In addition to ITC’s pool of mentors and mentors from partner organizations, a group of external mentors – particularly committed to gender parity, diversity and inclusion – called ‘fortifiers’ was included. Beyond one-on-one mentoring, the team offered 11 training sessions on six topics in collaboration with its partners. These topics focused on various issues related to personal and professional career development. The mentoring team encouraged monthly inclusion challenges for all participants. These challenges were shared across ITC via a dedicated site on the intranet.

Gender parity dashboards

In close collaboration with HR, the Gender Unit continued to automate gender scorecards and its gender parity dashboards to enable streamlined and up-to-date monitoring of organizational progress towards gender parity targets. The dashboards, recognized as a best practice by UN Women in 2021, show ITC’s parity data over time and enable hiring managers to simulate the impact of their hiring decisions on organizational parity. To raise awareness across ITC and ensure maximum transparency, they are accessible to all employees via the gender equality, diversity and inclusion intranet page.

Recognition and awards

Both internally and externally, ITC’s corporate gender equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives have received wide recognition. Beyond the gender parity dashboards, at the United Nations system-level, the MenEngage programme was featured as a best practice and selected for system-wide adoption during the 2021 annual UN-SWAP network meeting.

The Gender Unit and the Diversity and Inclusion Group continued sharing their work and best practices with other agencies and organizations, including the WTO and the International Labour Organization. During the annual Innovation Heroes awards, ITC’s internal peer-to-peer recognition system, the Gender Unit and the Diversity and Inclusion Group received four awards, including the People’s Choice award.

Women’s Power Lunch

Under the lead of a cross-sectional working group, ITC introduced a new event series called Women’s Power Lunch. The lunch offers a safe, informal setting for junior to mid-career women employees to exchange with inspiring women leaders on women-specific workplace issues. Speakers have included ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Gold Paralympian Ellen Keane and Chief Executive/Editor-in-chief of Glitz Africa Magazine Claudia Lumor.
To ensure greater impact, meet client demands and needs, and truly deliver in an integrated way for the SDGs, ITC invested in existing partners, explored future public and private sector partnerships that could deliver mutual benefit, and developed a clearer corporate approach to better monitor and assess how these partnerships are delivering against the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan.

Impact-focused partnerships are critical to delivering in the final decade of the SDGs. In 2021, ITC understood that delivering on our mandate in a challenging aid for trade environment had to be built on partnerships. Efforts were made to expand our reach and better identify:

- key members of the United Nations family to help drive achievement of the SDGs;
- private sector actors that align with the ITC vision;
- foundations where there is scope to tap into their funding priorities;
- regional and national actors as implementing partners for ITC work on the ground;
- academic institutions to cooperate around advocacy, research and data gathering; and
- critical multilateral partners, including vertical funds.

**NOVICA partnership brings Central American artisans to global markets**

Many entrepreneurs were not ready to sell online when the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in 2020. The global crisis greatly digitalized the international consumer market, affecting countless artisans in developing countries who have limited access to a stable internet connection, technology or e-commerce support.

Through its work with artisans in Central America, ITC realized that many small businesses lacked the skills or resources to manage a digital store. By combining ITC’s core work on MSMEs with the product-based training and support offered by NOVICA, the world’s largest online marketplace for artisan-handcrafted items, the partnership ensured that the makers of unique, sustainable goods could earn a decent living to support their families and communities.

Thanks to an inclusive partnership approach, the marketplace included a dedicated page for artisans participating in ITC projects, through which 10% of sales are invested in supporting these artisans. NOVICA also granted these companies preferential access to its micro-credit programme. This game-changing initiative, made possible through strong collaboration, means ITC has helped hundreds of enterprises in Central America.

New partnership engagement strategy

Work began in 2021 on a new internal partnership engagement strategy for ITC. Consultations around the engagement strategy were launched through a new Partnerships4Purpose Knowledge Community.

Representatives from each division and relevant project teams were included in the community to help ITC colleagues build more effective partnerships through:

- best practice guidance on developing, finalizing and monitoring partnerships;
- internal processes, including legal, financial and communications, that are fit for purpose;
- an improved culture of internal transparency around partnership building and better centralizing information on partnerships in an accessible place;
- resource mobilization diversification and a strategic focus on the choice of partners; and
- better communication of the outcomes and impacts of ITC partnerships.

Regional spotlight on key partnerships in 2021

- Africa
  - ITC partnered with the International Cotton Advisory Committee to increase yields in Zambia.
  - United Kingdom Trade Partnerships Cameroon and Penja Pepper Association jointly supported higher productivity and quality-improvement initiatives for member producers.
  - ITC partnered with the Youth Alliance for Leadership and Development for the AfCFTA Youth Creative Competition to raise awareness among youth on the AfCFTA.

- Asia Pacific
  - With the United Nations Capital Development Fund, ITC worked on mapping the characteristics of the entrepreneurship ecosystem in several countries across the Pacific.
  - ITC and IdeaSpace jointly rolled out Ye! Boost Accelerator for youth-led businesses in the Philippines.
  - ITC collaborated with Alibaba Group to launch the Global Digital Trade Accelerator for MSMEs in Developing Countries to help MSMEs explore e-business opportunities worldwide.
  - In partnership with the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, ITC improved financial accessibility for rural MSMEs.

- Eastern Europe and Central Asia
  - With the Union of Private Sector Development in Tajikistan, ITC conducted roundtables and improved linkages between educational institutions and the textile and clothing industry.
  - ITC and the Ukrainian Berries Association developed an exporter guide for successful exports of berries to the EU.
  - ITC, in collaboration with UNCTAD, developed a comprehensive regulatory framework for e-commerce in Kazakhstan.

- Latin America and the Caribbean
  - In Colombia, ITC partnered with the Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario to assist lime farmers in post-conflict areas to certify their farms for export.
  - ITC, in partnership with Caribbean Export, trained farmers, small agricultural firms and BSOs to strengthen the capacities of MSMEs.

- Middle East and North Africa
  - ITC worked with the Islamic Trade Finance Corporation and the World Bank to support women entrepreneurs across the region, particularly in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.
  - In partnership with the Qatar Development Bank, and working with HEC Paris in Qatar, ITC developed the Export Acceleration programme for Qatari enterprises.
  - ITC partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for more competitive Palestinian agribusiness following an integrated value chain development approach.

- Global
  - ITC partnered with the UEFA Foundation to implement sport4dev initiatives for youth across several countries in Africa and the Middle East.
  - With Facebook, ITC organized a Good Ideas Festival that included a live fireside chat between ITC’s Executive Director and Facebook’s Director of Global Small Business Marketing.
  - ITC concluded corporate memorandums of understanding with the Commonwealth Secretariat with a focus on small states and with the United Nations Development Programme on supporting the AfCFTA.
Innovation Lab

The Innovation Lab (the Lab) promotes innovation in trade-related technical assistance delivery and fosters a culture of collaboration and experimentation in ITC. It aims to better equip the organization to adapt continuously and create new ways of responding to changes in the trade development landscape. The Lab is a platform to ideate, co-create and pilot innovative initiatives and concepts, and to facilitate change within the organization.

"The Back to the Future sessions are key opportunities to build stronger links between former and current staff. I found those sessions extremely useful because they enabled former staff to share their long experience, in the form of “lessons learned”, and prevent current staff from making “time-tested” mistakes in their planning and delivery. They absolutely should be continued."

Alain Chevalier, former ITC staff, on the Back to the Future sessions created in 2021

Innovation Lab 2021 results

- Increased awareness on innovation
  - 800 + participants in Innovation Lab events

- Partnership building
  - 4 new engagements with external partners: EPFL, UNFPA, UNAIDS, WTO

- Increased capacity on innovation
  - 90 + participants in Lab capacity-building activities

- Project innovation
  - 9 new project components integrated into ITC initiatives thanks to the Lab
Spotlight on new activities in 2021

**Innovation Fair**

36 innovations from all ITC divisions were part of the first-ever virtual ITC Innovation Fair. The event was attended by 229 participants, 77 of which were external guests.

**ITC Shares**

The objective of ITC Shares is to create a virtual space where field colleagues can share useful experience on relevant topics to ITC. In 2021 this included resilience and connectivity.

**Innovation Directory**

A directory of all 36 innovations highlighted at the 2021 Innovation Fair was created. It acts as a live compilation, allowing future innovations to be included.
Communications and outreach

2021 highlights

March
For International Women’s Day, a social media campaign focused on solutions for small business recovery, with a range of partners from around the world. To celebrate the day, ITC also co-hosted two major events: New ISO Standard on Women’s Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the International Organization for Standardization and the Swedish Institute for Standards; and Women in Tourism, Building Back Better, a virtual panel exploring support for women in sustainable tourism, in partnership with ITB Berlin, the world’s leading travel trade fair. ITC also co-hosted a side event at the UN Commission on the Status of Women on Women’s Economic Empowerment: Good Practices in COVID-19 Response and Recovery, with the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN.

April
ITC’s magazine Trade Forum launched its first fully digital format, which focused on small business resilience in the context of the economic consequences of COVID-19 and a future post-pandemic world.

May
ITC co-hosted an event highlighting African digital entrepreneurs leading the way for COVID-19 recovery and SDG acceleration at the 7th Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs, with UNCTAD and the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the UN.

June
Commemorations for the International Day of MSMEs included a fireside chat: Supporting small business recovery, in partnership with Facebook, and an event, MSMEs: Key to an Inclusive and Sustainable Recovery, with entrepreneurs from Argentina, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya and Senegal, hosted by ITC in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Council for Small Business, UNCTAD and UNIDO.
ITC also co-organized the Digital Champions for Small Business competition with the WTO Informal Working Group on MSMEs and the International Chamber of Commerce. The initiative was officially launched for MSME Day. Finally, ITC communications released Stories from Entrepreneurs, a campaign featuring stories from around the world on resilience.

September
ITC communications and events contributed to the MultilateralismMatters photo exhibition held along the bank of Geneva Lake in cooperation with the Delegation of the EU to the United Nations in Geneva. It also contributed significantly to the Trade for Sustainable Development Forum and the WTO Public Forum.
During the year, ITC social media outreach was noted by Twiplomacy, a global platform for digital diplomacy, where ICTnews ranked 34th among top international organizations influencing the global debate.
2021 key figures

(compared with 2020)

16,500
media mentions
(36% increase over 2020)

Social media followers
(increase over 2020)

Facebook
16%
Twitter
32%
LinkedIn
36%

12,272,116 video views
(1130% increase over 2020)

4.64 million
visitors to ITC website
(1.75% increase over 2020)

2.63 million user sessions
(7.4% increase over 2020)

42,701 publication downloads

Top 10 downloads in 2021

4. SME Competitiveness Outlook 2021: Empowering the Green Recovery (2021)
5. Model Contracts for Small Firms (2011)
10. Investment Facilitation for Development (2021)

* The list reflects downloads between 1 January and 31 December 2021.

ITC publications (New releases in 2021)

**Green**
SME Competitiveness Outlook: Empowering the Green Recovery

**Inclusive**
Investment Facilitation for Development
What Makes a Winner? Initiatives for Economic Recovery
Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship: Understanding the African Continental Free Trade Area
Sustainability Standards: A New Deal to Build Forward Better State of Sustainable Markets 2021 (e-publication)
The Business Guide for Sustainability in Foreign Investments
Kenya: Sustainable Investment Requirements
Ethiopia: Sustainable Investment Requirements
Mozambique: Sustainable Investment Requirements
Zambia: Sustainable Investment Requirements

**Digital**
E-commerce at the Border – for US and EU Markets (English and Spanish)

**Resilient value chains**
Promoting SME Competitiveness in Francophone Africa (English and French)
Report on the Situation of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Firms (Poland)
Invest in Kenya: Local Business Intelligence
Managing Quality in Azerbaijan
Beyond the Fibre: Capturing Cotton’s Full Value in Africa (French, Spanish)

**Other topics**
World Tariff Profiles (with UNCTAD and WTO) (English, French and Spanish)

* The publications issued in 2021 are organized by theme, according to the ITC Strategic Plan 2022-2025.
The coffee sector is ruled by volatile market prices and uncertainties linked to climate change, among others. Persistent issues inherent to the current coffee supply chain system also remain. Meanwhile, coffee demand continues to increase.

ITC research and projects on coffee have been well appreciated over the years, and its coffee guide has become the industry standard. The fourth edition of the Coffee Guide was launched on World Coffee Day in October 2021. It builds heavily on partnerships and reflects a co-creation process with the coffee industry, from farm to fork. An advisory panel of more than 70 members from across the globe helped shape its structure and content. Producer organizations, major coffee roasters and brands, policymakers and coffee organizations came together to solve sector challenges and offer a way forward.

The guide provides the latest on coffee quality, digitalization, climate change aspects, changing consumer tastes and certification realities, along with information on commercial aspects, financing and more. Most importantly, this edition charts a way forward for sustainable industry growth. The advisory panel has turned into a dynamic network, working closely with ITC to build a more sustainable coffee sector, from seed to cup.

The guide is being translated in French, Spanish and Portuguese. Various topics are being reissued with additional resources for action, due to the popularity of the publication.

The fourth edition of the Coffee Guide was ITC’s top publication download in 2021.
The work of ITC is enabled by the regular budget (RB) and extrabudgetary (XB) funding. The United Nations and the WTO jointly and equally fund the RB. While it is normally approved on a biennial basis, the United Nations adopted on a trial basis a shift from a biennial to an annual budget period in 2020, though the WTO budget continues to be approved biennially.

Extrabudgetary resources for technical cooperation projects are financed by voluntary contributions from donor governments, governmental organizations, other international organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the business sector and foundations. The commitments for XB contributions often extend over multi-year periods.

ITC collects a programme support cost (PSC) of up to 13% on XB expenditures to recover incremental indirect costs incurred to support project implementation. PSC income is earned when the related XB expenditure is incurred and not when the contributions are received. The PSC budget is approved yearly.

ITC is subject to the Financial Regulations and Rules and the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules of the United Nations and to the oversight system of the United Nations (Office of Internal Oversight Services and Board of Auditors). The United Nations Board of Auditors reviews and audits ITC accounts. The United Nations Controller certifies the reports of the United Nations oversight bodies and the financial statements, which are all transmitted to the General Assembly.

ITC consistently receives an ‘unqualified audit opinion’ on its financial statements, including in 2021, confirming sound financial management practices and full compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Table 1 highlights ITC’s 2021 financial information, focusing on the regular budget, extra-budgetary resources and the programme support account.

**TABLE 1** Status of resources ($ million gross) as of 31 December 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>Opening balance</th>
<th>Net income received*</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Total cash at hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular budget</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40.36</td>
<td>40.36</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme support cost</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>7.77</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>9.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total extra-budgetary resources</td>
<td>113.78</td>
<td>90.05</td>
<td>107.14</td>
<td>96.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-budgetary resources, Window I</td>
<td>12.01</td>
<td>14.16</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>14.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-budgetary resources, Window II</td>
<td>101.77</td>
<td>75.89</td>
<td>95.20</td>
<td>82.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>122.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>138.18</strong></td>
<td><strong>154.43</strong></td>
<td><strong>106.13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall resources available in 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>260.56</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Net contribution including refunds to donors ($0.58 million), excluding interest and transfers to operating reserves.
KEY FINANCIAL DATA FOR 2021

➡️ $94.33 million: total value of new XB agreements signed in 2021 for projects running up to 2026 (2020: $125.66 million)

➡️ $138.18 million in gross contributions received (2020: $165.40 million)

➡️ $260.56 million in overall resources available in 2021, comprised of an opening balance of $122.38 million and $138.18 as new contributions (2020: $259.16 million)

➡️ $154.43 million in overall cumulative expenditure (2020: $136.76 million)

In 2021, ITC continued to incorporate best practices and lessons learned from the adjustments and adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic. While certain implementation activities may have been affected in terms of the expected completion date, the pandemic has not had an impact on the overall financial situation of ITC and on collections of receivables. The liquidity of the organization remains healthy.

Total expenditure reached its highest level, amounting to $154.43 million, an increase of 12.9% compared to 2020. The general performance is in line with outcome targets that were set for the year 2021.

Figure 1 shows the upward trend of RB and XB expenditure since 2017.

FIGURE 1 Expenditure pattern 2017–2021 ($ million)

Regular budget

The RB funding covers salaries and common staff expenditures for 160 positions and organizational running costs. ITC uses the RB contribution to fund core expertise and development, maintenance and expansion of ITC’s intangible assets, Global Public Goods offering, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, and core management and country coordination.

- $40.94 million in original RB appropriation for 2021
- $40.36 million in RB resources were available and expensed as of 31 December 2021, which translates into an implementation rate of 100% of available resources

TABLE 2 RB expenditure in 2021 ($ million gross)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff and other personnel costs</td>
<td>31.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating and other direct costs</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual service</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment, vehicles and furniture</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants out</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, commodities and materials</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40.36</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of delivery 100%

* The RB is approved in Swiss francs. Amounts reported in the above table have been converted to US dollars to make the data easier to compare and to provide a comprehensive view of ITC’s financial situation for accounting and reporting purposes.
Corporation Results

Extra-budgetary funds

In 2021, ITC continued to build strong relations with a range of funders and signed grant agreements worth $94.33 million with donor governments, multilateral agencies and international foundations. Based on present negotiations with donors, it is anticipated that the current level of financial resources will be maintained for the immediate future.

Voluntary contributions through donor agreements often cover multi-year periods as they are usually committed for the lifetime of the projects. This means that some contributions related to the agreements signed in previous years are used for activities in the current year or in future years.

Figure 2 shows the evolution of voluntary contribution agreements signed in each year and the portion attributable to the current year and to future years.

Total XB available resources in 2021 included:

- **$113.78 million** carried forward from 2020
- **$90.05 million** in gross contributions received in 2021

XB contributions received in 2021 reached $90.05 million. These contributions came from an increasingly diversified base: 15 funders each provided more than $1 million, accounting for 92% of XB funding.

In 2021, measured by US dollar expenditure, ITC delivered technical assistance, capacity building and market intelligence with extra-budgetary expenditures of $107.14 million. Extra budgetary expenditure is approximately 16.6% higher than in the previous year, owing to the rapid pivoting during the year because of the COVID-19 pandemic and ITC’s unwavering commitment to MSMEs in developing countries and the organization’s focus on sustainability, digitization and inclusiveness.

Corporate initiatives for innovation and project development continued to strongly support ITC’s performance. Throughout the year, $400,000 was approved for innovative projects from ITC’s Business Development Fund.

Table 3: XB expenditure in 2021 ($ million gross)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical experts and other personnel</td>
<td>74.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating and other direct costs</td>
<td>10.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers and grants issued to implementing partners</td>
<td>9.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual services</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment, vehicles and furniture</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants out</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, commodities and materials</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>107.14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total XB funds secured for future years amount to $316.05 million, consisting of $96.69 million carried forward for activities in 2022 because of the multi-year nature of ITC programmes and $219.36 million of remaining receivables from donors for technical cooperation projects.
### TABLE 4 XB expenditure by focus area in 2021 ($ million gross)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS AREAS</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing Trade and Market Intelligence</td>
<td>9.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a Conducive Business Environment</td>
<td>19.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Trade and Investment Support Institutions</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting to International Value Chains</td>
<td>30.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting and Mainstreaming Inclusive and Green Trade</td>
<td>32.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Regional Economic Integration and South-South Links</td>
<td>7.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate (IT, results-based management, visibility and partnerships)**</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>107.14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Programme support account

An indirect cost recovery called a ‘programme support cost’ is charged to extrabudgetary funds as a percentage of direct costs to ensure that the additional costs of supporting activities financed from XB contributions are not borne by RB.

In line with United Nations financial procedures, ITC charges standard PSC rates ranging from 7%–13% on XB expenditures. This revenue is used to cover indirect and incremental costs associated with XB projects, such as the central administration of human, financial and information technology resources, as well as monitoring and oversight.

- $7.77 million received in PSC income in 2021 in addition to $8.6 million carried forward from 2020
- $6.93 million in PSC expenditure
- $9.44 million balance in the PSC account at the end of the year

In 2021, PSC resources continued to be used to fund additional staff required to support programmatic delivery and to fund cost-shared corporate initiatives by the United Nations Secretariat, as well as security and insurance of field staff. The emphasis is on full cost recovery for XB projects and inclusion of all direct operational and support costs in the XB project budgets, to avoid the use of RB resources to subsidize XB-financed activities.

### Upgrading financial management

Regular financial reporting continues to highlight matters requiring management attention, enhancing management discussions and facilitating informed decision-making. ITC remains committed to transform and automate internal processes and workflows. In 2021, improvements were made in the following areas: launch of automated system for vendor payments (ePAY), development of video tutorials for internal clients on three business process and further development of funding dashboards.
132 Countries in which ITC was active in 2021

* The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map are for information purposes only. They do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations of any disputed boundary, and are without prejudice to a mutually acceptable political solution consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.
Appendices
## APPENDIX I

### ITC’S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TARGETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No Poverty</td>
<td>To reduce the proportion of people living in poverty, ITC works with women, men and youth living in poverty, and helps them to increase their income through economic activities (1.2). ITC works in regions with a high proportion of the population living in extreme poverty, such as in sub-Saharan Africa, least developed countries (LDCs) and conflict-affected economies, where it creates conditions for entrepreneurship and employment opportunities connected to international value chains, and thus growth in incomes. Moreover, ITC engages in the development of trade-related policies and strategies that are grounded in considerations of inclusiveness and sustainability (1.b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Zero Hunger</td>
<td>To increase the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, ITC works with agribusinesses, farmers and cooperatives to improve their market knowledge, production practices and value addition. These efforts are complemented by work with partners along whole agricultural value chains, helping to create demand, and eliminating obstacles to local value addition, competitiveness, trade and investment. Through its global public goods, ITC enables users from developing countries to identify new market and business opportunities, as well as to obtain information and increase compliance on voluntary environmental and social sustainability standards. This can increase export opportunities and the value of their produce (2.3). Working along agricultural value chains, ITC also helps to build resilient agricultural practices and sustainable food production systems (2.4). ITC identifies existing tariff and non-tariff measures in agriculture and thus helps to identify and correct trade restrictions (2.b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quality Education</td>
<td>To increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship, ITC works in sectors that offer particular opportunities. ITC provides face-to-face and online training to youth and adults to increase their knowledge and skills for better employability, and works with technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions to enhance their capacities and offering. ITC is a strong advocate for TVETs in the context of MSME competitiveness and engages in national and international conversations on this topic (4.4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gender Equality</td>
<td>ITC supports women-owned and women-managed enterprises to become more competitive and to grow their business. By advocating for and supporting women-owned business enterprises (WBEs), ITC supports more opportunities and promotes increased participation and decision-making of women in the economy (5.5). To accelerate this progress, ITC works with business organizations to improve their support to WBEs and female entrepreneurs. Moreover, ITC helps to develop policies that are gender-sensitive and ensure equal conditions for women’s participation in economic activities (5.a). ITC also enhances the use of enabling technology to promote the empowerment of women, for example through the SheTrades platform (5.b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Decent Work and Economic Growth</td>
<td>ITC contributes to sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, through increasing the international competitiveness of MSMEs. ITC works with enterprises, and supports trade, investment and other business support organizations to improve their operations and services to MSMEs, to increase productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors (8.2). MSMEs and domestic financial institutions are supported to facilitate MSMEs’ access to financial services (8.10). ITC also supports policymakers to conceptualize and implement development-oriented trade and investment strategies and policies in dialogue with the private sector (8.3). ITC’s work helps companies to grow and consequently to employ more people (8.5). Youth are a key client and ITC implements projects that are targeting youth employment (8.6). In this context, ITC also contributes to the development of strategies that promote youth employment and the global Decent Jobs for Youth initiative in its design and implementation (8.b). ITC helps to develop policies that promote sustainable tourism and local culture and products (8.9). All of ITC’s support is Aid for Trade. ITC actively advocates for additional support and makes a case for Aid for Trade in developing countries, in particular LDCs. ITC is an implementing partner agency of the Enhanced Integrated Framework (8.a).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ITC connects small-scale industrial enterprises from developing countries to international markets and global value chains, for example, by supporting product and service innovation and quality improvement to meet international market demand. It supports those MSMEs to get access to finance by helping them to identify opportunities and connecting them to investors and buyers (9.3). ITC helps to create a conducive business environment and conditions that enable diversification and value addition through technology and innovation (9.b).

REDUCED INEQUALITIES

To achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40%, ITC works on economic growth and empowerment of the base of the pyramid (10.1). ITC’s mission is to make trade inclusive and it therefore empowers women, youth and marginalized groups, and thus contributes to the SDG target 10.2. ITC contributes to target 10a. ‘To implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.’ ITC provides data and information on trade and tariffs, which makes trade information transparent and provides the conditions for addressing tariff lines. Moreover, ITC is a custodian agency for indicator 10.a.1 ‘Proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff’, and tracks progress of its attainment.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

To achieve sustainable production and an efficient use of natural resources, ITC’s global public goods provide information on related sustainability standards and enable users to improve their compliance with these standards and to adopt sustainable practices (12.2). Additionally, ITC supports the establishment of quality standards and practices, and helps the trade community and consumers to make better-informed decisions vis-à-vis voluntary sustainability standards (12.6).

CLIMATE ACTION

ITC emphasizes the green economy and works with its beneficiaries on building it. ITC raises awareness and builds capacity of institutions and MSMEs on climate change mitigation and adaptation (13.3). ITC works with policymakers and trade, investment and other business support organizations to help MSMEs transitioning to the green economy. ITC also works directly with MSMEs to adopt green business strategies and to introduce climate resilient and green practices.

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

ITC works with business support organizations and institutions that support trade, investment, entrepreneurship, innovation and vocational training. Effective institutions give the private sector a voice, and can serve as sustainable multipliers for our interventions. By improving their performance, we indirectly impact their beneficiaries (16.6). ITC teams plan and implement projects with a variety of partners and stakeholders and put emphasis on local ownership and participation, to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (16.7). ITC promotes and enhances private-public dialogues through its interventions.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

As a joint organization of the WTO and the UN, ITC supports and advocates for the promotion of a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system by mandate. It works with governments on trade-related policies and assists with WTO-related matters (17.10). ITC brings identified non-tariff measures to the attention of the policymakers and thereby helps to realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all LDCs, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access (17.12). ITC makes information on rules of origin and trade agreements available and transparent through its global public goods. By mandate, ITC works on increasing exports from developing countries and LDCs (17.11). ITC is a custodian agency for targets 17.10, 17.11 and 17.12, and tracks progress of their attainment. To mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources, ITC works directly with investors to create foreign direct investment flows into developing countries (17.3), brings public and private actors together in the countries where it operates and works directly with multi-stakeholder platforms (17.17). ITC promotes South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on technology, innovation and knowledge-sharing (17.6).
### APPENDIX II

**ITC TECHNICAL COOPERATION BY REGION AND FOCUS AREA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY / REGION</th>
<th>PROJECT TITLE</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 1</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 2</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 3</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 4</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 5</th>
<th>FOCUS AREA 6</th>
<th>FUNDERS</th>
<th>BUDGET 2021 ($’000)</th>
<th>DELIVERY 2021 ($’000)</th>
<th>% DELIVERED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Afghanistan: Advancing trade (Phase II) (B946)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>2.075</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan: Ethical Lifestyle Initiative for the Economic Reintegration of Returnees and Internally displaced people (B438)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>1.897</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support Trade Negotiations (B629)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>CEFTA - Support to regional integration (B973)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Euromed: Providing trade and market intelligence for better informed decisions (TIFM 2) (A340)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
<td>Caribbean: Development of value added products and intra-regional trade to enhance livelihoods from coconuts II (B407)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>182%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B900)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GreenToCompete Hubs (B694)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B906)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>SheTrades Latin America: Supporting women businesses’ transition towards the post COVID digital age (B999)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Eastern Partnership: Ready to Trade - an EU4Business initiative (B252)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>136%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade and market intelligence for the Eastern Partnership Countries (B802)</td>
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APPENDICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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<td>Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B906)</td>
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<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>Trade Training Hub (TTH) (B736)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grenada</strong></td>
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<td>Caribbean: Development of value added products and intra-regional trade to enhance livelihoods from coconuts II (B407)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>101</td>
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<td>CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B900)</td>
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<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
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<td>GreenToCompete Hubs (B694)</td>
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<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guatemala</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Central America: Linking women business enterprises (WBES) with the global gifts and home decoration market (A314)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Enhancing Transparency and Traceability of Sustainable Textile Value Chains (B893)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guatemala: Strengthening the business skills and employability of informal entrepreneurs at the Ciudad Pedro de Alvarado Border (B615)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>-1%</td>
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<td>LDGS / PROJECT COUNTRIES</td>
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<td>FOCUS AREA 2</td>
<td>FOCUS AREA 3</td>
<td>FOCUS AREA 4</td>
<td>FOCUS AREA 5</td>
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<td>DELIVERY 2021 ($'000)</td>
<td>% DELIVERED</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td></td>
<td>ECOWAS: West Africa Business and Export Promotion Project (WABEP) (B537)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>83  85</td>
<td>103%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guinea: Improving sustainable livelihoods for border communities (C035)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
<td>-  15</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
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<td>Guinea: Relance de la filière ananas (REFILA) (B803)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
<td>171  99</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>83  85</td>
<td>103%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caribbean: Development of value added products and intra-regional trade to enhance livelihoods from coconuts II (B407)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>62  113</td>
<td>182%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GreenToCompete Hubs (B694)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>61  56</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B906)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>54  43</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td></td>
<td>Haiti: Feasibility study exports of mango, horticulture and cereals (B964)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>Enhanced Integrated Framework</td>
<td>84  105</td>
<td>126%</td>
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<td>Honduras</td>
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<td>Central America: Linking women business enterprises (WBEs) with the global gifts and home decoration market (A314)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>24  16</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
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<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>3   -</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing Transparency and Traceability of Sustainable Textile Value Chains (B893)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>24  34</td>
<td>138%</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting Indian trade and investment for Africa (SITA) (A854)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>380  394</td>
<td>104%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing Transparency and Traceability of Sustainable Textile Value Chains (B893)</td>
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<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>34  47</td>
<td>138%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Culture project: Identity Building and Sharing Business Initiative (B542)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>120  177</td>
<td>147%</td>
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<td>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</td>
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<td>Iran: Trade-Related Technical Assistance (B782)</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
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<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔</td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>2.553  1.871</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>COUNTRY / REGION</td>
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<td>PROJECT TITLE</td>
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<td>FOCUS AREA 2</td>
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<td>FOCUS AREA 4</td>
<td>FOCUS AREA 5</td>
<td>FOCUS AREA 6</td>
<td>FUNDERS</td>
<td>BUDGET 2021 ($'000)</td>
<td>DELIVERY 2021 ($'000)</td>
<td>% DELIVERED</td>
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<td>Iraq</td>
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<td>Iraq: Strengthening the Agriculture and Agri-Food Value Chain and Improving Trade Policy (B960)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>3,991</td>
<td>2,795</td>
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<td>SheTrades: Accelerator Programme for women entrepreneurs in the Apparel, Accessories and Home Décor sector (C052)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
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<td>ACP: Strengthening Productive Capabilities and Value Chain Alliances (B807)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>149%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Caribbean: Development of value added products and intra-regional trade to enhance livelihoods from coconuts II (B407)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>182%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B900)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GreenToCompete Hubs (B694)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ITF Window 1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Programme Management: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B908)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>124</td>
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<td>Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme (B906)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<td>Euromed: Providing trade and market intelligence for better informed decisions (TIFM 2) (A340)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
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<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<td>Jordan</td>
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<td>Jordan: Improving the international competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector (MENATEX) (B811)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>141%</td>
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<td>Jordan: Trade for Employment Project ‘Improving Business Environment for SMEs Through Trade Facilitation’ (B639)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>88%</td>
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<td>MENATEX Regional: Regional component of the Textiles and Clothing Programme for the MENA region (B696)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>121%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SheTrades: Accelerator Programme for women entrepreneurs in the Apparel, Accessories and Home Décor sector (C052)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Kazakhstan</td>
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<td>Central Asia: Developing entrepreneurial skills and providing access to international market to lifestyle sector artisans, micro-producers (Ethical Fashion Initiative) (C084)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - Almaty Cluster Office</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Central Asia: Ready4Trade (R4TCA) (B723)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
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<td>776</td>
<td>125%</td>
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<td>ACP: Strengthening Productive Capabilities and Value Chain Alliances (B807)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>149%</td>
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<td>AfICTA Export Training Programme for African SMEs (B972)</td>
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<td>African Export-Import Bank</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>COMESA Cross Border Trade Initiative: Facilitating Small-Scale Trade Across the Borders (B796)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Common Market for Eastern &amp; Southern Africa (COMESA)</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Culture project: Identity Building and Sharing Business Initiative (B542)</td>
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<td></td>
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APPENDICES
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<td>Rwanda (continued)</td>
<td>EU-EAC Market Access Upgrade Programme - MARKUP (B383)</td>
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<td>Global: A pilot approach to enhancing capacity of cooperatives for sustainable coop-to-coop trade (C068)</td>
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<td>SheTrades Rwanda (B950)</td>
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<td>Saint Kitts and Nevis</td>
<td>GreenToCompete Hubs (B694)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>●</td>
<td></td>
<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>●</td>
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<td>United Nations Capital Development Fund - Fiji</td>
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<td>AfCFTA Export Training Programme for African SMEs (B972)</td>
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<td>●</td>
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<td>African Export-Import Bank</td>
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<td>Senegal: Building Resilient Trade Competitiveness by Fast Tracking the Digital Technology Sector (NTF V) (C153)</td>
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<td>Senegal: Export development of IT and IT-enabled services (NTF V) (B390)</td>
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<td>SheTrades: Accelerator Programme for women entrepreneurs in the Apparel, Accessories and Home Décor sector (C052)</td>
<td>[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]</td>
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<td>SheTrades West Africa (B610)</td>
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<td>State of Palestine: Enhancing self-employment of refugees and youth in Gaza through digital channels (O056)</td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>182%</td>
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<td>Culture project: Identity Building and Sharing Business Initiative (B542)</td>
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<td>SheTrades Gambia (B751)</td>
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<td>The Gambia: Strengthening community coping mechanisms to mitigate risks of conflicts and reduce climate-related tensions (B945)</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>Caribbean: Development of value added products and intra-regional trade to enhance livelihoods from coconuts II (B407)</td>
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<td>AfCFTA: Identifying sustainable regional value chains at continental scale (C087)</td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General International Partnerships</td>
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<td>AfCFTA Export Training Programme for African SMEs (B972)</td>
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<td>Alliance for Product Quality in Africa (B928)</td>
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<td>Enhancing Transparency and Traceability of Sustainable Textile Value Chains (B893)</td>
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<td>Euromed: Providing trade and market intelligence for better informed decisions (TIFM 2) (A340)</td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
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<td>Global: Networking and knowledge management for the textile and clothing sector (GTEX) (B451)</td>
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<td>MENATEX Regional: Regional component of the Textiles and Clothing Programme for the MENA region (B696)</td>
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<td>Sustainable Investments into Africa (SIA) (B961)</td>
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<td>Textile and Apparel Network for Africa (TANA) (C027)</td>
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<td>Tunisia: Improving the international competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector (GTEX/MENATEX) (B672)</td>
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<td>Turkmenistan</td>
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<td>Central Asia: Developing entrepreneurial skills and providing access to international market to lifestyle sector artisans, micro-producers (Ethical Fashion Initiative) (C084)</td>
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<td>Central Asia: Ready4Trade (R4TCA) (B723)</td>
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<td>Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali and Uganda: Building Resilient Trade Competitiveness by Fast Tracking the Digital Technology Sector (NTF V) (C154)</td>
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<td>Culture project: Identity Building and Sharing Business Initiative (B542)</td>
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<td>Uganda (continued)</td>
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<td>Partnership for enhancing export capacity of Africa to China (PEECAC) (C040)</td>
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<td>Supporting Indian trade and investment for Africa (SITA) (A854)</td>
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<td>Uganda: Youth Startup Academy in Africa (C026)</td>
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<td>Eastern Partnership: Ready to Trade - an EU4Business initiative (B252)</td>
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<td>European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</td>
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<td>Trade and market intelligence for the Eastern Partnership Countries (B802)</td>
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<td>Ukraine: Linking SMEs in the fruit and vegetables industry to global and domestic value chains (A303)</td>
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<td>Ukraine: Linking SMEs in the fruits and vegetable sector to global and domestic markets and value chains (Phase II) (C044)</td>
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<td>Embassy of Sweden to Ukraine</td>
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<td>COMESA Cross Border Trade Initiative: Facilitating Small-Scale Trade Across the Borders (B796)</td>
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<td>EU-EAC Market Access Upgrade Programme - MARKUP (B383)</td>
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<td>Global: A pilot approach to enhancing capacity of cooperatives for sustainable coop-to-coop trade (C068)</td>
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<td>Implementation of the African Trade Observatory within the AUC (B353)</td>
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<td>ITC’s contribution to the AICFTA (B942)</td>
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<td>ONE TRADE AFRICA: Connecting the African business community with the AICFTA (C088)</td>
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<td>Collecting data on women in extra-EU services trade in selected EU Member States (B922)</td>
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<td>Enhancing Transparency and Traceability of Sustainable Textile Value Chains (B893)</td>
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<td>Export Potential Map (A341)</td>
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<td>China Council for the Promotion of International Trade – Hengshui Training Center</td>
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<td>Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>SheTrades (B641)</td>
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<td>SheTrades and Mary Kay (B957)</td>
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<td>Supportive business ecosystem: Institutions and supporting ecosystems (C130)</td>
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<td>Sustainable and resilient value chains (C133)</td>
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<td>119%</td>
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ITC is grateful for contributions to the ITC Trust Fund Window 1 (ITF Window 1) in 2021 from Canada, Finland, Germany, Iceland, India, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.
## APPENDIX III

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Developing and Transition Countries Total | 87 | 72 | 159 | 37.50%
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**GRAND TOTAL**  
244  180  424
## APPENDIX IV

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