



Enhanced Integrated Framework

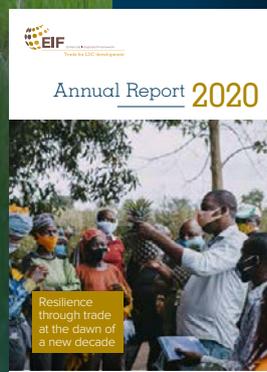
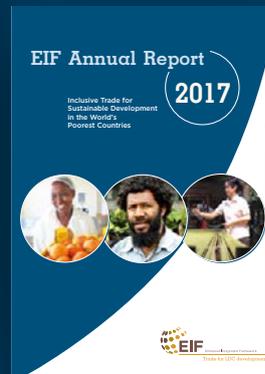
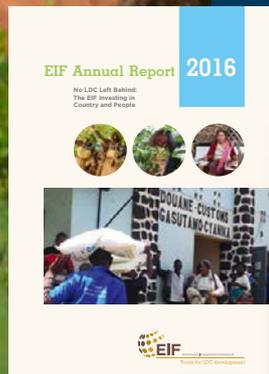
Trade for LDC development

EIF
Phase Two &

2023
ANNUAL

REPORT

Delivering on
inclusive trade for
the LDCs



The Enhanced Integrated Framework brings together partners and resources to support the least developed countries in using trade for poverty reduction, inclusive growth and sustainable development.

EIF Partner Agencies

International Monetary Fund (IMF)
International Trade Centre (ITC)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
World Bank Group (WB)
World Trade Organization (WTO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

EIF Trust Fund Manager

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

EIF Trust Fund Donors



Contents

Foreword from the Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO)	4
Message from the EIF Steering Committee Chair	6
Message from the EIF Board Chair	7
Message from the Executive Director, Executive Secretariat for the EIF	8
Governance	9
EIF Phase Two accomplishments and lessons learned	9
EIF Phase Two Snapshot	10
Where we work	12
How we work	13

01	Expanded LDC participation in global and regional trade	14
02	Strengthened NIU integration	22
03	Building human and institutional capacity	28
04	Mainstreaming trade	32
05	Interlinkages	38
06	Environment and climate	42
07	Leveraging digital solutions for the LDCs	48
08	Gender and trade	54
09	EIF operations: Providing adaptive and impactful programming	58
10	Annexes	144
	Results by indicator	145
	List of projects	150
	Glossary	162

Country Snapshots – Regional Overviews

Africa	82
Angola	86
Benin	87
Burkina Faso	88
Burundi	89
Cabo Verde	90
Central African Republic	91
Chad	92
Comoros	93
Democratic Republic of the Congo	94
Djibouti	95
Equatorial Guinea	96
Ethiopia	97
The Gambia	98
Guinea	99
Guinea-Bissau	100
Lesotho	101
Liberia	102
Madagascar	103
Malawi	104
Mali	105
Mauritania	106
Mozambique	107
Niger	108
Rwanda	109
São Tomé and Príncipe	110
Senegal	111
Sierra Leone	112
Somalia	113
South Sudan	114
Sudan	115
Tanzania	116
Togo	117
Uganda	118
Zambia	119
Asia	120
Afghanistan	123
Bangladesh	124
Bhutan	125
Cambodia	126
Lao PDR	127
Maldives	128
Myanmar	129
Nepal	130
Timor-Leste	131
Yemen	132
Pacific and Americas	134
Haiti	137
Kiribati	138
Samoa	139
Solomon Islands	140
Tuvalu	141
Vanuatu	142

Foreword from the Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO)

As we look back at the 30 years since the Uruguay Round negotiations concluded with the Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization, it is clear that trade has played a central role in improving human well-being around the world. Since 1995, trade-enabled growth has helped lift more than 1.5 billion people out of extreme poverty. Poor countries began to narrow the income gap separating them from rich ones for the first time since the Industrial Revolution two centuries earlier. But it was always evident that the gains from trade would not automatically extend to all countries and people. The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), first set up as an inter-agency effort in 1997 and then substantially expanded a decade later, was created to support the least developed countries (LDCs) in their quest to participate more effectively in the global trading system as a means to making people's lives better through trade. Over the years, the EIF has made important contributions to this goal – though so much remains to be done.

This report covers the results the EIF delivered for the LDCs during its recently concluded seven-year phase of work. EIF Phase Two dates back to the WTO's Tenth Ministerial Conference in December 2015, and was made possible by the generous support of 15 donor countries. Between 2016 and 2023, the EIF contributed to some important milestones for the LDCs: three countries

graduated from LDC status, reflecting income growth and decreased vulnerability. The LDCs' share of the value of non-oil global exports rose from 0.7% in 2015 to 1.1% in 2021, before falling back to 0.9% by 2023 as LDCs were outpaced by the trade rebound in other countries. EIF projects have bolstered the tourism sector in countries including Sierra Leone and the Solomon Islands; supported new digital trade opportunities in the East African Community; and fostered hundreds of connections between LDC firms and new country markets.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic dealt a severe blow to economic momentum in the LDCs: according to the International Monetary Fund, low-income countries were hit hardest by the pandemic, and have experienced the most scarring, in terms of output losses. Growth setbacks have worsened debt distress. Combine all this with relentless pressure from climate change, and the need to keep trade and other growth pathways open for the LDCs – and to deliver the support required to take those pathways – is more critical than ever.

This report describes the EIF's work since 2015 to help the LDCs capitalize on international market opportunities to drive growth, development, and job creation. EIF projects and partnerships have built human capital, enhanced capacity within both public institutions and the private sector, and provided policy support to important policy processes such as WTO accession.

Some 25,000 public officials have received training in policy formulation and implementation through EIF activities, building the skills they need to ensure their governments are able to engage fully in the multilateral trading system. The EIF's National Implementation Units (NIUs), set up within LDC trade ministries to implement projects and coordinate Aid for Trade, have become important talent incubators for future top officials, WTO ambassadors, and trade ministers, and in 45 countries went on to be integrated into the wider ministries.



In this report, you will find examples of how EIF projects with public authorities made a material difference for traders. In Vanuatu, the establishment of a National Single Window with EIF support helped slash trade-related processing times from days to as little as 10 minutes, saving on costs and transport-related emissions. In The Gambia, improving connections between the trade and environment ministries and with other partners at home and abroad helped unlock climate financing for building a green economic zone – a special economic zone focused on less carbon-intensive export-oriented production.

In its direct work with the private sector, the EIF has trained more than 200,000 people across the value chain. These efforts have supported Cambodia to build a thriving rice export industry, and Togo to become the largest supplier of organic soy to the European Union in 2022 from a previously negligible production base. EIF support for Sierra Leone's post-conflict ecotourism sector has not just contributed to significant growth in visitor arrivals and awareness, but has catalysed external support, with the World Bank providing USD 10 million to scale up investments in tourism and trade in the country. Digital is a key part of the future of trade, and the EIF has worked to address the digital divide, such as through the launch of South Sudan's first online market with a focus on capacity support for women and youth to access markets.

Finally, the EIF has continued to support LDCs seeking to join the WTO. Earlier this year at the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi, I was delighted to welcome Comoros and Timor-Leste – both LDCs – as the first WTO members in almost eight years. The EIF's close support for Timor-Leste's accession efforts helped the young country, which has

placed trade as the centre of its development strategy, complete its negotiations in only seven years – a record time for an LDC. The EIF also provided extensive support to Comoros in its accession process, complementing work to boost competitiveness in sectors such as ylang-ylang and vanilla.

22 more countries – including six LDCs – are seeking to follow in their footsteps, as the WTO approaches universal membership.

Integrating the LDCs more fully into global trade matters first and foremost for the potential to improve livelihoods and future economic prospects for people in those countries. But the benefits extend beyond that. Recent years have taught us that the way to make the global economy and global trade more resilient and shock-proof is by diversifying and deconcentrating production networks. At the WTO, we call this process of bringing more countries and communities from the margins to the mainstream of the global division of labour 're-globalization'. We can and must ensure that the LDCs can harness the opportunities that come with re-globalization.

Changing trade dynamics – with rising risks as well as opportunities – demand a fit for purpose approach to help LDCs. The EIF has a proven track record of bringing together international agencies, donors, and funding mechanisms to provide solutions.

I would like to thank the EIF's key partners and donors for their generosity and, of course, all the LDCs for their continued dedication and commitment I look forward to a strengthened framework of support that continues to deliver for the LDCs.

Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala,
Director-General of the WTO

Message from the EIF Steering Committee Chair

As EIF Phase Two comes to a close, it is an important time to celebrate the hard-earned successes and reflect on the lessons learned. The past half a year that I have spent as Chair of the EIF Steering Committee has been a constant reminder of the unique value the EIF partnership brings to the LDCs.

This report is the latest opportunity to review progress and reinforce accountability for the EIF's initiatives. By looking back to 2016 and onwards, the importance of the EIF's focus on partnerships, country ownership and accountability truly comes into perspective.

While the world has been shaken by a number of crises in recent years, the EIF has been effective in its ability to leverage relationships within LDC governments, as well as with donors and partner agencies, to effectively overcome obstacles. The high level of ownership by the LDCs provided by the EIF's approach allows the countries to celebrate wins with the confidence of knowing that skills and knowledge are local and sustainable while being backed and supported globally.

Aid for Trade (AfT) flows to the LDCs have been growing consistently, and we have seen remarkably high levels of LDC participation in the global trading system. I am particularly pleased to see that gender issues receive increasing focus and impact through an initiative such as the EIF's Empower Women, Power Trade (EWPT). In the name of inclusive trade, we should find ways to help other under-privileged constituencies, such as people with disabilities, benefit from international trade as well.

As we await the future programme of trade-related support for the LDCs, I am pleased that Finland and several other donors have enabled the EIF Interim Facility to bridge this gap. I would like to extend my warm thanks to all the partners and, especially, the countries for their tireless commitment to making trade work for people.

It is a privilege to chair the EIF Steering Committee and I look forward to continuing to work closely with the partnership in this crucial time for the EIF.

Heidi Schroderus-Fox,

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, WTO, and Conference on Disarmament



© Permanent Mission of Finland

Message from the EIF Board Chair

EIF Phase Two has been marked by unprecedented opportunities, challenges and successes for the world — and for the LDCs in particular. For almost two years now, I have had the great pleasure of serving as the Board Chair of the EIF, the only AfT initiative dedicated solely to the LDCs. We have accomplished so much over the past several years. This success is primarily due to the EIF's role as a framework and a partnership, guided by a dedication to make trade work for the LDCs, while ensuring a high level of country ownership.

Despite facing complex challenges that disrupted trade around the world — including the COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts — much progress was achieved over EIF Phase Two. Lessons learned from EIF Phase One were key to ensuring success in the current phase. These lessons resulted in much stronger engagement with the private sector over EIF Phase Two, an increase in regional support and attention to gender-related issues. Additionally, more efficient and effective operations translated into stronger value for money (VfM).

This growth was clearly demonstrated by an external evaluation of EIF Phase Two and assessments on gender in the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTISs) and the EWPT initiative. I am happy to see that 2023 continued the EIF's upward trend, with a dual focus on effective implementation and significant efforts contributing to closing the phase as scheduled.

On regional trade, the EIF has supported the vast majority of the LDCs in their engagement within Africa, including the development of 12 African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) strategies. Digital trade has also accelerated, in part facilitated through the EIF-financed eTrade Readiness Assessments and e-commerce platforms. We are seeing environmental benefits too, with Vanuatu's Electronic Single Window (ESW) system helping reduce CO2 emissions by more than 5,000 kgs. The LDCs are developing capacity and sharing experiences, such as from The Gambia's efforts to leverage climate finance for trade. The link between trade and investment, a key pillar of reforms for EIF Phase Two, are growing with EIF-facilitated partnerships among investment support agencies, together with results in investment facilitation, e.g., in Bhutan, where more than USD 350 million in investment was facilitated through a new online portal.

I would like to congratulate the EIF Countries, partners and various teams for the remarkable progress and unwavering commitment to achieving the EIF's goals. I would also like to thank the many committed EIF Board Members who served over both phases of the EIF, and my predecessors who contributed so much in their role as EIF Board Chairs.

H.E. Mr Yackoley Kokou Johnson,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of the Togolese Republic to the WTO



© Permanent Mission of Togo

Message from the Executive Director, Executive Secretariat for the EIF

With 2023 marking the final year of operations for EIF Phase Two, this report takes a departure from our regular annual reporting to look at the EIF's contributions, results and challenges over EIF Phase Two. The report also provides insights into the lessons learned from a variety of headwinds faced by the LDCs, including the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts and climate-related natural disasters. I am delighted to say that these challenges facing the LDCs have been weathered together. We have learned, developed and shared lessons along the way — particularly from country to country.

This year, we have gone a step further in our reporting to provide a snapshot of the EIF's work across each of the LDCs and recently graduated countries. While not a comprehensive study of each country, these summaries effectively illustrate the extent and scale of the EIF's work over EIF Phase Two.

This reflection also acts as a reminder that progress takes time and that small steps forward eventually result in deep, sustainable and meaningful change. The EIF's National Implementation Arrangements (NIAs) are the foundation of the progress that has been achieved. These embedded trade mechanisms enable long-term capacity, memory and the ability to monitor and support sustainability of past interventions.

Investments into national structures are yielding fruit. For example, efforts by Senegal's NIU led to USD 3 million in Government funding with an EIF-developed proposal, while needs identified through EIF diagnostics and pilot projects have been scaled up into USD 100 million plus investments financed by the private sector, donors and development banks in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Guinea. Likewise, on gender and trade, our increased ambition has yielded results for women-owned businesses, increased knowledge of the topic and helped train more than 170,000 women in the LDCs. Finally, the core area of trade mainstreaming is being realized with almost all LDCs now including trade in their national development plans (NDPs), a rolling process as new plans are developed with, for instance, the EIF contributing to the new NDPs in Bhutan, Comoros and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2023.

These achievements would not have been possible without contributions and support from the EIF partners.

I would like to express my gratitude to the EIF Donors for their generous support. I am truly grateful to our partners, the EIF Board, the EIFSC, our in-country teams, the WTO and my colleagues at the ES and the EIF Trust Fund Manager (TFM). So many of you have worked tirelessly to achieve these results, and I am pleased to recognize your efforts.

Together we have helped provide the LDCs with the much-needed support for harnessing development opportunities through trade.

Ratnakar Adhikari,
Executive Director, Executive Secretariat for
the EIF at the WTO



Governance

EIF Steering Committee

The EIFSC brings together all stakeholders from across the EIF partnership: the LDCs, partner agencies and donors, as well as all other interested stakeholders. It serves as a forum for transparency and information exchange, providing updates on the implementation and effectiveness of the EIF programme and its overall goals.

Over EIF Phase Two, the EIFSC has evolved to become more dynamic and interactive, allowing for more comprehensive discussions and experience-sharing among EIF partners, and to serve as a forum to provide updates on, and enable discussions around, some of the latest issues, whether an EIF evaluation or the future multilateral support mechanism for the LDCs. To enhance participation, and through the impulse of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EIFSC has progressively embraced remote participation from country capitals through online platforms, moving beyond the initial limitation of in-person attendance in Geneva. This shift has broadened engagement, fostering a more inclusive environment that leverages the diverse insights and experiences of all partners involved and not least opening it to representatives from LDC capitals.

In 2023, two EIFSC meetings were held on 30 June and 7 December. These gatherings delved into EIF support for LDC graduation and

the fundamental principle of leaving no one behind. Representatives from the LDCs and partner agencies were given the opportunity to present and discuss how EIF support had facilitated progress in those areas, shedding light on significant achievements and ongoing efforts.

In November 2023, H.E. Mrs Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Finland to the WTO, assumed the role of Chair of the EIFSC, and the EIF partnership wishes to express its gratitude to the departing Chair, H.E. Mr Mikael Anzén, Ambassador and former Representative of Sweden to the WTO.

EIF Board

The EIF Board guides the overall implementation of the EIF and consists of representatives from the LDCs, EIF Donors and EIF Partner Agencies.

In response to the critical period of closing EIF Phase Two and the need to chart a course for future multilateral trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) for the LDCs, the EIF Board began meeting more frequently from 2022, by introducing two additional informal meetings each year to ensure rigorous oversight and responsive decision-making.

In 2023, two formal EIF Board meetings were held in June (Geneva, Switzerland) and November (Lomé, Togo), complemented by informal meetings in February and April.



EIF Phase Two accomplishments and lessons learned

The LDCs are among the world's most vulnerable countries and were impacted by a range of global challenges over EIF Phase Two. From the COVID-19 pandemic to conflict and instability in partner countries, the EIF was able to leverage its unique structure to overcome obstacles and implement lessons

learned in the process. For example, while EIF activities were curtailed in a number of countries due to conflict and instability, progress that was achieved prior to these interruptions established enough resilience to ensure that some countries have had a remarkable ability to rebound.

EIF Phase Two Snapshot

37
Countries

37 countries integrated trade into their new NDPs

26 countries facilitated to participate in the AfCFTA

26 Countries

175

175 projects undertaken

USD 143 million in contributions to the EIF Trust Fund over EIF Phase Two

143 Million

170,000+

170,000+ women trained/supported

3
Countries

3 countries graduated from LDC status

10 LDCs supported to accede to the WTO (4 acceded in EIF Phase Two)

10 LDCs

300+ market transactions and USD 1 billion in exports facilitated for the LDCs, helping support an increase in LDC trade values by 13% (in EIF Phase Two compared to EIF Phase One)

300+
Market transactions

27%

AfT flows have increased by **27%**, from USD 10.8 billion to an average of USD 13.7 billion

The LDC share of non-oil global exports increased by **1/3 between** EIF Phase One and EIF Phase Two (from 0.6% on average to 0.9%)

1/3

2
Billion

USD 2 billion in financing linked to EIF structures or DTISs

Highlights

TOGO Ten-fold production increase

Efforts to strengthen **Togo's** soybean value chain spurred a ten-fold production increase from 25,000 MT to 250,000 MT between 2015 and 2022, contributing to the creation of more than 700,000 jobs. This result helped increase the profile and linkages of the Ministry of Trade.

MALI Top country contributions to the EIF

In recent years, **Mali** became the top country in terms of LDC Government contributions to the EIF, having secured more than USD 11 million in counterpart funding.

BENIN USD 5 million invested by the Government

Based on the recommendations of an EIF study, the Government of **Benin** allocated USD 5 million from the national budget to begin the construction on the country's first cross-border marketplace.

VANUATU Improved efficiency and environmental benefits

Vanuatu's National Single Window, established with EIF support, has helped reduce trade-related processing times from a matter of days to as little as 10 minutes, while also securing strong environmental benefits.

TIMOR-LESTE Accedes to the WTO

After only seven years from the date of its application, **Timor-Leste** formally acceded to the WTO in February 2024, making it the fastest LDC ever to complete the formal accession process.

NEPAL Developed an e-commerce ecosystem

National ownership, combined with EIF support, has helped **Nepal** move forward progress on e-commerce. Following an e-Trade Readiness Assessment and the development of an e-commerce strategy, a new e-commerce bill was drafted together with the creation of a new digital trade platform, on which 387 MSMEs have now registered.

LAO PDR USD 150 million coordinated by the NIU

Lao PDR's national implementation structure continues to grow in depth and form, and has implemented or coordinated more than USD 150 million in development projects since its inception.

Facing challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic

The global COVID-19 pandemic presented many challenges to the LDCs, as the EIF's ability to implement projects in EIF Phase Two was largely reduced. The pandemic interrupted supply chains, closed marketplaces and often increased the cost of doing business. For the EIF, social distancing requirements and travel restrictions prevented face-to-face meetings, which are a crucial means to implement projects and measure progress.

Nevertheless, the EIF's unique model enabled it to quickly adapt through a business continuity plan that allowed projects to continue to move forward, while also safeguarding the health of staff and beneficiaries.

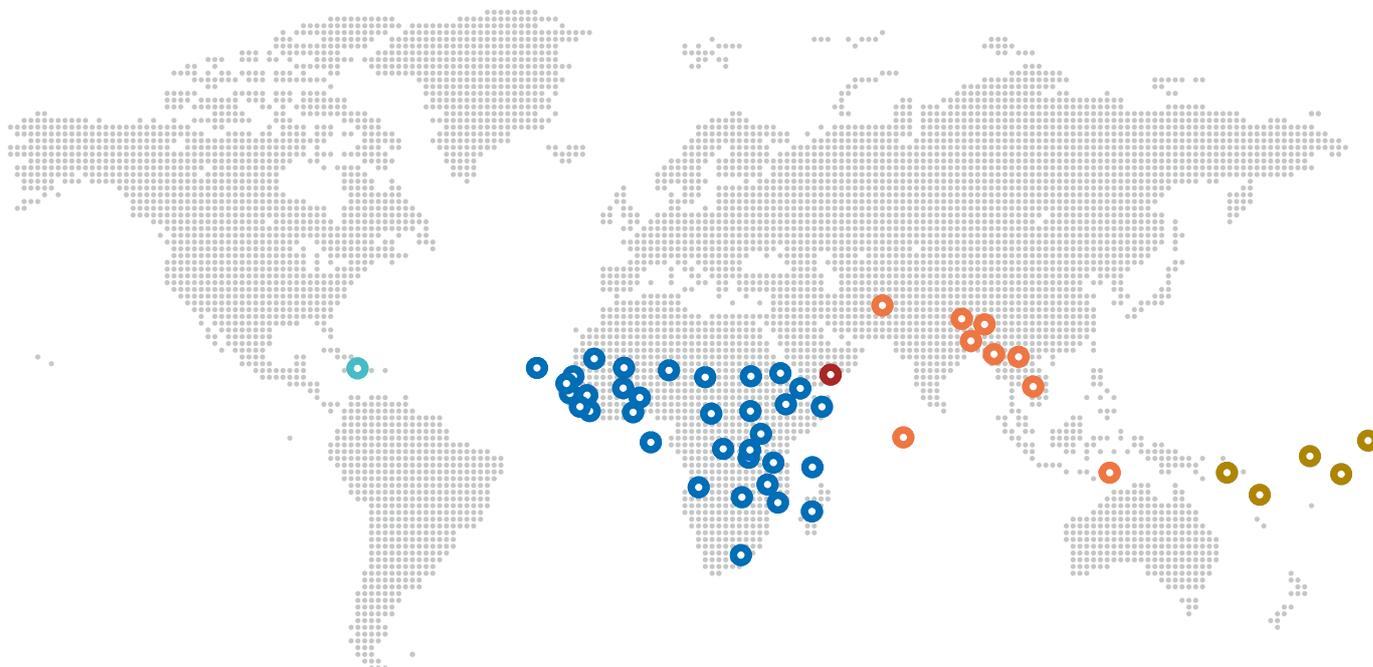
This shift prompted changes that provided valuable lessons. For example, funding for risk management capacity is now a key priority. Also, communications-related innovations that were introduced as a result of social distancing requirements have resulted in efficiency gains through the use of digital tools for operations and training.

MORE INFO 

For more country highlights,
see this report's special
Country Snapshots section.



Where we work



AMERICAS

Haiti

AFRICA

Angola
 Benin
 Burkina Faso
 Burundi
*Cabo Verde**
 Central African Republic
 Chad
 Comoros
Democratic Republic of the Congo
 Djibouti
 Equatorial Guinea*
Eritrea
 Ethiopia
 The Gambia
 Guinea
 Guinea-Bissau
 Lesotho

Liberia
 Madagascar
 Malawi
 Mali
 Mauritania
 Mozambique
 Niger
 Rwanda
 São Tomé and Príncipe
 Senegal
 Sierra Leone
 Somalia
 South Sudan
 Sudan
 Tanzania
 Togo
 Uganda
 Zambia

MIDDLE EAST

Yemen

ASIA

Afghanistan
 Bangladesh
 Bhutan*
 Cambodia
 Lao PDR
*Maldives**
Myanmar
 Nepal
 Timor-Leste

PACIFIC

Kiribati
*Samoa**
 Solomon Islands
 Tuvalu
 Vanuatu*

Countries listed in grey and italics did not have active EIF projects in 2023 (Afghanistan, Cabo Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Maldives, Samoa and Yemen).

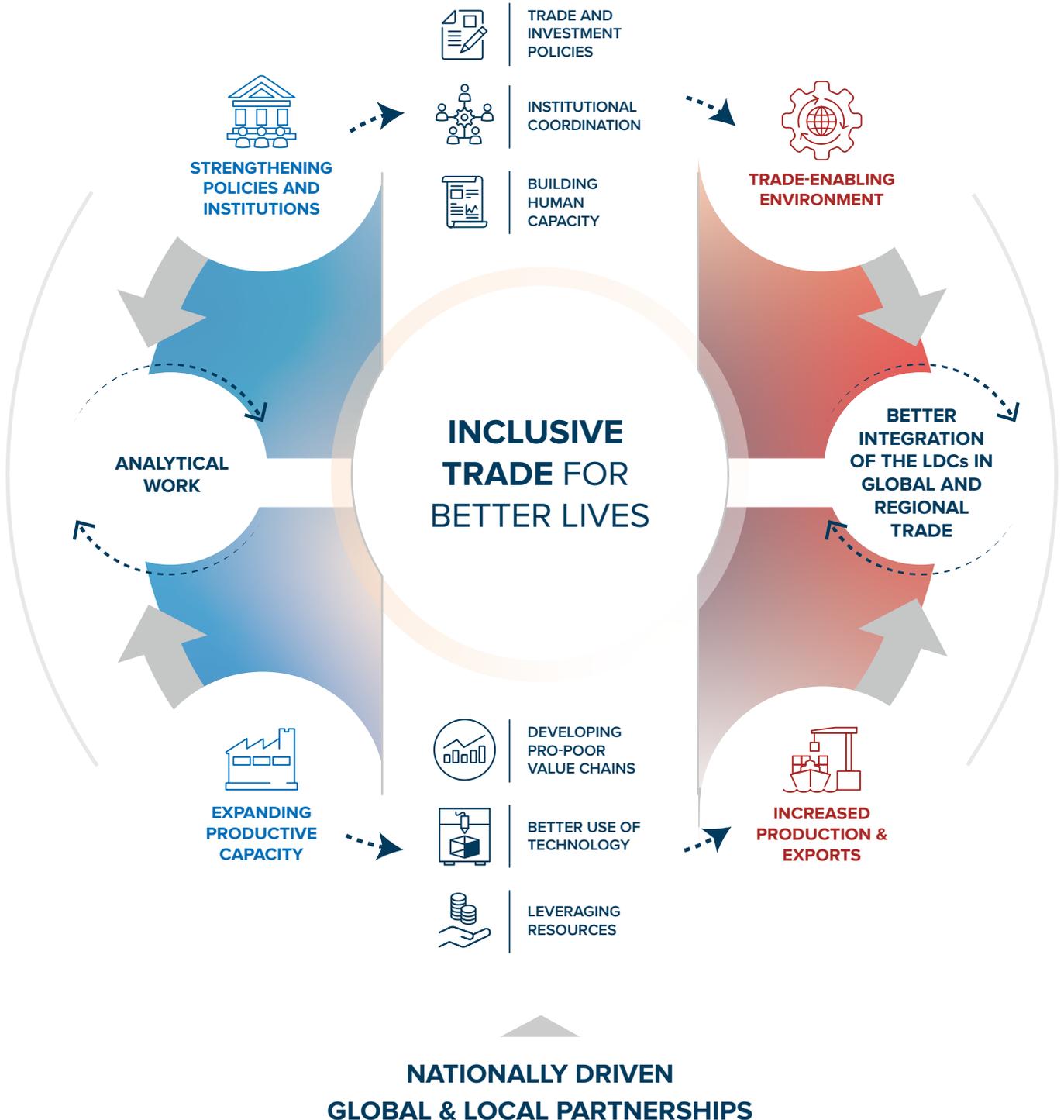
* Graduated countries.

How we work

OUR WORK

OUR DELIVERY

OUR GOALS



01 Expanded LDC participation in global and regional trade

Enhancing the LDCs' participation in global and regional trade is at the core of the EIF's mission. The EIF has worked with LDC governments and partners to build the trade institutional capacity necessary to integrate trade into governments, which is essential for expanding global trade participation. Support for LDC WTO accession has been a pivotal pillar in both delivering and coordinating AfT, facilitating the accession of countries including Afghanistan, Comoros, Liberia and Timor-Leste.

“While we have had the support of our partners in the WTO accession process, the support of the EIF has been special for two reasons: First, EIF support has been sustained. Second, EIF support spanned the entire process - from identifying the required documents to aligning national regulations with WTO rules, as well as preparing for, and participating in, the Working Party meetings in Geneva.

– H.E. Mr Ahmed Ali Bazi, Minister of Economy, Industry and Investment of the Union of the Comoros



Highlights

10 LDCs supported to accede to the WTO (4 acceded in EIF Phase Two).

680+ actions in support of increased trade integration, including 95 WTO engagement and 160+ regional integration.

LDC share of non-oil global exports **increased by 1/3** between EIF Phase One and EIF Phase Two (0.6% on average to 0.9%).

LDC total trade **increased by 13%** as an average between EIF Phase One and EIF Phase Two.

300+ market transactions and USD 1 billion exports facilitated for the LDCs.

According to an external evaluation, **25% of trade reforms** in the LDCs have been linked to the EIF.



© Simon Hess/EIF

Regional integration was also boosted over EIF Phase Two with support from the EIF. Timor-Leste was granted observer status to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and in 2022, the bloc agreed, in principle, to admit it as its 11th member. In Africa, the EIF supported 26 countries in the preparations for, and implementation of, the AfCFTA.

LDC graduation is another area where EIF support has helped advance trade through analytical work and graduation-specific studies for countries as they move away

from LDC status. In Vanuatu, for example, the EIF supported two analytical studies to help inform the graduation strategy: one on quantifying loss in trade revenues due to graduation and another aimed at ensuring Vanuatu's smooth integration into the global economy following graduation. The EIF guarantees continued support for five years after graduation, subject to funding availability, to ensure a smooth transition. Together with the WTO, the EIF provides key analytical work for the LDCs to assess the specific trade implications of graduation. EIF Phase Two saw the graduation of Equatorial Guinea in June 2017, Vanuatu in December 2020 and Bhutan in December 2023.

Over Phase Two, the EIF helped strengthen government capacity in Tanzania to bolster global and regional trade initiatives for growth.

Progress on LDC multilateral trade integration



Over Phase Two, the EIF supported 26 countries through their preparations for, and implementation of, the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Several LDCs are at various stages of WTO accession. The EIF has a commitment to crucial support to the LDCs not just in the lead-up to accession but also through the post-accession processes. Examples include Afghanistan (2016), Lao PDR (2013), Liberia (2016), Vanuatu (2012) and Yemen (2014). With the recent adoption of the Working Party report on the accession of Comoros and Timor-Leste in February 2024, two more countries will join the ranks of those receiving post-accession support.

Support over EIF Phase Two also helped several countries move toward their WTO accession aspirations, including Bhutan, Ethiopia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. In Ethiopia, for example, the EIF supported the re-establishment of the country's WTO Accession Steering Committee (led by the Prime Minister's Office), along with a National Technical Committee that brings together representatives of all major stakeholders to

support the accession process. The EIF also supported an awareness-raising exercise on WTO issues and the status of Ethiopia's WTO accession process targeted at Ministry staff. Ethiopia has welcomed this support, stating that the EIF is neutral, flexible and country-driven.

Activities to support these often-protracted processes depend on the needs of the country and the intended timeline. Nevertheless, at its core, a central theme in these efforts is to support internal institutional coordination, such as the creation of working groups and inter-ministerial committees. In Timor-Leste, for example, the EIF helped establish the National Secretariat for WTO Affairs.

The EIF also helps with the coordination of legislative action plans; preparation for, and participation at, WTO accession Working Party meetings; production of negotiation-related analytical documents; and analyses of members' questions and comments on proposals and help in the preparation of responses.

Global and regional trade integration can generate profound growth opportunities for LDC MSMEs.



Another important aspect of accession support consists of ensuring that governments are aware of the minutiae of the WTO accession process, including the opportunities and potential challenges that all stakeholders may face. Post-accession adjustment is also an issue that requires careful monitoring, analysis, recommendations and actions.

Capacity-building to assist with integration into the multilateral trading system extends far beyond accession, with targeted training

aimed at ensuring that the LDCs have the expertise necessary for full participation. In Bangladesh, for example, EIF training has developed national stakeholders who, in turn, have become trainers themselves. This national capacity in areas such as trade law can be a game changer for countries that are lacking local capacity. For Bangladesh, it meant that it was not necessary to hire the services of international lawyers to lead its dispute settlement case with India.

Comoros concludes its WTO accession process

After launching its WTO accession Working Party on 9 October 2007, Comoros was formally approved as a WTO member on 26 February 2024 at MC13. The EIF has been working for a number of years to help the African archipelago prepare for accession and, by all accounts, the Government demonstrated a high level of openness to recommendations.

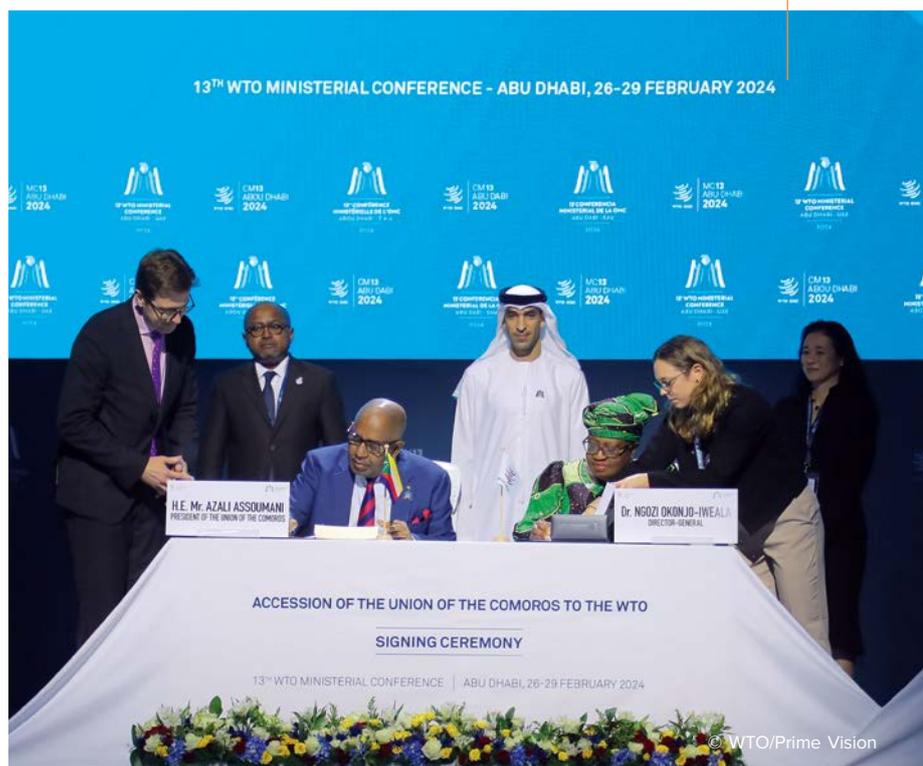
The EIF helped organize accession-related committee meetings and supported the ongoing process by helping to provide required documents when needed. The EIF also supported the creation of a compendium of international and national legislation to ensure that regulations were aligned with WTO rules.

Support also proved to be critical for analysing WTO member questions emerging from processes such as the Trade Negotiations Committee and preparing appropriate responses. Additionally, the EIF was instrumental in the establishment of the Comoros Permanent Mission in Geneva, which has helped ensure the smooth functioning of WTO-related activities and streamlined the participation of officials when visiting from out of town.

Overall, EIF support played a central role in accelerating Comoros' progress toward major WTO accession milestones. This support not only helped the country achieve its goal of accession but also helped reinforce

institutional capacity for the formulation and implementation of trade strategies and overall integration into the global trading system. A project to support Comoros' post-accession phase has now been approved under the EIF Interim Facility of support to the LDCs following the end of EIF Phase Two.

In January 2024, WTO Members negotiating the accession of Comoros agreed on the terms of its accession, paving the way for it to officially join the organization the following month at the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference.





The EIF supported Timor-Leste through its preparations for WTO accession in a number of ways, including technical preparations, mobilizing support, national and international policy consultations, and awareness raising.

Timor-Leste records quickest LDC accession process ever

While it only achieved independence in 2002, Timor-Leste has been moving quickly to integrate itself into global and regional markets. With a strong commitment to the idea of using trade as a tool to drive development, the country expressed its intentions to join the WTO, and a WTO accession Working Party was established on 7 December 2016. On 11 January 2024, members of the Working Party concluded negotiations as trade ministers welcomed the country to the WTO at MC13, alongside Comoros.

The EIF worked to ensure that institutions in Timor-Leste lent their support behind a strategic plan and roadmap for the country's accession, including technical preparations and mobilizing support around national reforms. Together with partners, this support allowed for the effective functioning of the country's WTO accession Working Group and the Inter-Ministerial Commission and the establishment of the National Secretariat for the Accession to the WTO.

The EIF's work also supported Timor-Leste's accession process in other ways, such as through offering policy consultations, nationally and internationally, to accelerate the accession process; raising awareness at the municipal level; and translating legislation. Additionally, EIF support facilitated development partner meetings in Dili and Geneva, which resulted in meaningful progress and coordination on technical assistance towards accession.



At the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference, Timor-Leste became a WTO Member, marking the fastest LDC accession process ever.

Through its WTO Membership, Timor-Leste aims to connect with new export markets for commodities such as coffee.



© David Daepp/EIF

Expanded regional trade engagement

Over EIF Phase Two, the EIF supported more than 160 actions in support of greater regional integration. For instance, over EIF Phase Two, in addition to acceding to the WTO in 2024, Timor-Leste has made strides toward becoming the 11th member of the ASEAN. The roadmap to ASEAN membership requires a number of technical requirements, which has made for a protracted process. Dili applied for membership in 2011 and was granted official observer status and received in-principle approval to become an ASEAN member in 2022. Since then, the country has slowly moved toward full membership.

In Africa, the EIF has supported at least 26 countries to develop stronger regional trade ties through the AfCFTA, including the development of 12 AfCFTA country strategies. For example, EIF support helped strengthen Angola's capacity to advance regional integration, and in 2020 the country ratified the AfCFTA.

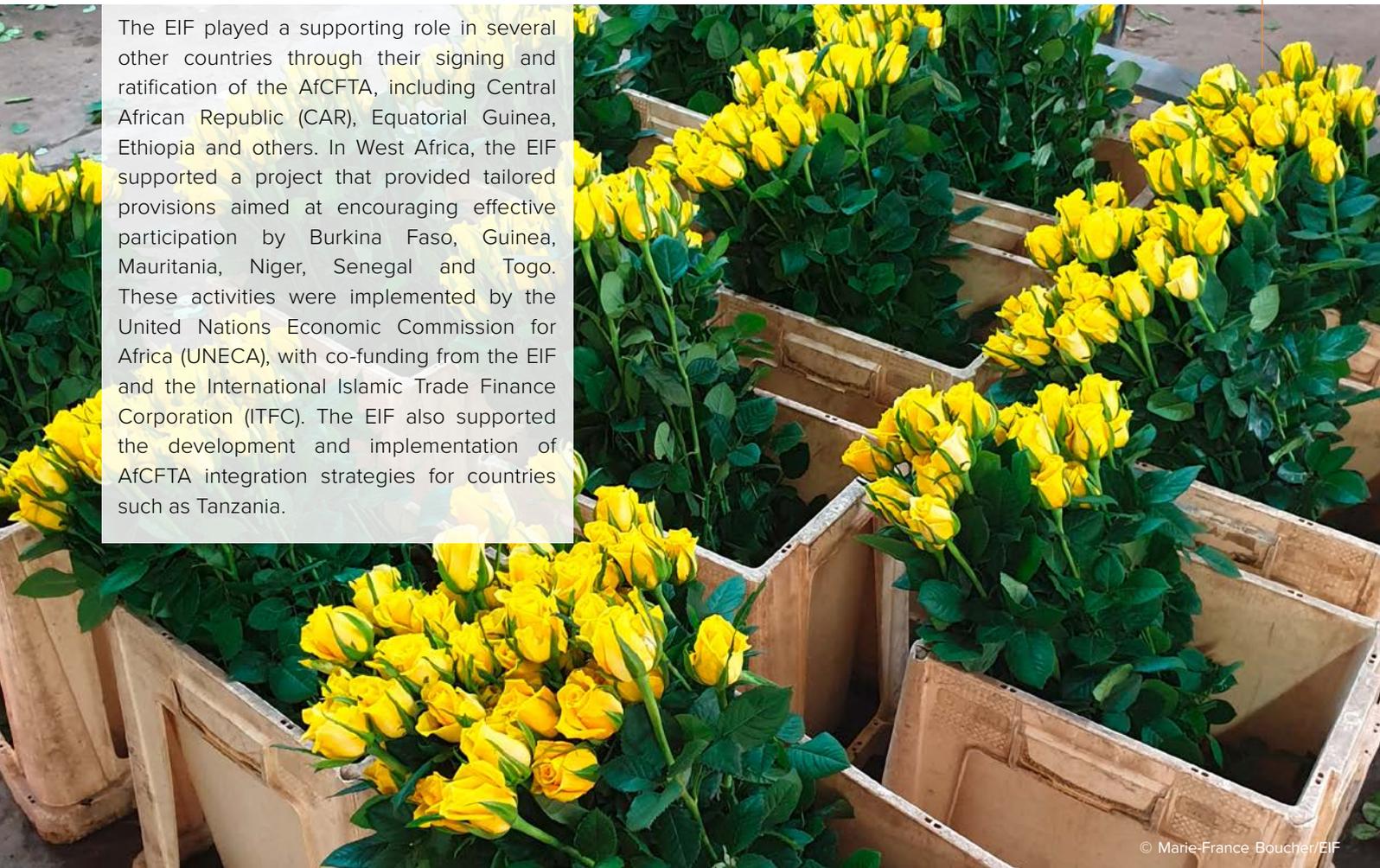
Furthermore, the EIF supported AfCFTA participation by helping link ministries of trade in partner countries to other development partners. For example, Rwanda benefitted from an EIF-funded AfCFTA implementation project that supports the AfCFTA's implementation through the Private Sector Development and Youth Employment Committee. The Committee is chaired by the EIF Focal Point (FP) and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry and co-chaired by the Head of Development Cooperation for the European Union (EU) country office. This brings together stakeholders from the public and private sectors, as well as development partners, to discuss and coordinate AfCFTA roll-out.



The EIF supported more than 160 actions in support of regional integration over Phase Two.

Ethiopia is the second largest cut flower producer in Africa after Kenya. The industry supports a number of jobs for women, with exports destined for markets across Africa and around the world.

The EIF played a supporting role in several other countries through their signing and ratification of the AfCFTA, including Central African Republic (CAR), Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia and others. In West Africa, the EIF supported a project that provided tailored provisions aimed at encouraging effective participation by Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. These activities were implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), with co-funding from the EIF and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC). The EIF also supported the development and implementation of AfCFTA integration strategies for countries such as Tanzania.



© Marie-France Boucher/EIF

LDC graduation: EIF Phase Two overview



Three LDCs graduated from LDC status over EIF Phase Two and several others are on a path towards graduation.

The EIF has played a crucial role for countries at various stages of the LDC graduation process. Support is essential in the lead-up to, and for years after, graduation, as countries look to ensure sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The EIF provides support through capacity-building efforts and analytical work, such as DTISs, with a special focus on

graduation; studies on trade impacts on LDC graduation; and studies on the productive sector. Three LDCs graduated during EIF Phase Two, and several others are on the path toward eventual graduation, including São Tomé and Príncipe, which is currently scheduled to graduate on 13 December 2024.

Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea graduated from LDC status in 2017. The EIF worked closely with the Government, as it moved through the post-graduation process, bolstering the country's trade capacity to ensure that it was able to sustain itself in the absence of

dedicated LDC support. The EIF focused on activities related to trade mainstreaming, economic diversification, integration of the NIU into the Government and WTO accession support. As five years have now passed since Equatorial Guinea's graduation from LDC status, it no longer qualifies for EIF support.

The EIF provides crucial support to LDCs on their path to graduation and up to five years after graduation.



Vanuatu

Despite a number of natural disasters and loss of tourism revenue due to COVID-19, Vanuatu decided to graduate from LDC status on 4 December 2020. This was a courageous decision in the midst of the onset of the global pandemic and one where the EIF's analysis on the trade effects of graduation played a role in the decision to proceed with graduation.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



© Simon Hess/EIF

Vanuatu's economy is largely based on small-scale agriculture, followed by fishing, offshore financial services and tourism.

Bhutan

Bhutan graduated from LDC status in December 2023. Over the past few decades, the Himalayan nation has managed to sustain an average annual real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 7.5% and boosted life expectancy from 47 to 68 years. Primary health care is also now accessible to 95% of the population. The EIF has supported Bhutan in various areas, including institutional and human capacity-building, trade integration and private sector development — especially through digital infrastructure upgrades. As LDC-focused grants are likely to be reduced, the EIF has worked to help mobilize private investment through a new online portal.



© Simon Hess/EIF

Bhutan's online potato auction allows farmers to access market information and sell products more efficiently.

02 Strengthened NIU integration

NIUs are the bedrock of the EIF's approach to integrating trade into LDC governments. These technical teams are established by LDC trade ministries and over time are fully integrated into the ministries themselves. Over EIF Phase Two, the number of NIUs integrated into ministries grew from 6 in 2015 to 45 by the end of 2023.

“ The Enhanced Integrated Framework's NIU provided me with my first professional experience and will undoubtedly remain the most important career opportunity of my entire life. Through the NIU, I learned how to interact for the first time with public entities, international organizations, and local associations. It was my gateway to the public service.

– **Mohamed Lemine Vayda**, Director of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism in Mauritania and Mauritania's Chief AfCFTA Negotiator



Highlights

45 NIUs meet the criteria for integration.

14+ NIU staff or EIF Focal Points have served in their country's mission in Geneva, including 3 Ambassadors.

NIUs in Cambodia and Lao PDR have each coordinated more than **USD 100 million** in funding since their creation.



© Simon Hess/EIF

NIUs are established as a public good, assisting in the coordination and delivery of projects for development partners in LDCs such as Cambodia, Comoros, Lao PDR, Rwanda, Tanzania and The Gambia. They also provide technical services, coordinate AfT initiatives, implement EIF projects and service key inter-ministerial bodies.

They have also proven to be an important local talent incubator, with young, inexperienced staff often maturing into experienced trade professionals. Many former NIU staff are now employed as ambassadors to the WTO, ministers of trade, trade ministry directors and a range of other senior trade-related positions.

The EIF's efforts to establish NIUs in the LDCs have resulted in a number of success stories over EIF Phase Two.

The NIU: A success story in and of itself



The EIF has established NIUs in 46 countries and 45 have achieved four out of the five necessary criteria required to be considered "integrated."

The EIF strives to ensure that NIUs are integrated into governments as a means to help strengthen the trade policy and coordination functions of trade ministries. NIUs have proven to be nimble and often sustainable mechanisms for advancing trade priorities in a wide range of LDCs. The most effective NIUs are staffed by well-trained personnel, integrated into existing national mechanisms, and work seamlessly with a range of stakeholders from the government, the private sector (including micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and civil society.

Over EIF Phase Two, NIUs have evolved, and three dominant models have emerged: a conventional government model (where most, if not all, NIU staff are public officials embedded in, and paid by, the ministry); a hybrid or integrated model (where the NIU has a mix of the conventional model and of project staff paid through other funding); and a project-leaning model (where the NIU is housed within the trade ministry, but most of its staff are paid from project funds that are often not related to the EIF).

A number of success stories have emerged from the EIF's long history of establishing NIUs in the LDCs. In Sudan, the NIU was seen by the Government as so essential to effective trade policy management that a formal decree established it as a permanent unit within the Ministry of Trade and Supply in October 2022. In Cambodia, the NIU operates as the implementation hub for all AfT projects. The NIU's work in this area has been so successful that it has served as a blueprint for the Government to attract funding from other development partners.

NIU integration is a strong indicator of sustainability, a concern of particularly high importance as EIF Phase Two comes to a close. Five criteria have emerged to gauge whether an NIU has been successfully integrated: (i) the NIU is physically housed in government offices; (ii) the NIU staff includes government officials; (iii) a formal decision has been made to integrate the NIU as part of a ministry; (iv) the NIU is responsible for coordination of TRTA; and (v) the NIU is responsible for coordinating intersectoral bodies. To date, the EIF has established NIUs in 46 countries, and 45 are considered integrated (i.e., they meet at least four out of the five aforementioned criteria).

While being integrated is a key step towards achieving NIU sustainability, this does not guarantee NIU institutional, human capacity and financial sustainability. In the absence of the EIF, there are four potential options for their continued function: (i) the NIU could continue as a recognized unit; (ii) it could be merged into the functions of dedicated ministry units; (iii) it could become an autonomous entity that responds to host ministry guidance (with funding from various programmes); or (iv) it could be replaced by a series of functional units in the host ministry.

Rwanda Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU)

The EIF's NIU in Rwanda stands out as a leader in implementing a "project-leaning" model that is entirely made up of project-financed staff as part of an SPIU. The SPIU was established by a government-wide mandate, whereby staff costs are shared between contributing projects, and staff members are expected to be absorbed into other interventions within the Unit without being incorporated into the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The Unit coordinates donor-funded AfT initiatives to maximize collaboration and long-term sustainability.

The SPIU has played a vital role in supporting the Ministry to focus on cross-border trade, e-commerce and value chain development, as well as giving the Government improved oversight, ownership and coordination of large-scale development partner-funded initiatives, such as by the World Bank (WB), the EU, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) and others. Pilot projects in other Ministries employing the same model have also been successful, underscoring the influence of NIU approach on Rwanda's overall approach to development. The model has also been successfully employed elsewhere, such as Liberia.



Rwanda's SPIU played a vital role in supporting the Ministry of Trade and Industry to focus on cross-border trade initiatives, including two major cross-border markets.

Rwanda's cross-border markets were constructed taking into consideration the needs of women and of both large-scale traders and small-scale entrepreneurs. The model proved to be so successful that the approach is now being replicated elsewhere.



Lao PDR's model NIU



The work of Lao PDR's NIU has been so successful that it has served as a blueprint for the Government to attract funding from other development partners. The structure is an excellent example of value for money.

The EIF's support in Lao PDR resulted in a high level of trade mainstreaming, led by targeted capacity-building and a strong integration of its NIU into the Government. Lao PDR's NIU is housed in the Department of Planning and Cooperation of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and implements all the country's

AfT projects. The effectiveness of the NIU has resulted in a high level of country ownership and has helped attract more than USD 150 million to date in funding from other development partners. The NIU model has also been an inspiration for Myanmar in its approach to creating its own Unit.

“Alignment with national priorities and needs was a major achievement of the EIF, and this was fully aligned with its guiding principle of promoting country ownership.”

*– Saana Consulting,
Evaluation of the Enhanced Integrated Framework*

In Lao PDR, partnerships in textile production enhanced market access for the handicrafts sector, resulting in an 80% increase in incomes.





© NIU Lao PDR

Lao PDR's economy has been on an upward trajectory for much of the last two decades, with an average of 7% annual GDP growth. It is set to graduate from LDC category in 2026.

“EIF support is well grounded on the principle of national ownership, which helps the Government to promote its priority to enhance productive capacity, foster a well-balanced system for international trade, and achieve sustainable development in line with Lao PDR's National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021-2025).

– H.E. Dr Manothong Vongsay, Vice Minister of Industry and Commerce

03 Building human and institutional capacity

A key measure of success for any EIF initiative is the level to which individuals and institutions adopt policies and practices that have impact and are sustainable. This is why country ownership is at the core of the EIF approach. When institutions and the individuals who work within them have the structures and knowledge they need to see change, the EIF's interventions are much more likely to result in long-term sustainable success. The EIF's approach is to build capacity through the direct involvement, ownership and responsibility of LDC ministries of trade.

“The Enhanced Integrated Framework has been a catalyst. Its funding has triggered other donors... they are interested in working together with other donors to help achieve bigger outcomes.

– **Willie Luen**, Former Head of Aid Coordination and Negotiation Unit, Prime Minister's Office, Vanuatu



Highlights

Nearly 300,000 people participated in EIF trainings across the LDCs, including 170,000+ women and 60,000+ youth.

47 countries with established public-private dialogue mechanisms.

30+ NIU staff and EIF Focal Points promoted to very senior levels of Government, including 8 into Ministerial positions.



© Ollivier Girard/EIF

In addition to working through national systems, government co-financing for projects has been built over time to sustain initiatives beyond defined timelines. A strong NIU capacity is an essential ingredient for achieving long-term

success, and, in some cases, NIUs are now completely financed by their governments. The NIUs are also increasingly working with each other to share knowledge and implement successful new and innovative approaches.

The EIF's trade and productive capacity-building support in Benin has been crucial to helping reduce poverty by strengthening trade and productive capacity-building.

The Government of Benin buys in to trade infrastructure



By bringing together senior Government officials, donor partners, private sector representatives, staff of non-governmental organization, diplomats and community representatives, Vanuatu's NTDC expedites the trade policymaking process and improves transparency.

The EIF supported the DTIS Update (DTISU) process for Benin in 2015. Included in the DTISU's recommendations was the undertaking of an extensive feasibility study on cross-border trade, including a deep dive into trade facilitation and regional trade dynamics. In 2023, based on the recommendations of the study, the Government allocated some

USD 5 million from the national budget to begin the construction on the country's first cross-border marketplace. This project along the country's border with Nigeria offers a tangible example of country ownership in trade infrastructure as a direct result of the EIF's support.



Vanuatu's National Trade Development Committee (NTDC)

Click/scan here for more



Setting the foundation for implementation in EIF Phase Two, in 2012, the EIF supported Vanuatu through the development of its NTDC—an innovative approach to improve efficiency in trade policymaking. Led by the Deputy Prime-Minister, with technical support from the NIU, the NTDC is a tailored group of key public and private sector representatives who are interested in domestic and international trade. The Committee works together to identify and resolve trade development opportunities and challenges and then make recommendations to Vanuatu's Council of Ministers.

The NTDC has been a game changer for trade-related decision-making in Vanuatu, and other Ministries are looking to replicate the approach. Before the NTDC, decisions on trade projects were time-consuming and took place in isolation from other decisions. Project

proposals were sent to the Prime Minister's office, where consultations with donors would happen. The office would then reply to the Ministry if the project was of interest.

By bringing together senior Government officials and some of Vanuatu's most important donor partners, private sector representatives, staff of non-governmental organization, diplomats and community representatives, the NTDC expedites the process and improves transparency. Donor partners can come together to discuss each proposal and pool resources to support promising ideas. With this experience, the NIU Coordinator, Willie Luen, was recruited to lead the Government's overall Aid Coordination and Negotiation Unit in the office of the Prime Minister. According to Luen, the EIF was central to the success of the initiative and has helped expand funding.

How the EIF Countries are supporting each other

With EIF Phase Two, the EIF stepped up its work on supporting the LDCs in regional initiatives. By design, regional projects, such as those supporting shea-producing countries in West Africa, result in important linkages and lesson-sharing between NIUs and regional organizations. These relationships have resulted in significant mutually reinforcing institutional knowledge-sharing opportunities that far outlive standalone projects, thus contributing to sustainability.

International trade exchanges between the EIF Countries, for example, are a cornerstone of these efforts to improve institutional capacity in the LDCs. The NIUs in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar have established an exemplary exchange programme that has been an efficient conduit for ideas and best practices. Niger and Chad have also taken full advantage of such exchanges to help improve their skins

and hides industry. When Zambia established their Cooperatives project, they learnt from Uganda, which had implemented a similar mechanism; and countries such as Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Tuvalu have studied how The Gambia is leveraging climate finance for trade. Also, the EIF provided Guinea-Bissau's legal and regulatory body with training on how to facilitate exchanges to allow for more effective knowledge transfer amongst peer countries. EIF initiatives such as regional capacity-building events and online networks have played an important role in stimulating these networks.



Collaborative relationships between NIUs are helping to reinforce long-term institutional knowledge-sharing opportunities.

“Through the EIF, Cambodia implemented Aid for Trade effectively and took ownership seriously.”

– H.E. Mr Suon Prasith, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the WTO

Cross-country learning and collaboration around shea production has been enhanced through the regional approach adopted in West Africa.



© Olivier Girard/EIF

04 Mainstreaming trade

When trade is fully integrated into a government, countries are better able to harness its potential for poverty reduction and economic change. Thus, mainstreaming trade is a central EIF tenet and a key objective when establishing NIUs and ensuring that they are effectively integrated. Trade mainstreaming also ensures that trade considerations are factored into core policy documents and strategies, including economic, environmental, agricultural, development and others.

A number of mainstreaming successes were achieved in all regions over EIF Phase Two, with the EIF working with 37 countries to integrate trade into their new NDPs.

“ EIF country-level structures were established, delivering their respective mandates and functions, with the recipient country increasingly serving as the Main Implementing Entity (MIE). EIF governance structures at the country-level were in place and reasonably effective.

– **Saana Consulting**, Evaluation of the Enhanced Integrated Framework



Highlights

EIF capacity-building efforts in Tuvalu led to the development of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development, a Trade Policy Framework and a Sustainable Tourism Policy.

Mainstreaming efforts in Burkina Faso led to the incorporation of trade-related language into several Government strategy documents.

Sierra Leone is a model for trade mainstreaming and boasts a high level of country ownership.



© Simon Hess/EIF

EIF Phase Two has resulted in a number of mainstreaming opportunities in Bhutan, including strengthening trade-related institutions and legal frameworks and capacity-building for both public and private officials.

Trade plays a prominent role in Bhutan's development planning



Mainstreaming trade has played an important role in Bhutan's development planning, with trade tightly integrated into Government planning, including its 13th Five Year Plan (2024-2029).

In December 2023, Bhutan became the seventh country to graduate from the ranks of the world's LDCs. The EIF worked closely with the Himalayan kingdom to ensure that it had effective trade and investment plans in place to both achieve its goal of graduation and to continue on its upward development trajectory. Mainstreaming trade has played an important role in Bhutan's development planning, with trade tightly integrated into Government planning, including its 13th Five

Year Plan (2024-2029) and its Long-term Perspective Plan (2024-2034). The prominent role of trade in these medium- and long-term NDPs highlights its importance to the Government in facilitating investment to achieve its objective of becoming a developed country by 2034. Bhutan has embraced a strategy that includes the development of trade-oriented transportation infrastructure, the expansion of agricultural exports and growth in services trade.

Burkina Faso integrates trade into key development strategy documents

Mainstreaming efforts in Burkina Faso resulted in the incorporation of trade-related language into a broad spectrum of Government strategy documents, including those focused on transportation, mining, energy, agriculture, animal resources, environment, culture and tourism. Institutional capacity

was also bolstered, which helped ensure the prominence of trade in key development strategy documents, including Burkina Faso's Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (2011-2015) and the National Economic and Social Development Plan (2016- 2020).

The EIF's mainstreaming efforts in Burkina Faso led to the integration of trade into several sectoral strategies, including transport, mining, energy, agriculture, animal resources, environment, culture and tourism.



South Sudan's trade journey

In South Sudan, the EIF supported trade mainstreaming in two successive NDPs (2018-2021 and 2021-2024). The emphasis on economic diversification has contributed to the development of South Sudan's Trade

Policy Framework and a National Quality Policy and Draft Competition Bill; and laid the basis for South Sudan's participation in the East African Community and the AfCFTA, with progress towards accession to the WTO.



Benin's experience in mainstreaming trade

The EIF supported trade mainstreaming in Benin's NDP 2018-2025. The EIF-Benin team participated in the drafting process, helping include priorities from the DTIS Action Matrix. Anchoring trade in the NDP has helped the

country deliver various trade reforms, including improvements in the regulatory framework for MSME development, national quality infrastructure and consumer protection.



Trade mainstreaming key to Cabo Verde's post-LDC development plans

While Cabo Verde graduated from LDC status in 2007, it continued to receive support for a transitional period, with projects lasting well into EIF Phase Two. As identified by the country's DTISU in 2014, institutional capacity and trade mainstreaming were priorities, as development aid opportunities contracted in the wake of LDC graduation. Thus, the EIF focused heavily on trade-related capacity-building, which led to an increased awareness of

the potential for trade as a tool to stimulate production, consumption and incomes. These efforts also led to the development of a national trade strategy; the establishment of a National Trade Council; and the creation of an Integrated Government Resource Programme to facilitate trade. Additionally, trade was integrated into Cabo Verde's 2012-2016 Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and its National Strategic Development Plan.

Collective sense of ownership for Sierra Leone's tourism sector



Over Phase Two, EIF support was instrumental in helping mainstream trade into Sierra Leone's National Development Plans.

Sierra Leone is a model for trade mainstreaming and boasts a high level of country ownership. The EIF supported the implementation of the country's NIAs, which include an NIU, an EIF National Steering Committee (NSC), the EIF Donor Facilitator (DF) and the FP. In a strong indication of early trade mainstreaming, a Presidential decree stipulated that all NIU staff be absorbed into the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Strategic planning by the NSC and the NIU were central to helping to achieve the Government's ambition to attract tourists back to the country after a prolonged absence in the years following the country's civil war.

Thus, the goal of establishing Sierra Leone as an ecotourism destination was integrated into the country's trade policy — a goal that has already achieved noteworthy success. Further efforts led to the introduction of a new Tourism Act and the formulation of a Tourism Governance and Financial Management Policy. The country's tourism policy has now been mainstreamed across Government programmes and generated a widespread sense of ownership across departments. These efforts are already paying dividends in terms of meaningful transformation of the tourism industry. In 2023, Time Magazine listed Sierra Leone as one of the world's top tourism destinations.

EIF support has led to substantial progress in developing and improving community-based eco-tourism sites in Sierra Leone.



Tuvalu's sustainable development strategy prioritizes trade

The EIF made substantial efforts to help mainstream trade in Tuvalu over EIF Phase Two. Trade comprises some 65% of the country's GDP, with priority sectors being agriculture, fisheries, labour mobility and education. However, a lack of institutional and human capacity for effective trade integration was identified as a constraint. EIF capacity-building efforts led to the development of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development, a Trade Policy Framework and a Sustainable Tourism Policy.

Targeted support allowed the trade sector to develop in a way that is more harmonized across the Government. By strengthening regulatory frameworks, the Government was able to create key policies to ensure the existence of an enabling environment for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Strategies to help develop the trade, tourism and e-commerce sectors were also created, which led to the piloting of sector-specific initiatives and a variety of business promotion initiatives.

Over Phase Two, the EIF invested substantially in projects aimed at scaling up Tuvalu's institutional and human capacity for effective trade integration, with trade-related priorities including agriculture, fisheries, labour mobility and education.



© NIU Tuvalu/EIF

05 Interlinkages

The EIF's approach is more than just supporting the LDCs on their journey toward better participation in the global trading system — it is about systemic change. The approach places a strong emphasis on sustainability, because that is how long-term success is achieved. The key to sustainability is robust and interlinked processes and institutions. When systems are designed to engage with and support one another, they are far more likely to generate long-term, sustainable change.

“With the EIF's rapid response to the country's needs, Cambodia has moved quickly to grasp the opportunities of the digital economy, with the EIF's support to develop a national e-commerce strategy and to set up a national e-commerce platform [...].

– **Samheng Bora**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Trade of Cambodia, 2022



Highlights

47 countries with sector-specific strategies integrating trade.

Productive capacity interventions help generate visible results to drive deeper trade reforms.

Inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms met 3.1 times on average in 2023.



© Simon Hess/EIF

The NIUs that are fully integrated into government help create institutional and productive capacity interlinkages, which are crucial to success. These strong ties within a government help ensure that capacity-building efforts do not remain siloed within external agencies or organizations. Demonstrated success within one ministry often leads to models that are then adopted by other ministries and institutions. These successes often migrate to the private sector and other NIUs in LDCs facing similar challenges.

By ensuring support for a wide range of interlinkages through networking, trade exchanges and purposeful project design, the EIF is creating long-term systemic change that will outlive projects.

Robust interlinkages ensure that successful projects are sustainable and able to be replicated, which maximizes impact and ensures value for money.

Rwanda's influential approach to project implementation



NIU staff carry with them the knowledge they acquire through their experiences with the EIF.

Rwanda's SPIU is an interesting model of government integration and has been ambitious to embrace additional opportunities. In 2011, when established by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the SPIU was allowed to effectively coordinate all donor-funded initiatives related to AfT. This shift allowed the Unit to revolutionize collaboration by allowing staff costs to be shared between projects, this being an alternative mechanism to the incorporation of staff into the Ministry.

The approach has led to engagement on large-scale projects with the WB, the EU and others and has influenced other ministries to adopt the same model. In many ways, this EIF-supported method has changed the way Rwanda approaches development. Already, Liberia has adopted the SPIU model, based on Rwanda's success.

Long-term impact through recruitment and training

The success of the EIF's approach is closely linked to high calibre staff recruitment and training. Many former FPs and NIU staff have gone on to influence policy and systems in the high-level roles in government and industry. For example, Niger's former FP went on to lead the country's AfCFTA negotiations; Liberia's former NIU Coordinator went on to become the Minister of Trade; Rwanda's NIU Coordinator became the Permanent Secretary; and Nepal's former NIU Coordinator became Finance Secretary.

NIU staff carry with them the knowledge they acquire through their experiences with the EIF. For example, when Willie Luen, Vanuatu's former NIU Coordinator, went on to lead the country's Foreign Aid Coordination Unit, he helped establish the NTDC: a group of public and private sector representatives that could efficiently work together to identify and

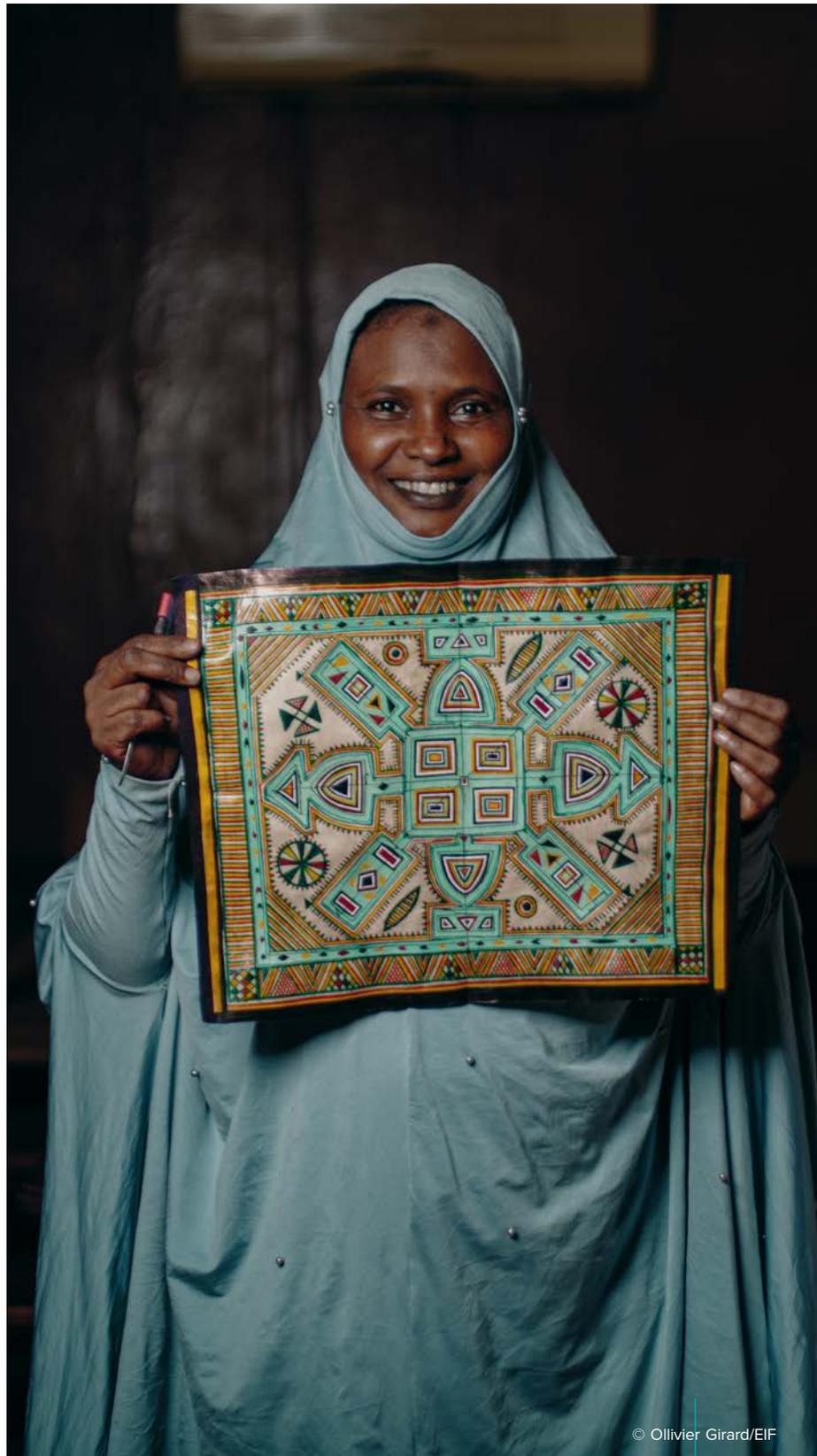
resolve trade development problems and make recommendations to Ministers. Several of Vanuatu's Ministries expressed an interest in the model, and the Ministry of Agriculture replicated the Committee in the form of a project management unit. Across the EIF Countries, more than 30 former NIU staff or FPs have progressed into senior positions of leadership. For instance, the FPs in Cambodia and Lao PDR and the NIU Coordinator in Liberia became Ministers, with another three EIF-linked personnel becoming Ambassadors to the WTO and yet others working in the Geneva Missions. In Bhutan, the former FP became the Chief Climate Negotiator and played a key role in the discussions at the Conference of the Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at a time when trade became more prominent.

How enabling local markets can lead to international linkages

Various EIF initiatives provide illustrative examples of the linkages between strengthening domestic or local markets and the longer-term ability to tap into international markets. Experience has shown that creating the enabling conditions in domestic markets is a crucial stepping stone toward participation in the global trading system.

In Niger, the EIF supported the hides and skins sector by modernizing production practices, including through the provision of equipment and strengthening the capacity of actors in the value chain. One of the goals of the project was to modernize production from traditional to semi-industrial methods by improving technology in the collection, treatment and preservation of hides and skins. By enabling local capacity, the industry saw export revenues more than double between 2010 and 2018.

Niger's success in the hides and skins industry led to interest from neighbouring Chad, which had been struggling to produce high-quality hides that would meet international standards and be competitive. The EIF's Country Coordinator saw the opportunity to boost the interlinkages between the two countries through a knowledge-sharing exercise. Niger's project manager was hired to develop a proposal, which was ultimately approved by the Government of Chad. The initiative led to 60% of Chad's tannery outputs meeting international standards by 2021, and products made in Chad have gained in global popularity.



© Olivier Girard/EIF

The EIF Project Manager in Niger facilitated a knowledge-sharing initiative with neighbouring Chad during Phase Two.

06 Environment and climate

From extreme storms to coastal flooding, the LDCs are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. More than two-thirds of climate-related disaster fatalities worldwide have occurred in the LDCs. This is why environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting issue that has played a part in all EIF Phase Two activities. The environment is embedded in the EIF's strategic plan, and an indicator has been established to ensure that impact measurement considers environmental dimensions.

“ This collaboration [through the project]... reinforces how much importance we place on such partnerships as a critical investment into the shea sector, and reiterates the commitment of stakeholders to the vision of a more sustainable industry.

– **Mamatou Djaffo**, GSA Executive Committee Women's Group representative, Burkina Faso



Highlights

Support for Ethiopia's honey industry has led to the propagation of more than **700,000 bee** forage seedlings by youth enterprises.

122 environment-related interventions through EIF projects (36 in 2023).

The digitization of trade-related transactions in Vanuatu **reduced vehicle emissions** by requiring at least 25,000 fewer visits to government offices.



© José Carlos Alexandre/EIF

In order to ensure that climate change and environmental considerations are incorporated into planning as early as possible, the EIF has published a “Quick Guide” for the development of DTISs. By addressing environmental concerns at the DTIS stage, the LDCs can seamlessly incorporate such considerations as standard planning practices. The movement toward addressing climate and environmental issues in DTISs has increasingly become common practice. For example, Zambia’s DTISU dedicates an entire chapter to climate and trade.

Productive capacity projects — such as those addressing honey production in Ethiopia or the hides tanning industry in Chad — are typically required by good practice to incorporate an assessment of environmental dimensions into the project design. Often, these assessments can lead to the creation of new initiatives that help significantly advance environmental considerations and sustainability within a country.

Cyclones and other climate-related weather events are increasing in frequency, causing profound challenges for Pacific Island nations, such as Vanuatu.

How the EIF helps drive environment and climate change action in the LDCs



Over EIF Phase Two, environment and climate change considerations have been increasingly incorporated into the EIF's work. In particular, work with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) helped bring policymakers together to ensure that the international climate and trade architecture better supports LDC climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. This included bringing together trade and climate negotiators and developing policy-oriented research in climate finance, technology transfer and carbon markets and standards. Additionally, a review of environment considerations discussed in the DTISs resulted in the development of guidelines for better inclusion of these issues in trade diagnostics.

With respect to country involvement, the following are some highlights of specific actions that have been taken:

Benin

- Forest protection training was provided, with 600 people trained in shea tree park management and protection and 30,000 shea tree sapplings planted.

Burkina Faso

- Training was provided to ensure compliance with environmental standards and to achieve renewable energy goals.
- Environmental impact studies were undertaken.
- Waste management support was provided to mitigate environmental impacts related to shea butter processing.

Cambodia

- Fisheries projects adopted mitigation measures to minimize environmental impacts.
- A study was undertaken to better understand the environmental risks related to the cassava industry.

Chad

- The EIF helped establish environmentally responsible production practices in the leather tanning industry.

Comoros

- Projects focused on boosting ylang-ylang and clove production have adopted organic agricultural practices.
- Ecotourism initiatives now have improved mechanisms for waste treatment, and recycled products are more prominent.

DRC

- An environmental protection study was undertaken.
- Training was provided on the importance of the protection of natural resources through a zero-deforestation policy.

Djibouti

- Capacity-building was provided to improve knowledge of environment and trade linkages at the Ministry of Trade.

Ethiopia

- An EIF project supported the participatory planting of over 2.6 million bee forage sapplings, covering 902 hectares, of which 214 hectare was rehabilitated land.
- Training was provided on the correct use of agrochemicals.
- Training has helped facilitate good practices in the commercial forestry sector.

The Gambia

- Activities linking the Ministry of Environment with the Ministry of Trade included high-level dialogues for the public and private sectors on accessing trade-related climate change financing. This ultimately led to the development of a proposal on the Green Industrialization through Special Economic Zones and Agropoles.

Lesotho

- The establishment of protected agriculture through the distribution of 150 greenhouses and hail nets has led to more efficient water and fertilizer use. It has also extended the growing seasons and provided protection from extreme weather. On average, two to three individuals were employed per greenhouse.



Madagascar

- Support has allowed Madagascar to engage more thoroughly in WTO trade and environment discussions.

Malawi

- More than 6,000 smallholder farmers have been trained in environmentally friendly and climate-smart production and processing practices.

Mali

- Environmental protection training was provided with an emphasis on raising awareness of the income potential of shea trees.

Niger

- An environmental impact assessment was conducted on leather tanning operations.
- Tanners were trained on environmentally sensitive waste management practices.

Rwanda

- EIF support led to the development of an e-waste policy and the establishment of a new e-waste processing centre. In one year, the facility collected 3,000 tonnes of e-waste, including from neighbouring Burundi, DRC and Uganda, with exports of circuit boards to Dubai to extract the precious metals. In addition to the environmental benefits, over 400 jobs were created.

Samoa

- EIF projects helped increase the dialogue on responses to the effects of climate change between the Government and the private sector.

South Sudan and Uganda

- Protection of shea trees against illegal deforestation driven by the demand for charcoal.

Vanuatu

- The EIF supported the Vanuatu Tourism Infrastructure Project, which rebuilt the seafront with higher specifications to withstand increasingly volatile climate-change-related weather.
- In one year, the trade ESW meant 42,000 less pages of paper, and 25,000 fewer vehicle-based trips from traders to government offices were made. New modules on Ozone-Depleting Substances, Energy-Efficient Appliances and Humanitarian Supplies led to environmental and social benefits.

Yemen

- The EIF supported studies and a dialogue around the use of solar power as a clean and renewable source.

Zambia

- Zambia's 2023 DTISU included a dedicated chapter on trade and climate change.

The Gambia develops the first AfT climate finance project



The Gambia has pioneered a new approach to access trade-related climate finance through an Aid for Trade project.

Trade-related climate finance is an area that is still in its infancy in the LDCs. It is relatively common for countries to have climate-related nationally determined contributions tied to industries such as forestry or agriculture. However, The Gambia has pioneered a new approach to access trade-related climate finance through an AfT project. The “Trade Mainstreaming and Value Chain Enhancement Project – Post-SSP” project was approved in December 2021 and was designed and implemented by the NIU within the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment.

This represents the first time that such an activity has been requested by an EIF-supported LDC and demonstrates an increased awareness of the impact of climate

change in the LDCs and the nexus between climate change and trade. By bringing together the key stakeholders, this project played an important role in the formulation of the WTO LDC Group positions on trade and climate ahead of the WTO’s Twelfth Ministerial Conference. This innovative approach has already attracted interest from fellow LDCs — including Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Tuvalu — with some having already arranged study tours to Banjul to better understand the climate finance strategy. This engagement has also already forged new relationships and fostered new networks at the ministerial level. The Gambia has now developed a multi-million-dollar proposal on Green Industrialization through Special Economic Zones and Agropoles (GIEZA).



Helping the environment while boosting Vanuatu’s economy through paperless trade

[Click/scan here for more](#)



The EIF’s project to support the establishment of an Electronic Single Window System in Vanuatu was a strategic initiative aimed at streamlining trade procedures, reducing trade barriers and stimulating economic growth. The initiative also stands as an important example of how environmental challenges in the LDCs can be addressed in concert with economic progress.

The project focused on enhancing the efficiency of goods movement across borders, thus increasing Vanuatu’s attractiveness as a destination for international trade and investment. By allowing customs data to be submitted electronically, automating various processes and integrating systems, Vanuatu’s ESW streamlined trade processes reduced clearance times and improved overall efficiency.

The initiative also reduced the use of paper-based transactions by more than 95%, resulting in 42,000 fewer pages of paper being used per year to process trade-related transactions. The digitization of transactions also resulted in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by requiring at least 25,000 fewer vehicle-based trips by traders to government offices. As a result of the successful implementation of the project, according to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), Vanuatu was the top ranked country in the Pacific Islands.



© Peter Donelan/EIF

The EIF has prepared a “Quick Guide” for the development of DTISs to ensure that environmental and climate change impacts are considered.

07

Leveraging digital solutions for the LDCs

Digital solutions have the potential to significantly transform the way that the LDCs participate in the global economy. Technological innovations in areas such as e-commerce are removing barriers and opening up unprecedented opportunities for MSMEs to connect with consumers around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic unintentionally operated as a springboard for digital solutions, as businesses around the world adapted to overcome the challenge of physical marketplace closures.

“My production employs women from rural areas. The online training about e-commerce and digital marketing helped my business. It helped me to connect with customers and will generate new customers from South Asia.

– **Tazima Majumdar**, Founder of Needlecraft, Bangladesh



Highlights

9 eTrade Readiness Assessments were undertaken across Asia and the Pacific

140+ e-commerce solutions supported by EIF projects (43 in 2023)

27 projects with digital components



© Simon Hess/EIF

However, the distribution of progress in the sector has not been equal around the world. While participation in the digital economy across the LDCs has surged over the past decade, they continue to lag behind the rest of the world in terms of participation — and this gap widened

even further during the pandemic. The EIF has been supporting countries through activities aimed at addressing undeveloped digital infrastructure and lack of internet access, and at addressing policies that can help MSMEs access digital markets.

An EIF-supported e-commerce strategy in Bhutan is helping to mutually reinforce the digital, trade and investment worlds. Partnerships with civil society organizations help to ensure the benefits flow to the most rural and vulnerable groups.

The EIF's approach to bridging the digital divide



The EIF worked with UNCTAD to undertake nine eTrade Readiness Assessments across Asia and the Pacific.

The EIF has worked with the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to undertake nine eTrade Readiness Assessments. These diagnostic assessments provide a snapshot of a country's e-commerce ecosystem and lay the groundwork for the design and development of tailored policy frameworks that align digital and development policies. The assessments were conducted for Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Nepal, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The EIF also undertook a separate trade and digital economy assessment for The Gambia.

The EIF has also helped bridge the LDC digital divide through assessments of digital trade opportunities and constraints in DTISs and by assisting with drafting digital trade provisions in trade agreements. While digital trade provisions are becoming more common in regional trade agreements, very few exist in the LDCs and, as such, they often lack expertise in this area. EIF support for African LDCs through the adoption and ratification of the AfCFTA Agreement was helpful in this regard as, for many countries, it was their first experience negotiating provisions on digital trade.

Click/skan here for more



Another way that the EIF works to leverage digital solutions for the LDCs is through the development of e-commerce strategies. These strategies provide an overview of e-commerce in the targeted country or region, followed by a statement of the overall vision, goals, priority policy areas, strategic measures and implementation plan. Also included are recommendations on governance and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The EIF has helped develop e-commerce strategies in Bhutan, Cambodia, Djibouti, Kiribati, Nepal, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania. EIF support also facilitated consultations for Zambia's e-commerce strategy.



The EIF has invested more than USD 2 million in dedicated digital trade projects in Africa and more than USD 18 million in African projects including digital trade components.

Facilitating investment in Bhutan

Click/skan here for more



The EIF supported the development and launch of a revolutionary e-regulation portal, which facilitates access to information on trade, investment and business registration procedures. Developed together with UNCTAD, the portal is accessible in

100 languages and uses online single window technology to help reduce entry barriers for new businesses.

The portal was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, which facilitated touchless processing of projects. Between the launch of the portal in November 2020 and 2022, the portal has helped generate additional domestic and foreign investments worth more than USD 350 million. This complements other digitally-focused EIF investments such as the online potato auction system in Bhutan.



Support for women and girls in the digital economy

While access to opportunities offered by the digital economy in the LDCs is lower than in the rest of the world, it is even lower for women. In African LDCs, 31% fewer women have access to the internet than men. In EIF Phase Two, the EIF partnered with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to help address this challenge in Burundi, Ethiopia and Haiti. The initiative has helped women participate more fully in the digital economy by helping integrate a gender perspective into domestic policies.

Capacity-building also resulted in training for more than 1,660 women and an increased understanding of the importance of technology and digital knowledge for working-aged women — including junior professionals and entrepreneurs — by policymakers. Success of the initiative resulted in the expansion of support to several additional supporting institutions. This added support allowed the project to carry on longer than initially targeted, thus also expanding its impacts on women's economic empowerment through digitization.

Bringing the world's youngest country online

The EIF jointly supported the enhancement of the digital economy in the world's newest country through the “E-commerce for South Sudan” project, together with the country's Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Embassy of the Netherlands and the AfDB. The initiative supported the implementation of a Revised National Development Strategy (2021-2024) to ensure that it commits to creating employment opportunities through the development of the digital economy.

Support also included the provision of a fully equipped computer and communications facility with business development support services. The initiative likewise helped launch

the “dukaanye” — the country's first-ever online marketplace platform. Through targeted training in digital marketing, e-commerce skills, online store management, online sales, social media marketing, data analytics and digital content creation, the e-commerce hub is playing a crucial role in enhancing the digital capacity of women and youth.



Digital trade for women MSMEs in South Asia

The EIF and UN-ESCAP worked together in the delivery of technical assistance to women-led MSMEs in South and South-West Asia, which later was expanded to include ASEAN countries and Africa, when the Commonwealth Secretariat joined the initiative. Conceptualized to focus on training related to e-commerce, digital marketing and launching an online business, the project gained importance as the devastating effects of a gendered digital divide became even

more apparent when the pandemic hit the world. Although initially unanticipated, it also led to the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal engaging UN-ESCAP by seeking its technical assistance in training their officials in formulating their e-commerce policies with a focus on making them inclusive of women. To date, over 2,000 women have received training through the initiative.

Source: Evaluation of the EIF EWPT initiative

Embracing digital solutions in the remote Pacific



Kiribati's eTrade Readiness

Assessment helped scale-up digital infrastructure capacity just before the COVID-19 pandemic, when such solutions were desperately needed.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



In EIF Phase Two, the EIF saw the opportunity to help drive e-commerce solutions in geographically-isolated Pacific Island LDCs, such as Kiribati. Implementing EIF partner UNCTAD led an eTrade Readiness Assessment and capacity-building project in 2019 aimed at providing recommendations to the Government on strategy formulation and infrastructure needs. The guidelines also outlined how to implement and formulate policies that facilitate the development of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and services.

The eTrade Readiness Assessment included the undertaking of a survey, which found that Kiribati had a low level of e-commerce awareness, with 71% of respondents recommending that capacity-building be undertaken to improve digital knowledge and skills in the private and public sectors. The Assessment also found that low trade volumes and logistical challenges were resulting in

high trade costs. Policy recommendations focused on the need to seize opportunities and remove barriers to increase the country's overall competitiveness in e-commerce and the broader digital economy.

In many ways, the timing of the eTrade Readiness Assessment was auspicious, as it helped Kiribati begin scaling-up its digital infrastructure before the COVID-19 pandemic — when such solutions were desperately needed. The Government and key Ministries have achieved remarkable success in updating ICT policies with strategies for boosting e-commerce. The rapid scale-up gave rise to a number of post-pandemic digital and e-commerce opportunities, and the Government of Kiribati has embraced the sector's potential. The country now has an updated national trade portal that has facilitated the way that vessels and flights are processed.

Partners attending UNCTAD's 2023 eWeek highlight the crucial role of coordination with key stakeholders when it comes to paving the way for rapid progress in e-commerce development in the LDCs and bridging the digital divide.





© José Carlos Alexandre/EIF

Digital SPS processes help traders in Vanuatu.

08 Gender and trade

The EIF's work consistently gives purposeful attention to gender-responsive project design and execution. From ensuring that gender priorities are mainstreamed into all programming to support dedicated women-centred initiatives — such as the Empower Women, Power Trade (EWPT) initiative, progress on women's economic empowerment is a highlight from EIF Phase Two.

“ Since independence, the women of the coast have never benefited from support like [that of the EIF to the development and promotion of tourism at the Banc d'Arguin National Park], and this type of support, which provides a source of income for local communities, helps to preserve peace and security.

– **Hamza Babetta**, Secretary-General of the Mauritanian Tourism Federation



Highlights

170,000+ women in the **LDCs** helped become better linked into trading systems.

Support for small-scale mostly female coffee producers in Timor-Leste led to the export of **USD 525,436** worth of Fairtrade and certified organic coffee to Canada, Japan and the US.

40 percentage-point increase in the number of projects reporting gender disaggregated data over the phase.



© Simon Hess/EIF

The vast majority of EIF projects include training as part of capacity-building initiatives. All training sessions are designed to ensure a high level of female participation and to support the participation of women in the national trade agenda. By the end of 2023, women accounted for 61% of EIF beneficiaries, with 144 dedicated gender and trade activities undertaken over EIF Phase Two.

The EIF's commitment to advancing women's participation in trade helps strengthen entire economies. By ensuring that all EIF work is designed through a gender-inclusive lens, the foundations of communities are reinforced and poised for sustainable growth.

The EIF invested into the textile sector in Cambodia.

EWPT initiative



Women now account for **61%** of EIF beneficiaries.

30,000+ women benefited from the EIF's investments into the Shea Sector in West Africa.

In 2019, the EIF launched the EWPT initiative aimed at transforming the economic lives of 50,000 female entrepreneurs and producers, cross-border traders, workers and women-owned MSMEs. The initiative was designed to help deepen the EIF's gender focus by supporting women's business associations and global and regional value chains where women already play an important role. Through these efforts, the initiative aims to improve best practices and share lessons learned that can be used to help advance all EIF initiatives.

The EWPT initiative was designed using the EIF's partnership approach, which draws upon the expertise of specialized implementing agencies — primarily UN agencies, including the International Trade Centre (ITC) — while placing country ownership in the NIUs inside the Ministries of Trade. Projects focus on a range of priorities, including helping establish fair policies; generating data; enabling market access; providing capacity-building for female entrepreneurs and female-led MSMEs; and enhancing women's collective empowerment through the formation of, or support to, women's trade associations and cooperative.

Women represent nearly 80% of the actors in the shea butter production chain. They are at the heart of this activity and are responsible for collecting fresh nuts from the fields and forests, processing them to obtain almonds and extracting the butter.



Women in Timor-Leste leverage opportunities in tourism and Fairtrade coffee

COVID-19 exposed a range of inequalities around the world, especially with regard to gender. Women were disproportionately affected by the pandemic, because they tend to earn less and hold insecure jobs that are often unpaid. The EWPT initiative took aim at these inequalities in Timor-Leste's tourism sector, which was deeply impacted by the pandemic. The country's subsequent tourism recovery process provided an opportunity to ensure that women were front and centre in the sector's restoration efforts. In 2022, an assessment on tourism and gender was carried out, and the results were disseminated widely as an awareness-raising exercise. A vocational training programme for women working in the tourism sector was organized, and women who participated have shared feedback on how they are using the lessons learned and how it has benefitted their small businesses.

In addition to the tourism sector, the EIF supported a collaborative project with Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand to enhance the quality, quantity and export revenues of Timor-Leste's coffee sector. An emphasis was placed on the need to build the decision-making and leadership capacity of women in Fairtrade Small-scale Producer Organizations. Small-scale producers were also trained to increase their knowledge of environmental standards and strategies for accessing markets through Fairtrade. As a result of the project, producers in the coffee value chain — most of them being women — were able to export 10 Fairtrade and certified organic containers worth USD 525,436 to Canada, Japan and the United States (US).

Leading the way through female-led businesses in West Africa, the EIF understands the value of increasing trading opportunities for women in the LDCs. By enhancing export opportunities for women entrepreneurs, the

EIF is advancing equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth. Boosting productivity to an export-oriented level is a key goal for the EIF when working with MSMEs, because when enterprises export, they can grow at faster rates and provide the type of well-paying jobs needed to reduce poverty.

MSMEs that have been helped through this approach include Zikora, a woman-led shea nut processing company located in the north of Benin; and Scoops, a women's soybean cooperative in Togo. Zikora specializes in transforming shea nuts into shea butter and other products, such as soaps and ointments. The EIF provided the company with equipment, promotional support and training, which resulted in a 26% growth in only one year. Meanwhile, the EIF supported the participation of Scoops in Togo's national soybean fair in Dapaong and in the Lomé International Fair, which resulted in a two-fold sales increase for its cosmetics and food products.



© Ollivier Girard/EIF

EIF supported a collaborative project with Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand to enhance the quality, quantity and export revenues of Timor-Leste's coffee sector.

09 EIF operations: Providing adaptive and impactful programming

The effective functioning of EIF operations is crucial to the success of impactful programming. EIF Phase Two was characterized by a number of challenges, including conflict, natural disasters, and the global COVID-19 pandemic. The flexible, adaptive and innovate nature of EIF operations and its dedicated partners ensured that programming could continue and be effective.

“ At the global level, VfM policies and processes clearly improved over the life of the EIF, and particularly following the transition from Phase One to Phase Two.

– EIF Phase Two Evaluation



Highlights

55 percentage-point increase in "on-time" submissions of reports and evaluations.

118 projects under implementation, closure or closed during 2023.

330 articles published on Trade for Development News.

90% of programme targets were met or exceeded for EIF Phase Two.



© NIU Nepal/EIF

Communications was another area of enormous growth for EIF operations, with a number of new initiatives that emerged over EIF Phase Two to help tell on-the-ground stories of EIF projects and facilitate access to essential data and information.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) was crucial to that effective storytelling. By becoming increasingly outcome and lesson focused, MEL plays a central role in providing accurate data and information to internal and external audiences.

The EIF's commitment to maximizing the effectiveness of its programming evolved over EIF Phase Two, with its 2017 Value for Money Framework and Action Matrix acting as a roadmap to success.

EIF Phase Two also saw the EIF also place a strong focus on building effective and indispensable risk management systems. This attention to risk management processes significantly mitigated the negative impacts of COVID-19 and other challenges on programming.

The EIF invested into tea production in Lao PDR and Nepal over Phase Two.

Partnerships



8 EIF Partner Agencies bringing a wealth of experience to the LDCs.

At the heart of the EIF are the partnerships that define its very essence. By bringing together the LDCs with an alliance of funding and development partners, the EIF strategically aligns its efforts with a shared goal: harnessing trade to foster LDC growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction. These partnerships promote synergies between governments, international organizations and the private sector and cultivate a collaborative environment that amplifies the impact of the EIF's initiatives. By grounding its approach in local insights and effectively coordinating the contributions of donors and partners, the EIF amplifies the benefits of technical assistance, financial support and expert knowledge. These partnerships do not only bring a wealth of diverse expertise and resources; they also ensure that development strategies are inclusively designed and tailored to the unique needs of the LDCs. Through these collective efforts, the EIF has bolstered its role in

driving substantial economic transformations and advancing sustainable development in beneficiary countries.

EIF Partner Agencies

The EIF has eight core Partner Agencies, which play a crucial role in shaping the strategic direction of the EIF, as they contribute to its governance and decision-making processes by holding seats on the EIF Board.

They are also instrumental in implementing a wide range of projects, spanning both country-specific and regional efforts. Over EIF Phase Two, the EIF's eight core Partner Agencies have acted as Main Implementing Entities (MIEs) for 49 EIF projects (28% of all projects by number), representing a total of USD 19.35 million from the EIF Trust Fund (EIFTF).



United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

[Click/scan here for more](#)



The UNIDO-EIF partnership has encompassed a range of critical development areas, including support for SPS standards in Burundi; marine fishery enhancements in Cambodia; industrial statistics for SMEs in Lao PDR; and feasibility studies in Chad. In EIF Phase Two, a highlight of this ongoing collaboration has been the investment in the artisanal fisheries sector in Guinea-Bissau. This initiative has sought to strengthen the competitiveness and socio-economic conditions of over 300 fisherfolk, directing particular attention to empowering women and youth, who are deeply involved in fish processing and marketing. They have

benefited from training and equipment to improve traditional fish preservation methods and from the establishment of a market information system and mobile sales points to access timely market data. Additionally, an environmental and social management plan was developed to ensure that project activities were sustainable and met environmental standards. The EIF has also collaborated with UNIDO in the provision of technical assistance. UNIDO was a key partner in the EIF's investment promotion initiatives and jointly worked on events and publications to create awareness on the application of the Fourth Industrial Revolution for the LDCs.

A central objective of the EIF is to facilitate the integration of the LDCs into the global trading system, of which the WTO is a central pillar. Consequently, the EIF's governance structures have been heavily embedded within WTO mechanisms, for instance, through coordination mechanisms of WTO representatives of the LDCs and donors. As the host of the ES, the programme has leveraged the frequent presence of the EIF Countries engaged in the regular work of the WTO. From an administrative perspective, the WTO has been instrumental in facilitating the EIF's operations, hosting meetings and providing quality interpretation and translation services through to design, publications, digital and administrative support. An inherent and key part of the partnership has also been the direct access to, and insights on, ongoing trade negotiations and their impact for the LDCs. From a knowledge perspective, WTO expertise has been fed into DTISs — from reviews of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) analyses to pro-bono contributions in the area of trade finance.

The EIF has intensified collaboration with other technical assistance from the WTO. For instance, in EIF Phase Two, the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) began rolling out projects implemented through the EIF's NIUs and engaged in the

direct co-financing of projects in the LDCs. Joint work with the STDF has helped boost regional SPS collaboration in the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. The collaboration has also promoted reduced aflatoxin contamination in Burkina Faso. EIF support to the implementation of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement included the operationalization of committees, through to technical work and engagement with the Trade Facilitation Facility, and now support towards the implementation and access to the WTO's Fisheries Facility.

In line with WTO Ministerial decisions related to cotton, the EIF worked with the WTO to enhance support to the LDCs in this sector, including through a joint project with UNCTAD and ITC on cotton by-products. Likewise, with LDC graduation issues being a key topic of discussion, the EIF facilitated a series of analytical pieces that provided greater clarity on the trade-related implications of LDC graduation.

Additionally, led by the WTO, the EIF helped facilitate the engagement of the LDCs around trade-related elements in the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs. There have been strong synergies in the support to LDC accessions.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



UNCTAD



UNCTAD was a key partner in establishing Bhutan's investment portal, which has already facilitated more than USD 350 million in foreign and domestic investment.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



EIF foundational partner UNCTAD has significantly shaped the EIF's approach to e-commerce, trade facilitation and investment promotion in the LDCs. UNCTAD has also been a key manager of EIF-funded projects worth approximately USD 3.7 million, and helping leverage millions more from national governments and development partners.

A highlight of UNCTAD's collaboration over EIF Phase Two has been its leadership in the "eTrade for all" initiative, where the EIF has been a founding partner since July 2016. This initiative has supported nine eTrade Readiness Assessments across the LDCs, providing crucial insights into their e-commerce ecosystems and identifying key areas for development, including gender equity considerations. These Assessments have laid the groundwork for subsequent EIF-funded projects, such as national e-commerce strategy formulations and capacity-building efforts in Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal and Senegal, which were informed by the initial findings of UNCTAD's studies. Additionally, based on these same initial findings, the EIF has supported an e-commerce institutional

capacity-building project in Rwanda and productive capacity-building projects in Bhutan and Cambodia. Innovative projects in Cambodia and Vanuatu have pioneered e-commerce, customs and postal system connections in conjunction with the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in addition to the ESW system for trade in Vanuatu. In a similarly innovative mechanism, UNCTAD was a key partner in establishing Bhutan's investment portal in line with the discussions around investment facilitation, which has already facilitated more than USD 350 million in foreign and domestic investment. Through a regional project in West Africa, concluding in 2023, UNCTAD also helped establish a sub-regional strategy for transit, transport and trade facilitation, likewise helping inform significantly greater investments from other partners. UNCTAD played a central role in facilitating increased coordination and collaboration of partners supporting investment promotion in the LDCs; and in launching dedicated e-learning courses on trade and gender for LDC participants.



United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

[Click/scan here for more](#)



The EIF's partnership with UNWTO in EIF Phase Two has been instrumental in promoting inclusive and sustainable development through tourism. A cornerstone of this collaboration is the EWPT initiative in Timor-Leste, where UNWTO's expertise has been essential in advancing tourism and women's economic empowerment. Through this initiative, UNWTO has played a critical role in upskilling local tourism and hospitality providers, crucial for a resilient post-COVID-19 recovery. Notably, the Women Empowerment

and Tourism Recovery project has effectively developed a specialized training curriculum and equipped trainers with innovative high impact tourism training methods. These efforts are designed to significantly enhance skills development, empowering women to lead the charge in revitalizing Timor-Leste's tourism sector. Progress in this area builds on the joint analysis conducted by UNWTO and the WTO and financed by the EIF around tourism development and the LDCs.

World Bank Group

As the single biggest implementing agency for DTISs, the WB Group plays a central role in generating trade-related analyses. The WB Group has conducted 23 DTISs, involving EIF investments of some USD 6.3 million over EIF Phases One and Two. These studies are vital, as they provide a strategic foundation for identifying and prioritizing trade interventions in the LDCs; guiding policy decisions; and enhancing integration into the global economy. WB Group involvement at the analytical stage has helped inform broader WB Group investments, such as in Bangladesh, where the DTIS was used as a key input into two trade facilitation projects with a combined value of over USD 200 million. Likewise, in Lao PDR, the WB Group has been a cornerstone of an effective EIF system helping leverage and implement a multi-donor trust fund around the implementation of DTIS priorities. The WB Group has also provided core behind-the-scenes support to EIF systems in other countries, such as helping operationalize EIF systems (such as increased donor coordination and national ownership of trade priorities) in Myanmar through to being the Donor Facilitator in Tanzania.

In line with its central objectives, the WB Group has been a key knowledge partner, particularly in focus areas of EIF Phase Two, such as on the linkages between gender and climate change. In a shift from EIF Phase One, the WB Group has provided increased levels of technical assistance, such as establishing frameworks for Special Economic Zones in Malawi through EIF funding; and support to trade facilitation systems like the ESW in Vanuatu through other WB Group finance. Additionally, leveraging broader trade- and private sector-related specialized training was facilitated for Somali Government officials, focusing on key aspects of WTO accession with EIF finance. This partnership, involving the Trade Policy Training Centre in Africa (TRAPCA) and the Government of Sweden, focused on offering advanced courses in international trade policy and trade law, further enhancing the officials' capabilities to navigate and integrate their country into the global trade system. Moreover, in Burkina Faso, joint initiatives were undertaken to improve conditions for women cross-border traders.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The IMF is a founding agency of the EIF. During EIF Phase Two, the IMF increased its focus on fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS), many of which are LDCs, with the launch of a new policy specifically targeting these countries. This renewed approach

includes the preparation of dedicated country strategies for FCAS; additional investments in staff resources; and the development of a staff guidance note for the application of the strategy in a country context.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



International Trade Centre (ITC)

[Click/scan here for more](#)



The EIF has collaborated effectively with ITC, particularly in areas around women-led MSMEs, through the provision of catalytic finance to establish SheTrades Hubs and initial investments in Rwanda, The Gambia and Zambia. In Rwanda, as part of the ITC SheTrades programme, the EIF-funded Export Growth Initiative project linked nearly 150 women-owned businesses to buyers and markets locally and internationally, significantly boosting incomes and standards of living. In Zambia, ITC developed a "Gender Lens Funding" guide in collaboration with the Bank of Zambia and Absa Bank Zambia. ITC also helped ensure the inclusion of gender dimensions in Zambia's Public Procurement Bill. Similarly, in The Gambia, the EIF and ITC joint efforts led to the creation of the Jokkalante digital market platform, enhancing the horticultural sector's resilience and connectivity amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This platform not only improves market access for local producers, particularly women, but also ensures sustainability through its private-sector-led business model. Together, these initiatives in The Gambia, Rwanda and Zambia have helped generate USD 20 million in exports to 18 different international markets. With EIF financing into such initiatives, ITC has leveraged an additional USD 5 million+ in

resources from both the private sector and traditional donors for further investments to scale up EIF-initiated investments.

Beyond these initiatives, ITC's technical support in Lesotho was instrumental in introducing greenhouse farming technology, which enhanced crop quality, market reach and climate resilience. The EIF also financed the development of the Lesotho National Export Strategy, focused on sectors such as horticulture, textiles and light industry to drive export growth and economic empowerment. In a similar vein, the EIF financed two additional sectoral contributions to Liberia's National Export Strategy. Here, ITC subsequently implemented an EIF project focused on revitalizing the tourism sector by developing crucial infrastructure and a unified marketing strategy. Initiatives included construction of a surf house and visitor centre in Robertsport, which have increased tourist visits and boosted local economic growth. This collaboration has effectively brought stakeholders together to leverage tourism as a catalyst for economic development in the region. In a shift from EIF Phase One, ITC has also played a key role as a sub-implementing agency, contributing specialist support to nationally implemented projects, such as the tourism and handicrafts project in Uganda.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP has played a key EIF partnership role, particularly with regard to supporting implementation in FCAS. In total, UNDP has implemented 13 projects in EIF Phase Two (32 in total). Additionally, with UNDP often playing a key role in supporting the development of LDC NDPs, it has been involved in 12 DTISs (9 in EIF Phase One and 3 in EIF Phase Two), and additional NIA support has helped integrate trade into these key documents. During EIF Phase Two, DTISUs were conducted for Bhutan, CAR and South Sudan, providing critical insights for shaping their trade and development strategies. A case in point is the post-conflict trade policy developed in CAR.

Likewise, UNDP has been a core partner of the EIF in the Pacific, providing support to a remote region of the world. In Kiribati, for instance, UNDP helped establish a virgin coconut oil centre in December 2022. This initiative aims to reduce poverty by enhancing local value-added products and spreading knowledge on coconut product processing and marketing, particularly benefiting women and youth on Tab-South Island.

In South Sudan, the UNDP-EIF partnership, building on an initial trade and peace assessment, has successfully leveraged additional funding from the Netherlands and the AfDB to enhance e-commerce interventions. This effort has led to the creation of Dukaanye, South Sudan's first online marketplace platform, as part of the Revised

National Development Strategy (2021-2024). In Lesotho, the UNDP-EIF partnership built upon earlier initiatives with ITC, achieving a 20% increase in vegetable production of previous beneficiaries. This success has been driven by enhanced agricultural practices and improved market linkages, furthering food security and economic resilience in the region.

In Tanzania, the UNDP-EIF partnership has focused on enhancing income generation from key sectors such as palm oil, honey and horticulture on the mainland and seaweed and anchovy on Zanzibar. This collaboration aimed to boost productivity and market access, with a special emphasis on empowering women and youth, drawing on insights from previous projects to strengthen the capacities of local Government authorities. These efforts are designed to help MSMEs improve their business development skills and competitiveness in both local and international markets. Seaweed production increased from 21.7 metric tonnes (MT) in 2021 to 50.1 MT in 2022 and was estimated to reach 70 MT by the end of 2023. With 77% of beneficiaries being women, the project has a strong gender dimension.



EIF's partnership with UNDP in South Sudan

led to the creation of Dukaanye, the country's first online marketplace platform.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



Snapshots of key partnerships during EIF Phase Two



The EIF brought together key partners including around investment, trade and climate.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



In addition to EIF core Agency partnerships, the EIF has leveraged key partners in EIF Phase Two focus areas, which include investment, climate, digital, gender, technology and regional cooperation. For instance, the EIF has leveraged crucial expertise from the **World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies** to boost investment promotion capacities in Francophone LDCs, ensuring that services are closely aligned with investor needs at the same time as building collaborative networks around investment support to the LDCs. In the digital and regional space, **ITU** has partnered with the EIF to bridge the gendered digital divide in Burundi, Ethiopia and Haiti, empowering women through targeted digital trade training and supportive policy frameworks. In Asia, **UN-ESCAP** has worked alongside the EIF to strengthen e-commerce capabilities, training over 2,000 women entrepreneurs and facilitating their integration into global e-commerce platforms. Innovative projects funded by the EIF jointly with the UPU and UNCTAD in Cambodia and Vanuatu increased border efficiency and reduced red tape and friction in the cross-border shipment of postal items. This project responds to new legislation brought in by the US, the EU, China, Russia and others, which seeks to address the fast-growing volumes of cross-border e-commerce shipments and the challenges this presents, such as illicit trade, security risks, inefficient revenue collection and insufficient statistical analyses. Broader engagement with UN-ESCAP and the WTO included supporting the development of frameworks for paperless trade.

Meanwhile, in Africa, collaborations with **UNECA** and **ITFC** have been crucial in bolstering trade capacity under the AfCFTA, promoting substantial economic growth. Through an EWPT project, the EIF partnered with **Fairtrade Australia-New Zealand** in Ethiopia and Timor-Leste.

Leveraging regional interests in shea, the EIF collaboration with the **Global Shea Alliance** enabled synergies across countries and shared resources and lessons, while leveraging national EIF structures for implementation. The EIF built on a partnership with the **International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology**, supporting follow-on investments building on the EIF project with more than USD 100 million from the Mastercard Foundation.

On the climate front, the EIF partnered with **ODI** and the **International Institute for Sustainable Development** (IISD) to build knowledge and connections amongst trade and climate negotiators in the LDCs.

These selected partnerships reflect only a portion of the diverse and influential collaborations that have consistently supported the EIF's initiatives during EIF Phase Two, as detailed in both this and prior annual reports.

Through a series of learning events, partnerships were established between the LDCs, establishing platforms for the sharing of experiences across.

Communications

Showcasing LDC stories in trade and development

During Phase Two, the EIF has continued to place strategic emphasis on the power of storytelling to vividly narrate the transformative impacts of trade in the LDCs, giving the floor to the LDCs and partners to share their own experiences. Central to this approach is the "Trade for Development News" platform, which was launched at the 2018 WTO Committee on Trade and Development's Aid for Trade meeting. This platform aims to amplify LDC voices and highlight the tangible benefits of trade on their development.

Trade for Development News serves as a dynamic repository for stories, articles and multimedia content that spotlight the successes and challenges of trade initiatives in the LDCs. Throughout EIF Phase Two, the EIF has published a diverse array of content through the platform, including deep dives into specific projects in countries, and Q&As with influential trade figures in the LDCs. Covering sectors from agriculture and tourism to digital trade, the platform showcases how the LDCs are innovating and progressing despite significant obstacles.

The platform has become a vital tool in the EIF's communications arsenal, especially during critical times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the platform shifted its focus to the resilience of the LDCs, sharing stories of adaptability and perseverance amidst global economic disruptions. Additionally, it connects articles to broader global events and issues, such as environmental challenges. For example, in 2022, Trade for Development News leveraged the timing of the UNFCCC's COP in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to feature a seven-part series exploring how the LDCs are navigating the intersection of climate action and trade policies. The series helped demonstrate how trade can contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future.

Building on this success, in 2023, the EIF launched a significant initiative focusing on a comprehensive impact story for each LDC. This new endeavour delved into

the EIF's achievements and challenges within each country, aiming to enhance the understanding and engagement of both local and international audiences across both time and countries. By the end of the 2023, 16 such impact stories had been published on Trade for Development News.

Alongside the Trade for Development News platform, the EIF further expanded its outreach during EIF Phase Two through strategic op-eds and partnerships with major global platforms, such as the OECD Development Matters blog, Thomson Reuters Foundations News, and Devex. These were also featured in prominent regional publications, including The Diplomat and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development's Bridges Africa. Additionally, these efforts extended to publishing on platforms of some of the EIF's key partners, such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, ITC and the World Bank. Overall, more than 50 op-eds were disseminated across these external platforms during EIF Phase Two, with a peak in 2020, when more than 20 op-eds were published, offering timely analyses of the significant impacts of COVID-19 on trade in the LDCs as early as April of that year. These op-eds feature insights from key figures such as LDC ministers, covering themes like digital trade, sustainable practices and the importance of global cooperation in trade. These stories published in renowned channels have helped the perspectives of the LDCs reach a broad and influential audience, further amplifying their impact on international trade discussions. Furthermore, the EIF continues to disseminate a regular newsletter, which saw a significant format update in 2023. The editorial scope was broadened to cover a wider range of topics and provide a curated selection of news from the EIF partnership, particularly focusing on developments in the LDCs. This revamped newsletter keeps stakeholders informed and actively engaged with the ongoing efforts and progress within the partnership.



300+ stories
(23 in 2023)
published on Trade for Development News, including news and impact stories and event coverage.

50+ op-eds published externally (3 in 2023).

Seven-part series
[Click/scan here for more](#)



OECD Development Matters blog
[Click/scan here for more](#)



Thomson Reuters Foundations News
[Click/scan here for more](#)



Devex
[Click/scan here for more](#)





X/Twitter

[Click/scan here for more](#)



LinkedIn

[Click/scan here for more](#)



Facebook

[Click/scan here for more](#)



YouTube

[Click/scan here for more](#)



Instagram

[Click/scan here for more](#)



Flickr

[Click/scan here for more](#)



Digital engagement: Boosting the EIF's social media presence

The EIF has harnessed the connective power of social media to magnify the impact of trade in the development of the LDCs across primary channels like X/Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and on visually driven platforms such as YouTube, Instagram and Flickr. Through these initiatives, the EIF has woven stories that reflect the transformative nature of its work. The EIF has woven stories that reflect the transformative nature of its work.

In 2019, the EIF introduced a comprehensive social media strategy focused on disseminating key facts and figures about LDC trade and showcasing the expertise of Trade for Development News writers. This strategy involved producing a variety of content, including short videos, infographics, GIFs and image cards designed to inform and increase the understanding of the EIF's work. This approach significantly boosted engagement and attracted new followers.

Innovative communications and social media campaigns have been a hallmark of the EIF's approach to social media, creating interactive platforms that resonate with both local and global audiences. Notable campaigns include #PowerUpTrade (2020), which showcased the resilience of entrepreneurs during the pandemic; and #AfriCommerce (2021), which spotlighted the economic potential within Francophone Africa. In 2022, the "Country Take Over Days" provided the LDCs with a platform to share their unique stories, significantly enhancing global engagement and awareness, while the social media campaign around International Women's Day in 2023 provided a platform to highlight the EIF's work on gender and women's economic empowerment.

Enhancing the EIF website

The EIF has continuously improved its website to enhance user experience and ensure that content resonates effectively with its audience. Since significant upgrades began in 2017, the website has attracted an average of over 90,000 new users annually. These enhancements have included multi-language support, streamlined navigation and

rich, image-driven content, making it easier for users to access and engage with information relevant to their needs. Each iteration, from revamping the landing page to optimizing country-specific pages, has been geared towards presenting a clearer, more compelling narrative of the EIF's impact on trade and development within the LDCs. At the same time, working with the EIF website is work in progress and has – and will – require continuous enhancement.

Amplifying LDC voices through global events

Over the years, the EIF has leveraged events as dynamic platforms to engage with partners and showcase the collaborative spirit central to its mission. These gatherings not only addressed current trade issues but also ensured that the voices of the LDCs were prominently featured in global, regional and national forums.

At a global level, the EIF has consistently marked its presence at pivotal global trade meetings, including the WTO Public Forums, the Global Reviews of Aid for Trade and the UNCTAD eWeeks, and commemorating significant dates such as International Women's Day.

Some highlights from these engagements include the 2018 EIF Global Forum on Inclusive Trade for LDCs in Geneva, which attracted over 300 participants from more than 50 countries. This Forum fostered practical, results-oriented discussions and showcased successes in promoting inclusive trade. Another key event was the EIF session at the July 2019 Global Review of Aid for Trade in Geneva, entitled "Seeing Impact and Looking Forward." This session brought together over 200 participants, including policymakers and trade experts, and showcased high-level political commitments with funding pledges from six countries. It provided a platform for discussing the EIF's impactful initiatives and strategies for enhancing trade and development in the LDCs.

In 2020-2021, the shift towards digital events during the pandemic allowed the EIF to sustain strong engagement amidst global disruptions. Notably, a series of Expert

Q&A sessions addressing COVID-19's impact on trade and recovery strategies drew an international audience of over 2,700 participants, highlighting the effectiveness of digital platforms in sustaining critical dialogue.

In 2023, the EIF continued its active engagement, including through its own EIF Global Forum: Learning from country experiences in September — bringing together stakeholders from 36 LDCs and development partners to discuss the AfT landscape, focusing on systemic changes in productive capacity and promoting inclusive trade. This Forum served as a crucial platform for experience-sharing and South-South cooperation. At the WTO Public Forum that same month, the EIF organized and co-organized three sessions, focusing on sustainable industrialization in Africa; environmental sustainability; and the role of investment promotion agencies and trade institutions in leveraging digital tools to create sustainable supply chain partnerships. Additionally, during the UNCTAD eWeek in December 2023, the EIF hosted sessions focused on integrating underserved communities into the digital economy; enhancing digital trade capacities in the LDCs; and leveraging technologies for paperless trade in the Asia-Pacific region.

Over EIF Phase Two, the EIF participated in several country missions aimed at deepening donor relationships by providing a first-hand look at results, lessons and challenges related to EIF project implementation. In November 2018, the EIF, in collaboration with Rwanda's Ministry of Trade and Industry, led an impact-focused mission to Rwanda. A number

of donor partners — including Australia, the EU, Germany, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Sweden and the Netherlands and other development agencies — participated in the mission, which aimed to highlight the EIF's unique value, country ownership and results and to attract further donor interest and support.

Similarly, in October 2022, the EIF organized a partner visit to Cambodia and Lao PDR. The delegation included 14 EIF Donor and LDC representatives from capital and in-country offices. The mission provided partners with an opportunity to engage in discussions with the NIUs and the private sector and see first-hand the ways in which EIF investments contribute to institutional strengthening and improved marketability of potential export products.



Stakeholders from 36 LDCs and development partners convene at the EIF Global Forum in September 2023 to discuss systemic changes in inclusive trade and productive capacity.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)



2023 numbers

54 joint monitoring missions undertaken.

5 Risk and Issues

Management Taskforce meetings held.

101 evaluations

conducted in the phase.

147 participants

at the EIF Global Forum: Learning from country experiences in EIF Phase Two.

345 participants

(30% female) from 39 LDCs enrolled in EIF e-learning courses with an 85% rate of successful completion.

Monitoring

Over EIF Phase Two, monitoring has become increasingly outcome- and lesson-focused, as well as more effective and efficient. Challenges remain given the diversity of implementing mechanisms. However, increased capacity at the country level has led to improved availability and quality of data to help inform strategic management decisions. Tools (such as more detailed reporting templates and the development of data collection toolkits) as well as training have been key factors in the improved quality of monitoring data. Beyond EIF implementation, there is evidence that these toolkits are being utilized more broadly to inform LDC Ministry project monitoring practices.

Towards the end of the phase, monitoring has become more risk-based combined with an increased frequency of work plan monitoring. In addition to ongoing support to EIF projects, in 2023 a total of 54 missions were undertaken by the ES, of which 47 conducted jointly with the TFM. During these missions, ES Coordinators and the TFM's Regional Portfolio Managers worked with project implementation teams to make recommendations to help improve and adapt project delivery, including overcoming bottlenecks. A total of nine programme-level joint portfolio reviews were organized in 2023, assessing progress and risks towards implementation and closure. Monitoring processes were adapted to be more flexible and effective, and monthly updates were established on work plan implementation and advance preparation of the Project Completion Reports (PCRs).

Risk management also continued to evolve with the EIF's digital platform for risk management and new processes for assessing project-level risks towards closure. Five Risk and Issues Management Taskforce meetings were held over the year. Risks towards closure of the phase were elevated with increased mitigation mechanisms implemented, thus helping reduce the overall level of risk to the programme by the end of the year. Other major risks emerged from issues due to political instability and conflict in EIF Countries.

Evaluation

Substantial investments were made to the evaluation functions of the EIF in Phase Two, with new guidelines developed to facilitate more efficient and effective project evaluations. Amongst other improvements, new mechanisms included the initiation of evaluation synthesis reviews, establishing a peer review process and piloting new forms of impact, sustainability and thematic evaluations. In 2023, for instance, this included three learning evaluations, including assessing gender mainstreaming in DTISs; assessing environmental and climate change dimensions in DTISs; and assessing the EIF's EWPT initiative. At the project level, the ES continued to provide technical assistance to ensure the quality of EIF project evaluation reports and PCRs. The guidelines for sustainability reviews were finalized and shared with the EIF Countries. As of December 2023, technical support and quality assurance had been provided to a total of 101 evaluations consisting of 35 independent project evaluations, 63 internal PCRs and 3 programmatic learning evaluations.

Learning

With the imminent closure of EIF Phase Two, 2023 focused on capturing lessons from the implementation of the phase. A number of significant learning events were conducted in this regard, including the organization of the EIF Global Forum, to take stock of lessons learned across the key themes of the EIF. The Forum harnessed the sharing of country experiences in implementing EIF Phase Two and brought together 147 participants (on site and online) representing the LDCs, EIF Partner Agencies, EIF Donors and international experts.

The EIF Countries continued to share experiences related to learning. For example, countries including Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Tuvalu have been learning from The Gambia's experience in harnessing climate funding for trade. Learning between EIF Countries has been greatly facilitated through events bringing countries together to share

their own experiences, as well as direct country-to-country connections on areas of common interest facilitated by the ES. The evaluation of the EIF's EWPT initiative, however, pointed out that despite the EIF's broad network, there is further opportunity to expand this learning function across thematic areas such as gender.

Capacity-building

Building capacity in the LDCs to design, implement, monitor and learn from projects has been a central tenant of the EIF. At the most core level, this has been focused around working with teams in-country at each stage of the process. In EIF Phase Two, this has increasingly focused on building capacity to monitor as well as evaluate and learn from project cycles. In project development, there has been a much stronger focus on building capacity to develop projects for funding from the national treasury and other bilateral partners. Following the rapid assessment of the monitoring and evaluation functions of the EIF mid-phase, a series of dedicated capacity building mechanisms were initiated in 2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic, training moved to virtual platforms, bringing benefits in terms of both cost and reach. However, this approach also meant missing out on the face-to-face interactions and related learning opportunities.

Post COVID-19, in 2022, a further set of regional workshops resumed. To ensure the effective closure of EIF Phase Two, 2023 capacity-building activities focused on training NIU and MIE officials on project closure requirements and processes and expected deliverables, while also focusing on capturing

lessons learned from the implementation of this most recent phase. In January and July 2023, the ES and the TFM organized trainings focusing on operational and financial project closure requirements, processes and tools for the benefit of 145 participants from NIUs and MIEs. To ensure the effective harvesting of results and impacts of the EIF Phase Two programme in the beneficiary countries, 55 country officials were trained on conducting impact and sustainability reviews of past projects.

More participants from the LDCs built their capacity on project evaluation design and management by enrolling in and completing EIF e-learning courses hosted on the WTO's e-learning platform. A total of 345 participants (30% female) from 39 LDCs enrolled in the different trainings in 2023. Over 85% of enrolled participants successfully completed the courses.



345 participants from **39 LDCs** enrolled in trainings in 2023.

“The EIF regional workshop in Addis Ababa provided us with a shared understanding of best implementation practices and the impacts achieved in different country settings... In the wake of the workshop, Malawi has already embraced the Ugandan Tourism project's approach, where key public stakeholders were involved, which resulted in the development of a project proposal.

– **Cuthbert Wadonda Chirwa**, Chief Economist, Head of Monitoring & Evaluation Section, Ministry of Trade of Malawi

“The Secondment Programme provides knowledge and skills that cannot be acquired in a seminar or a classroom. The practicality responds to most of the questions that NIUs have at country level, including how important the M&E functions are, the use of various tools and reporting requirements. With this programme, I am more resourceful and will provide support in Tanzania, to the EIF and other LDCs.

– **Natasha Ngalla Ngowi**, Senior Trade Officer and M&E Expert, Tanzania Ministry of Industry and Trade, Department of Policy and Planning Programmes and Projects Coordination Unit

Lessons learned from MEL implementation over EIF Phase Two



EIF Phase Two in numbers:

21 percentage-point increase in the proportion of projects scoring higher ratings in their **project's independent evaluation**.

40 percentage-point increase in the reporting of **gender-disaggregated data**.

55 percentage-point increase in "on-time" submissions of **narrative reports and evaluations**.

24 percentage-point increase in the number of **NIUs with dedicated MEL staff**.

250% increase in the frequency of **monitoring missions**.

[Click/scan here for more](#)



In 2018, a Rapid Assessment of the EIF's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system was undertaken to take stock and provide recommendations for a more effective M&E system for EIF Phase Two. The assessment concluded with nine key findings and recommendations. A sub-working group of the EIF Board was established for the following three years to address the recommendations together with the ES and the TFM, and additional resources were provided for the strengthening of the M&E system. In the ensuing period, there has been:

#1

A stronger overall MEL system that focuses on learning and improvements, where the EIF programme evaluation noted that "EIF MEL capacity was substantially strengthened from Phase One to Phase Two" alongside "significant strides on improving its risk management system following the COVID pandemic, applying the learnings and tools from engaging with that process."

#2

Better project implementation with a 31% increase in the proportion of projects scoring moderately satisfactory or above in their evaluations (88% of projects assessed in the 2022 Annual Evaluation Synthesis Review, up from 67% of projects in 2019).

#3

Improved quality of data following the roll-out of new reporting templates and data collection toolkits. For instance, between 2016 and 2018, the share of progress reports that reported gender-disaggregated data for value chain trainings was 59%. Between 2019 and 2021, this had increased to 84%, and in 2022-2023, 99% reported gender-disaggregated data. Similarly, the quality of qualitative data improved: whereas in 2017, only 15% of project reports included impact stories, by 2022, this figure had increased to 100%. This was made possible through combined MEL-Communications training of countries on drafting impact stories and a greater focus on qualitative results and lessons in the updated reporting template.

#4

More timely reporting, where in 2017, the "on-time" submission rates for narrative reports was 25%; 15% for evaluations; and 40% for PCRs. In 2022, over 80% of projects submitted their narrative reports on time, with over 70% of evaluations and 80% of PCRs submitted on time. By 2023, at which time only PCRs were due, 88% of projects submitted their evaluations and PCRs on time.

#5

Progress in the capacity of trade-related ministries to undertake MEL. While there is still progress to be made, there are encouraging signs of improved and sustained MEL capacity in the EIF Countries, as demonstrated through the improved quality and timeliness of reporting. In 2020, 46% of NIUs that responded to a survey to assess the uptake of MEL skills noted that they had staff dedicated to M&E. By 2023, the percentage of NIUs with dedicated M&E staff was 70%. The increased capacity has also been evident in country-specific examples, such as in Niger, Senegal and Uganda, all of which benefited from the MEL secondment programme. The NIU in Niger has now rolled out an online MEL system for their latest project, providing real-time data for project management; Senegal's NIU project design and implementation capacity was recognized through securing more than USD 3 million in funding from the national budget for a new project; and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities in Uganda has adopted the EIF's monitoring toolkit for all their development projects. On average, and excluding e-learning participants, between 2019 and 2023, more than 130 officials from the LDCs were trained in various aspects of MEL each year.

#6

Agile processes. For instance, during COVID-19, the ES and the TFM pivoted towards continuing monitoring missions, though on a virtual basis. Regular contact and working through national systems, which remained in place through the pandemic, meant that programming could also adapt to the changing circumstances.

#7

Closer monitoring of projects by the ES and the TFM. The number of monitoring missions increased by 250% between 2017 and 2023. From 2017 to 2018, an average of 22 project monitoring missions were undertaken annually. Between 2019 and 2021, COVID-19 greatly limited access to the field. Despite this challenge, EIF monitoring missions increased to an annual average of 34, partially as a result of the introduction of virtual monitoring missions in addition to field missions. In the period 2022-2023, despite a reduced staff complement, an annual average of 57 missions were undertaken.

#8

Stronger collaboration with EIF partners in the M&E Working Group and beyond. For instance, the EIF worked jointly with ITC in conducting sustainability reviews in Senegal and Tanzania. ITU is using EIF materials (particularly the EIF's Evaluation Guidelines) as a key source for further strengthening their own MEL mechanisms. In FCAS, EIF partners such as UNDP played a key role in supporting ongoing project implementation and monitoring.

#9

Progress. However, change takes time. While there have been major positive shifts in the approach to MEL that are yielding results, the processes take time and resources. The quality of reporting has been improving, particularly with respect to completeness and timeliness. Likewise, there is a trend towards more qualitative outcome and impact data, as well as reflection and update of lessons.



EIF MEL capacity was substantially strengthened from Phase One to Phase Two through the EIF management's concerted effort. (EIF programme evaluation 2021).

Snapshot: Niger's automated M&E system

In Niger, the Support Project for the Development of the Sesame Value Chain has contributed to the development of a system-wide M&E system known as the SASE (Automated M&E System). The online system has been developed to help collect data on different components of the sesame value chain, including production volume; processing volume and sales (in-country and export) value and volume; production zone geo-localization; and stock availability. Data for the system is collected using mobile devices and entered by key players in the sector, specifically the Executive Committee of the Sesame Interprofessional Organization and its different cooperatives.

The data to be generated for the next harvesting season will be put at the disposal of key national stakeholders, including the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Statistical Institute and private actors in the sesame sector (i.e., exporters and processors). At the time of reporting, the NIU was undertaking pilot tests of the system and working with the inter-professional organization to coordinate their internal monitoring committee, which will be responsible for collecting data in real time from the different regional aggregation centres in Tillabéry, Zinder and Maradi. It is expected that the tool will be fully deployed in the 2024 planting and harvesting season, usually between July and October.

Click/scan here for more



Value for Money (VfM)

The EIF is committed to delivering strong VfM, focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, economy and equity throughout the programme. This commitment was anchored in the 2017 VfM framework and action matrix. With respect to effectiveness, 90% of the programme targets have been met or exceeded for EIF Phase Two. The programme evaluation concluded that the EIF was an effective form of AfT. For example, modelling indicated that a doubling of EIF aid was linked to a 20% increase in total exports, compared to 4.7% from wider AfT initiatives. Likewise, 25% of trade policy reforms in the LDCs could be traced directly to the EIF partnership's influence. On efficiency, project approval times contracted considerably over the phase. In 2017, project approvals took some seven months to be approved.

By 2023, this process had decreased to 25 working days. The total disbursement of EIF Phase Two funds by 31 December 2023 was USD 136.15 million, representing 95.2% of the total allocation of EIF Phase Two. Regarding economy, new guidelines for competitive selection were introduced alongside cost reductions of 15% in 2022 and 30% in 2023 in the ES budget. On equity, EIF support has included all LDCs, with the exception of Eritrea, and including those facing challenging domestic situations. Similarly, EIF Phase Two saw a greater focus placed on gender and youth, particularly through the implementation of the EWPT initiative, which helped increase the proportion of women beneficiaries to 61% — almost double the proportion seen in EIF Phase One.



Adapting to risks

There was a strong focus on building effective risk management systems over EIF Phase Two with the development of a comprehensive risk management policy and implementation mechanisms. Risks to the programme sharply increased over the COVID-19 pandemic. However, risk management processes significantly mitigated the negative impacts on programming. Systems further developed through this period were anchored into the regular risk processes. Other significant risks that materialized included those of conflicts and natural disasters in the LDCs.

In many instances, mitigation measures supported continued operations. However, in cases such as Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sudan, EIF operations needed to be greatly curtailed or stopped. In 2023, additional risks related particularly to the closure of the projects remained elevated, and additional risk review and reduction mechanisms were introduced, including pro-active support to the closure processes by the ES and the TFM. Programme-level risks continue to be monitored through a dedicated Risk and Issues Management Taskforce and an online risk portal.

Fiduciary update

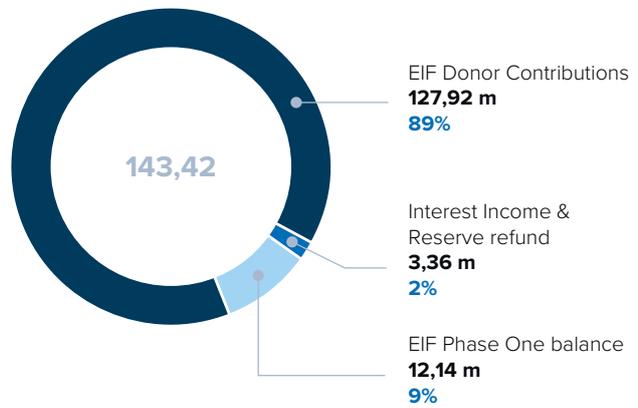
The EIF Trust Fund (EIFTF) at a glance

This section of the Report covers the EIFTF's primary fiduciary areas and provides insights into the EIFTF's contributions, allocations, disbursements and other financial and fiduciary activities.

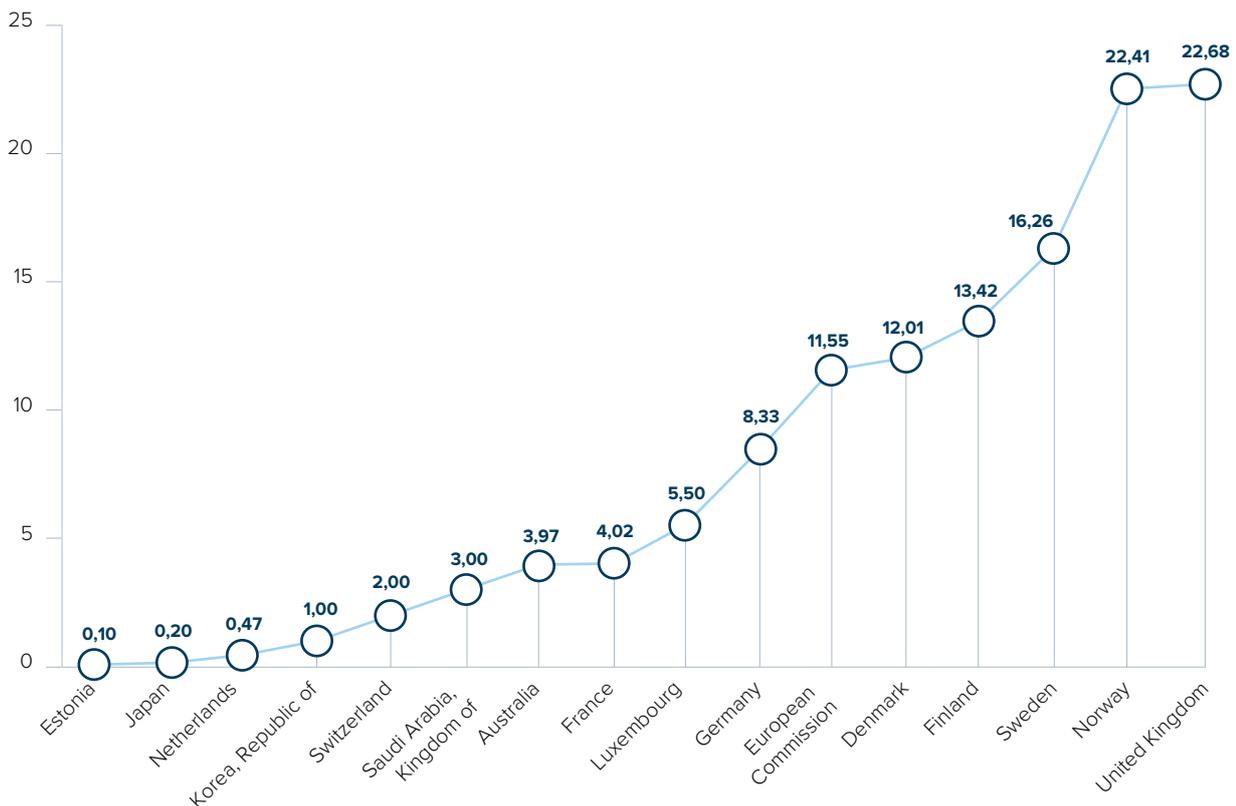
All contributions from the 16 EIF Donors of EIF Phase Two are accepted and managed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as a trustee of the EIFTF. The primary objective of these funds is to support the EIF partnership in trade for the LDCs.

From the 2015 EIF Pledging Conference to 31 December 2023, EIF Donors' commitments for EIF Phase Two (including the transfer of the EIF Phase One balance and interest earned) amounted to USD 150.12 million, out of which USD 143.42 million has been received. Total funds received up to the end of 2023 represent 95.02% of the total committed amount.

Trust Fund Sources



EIF Donor Contributions Received – as of 31 December 2023 (USD millions)



The EIFTF has effectively secured all the funding committed from the EIF Donors, as demonstrated by the contributions detailed for EIF Phase Two until the year ending 31 December 2023.

The contribution of over USD 143.42 million demonstrates strong support from the EIF Phase Two Donors. This financial support emphasizes the global commitment to the EIFTF's objectives in support of the LDCs.

In 2023, the EIFTF reported several key receipts, as detailed in Table 1. The combined total receipts for the year amounted to USD 1,509,392. This total encapsulates the contributions, the EIF Phase One balance and interest earned and a transfer made by UNOPS from its excess reserves.

Table 2 outlines overall funding for EIF Phase Two, including commitments and receipts by EIF Donor country and interest earned.

Table 1. The changes during the year 2023 only			
Report Category	EIF Donor	Commitments	Receipts
EIF Donor contribution	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of		1,000,000
	Total		1,000,000
EIF Phase One balance	EIF Phase One balance		1,870
	Total		1,870
Interest earned	Interest Income - Allocated	155,696	155,696
	Interest Income - Refund by Main Implementing Entities (MIEs)	17,242	17,242
	UNOPS excess reserves	334,584	334,584
	Total	507,522	507,522
Grand Total		507,522	1,509,392

Table 2. Overall EIF Phase Two funding			
Report Category	EIF Donor	Commitments	Receipts
EIF Donor contribution	Australia	3,965,521	3,965,521
	Denmark	12,009,573	12,009,573
	Estonia	101,539	101,539
	European Commission	11,550,748	11,550,748
	Finland	13,424,322	13,424,322
	France	4,018,307	4,018,307
	Germany	8,332,890	8,332,890
	Japan	197,321	197,321
	Korea, Republic of	1,000,000	1,000,000
	Luxembourg	5,495,219	5,495,219
	Netherlands	472,255	472,255
	Norway	22,414,346	22,414,346
	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of	4,000,000	4,000,000
	Sweden	16,259,461	16,259,461

Table 2. Overall EIF Phase Two funding (continued)			
Report Category	EIF Donor	Commitments	Receipts
	Switzerland	2,000,000	2,000,000
	United Kingdom	29,375,669	22,678,464*
	Total	134,617,171	127,919,966
EIF Phase One balance		12,142,463	12,142,463
	Total	12,142,463	12,142,463
Interest earned and UNOPS excess reserve refund	Interest Income - Allocated	2,944,708	2,944,708
	Interest Income - Refund by MIEs	77,805	77,805
	UNOPS excess reserve refund	334,584	334,584
	Total	3,357,097	3,357,097
Grand Total		150,116,732	143,419,526

* Contribution is cancelled

EIFTF allocations for EIF Phase Two

As of 31 December 2023, allocations made for EIF Phase Two activities totalled USD 143.08 million, including USD 92.1 million for projects and USD 26.02 million for the technical support and global activities of the Executive Secretariat for the EIF (ES), such as MIE capacity-building workshops; outreach, partnerships and resource mobilization; logistics to EIF Board meetings; strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation systems; EIF Management Information System and Knowledge Hub; global forum events and EIF evaluations.

USD 65.54 million relates to government implementation (71.16% of total project allocations), while the EIF Partner Agency share of direct implementation is USD 19.35 million (21.01%). The balance of USD 7.21 million (7.83%) represents allocations implemented by various other entities, such as non-governmental and other international organizations.

Zoom into Disbursements to projects per MIE type

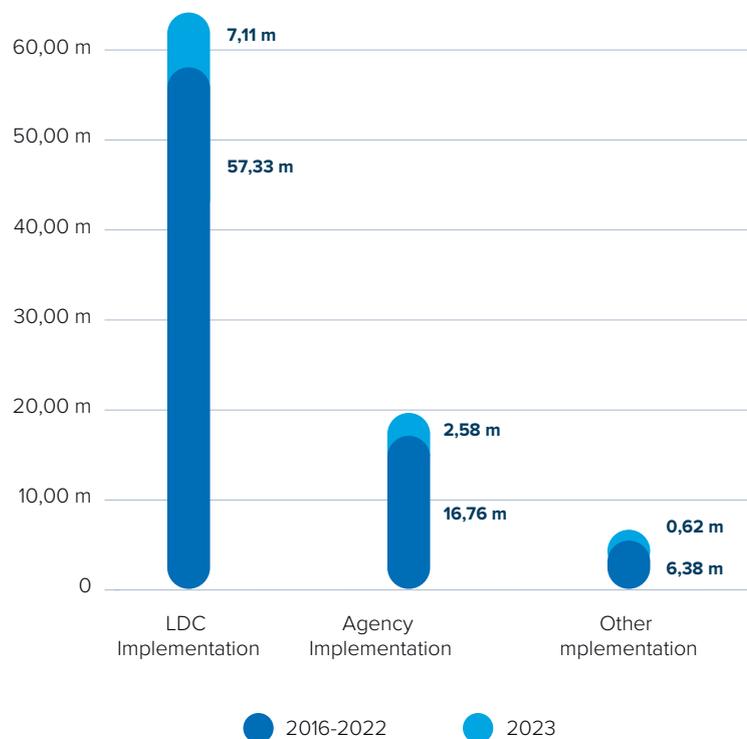


Table 3. Allocations for EIF activities		
Report Category	Type	USD million
LDC implementation	Tier 1	21,04
	Tier 2	37,76
	Combined	6,74
Total		65,54
Other implementation	Tier 2	1,61
	Regional	5,60
Total		7,21
EIF Partner Agency implementation	Tier 1	6,76
	Tier 2	4,76
	Regional	5,73
	Combined	2,10
Total		19,35
ES technical support		20,93
EIF Global Activities		5,09
ES administrative support		8,97
TFM		14,93
UNOPS transaction fee (0.75%)		1,07
Grand Total		143,08

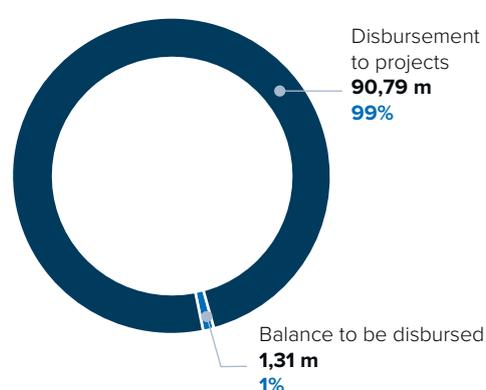
Table 4. Disbursements for EIF Phase Two (in million USD)			
Annual Report Category	2016-2022	2023	Grand Total
LDC implementation	57,33	7,11	64,44
EIF Partner Agency implementation	16,76	2,58	19,35
Other implementation	6,38	0,62	7,00
ES technical support	16,16	2,77	18,93
EIF Global Activities	3,91	0,80	4,74
ES administrative support	6,93	1,19	8,11
TFM	10,25	2,35	12,60
UNOPS transaction fee (0.75%)	0,88	0,13	1,01
Grand Total	118,60	17,55	136,15

Disbursements and delivery

During 2023, a total of USD 17.55 million was disbursed for the programme. The total disbursement of EIF Phase Two up to 31 December 2023 was USD 136.15 million, which represents 95.16% of the total allocation of EIF Phase Two.

The total allocation disbursed for the projects is 99%, with the remaining 1% allocated for NIU preservation support projects.

Disbursement to projects



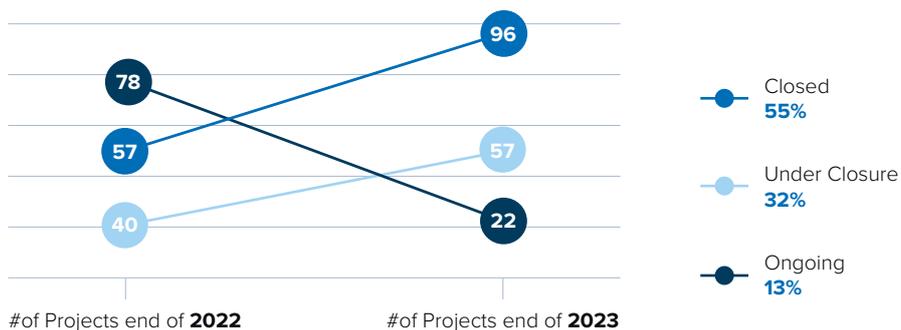
EIF portfolio overview as of 31 December 2023

As of 31 December 2023, 22 projects that are part of NIU preservation (EIF interim support) remained under implementation and 57 under closure. In line with the EIF Phase Two interim closure plan, throughout the past year, the EIF made significant progress in project closure. Thirty-nine (39) projects were closed from a programmatic and fiduciary perspective, increasing the number of closed projects from 57 to 96.

In 2023, 23 projects received additional funding under the NIU preservation (EIF interim support) mechanism, approved by the EIF Board, for a total budget of USD 1.16 million. USD 0.91 million was new funding, while USD 0.25 million was reprogrammed from the balance of existing funds.

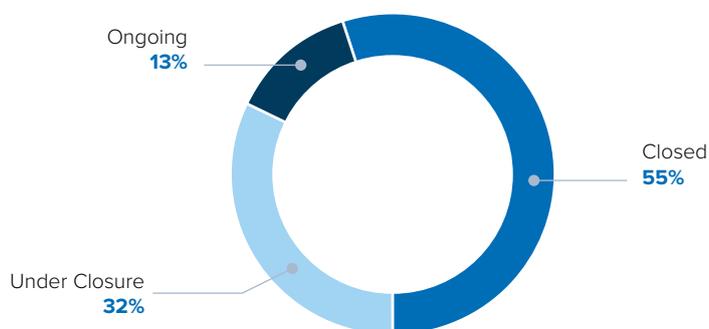
Progress during 2023

(Number of projects in implementation phases)



Progress during 2023

(Number of projects in implementation phases)



Key fiduciary highlights for the TFM in 2023

In 2023, the EIFTF was meticulously managed in accordance with EIF policies and UNOPS guidelines, effectively overseeing projects. The TFM was particularly proactive in enhancing project execution, successfully closing projects and conducting supervision missions. Moreover, the TFM carried out Fiduciary Maturity Assessments for implementing partners in the LDCs, aiding their ability to manage projects and funds efficiently. Financial reports from partners

underwent thorough reviews to verify their accuracy, transparency and compliance with regulatory standards, thus ensuring proper funds allocation. Additionally, the TFM played a crucial role in facilitating the receipt and review of independent audit reports from implementing partners. This process was aimed at bolstering the credibility of financial statements and commitment to transparency and accountability in financial practices.



118 projects under implementation, closure or closed managed during 2023.

USD 76.1 million total budget managed/overseen in 2023.

39 projects closed.

32 supervision missions carried out, including 17 joint ES/TFM missions.

20 Fiduciary Maturity Assessments conducted.

360 financial reports received and reviewed.

Overview of TFM Roles in the EIFTF Management

Key principles and functions for transparency, accountability and oversight

This section of the Annual Report delves into the pivotal roles and responsibilities of the TFM in administering the EIFTF. The following visuals emphasize the key fiduciary responsibilities and functions of the TFM undertaken throughout the year 2023.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING



Adhering to UNOPS financial guidelines: All funds disbursed or refunds received from Main Implementing Entities (MIEs) through 157 transactions followed UNOPS financial rules and regulations.

Ensuring accuracy in MIEs reporting: All reports received from MIEs are precise and delivered promptly.

Provision of reports: 3 Interim Financial Statements and 1 Annual Certified Financial Statement.

CAPACITY-BUILDING



Continuing support to LDCs in enhancing financial management skills and financial reporting.

Adopting best practices for sustainable project impact.

Streamlining user-friendly tools in project development, management, reporting, and closure.

DATABASE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Maintaining the EIF Knowledge Hub to ensure it is able to function as a key informational resource for the EIF throughout the year.

Automating, updating, and checking all key fiduciary areas in the Knowledge Hub.

Making continuous enhancements and adaptations to address the programme's evolving needs.

PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND CLOSURE



Reviewing regular audits.

Reporting clearly and transparently about the use of funds.

Ensuring full compliance with accounting principles and fiduciary standards.

Engaging with stakeholders regularly.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE



Managing all contractual agreements, including MoUs with MIES and contribution agreements with donors.

Regulatory compliance standards: Complying with all UNOPS standards and processes.

Commitment to UNOPS ethical standards.

MAINSTREAMED VALUE FOR MONEY



Allocating funds in line with the EIF Value for Money principles.

Applying the EIF governance policies and procedures for financial management, conflict of interest, and risk management.

Applying VfM indicators throughout project cycle, ensuring the appropriate use of funds.

RISKS AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT



Establishing a comprehensive risk management framework for identifying, evaluating and managing financial and operational risks.

Detecting risks proactively in conjunction with the MIEs and the ES.

Communicating, reporting and escalating, as relevant.

Country Snapshots – Regional Overviews

This section provides an overview of the journey of each region and country in the EIF to date. The highlighted value and number of projects are for EIF Phase One and EIF Phase Two and exclude the value of regional projects.

Contents

Africa	82	Asia	120
Angola	86	Afghanistan	123
Benin	87	Bangladesh	124
Burkina Faso	88	Bhutan	125
Burundi	89	Cambodia	126
Cabo Verde	90	Lao PDR	127
Central African Republic	91	Maldives	128
Chad	92	Myanmar	129
Comoros	93	Nepal	130
Democratic Republic of the Congo	94	Timor-Leste	131
Djibouti	95	Yemen	132
Equatorial Guinea	96		
Ethiopia	97	Pacific and Americas	134
The Gambia	98	Haiti	137
Guinea	99	Kiribati	138
Guinea-Bissau	100	Samoa	139
Lesotho	101	Solomon Islands	140
Liberia	102	Tuvalu	141
Madagascar	103	Vanuatu	142
Malawi	104		
Mali	105		
Mauritania	106		
Mozambique	107		
Niger	108		
Rwanda	109		
São Tomé and Príncipe	110		
Senegal	111		
Sierra Leone	112		
Somalia	113		
South Sudan	114		
Sudan	115		
Tanzania	116		
Togo	117		
Uganda	118		
Zambia	119		

Africa

Regional overview



- Angola
- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cabo Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Comoros
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Djibouti
- Equatorial Guinea
- Ethiopia
- The Gambia
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Rwanda
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Uganda
- Zambia



Total number of EIF
country projects

203



Total number of EIF
regional projects

17



Countries supported in
AfCFTA engagement

26



Total budget in million USD

156.30



© Olivier Girard/EIF

*Working to improve trade-related
processes in the LDCs.*

Regional overview

Africa is home to the vast majority of the world's least developed countries (LDCs) and, as such, the EIF has dedicated more resources to this region than any other. The EIF was active in 34 African countries over the past decade through both bespoke initiatives tailored to the unique needs of specific countries and regional initiatives that leverage the common development goals amongst certain country groupings.

In line with the increased regional focus of EIF Phase Two, the EIF stepped up its engagement with regional economic communities with a particular focus on supporting LDC preparations for, and engagement in, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). This included a dedicated AfCFTA regional project, co-financed with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Islamic Development Bank and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC). Over this time, the EIF has provided support to 26 countries in their AfCFTA engagement, including contributions towards the development of 12 national strategies. At the sub-regional level, the EIF has implemented projects with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and supported an Aid for Trade (AfT) strategy in the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS).

Regional initiatives have been particularly effective when a grouping of countries is engaged in a common industry, as is the case for West African shea producers. The EIF, together with implementing partner the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), undertook a remarkably successful regional initiative leveraging national implementation mechanisms in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo to increase exports of shea nuts and value-added shea products to international markets. The initiative triggered

unprecedented formal and informal collaboration between the EIF National Implementation Units (NIUs) in these four countries, resulting in more coordinated planning and enhanced synergies.

Targets in the GSA initiative were greatly exceeded, with annual shea production increasing by 779% to 45,829 metric tonnes (MT) (initial targets were an increase of 5,880 MT). Similar increases were seen in exports, with traded shea products growing by 45,167 MT per year, amounting to USD 21,181,896 generated for beneficiary communities. As many as 32 additional markets were accessed by beneficiary countries, with the majority being in Asia and Africa, and some 2,500 new full-time jobs were created through the initiative. In addition to shea, smaller regional initiatives targeting crops such as mango and cashews were also undertaken in the region. (For additional information, see entries on Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo later in this section.)

The EIF also supported efforts to reduce the digital gender divide through an initiative with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in Burundi and Ethiopia (as well as Haiti). The initiative aimed to address the growing problem that the proportion of women using the internet in Africa is 12% lower than the proportion of men, with the gap widening to 31% in the LDCs. The initiative drew in the support of a number of other partner institutions, which lengthened the initial timeline of the project and allowed governments to further raise awareness of the issue of women's economic empowerment through digitization.

UNCTAD work through the EIF and in collaboration with other regional mechanisms has enabled progress in facilitating trade in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Country highlights

Comoros | EIF support was key to the country's successful accession to the WTO. In addition to accession-specific support, benefits were achieved through project investments in tourism, ylang-ylang and vanilla. Tourism revenues also increased as tourist numbers rose from **28,000 in 2021 to 50,360 in 2022**.

Ethiopia | A **USD 100+ million** investment from the Mastercard Foundation, informed by an EIF pilot project in the honey sector, is further helping to generate jobs and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in the country.

The Gambia | Pioneering connections between trade and climate ministries are unlocking climate change financing. The investment in an EIF-financed upgrade of the air cargo complex near Banjul International Airport has reduced handling times by as much as **40%**.

Guinea | Guinea became one of the leading countries for food safety laboratory equipment in the ECOWAS, following EIF investments. These improvements have reduced the average time to analyse a sample from **21 to 5 days**.

Liberia | With EIF support, the Government of Liberia launched its first Tourism Trade Strategy in 2016. The EIF supported the country's plans to develop Liberia as a surf destination as a means to improve economic growth, create **jobs** and **protect the coastal environment**. The unique surfing sector initiative has already attracted attention from additional donors, including USAID.

Mali | In recent years, Mali became the top country in terms of LDC Government contributions to the EIF, having secured more than **USD 11 million** in counterpart funding.

Mauritania | The EIF supported the **eco-tourism sector** in Mauritania through the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in the Banc d'Arguin National Park. Through the initiative, three women-operated renewable energy-powered eco-camps with modern tourist-focused accommodations were established in Iwik, Mamghar and Tessot.

Niger | The EIF has made important contributions toward improving the competitiveness of Niger's sesame value chain significantly boosting exports to **USD 36 million, six times the initial project target**. The two new markets of China and Türkiye now account for 50% of sesame exports.

Rwanda | The Single Projects Implementation Unit (SPIU) has implemented more than **USD 24 million** in donor funding. The success of the SPIU model has now been taken up Government-wide.

Senegal | Increased NIU capacity resulted in the development and approval of a **USD 3 million** cashew nut project, financed through the national budget. EIF investments into the development of Senegal's metrological capacity facilitated trade by harmonizing national measurements with international standards. In the past, access to international markets by producers and exporters was greatly limited due to a lack of access to accurate weights and measures.

Sierra Leone | Support for Sierra Leone's post-conflict ecotourism sector has already led to significant growth, with visitor levels surging higher than ever before and the country earning a spot on Time Magazine's top places to visit. Tourism and trade linkages have been strengthened and **USD 10 million** leveraged from the World Bank to scale up investments.

Togo | Efforts to strengthen Togo's soybean value chain spurred a ten-fold production increase from **25,000 MT to 250,000 MT between 2015 and 2022**, contributing to the creation of more than **700,000 jobs**. This result helped increase the profile and linkages of the Ministry of Trade.



Angola

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

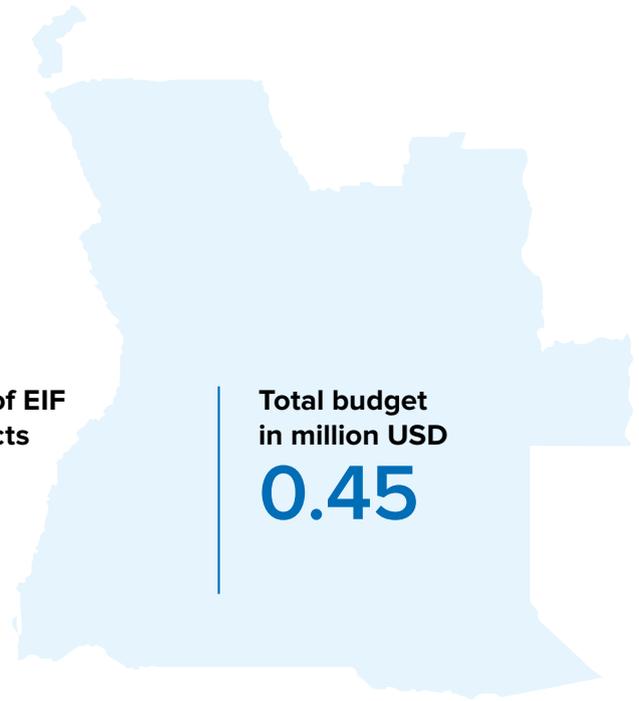
2

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

0.45



Angola occupies a large portion of the southwestern coast of continental Africa and is home to some 33 million people. While the country is rich in natural resources, including gems and metals, it relies strongly on revenues generated by petroleum exports. For example, of the USD 41.4 billion in goods and services that Angola exported in 2018, 95% were petroleum — equivalent to one third of its GDP. The EIF has been focused on support aimed at diversifying the country's sources of export revenue and integrating trade into Government plans through capacity-building.

The EIF has been engaged with Angola since 2006 (under its prior form, the Integrated Framework (IF), when it partnered with the World Bank to draft the country's first Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS). More recently, the EIF has been working again with the World Bank on an Update (DTISU) aimed at identifying the main constraints to trade; mainstreaming trade into national economic diversification strategies; and identifying recommendations on horizontal trade policy reforms.

The DTISU also outlines a number of recommendations focused on engaging in possible preferential trade agreements; addressing policy and legislative constraints; and reviewing multilateral, bilateral and regional integration schemes. The DTISU design centres around sustainable development and poverty reduction, with an emphasis on a shift away from extractive sectors (primarily oil) towards inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Despite this long history of working with Angola on its DTIS, the EIF began its first institutional capacity-building work in April 2022, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Launching the project was a milestone for the EIF and stands as a testament to its commitment to leaving no country behind. Only a short time after launching this support, it is already clear that

there has been direct positive impact on the activities of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. For example, Angola has already boosted its compliance with the multilateral trading system by submitting notifications to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and honoured its commitments to the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Specific training under these efforts has included staff training on how to effectively implement export diversification plans by facilitating import substitution and developing comparative advantages in agri-food, mineral resources, building materials and textiles. Training also focused on raising awareness of international support measures related to Angola's graduation from the LDC category, which was initially scheduled for 12 February 2024 but has now been deferred to a later date.

The EIF has also been working to strengthen the Government's capacity to meet the challenges of regional and continental integration. Angola has been expanding its connections with these initiatives in recent years, signing up to the AfCFTA in 2018 and ratifying it in 2020. Angola presented its tariff offer for the Free Trade Zone of SADC in 2018 and it has long been a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).



Benin

Total number of EIF country projects

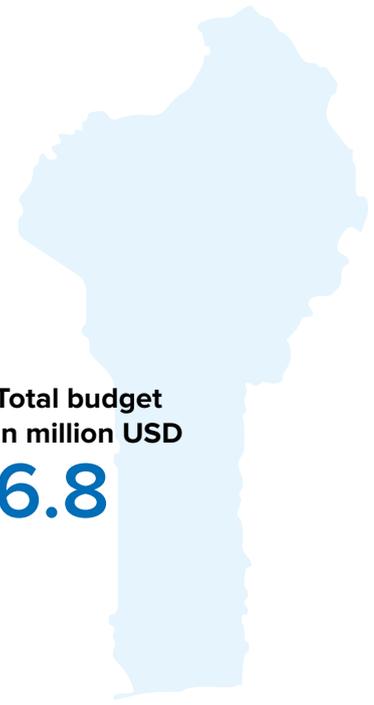
8

Total number of EIF regional projects

7

Total budget in million USD

6.8



Benin occupies a narrow, vertically-oriented strip of mixed forest-savanna perched on the northern coast of the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. The EIF began working with Benin in 2003, under its prior form, the IF. Early work consisted of the completion and validation of Benin's DTIS, institutional capacity-building and export development. Based on the DTIS and its 2015 Update, the EIF has continued to support institutional capacity-building, strengthened productive capacity and committed to improving competitiveness in the shea sector.

The EIF's trade and productive capacity-building support has been crucial to helping reduce poverty by strengthening trade and productive capacity-building. Prior to the EIF's collaboration with Benin to develop the country's shea sector, there was no national association responsible for supporting the industry. The EIF has helped establish Benin's national shea interprofessional association and mobilize the national and international private sectors through the GSA, a non-governmental organization with ties to large shea companies.

The EIF's support for developing the shea value chain was launched in 2018 and has had an enormous impact, with more than 27,000 women benefitting from capacity-building initiatives in areas such as shea nut collection techniques, shea processing, women entrepreneurship, e-commerce, business and contract negotiation and accessing finance. These efforts have led to a more than 50% increase in the volume of shea kernels, leading to improvements in the incomes of women collectors and processors.

The EIF is ideally suited to help develop the sector, due to its extensive experience with other shea producers in the region (see, for example, Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo). The EIF's structure and network allows beneficiaries to gain knowledge of others in

the region who are engaged in similar activities, as regional initiatives can impact a number of countries. Benin, for example, has benefited from regional support on inclusive trade development in the shea value chain (implemented by the GSA); transit, transport and trade facilitation in West Africa for better value chain participation (implemented by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); and cotton by-products (implemented by the WTO).

EIF support also helped enhance trade coordination by supporting the operationalization of the National Trade Facilitation Committee and the Inter-Institutional Commission for the Monitoring and Implementation of WTO Agreements. Both mechanisms have led to several achievements and reforms, such as improved processing times for commercial litigation; enhanced powers, organization and functioning of the Centre for Arbitration; and the establishment of a unified regulatory framework for public-private partnership (PPP) operations. Based on the recommendations of an EIF study, the Government has committed about USD 1 million toward trade-related cross-border infrastructure. This example of institutional capacity-building and facilitating country ownership is a prime example of the EIF's unique ability to develop integrated and local capacity.

The EIF has been aiming to scale up Benin's national export strategy, and recent efforts have resulted in a partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) aimed at doing exactly that. This support will help establish a framework to equip public and private actors with the tools they need to formulate and implement a coherent strategy for export development and the competitiveness of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).



Burkina Faso

Total number of EIF country projects

9

Total number of EIF regional projects

9

Total budget in million USD

10

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country of some 23 million people, which occupies a fertile to semi-arid savannah plateau in central West Africa. The EIF has been working with Burkina Faso since 2005, under its prior form, the IF. Since that time, Burkina Faso has benefitted from the development and updates of its DTIS and institutional and productive capacity-building support, notably in the shea, sesame, dried mango and cashew sectors.

The effectiveness of the NIU as a knowledge and coordination hub in Burkina Faso has been crucial to success. As a knowledge hub, the EIF is involved in providing technical trade assistance and supporting WTO negotiations. As a coordination and implementation hub, it supports the implementation and cooperation with other Agencies, including the WTO's Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF).

EIF support has strengthened trade-related institutional capacity and coordination, which resulted in the integration of trade into key development strategy documents, including Burkina Faso's Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (2011-2015); its National Economic and Social Development Plan (2016-2020); the revision of its National Export Strategy; and the 2011-2020 Sectoral Policy on Industry, Trade, and Crafts (2011-2020). The EIF's mainstreaming efforts also led to the integration of trade into several sectoral strategies, including transport, mining, energy, agriculture, animal resources, environment, culture and tourism.

With regard to productive capacity support, the EIF's work in Burkina Faso has been extraordinarily successful in creating strong forward and backward linkages in value chains. The EIF also often adopts a "learn by doing" approach, where, for example, stakeholders are shown a specific approach to processing on-site. Private

sector participation is key to this approach in the form of production and processing equipment and units; export finance; market access; and guidance on import and export regimes. This support has led to additional interest from donors and a measurable increase in exports and value addition, notably in the shea butter, sesame, mango and cashew sectors. Investments in the cashew sector helped spur the mobilization of internal resources and the establishment of the Cashew Council of Burkina Faso. Likewise, productive capacity support in the shea butter sector attracted some USD 1,483,300 in co-funding from Luxembourg and USD 1 million from the African Development Bank (AfDB), contributing towards shea exports worth USD 3.39 million and the creation of 2,524 direct jobs. Monitoring of prior EIF support to the mango sector shows that more than 58,000 jobs have been created through the growth in production and processing, with the vast majority of new processing-related jobs going to women. Prior to EIF engagement, the production and marketing of mangos was primarily conducted in the informal sector, and products were typically unprocessed.

Burkina Faso's sesame sector also saw robust growth as a result of EIF interventions. Support led to an increase in jobs, quality and production — with 300,000 MT of additional sesame having been produced. Importantly, many of these new jobs were at the grassroots level, resulting in meaningful change for beneficiaries. The EIF equipped sesame-producing SMEs with new machinery, thus leading to processing efficiency and a boost in quality. This, in turn, has triggered growth in jobs in small communities — especially for women — and increases in exports.



Burundi

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

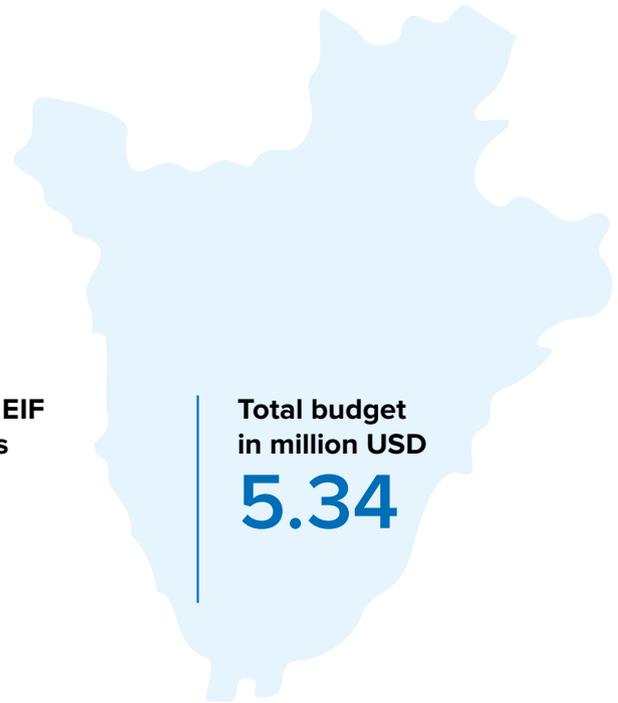
6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

5.34



Burundi is a landlocked East African country of some 13 million people, seated at the northeast corner of Lake Tanganyika, one of Africa's Great Lakes. Burundi has a number of natural resources and arable land, which ranges from hilly and mountainous to flat plateau. The EIF began working in the country in 2010 in the wake of socio-political changes in the 1990s, which left lasting economic and social challenges.

Burundi's economy is heavily reliant on coffee and tea exports, which represent over 70% of the country's revenues. In response to Burundi's DTIS 2013 and its subsequent Update in 2022, EIF support has led to a robust trade strategy, which includes efforts to boost productive and institutional capacity-building, boost regional trade integration and strengthen trade in services, including through a new tourism strategy.

The EIF took aim at clearing trade blockages in Burundi through a productive capacity-building initiative in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). These efforts aimed to promote quality standards by harmonizing as many as 1,000 sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards nationwide. Through the initiative, the project boosted export capacity and protected consumers through stronger national systems, analyses, inspections and testing.

EIF-led institutional capacity-building initiatives in areas such as trade-related policy-making and integrating trade into sectoral strategies helped enhance Burundi's trade environment. Some 225 officials and 350 private sector representatives (40% of which were women) contributed to improvements in trade facilitation, regional integration, business English skills, knowledge of WTO fundamental principles, trade in services and trade policy

implementation. A wide range of policies and strategies were enhanced as a result of these efforts, including national strategies on electronic waste, sustainable tourism and the development of the financial sector. The EIF also commissioned a regional trade integration study that helped strengthen integration with organizations, such as the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the SADC and the AfCFTA.

To respond to the demand for more tourism sector analysis and support from the Government and from development partners such as the European Union (EU), the EIF was able to quickly respond by facilitating the development of a detailed strategy. Additionally, EIF activities in Burundi have been especially helpful in supporting women and girls, particularly entrepreneurs. One initiative, in partnership with ITU, supported women's economic empowerment through the digital economy. More than 1,660 women were trained through these efforts, and institutional capacity-building has allowed senior policy-makers to better understand the importance of technology and digital knowledge for working-aged women, including junior professionals and entrepreneurs.

This EIF-ITU partnership contributes to the EQUALS Global Partnership, which works to integrate a gender perspective into domestic policies and regulations to ensure that women can participate fully in the digital economy. These efforts also include training for women in the tea and coffee sectors on topics covering storytelling, online safety, personal development, pitching technology, digital marketing and e-commerce. This focus on country ownership is central to the EIF's approach, which places a priority on internal capacity and sustainability.



Cabo Verde

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

1.69

Cabo Verde occupies an archipelago of ten volcanic islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of mainland West Africa. It is home to some half a million people and has a GDP of USD 2.23 billion (2022). Because Cabo Verde graduated from LDC status in 2007 and completed its first DTIS in 2008 — under the EIF’s predecessor, the IF — support has been focused on post-graduation support. All EIF projects in Cabo Verde were completed by August 2020, and the country is no longer eligible for further EIF support.

Under the EIF, a DTISU was completed in 2014, and a number of institutional capacity-building initiatives were undertaken. Because of the DTIS and concern that LDC graduation would lead to a drop in development aid, awareness of the importance of trade as a stimulant for production, consumption and income in Cabo Verde’s Government was high in the early 2010s. Thus, EIF support focused heavily on increased integration of trade into Government and systemic level improvements in the trade and investment policy and regulatory environment.

These efforts led to an increase in the profile of trade in Cabo Verde’s 2012-2016 Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and its National Strategic Development Plan. EIF support also led to the development of a national trade strategy; the establishment of the National Trade Council (an inter-ministerial body addressing national trade matters); and the implementation of the Integrated Government Resource Programme to facilitate processing of imports and exports.

The EIF’s approach, which focuses on mainstreaming trade into national development strategies and achieving a high level of national country ownership, is particularly crucial when providing post-graduation support. The NIU in Cabo Verde was integrated (in structure and function) into the Ministry of Trade and the Government system for

trade coordination. This proved essential in the lead-up to the 2022 signing of the AfCFTA Agreement, when the NIU provided technical analysis and support, as well as reporting and the creation of a list of sensitive products to be submitted to the ECOWAS.

In 2018, EIF also supported the drafting and revision of a number of trade and investment laws aimed at improving the business climate in Cabo Verde. Examples include laws covering tax benefits for investment and the internalization of companies, economic diplomacy and commercial relations, public policies for trade, and trade-related legal and regulatory strengthening. EIF also supported the formulation of the Investment Code and tax benefits aimed at spurring investment. Overall, EIF support helped set Cabo Verde on a path toward success in a number of trade-related areas. One example of the country’s success comes from the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index, which saw Cabo Verde’s score increase from 3.5 in 2010 to 3.76 in 2017.



Central African Republic

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

4

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.34

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in geographical centre of the African continent, with a population of some 6 million. Support for CAR began in 2005, under the EIF's prior form, the IF. CAR experienced a number of political and social challenges over the past decade and, in EIF Phase One, the EIF was forced to temporarily suspend its activities in the country. Nevertheless, the integration that had already taken place through EIF support within the Government left a lasting impression, and in 2017, a Presidential Decree strengthened the NIU by expanding its functions to become a sectoral strategy and project management unit. This long-term impact made through bolstered Government capacity in CAR — despite considerable institutional challenges — makes the country a remarkable EIF success story.

The NIU plays a pivotal role in the Ministry of Trade, including acting as the planning department; contributing to the development of the Ministry's work plan; representing the Ministry at coordination meetings with the Ministry in charge of planning; and helping update the National Development Plan (NDP). Trade is mainstreamed into the Government strategy and decision-making, and the NIU is extremely well integrated into the Government systems.

Through the EIF's interventions, trade has been integrated into four sectoral strategies, including agriculture, mining, tourism and water/forestry. EIF interventions in CAR have also contributed to sustainable and inclusive development through activities aimed at empowering women and youth and supporting trade associations and small businesses. Despite challenges that have sometimes created obstacles to the streamlined functioning of the Government, the EIF has managed to work with CAR to adapt to the evolving development context of the country and maintain its relevance to emerging EIF global priorities and changing

contexts, including in the areas of participation of women and SMEs.

Starting in 2018, the EIF has supported initiatives aimed at strengthening institutions in CAR in order to contribute to the effective implementation of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan. These efforts, in turn, aim to reduce poverty and to strengthen economic growth and the trade capacity of economic actors to improve CAR's presence in international markets. The EIF has also been instrumental in helping CAR integrate into global and regional trading systems. The EIF provided support for CAR's ratification of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and helped with the adoption of several laws aligned with WTO rules. Also, the EIF helped CAR in the drafting of its instruments of ratification to join the AfCFTA.

With a high level of trade capacity within Government and movement towards regional integration progressing, support for boosting exports is already underway. Support for productive capacity improvements in the sesame, corn, palm oil and coal sectors already have indications of positive results, despite ongoing security challenges in the country. Capacity-building efforts focused on packaging and commercialization techniques have benefitted more than 1,000 farmers (30% of which are women), and production equipment has been supplied to more than 450 producer associations. These efforts helped contribute to maize production increases in excess of 2,400% between 2020 and 2023; to palm oil production increases of more than 280% between 2021 and 2023; and the creation of 6,534 jobs for women and 6,723 jobs for youths, thus helping to reduce their vulnerability to recruitment by armed groups.



Chad

Total number of EIF country projects

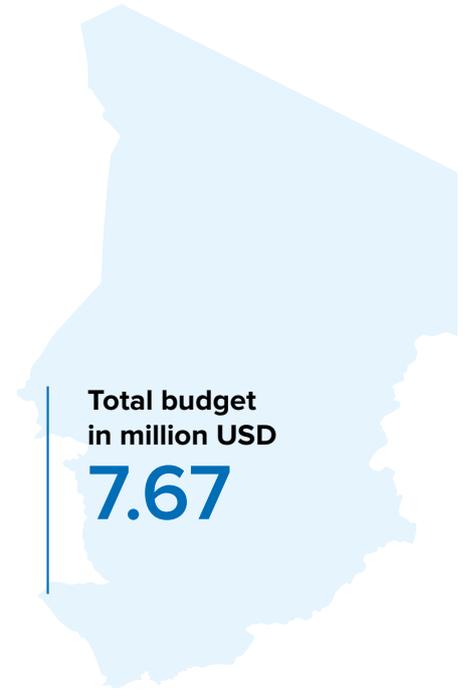
9

Total number of EIF regional projects

5

Total budget in million USD

7.67



Chad is a large landlocked country that occupies a basin surrounded by mountains in northern Central Africa. While it is the fifth largest African country by size, much of northern Chad is covered by the Sahara Desert, and the majority of its 18 million residents are concentrated in the south. The EIF has been supporting Chad since 2004 — under its predecessor, the IF — with an emphasis on developing and strengthening the human, commercial and institutional capacities of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

EIF support has bolstered the formulation and effective implementation of trade development programmes and policies. Officials in N'Djamena have shown a strong commitment to trade and support for the NIU. All NIU staff and facility expenses are now paid by the Government, and discussions have been undertaken on the possibility of transforming the NIU into a permanent Government institution. Specific activities undertaken by the NIU include institutional capacity-building; strengthening existing private-public dialogue frameworks; and improving private sector functioning and structures — especially female umbrella organizations and grassroots actors.

While the oil sector significantly contributes to export earnings, the overdependence on oil exports exposes Chad to the inherent economic risk associated with oil price volatility. Aside from oil, the main exports are gum arabic, sesame, cotton and live cattle. As the majority of Chad's population relies on agriculture and livestock farming, the development of these two sectors has considerable potential for economic diversification, rural income improvement and food security.

EIF support for Chad's critical gum arabic sector included capacity-building efforts on production techniques for some 2,200 beneficiaries, half of whom were women.

These efforts contributed to the generation of some 60,000 tonnes of gum arabic, which resulted in the exports to 29 international markets across all continents for a total value of more than USD 72.2 million.

The EIF also provided significant support to Chad's leather and skins industry. The sector is a vital source of employment and income for women and young people and, as such, the Government has prioritized its development. The biggest challenge facing the sector was the lack of skills and technology required to produce high-quality hides that would meet international standards and be competitive. To address these challenges, the EIF supported the upgrading of a tannery, capacity-building workshops and training sessions and provided the required technical equipment.

As a result, improvements in the quality of hides and skins production and conservation led to 60% of outputs meeting the international standards by 2021. Moreover, producers saw a decrease in the amount of time needed to produce an individual product, and incomes were increased — particularly amongst women and youth. High-quality skin products made in Chad have subsequently gained popularity in the global market, leading to a considerable increase in exports.

Because the tanning process involves the use of a number of chemicals and organic compounds that can be detrimental to the environment, training in this area was also prioritized. With support from the EIF, the Government trained tanners on the use of plant-based techniques and best practices for wastewater management. These efforts reduced industrial pollution and wastewater, which not only promoted environmental sustainability but also improved public health conditions.



Comoros

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

8

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.52

Comoros is an archipelago that is located off the east coast of the African continent in the Mozambique Channel. It is home to some 830,000 inhabitants. The EIF has been supporting Comoros since 2011 and has achieved considerable success during that time. The economy has seen an upward trend in trade openness and, following EIF support, has seen a robust growth in agricultural exports (e.g., vanilla, ylang-ylang and cloves), public investments in infrastructure, FDI and the collection of remittances.

A key area of EIF success in Comoros has been its high level of integration of trade into the Government and strong support for the NIU. The EIF aims to have each country's NIU fully integrated into the Government to help ensure that country ownership ensures sustainability of the Unit upon completion of EIF activities. Comoros has embraced the value of the NIU to such a degree that the Ministry of Finance has created a budget line to support the NIU's salaries and operating costs. In reality, this allows the NIU to function as an implementation unit of the Ministry, including for projects funded by other partners.

For example, Comoros recently launched an EU-funded initiative — jointly implemented by ITC and UNIDO — aimed at supporting production, industrialization and free trade. The NIU is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the project with a high level of country buy-in and ownership. The NIU is also implementing an ITFC-funded project, which builds on EIF work on vanilla. These two examples showcase the value of the EIF model.

The EIF also provided valuable support to help nurture the tourism sector in Comoros. Initiatives helped support the development of a National Tourism Development Strategy; the construction of eco-lodges; and the establishment and operationalization of a scuba diving club. These efforts

contributed to an increase in the number of tourists from 28,000 in 2021 to 50,360 in 2022. Additionally, 138 new jobs in the sector had been created as of 2022, with 67% of the positions being taken by youth and 50% being by women.

The EIF has been successful in raising the profile of trade within the country, and the Government has been highly receptive to recommendations regarding the country's trade-related needs. Possibly the most visible example of this is the instrumental role of the EIF in supporting Comoros' accession to the WTO, including support for working party meetings, facilitating domestic discussions through the Trade Negotiations Committee and development of key pieces of legislation. EIF support to the Permanent Mission of Comoros in Geneva has helped facilitate communication and official visits from the capital. A national consultant also updated a compendium for international and national legislation and drafted regulations to align with WTO rules. On 26 February 2024, Ministers formally approved Comoros' WTO membership at the Thirteenth WTO Ministerial Conference. This NIU has also facilitated engagement in Economic Partnership Agreement and AfCFTA negotiations, and the National Committee for Trade Negotiations and the EIF National Steering Committee (NSC) now serve as the main frameworks for public-private coordination.

Trade has been integrated into the NDP and key sectoral frameworks, including the Agricultural and the Industrial Strategies.



Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

8

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

4

**Total budget
in million USD**

5.28

Located in the heart of Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is home to some 100 million citizens and is endowed with abundant natural resources, including minerals, large arable land, hydropower potential, rich biodiversity and the world's second-largest rainforest. The DRC has experienced a number of political, social and economic challenges over the past three decades, and the EIF has been supporting the country since 2008. The mining and petroleum sectors are the key drivers of economic growth in the country and account for 90% of exports.

While the country continues to face administrative challenges that are, at times, obstacles to progress, trade integration is a notable successful outcome of the EIF's work in the DRC. The NIU was integrated as a department within the Ministry of Foreign Trade and has managed to make progress on a number of priority issues, including accommodating sustainable development considerations into the development of sectoral plans as well as the NDP. The Government has also established multiple trade coordination mechanisms, which serve as a formal and regular trade dialogue platform between informal private sectors, women entrepreneurs and civil society.

A key result of the acknowledgement of the value of trade is the recognition of the need to diversify exports, as recommended in the DTIS and its subsequent Updates. One example of this, supported by the EIF, is the revival of the country's palm oil sector in a way that is highly sensitive to the possible negative environmental impacts of the sector. The DRC was the first African exporter of palm oil and, in the 1950s, one of the largest global producers. The sector contracted after decolonization, and by the end of the 1990s, palm oil exports had ceased entirely.

The EIF supported the revitalization and recovery of the sector through the strengthening of the productive and financial capacities of small farmers and micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Mayombe — a highly forested region in the country's far West. The initiative aimed to generate jobs, increase incomes (especially among the country's poorest) and expand the country's palm oil sector by improving both the quantity and quality of palm oil production.

Support consisted of the provision of upgraded equipment and professional training for stakeholders along the value chain in areas such as sustainable management of palm oil resources, e.g., the adoption of a zero-deforestation approach for new plantations to stop further encroachments on biodiverse forests. Support also led to the installation of a Palm Oil Marketing Information System, which connected local palm oil producers to private companies to facilitate the distribution of palm oil to the market.

While the project encountered obstacles due to the poor infrastructure and political instability in the DRC, the sustainability aspects of the project were a major success that will have lasting impact on the sector and those involved in the training. Moreover, the EIF supported sectoral infrastructure in the form of "mini-mills", which was adopted by 89 MSMEs and over 3,100 individual actors in the palm sector. Value chain training was also provided to some 7,000 palm oil producers.



Djibouti

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

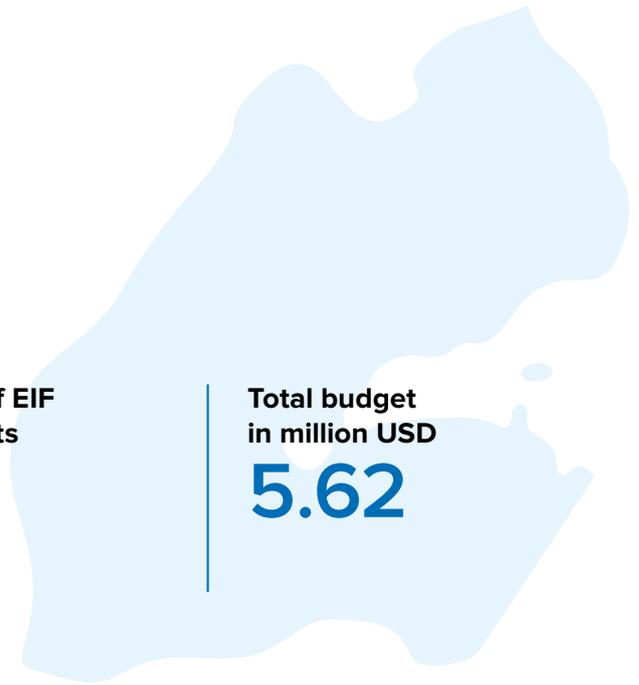
7

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

5.62



Djibouti is one of the smallest countries in Africa with a population of 1.1 million. The country is strategically seated on the continent's northeast coast at the southern entrance of the Red Sea — along some of the world's busiest shipping lanes. Djibouti has taken advantage of its location by developing a trade structure dominated by merchandise trade, which is underpinned by a port complex that is among the most modern in the world. While the economy remains relatively small, observers have predicted it to become one of the fastest-growing economies on the continent.

Djibouti joined the IF — the EIF's predecessor — in 1997. Since that time, the country has been supported by the generation of a DTIS and subsequent Updates, in addition to a number of initiatives on issues such as tourism development and improvement of the business environment. EIF efforts in Djibouti have exhibited a high level of integration into Government priorities, activities, structures and processes. For example, the Government now allocates an annual budget to support the implementation of the EIF, and the NIU has been almost fully integrated into the Government, including being hosted by the Ministry of Commerce. The NIU supported and contributed to the development and updating of a variety of trade-related policies and regulations, including the National Strategy for the Development of E-Commerce; the National Trade Development Strategy; the Investment Code; the Strategic Direction for the Development and Promotion of Tourism in the Republic of Djibouti; and the decree establishing a National Council for Sustainable Tourism.

The EIF helped strengthen Djibouti's National Tourism Office, allowing it to develop into a fully capable tourism agency, and supported Djibouti to prepare a Master Plan for the development of sustainable tourism, which the

National Tourism Office continues to use to develop the ecotourism sector. Institutional capacity-building allowed the National Tourism Office to expand the country's reach through the establishment of a digital tourism platform and participation in commercial promotion and marketing opportunities at the national, regional and international levels. Meanwhile, tourism-related products and services were improved and diversified through EIF initiatives aimed at institutional and human capacity-building at the Tourism Directorate and the Arta Hotel School, a hospitality training school for young graduates. In 2018, Lonely Planet magazine ranked Djibouti as the fourth amongst ten destinations to visit.

Another area where EIF support led to a major shift within the country is the formalization of the informal business sector. By supporting national institutions responsible for the private sector, the EIF was able to help ensure informal MSMEs had the documentation they needed for the Government to recognize them. These efforts resulted in the formalization of some 2,000 MSMEs. By highlighting the net positives that could come from formalizing MSMEs, such as access to modern machinery, financing and technologies, many informal actors were willing to move away from this status. Additionally, support for the improvement of legal texts and the establishment of a licence card for the exercise of crafts, trades and services trades helped improve the structure of the business sector. Success in this area was instrumental in improving the business environment, which led to more inclusive and income-generating growth. Drawing on the EIF model for NIUs, the Ministry of Trade and Tourism has established a Project Management Unit for Trade Development. This Unit has absorbed the NIU and is responsible for implementing all of the Ministry's projects.



Equatorial Guinea

Total number of EIF country projects

3

Total number of EIF regional projects

2

Total budget in million USD

1.23

Equatorial Guinea is a small country of 1.7 million people seated on the Gulf of Guinea coast in central West Africa. The EIF began working in Equatorial Guinea in 2017, the same year the country graduated from LDC status. The EIF worked with the country throughout its post-graduation process, with significant achievements accomplished in the areas of trade mainstreaming; integration of the NIU into the Government; and WTO accession support. As five years have now passed since the country's graduation, it no longer qualifies for EIF support.

The EIF's DTIS was completed in 2019 and was instrumental in mainstreaming trade, including key strategies and policies. The DTIS helped create a better understanding of the structural, policy, budget and supply-side issues that are constraining trade. This knowledge was disseminated to key areas of the Government, which, in turn, was integrated into the design of the country's National Strategy for Sustainable Development (Equatorial Guinea Agenda 2035) (released at the Third National Economic Conference) and the General State Budget 2021. The DTIS also provided policy recommendations aimed at increasing the country's ability to withstand commodity price shocks, elucidating fiscal policies and addressing weaknesses in tax policies. These recommendations were welcomed by the Government and are being implemented.

Establishing a sustainable NIU in Equatorial Guinea was of paramount importance in the EIF's support in the country, due to the short window of opportunity due to the country's graduation. The NIU was successfully integrated into the Government and is hosted by the Ministry of Trade and Promotion of Micro-, Small-, and Medium-sized Enterprises. There are some concerns over the ability of the NIU to finance itself; nevertheless, EIF initiatives have continued to be supported by the Government, and

there is optimism that the NIU will be re-prioritized by the Government.

In addition to supporting trade mainstreaming and operating as an advisor to the Minister on trade-related matters, the NIU operates as a focal point for participation in the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa and the ECCAS. The NIU was also instrumental in providing capacity-building for more than 200 public officials, including 54 women, in diverse areas, such as trade negotiation, trade facilitation and strategies related to the AfCFTA.

This training significantly contributed to Equatorial Guinea's successful ratification of the AfCFTA Agreement and ongoing WTO accession discussions. The NIU has played a key role in coordinating trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) for WTO accession, including through the provision of assistance in the development of the Trade Policy Regime Memorandum.

Overall, EIF support was directly linked to expected strategic outcomes in line with the EIF's Theory of Change. For example, indicators on trade policy in Equatorial Guinea's EIF National Implementation Arrangements (NIAs) are identical to planned outcomes in a number of areas, including national development and poverty reduction objectives, capacity-building and integration into regional markets. Additionally, EIF projects in the country were well coordinated with other initiatives in areas such as agriculture, fisheries and human development.



Ethiopia

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.39

Ethiopia is a landlocked East African country in the horn of Africa, with a population of about 123 million people, making it the second most populous nation in Africa. The EIF has been supporting Ethiopia since 2004, under its prior form, the IF. EIF support has led to important progress in the areas of private sector development, institutional capacity-building and integration into the global trading system. Ethiopia's NIU is well integrated into the Government and has been instrumental in scaling up the Government's trade-related capacity.

Through a climate-smart beekeeping project, the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) procured innovative technologies, such as basic honey testing tools and equipment. Overall, EIF funding in the sector has generated jobs — particularly for women — and has enhanced bee floral resources, which has improved biodiversity and the ecosystem. Almost 20,000 beekeepers were trained (well over 6,000 women and nearly 18,000 youth) in honey harvesting, grading, packaging, storage and marketing and were provided with modern equipment. Armed with better skills, a total of 153 tonnes of honey and 17 tonnes of beeswax were produced during the project period (2019-2021). Moreover, the initiative attracted [an additional USD 135 million in two phases of funding](#) from the Mastercard Foundation. The project also played an important role in enhancing biodiversity and reforestation, with nearly 2 million seedlings planted to serve as bee forage.

Following training focusing on digital skills and support through ITU, women-led businesses were linked to new markets. The proportion of African women with internet access is 12% lower than the proportion of men and, in African LDCs, this gender gap broadens to 31%. In total, more than 1,660 women were trained, which provided a better understanding of the value of technology for working-age women.

Ethiopian women were also the focus of an EIF initiative aimed at implementing gender-sensitive, climate-resilient international market access through fair trade with FairTrade Australia and New Zealand. Support focused on increasing women's capacity on various aspects of farm management and exporting to ensure that harvesting techniques are environmentally-friendly and that the quality of their produce meets international market requirements.

The EIF has also been supporting Ethiopia's participation in the Dubai Gulfood Expo since 2015. The trade fair has been a major source of market access for Ethiopian companies, resulting in some USD 80 million each year as a direct result of contracts signed at this trade fair. The success of the fair triggered an increase in interest by Ethiopian companies looking to participate. The number of participating companies has risen from less than 10 to approximately 70, with demand for participation now outstripping the Trade Ministry's capacity to accommodate.

Recognition of the value of trade within Ethiopia's Government has led to a number of trade promotion initiatives — including an export promotion strategy — and led to a further integration into the global trading system. The EIF supported Ethiopia through its ratification of the AfCFTA Agreement and continues to play a role in supporting Ethiopia on WTO accession negotiations. WTO accession discussions began in 2003 but faltered a decade later. In 2020, when Ethiopia signalled that the Government was ready to resume negotiations, the EIF's close ties through the NIU and a nimble structure allowed it to immediately resume support.

[Click/scan here for more](#)





The Gambia

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

11

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.75

The Gambia is a country of some 2.7 million inhabitants seated on the far western coast of the African continent. The country is a virtual enclave, with its border only shared with Senegal. Support for The Gambia began in 2009 with the EIF engaging in a number of initiatives in the country, including institutional strengthening; productive capacity-building; and trade-related climate finance.

The EIF's experience in The Gambia has been notably positive, with an extremely high level of Government participation, coordination and enthusiasm. The Government is strongly engaged and actively involved all the way down to the beneficiary level. The EIF enabled consultation and coordination of key stakeholders, including the private sector, during the formulation of the Green-Focused National Development Plan (2023-2027). This collaboration resulted in the mainstreaming of trade and trade-related issues, including on e-commerce into the NDP. Likewise, the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment has now also strengthened relationships with other key ministries, particularly those related to agriculture and the environment.

EIF support has helped The Gambia become a pioneer in the trade and climate change nexus. The Government developed the country's first AfT project to access trade-related climate finance. This innovative approach has already attracted interest from fellow LDCs — including Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Tuvalu — looking to possibly emulate the initiative. Some of these countries have already arranged study tours to better understand the climate finance strategy, which has forged new relationships and boosted information-sharing among countries and between ministries. The EIF has also supported climate adaptation in fisheries, a sector vital to the livelihoods

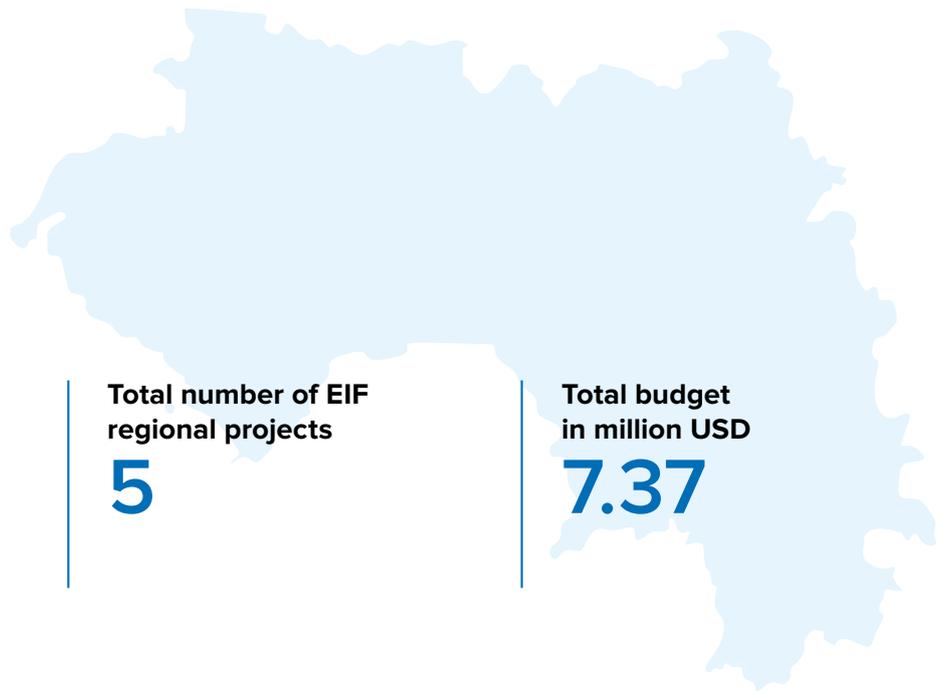
of more than 200,000 and where women make up 80% of processors. This included establishing “climate smart” fish-smoking facilities, and insulated ice boxes for traders to help prolong shelf life, and training to raise post-harvest hygiene standards for the EU market.

On e-commerce, the EIF facilitated the development of an eCommerce assessment and follow-on project proposals. The Ministry is now supporting the implementation of a USD 50 million project from the World Bank tackling the identified constraints. The investment in an EIF financed upgrade of the air cargo complex near Banjul International Airport has reduced handling times by as much as 40%. This has been secured through improved infrastructure, packaging standards, better trained airport staff and increased services to small- and medium-sized enterprises. In a similar vein EIF investments together with the ITC established the aflatoxin mitigation programme, helping overcome one of the main constraints to international markets for this key crop.

Following a catalytic pilot project financed by the EIF with ITC, the initiative was scaled up through an additional EUR 11 million investment by the EU. In another project implemented by the ITC's SheTrades team, over 1,500 women entrepreneurs were equipped with skills to access new markets, and 141 women-owned businesses were successfully linked to buyers abroad and to transnational value chains. Overall, incomes of women farmers increased by 179%. Women entrepreneurs increased their participation in trade by improving their competitiveness and strengthening their market linkages, enabled by a supportive business environment.



Guinea



**Total number of EIF
country projects**

8

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.37

Guinea is a country of some 14 million people, located on the coast of West Africa. The EIF has been supporting Guinea since 2002, under its predecessor, the IF. In 2016, the EIF led an update to Guinea's 2003 DTIS, which was successfully integrated into the country's National Economic and Social Development Program 2016-2020. International trade accounts for more than three quarters of Guinea's economy, and exports are highly concentrated on mining (bauxite, alumina, gold and diamonds).

While agricultural products make up a smaller share of exports, the sector is the country's largest employer and plays a key role in poverty reduction and rural development — it provides income for 57% of rural households and employment for 52% of the workforce. Additionally, processing industries are a valuable economic sector that the Government highlighted as an area that could benefit from EIF support.

The EIF supported productive capacity-building in the mango sector, which aimed to improve sectoral competitiveness — particularly amongst small producers — by reinforcing and strengthening capacity along the value chain. The EIF also supported the construction of a modern packaging facility with new refrigeration equipment to help improve packaging and marketing infrastructure in the sector. More recent impact monitoring reporting from the mango project indicates that over 3,350 jobs (of which 35% went to women) were created in the sector by the different MSME beneficiaries.

In addition to the provision of capacity and equipment in the sector, the EIF supported the preparation and validation of a report, which provided an inventory of all relevant legislation and regulations relating to Guinean exports. The EIF also supported a study, which was undertaken by

ITC, on the competitiveness of the Guinean mango sector, which was subsequently adopted by the Government.

One of the most significant interventions in Guinea was the EIF's support for laboratory equipment to facilitate the ability of processing industries to ensure food safety and to conform to international standards in order to better access global markets. Support to tackle this SPS challenge was requested by the Guinean Government, because at the time, the Government and the industry were forced to send samples out of the country to Senegal for analyses, which was both costly and time-consuming.

Support was provided to the National Office for Quality Control, and laboratory equipment was procured, thus allowing testing to be done locally. Importantly, laboratory analysis training was also provided, with an emphasis on job growth for young people. Today, some 80% of laboratory staff are youth. Overall, an additional USD 800,000 was mobilized from the private sector, development partners and the Government. The average time to analyse a sample has been reduced from 21 to 5 days.

Through this support, Guinea has now become one of the leading countries for food safety laboratory equipment in the ECOWAS. This capacity is crucial in achieving sustainability, because the private sector has now come to rely on the services of the laboratory, enabling regular investments in upgrades to allow for additional services.



Guinea-Bissau

Total number of EIF country projects

5

Total number of EIF regional projects

2

Total budget in million USD

3.7

Guinea-Bissau is a small coastal West African country with a population of some 2 million people. The country consists of mostly lowland plains, and exports are mainly cashew nuts, fish and minerals. The EIF has been working in Guinea-Bissau since 2010. Despite setbacks from occasional political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic, the EIF has managed to undertake a number of capacity-building initiatives and achieve a high level of trade integration into Government planning and strategy. More recently, support has been provided to help develop the country's fisheries industry.

Capacity-building opportunities were provided to Government authorities, political decision-makers, women's groups and stakeholders from a range of economic sectors on the overall importance of international trade to development and best practices for developing strategies for a robust and healthy trade sector. Government officials were also trained on effective strategies for attracting international donors for trade development. These skills helped develop Guinea-Bissau's Second National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which formalized strategies for national growth and poverty reduction.

The NIU in Guinea-Bissau is well integrated into the Government and has benefitted from technical and professional capacity-building efforts that have allowed it and its staff to operate effectively and advance the role of trade within the Government. An international trade advisor was also installed in Guinea-Bissau to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Commerce and Handicrafts. The advisor supported the drafting of major policies of the trade strategy, the DTIS and national consultants' reports.

NIU staff are well integrated into senior roles at the Ministry. Until recently, a past NIU Coordinator served as the Minister of Trade and the trade policy expert of the

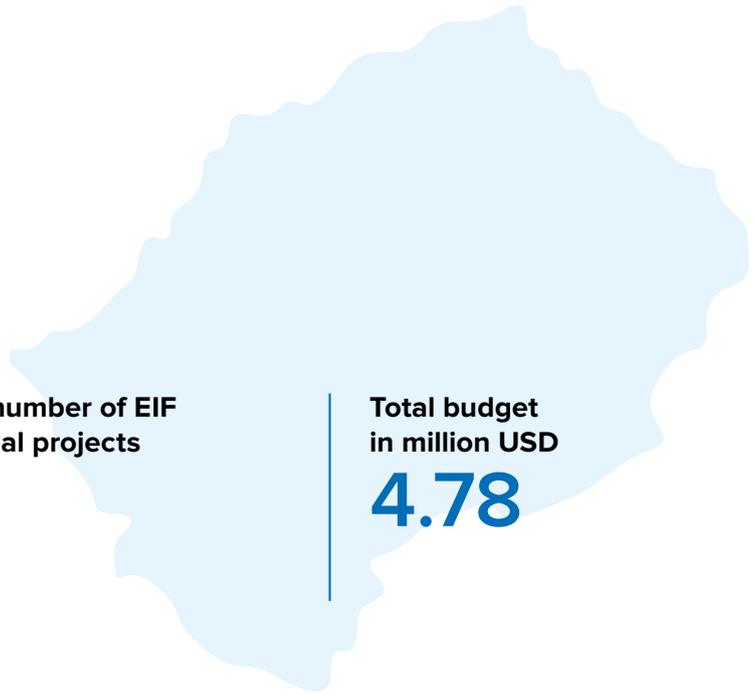
NIU is now the Director-General of External Trade and Competition.

Support for Guinea-Bissau's productive sector focused on supporting the artisanal fisheries sector, together with implementing partner UNIDO. These efforts have focused on building capacity and improving women's economic opportunities through PPPs, improved equipment and the implementation of training with a "learning by doing" approach. The initiative provided some 569 beneficiaries (57% of which were women) with training on production and distribution techniques. Overall, some 2,000 stakeholders benefitted from these efforts, including through the strengthening of three federations in three regions and the creation of a new federation of fishers and traders, comprised of four associations.

Support in this area benefitted from diagnostic visits to key regions in order to ensure that proposed training and equipment would meet the needs of beneficiaries. Efforts focused on providing a number of training sessions and the procurement of essential equipment, such as isothermal crates for transporting goods and new dugout canoes. A national expert was also commissioned to develop the PPP model, with the involvement of associations, to adapt to the local context. Notably, training on fishing techniques and the canoes had a strong impact on improving women's economic opportunities.



Lesotho



Total number of EIF country projects

7

Total number of EIF regional projects

2

Total budget in million USD

4.78

Lesotho is a landlocked country in Southern Africa that is home to some 2.3 million inhabitants. The country is a mountainous enclave that is surrounded by the country of South Africa. Lesotho has been part of the EIF's predecessor, the IF, since 2001 and has actively benefitted from EIF support since 2010.

Due to its proximity, Lesotho's economy is closely linked with that of South Africa. The economy of Lesotho has historically been based on exports and the attraction of investment. It has a relatively strong light manufacturing industry, and MSMEs represent the majority of Lesotho's businesses.

Impressive industrial and commercial development has been a notable positive outcome of the EIF's support in the country. The DTISU in 2012 created a framework upon which the Government could develop new industries, and it underpins Lesotho's current National Strategic Development Plan and National Trade Strategy. The National Trade Strategy serves as a blueprint to expand the MSME sector and maximize the country's export potential in the areas of horticulture, textiles and apparel and light manufacturing.

Lesotho's 2021-2025 National Trade Strategy (launched in 2020) was formulated by the Ministry of Trade and Industry with technical assistance from ITC and funding from the EIF. The Strategy provides a prioritized plan of action with specific activities to support exporting MSMEs at the national level in three strategic sectors: horticulture, textiles and apparel and light industry. A follow-up project to support the implementation of the National Trade Strategy was implemented by ITC. This has informed the Department of Trade, and current support, notably from the EU and the World Bank, is covering areas that were identified, such as customs procedures and regional trade agreements building MSME capacity.

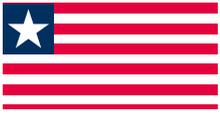
Lesotho's horticultural sector has been stricken by challenging climate change-induced weather in recent years, including severe hailstorms that destroy many crops. The EIF, together with implementing agency ITC, led an initiative to provide protection for crops in the form

of weather-resistant greenhouses, which also served as a space for smallholder farmers to distribute produce.

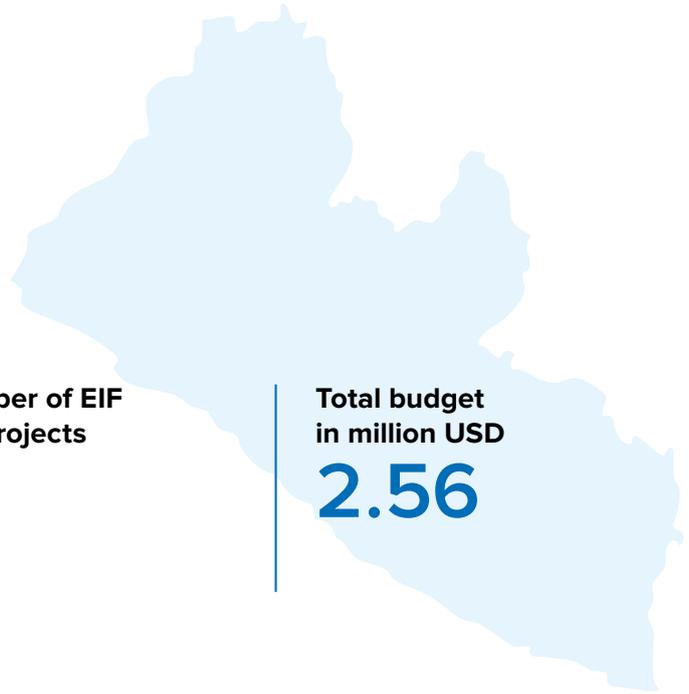
Through the initiative, the EIF supported the adoption of new horticultural techniques; linkages to markets; and the installation of 115 greenhouses in four regions. These efforts led to an increase in incomes and 650 new jobs through broad growth in the horticulture sector, resulting in a reduction in poverty. Support also led to the establishment of the Maluti Market Centre, the country's first major produce marketplace. The produce hub is a private sector-led initiative located in the country's capital city, Maseru. Following the EIF's intervention, the Government has invested USD 1.3 million in additional market centers in different regions of the country.

The success of the horticulture and market initiatives are crucial examples of the value of the EIF in delivering projects that are ideally suited to the needs of the country. Because the NIU is anchored in the Ministry of Trade, policy interventions travel both upstream and downstream, which brings the private sector and, in this case, small-scale farmers and the Agriculture Ministry together with trade institutions. In many ways, this approach bridges the gap between policy-makers and the lives that they are impacting. This, in turn, helps provide longer-term interventions that are more responsive and more sustainable.

Another key area of success in Lesotho was the EIF's comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the country's readiness to engage in, and benefit from, e-trade. Together with implementing partner UNCTAD, the assessment reviewed several sectors and provided recommendations on a path forward for Lesotho in such burgeoning sectors. Recommendations included improvements in public-private sector dialogues; launching a national e-commerce strategy development process; increasing mobile internet access; improving physical infrastructure (e.g., roads); increasing mobile money services; building legal and regulatory frameworks for e-commerce; strengthening e-commerce skills development; and enabling better access to financing.



Liberia



**Total number of EIF
country projects**

6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

2.56

Liberia is a coastal country of some 5.3 million people that is seated at southwest corner of West Africa. While the economy is largely based on the export of a few high-value natural resources (e.g., iron ore, gold and rubber), the Government has made efforts in recent years to diversify. Initial support for Liberia was provided in 2008 by the IF, focusing largely on creating and implementing the country's DTIS. More recently, the EIF was instrumental in supporting trade integration, including preparing the country for its accession to the WTO in 2016. Since then, the EIF has been supporting the country on a number of fronts, including post-accession support and the development of its tourism industry.

Prior to Liberia's WTO accession, the EIF played a pivotal role in developing Liberia's trade strategy, including the preparation for WTO membership. First and foremost, the EIF supported the establishment of the country's NIU, which was named the SPIU. The SPIU brings together various forms of AfT support in the accession process, such as the Japanese Non-Project Grant Aid (valued at approximately USD 4.2 million) and anchoring support from the Swedish National Board of Trade for the accession process.

NIU staff have subsequently moved on to play more high-profile trade-related roles within the Government, including at the Ministerial level. Institutional capacity-building also extended to developing capacity within the MoCI and the National Security Council as a means to help prioritize the role of trade and assist with policy-making and implementation.

This internal support was key to ensuring a smooth transition toward WTO membership and post-accession, which was further supported by the EIF through a number of initiatives. The EIF assisted with the drafting

of Liberia's post-accession protocol and the Liberia Post Accession Plan.

Another major success in Liberia has been the EIF's support for the country's tourism sector, especially the renowned surfing sub-sector. With EIF support through ITC, the Government of Liberia launched its first Tourism Trade Strategy in 2016. The Strategy included specific plans to develop Liberia as a surf destination. Training was provided to 23 members of the Liberia National Tourism Association and 45 participants from the surf tourism industry.

By developing the surfing industry, the initiative aims to not only improve economic growth and create jobs, but also to ensure that the coastline environment is protected. Environmental sustainability has been targeted through the development of governance and management guidelines. The EIF has also supported the sector through the development of infrastructure, including the construction of surfing facilities (e.g., a storage house, a conference hall, showers, washrooms and a kitchen) in the town of Robertsport; and a pier and welcome facilities on the mainland opposite the tourist attraction at Chimpanzee Island — all in collaboration with local surfing associations. The EIF has also helped launch a major surf exhibition and establish a surf tourism booth at the airport.

Additional donors have already recognized the value of the surf industry. USAID has supported work on supporting protected areas and have signed on to provide marketing support for the EIF initiative.



Madagascar

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

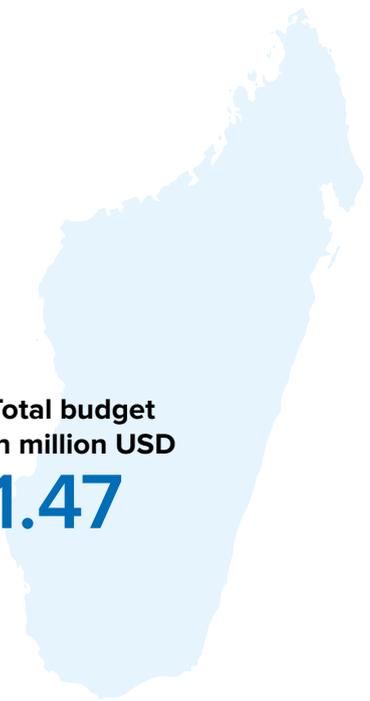
3

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

1.47



Home to some 30 million inhabitants, Madagascar is a large, resource-rich island in the Indian Ocean off the south-eastern coast of continental Africa. The country developed its first DTIS in 2003, under the EIF's predecessor, the IF. While support was suspended in 2009 due to political instability, the EIF resumed activities in 2013. The majority of support in the country has focused on trade integration and updating the DTIS.

In terms of integration, the EIF has supported Madagascar through the drafting of its NDP, supported by UNDP's role in drafting Madagascar's DTIS. The EIF structure facilitated the resumption of activities in Madagascar in 2013, which began with the drafting of a pre-DTIS document. Underscoring the priority and importance of the EIF's unique approach to support, a workshop was first held to ensure that all stakeholders were familiarized with the matter. This support also helped the Government prepare for the Fifth Global Review of Aid for Trade and the country's Third Trade Policy Review at the WTO.

The Madagascar DTISU was a significant undertaking, given the challenges introduced by the lack of continuity and the complexities involved. Nevertheless, it aimed to identify the possible constraints that might be hindering Madagascar's ability to integrate further into regional and global production networks and markets. Thus, it undertook a more in-depth analysis of these constraints beyond descriptive evidence and proposed a series of pragmatic remedies and trade policy reforms.

Ultimately, the DTIS and subsequent Updates provided a range of analyses and recommendations, with a matrix of 23 priority actions to be implemented. The EIF supported the NIU Coordinator in Madagascar through the development of a Medium-Term Plan based on the DTIS. The Plan has already been deployed based on the EIF's

frameworks and has helped the Government mobilize more resources to support its trade priorities.

The EIF partnered with the Government of Madagascar to co-finance a project to support the establishment of the country's NIAs. The initiative aims to help integrate trade into national development strategies; establish trade coordination structures; and address supply-side constraints.

Notably, these efforts have led to the integration of trade into Madagascar's NDP and contributed to the development of the country's Medium-Term Plan for Trade Development. Cross-cutting trade priorities were also integrated into Madagascar's NDP, which identified AfT and the enhancement of private sector competitiveness as key focus areas.

In an effort to help enhance TRTA in Madagascar, the EIF supported the establishment of a public-private stakeholder coordination mechanism to enhance capacity-building. The initiative led to the training of more than 700 public officials from different sectors in areas such as management skills; trade and investment; trade and the environment; trade in services; trade facilitation; international negotiations; e-commerce readiness; and trade and value chain development.



Malawi

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

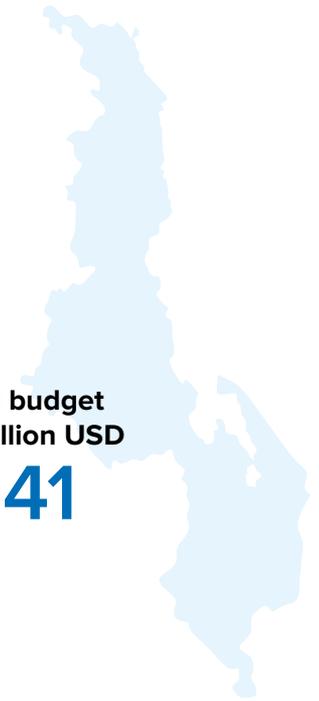
11

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

5.41



Malawi is a landlocked country in southern Africa with a population of some 20 million. The eastern border occupies much of Lake Malawi, one of the African Great Lakes. Malawi's economy is agricultural-based, accounting for about 30% of the GDP and 80% of export revenues in 2017. Agriculture also employs some 76% of the Malawi's workforce. The EIF has been working in Malawi since 2009, and since then has achieved significant progress on mainstreaming trade and targeted support for the agricultural sector.

The EIF has been working to help ensure that its successes in mainstreaming trade policy into the NDPs, sectoral policies and strategies have continuity and are sustainable. Additional resources have been leveraged by the Ministry from the AfDB and the World Bank. Resource-mapping has also been undertaken through the development of flagship projects under the country's Second National Export Strategy, which was complemented by EIF investments into the preparation of proposals for follow-on projects.

Working with the Ministry and the National Association of Smallholder Farmers, the EIF has continued to follow up on the innovative "anchor farm" model, which uses farming hubs as a means to boost local farmer collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Twinned with investments into trade promotion through the Malawi Investment and Trade Centre (MITC), the initiative facilitated exports to consumers in Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Mechanized farming amongst project smallholders also increased from 4% to 52%, and incomes for beneficiaries were substantially increased. The poverty rate among beneficiaries plummeted from 55.5% to 37.4%, as average incomes increased by 160%-240%. Following support from the MITC, more than 500 new jobs were created in exporting firms, and USD 350 million worth of investment deals were facilitated through the Malawi

Investment Forum, which was supported in part through the EIF. The EIF played a key role in establishing a trade consulate in neighbouring Mozambique, which now continues through Government funding. The two countries signed an agreement in 2019 for Malawi to supply a minimum quota of 1,000 tonnes of poultry and poultry products and, by 2022, the quota had already been met.

The EIF also worked with UNCTAD to develop a feasibility study on further developing cotton by-products, such as seeds and cottonseed cake, for export. While cotton is an important Malawian export crop, the technologies, equipment and know-how needed to process by-products are not available. The feasibility study proposed several recommendations in the areas of legislation, Government support, farmer organization and the development of value chains.

With some 350,000 cotton farmers in Malawi — one third of whom are women — support in this area has the potential to contribute to poverty reduction. Additional research to identify potential workstreams for future capacity-building projects in this sector is already underway.



Mali

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

7

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.09

Mali is a large landlocked nation of 22.6 million people in central West Africa. While as much as 65% of the country is desert or semi-desert, the Niger River creates a large and fertile inland delta in the centre of the country. Mali joined the EIF's predecessor, the IF, in 2003 and completed its first DTIS in 2004. Under the EIF, Mali completed a DTISU in 2015, which emphasized the need for institutional capacity-building and strengthening productive and commercial capacity in the shea and gum arabic sectors.

EIF support for institutional capacity-building consisted of strengthening the management capacity of the NIU; supporting the public and private sectors in meeting commercial and regulatory requirements of international markets; and increasing financial and technical support to address supply-side constraints and implement DTIS priorities. Mali's Ministry of Trade has been an incredibly positive contributor to the EIF model. Particularly noteworthy is its ability to mobilize Government contributions for trade. In recent years, Mali became the top country in terms of Government contributions to the EIF, having secured more than USD 11 million in counterpart funding.

Furthermore, trade was integrated into national development strategies, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers for 2007-2011 and 2012-2017 and the National Development Strategy for 2016-2018. Trade has also been integrated into eight sectoral strategies, including amongst others agriculture; environment; transport; and food quality and safety.

More recently, the Ministry of Trade has played a strong role in drafting the country's Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development. For example, one of the lines of action of this Framework

aimed to increase the contribution of trade to growth through the development of internal and external trade.

Productive capacity support in Mali focused on funding the mango, gum arabic and shea sectors. The shea sector, for example, has been particularly successful due to the EIF's support, which facilitated the creation of a national shea interprofessional association. Technical assistance support was provided at all levels of the shea value chain and helped sustain it through a range of processes. EIF support toward a sustainable approach to shea harvesting and exporting has directly contributed to improving incomes in the shea sector and reducing poverty in the country. Thanks to the support, Mali's shea producers have produced an additional 1 million MT of shea products. Meanwhile, shea exporters have been able to access 17 international markets across Africa, Europe, North America and Asia, generating over USD 74 million.

The support has also helped shape the Government of Mali's National Development Strategy for the shea sector, and in the gum arabic sector, the project exceeded its annual average production target by 25%. Overall, the project contributed to the production of more than 45,500 MT of gum arabic and the export of some USD 50 million worth of gum arabic products in 9 international markets in Europe, Asia and North America.

In addition to Mali's national shea initiative, the country benefits from a regional project implemented by the GSA. The regional project brings together fellow shea producers Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo to help enhance the capability of women's cooperatives to produce and export quality shea products; promote the regional integration of the shea supply chain; and facilitate greater LDC participation in international markets.



Mauritania

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

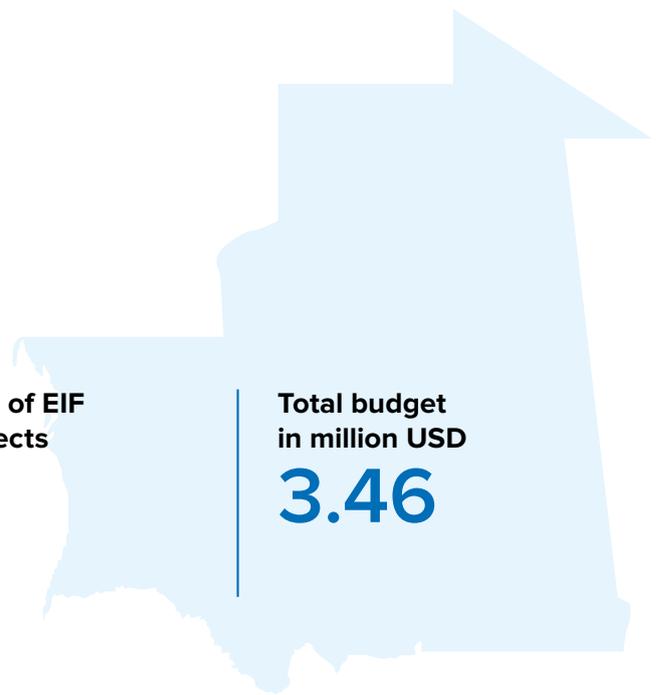
4

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.46



Mauritania is a large country located on the coast of northwest Africa. The country is home to almost 5 million people, who predominantly inhabit the country's temperate south. Much of the northern half of the country is dominated by the Sahara Desert. Mauritania was one of three countries selected for a pilot project in 2001 by the EIF's predecessor, the IF. Integration of trade was achieved early on in the process, when the country's first DTIS played a major role in the development of its 2003 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and helped establish export promotion and fishing cooperatives.

In more recent years, under the EIF, this high level of trade integration remains a hallmark of success in Mauritania. The country's NIU is integrated into the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Handicraft and Tourism. Support from the EIF and the NIU framework has substantially boosted trade capacity within the Government and created a sustainable approach to staff. For example, the EIF's Focal Point in the Ministry is the Director of Studies, Programming and Cooperation. Staff also focused on hiring junior staff as a means to train young people as potential future experts and leaders within the Ministry.

Trade-related institutional capacity within the Government, more broadly, has also been a priority area for the EIF in Mauritania in recent years. Through EIF support, coordination on trade issues has improved among Government agencies. There has also been an increase in the integration of trade into development strategies, including tourism, and coordination between development partners has also expanded. Training was also held for private sector and civil society actors with the goal of actioning economic reforms undertaken by the Government. Furthermore, the EIF contributed towards the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

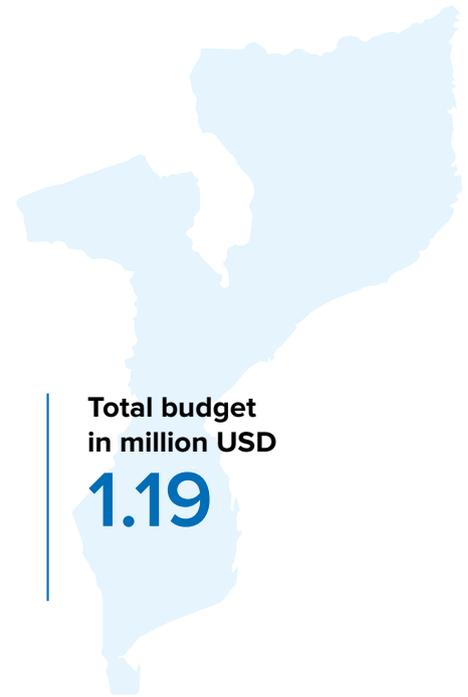
The EIF's support for the eco-tourism sector is another notable area of success in Mauritania. The initiative aims to help build trade-related productive capacity by supporting the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in the Banc d'Arguin National Park. In all, three renewable energy-powered eco-camps were established in Iwik, Mamghar and Tessot. The camps feature modern tents for tourist accommodation and sanitation facilities, and transportation and management is undertaken by some 150-200 women connected to local women cooperatives.

Support also included training workshops for beneficiaries in areas such as sustainable tourism; eco-tourism marketing strategies; business management; technical and managerial skills; environmental management; and strategies for selling local artisanal products. Community market gardens were also created, with features such as soilless gardening, and training on environmental practices were provided. The initiative also benefitted from the establishment and implementation of an eco-tourism marketing strategy and participation at an international tourism trade show.

In 2022, the EIF also partnered with the UNECA and the ITFC on a project aimed at helping eight African countries, including Mauritania, operationalize the AfCFTA. The project aims to help create a more efficient trade environment that is underpinned by enhanced local capacity.



Mozambique



Total number of EIF
country projects

4

Total number of EIF
regional projects

5

Total budget
in million USD

1.19

Mozambique is a large coastal country in southern East Africa with a population of some 33 million. It boasts 2,700 kilometres of coastline with three deep seaports. The country is abundant in natural resources, including arable land, fresh water, energy capacity, minerals and newly discovered coastal gas deposits. Some two thirds of Mozambique's population live and work in rural areas. Support for Mozambique began in 2004 under the IF, the EIF's predecessor. The EIF has placed a priority on supporting the development of Mozambique's internal capacity in order to enhance trade policies and strengthen the country's ability to participate in regional and global markets.

In an important move for trade integration, the NIU helped re-establish a key inter-ministerial trade committee, which was chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The EIF-supported committee brought together a number of partners and set in motion various processes, including the development of an external trade directory; the establishment of a national export strategy; the drafting of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement Implementation Plan; the creation of a guide to trade negotiations; the provision of a toolkit on market access; and the implementation of a database on international trade statistics. This has enabled the collection of services-related data from three border posts, which will be replicated across other provinces. The support and involvement of USAID as the EIF Donor Facilitator (DF) throughout these processes has been key.

In addition to institutional capacity-building, the EIF hosted an event aimed at enhancing awareness of preferential trade agreements and trade diversification opportunities among a number of trade-related stakeholders, including MSMEs. This initiative inspired the formation of the MozExport Conference, which is now an annual export

promotion event run by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. The event brings together all key stakeholders in the foreign trade ecosystem where, in addition to export promotion, the main constraints to increasing exports and related private sector concerns are discussed.

“The project was very beneficial for me as it enabled me to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge about international trade. It has also contributed for the promotion of Mozambique exports through the market access workshops carried out during the project.

– Ms Amelia Nhassope,
MozExport Training workshop participant.



Niger

Total number of EIF country projects

6

Total number of EIF regional projects

7

Total budget in million USD

5.98

Niger is a large landlocked country of some 26 million people in eastern West Africa. Niger's economy is based largely on agriculture, which made up 40% of its GDP in 2023. While Niger's trade structure is dominated by merchandise trade, trade in services — imports and exports — has increased substantially since 2006, when the EIF's predecessor, the IF, became active. Under the EIF, support in Niger has focused on institutional capacity-building; improving the competitiveness of the hides and skins sector; and developing the sesame sector for increased export competitiveness.

The EIF's institutional capacity-building supported the mainstreaming of trade into Niger's NDP; the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism; and the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Livestock (2012-2035). In recent years, capacity-building focused on support for the reinforcement of skills in the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Government training was provided to 140 officials, including 42 women, and workshops on business relations and technical requirements were also hosted for MSMEs. The NIU is now strongly integrated into the Government and forms an integral part of the Ministry's capacity for the coordination of trade priorities. Following training, including a secondment to the Executive Secretariat for the EIF (ES), Niger pioneered an online Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system for their latest EIF project (see the section on Niger's Automated M&E System).

The EIF has made important contributions toward improving the competitiveness of Niger's sesame value chain, significantly boosting exports to USD 36 million, six times the initial project target. Exports have been facilitated into two new major international markets (China and Türkiye), which now account for 50% of sesame exports. The project also helped add value in

the processing of sesame into oils, soaps and foodstuffs; the improvement of packaging (biodegradable); and a boost in e-commerce (social networks), all of which have been major factors in increasing the turnover of sesame processors. The increase in exports was also facilitated by increased production facilitated by improved seeds and production practices. The average annual production in the five years prior to the project was 51,545 tonnes, which has now almost doubled to 92,406 tonnes between 2020 and 2022.

The EIF also focused on poverty reduction and empowering women in the hides and skins sector. Support in this area was bolstered by knowledge-sharing with industry partners in neighbouring Chad through an existing informal EIF network. The EIF played a role in helping establish an association for the sector and upgrading tannery facilities. Success in this initiative led to the mobilization of additional funding from the EU's West Africa Competitiveness Programme. Throughout this process, environmental considerations were taken into account, noting that waste management remained a challenge in this sector. The transition from traditional to modern tanning has had significant environmental benefits.

The capacities of the tanneries were strengthened through the project, and the Leather Trade Centre of Niamey was upgraded. By 2018, export revenues for the sector in 2018 amounted to USD 1,363,920, two and a half times greater than the 2010 baseline of USD 534,198. The main export markets are China, France, India and Spain. The project further supported officials from the newly constructed Maradi Tannery to participate in the International Leather Fair in Chennai, India, in November 2018. This led to the signing of a contract with an Indian company for 20,715 tanned sheep skins.



Rwanda

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

8

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.44

Rwanda is a landlocked country of 14 million inhabitants located in Central Africa. While political and social instability in the 1990s challenged the country's economy in the early 2000s, Rwanda has been on an upward trajectory over the past decade, and is aiming to graduate from LDC status in the near future. The EIF has been supporting Rwanda since 2009 in areas such as capacity-building for public officials; establishing e-commerce capacity; improving cross border trade infrastructure, and enhancing export growth, including through small-scale entrepreneurs.

In 2011, the Ministry of Trade and Industry formally established the NIU as a Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU). The SPIU coordinates donor-funded initiatives worth some USD 48 million related to AfT to maximize collaboration and long-term sustainability. Staff costs are shared between contributing projects, and staff members are expected to be absorbed into other interventions within the Unit without being incorporated into the Ministry.

The SPIU has played a vital role in supporting the Ministry to focus on cross-border trade, e-commerce and value chain development, as well as giving the Government improved oversight, ownership and coordination of development partner-funded initiatives.

The approach has been incredibly successful and has led to engagement on large-scale projects with the World Bank, the EU and others. The SPIU model has now been rolled out to all Ministries, underscoring the reality that the EIF has not only supported trade in Rwanda but also the country's overall approach to development.

The EIF also supported a successful initiative focused on improving cross-border trade through the establishment of two major cross-border trade markets. These large

facilities helped advance the economy by assisting the formalization of the informal cross-border trade sector, which employs many Rwandans — especially women. The markets were constructed taking into consideration the needs of women and of both large-scale traders and small-scale entrepreneurs.

The initiative also supported capacity-building for key players in the cross-border market sector, including technical officials, management teams and the informal cross-border traders themselves. This latter group was provided with training on a number of protocols related to trade facilitation; and of COVID-19 prevention measures, which, at the time, were essential for minimizing the spread of the virus across borders while conducting trade.

The initial EIF momentum helped spur more than USD 13 million in investment from other partners, including the World Bank, TradeMark East Africa and the AfDB. The cross-border marketplace model proved to be so successful that the approach is now being replicated elsewhere.

On e-commerce, the number of e-commerce platforms has increased from 9 at the start of the project to 67 by its conclusion, and Rwandan coffee and hot peppers were launched on the Alibaba platform. A dedicated project helped develop the national e-commerce policy and the competition and consumer protection policy, as well as seven Ministerial orders for the implementation of the Intellectual Property Law. Through a linked project, women-owned businesses are now exporting honey, flowers, avocados and fresh beans.



São Tomé and Príncipe

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

2

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

4

**Total budget
in million USD**

1.07

São Tomé and Príncipe is a small archipelago in the Gulf of Guinea, off the west coast of continental Africa. It is the second-smallest African country with a population of some 220,000 people. São Tomé and Príncipe's economy is predominantly based on agriculture, with cocoa production accounting for more than half of its exports. Other exports include chocolate, pepper, coconut oil and coffee. The country began receiving support from the EIF's predecessor, the IF, in 2006. Support has focused on capacity-building within the Government to help strengthen competitiveness and resilience through trade.

The EIF has provided support to increase the country's institutional and technical foundations to advance a trade-inclusive NDP for sustainable poverty reduction. An emphasis was placed on developing regulations for trade-related institutions and awareness-raising training for public and private sector stakeholders on the promotion of trade as a source of development and poverty reduction. Trade coordination was strengthened through the creation of the National Commission for Trade Integration and Exchange and the Trade Negotiation Committee, which also facilitated AfCFTA engagement.

EIF support has led to a general improvement of the trade environment through the adoption of several legal and regulatory texts, including the law on commercial activities; the law on cultural and artistic activities; the Artists Protection Act, the National Economic Council Act; updating the Hotels, Restaurants and Related Services Act; the registration of investment projects, and others. The Tourism Sector Development Strategy was updated with a focus on sustainable tourism and inclusive development. Likewise, a National Quality Plan was developed to help facilitate the establishment of geographical indication protection for cocoa.

There is now a much higher level of awareness among Government officials of the links between trade, development and poverty reduction. In addition to capacity-building seminars and workshops, the EIF has helped improve communication within the Government through the use of new technologies. Likewise, efforts also placed an emphasis on the use of national staff to lead capacity-building initiatives as a means to ensure local ownership and sustainability. The use of these national experts has proven to help overcome past inertia-related challenges.



Senegal

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

9

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

7

**Total budget
in million USD**

6.94

Senegal is a country of some 17 million people that sits on the Atlantic coast of far West Africa. The country's economy is diverse, with mining, construction, tourism, fishing and agriculture contributing toward its GDP of USD 27.7 billion (2022). Senegal's main cash crop is groundnuts, with further diversification into cotton, cassava and sugarcane. Senegal has been receiving support from when the IF spearheaded the country's first DTIS. Since that time, the EIF has driven a number of initiatives that have improved the integration of trade into Government planning and facilitated access to international markets. By 2021, the country met two of the three criteria for LDC graduation.

In clear recognition of the increased capacity and ability of the Ministry of Trade, and in partnership with technical expertise from the ES, the NIU secured more than USD 3 million from the national budget for investments into the cashew sector as a key means of diversifying exports.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EIF began work with Senegal to develop an e-commerce platform to ensure continuity of trade in the country. Initial work has shown remarkable success and has expanded trade opportunities into rural areas. The e-commerce initiative is part of the Emerging Senegal Plan, a strategy aimed at achieving major economic milestones by 2035. Already, the Senegalese Government — with support from the EIF — has put in place integrated policies, strategies and programmes with the fundamental objective of rapid, inclusive and mutually supportive economic development. More than 1,600 MSMEs, with an estimated 40% being women-led, have now been onboarded onto a national e-commerce platform (Boutik 221) and Senegal is now better placed to participate in plurilateral e-commerce negotiations at the WTO.

In addition to the e-commerce platform, the EIF helped establish support infrastructure, including the establishment of multi-functional trade relay points across the country for the movement of goods, resulting in reduced delivery costs and improved participation in digital trade by populations in disadvantaged rural areas.

Another key area of progress led by the EIF has been the enhancement of standardization of measurement techniques through an innovative approach to improving access to metrology. In the past, the country faced challenges with access to accurate weights and measures for producers and exporters, which greatly limited access to international markets. The EIF helped update legislative and regulatory frameworks; technical capacity; infrastructure; and administration-related to metrology. More than 100 lab technicians were trained in the use of mass metrology and weighting instruments, and 3 labs were equipped with up-to-date equipment for weight, temperature and pressure measurement. The increased capacity has enabled Senegalese labs to now provide services to firms in Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Guinea.

Prior EIF support helped boost mango production and exports through a project that was jointly implemented by ITC and the Government of Senegal. Through these efforts, more than 1,000 stakeholders (20% of whom are women) were trained on production and processing techniques and pest management. Together with investments into improved processing technologies, post-harvest losses have decreased, and mango exports have risen by nearly a third, from just under 17,000 MT in 2015 to 22,000 MT in 2018 (surpassing its initial 21,000 MT target).



Sierra Leone

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

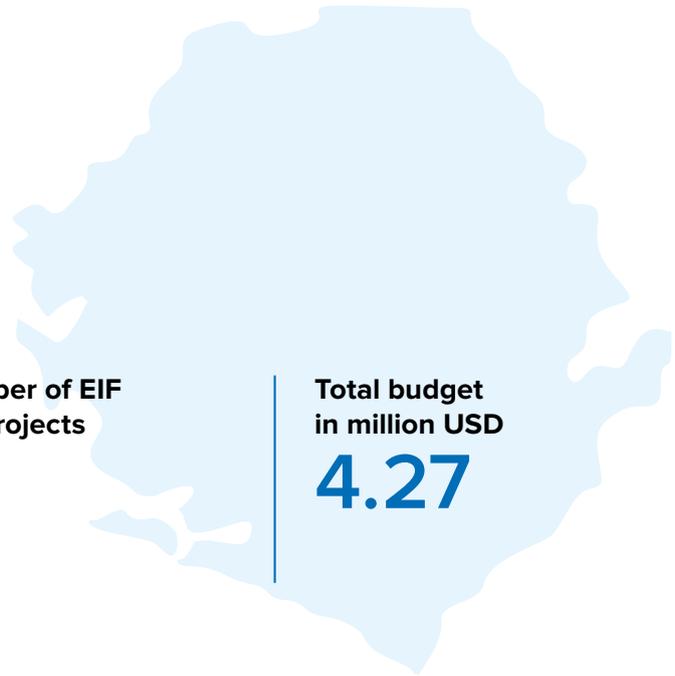
5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

2

**Total budget
in million USD**

4.27



Sierra Leone is a West African coastal country that is home to some 8.6 million citizens. The country boasts one of the world's largest natural harbours and is known for its scenic landscapes, which include a lush coastline, wooded hill country and mountain vistas. While the Sierra Leonean economy relies primarily on agriculture and mining, the EIF has been working with the country since 2009 to rebuild, following an 11-year civil war and the devastating impacts of Ebola.

Between 2009 and 2023, EIF support was instrumental in helping mainstream trade into Sierra Leone's NDPs. In a strong indication of ownership, the NIU, housed within the Ministry of Trade and Industry was integrated by Presidential Decree early on. The NSC and the NIU played crucial roles in project implementation, with the NSC making executive management decisions, including the approval of any changes in project objectives and strategy. These decisions were particularly important when guidance was needed by the National Tourist Board during the implementation of a tourism sector support project. Meanwhile, the NIU played a critical role in ensuring that projects aligned with the policy parameters outlined in the country's DTIS and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Strategic planning by the NSC and the NIU were also critical to efforts to rejuvenate Sierra Leone's tourism sector. Government officials had approached the EIF with a desire to attract tourists back to the country after a prolonged absence. Years of civil war in the 1990s had posed a challenge for the country's international image. Nevertheless, the country has immense tourism potential. The EIF listened to the policy-makers and helped integrate into Sierra Leone's Trade Policy the goal of reshaping the country's image into one of an ecotourism hotspot. The initiative has already achieved noteworthy success, the

country being recognized in 2023 by Time Magazine as one of the world's top destinations.

The initiative has two primary objectives: align Sierra Leone's tourism agenda with trade policies to foster sustainable and pro-poor growth and elevate Sierra Leone's presence and reputation in the international market as an alluring tourist destination. Despite facing challenges in a post-conflict setting compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts have led to the introduction of a new Tourism Act and the formulation of a Tourism Governance and Financial Management Policy. These administrative tools help ensure a cohesive integration of tourism policy across Government programmes, thus promoting the sustainable development of ecotourism.

Substantial progress was made in 2022 and 2023 in developing and improving community-based eco-tourism sites, such as Banana Island, Tiwai Island and the Wara Wara Hills. The EIF also supported a major refurbishment of the country's Hotel and Tourism Training College that had suffered from competing funding priorities during and after the conflict and the recent Ebola health crisis. The EIF further supported the participation of the Ministry of Trade and Industry in the Intra-African Trade Fair in South Africa, where the delegation showcased products originating from Sierra Leone. Following the initial EIF investments, the World Bank scaled up the initiatives with a USD 10 million project to further develop tourism in Sierra Leone.



Somalia

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

2

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

0.35

Somalia is continental Africa's easternmost country and has a population of some 17.5 million. The country occupies the majority of the coastline of the Horn of Africa, along one of the world's busiest maritime trade routes. Somalia is transitioning from a period of fragility and crisis and is working to overcome challenges related to infrastructure, institutions and governance structures.

Somalia has limited engagement with the EIF. It has not yet undertaken a DTIS, nor does it have an NIU. Nevertheless, the Government's National Trade Strategy 2021-2025 prioritized accession to the WTO as a goal, and the EIF has been supporting the country at this early stage.

Somalia faces acute shortages of officials endowed with the technical knowledge and institutional experience required for effective trade policy-making. Thus, EIF support has focused on providing training for officials to build their trade capacity and to enable them with the skills to prepare for the WTO accession process. The initiative has been implemented by the World Bank in partnership with the Trade Policy Training Centre in Africa (TRAPCA), which is based in Arusha, Tanzania.

The course content covered trade and development; foundational elements of trade law; tools for trade policy analysis; trade facilitation; agriculture; standards; and product competitiveness. There were also courses on drafting and interpreting trade agreements; regional integration; tariff and non-tariff measure analysis; trade negotiations and economic diplomacy; domestic trade governance; and trade remedies and dispute settlement.

At least 37 high- or mid-level officials participated in some or all of the e-learning or in-person training courses.



South Sudan

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

1.96

South Sudan is a landlocked country of some 11 million people in northeast Africa. In 2011, South Sudan became the world's youngest nation after its secession from Sudan. The EIF has focused its support to this young country recovering from a number of political and social challenges on building the institutional capacity of the public sector and ensuring that trade can play a role in peace and development. Key initiatives undertaken in South Sudan include bolstering trade governance and trade mainstreaming, beginning with spearheading the country's first DTIS in 2015 and a subsequent DTISU in 2022 to identify the areas and sectors that require support and strengthening.

The EIF's initiative to enhance institutional capacity in South Sudan was implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. A major priority was to ensure that the country's NIU was equipped with the need skills and knowledge to function effectively. Training focused on a range of areas, including e-commerce; project management; competition; and monitoring and evaluation. Training on commercial and economic diplomacy was also provided to 20 officials from the Ministry of Trade in collaboration with TRAPCA as a means to facilitate market access and regional integration.

The EIF is also supporting South Sudan as it strives to further integrate into regional and global trading systems through participation at the WTO and the AfCFTA. With EIF support, South Sudan commenced its WTO accession process in 2018, and by 2019, it had submitted its first Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime and participated in its first Working Party meeting. South Sudan remains committed to continuing its move toward WTO accession.

Additional efforts have led to the launch of the country's e-commerce Hub — the country's first-ever online

marketplace platform — which provided an enabling infrastructure for enhancing the capacity of MSMEs on digital trade and e-commerce. The e-commerce Hub is supported by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the EIF, the Embassy of the Netherlands and the AfDB as part of the "E-commerce for South Sudan" project.

EIF support has also led to an enhancement of competition law enforcement through capacity-building and mentorship programmes that have fostered an orientation towards the adoption of an effective competition regime in South Sudan. Overall, the EIF's efforts to strengthen trade capacity within the Government has been successful, with a high level of integration achieved — particularly given the short time that the Government has had to establish systems and structures.

In addition to institutional capacity-building, the EIF also supported South Sudan's participation in a regional agriculture initiative focused on generating increased pricing and new markets for women engaged in the shea butter value chain. The undertaking aims to provide training to shea producers in South Sudan and Uganda — especially women-owned MSMEs — on techniques for producing high-quality shea butter and strategies for accessing local and international markets. Beneficiaries also received training on sustainable growing and harvesting techniques and on the benefits of forming cooperatives.



Sudan

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

2

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

4

**Total budget
in million USD**

0.4

Sudan is a large North African country with a population of some 47 million people. The country historically relied on agriculture as its main economic driver and employer until oil and gas production surged in the early 2000s to account for 95% of exports. The secession of South Sudan in 2011 and subsequent political struggles have made the EIF's work in the country challenging. A primary benefit of the EIF's ability to integrate capacity into the Government has allowed for a uniquely nimble approach to suspension and resumption of activities in the country. However, since late 2022, operations have been put on hold.

When South Sudan seceded from the country in 2011, Sudan lost 75% of its petroleum reserves. The EIF was able to help advance a transition towards a more diversified and inclusive economy. Specifically, this meant resuming WTO accession activities and reinvigorating the country's agricultural sector, where livestock, cotton and gum arabic play a prominent role. Gum arabic, in particular, is an important cash crop for Sudan, as it accounts for some 70% of the global market.

Sudan expressed its desire to join the WTO in 1994. However, accession stagnated for several years, due to the political instability in the country. While Sudan renewed its desire to resume the process as a means to benefit from the global trading system, there were concerns by some people in the Government that lifting trade restrictions could lead to negative social, economic and political impacts. To alleviate these concerns, the EIF financed a study to assess the economic impacts of Sudan's WTO accession and make recommendations on ways that the country could overcome any undesired consequences.

An NIU was established by formal Decree as a permanent unit within the Ministry of Trade and Supply in October 2022. With the support of the Ministry and the EU (as DF), the NIU

played a crucial role in supporting the Government with policy formulation and implementation and trade policy coordination; and in further mainstreaming trade into national and sectoral development strategies, especially in the dairy, meat and animal breeding sectors, which has increased market access and exports.

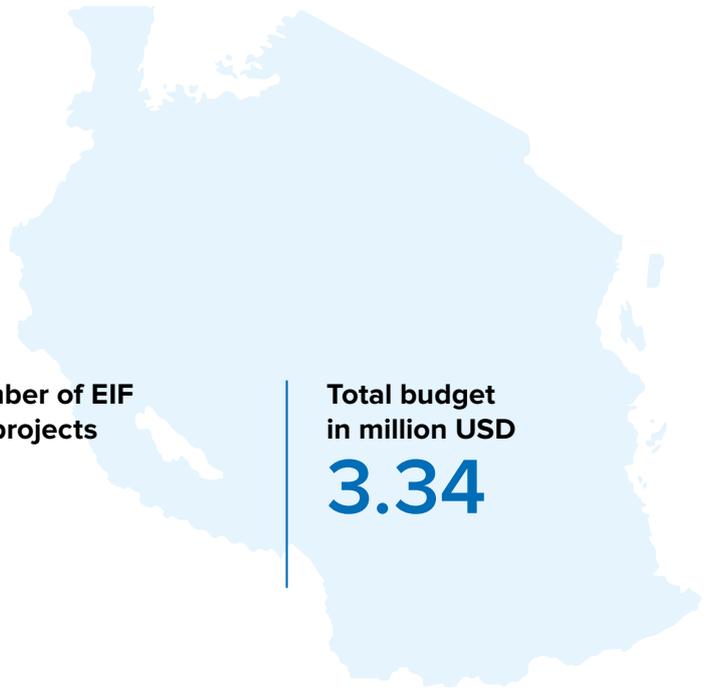
EIF support was crucial to helping Sudan enhance institutional capacity to advance trade through diversification to rely less on the petroleum sector. The goal of the initiative was to help contribute to sustainable development and reduce poverty through greater integration into global and regional trading systems. As agriculture is a sector that is poised for development, Sudan aimed to include strategies to promote value-added agricultural products in its trade policy.

Efforts to expand the agricultural sector and improve exports encountered a number of delays, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and political and security challenges, which limited access to skilled workers.

This challenge was somewhat mitigated through collaboration with the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), which facilitated the selection of Sudan's national experts. The AOAD also supported the Ministry of Agriculture to provide workshops and training to address the issues of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. In addition, the project worked with UNECA to hire international experts to support training workshops related to women SME entrepreneurship.



Tanzania



Total number of EIF country projects

3

Total number of EIF regional projects

6

Total budget in million USD

3.34

Tanzania is a large coastal East African country with a population of some 65 million people. The country boasts a number of lakes, national parks and arable land. The EIF has been supporting Tanzania since 2013, with an emphasis on strengthening the country's NIAs to boost Government capacity to successfully implement trade initiatives for growth. Other initiatives include the updating of the country's DTIS in 2017; supporting technology transfer related to cotton; and support to female entrepreneurs and producers, cross-border traders and women-owned MSMEs.

Support for Tanzania's NIAs placed an emphasis on capacity-building; improving the working environment for staff; and providing appropriate and adequate equipment and facilities. Overall, these efforts generated significant impact, with trade being integrated into Tanzania's formal development plans, especially in the areas of competitiveness; industrialization and services; and trade and investment. Capacity within the Ministry of Trade was also enhanced, allowing it to successfully harmonize a range of revenue-collecting and reporting systems used by agencies and institutions.

Ministry of Trade officials also received training on project cycle management for trade, industry and investment projects, which led to improvements in project management within the Ministry and the development of a resource mobilization plan, which has identified potential development partners in trade-related projects and financing.

Improved Ministerial capacity also led to the successful incorporation of trade-related knowledge and analysis into the mining, agribusiness and tourism sectors. For example, strategic trade-related synergies were

leveraged and allowed for innovative integration of the agribusiness and tourism industries.

In a notable example of the confidence that the international community has in the EIF model, Swiss SECO used the NIAs — including the NSC and the NIU — to support the implementation of a bilaterally funded AfT project on responsible tourism.

A joint EIF-UNDP funded capacity-building project in Tanzania (including in Zanzibar) also extended to the private sector, where many women-led MSMEs received training on maximizing value chains in key industries, such as palm oil, horticulture, anchovies, seaweed and honey. These efforts have already led to improvements in productive capacity and quality, which, in turn, have led to producers receiving higher prices. For example, anchovy farmers now receive USD 3.40 per half kg compared to USD 1.50 before the project. Training was also provided to horticulture farmers in the Mara and Simyu regions to help improve techniques for fruit and vegetable harvesting and for land use planning and farm management. A similar approach was undertaken in the Kigoma region, where MSMEs engaged in the palm oil value chain learned how to maximize productivity in the area. These efforts led to improvements in production and quality, which resulted in higher incomes for producers.

Importantly, women's economic empowerment and gender equality were considered in all aspects of the initiative. As a result, incomes for women and youths have increased, and the role of women in making household decisions has been enhanced.



Togo



**Total number of EIF
country projects**

9

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

8

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.35

Togo is a West African country of some 9 million people seated on the northern coast of the Gulf of Guinea. The country's economy is focused on mining and agriculture, with the latter employing the majority of the country's workforce through the production of cereals, tubers and now soybeans. EIF support to Togo began in 2008 under EIF's predecessor, the IF, with much being achieved since that time, particularly with regard to regional integration and the development of the shea sector both in the country and more broadly in the region.

Togo's soybean industry stands out as a notable success story, with production in the sector increasing ten-fold between 2015 and 2022, from 25,000 to 300,000 MT, and now employing some 700,000 people. The sector was identified by Togo's DTIS as a prime area for economic diversification. In 2015, the EIF provided early support to catalyse growth in the sector to better organize farmers into cooperatives; teach good farming and harvesting practices; and secure organic certification.

Likewise, the shea sector in Togo is also an area of noteworthy success for the EIF. The EIF supported the development of the sector, which contributed to a precipitous increase in shea production in the country. The EIF aimed to address challenges in the shea sector that were limiting access to international markets, especially the EU. Producers and processors received training in product processing; packaging management; and hygiene and health safety practices to align with international standards. Additionally, by enhancing laboratory analyses and testing equipment, producers were able to improve the quality of shea products to meet the SPS requirements in targeted markets.

On the regional level, formal and informal relationships between NIUs in shea-producing countries allowed for information-sharing and support. Togo's participation in the GSA initiative helped the country's shea producers expand their global reach and support women stakeholders in the process. Amongst other areas, the initiative supported women through the formation of cooperatives, which empowered them to negotiate better prices and increase incomes.

Togo was also a beneficiary of EIF support to the operationalization of the AfCFTA in West Africa, with tailored provisions aimed at encouraging effective participation by Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Activities were implemented by UNECA, with funding from the EIF and ITFC. The project focused on raising awareness about trade opportunities afforded by the AfCFTA among trade facilitation stakeholders. Capacity-building initiatives, such as training courses, helped Togo formulate several policy instruments to facilitate AfCFTA implementation, including the national implementation strategy for AfCFTA and Togo's schedule of tariff commitments. Additionally, a national AfCFTA Committee was created as part of the national committee for trade negotiations. In 2022, Togo submitted service commitments in five priority sectors (financial, communication, transport, professional services and tourism) to the AfCFTA Secretariat. In addition, Togo incorporated guidelines for AfCFTA engagement into the new National Development Policy. These successes are clearly tied to the EIF's ability to maintain close contacts with the Government and incorporate trade through the NIU.



Uganda

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

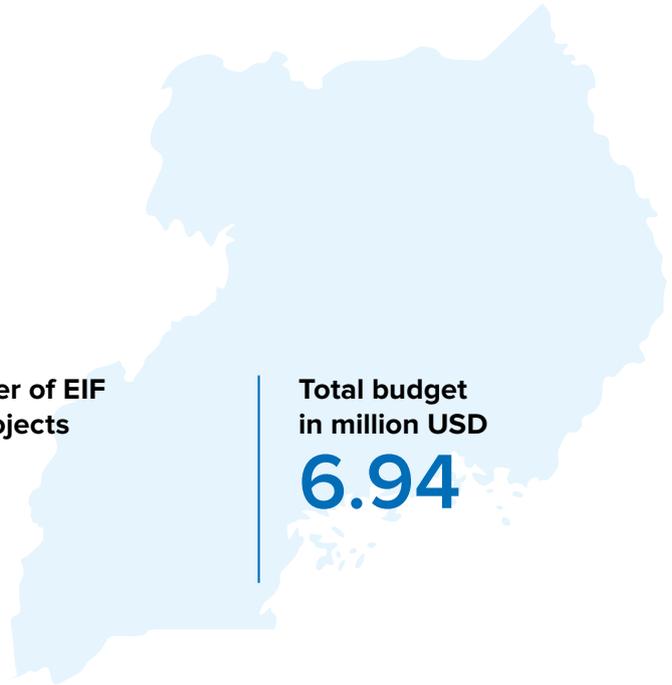
7

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

8

**Total budget
in million USD**

6.94



Uganda is a landlocked East African country of some 47 million people. The country is rich in natural resources, including oil reserves and fertile soils, and its southern border occupies much of Lake Victoria, Africa's largest lake by area. The agricultural sector plays a primary role in Uganda's economy, contributing a quarter of the country's GDP and generating approximately 70% of employment opportunities. The Government of Uganda has set a goal to transform itself into a middle-income country by 2025 by prioritizing greater regional and global economic integration and value-added exports.

Uganda has been a beneficiary of the EIF since 2009. In EIF Phase Two, support has included a highly successful initiative to develop the handicrafts and souvenir sector as a means to diversify and stimulate the export of tourism-related services and raise the incomes of producers. Handicrafts and souvenir producers — 67% of whom were women — were trained in product design and market development. This training led to an improvement in product quality, which in turn resulted in increased sales and a higher income for producers.

The initiative brought together key EIF partners and stakeholders, including the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, which implemented the capacity-building training in partnership with ITC. Additionally, in an example of broad impact possibilities, standards that were established for handicrafts through the initiative have now been adopted by the country's standards council, which will continue to guide the development of the sector beyond the project.

The Government continues to finance an EIF pilot from EIF Phase One in its regular budget. The Trade Policy and Administrative Management District Commercial

Services project aimed to extend commercial services and trade-related information across the country. The median wage bill of supported MSMEs increased by more than 100% as a result of both increased wages and increased employment.

Another crucial EIF initiative led to the notable economic empowerment of women engaged in the shea butter sector and provided producers of value-added shea products with access to new export markets. In addition to building processing skills, some 4,000 shea butter producers were trained to protect and conserve shea butter trees, which helps to promote sustainability within the shea industry. Overall, the project has raised producers' awareness of shea butter tree conservation across the region and helped enact the Shea Conservation Bill, which had been developed and advocated by one of the project implementers.

Importantly, because of the high number of women with disabilities in Northern Uganda as a result of conflict, impacts of EIF support in the region extended beyond the intended economic initiatives to benefit the needs of people with disabilities. Conflict in this region led to a number of people — especially women — living with disabilities, including physical and psychological, and the contraction of HIV/AIDS. In one example, an initiative launched in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism to support women entrepreneur groups had a specific focus on supporting women with disabilities. The EIF has now expanded its review criteria when showing how projects address cross-cutting issues to include people with disabilities in addition to existing issues, such as environment, gender and youth.



Zambia

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

9

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

7.16

Zambia is a landlocked country of some 20 million people in central Southern Africa. The country sits on a resource-rich high plateau, and its economy is focused on agriculture, mining and manufacturing goods, such as food and beverage products, textiles, chemicals and fertilizers. Copper mining is a prominent industry in Zambia, contributing about 12% to the country's GDP. Support for Zambia began in 2005 under the EIF's predecessor, the IF. In June 2023, the Government in Zambia finalized a DTISU, which focused on a number of priority areas, including market access relating to Zambia's upcoming graduation from the LDC category. It was the first DTIS with a dedicated chapter on the nexus between trade and climate change. Other notable EIF-related achievements in Zambia include significant increases in production for the honey industry and improved SPS capacity to allow producers to access international markets.

Following EIF support, Zambia's honey exports increased more than six-fold as quality, production and market access improved. Supported cooperatives noted a 76% improvement in honey quality and an expansion of the number of producers from 5 to 11 in one year alone. Importantly, the EIF also supported the development of norms and standards that were adopted by the Zambia Honey Partnerships Forum to bring national honey quality standards in line with international standards. In doing so, Zambia's honey producers were given access to international markets. Overall, EIF support to the honey sector in Zambia increased production, improved the quality of the honey and protected the environment. This directly resulted in income from exports increasing from USD 684,000 in 2011 to USD 6.09 million 2022.

Another noteworthy area of success in Zambia is the EIF's support for sectoral capacity-building; packaging; and logistics solutions, and to women entrepreneurs

through ITC's SheTrades project. The initiative worked to strengthen the institutional capacity, efficiency, partnership opportunities and service offerings of local institutions and women-led cooperatives to increase the reach, impact and sustainability of interventions. By providing access to finance, investment opportunities, training, strategic advice and crisis management training, some 92 women were able to access new markets. The initiative also led to the creation of 94 new jobs, of which 43 were for women. Support for a further 38 women entrepreneurs was provided to help increase revenues through fostered market linkages with national, regional and international markets. The beneficiaries reported working with 144 new suppliers, of which 133 were women suppliers, thus fostering sustainable impact towards job creation, poverty reduction and trade.

Connecting Zambian producers with export markets was not limited to honey producers. The EIF and the WTO's STDF division also collaborated on an initiative aimed at connecting Zambian entrepreneurs with improved export quality infrastructure in order to better access international markets. Central to this initiative was the development of a regional strategy to ensure that SPS obligations could be met. Zambia had been struggling to meet Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Service requests from China and South Africa for various products, such as stevia, blueberries and avocados. Improvements in this area led to the better livelihoods at the grassroots level, as Zambian blueberry producers began exporting to South Africa and avocado producers to the EU.

Asia

Regional overview

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cambodia
- Lao PDR
- Maldives
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Timor-Leste
- Yemen



Total number of EIF country projects

62



Total number of EIF regional projects

12



Total budget in million USD

41.7



© Jose Carlos Alexandre/EIF

Investing into rice production in Lao PDR.

Regional overview

The EIF's support to 10 Asian LDCs over the past decade has contributed significantly to the mainstreaming of trade into national government's development plans, strategies and policies, export diversification, as well as their ability to integrate into the regional and multilateral trading systems. Efforts ranged from bolstering the competitiveness of Bangladesh's garment exports, contributing to Cambodia-United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), to supporting the WTO accession processes in Timor-Leste and LDC graduation in Bhutan.

Regional integration, digital trade and LDC graduation are notable areas of the EIF's success in Asia, with both formal and informal trade-related exchanges and information sharing now more common. In Southeast Asia, for example, NIUs in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar established an informal exchange programme to share ideas on best practices. The trade ministries in these

three countries have managed to establish a notably high level of authority within government. In partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Nepal and Timor-Leste have undertaken readiness assessments and feasibility studies for joining the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific. All countries are also on the pathway toward LDC graduation and have proactively prepared for sustainable graduation in addition to benefiting from this achievement. Work with UNCTAD has helped facilitate greater engagement at the WTO for Lao PDR and Cambodia on issues related to e-commerce and rules of origin, while investment related support with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), UNCTAD, UNIDO and ILO has improved quality FDI promotion in SDG-related sectors. This joint project has also helped promote greater collaboration amongst key trade and investment support entities in their support to the LDCs.

Country highlights

Bangladesh | Trade law skills development in Bangladesh has developed local capacity to such an extent that it was able to use local services rather than international lawyers to lead a bilateral dispute settlement case.

Bhutan | A new e-regulation portal has already helped to facilitate more than USD 350 million in domestic and foreign investment. New potato grading machines have reduced potato processing times from four days to four hours.

Cambodia | An impact assessment shows that rice exports increased from USD 100 million in 2011 to over USD 450 million in 2020, together with the diversification of export partners and an increase in the global market share from 0.4% to 1.8%. This follows EIF and partners investments in EIF Phase One.

Lao PDR | The national implementation structure continues to grow in depth and form, and has implemented or coordinated more than USD 150 million in development projects since its inception. In joint collaboration with the multi-donor trust fund, the business registration process was reduced from 10 to 3 steps, helping to bring down the timeframe from 174 to just 17 working days.

Maldives | The lead time for a trader to clear shipments was reduced from 2 or 3 days to less than 24 hours, resulting in significant time and cost savings for traders and SMEs across the islands.

Nepal | National ownership, combined with EIF support has helped move forward progress on e-commerce. Following an e-Trade Readiness Assessment and development of an e-commerce strategy a new e-commerce bill was drafted together with the creation of a new digital trade platform on which 387 MSMEs have now registered.

Timor-Leste | After only seven years from the date of its application, the country formally acceded to the WTO in February 2024, making it the fastest LDC ever to complete the formal accession process. The EIF provided significant support to Timor-Leste in preparation for its accession to the WTO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Afghanistan

Total number of EIF
country projects

5

Total number of EIF
regional projects

1

Total budget
in million USD

0.53

Afghanistan is a mountainous central Asian country with more than 2,000 years of history as a trade hub on Asia's Silk Road. The EIF began its engagement with Afghanistan in 2009 and — together with a number of active partners — achieved noteworthy progress before 2021, when EIF operations in the country were halted. During its time in Afghanistan, the EIF committed over USD 500,000 to the country's DTIS and Update with the World Bank and provided capacity-building projects together with the Government of Afghanistan. The country also benefited from a regional project with UN-ESCAP.

The EIF partnered with the World Bank in its early support in Afghanistan and focused on the establishment of the country's first DTIS. By 2020, Afghanistan had established an NIU and an NSC tasked with integrating trade policy into national development. These two bodies focused on private sector development to help produce affordable and quality goods, promote and attract investment and reduce costs for quality inputs. The institutional support was closely linked to support from ITC on a National Export strategy.

In line with the importance placed on multilateral trade integration highlighted in the DTIS, the EIF supported Afghanistan's WTO accession process. In 2016, Afghanistan's Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC) initiated an NIA, which was postponed due to security challenges in the country. The EIF continued to work with the MOIC to tailor the NIA to align with evolving national priorities and implementation needs, including strengthened AfT coordination, investment promotion and WTO post-accession support.

From 2008 to 2019, Afghanistan's real GDP grew by an average of 5.5% and its Human Development Index score rose from 0.472 in 2010 to 0.511 in 2019. Nevertheless, despite much progress and its upward trajectory, the political change in 2021 forced the suspension of all EIF activities in the country.



Bangladesh

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

2.01



With a population of some 165 million, Bangladesh is the eighth most populous country in the world. The EIF has been supporting the South Asian country since 2010, with investments amounting to around USD 2.7 million in trade-related institutional capacity-building and productive capacity for the country's garment, pharmaceutical and fruit processing sectors. Bangladesh has grown to become the second-largest garments exporter in the world and has been lauded for its high share of manufactured exports for its income level. A key challenge is now moving further up the value chain and spreading the benefits to those most in need, particularly women, who predominantly work in this sector. The EIF also provided technical support to mainstream trade into Bangladesh's National Development Plan and Vision 2021 and actively supported preparations towards LDC graduation (currently projected for 2026).

Major progress has been made in building human capacity and skills for trade policy in the country, both within the Government and at the grassroots level. For example, training in trade law has developed local capacity, meaning that Bangladesh could use local experts instead of the services of international lawyers to lead a bilateral dispute settlement case with a neighbouring country. This local knowledge on WTO-related issues has bolstered the ability of domestic universities to ensure a sustainable source of local expertise is available in the country. The EIF also provided support to skills upgrade in key export sectors such as active pharmaceutical ingredients, processed fruits and garment. For example, with EIF support, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association to establish the Centre of Innovation, Efficiency and Occupation Safety Health. The initiative helps provide knowledge, skills and technical know-how to Bangladesh's apparel industry through trainings, workshops and stakeholders' gatherings.

The EIF's presence in Bangladesh has been leveraged as a knowledge hub to connect the Government, private sector and academia on WTO-related issues, including agriculture negotiations and trade in services. The evidence-based trade priorities set out in the 2016 DTIS and 2022 DTISU have also triggered much-needed investment from the Government, the private sector and development partners in trade reforms. Some 83% of the 2016 DTIS recommendations were implemented within five years, contributing to the country's progress towards LDC graduation.

The partnership with the World Bank in conducting the 2016 DTIS was also an important mechanism for mobilizing resources in Bangladesh. Two projects financed by the World Bank made significant contributions to trade facilitation and diversification of exports. The USD 148 million Bangladesh Regional Connectivity Project helped improve four key land ports and brought more women traders into formal trade networks. Additionally, the USD 100 million Export Competitiveness for Jobs Project supported the country's diversification into other industries, such as leather goods, footwear, plastics and light engineering. Interventions included linking to new technology and facilitating compliance with international environmental, social and quality standards.



Bhutan

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

8

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

5.27

The Kingdom of Bhutan is a mountainous, landlocked country in South Asia, with a population of some 770,000. While Bhutan's exports are limited to a high concentration of only a few products, it is an active trading nation targeting niche products and markets. The EIF has been supporting Bhutan since 2009 and is among major partners providing technical assistance to the country. EIF Phase Two has seen progress in strengthening trade-related institutions and legal frameworks, e-infrastructure for trade and services, mainstreaming trade into national plans and programmes, addressing supply-side constraints to trade, and capacity-building for both public and private officials. The EIF also supported the country in the lead-up to and in the wake of its graduation from LDC status in December 2023.

With EIF support, trade has been increasingly well integrated into government planning and is a key strategy in both the 13th Five-Year Plan (2024-2029) and the long-term perspective plan (2024-2034). EIF support in Bhutan also led to the growth of a strategy aimed at leveraging Bhutan's brand to increase exports. This included the emergence of "Brand Bhutan" and the "Made in Bhutan" and "Grown in Bhutan" marks. 68 "Made in Bhutan" products (e.g., handicraft products, spring water and essential oils) and three "Grown in Bhutan" products (e.g., cardamom powder, pineapple juice and chocolate mint tea) have now been certified. A unique approach supported through these efforts also saw the establishment of direct-to-consumer "Bhutan Stores" in Perth, Australia, and New York, USA, both of which helped expand markets and earn much-needed convertible currency.

Complementary support has helped Bhutan negotiate new trade agreements with regional partners (e.g., Bangladesh and its revised agreement with India), and resume progress in accession to the WTO. On the production side, new

digital processes in the potato auction system are yielding higher prices for farmers — as much as USD 420 additional earnings per truckload — and helped leverage additional government resources into processing mechanisms. New grading machines have reduced potato processing times from four days to four hours. Through providing a "Common Facility Center" and a natural dye house the EIF contributed to improved textile weaving production, a main source of income for most of households in the region.

The EIF also supported the development and launch of an e-infrastructure project for trade and investment, enabling public services to exchange data securely and efficiently in real-time and eradicated duplicate data across agencies. The E4T initiative also led to the launch of a one-stop shop, which allows for easy access to government services such as business registration, trade licencing and an e-regulation portal. Since its establishment, the e-regulation portal has facilitated the approval of more than USD 360 million in foreign and domestic investment. An EIF-supported e-commerce policy framework will help build the virtuous circle of the digital world, trade and investment. Partnerships with civil society organizations, such as the Bhutan Association of Women Entrepreneurs and the Bhutan Agency for Promotion of Indigenous Crafts ensure benefits flow to the most rural and vulnerable groups.



Cambodia

Total number of EIF
country projects

8

Total number of EIF
regional projects

4

Total budget
in million USD

9.24

Occupying mostly low-lying plains in central Southeast Asia, Cambodia has a population of some 17 million. In 2015, the country moved up from a low-income country to a lower-middle-income country and has targeted 2030 as its date to reach upper-middle income status. This upward economic trajectory is underpinned by a trade structure that is dominated by merchandise and, to a lesser but growing extent, services. Cambodia was one of the IF pilot countries and was swift in implementing EIF projects as well. Major trade sectors include garment and footwear exports, as well as tourism, which have enjoyed an average annual growth rate of 7.7% in recent years. FDI to Cambodia has also been on an upward trend over the past decade.

As a pioneer in the EIF, Cambodia has demonstrated a clear model in successfully integrating its NIU into the Government. The Department of International Cooperation (DICO) takes the lead on projects funded by the EIF and other partners and has grown in size and importance over time. At its start, DICO was mostly staffed by national and international consultants, while it now is composed of more than 25 government officials. Institutional capacity-building combined with a clear government vision has allowed for the adoption of a coordinated trade sector-wide approach (Trade SWAp) that, amongst other support, helped mobilize more than USD 100 million that was coordinated or implemented by DICO targeting trade priorities.

An independent impact assessment conducted in EIF Phase Two assessed the effects of prior EIF support on the rice, cassava, silk, fishery and tourism sectors. Rice exports increased from USD 100 million in 2011 to over USD 450 million in 2020, together with the diversification of export partners and an increase in the global market share from 0.4% to 1.8%. Silk product exports increased from USD 0.14 million to USD 3 million over the same

period, with the incomes of silk weavers growing from an average of USD 392 in 2012 to USD 785 by the end of the project. The PPP investment into the culinary arts (with co-funding of USD 2 million from Sweden) has been remarkably resilient despite COVID-19, with graduates now employed by international hospitality chains in Asia and Europe. Starting salaries for graduates are double that of graduates from other vocational training institutes and demand for chefs trained through the programme outstrips the current supply.

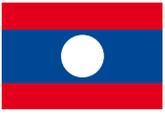
With an eye to the future, the EIF also supported the development of Cambodia's e-commerce strategy and regulatory environment together with the launch of a national e-commerce portal "[Cambodia Trade](#)," which has already contributed to the creation of more than 300 jobs in the sector. Partnering with UNCTAD, the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation and Swisscontact, an innovative Electronic Advance Data (EAD) interface between Cambodia Post's Customs Declaration System and ASYCUDA World of the General Department of Customs and Excise has been created, helping reduce the time and cost associated with cross-border e-commerce, particularly for MSMEs.

“With the EIF's rapid response to the country's needs, Cambodia has moved quickly to grasp the opportunities of the digital economy, with the EIF's support to develop a national e-commerce strategy and to set up a national e-commerce platform [...].”

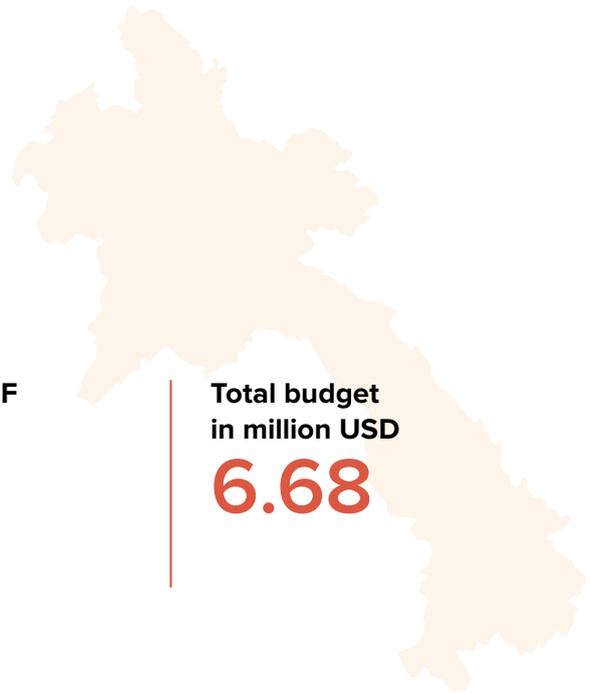
– **Samheng Bora**, Secretary of State,
Ministry of Trade of Cambodia, 2022



Click/scan
here for more



Lao PDR



Total number of EIF country projects

6

Total number of EIF regional projects

4

Total budget in million USD

6.68

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) is a landlocked country in Southeast Asia, with a population of almost 8 million. The country's economy has been on an upward trajectory for much of the last two decades, with an average of 7% annual GDP growth and is set to graduate from LDC category in 2026. The EIF has been supporting the country since 2004 (under its predecessor, the IF). Lao PDR is a strong example of successful capacity-building support leading to the integration of trade into national development planning, and efficient AfT implementation and coordination.

Early support in Lao PDR with the DTIS and establishment of the institutional framework laid the foundation for an effective AfT implementation and governance framework, which helped to facilitate its accession to the WTO. This included a longstanding partnership with the World Bank, leveraging additional partner support around the DTIS priorities.

In recent years, support was particularly focused on enhancing public-private dialogue (PPD) around trade, combined with practical investments into addressing supply-side constraints and a focus on the inclusive benefits of trade. In this regard, and in collaboration with the multi-donor trust fund, the business registration process was reduced from 10 to 3 steps, helping to bring down the timeframe from 174 to just 17 working days. The successful EIF model of provincial-level PPD was replicated by USAID in another region of Lao PDR. Partnerships in textile production enhanced market access for the handicrafts sector and resulted in an 80% increase in incomes, while maize productivity increased by approximately 82%, and rice productivity rose by around 30%.

The NIU in Lao PDR operates as the implementation hub for all AfT projects channeled through the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, which to date exceeds USD 150 million. The NIU also serves as the national secretariat for the trade and private sector working group. The NIU's work has been so successful that it has served as a blueprint for the Government to attract funding from other development partners, with the structure being an excellent example of value for money. NIU staff — which are jointly funded by the Government, various development partners and the EIF — have large portfolios of about a dozen projects that extend well beyond the EIF. The NSC, known as the Programme Executive Committee, also acts as a central hub to oversee all projects implemented by the Ministry, ensuring efficiency and coherence, and allows donors to have a focal point to engage in a coordinated way with the Government.

Improvements have also been made in national quality infrastructure, such as through the provision of mobile laboratory facilities to help support remote exporters and the adoption of over 400 quality standards to facilitate exports. These efforts have helped to boost the incomes of maize and rice farmers — including several women-led MSMEs — by as much as 15-50%.

While large-scale mining and hydropower have been the cornerstone of the national economy for more than two decades, growth in these sectors has been slowing in recent years. Since 2021, the Government has been seeking out options to pivot toward fostering sustainable and inclusive growth and reducing its reliance on the natural resource sector.



Maldives



**Total number of EIF
country projects**

2

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

2

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.05

The Maldives occupies an Indian Ocean archipelago, spanning roughly 298 square kilometres, comprised of about 1,190 islands grouped into 26 natural atolls. The economy is primarily services-based, with a heavy dependency on tourism. While industries such as fishing and construction also contribute to the economy, the Maldives remains strongly dependent on imports, mainly from trading partners, such as China, India, Singapore and the UAE.

The Maldives received support from the EIF from 2004 (under its predecessor, the Integrated Framework) until the completion of post-LDC graduation support in 2016. Through that relationship, the EIF catalysed progress in trade facilitation, economic diversification, business facilitation and investment promotion. The lead time for a trader to clear shipments was reduced from 2-3 days to less than 24 hours, resulting in significant time and cost savings for traders and SMEs across the islands.

EIF support was vital in strengthening the Maldives' institutional capacity, particularly in trade facilitation. As an import-reliant and fish export-dependent economy, it is crucial for the Maldives to ensure the efficient movement of goods and customs services in line with international best practices. EIF support has helped to enhance the ability of Maldives Customs services and line ministries to process import/export licencing and customs clearances online. Through these efforts, customs officials were trained on valuation, risk management and post-clearance auditing.

The EIF also supported the modernization of customs services through the deployment and training of UNCTAD's Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) at the main seaport in Malé and the Maldives Customs Services Head Office in 2016. The system has now been deployed to all customs sites across the country, and 30 customs

officers have either completed ASYCUDA or Java training for the effective implementation of the system. This trade facilitation initiative levelled the playing field for line ministries and helped leverage a bigger National Single Window programme, [funded by the Asian Development Bank](#).

Trade has been well integrated into government planning and strategy, with a number of substantive reforms having been implemented, including new legislation, regulations and frameworks designed to encourage foreign direct investment with the goal of promoting economic and social development.

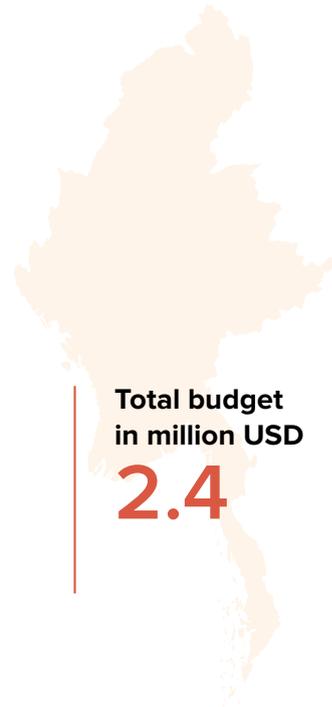
The NIU in the Maldives was integrated into the Ministry of Economic Development. The NIU acts as a focal point for the registration of all entities engaging in business in the Maldives and supports Invest Maldives, the Government's investment promotion arm that promotes foreign investment.

[Click/scan here for more](#)





Myanmar



Total number of EIF country projects

4

Total number of EIF regional projects

3

Total budget in million USD

2.4

Myanmar is Southeast Asia’s westernmost country, with a population of some 55 million. The country’s economy experienced a significant surge starting in 2011, when democratic reforms led to increased civic participation as the Government looked to attract foreign investment. The EIF began its work in Myanmar in 2014, as opportunities to increase trade under a stable government became clear.

Merchandise exports from Myanmar increased from USD 9.2 billion in 2011 to USD 18 billion in 2019 and commercial services exports increased more than six-fold from USD 727 million to USD 6.5 billion over the same period. These figures contracted in 2020 when travel services and demand for exports dropped as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EIF’s initial support in Myanmar, in close collaboration with the EU as the EIF Donor Facilitator and the World Bank as the technical partner for the DTIS, helped shape and coordinate burgeoning trade and investment opportunities. Importantly, with an abundance of development partners, a structure was established for better alignment and coordination. The EIF was also instrumental in helping Myanmar integrate trade into its Sustainable Development Plan (2018 – 2030) and helped to establish an Aid for Trade Coordination Unit. This followed the integration model established in Cambodia and Lao PDR (see entries earlier in this report) with notable success. The EIF also provided a bridge to help take forward reforms identified through the WTO’s Trade Policy Review mechanism.

While support was in place, the EIF’s efforts to enhance Myanmar’s services trade were notably successful in terms of impact and its ability to attract additional international partners, including UNCTAD and the World Bank. Efforts aimed to enhance crucial policies, strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks, and build institutional capacity

and private sector engagement in the services trade sector. The [Myanmar services portal](#) was established to facilitate access to information on trade and investment-related processes. This was complemented by a Regulatory Assessment for Services Trade and Investment, which helped lay the framework for a new law on trade in services and investment. Likewise, with Myanmar involved in WTO e-commerce discussions, the EIF helped draft an e-commerce strategy and provided trainings around key digital areas such as e-payment solutions. Political challenges in Myanmar in February 2021 compelled the EIF to scale down its work in the country, with support limited to activities implemented by the private sector and EIF Agencies. Although EIF projects were terminated in 2022, the fact that the NIU is reportedly still functional within the current structure (with EIF support) is a testament to the unique value of the EIF’s approach to support. Likewise, despite the cessation of EIF funding, work continued to progress and an [E-commerce Guideline was published in September 2023](#).

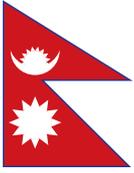
The scaled-up services capacity gave Myanmar the opportunity to engage in regional activities, including a UNESCAP Regional Cross-Border Paperless Trade project and two Lancang-Mekong Cooperation projects, funded by China.

Myanmar services portal
[Click/scan here for more](#)

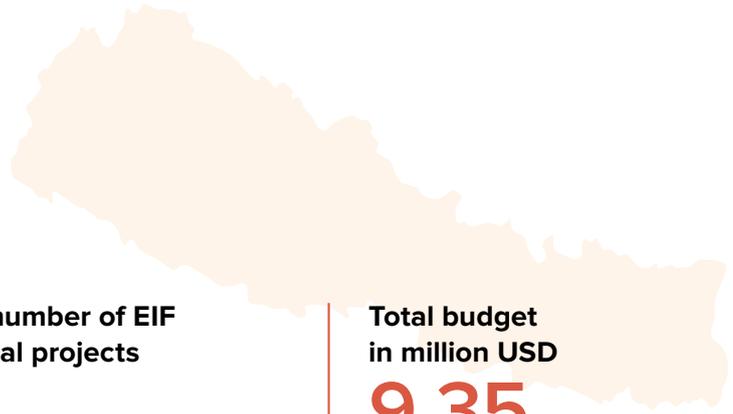


E-commerce Guideline
[Click/scan here for more](#)





Nepal



Total number of EIF country projects

8

Total number of EIF regional projects

4

Total budget in million USD

9.35

Located in the southern Himalayas, Nepal is a landlocked country with a trade sector primarily focused on agriculture, industry and tourism. Nepal has limited foreign trade and relies extensively on the neighbouring Indian market for both imports and exports. Nepal was a beneficiary of the IF with their first DTIS conducted in 2002. Through EIF support, the Government of Nepal created an extended NIU that involves technical departments in the implementation of trade-related projects, thus helping to embed results and catalyse systemic change.

Nepal is on a path toward LDC graduation, which is currently scheduled for November 2026. The EIF has been providing support through consultations with the private sector on the associated impacts that come along with LDC graduation (i.e., tariffs, rules of origin and trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights). The EIF has also been engaging with journalists and supporting studies, dialogues and consultations related to Nepal's LDC graduation.

The EIF's success in Nepal is rooted in the Government's ability to leverage recommendations from its DTIS and subsequent Nepal Trade Integration Strategy (NTIS). Nepal's first DTIS was validated in 2004 and was efficiently used to mainstream trade priorities into the national development strategy. The NTIS was subsequently updated in 2015 and launched in 2016. These studies prioritized 19 products with high export potential and the EIF provided targeted assistance for four of those products: pashmina, ginger, medicinal and aromatic plants, and orthodox tea. By demonstrating its ability to provide catalytic support to priorities identified in its DTIS, Nepal was able to attract additional funding for major projects from partners, such as the EU, Germany and the United Kingdom.

The EIF worked with Nepal to enhance value in the tea sector with a focus on improved traceability and branding, helping increase the export prices of tea from USD 8/kg to USD 9.5/kg. Siddha Devi Tea Estate, one of the project beneficiaries, was awarded the [Grand Champion title at the 2024 World Tea Expo](#). This project was the first EIF productive capacity project directly implemented by the country demonstrating the growth in capacity for the implementation of AfT projects, and helping embed ownership and sustainability.

National ownership, combined with EIF support, has helped Nepal move forward progress on e-commerce. Following an e-Trade Readiness Assessment and development of an e-commerce strategy a new e-commerce bill drafted and a new digital trade platform created with 387 MSMEs now registered.

Together with the EU, the EIF invested in the export growth of Chyangra Pashmina products with technical support from ITC. Business revenues rose by almost 200% to more than USD 5 million, supporting the creation of over 600 new jobs. In a joint project with STDF focused on ginger, farmer incomes rose by 62%, partially due to a one-third reduction post-harvest loss.

Click/scan here for more





Timor-Leste

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

3

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

3

**Total budget
in million USD**

0.57

Having achieved independence in 2002 and boasting a population of only 1.3 million people, Timor-Leste is the youngest and the second least populated country in Southeast Asia. The country has faced challenges in achieving its trade potential, as its export base remains narrow. With oil, gas, coffee and tourism services accounting for more than 95% of exports, Timor-Leste's economy is exposed to significant internal and external vulnerabilities. In many ways, the contribution of trade to the country's growth and development has remained largely untapped.

Nevertheless, Dili has been pursuing an ambitious trade policy agenda aimed at deepening its integration into global and regional markets as a means to improve living standards for its citizens. Key to this strategy has been a deep commitment to forging multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements. The EIF has been instrumental in supporting this process, which resulted in Timor-Leste acceding to the WTO in February 2024 — only seven years after starting on that path (a record time for LDC accession). Additionally, in 2022, Timor-Leste was admitted “in principle” to ASEAN, becoming the regional body's 11th member (full membership is pending).

EIF Phase Two work in Timor-Leste helped channel a growing swell of public support behind the country's ambitions to join the WTO and ASEAN. The Government, academia, private sector, civil society and Parliament all rallied behind a strategic plan and roadmap for the country's accession, including mobilizing support around national reforms. This involved EIF-supported technical preparations (e.g., workshops, consultations and diplomatic dialogues), which were instrumental in progressing toward accession.

In 2023, the EIF and other partners supported the effective functioning of the country's Accession Working Group and the Inter-Ministerial Commission. Efforts also helped support the preparation and participation in a variety of multilateral and bilateral negotiations, drafting a legislation action plan and establishing Timor-Leste's National Secretariat for Accession to the WTO in 2022.

EIF Phase Two also saw the EIF undertake efforts to support women in Timor-Leste through its Empower Women, Power Trade initiative (see section on Gender and Trade). These efforts, in partnership with UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism, were specifically aimed at helping build capacity and improve the enabling environment for women through the COVID-19 tourism recovery process and sustainable tourism development. In 2022, an assessment on tourism and gender in the country was carried out and the results were widely disseminated as an awareness-raising exercise. Other training sessions were also undertaken under the theme of “Training of Trainers” as a means to ensure local ownership over knowledge and sustainability was achieved.

The EIF's initial support to improve the value of Timor-Leste's exports through Fairtrade also laid foundations for further investment from various actors. The Women's School of leadership, for example, was supported through this project and is a long-lasting legacy with high-level national buy-in. Additionally, the country's pursuit of a cross-border paperless trade initiative is another promising avenue of trade reform leading to improved integration of the country into the global economy.



Yemen

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

2

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.05

With a population of some 35 million people, Yemen occupies the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula along one of the world's most active trade routes. The EIF has had a presence in Yemen since 2003 (under its prior form, the Integrated Framework). While EIF operations were underway, much was accomplished in terms of institutional capacity-building, with additional support from UNDP. Additionally, the EIF supported Yemen through the preparations toward its 2014 WTO accession and helped stimulate growth in the productive sector, with a particular emphasis on the bee health and honey production sector.

In 2015, however, political challenges in the country hindered the EIF's ability to engage, and all activities were eventually put on hold at the end of 2017. Nevertheless, the resilience of the EIF's model of support has allowed the in-country team to remain intact, with management in place and prepared to move forward with activities when possible.

Institutional capacity-building support targeting trade was in place from 2009 to 2017. These efforts established a training center for Yemen's Ministry of Industry and Trade where language and information technology training can be provided to ministry staff and the private sector. The centre also features a conference facility and computer lab. At the request of the Ministry, the NIU also established a training programme for senior ministry officials in order to help enhance strategic planning skills.

While operational under the EIF, the NIU in Yemen worked closely with the Ministry of Industry and Trade to integrate all programme and project activities within the broader ministry plans.

Overall, institutional capacity-building support in Yemen was highly successful. With ministry staff playing a key role in activities such as drafting the National Export Strategy and the DTISU, a high level of national ownership and sustainability was achieved.

Yemen's bee and honey industry was supported by the EIF as early as 2003, when the country's first DTIS Action Matrix identified it as a priority sector. Implemented by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) from 2011, these activities aimed to alleviate poverty by improving the incomes of small-scale beekeepers through improvements in the productivity and quality of honey and other hive-based products.

Prior to suspending activities in Yemen, the EIF's work in this area led to the establishment of 2,000 modern hives and the mobilization of 1,200 beekeepers in the Shabwah Governorate; the establishment of 1,500 hives and the training of 450 beekeepers in the areas of frame hive technology, colony transfer from traditional Yemeni hives to modern frame hives, honeybee disease and pests, pollination services, and the effects of the indiscriminate use of pesticides on honeybee health in the Al Hudaydah Governorate; and the training of 12 staff members from the Tihama Development Authority in honeybee diseases and pest diagnosis.



© EIF

Around half of EIF investments into productive capacity are anchored around agriculture

Pacific and Americas

Regional overview

Haiti
Kiribati
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tuvalu
Vanuatu



Total number of EIF country projects

36



Total number of EIF regional projects

8



Total budget in million USD

22.99



© José Carlos Alexandre/EIF

The EIF working for sustainable tourism.

Regional overview

The EIF's support in the Pacific and Americas cut across six LDCs or recently graduated countries. While these countries are geographically dispersed, as mostly remote island nations, they face a number of similar challenges. Many of these countries have a high dependency on imports. The EIF has worked to equip governments with strategic tools and knowledge to increase trade in areas such as agriculture and fisheries in order to make a mindset shift toward thinking of these sectors as more than only for subsistence.

The EIF worked closely with partners in the region, including UNDP, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and key regional donors such as Australia, the EU and New Zealand. For instance, a regional project implemented by PIFS used EIF finance to leverage resources from other donors to build a regional quality infrastructure framework. This helps to enhance synergies and achieve necessary economies of scale for regional LDCs. With the EIF financing five eTrade Readiness Assessments in the Pacific, a useful base of information was available to assist in the development of the PIFS regional e-Commerce Strategy.

Country highlights

Haiti | Annual fish production amongst the beneficiary small scale fishers increased by 23.5% from baseline numbers. Furthermore, the EIF's commitment to institutional integration has been crucial to the continued operation of trade-related activities in countries facing political challenges. Despite fragility, anchoring implementation through national systems enables regular updates and the timely resumption of normal activities.

Kiribati | Kiribati has started processing online documents for incoming vessels and flights and has updated its national trade portal for ease of access. The EIF's support for Kiribati's e-commerce capacity prior to COVID-19 contributed to the country's ability to successfully weather a number of challenges presented by the pandemic, including uninterrupted connectivity with the EIF when staff were unable travel. The initiative was so successful that advancing digital capacity remains a priority after the pandemic.

Samoa | While Samoa graduated from LDC status in 2014, the EIF supported the country through the post-graduation process. This included ensuring that trade maintained a high profile in government, which resulted in trade being integrated into national development planning.

Solomon Islands | Between 2014 and 2019, tourist arrivals to Solomon Islands increased by 44% and tourism services as a percentage of GDP increased by 17.7%. Importantly, because women account for some 90% of the income generated through the tourism sector, these efforts have made a significant contribution toward women's empowerment.

Tuvalu | Production by EIF beneficiaries of value-added fish processing increased by 25%.

Vanuatu | The National Single Window established with EIF support has helped reduce trade-related processing times from a matter of days to as little as 10 minutes, while also securing strong environmental benefits, with an estimated 5,000 kg+ of CO2 saved through reduced travel requirements. The project benefited from additional support from Australia and will continue into a new phase with support from the Vanuatu national budget.



Haiti

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

7

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

5

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.84

With 78% of the population living below the poverty line, Haiti is the only country in the Americas to be considered an LDC. The EIF has partnered with Haiti on seven projects over the past decade, with an aim to help create employment, reduce poverty and mitigate the country's trade deficit. Five of these projects are now closed, and two are ongoing.

Efforts tackled issues such as the need to enhance fishing and salt production techniques to help raise the standard of living for those working in cooperatives and, more broadly, improve living conditions in these communities. Almost 2,000 stakeholders — 31% of whom were women — directly benefitted from these efforts, including fishers, salt farmers, project employees and craftspeople, with benefits extending to more than 130,000 indirect beneficiaries, 51% of whom were women.

The EIF helped to boost capacity in the fishing and salt sectors by hosting 12 training courses, providing devices and training to sustainably increase fish harvesting yields, supplying fishing equipment (i.e., vessels and motors) and supporting the construction of nine conservation and processing units (surpassing projections by 150%). As a result of the EIF's efforts, annual fish production amongst the targeted beneficiaries increased by 23.5% from baseline numbers.

Salt production capacity was also increased through the construction of two production units, featuring 10 hectares of salt marshes and 110 salt basins. Two warehouses were also constructed. While data has not yet been collected on salt production, it is estimated that the production capacity of salt in target localities has almost tripled, from 75MT to 200MT since the project's inception.

In terms of market access, limited progress has been achieved. While new but limited access to the neighbouring Dominican market was achieved, there was no additional penetration of new markets. Canada and the United States — traditional markets for Haiti's fisheries exports — continued to import some 5% of the volume fished. Haiti's political and security challenges in recent years have profoundly restricted the movement of people and goods.

Notably, projects in Haiti offer important insights into the EIF's unique approach, which relies on building strong local capacity and leveraging international partnerships, such as from ITC, UNCTAD and the ITU in areas from trade strategy development to supporting women in digital trade. This type of integration into formal government and private sector structures is a hallmark of EIF projects and is crucial for ensuring consistent support. When unforeseen political or environmental challenges prevent physical visits by project coordinators, local capacity can allow projects and their associated impacts to continue.

The EIF also supported institutional capacity-building in Haiti through a number of national training workshops on inter-sectoral trade, project management and implementation. Efforts to improve the business environment were also undertaken, with efforts focusing on the development of new trade policy, implementation of a medium-term intersectoral plan (MTIP), strengthening linkages between cross-sectoral implementation networks, improving trade-related capacity of government officials and advancing product and system certification processes.



Kiribati

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

4

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

1.54

With a population of 122,700 scattered across 33 Pacific islands, Kiribati faces challenges in terms of global trade integration due to its geographic isolation and a small workforce pool. While the island nation is home to the South Pacific's largest marine reserve, its economy remains undeveloped and heavily concentrated on subsistence farming and fishing. Additional revenue from commercial fishing licences is also a source of income. Kiribati was also one of five Pacific island countries to receive an EIF-funded eTrade Readiness Assessment, which was instrumental in removing e-commerce-related barriers and generating new opportunities.

EIF support was uniquely diverse in Kiribati, with a concurrent mix of both institutional and sector-specific capacity-building. This approach, anchored through implementation support from UNDP, achieved much in terms of strengthened regulatory frameworks, including new and enhanced policies. The improved regulatory environment helped nurture new and existing small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and increased interest from donors. Policies that were strengthened through EIF initiatives also helped to bolster value chains and diversify Kiribati's economy by supporting SMEs in key export-oriented industries, such as coconut oil.

The EIF also supported Kiribati's e-commerce capacity at a crucial time, which allowed it to successfully face a number of challenges presented by COVID-19 and continue advancing digital capacity in the wake of the pandemic. Implementing partner UNCTAD led an eTrade Readiness Assessment and capacity-building project in 2019 aimed at providing recommendations to the Government on strategy formulation, infrastructure needs and how to implement and formulate policies that facilitate the development of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and services.

The Assessment identified several barriers that were hindering Kiribati's e-commerce potential, including low trade volumes and logistical difficulties, which were resulting in high intra-island transaction costs. Moreover, surveys disseminated to public, private, state and non-state actors as part of the country's eTrade Readiness Assessment found that awareness of e-commerce is low in Kiribati, and 71% of respondents said capacity-building to improve digital knowledge and skills in the private and public sectors was needed.

Kiribati's eTrade Readiness Assessment recommended policy actions aimed at seizing opportunities and removing barriers to increase the country's overall competitiveness in e-commerce and the broader digital economy. As a result, the Federal Government and key ministries have shown demonstrable success in updating their ICT policies, with strategies for boosting e-commerce. For example, Kiribati has started processing online documents for incoming vessels and flights and has updated its national trade portal for ease of access.

In many ways, the digital solutions that were identified by this EIF-funded assessment and scaled up during the coronavirus pandemic have given rise to new ICT and e-commerce opportunities. Notably, the Kiribati assessment is one of five EIF-funded assessments in the Pacific (the others being Samoa, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu).



Samoa

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

2

**Total budget
in million USD**

4

Samoa is a South Pacific island country made up of an archipelago of nine islands, four of which are inhabited. Samoa's economy has historically been dependent on aid, remittances, tourism, agriculture, forestry, and fishing, with coconuts and fish making up most of the country's exports. However, over the time that the EIF has been engaged in initiatives in the country, trade in services has been on an upward trajectory, with robust growth at a pace that has outstripped merchandise trade.

Over EIF Phase One, support was provided to Samoa as it moved toward and through its graduation from LDC status (January 2014). Over EIF Phase Two, the EIF's post-graduation support focused on the sustainability of Samoa's economic growth through trade. This has involved the development of the trade sector by increasing export opportunities, strengthening private sector partnerships and increasing employment. Other target areas have consisted of value addition, trade facilitation and women's economic empowerment.

EIF-supported pilot projects have shown marked success when targeting community entrepreneurs with a vision to create and promote products for niche markets. For example, one project managed to secure an exclusive contract to supply The Body Shop with Samoan virgin coconut oil, despite much competition from other potential suppliers. This was part of an initiative aimed to add value to export-oriented traditional crops, such as cocoa and coconut, with a central focus on helping to empower women.

Samoa has the distinction of being the first country to benefit from an EIF-supported eTrade Readiness Assessment from UNCTAD. The 2017 Assessments provided a snapshot of the country's e-commerce

ecosystem, with an overview of e-commerce assessments, ICT infrastructure, payment solutions, trade facilitation and logistics, legal and regulatory frameworks, skills development and access to finance. These efforts contributed toward an increased understanding of e-commerce as a sector in need of soft infrastructure, rather than only about ICT infrastructure, transport and regulation. EIF's support through the Assessment was a pivotal first step in the crafting and implementing of Samoa's first E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap.

EIF support also made a significant contribution towards increasing the profile and capacity of trade in government. For example, as a result of the EIF's intervention, trade was integrated into the Strategy for the Development of Samoa and Samoa's Trade, Commerce and Manufacturing Sector Plan. Samoa's officials also received training on policy formulation and development, procurement, information systems and data analysis, and the country ramped up its participation in international trade fora — including bilateral negotiations, negotiations on the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus and key WTO meetings.

In 2021, an external evaluation found that the Trade Sector Support Program (TSSP) "contributed to the economic empowerment of women and youth, and supported trade associations and small businesses (particularly in the rural areas) through capacity-building, knowledge transfer, job creation and increased access to international markets."



Solomon Islands

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

5

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

4.2

The Solomon Islands occupies an archipelago of six major islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean. While the country has considerable natural and human resources, it has faced significant challenges in achieving its economic potential. The trade sector is dominated by merchandise trade, with recent trends showing an increase in the goods trade deficit. The EIF made considerable contributions toward building digital capacity within government, as well as leveraging the potential of the country's natural environment to drive growth in the tourism sector. Support for the agriculture sector also helped foster a mindset shift towards viewing agriculture as a commercial opportunity rather than strictly a subsistence activity.

In 2017, EIF financed an eTrade Readiness Assessment in Solomon Islands through UNCTAD. Due to the physically isolated geography of Pacific island nations, e-commerce is an area of significant potential for growth. The assessment provided recommendations for unlocking e-commerce potential in areas such as legislative gaps, facilitating mobile money services, and enhancing the e-commerce capabilities of enterprises. Digital trade support has also helped empower small local businesses, attracted foreign direct investment (FDI), and created job opportunities, particularly for women and youth.

Tourism is another area where Solomon Islands has significant room for growth and the sector was singled out for its untapped potential in its DTIS. In 2014 the EIF dedicated USD 1.5 million toward the development and promotion of the sector. The project produced the first-ever Solomon Islands National Tourism Policy in 2015, followed by the Solomon Islands National Tourism Development Strategy. These strategies established a pathway toward strengthening economic linkages between a range of tourism stakeholders, including the cruise ship industry.

In 2017, EIF provided another significant boost to the sector by supporting an initiative to develop minimum standards and a classification scale for tourism accommodation. Prior to these efforts, accommodation options for international visitors were unpredictable and unorganized. The new tools provide a set of measurable criteria and outlined items and services that must be in place for tourism accommodation. Between 2014 and 2019, tourist arrivals to Solomon Islands increased by 44% and tourism services as a percentage of GDP increased by 17.7%. Importantly, because women account for some 90% of the income generated through the tourism sector, these efforts have made a significant contribution toward women's empowerment.

Despite limited arable land, agriculture is a crucial sector in the Solomon Islands, accounting for one-third of the country's GDP and the majority of employment opportunities. Historically, the country prioritized growing enough food for both domestic consumption and export. The EIF supported growth opportunities in the cassava and taro sectors, in line with recommendations put forward by the 2015 DTIS and the National Development Strategy (2011-2020). The success of the project has attracted additional support from Australia, China, New Zealand and the United States Agency for International Development.

These efforts to boost agricultural production have raised awareness about new ways that sector can help improve living standards and contribute to the country's economy, including through exports and collaboration with the tourism sector. In this way, the sector is increasingly seen as a commercial, rather than subsistence, activity.



Tuvalu

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

6

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

3.2

With a population of only some 11,000 citizens living across nine geographically isolated islands, Tuvalu faces a range of trade integration challenges. Nevertheless, trade makes up 65% of the Pacific nation's overall GDP, with the vast majority of exports going to nearby Fiji (78%), followed by New Zealand, Indonesia and Australia. The services sector consists of much of the employment in Tuvalu, and a substantial part of the economy is based on remittances.

The EIF has invested substantially in projects aimed at scaling up Tuvalu's institutional and human capacity for effective trade integration, with trade-related priorities including agriculture, fisheries, labour mobility and education. Tuvalu's regulatory frameworks were strengthened considerably, with EIF support resulting in the development of a National Strategy for Sustainable Development, an e-commerce strategy, a Trade Policy Framework and a Sustainable Tourism Policy. Following the development of the new tourism policy, the International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) signalled its interest in working with the Development Bank of Tuvalu to finance tourism-related projects.

On fisheries, an EIF initiative resulted in a 25% increase in the production of value-added fish processing. The Tuvalu Fisheries Department, which collaborated with the project to deliver training on post-harvest fish processing, saw an increase in demand for continuous training in the outer islands.

The EIF also helped facilitate Tuvalu's engagement with donors and participation in regional projects, such as PACER Plus (Australia's development-centred trade agreement to support Pacific Island countries). Overall, the EIF's targeted support helped develop the trade sector in a more harmonized and consistent manner and laid the groundwork for implementation to take place.

The Tuvalu National Private Sector Organisation Business Incubator (and its related facilities) is a notable example of such an initiative. Despite initial delays due to land issues, construction of the Incubator is now complete and is playing a crucial role in supporting start-ups and new businesses. The Incubator has also secured technical support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) — a partnership that will be crucial to the ability of the Incubator to offer valuable expertise and resources to local businesses.

Tuvalu's e-commerce strategy emerged from an UNCTAD eTrade Readiness Assessment, an EIF-funded initiative aimed at assessing the country's preparedness to fully participate in the e-commerce sector and providing guidance on areas of opportunity and gaps in need of support. The assessment received input from 51 public and private sector institutions through surveys and focus groups.

Extensive support was also provided to women in Tuvalu over EIF Phase Two, including through the provision of sewing machines and training to women-led NGOs, which led to an increase in the production of locally sewn clothes and skills development. The success of this initiative clearly demonstrated how active promotion of gender equality can result in increased inclusivity, empowerment and a wider talent pool.



Vanuatu

**Total number of EIF
country projects**

9

**Total number of EIF
regional projects**

6

**Total budget
in million USD**

6.21

Vanuatu is an archipelago of 83 islands located in the South Pacific, some 1,750 km east of Australia. The country's economy is largely based on small-scale agriculture, followed by fishing, offshore financial services and tourism. Having graduated from LDC status in 2020, Vanuatu stands as a success story in the region, despite its vulnerability to natural disasters. The EIF provided logistical, communications and analytical support to Vanuatu through the LDC graduation process, in particular helping the country make an informed decision around trade-related implications.

After initial support in the immediate period following its 2012 accession to the WTO, efforts focused on supporting Vanuatu in the lead-up to graduation and through its post-graduation years. The impressive national implementation structure, with its active National Trade Development Committee and embedded NIU, has continued to deepen both the mainstreaming and Aid for Trade coordination mechanisms.

Recent support has focused extensively on improving Vanuatu's digital infrastructure, including through the establishment of a robust Electronic Single Window System (ESW), developing digital postal-customs links and support to e-commerce based around an EIF-funded eTrade Readiness Assessment. With co-financing from the EIF, Australia and the Government of Vanuatu, the ESW system was established with technical support from UNCTAD. The ESW has dramatically reduced processing times from a matter of days to as little as 10 minutes and enhanced the efficiency of movement across borders. On the environmental side, estimates show that carbon dioxide emissions have been reduced by 5,827 kg by eliminating or reducing paperwork in the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) certificate application

and cargo clearance processes. A 2021 UNESCAP survey found that Vanuatu was voted the number one Asia-Pacific Small Island Developing State in digital and sustainable trade.

The EIF also collaborated with UNCTAD and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) on an innovative universal data communication and processing platform between customs and postal services. This initiative helps to ensure that Vanuatu is able to comply with international legislative requirements — including newer legislation brought in by the US, EU, China, and others — that are seeking to address the fast-growing volumes of cross-border e-commerce shipments. In 2021, less than 5% of inbound postal consignments and less than 0.1% of outbound postal consignments were recorded in Vanuatu's customs system. Once implemented, the platform enabled the electronic exchange of advanced data and availability of 100% of postal consignments (including documents and letters). Moreover, between 2016 and 2023, the Department of Customs and Inland Revenue (DCIR) reported an annual revenue collection increase from around USD 33 million to USD 134 million.

In addition to the ESW initiative, digital capacity was also a priority area as a means to help boost e-commerce in the country. The EIF funded UNCTAD's 2018 eTrade Readiness Assessment of Vanuatu as a means to help identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in the country's e-commerce infrastructure. This was followed by the publication of Vanuatu's 2022 E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap.

A tourism infrastructure project, jointly support by New Zealand and the EIF, has revolutionized the connections of tourists to local businesses in the capital city, Port Vila.



© José Carlos Alexandre/EIF

Vanuatu stands as a success story in the Pacific region, despite its vulnerability to natural disasters. Its economy is largely based on small-scale agriculture, followed by fishing, offshore financial services and tourism.

10 Annexes

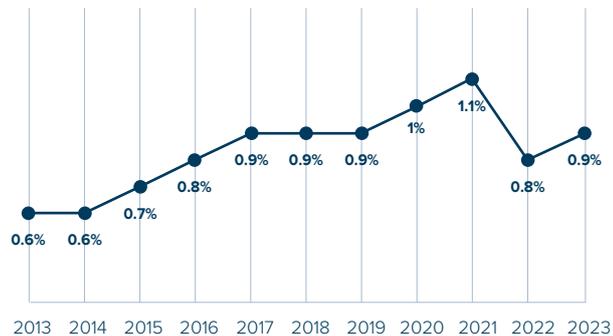
The vibrant shea sector in Burkina Faso and other West African countries provides a wide range of jobs to women throughout the value chain.





Impact-Level Indicators

A – LDC share of non-oil exports (%)



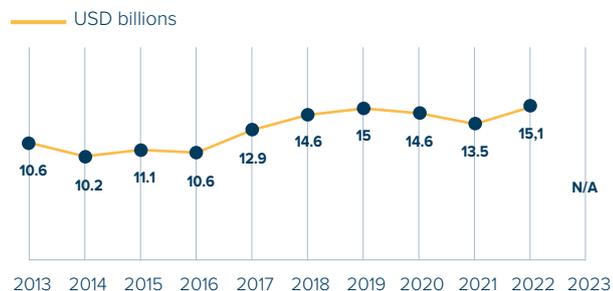
Source: WTO Secretariat.

B – Value of trade from the LDCs (USD billion)



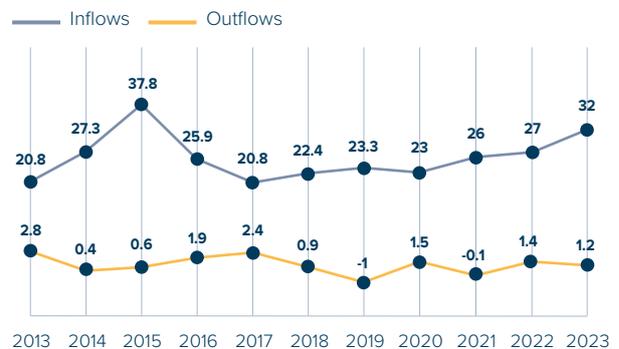
Source: WTO Secretariat.

C – Aid for Trade (AFT) flows to the LDCs



Source: WTO Secretariat/OECD.

D – Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the LDCs (USD billion)



Source: World Investment Report, UNCTAD.

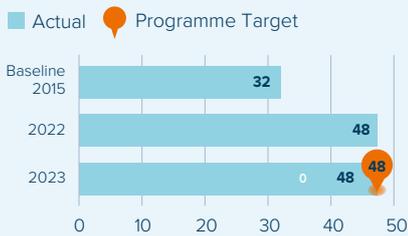
E – Human Development Index (HDI) in the LDCs



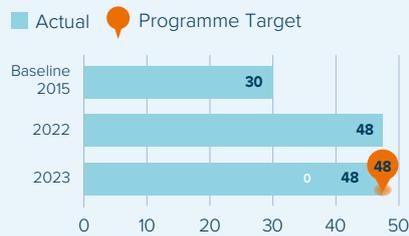
Source: Human Development Report 2020, UNDP.

Outcome 1 – Improved trade environment conducive for inclusive and sustainable growth of the LDCs

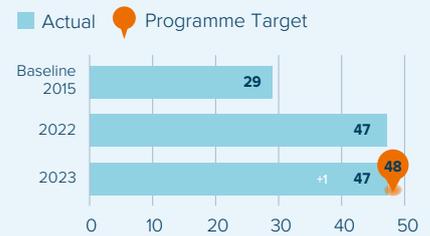
1.a. – Number of EIF Countries with trade integrated into their National Development Plan



1.b. – Number of EIF Countries with effective trade coordination mechanisms

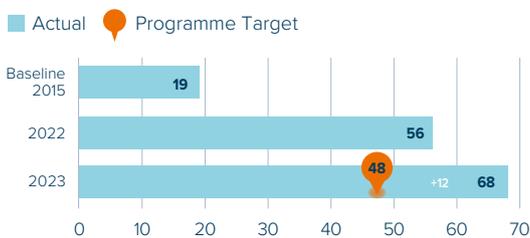


1.c. – Number of EIF Countries with sector-specific strategies integrating trade

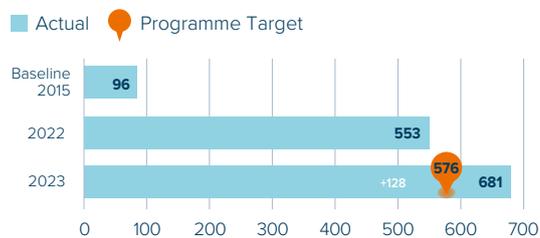


Output 1 – Improved evidence-based policy and regulatory frameworks for trade and investment

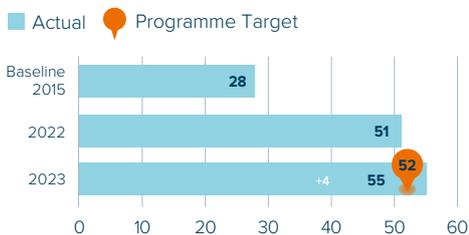
1.1.a. – Number of quality trade policies formulated and updated with support from the EIF



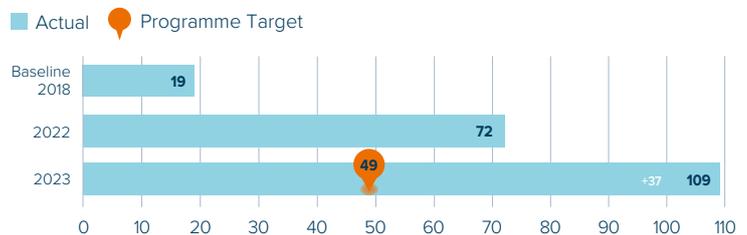
1.1.b. – Number of actions undertaken for improved legislation and participation in trade-related fora



1.1.c. – Number of DTISs developed through EIF support

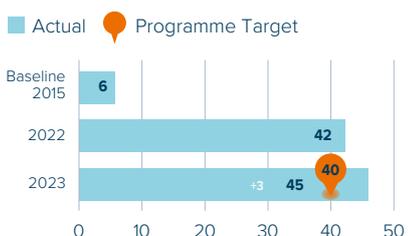


1.1.d. – Number of trade- and investment-related regulations adopted

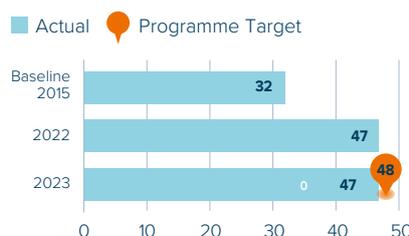


Output 2 – Strengthened institutional coordination for trade development and investment

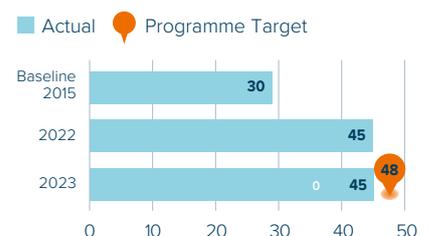
1.2.a. – Number of EIF Countries with National Implementation Units integrated into the government system



1.2.b. – Number of EIF Countries with quality functioning public-private coordination mechanisms

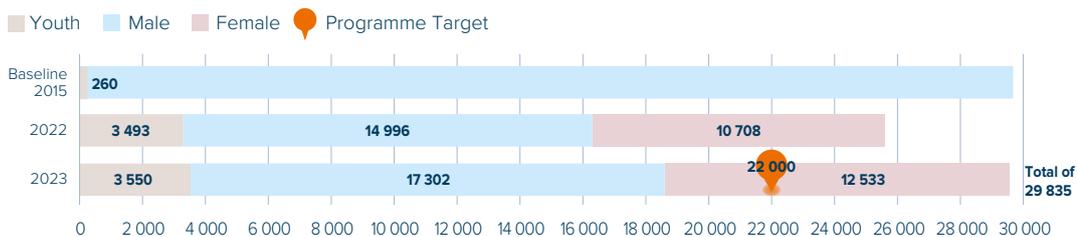


1.2.c. – Number of EIF Countries with quality government-donor dialogue mechanisms on trade- and investment-related matters



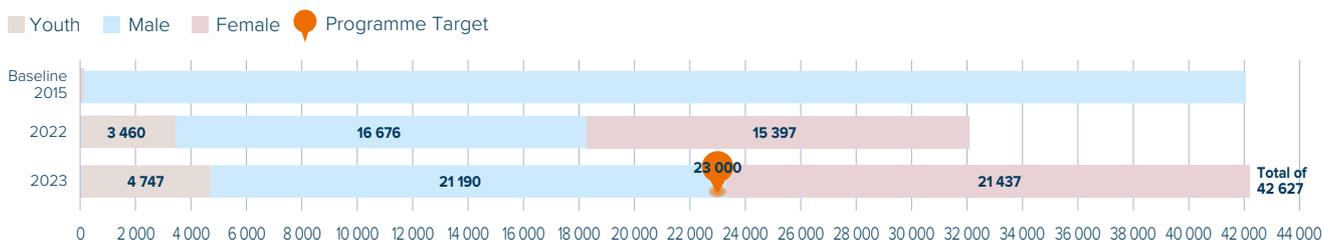
Output 3 – Enhanced capacities for policy formulation and implementation

1.3.a. – Number of public officials (disaggregated by gender and age) trained in investment and trade-related areas



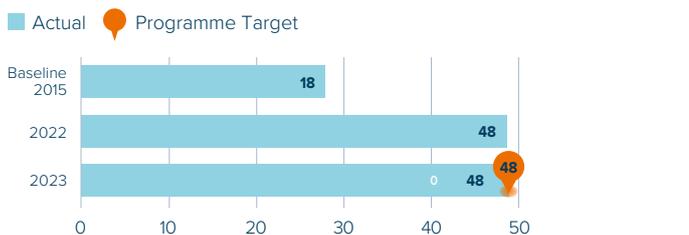
Note: The chart shows the cumulative total of male and female participants. Youth are included for illustrative purposes and do not contribute to the cumulative total.

1.3.b. – Number of private sector and civil society representatives (disaggregated by gender and age) trained in investment and trade-related areas to participate in the national trade agenda



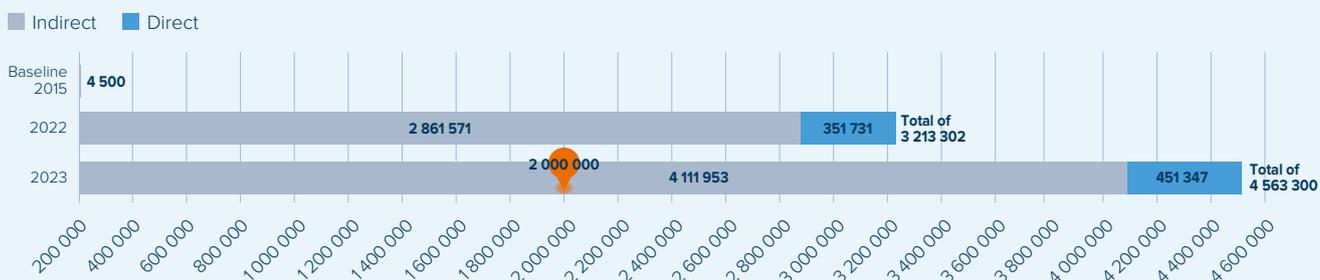
Note: The chart shows the cumulative total of male and female participants. Youth are included for illustrative purposes though do not contribute to the cumulative total.

1.3.c. – Number of EIF countries with investment and trade-related information dissemination tools for different stakeholders

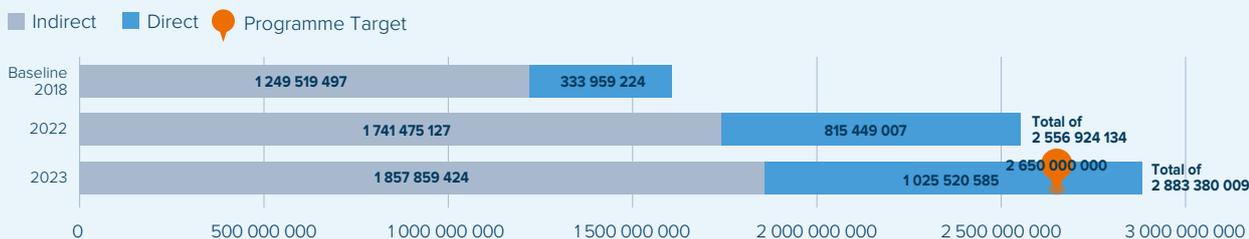


Outcome 2 – Increased exports and access to international markets for the LDCs

2.a. – Volume of production generated through EIF interventions (tonnes)

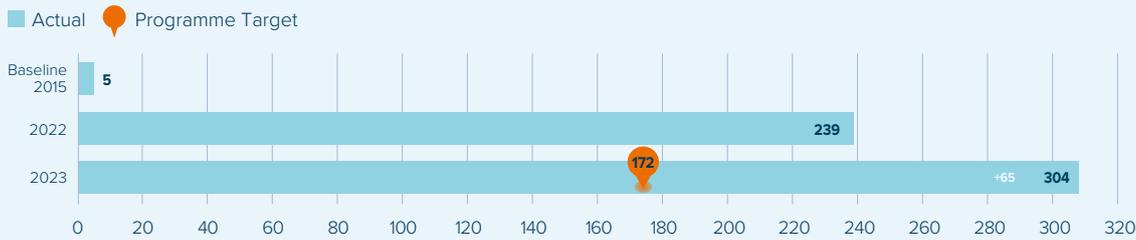


2.b. – Value of exports generated through EIF interventions (in USD)



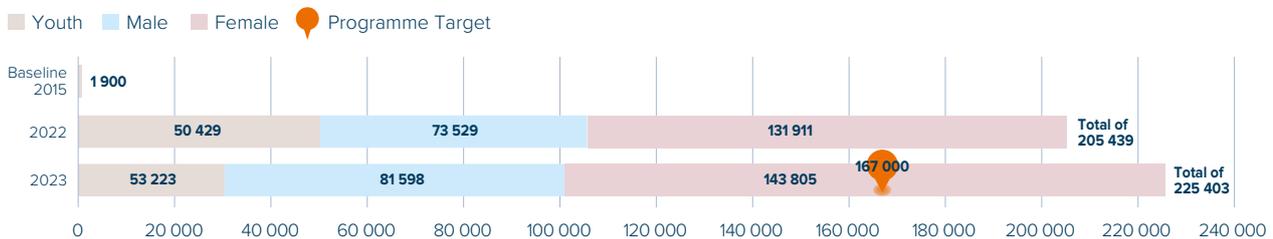
Outcome 2 – Increased exports and access to international markets for the LDCs (continued)

2.c. – Number of new international markets accessed with support from the EIF

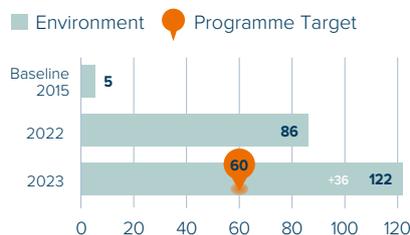
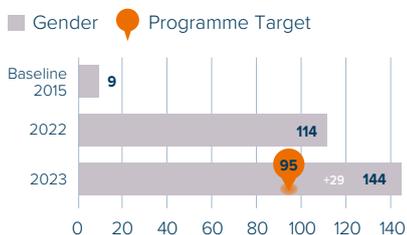


Output 1 – Improved participation of the EIF Countries in strategic value chains for increased connectivity to markets

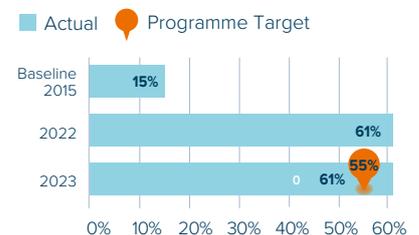
2.1.a. – Total number of people trained in value chain practices (disaggregated by gender and age) through participation in EIF capacity-building initiatives



2.1.b. – Number of awareness-raising activities conducted on gender and the environment



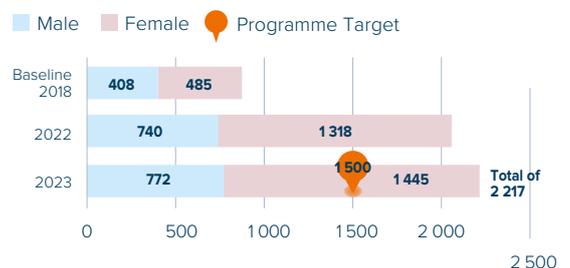
2.1.c. – Percentage of women directly benefiting from EIF-funded productive sector projects



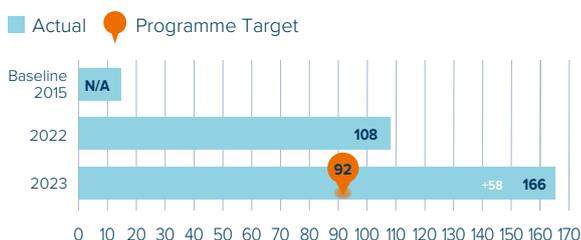
2.1.d. – Number of producer associations trained in value chain practices



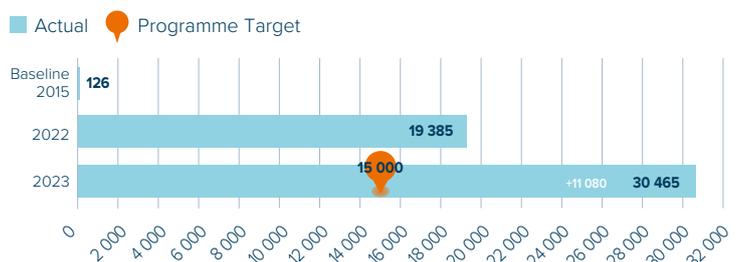
2.1.e. – Number of people (disaggregated by gender) participating in trade fairs related to market connectivity



2.1.f. – Number of trade facilitation initiatives undertaken with EIF support

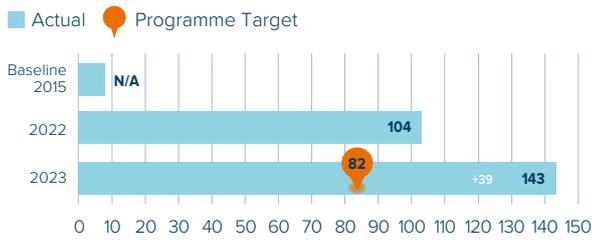


2.1.g. – Number of MSMEs supported by EIF projects

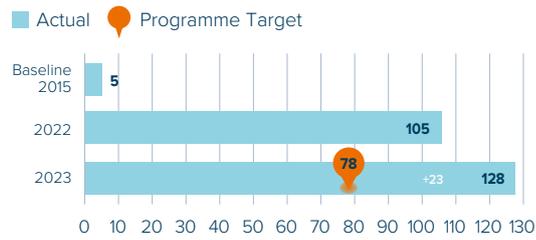


Output 2 – Improved technology use in production and services in selected value chains

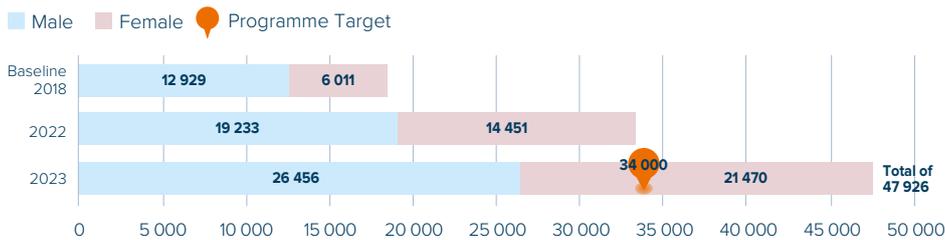
2.2.a. – Number of e-commerce initiatives undertaken



2.2.b. – Number of new technologies adopted through EIF support

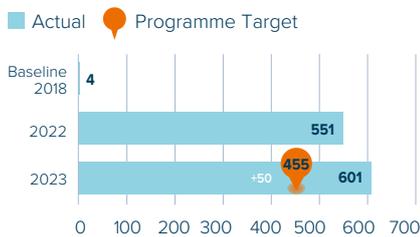


2.2.c. – Number of people (disaggregated by gender) adopting new technology through EIF capacity-building initiatives

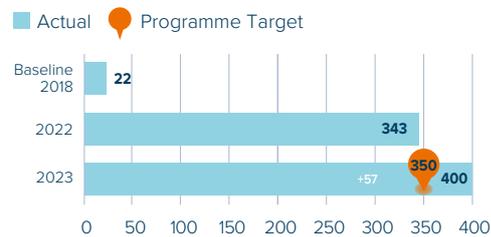


Output 3 – Support to the EIF Countries to leverage (directly and indirectly) additional resources

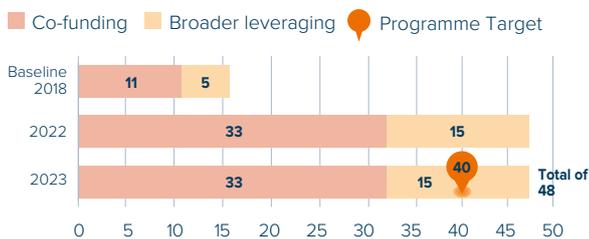
2.3.a. – Number of actions undertaken by EIF partners (Agencies/Main Implementing Entities) in support of leveraging finance and expertise



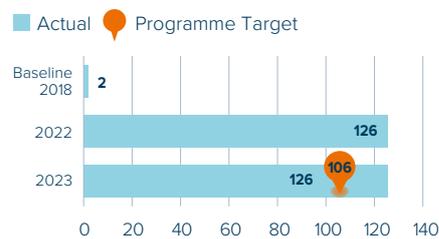
2.3.b. – Number of projects funded by development partners (Donors/Agencies/development banks) related to the Action Matrix of the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study



2.3.c. – Number of EIF projects leveraging private sector resources



2.3.d. – Number of EIF projects receiving additional funding from governments and development partners



Note: The figures in white indicate changes in 2023.

List of projects



As of 31 December 2023

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Afghanistan	Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS)	400,000		400,000
	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	DTIS Update*		1,713	1,713
	EIF National Implementation Arrangements (NIA) Support (Tier 1 Phase 1)*		12,560	12,560
	Support to NIA (Repackaged)*		62,440	62,440
	Total		450,000	76,713
Angola	DTIS Update		300,000	300,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1		150,000	150,000
	Total		450,000	450,000
Bangladesh	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	DTIS	460,000		460,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	300,000		300,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Years 2 and 3		331,731	600,000
	Export Competitiveness Development Project		699,810	856,528
	DTIS Update (Repackaged)		172,379	200,000
	Total	810,000	1,203,920	2,013,920
Benin	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,499,991		1,499,991
	DTIS Update	196,353		196,353
	Strengthening of Productive and Marketing Capacities	2,955,805		2,955,805
	Feasibility Study for Cross-Border Trade Facility		118,377	118,377
	Shea Value Chain Development		1,500,000	1,500,000
	Sustainability Support		291,417	291,417
	National Export Strategy		200,000	200,000
	Total	4,652,149	2,109,794	6,761,943
Bhutan	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	DTIS	400,000		400,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,053		900,053
	E-Infrastructure (E4T)		1,482,270	1,482,270
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		600,000	600,000
	DTIS Update		200,000	200,000
	Export Diversification - Brand Bhutan		1,577,030	1,577,030
	Post-Sustainability Support		73,921	73,921
	Total	1,350,053	3,933,221	5,283,274

* These projects have been terminated.

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Burkina Faso	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,465,002		1,465,002
	Strengthening the Productive and Commercial Capacities of the Sesame Sector	2,666,884		2,666,884
	DTIS Update	191,322		191,322
	Shea Butter - Feasibility Study	196,094		196,094
	Mango and Cashew	2,997,232		2,997,232
	Mainstreaming	70,621		70,621
	Sustainability Support		286,764	286,764
	Shea Butter Industry (PACFI-K)		2,053,230	2,053,230
	Post-Sustainability Support		75,000	75,000
	Total		7,587,156	2,414,994
Burundi	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,499,476		1,499,476
	DTIS Update	198,268		198,268
	Agribusiness Sanitary and Phytosanitary Support	2,503,277		2,503,277
	Export Support Mechanisms	606,274		606,274
	Sustainability Support		296,592	296,592
	DTIS Update - Second		238,070	238,070
	Total		4,807,296	534,662
Cabo Verde	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	DTIS Update	200,000		200,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		594,344	594,344
	Total	1,100,000	594,344	1,694,344
Cambodia	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,288,392		1,288,392
	Cambodia Export Diversification and Expansion Program (CEDEP) I - Silk	974,980		974,980
	CEDEP I - Evaluation	220,661		220,661
	CEDEP I - Rice	1,112,847		1,112,847
	DTIS Update	194,355		194,355
	CEDEP II - Marine Fishery	988,953		988,953
	CEDEP II - Cassava	993,955		993,955
	CEDEP II - Evaluation	339,952		339,952
	CEDEP II - Academy of Culinary Arts	950,000		950,000
	Sustainability Support		201,192	201,192
	DTIS Update - Second		185,756	185,756
	E-Commerce Strategy Formulation		116,917	116,917
	Go4eCAM		1,674,143	1,674,143
	Total	7,064,095	2,178,009	9,242,104

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Central African Republic	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	DTIS Update*	29,455		29,455
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		564,186	564,186
	Sesame, Corn and Palm Oil		1,697,000	1,697,000
	DTIS Update - Second		150,000	150,000
	Total		929,455	2,411,186
Chad	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,500,000,		1,500,000
	NIA Support through International Trade Advisor (ITA)	730,541,		730,541
	DTIS Update	367,000,		367,000
	Gum Arabic (PRCCGAT)	2,492,036,		2,492,036
	Gum Arabic - ITA Support	,375,180		375,180
	Feasibility Study to Support the Date, Natron and Sesame Sectors	147,235		147,235
	Sustainability Support		297,028	297,028
	Hides and Skins (PRCCFPCT)		1,491,538	1,491,538
	Post-Sustainability Support		274,000	274,000
	Total		5,611,992	2,062,566
Comoros	DTIS Update	256,791		256,791
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2	599,650		599,650
	Export Competitiveness	3,503,237		3,503,237
	Sustainability Support		299,543	299,543
	Mainstreaming Support		199,933	199,933
	Eco-Tourism		1,694,000	1,694,000
	WTO Accession Support		100,000	100,000
	Total		5,259,678	2,293,476
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	DTIS	400,000		400,000
	Pre-DTIS	49,841		49,841
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,500,159		1,500,159
	NIA Support through ITA - Tier 1 Phase 1	252,520		252,520
	Palm Oil	2,647,745		2,647,745
	NIA Support through ITA - Tier 1 Phase 2	75,193		75,193
	DTIS Update		198,810	198,810
	Sustainability Support		160,350	160,350
	Total		4,925,458	359,160

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Djibouti	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,381,375		1,381,375
	NIA Support through ITA	642,592		642,592
	DTIS Update	196,529		196,529
	Tourism Development and Promotion		1,469,088	1,469,088
	Sustainability Support		300,000	300,000
	Improving the Business Environment and Developing Entrepreneurship		1,509,709	1,509,709
	National Trade and E-Commerce Strategy Development		119,676	119,676
	Total		2,220,496	3,398,472
Equatorial Guinea	Pre-DTIS		50,000	50,000
	DTIS		284,667	284,667
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1		898,560	898,560
	Total		1,233,227	1,233,227
Ethiopia	NIA Support through ITA	49,963		49,963
	DTIS Update	390,058		390,058
	NIA Support - Phase 1	625,000		625,000
	Honey Quality Production and Fair Trade (International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology)		1,484,978	1,484,978
	NIA Support - Phase 2		490,000	490,000
	Sustainability Support		368,134	368,134
	Total	1,065,021	2,343,112	3,408,133
Gambia, The	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,498,986		1,498,986
	DTIS Update	193,559		193,559
	Sector Competitiveness and Export Diversification Project (SCEDP)	2,340,528		2,340,528
	Trade Facilitation (Airport)	2,494,200		2,494,200
	Mainstreaming	89,409		89,409
	Sustainability Support		297,453	297,453
	Aflatoxin Mitigation Programme (Pilot Project)		50,000	50,000
	SheTrades Gambia		285,607	285,607
	Trade and Digital Economy Assessment		60,306	60,306
	COVID-19 Recovery - Market Access for Women Horticulture Producers		200,000	200,000
	Trade Mainstreaming and Value Chain Enhancement - Post-Sustainability Support		245,000	245,000
	Total	6,616,683	1,138,367	7,755,049

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Guinea	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,500,000		1,500,000
	DTIS Update	278,476		278,476
	Mango (PRODEFIMA)	2,998,148		2,998,148
	Strengthening the Operational Capacity of the National Office of Quality Control		1,497,970	1,497,970
	Sustainability Support		300,000	300,000
	National Trade Development Strategy		200,000	200,000
	Reverse Linkage on Enhancing the Value Chain		348,090	348,090
	Post-Sustainability Support		244,000	244,000
	Total		4,776,624	2,590,060
Guinea-Bissau	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,500,000		1,500,000
	DTIS Update	199,435		199,435
	NIA Support through ITA	205,610		205,610
	Sustainability Support		298,860	298,860
	Development of the Artisanal Fisheries (DESPAR-GB)		1,500,000	1,500,000
	Total		1,905,045	1,798,860
Haiti	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	DTIS	294,953		294,953
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		591,545	591,545
	Feasibility Study - Agriculture Sector		174,424	174,424
	Sustainability Support		297,251	297,251
	Fisheries and Sea Salt		1,534,100	1,534,100
	Total		1,244,953	2,597,320
Kiribati	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Years 1 and 2	600,000		600,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Year 3		279,183	279,183
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		60,106	60,106
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		600,000	600,000
	Total		600,000	939,289
Lao PDR	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,446,260		1,446,260
	DTIS Update	390,484		390,484
	Quality and Statistics	2,488,411		2,488,411
	Mainstreaming	198,496		198,496
	Combined - Promotion of Export Competitiveness and Sustainability Support		1,973,405	1,973,405
	DTIS Update - Second		179,455	179,455
	Total		4,523,651	2,152,860

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Lesotho	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,296,857		1,296,857
	DTIS Update	160,000		160,000
	Agricultural Productivity	2,705,214		2,705,214
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		54,409	54,409
	National Export Strategy Roadmap		97,186	97,186
	Trade Mainstreaming - National Trade Policy		170,277	170,277
	Sustainability Support		299,754	299,754
	Total	4,162,071	621,626	4,783,697
Liberia	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,499,900		1,499,900
	DTIS Update	199,640		199,640
	Tourism and Furniture Feasibility Studies	199,433		199,433
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		49,204	49,204
	Surf Tourism		460,941	460,941
	Sustainability Support		150,000	150,000
	Total	1,898,973	660,145	2,559,117
Madagascar	DTIS Update	223,840		223,840
	Pre-DTIS	49,677		49,677
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2		1,187,424	1,187,424
	Total	273,517	1,187,424	1,460,941
Malawi	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	899,250		899,250
	DTIS Update	199,080		199,080
	Smallholder Linkages to Agro-Processing (NASFAM)	1,648,750		1,648,750
	Support to Agro-Processing (MITC) - EIF Phase One Part	1,146,299		1,146,299
	Study on Special Activity Economic Zone (MITC-SEZ)	197,237		197,237
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		593,173	593,173
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		59,757	59,757
	Support to Agro-Processing (MITC) - EIF Phase Two Part		204,378	204,378
	Sustainability Support		317,648	317,648
	Project Preparation Grant (PPG) - Flagship National Export Strategy II		100,000	100,000
	Cotton By-Products		48,946	48,946
	Total	4,090,616	1,323,901	5,414,517
Maldives	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,495,522		1,495,522
	Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Trade Facilitation	1,557,502		1,557,502
	Total	3,053,024		3,053,024

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Mali	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,412,863		1,412,863
	Gum Arabic - EIF Phase One Part	2,825,340		2,825,340
	DTIS Update	200,000		200,000
	Gum Arabic - EIF Phase Two Part		798,051	798,051
	Sustainability Support		299,643	299,643
	Project for the Development of the Shea Butter Industry (PRODEFIKA)		1,543,000	1,543,000
	Total		4,438,203	2,640,694
Mauritania	DTIS Update	400,000		400,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1		890,216	890,216
	Eco-Tourism (PNBA)		1,570,500	1,570,500
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		599,984	599,984
	Total	400,000	3,060,700	3,460,700
Mozambique	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	597,472		597,472
	NIA Support through ITA	184,150		184,150
	DTIS Update	195,755		195,755
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2 - Repackaged		218,000	218,000
	Total	977,377	218,000	1,195,377
Myanmar	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	DTIS	340,050		340,050
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Years 1 and 2	600,000		600,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Year 3		293,613	293,613
	Combined - Services Trade Enhancement (M-STEP) and NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		885,421	885,421
	Total	990,050	1,179,034	2,169,084
Nepal	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	941,687		941,687
	Ginger Competitiveness	700,642		700,642
	Pashmina (PETS)	1,861,603		1,861,603
	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants - EIF Phase One Part	3,580,000		3,580,000
	DTIS Update	86,448		86,448
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		44,274	44,274
	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants - EIF Phase Two Part		125,639	125,639
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2 - Repackaged		311,865	311,865
	Sustainable Tea Exports (NISTE)		1,271,483	1,271,483
	Sustainability Support		20,975	20,975
	Total	7,170,380	1,774,237	8,944,617

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Niger	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,492,140		1,492,140
	DTIS Update	193,144		193,144
	Leather (Hides and Skins)	2,271,070		2,271,070
	Sustainability Support		300,000	300,000
	Development of the Sesame Sector		1,496,764	1,496,764
	Post-Sustainability Support		287,001	287,001
	Total		3,956,353	2,083,765
Rwanda	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,634,400		1,634,400
	Cross-Border Capacity Development	3,324,948		3,324,948
	Sustainability Support		299,424	299,424
	Trade Competitiveness through E-Commerce		500,000	500,000
	Export Growth Initiatives		1,488,243	1,488,243
	Kickstarting of the AfCFTA in Rwanda - Post Sustainability Support		237,000	237,000
	Total		4,959,348	2,524,667
Samoa	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	898,682		898,682
	Trade Sector Support Programme (TSSP) - EIF Phase One Part	2,364,849		2,364,849
	DTIS Update	156,469		156,469
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		42,347	42,347
	TSSP - EIF Phase Two Part		539,378	539,378
	Total		3,420,000	581,725
São Tomé and Príncipe	DTIS Update	173,705		173,705
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1		900,000	900,000
	Total	173,705	900,000	1,073,705
Senegal	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	DTIS Update	195,734		195,734
	Mango Competitiveness - EIF Phase One Part	2,877,541		2,877,541
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		600,000	600,000
	Trade Mainstreaming		199,494	199,494
	Metrology		1,391,450	1,391,450
	Mango Competitiveness - EIF Phase Two Part		112,002	112,002
	Sustainability Support		273,788	273,788
	Establishment of the E-Commerce National Platform		390,000	390,000
	Total		3,973,275	2,966,733

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Sierra Leone	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,392,393		1,392,393
	DTIS Update	199,873		199,873
	Sustainable Tourism (STDPP)	811,074		811,074
	Sustainability Support		166,466	166,466
	STDPP - Repackaged		1,699,574	1,699,574
	Total		2,403,340	1,866,041
Solomon Islands	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2 - Years 1 to 4	1,200,000		1,200,000
	Tourism (SI-TIDE)	1,500,000		1,500,000
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		46,460	46,460
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2 - Year 5		150,000	150,000
	Enhancing Capacities for Agriculture Trade (ECAT)		1,300,000	1,300,000
	Total		2,700,000	1,496,460
Somalia	Pre-DTIS	50,875		50,875
	Institutional Capacity-Building for Somalia's WTO Accession and Trade Integration		303,750	303,750
	Total	50,875	303,750	354,625
South Sudan	DTIS	398,456		398,456
	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	Trade Mainstreaming		115,365	115,365
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2		1,200,000	1,200,000
	DTIS Update		200,000	200,000
	Total	448,456	1,515,365	1,963,821
Sudan	DTIS Update	197,759		197,759
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1 - Repackaged		200,000	200,000
	Total	197,759	200,000	397,759
Tanzania	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	DTIS Update	340,466		340,466
	Combined - MSME Capacity and NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		2,100,000	2,100,000
	Total	1,240,466	2,100,000	3,340,466
Timor-Leste	Pre-DTIS	43,515		43,515
	Capacity-Building for WTO Accession and Trade Integration		380,000	380,000
	Women Empowerment and Tourism Recovery		149,640	149,640
	Total	43,515	529,640	573,155

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Togo	DTIS	400,000		400,000
	Pre-DTIS	50,000		50,000
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,500,000		1,500,000
	Soya	2,991,216		2,991,216
	DTIS Update	200,000		200,000
	Combined - Sustainability Support - Cashew and Shea (PRODAK)		1,800,000	1,800,000
	Cotton By-Products		48,915	48,915
	National Trade Development Policy Update		100,000	100,000
	Post-Sustainability Support		265,000	265,000
	Total		5,141,216	2,213,915
Tuvalu	DTIS Update	156,445		156,445
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		59,938	59,938
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		502,027	502,027
	Trade and Integrated Private Sector Development		1,500,000	1,500,000
	Sustainability Support		85,000	85,000
	Total		1,056,445	2,146,964
Uganda	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phases 1 and 2	1,495,932		1,495,932
	DTIS Update	192,592		192,592
	District Commercial Services (DICOSS)	2,987,089		2,987,089
	Sustainability Support		262,685	262,685
	Handicraft and Souvenir Development (HSDP)		1,700,400	1,700,400
	DTIS Update - Second		193,372	193,372
	Post-Sustainability Support		125,000	125,000
	Total		4,675,613	2,281,457
Vanuatu	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	900,000		900,000
	Tourism Infrastructure	2,967,654		2,967,654
	DTIS Update	174,782		174,782
	Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment		48,233	48,233
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		426,940	426,940
	Electronic Single Window System		1,293,158	1,293,158
	LDC Smooth Transition Graduation		74,445	74,445
	Sustainability Support		149,915	149,915
	Automated System for Customs Data and Universal Postal Union Customs Declaration System		179,904	179,904
	Total		4,042,436	2,172,595

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Yemen	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	931,000		931,000
	Honey Productivity and Quality (IHPQ)	1,060,154		1,060,154
	DTIS Update	237,010		237,010
	Center for Bee Disease and Pest Management (CBDP)	1,086,837		1,086,837
	Total	3,315,001		3,315,001
Zambia	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 1	898,928		898,928
	DTIS Update	397,570		397,570
	Honey (TIPEC-ZAS)	2,469,930		2,469,930
	NIA Support - Tier 1 Phase 2		587,406	587,406
	Phytosanitary Capacity Strengthening		200,000	200,000
	SheTrades Zambia (B785)		200,000	200,000
	Combined - Cooperatives Development and Sustainability Support		2,082,393	2,082,393
	SheTrades Zambia (C081)		148,911	148,911
	DTIS Update - Second		180,000	180,000
	Total	3,766,428	3,398,710	7,165,138
Regional	Agricultural technology - Overseas Development Institute (ODI)		172,898	172,898
	Aligning Climate and Trade Policy for LDCs and Graduates - ODI		88,952	88,952
	Capacity-Building Investment Promotion - World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA)		376,659	376,659
	Capacity Development Programme for Investment Promotion Agencies - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)		341,799	341,799
	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa		207,400	207,400
	Cross-Border Paperless Trade - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)		197,963	197,963
	E-Commerce Capacity-Building for Women-Led Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises - UNESCAP		490,350	490,350
	Enhancing Capacity for Sustainable Cross-Border Trade Digitalization Through Application of Emerging Technologies - UNESCAP		297,353	297,353
	Enhancing Investment Promotion Capacities in Francophone LDCs - WAIPA		200,000	200,000
	Enhancing the Digital Ecosystem and Digital Skills for the Economic Empowerment of Women in the LDCs - International Telecommunication Union (ITU)		798,104	798,104
	Exploring the Benefit of E-Commerce for Women - UNCTAD		97,370	97,370
	Gender-Sensitive Market Access - Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand		400,000	400,000
Inclusive Commercial Development of the Shea Sector (PRADCIFK) - Global Shea Alliance		2,506,240	2,506,240	

Country Name	Project	EIF Phase One	EIF Phase Two	Grand Total
Regional	LDC Graduation Assistance - World Trade Organization (WTO)		306,340	306,340
	Pacific Quality infrastructure Initiative - Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)		1,110,980	1,110,980
	PPG - Quality Infrastructure in the Pacific - PIFS		84,654	84,654
	Promoting Gender-Responsive Trade Policy in the LDCs - UNCTAD		302,300	302,300
	Regional Consultations on UN LDC5 - WTO		309,214	309,214
	Support to the Operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - United Nations Economic Commission for Africa		400,000	400,000
	Technology Transfer for Cotton - WTO		143,477	143,477
	Trade Facilitation in West Africa - UNCTAD		1,775,000	1,775,000
	Trade Policy and Strategy for ASEAN LDCs on Market Access - UNCTAD		274,983	274,983
	Women - Shea Butter Value Chains - East African Women in Business Platform		450,115	450,115
	Total			11,332,152
Grand Total		140,518,245	92,093,312	232,611,557

Glossary

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
AfDB	African Development Bank	MIE	Main Implementing Entity
AfT	Aid for Trade	MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
AOAD	Arab Organization for Agricultural Development	MOIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	MSME	Micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data	MT	Metric tonne
CAR	Central African Republic	MTIP	Medium-Term Intersectoral Plan
CO2	Carbon Dioxide	NASFAM	National Association of Smallholder Farmers (Malawi)
COP	Conference of the Parties	NDP	National Development Plan
DF	EIF Donor Facilitator	NIA	National Implementation Arrangement
DICO	Department of International Cooperation (Cambodia)	NIU	EIF National Implementation Unit
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Study	NSC	National Steering Committee
DTISU	Diagnostic Trade Integration Study Update	NTDC	National Trade Development Committee
EAD	Electronic Advance Data	ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework	PPP	Public Private Partnership
EIFSC	EIF Steering Committee	SADC	Southern African Development Community
EIFTF	EIF Trust Fund	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement	SPIU	Single Project Implementation Unit, Rwanda
ES	Executive Secretariat for the EIF	SPS	Sanitary and phytosanitary
ESW	Electronic Single Window	STDF	Standards and Trade Development Facility
EU	European Union	TFM	EIF Trust Fund Manager
EWPT	Empower Women, Power Trade	TRAPCA	Trade Policy Training Centre in Africa
FCAS	Fragile and Conflict-Affected States	TRTA	Trade-Related Technical Assistance
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	TSSP	Trade Sector Support Program
FP	EIF Focal Point	UK	United Kingdom
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH	UNCTAD	United Nations Trade and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GSA	Global Shea Alliance	UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
HA	Hectare	UN-ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ICIPE	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
IF	Integrated Framework	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development	UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development	UPU	Universal Postal Union
ILO	International Labour Organization	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund	USD	United States Dollar
ITC	International Trade Centre	VfM	Value for Money
ITU	International Telecommunications Union	WAIPA	World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies
ITFC	Islamic Trade Finance Corporation	WB	World Bank
LDC	Least developed country	WTO	World Trade Organization
MC13	Thirteenth Ministerial Conference of the WTO		
MEL	Monitoring Learning and Evaluation		

Report designed and printed by
Graphic and Event Design,
Print and Distribution Section.
© EIF 2024

Published June 2024

Executive Secretariat for the EIF at the WTO

Rue de Lausanne 154

CH-1211 Geneva 2

Switzerland

 +41 (0)22 739 66 50

 eif.secretariat@wto.org

 enhancedif.org

 @EIF4LDCs

 facebook.com/eif4ldcs

 youtube.com/user/EIF4LDCs

 flickr.com/photos/152818923@N04/

 linkedin.com/company/11161784/



trade4devnews.enhancedif.org



NEWS



EVENT COVERAGE



IMPACT STORIES



OP-ED



PHOTO STORIES



Q&A