



Enhanced Integrated Framework

Trade for LDC development

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# The Investment Case for EIF Phase Three

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Boosting trade and investment in the least  
developed countries (LDCs)

**Transforming lives, building futures**

« The Enhanced Integrated Framework has played a critical role in developing Sierra Leone's trade capacity, from laying foundational structures for trade facilitation to supporting our integration into the WTO, AfCFTA, and other preferential trade agreements. As we look to the future, the Ministry is keen to be included in Phase Three of the EIF programme to unlock targeted implementation of key action plans in national trade strategies and support inclusive trade-led growth for sustainable development goals. »

— H.E. Mr Alpha Ibrahim Sesay, Minister of Trade and Industry, Sierra Leone

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# TRADE AND INVESTMENT

## A critical catalyst for positive change in the LDCs

**Trade and investment can transform economies.** They have been key drivers in lifting over a **billion** people out of poverty. But the least developed countries (LDCs) remain marginalized. They capture only a mere fraction of global trade.

The EIF empowers the world's most vulnerable economies to harness trade and investment as a driver of truly sustainable development. Through country-led catalytic, innovative and transformative interventions, the EIF supports the development of productive, competitive and resilient LDC economies that can fully participate in regional and global trading systems.

By building technical, operational and human capacity, improving coordination mechanisms and promoting inclusive legal and policy reform, the EIF helps create a strong trade and investment institutional environment in the LDCs.

At the same time, the EIF supports productive sector development through investment-ready projects by linking local businesses to global value chains and by scaling innovative technologies and business as well as financing models.



The LDCs comprise **13%** of the world's population but account for only **1%** of global exports.



Reference to the EIF is made in both Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.a and Article 174 of the Doha Programme of Action, recognizing it as a predictable source of Aid for Trade and a key pillar of the global trade development framework for the LDCs.

EIF Phase Three aims to foster competitive, diversified, inclusive and resilient LDC economies integrated into the global trade and investment system and will be closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Doha Programme of Action.



# EIF PHASE THREE

## A bold new vision for sustainable trade and development in the LDCs

The start of EIF Phase Three (2025-2031) marks the beginning of a **new era** of scaled-up LDC engagement in the global trading system. This renewed vision aims to be even more catalytic, innovative and transformative, focusing on two broad areas:

### Strengthening the institutional, policy and regulatory environment, including:

- Promoting inclusive and improved trade and investment policy and regulatory frameworks, along with other legal and institutional reforms that prioritize investment-ready sectors.
- Strengthening trade and investment coordination mechanisms together with governments, development partners and the private sector in the LDCs and at the global level, to promote coherence between trade, investment, climate and other private sector development policies.
- Generating, consolidating and sharing trade and investment knowledge and learning.

To make the vision of Phase Three a reality, we aim to mobilize at least **USD 200 million** — including through new and transformative funding partnerships.

Join us on this mission to empower the LDCs.

### Boosting LDC trade competitiveness and productive capacity, including:

- Developing bankable, catalytic productive sector projects that are aligned with national priorities.
- Providing targeted support for innovation, technology adoption, standards compliance and certification, including linkages to global value chains, connecting local firms to international markets.

The third phase of the EIF will be underpinned by the strong **leveraging of additional finance, including innovative financial instruments and private finance**, as well as **private sector and partner engagement** as the engine of trade and investment.



# TRACK RECORD OF RELIABLE PARTNERSHIPS

## Proven impact. Real Change.

Since 2015, the EIF has achieved the following results:

- Delivered **218 projects** across **48 countries**, contributing to empowering the LDCs through trade.
- Helped **40 LDCs** LDCs mainstream trade into their national development plans.
- Established **45** EIF National Implementation Units in LDCs within the ministries responsible for trade.
- Helped mobilize over **USD 2 billion** from development partners, including the private sector.
- Leveraged **USD 60 million** in direct co-funding from development partners, governments and private sector actors.
- Supported **10 LDCs** on their journey toward WTO accession – with four already having achieved their goal.
- Supported the engagement of **33 African countries** in the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- Directly supported over **30,000+** micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises.
- Facilitated more than **300 market transactions** worth an estimated **USD 1 billion**.
- Expanded the proportion of female EIF beneficiaries from **15% to 61%**, with overall benefits reaching **180,000+ women**.

Building on this track record, EIF Phase Three will place even greater emphasis on **using real-time** insights from a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning framework to **drive adaptation, amplify impact** and **stay responsive** to the evolving needs of the LDCs.

# SNAPSHOTS

## Innovative partnerships. Maximum results. Now more than ever, LDCs must forge strategic and innovative partnerships to succeed

In EIF Phase Two, the Mastercard Foundation contributed USD 135 million to scale up support to an EIF project fostering growth in **Ethiopia's** honey industry. This project led to the training of almost 20,000 beekeepers (well over 6,000 women and nearly 18,000 youth) in honey harvesting, grading, packaging, storage and marketing, and provided them with modern equipment.



The EIF partnered with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) to support women's economic empowerment through e-commerce. More than 2,000 women entrepreneurs received training through this initiative to strengthen their digital and business skills in South and South-West Asia, including in **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal**. Governments, such as those of Bhutan and Nepal, have since engaged UNESCAP for further technical assistance in making their e-commerce policies more inclusive of women.



In **Mali**, support was provided to strengthen the shea value chain with a focus on increasing income for local producers and reducing poverty. As part of these efforts, a modern shea- processing facility was established in the town of Yanfolila to improve the quality and export potential of shea products. The facility now processes nuts supplied by 130 shea cooperatives across the region. This investment has led to the creation of over 3,900 jobs, particularly benefiting women and youth.



Harnessing the **power of trade** has never been more important... and attainable.



A smiling woman with dark skin, wearing a white chef's coat and a dark headscarf with gold accents, stands next to a large metal pot on a stove. The background is dark and textured.

**As a funding partner  
to the EIF, you are  
helping the LDCs  
harness trade and  
investment as  
a tool for *truly*  
sustainable  
development.**



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