

Mali hosts regional workshop to unlock poorest countries' global trade potential

The Government of Mali is hosting a three-day workshop on 8 to 10 December for the poorest countries in the Central and West Africa region and Haiti, in partnership with UNDP and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), to promote global trade that works for poor communities in supporting local skills and entrepreneurship.

The international community is backing the event with participation from ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO, UNOPS, the World Bank, WTO, bilateral donors and the African Development Bank. Representatives from 17 countries will be coming together for the first time during the event to exchange experiences, share what works and lessons learned across the region from: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

The Bamako workshop on trade and development is one of a series of events worldwide being run by the EIF programme currently working to help 47 countries across Africa, Asia and the Pacific. In Mali, the EIF aims to make sure that the region has the support it needs to develop its ability to trade, facilitating much-needed access to markets and helping to develop sectors of the economy where the poor work.

The Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, H.E. Mr. Ahmadou Abdoulaye Diallo, said that "the Integrated Framework is fully in line with the priorities of the Government of Mali and recorded in the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework (GPRSF) enacted in the President's Economic and Social Development Project. This project gives political support for the implementation of the programme which is illustrated by the relative contribution of the State's Budget."

The Resident Coordinator for the United Nations system and Resident Representative of UNDP Mali, Ms. Mbaranga Gasarabwe, notes, "The strategy implemented by the Integrated Framework for which UNDP provides support, aims to aid capacity building related to the integration of Mali in the Multilateral Trading System by the implementation of priority actions identified in the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS). The sector by sector approach favoured by the Integrated Framework in Mali tends to consolidate the gains of the mango industry, strengthen the capacity of stakeholders in the Shea sector, the gum Arabic sector, the sesame sector or the tourism sector. For example, through mentoring and monitoring of the Integrated Framework Programme in the mango industry, women "trackers" play an important role in the production process and in the marketing of mangoes and have been able to diversify their income and improve their living conditions. This workshop is a time to share our experiences of our different countries in terms of integration into world trade."

Ms. Dorothy Tembo, Executive Director of the Enhanced Integrated Framework Executive Secretariat comments, "the EIF has a longstanding history of supporting Africa to forge the strong trading future it deserves. This next workshop in our series marks another milestone in our global partnership in support of locally-driven processes to see our aspirations through for the region's dynamic traders, small-holders and businessmen. Here in Mali, the

next generation of trade and development projects for the region will be developed to move us further on this joint venture in search of a fairer future for all.”

Notes to editors:

1. The Enhanced Integrated Framework is a multi-donor programme that supports Least Developed Countries to be more active players in the global trading system by helping them tackle supply-side constraints to trade.

2. The programme is currently helping 47 of the poorest countries worldwide, supported by a Multi-Donor Trust Fund with contributions from 22 donors. 21 projects are already under way since 2009.

3. The Enhanced Integrated Framework Executive Secretariat (EIF ES), housed in the WTO, and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as EIF Trust Fund Manager work in support of the programme.

ENDS:

For further information, please contact the Enhanced Integrated Framework Executive Secretariat (EIF ES), Trade and Communications Adviser, on +41227395421 or +41767885537 or visit: www.enhancedif.org