EIF Enhanced Integrated Framework

THE INVESTMENT CASE FOR EIF PHASE THREE 2025–2031

Unlocking Trade, Attracting Investment, Driving Prosperity in the LDCs







From trade potential to tangible results: stronger enterprises, greater investment, rising exports and more jobs in the LDCs.

A country-owned platform for trade-led economic transformation across 40+ LDCs and recently graduated countries.

The EIF supports **country-led reforms** that respond to business needs, expand trade and attract investment to create more decent jobs in least developed countries.



THE OPPORTUNITY IS GROWING. LDC PARTICIPATION IS NOT.

Trade has helped reshape the global economy. Developing economies now account for a far greater share of world trade, and trade between developing countries has expanded rapidly. **Yet the LDCs remain at the margins: their share of world exports was just 1.1% in 2024, barely above 1.0% in 2010**[1].

This is not simply a market-access problem. LDC firms face some of the world's highest trade costs, alongside constraints in productive capacity, standards and certification, technology, finance and connections to buyers. **WTO analysis finds that trade costs in LDC manufacturing and services are around 50% higher than in high-income economies**[2].

The result: too much economic potential never reaches the scale needed to attract investment, compete in international markets, generate exports and create jobs.

At the same time, the opportunity is changing. **South–South merchandise trade reached USD 7.2 trillion in 2025 – 28% of global merchandise trade**[3]. Regional markets are deepening. Digital technologies are changing how firms produce and reach customers. Sustainability requirements are reshaping competitiveness. Countries are looking not only to export more, but to diversify, add value and create productive employment.

The Doha Programme of Action sets a clear horizon: significantly increase LDC exports, with a view to doubling their share of global exports by 2031[4]. EIF Phase Three runs concurrently to that horizon.

THE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Your investment into the EIF can help the LDCs capture more value from trade by strengthening the systems and firms that can produce competitively, attract investment, reach new markets and create jobs.



1. UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Global Trade Update: Reforming trade rules to drive development, March 2026.
2. World Trade Organization, WTO Trade Cost Index.
3. UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNCTADstat, Data Insights: International Trade, data updated 30 June 2026.
4. United Nations Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLLS), Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, 2022–2031

A COUNTRY-OWNED PLATFORM THAT CONNECTS TRADE PRIORITIES TO ECONOMIC OUTCOMES.

The EIF is the only multilateral partnership dedicated to helping the LDCs use trade as a driver of sustainable development. Being anchored within the WTO allows global visibility and coordination to mutually complement the work at the country level.

Its distinctive role is to connect trade priorities with the reforms, productive capabilities, markets and investment needed to turn them into economic results.

Policy reform does not automatically create exports. A promising firm does not automatically become investment-ready. Increased production does not automatically reach a higher-value market.

The EIF works across these gaps, helping countries move from identifying where trade can create value to building the conditions, productive capabilities and enterprises needed to capture it. Working with governments and partners, the EIF strengthens the enabling environment for trade and investment while helping productive sectors and enterprises build the capabilities, technologies, standards and market connections they need to compete, attract investment and reach new markets.

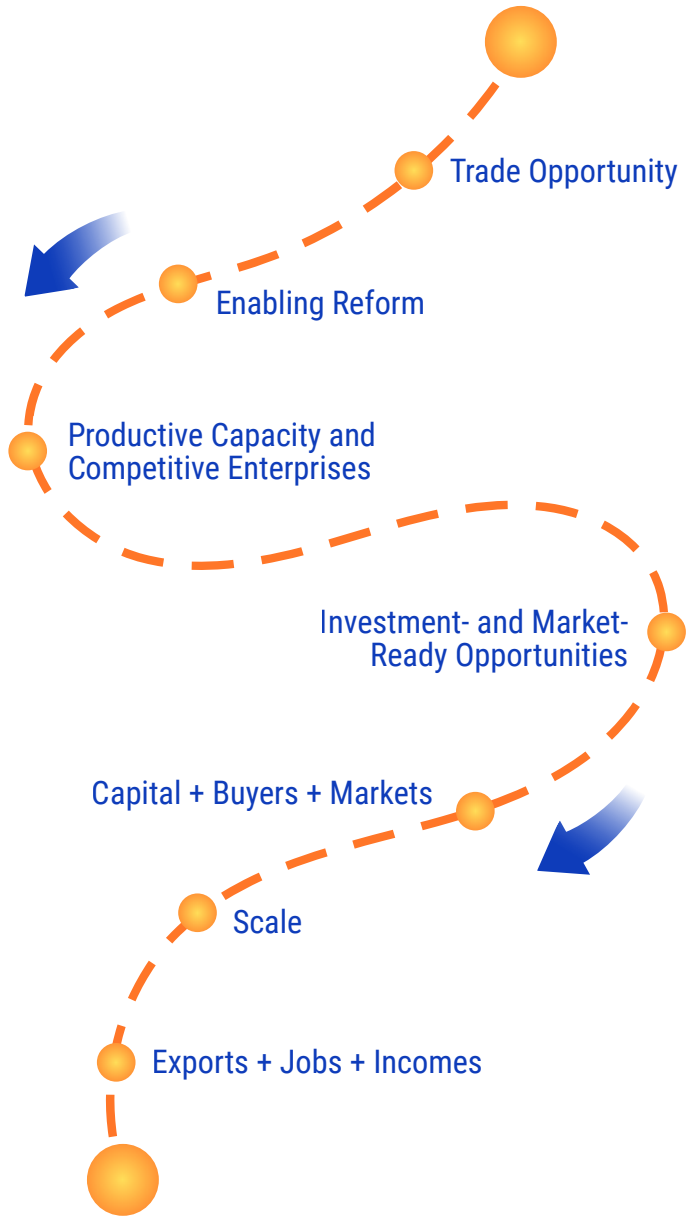
Country ownership is at the heart of the model. National priorities are translated into multi-year programmes, coordinated through government-led structures and implemented with national and international partners.

The EIF's role is therefore not to replace governments, development banks, technical agencies or private investors. **It is to help create the conditions, capabilities and connections that allow their resources to work together more effectively.**



THE EIF's PATHWAY





EIF'S ADDITIONALITY
Connecting reform upstream with commercially meaningful opportunities downstream—and helping mobilize the investment and partnerships needed for scale.

THE RULES OF COMPETITIVENESS ARE CHANGING FASTER THAN MANY LDC FIRMS AND INSTITUTIONS CAN ADAPT.

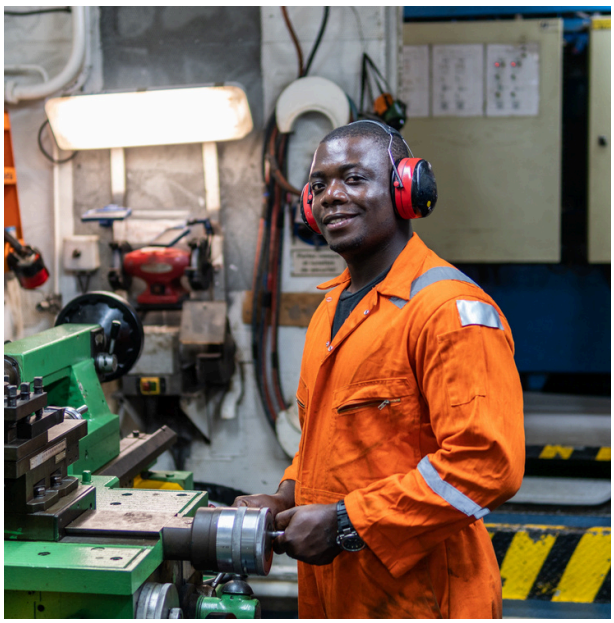
The case for investment is not that global trade will automatically move towards the LDCs. It is that opportunities are being created and reshaped, and countries need the capabilities to capture them.

TRADE IS BECOMING MORE COMPLEX

Policy volatility, non-tariff measures and increasingly demanding compliance requirements raise costs for small exporters. Quality, traceability, sustainability and certification increasingly determine who can enter and remain in markets.

SOUTH–SOUTH AND REGIONAL MARKETS ARE EXPANDING

A growing share of developing-country trade is with other developing economies. This creates routes to diversification and scale that are especially important for smaller economies.



TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING HOW FIRMS COMPETE

Digital systems can reduce trade friction and open new routes to customers and services. But technology only creates advantages where firms and institutions have the skills, infrastructure and capacity to use it.

GRADUATION RAISES THE BAR

For countries approaching or moving beyond the LDC status, durable progress requires competitive firms, diversified production and stronger institutions not permanent dependence on preferences.

At the same time, Aid for Trade flows to the LDCs remains below the levels required to meet the Doha Programme of Action's commitment to double support by 2031 from 2018 levels. This makes it even more important to use scarce development resources where they can mobilize wider investment and economic impact.

Without investment in competitiveness today, tomorrow's trade opportunities can become tomorrow's barriers.

EIF Phase Three is designed for this transition: helping countries build the capabilities to compete on increasingly commercial terms, attract investment into productive opportunities and translate trade into jobs, incomes and more resilient economies.

BUILT FOR THE SPACE BETWEEN TRADE POLICY AND MARKET OUTCOMES.

EIF's comparative advantage is not that it does everything. It is that it can connect interventions that are too often fragmented.

COUNTRY-OWNED

The EIF starts with national trade and development priorities and works through government-led structures – National Implementation Units – embedded in national institutions. Multi-year country programmes provide a platform for coordination, sequencing and partnership. Country ownership is financial as well as institutional: LDC governments are increasingly co-financing programme implementation and national delivery structures, investing alongside funding partners in their own trade priorities.

END-TO-END

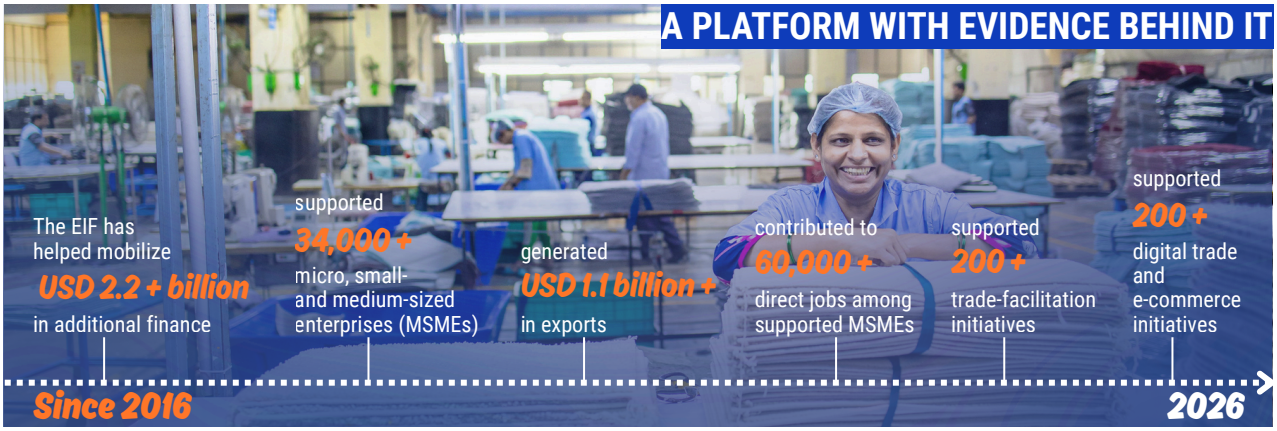
The EIF can simultaneously work on the enabling environment and the productive economy, linking policy and institutional reform with standards, technology, enterprise capability, value addition, investment readiness and market access.

CATALYTIC

The EIF's resources are intended to solve critical constraints and develop opportunities that larger sources of public and private capital can finance or scale. The value of EIF grant lies therefore not only in what it directly finances, but also in the additional investment, partnership and economic activity it can help unlock from LDC governments, development partners and the private sector.

CONNECTED

The EIF links LDC governments and businesses with development partners and the multilateral trading system, providing a bridge between country-level priorities and regional and global opportunities.



These results demonstrate more than delivery at scale. They show real impact and the EIF's ability to use targeted support to strengthen the conditions for trade, build productive capacity and mobilize wider resources and partnerships around country priorities.

CONNECTING TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WITH INVESTMENT AND SCALE.

EIF Phase Three builds on the EIF's established trade platform but makes the connection to investment much more deliberate. Country programmes will identify where trade can create economic value, address the constraints holding those opportunities back, and use EIF resources to help mobilize the partnerships and capital needed to take promising opportunities to scale.



1

FROM STAND-ALONE PROJECTS TO MULTI-YEAR COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

The Country Programme Documents provide a common framework for sequencing interventions, aligning partners and scaling what works.

2

FROM TRADE CAPACITY TO TRADE AND INVESTMENT OUTCOMES

Policy and institutional reform will be connected more deliberately to productive sectors, enterprise competitiveness and commercially meaningful opportunities, helping countries attract investment where it can strengthen productive capacity, promote value addition and improve market access.

3

FROM DELIVERY METRICS TO ECONOMIC RESULTS

Success is increasingly judged by the changes it delivers: stronger competitiveness, market entry, higher exports, increased investment, job creation and durable institutional performance.

4

FROM EIF GRANTS TO CATALYTIC RESOURCES

Interventions are designed to use EIF funding to unlock co-financing, technology, expertise, buyers and larger pools of public and private capital.



TWO FACILITIES. ONE ECONOMIC LOGIC.

The architecture of EIF Phase Three is structured around two interdependent and complementary funding facilities dedicated to the LDCs, designed to support countries in achieving inclusive, trade- and investment-led development.

Funding Facility 1: Institutional development support – Strengthens the conditions for trade and investment through support to policy development, institutional strenghtening, coordination mechanisms and implementation capacity.

Funding Facility 2: Catalytic support for trade competitiveness and market opportunity expansion – Invests in productive sectors and value chains with the potential to become more competitive, attract investment, add value and reach new markets. At least 75% of EIF financing will be allocated through this facility.

WHY THE MODEL MATTERS?

Reform without productive-sector response can stop at the policy level. Enterprise support without an enabling environment can stop at firm-level impacts. Combined together, these facilities address both institutional weaknesses and market constraints that hinder economic transformation.

USING TARGETED RESOURCES TO UNLOCK LARGER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.

The EIF's value lies not only in what its resources directly finance, but also in what they help unlock. EIF Phase Three deploys targeted resources to address critical constraints, strengthen productive capacity and prepare promising opportunities for investment and market integration, creating pathways for larger public and private actors to invest and scale.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE



The point is not that every intervention produces the same multiplier. The point is to design every intervention around what it can unlock.

EIF Phase Three therefore makes leverage, partnership and additional finance explicit components of its results model, rather than an afterthought.

ONE INVESTMENT. A MUCH LARGER EFFECT.
Partners invest in the EIF. The EIF uses that capital to strengthen systems, sectors and enterprises. Those interventions help mobilize larger investment into LDC economies

USD 200 MILLION TO TURN COUNTRY-OWNED TRADE PRIORITIES INTO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND MOBILIZE THE INVESTMENT NEEDED TO SCALE THEM.

A fully funded EIF Phase Three seeks to mobilize USD 200 million and is designed to contribute to a portfolio of results by 2031. These include, amongst others:

74,000
new direct jobs

USD 1.42bn
new direct exports

USD 2.6bn
additional finance mobilized

USD 638m
new private investment linked to EIF support

40,500
MSMEs, cooperatives, social enterprises and associations supported

410
new international market entries

The results reinforce one another: stronger institutions reduce friction; stronger firms create investable opportunities; investment expands productive capacities; market access generates exports; and productive growth creates jobs and incomes.

That is the return the EIF is designed to generate: stronger economies with greater capacities to trade, attract investment and grow.

WHAT THE USD 200 MILLION IS REALLY BUYING
A portfolio of country-owned programmes that strengthen the institutions, productive capabilities and commercial opportunities needed to attract investment, compete in markets and generate exports and jobs, while mobilizing resources well beyond the EIF's own grants.

THREE EXAMPLES, ONE PRINCIPLE: TARGETED INTERVENTION CAN UNLOCK MUCH LARGER ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

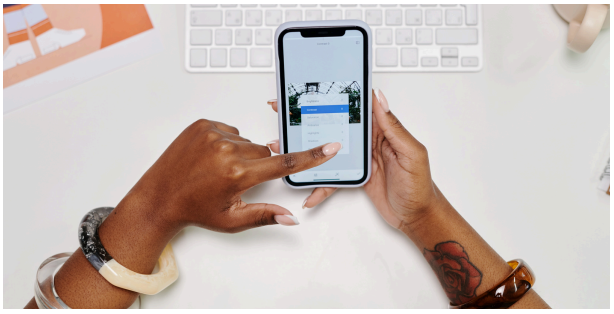
BHUTAN | MAKE INVESTMENT EASIER

Constraint: A cumbersome investment pathway.
EIF response: Support for a digital investment approval platform.
Reported result: 40 investment projects worth USD 365 million approved in under two years.
What it shows: Institutional and digital reform can improve the pathway through which capital reaches an economy.



VANUATU | CUT THE COST OF TRADING

Constraint: Slow administrative processes.
EIF response: An electronic single window.
Reported result: Permit processing reduced from four to 6 days to around 10 minutes.
What it shows: Targeted digital reform can remove costly friction from trade.



MALI | CAPTURE MORE VALUE LOCALLY

Opportunity: A shea sector with significant potential for value addition and women's economic participation.
EIF response: Support to productive capacity, including the establishment of a modern processing facility sourcing from 130 cooperatives.
Reported result: More than 3,900 jobs associated with the intervention.
What it shows: Investment in productive capacity and local value addition can turn an existing commodity into broader economic opportunity.



The sectors and constraints differ. The logic is consistent: identify what is holding back the economic opportunities, address it in ways that strengthen national capabilities, and connect the results to markets, investment and scalable growth.

EIF PHASE THREE TAKES THIS LOGIC TO PORTFOLIO SCALE

Country programmes provide the framework. The two funding facilities connect enabling reform with productive opportunities. Partnerships provide the route to scale and the key to unlock additional capital.

INVEST WHERE TRADE POTENTIAL BECOMES AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.

For funding partners, the value proposition is twofold: invest in a country-owned platform for trade-led transformation and use that investment to help mobilize substantially greater resources into LDC economies.

PARTNERS CAN ENGAGE IN DIFFERENT WAYS

CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO THE POOLED EIF TRUST FUND

Provide flexible resources that can be deployed across country, regional and thematic priorities.

MAKE A FLEXIBLE, MULTI-YEAR COMMITMENT

Give countries the predictability to sequence reforms and productive-sector investments, build partnerships and scale what works over the life of their programmes.

CO-FINANCE OR SCALE

Join the EIF in supporting country programmes, strategic value chains or proven interventions at the country level, in both the LDCs and the recently graduated countries.

BRING COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES

Development banks, foundations, technical agencies and companies can contribute finance, technology, expertise, buyers, standards of capability and market connections.





ACCOUNTABILITY AND VISIBILITY BUILT IN

GOVERNANCE

The EIF Executive Board, composed of LDCs and EIF Funding Partners

FIDUCIARY OVERSIGHT

Independent EIF Trust Fund Manager

TRANSPARENCY

EIF AURA – the EIF's integrated management information system: it brings together finance, governance, operations and results within one single platform. Its public dashboard shows what resources are delivering, while partners can access detailed portfolio data through a secure login.

LEARNING AND EVALUATION

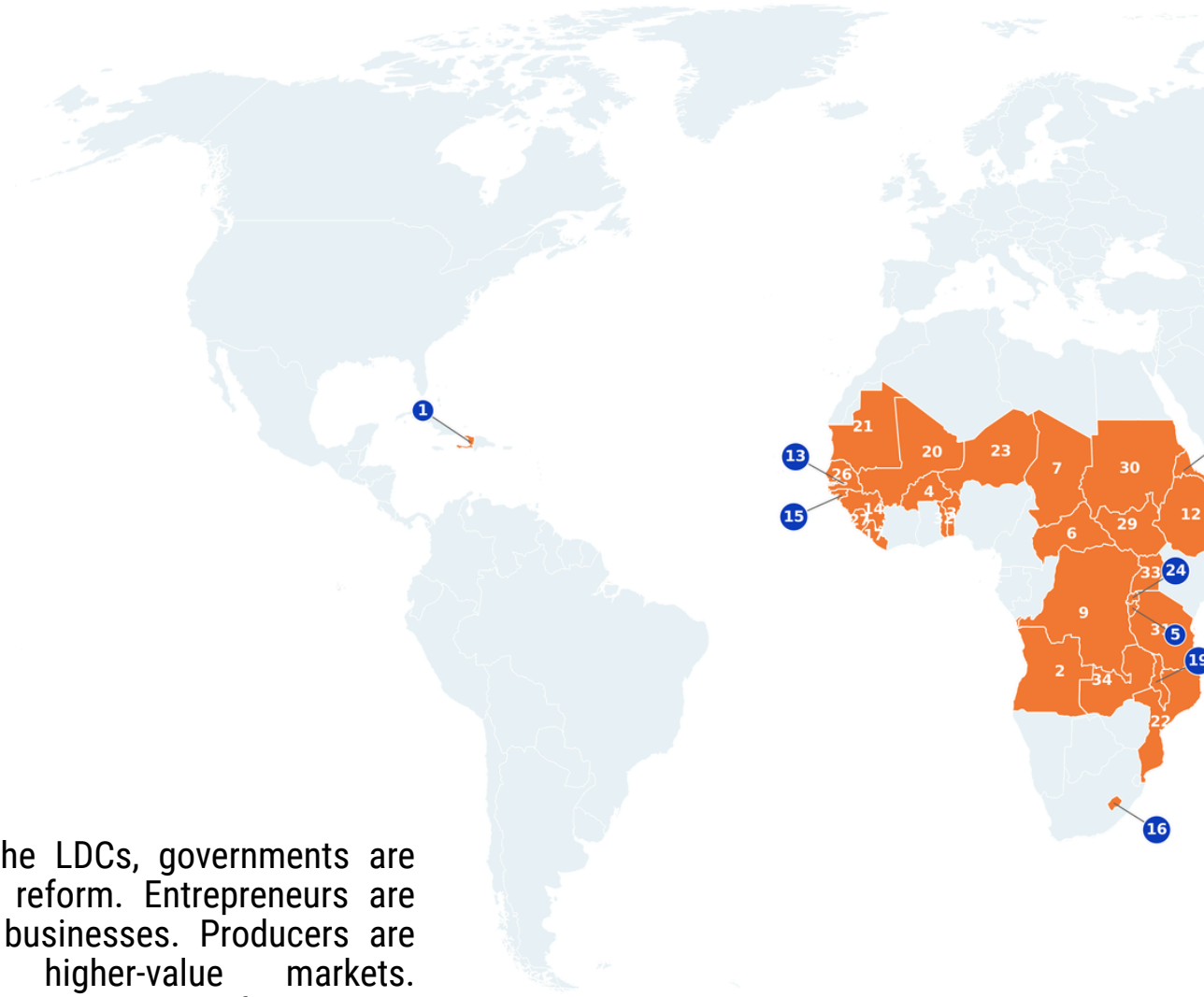
Semester results reporting, independent evaluations and a Value for Money framework.

VISIBILITY FOR FUNDERS

Contributions receive prominent recognition and branding at the country and programme level, including through reporting, communications and knowledge events.

THE OPPORTUNITY EXISTS.

The question is whether the systems, firms and partnerships needed to capture it are built in time.

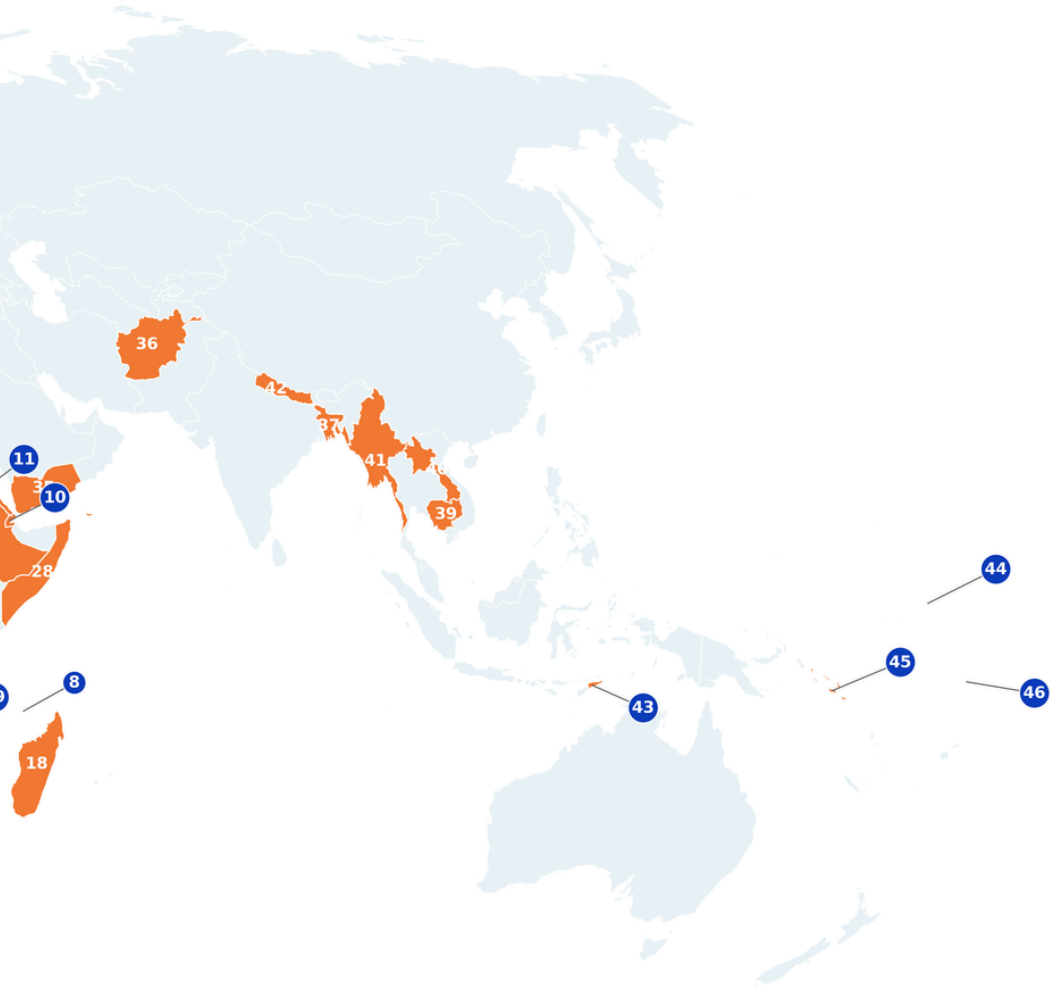


Across the LDCs, governments are pursuing reform. Entrepreneurs are building businesses. Producers are seeking higher-value markets. Sectors are capable of attracting investment.

The EIF helps **connect** those ambitions to institutions that work, enterprises that compete, markets that buy and investment that enables them to scale.

INVEST IN EIF PHASE THREE.

The EIF Phase Three: Your Partnership Platform for Trade and Investments in the LDCs



AMERICAS

01 Haiti

AFRICA

02 Angola
03 Benin
04 Burkina Faso
05 Burundi
06 Central African Republic
07 Chad
08 Comoros
09 Democratic Republic of the Congo
10 Djibouti
11 Eritrea
12 Ethiopia
13 The Gambia
14 Guinea
15 Guinea-Bissau
16 Lesotho
17 Liberia
18 Madagascar
19 Malawi
20 Mali
21 Mauritania
22 Mozambique
23 Niger
24 Rwanda
25 *São Tomé and Príncipe**
26 Senegal
27 Sierra Leone
28 Somalia
29 South Sudan
30 Sudan
31 Tanzania
32 Togo
33 Uganda
34 Zambia

MIDDLE EAST

35 Yemen

ASIA

36 Afghanistan
37 Bangladesh
38 *Bhutan**
39 Cambodia
40 Lao PDR
41 Myanmar
42 Nepal
43 Timor-Leste

PACIFIC

44 Kiribati
45 Solomon Islands
46 Tuvalu

* Graduated countries.

THE COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF THE EIF

The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) offers a distinctive value proposition to development partners seeking to support trade-led growth, economic diversification and sustainable development in least developed countries (LDCs). Unlike stand-alone trade-related technical assistance interventions, the EIF combines country ownership, inclusive governance, institutional alignment, coordinated implementation and results-based management within a single partnership framework.

The EIF's value proposition is further reinforced by its alignment with internationally agreed development commitments, notably the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs (2022–2031). SDG target 8.a calls for increased Aid for Trade support to developing countries, particularly LDCs, including through the EIF. The Doha Programme of Action renews the commitment to double LDCs' share of global exports by 2031 and recognises the EIF's role in strengthening their trade capacity (paragraph 174).

At its core, the comparative advantage of the EIF rests on five mutually reinforcing pillars.

A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP BRINGING TOGETHER LDCS, FUNDING PARTNERS AND PARTNER AGENCIES

The EIF is a multi-stakeholder partnership that brings together LDC governments, funding partners and partner agencies. It offers funding partners an established platform through which they can leverage the expertise, networks and operational capacities of multiple institutions alongside their own funding, while supporting a common, country-driven development agenda. It complements specialised technical assistance provided by other agencies by placing individual interventions within wider national priorities and coordinated country programmes.

STRONG COUNTRY OWNERSHIP AND ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Country ownership is a defining principle of the EIF. Its interventions are designed to respond to national trade and investment priorities identified by LDC governments through consultation, rather than to externally defined funding opportunities or institutional mandates.

The EIF offers a structured mechanism for translating national priorities into a coherent programmatic approach through its Country Programme Documents. It enables funding partners to invest in a country-defined development agenda rather than supporting disconnected projects, thereby strengthening relevance, national commitment, continuity and the sustainability of results.

The EIF's country-level implementation model, anchored in the National Implementation Units (NIUs), is designed to embed trade-related support within national institutions —typically ministries responsible for trade and strengthen the capacity of governments to coordinate and implement their own development priorities.



INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND SHARED STRATEGIC OVERSIGHT

The EIF's governance architecture provides a framework for collective decision-making, strategic direction and accountability at the global level.

The EIF Executive Board brings together LDC representatives, funding partners and partner agencies. Voting membership is held by LDCs and funding partners, while partner agencies participate as observers, contributing their technical expertise and operational perspectives.

This enables funding partners to engage not only as financiers but also as strategic partners in shaping priorities, monitoring performance and strengthening the effectiveness of trade-related development assistance.

CONVENING POWER AND VISIBILITY OF PARTNERS

The EIF's convening power brings together public institutions, investors and industry leaders to build partnerships and advance shared priorities.

Its platform raises partners' visibility by showcasing their expertise and contributions across its network.

Contributions to the EIF Trust Fund also provide funding partners with recognition and opportunities to strengthen cooperation with LDCs.

VALUE FOR MONEY THROUGH TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

The EIF places strong emphasis on results, transparency, accountability and the effective use of resources.

Its approach seeks to link financial inputs and interventions to measurable outcomes and sustainable development impact.

The introduction of AURA, the EIF's new management information system, strengthens this commitment.

Together with the EIF's country-owned partnership model, AURA provides a stronger basis for demonstrating value for money—not simply through expenditure efficiency, but through the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of development outcomes.



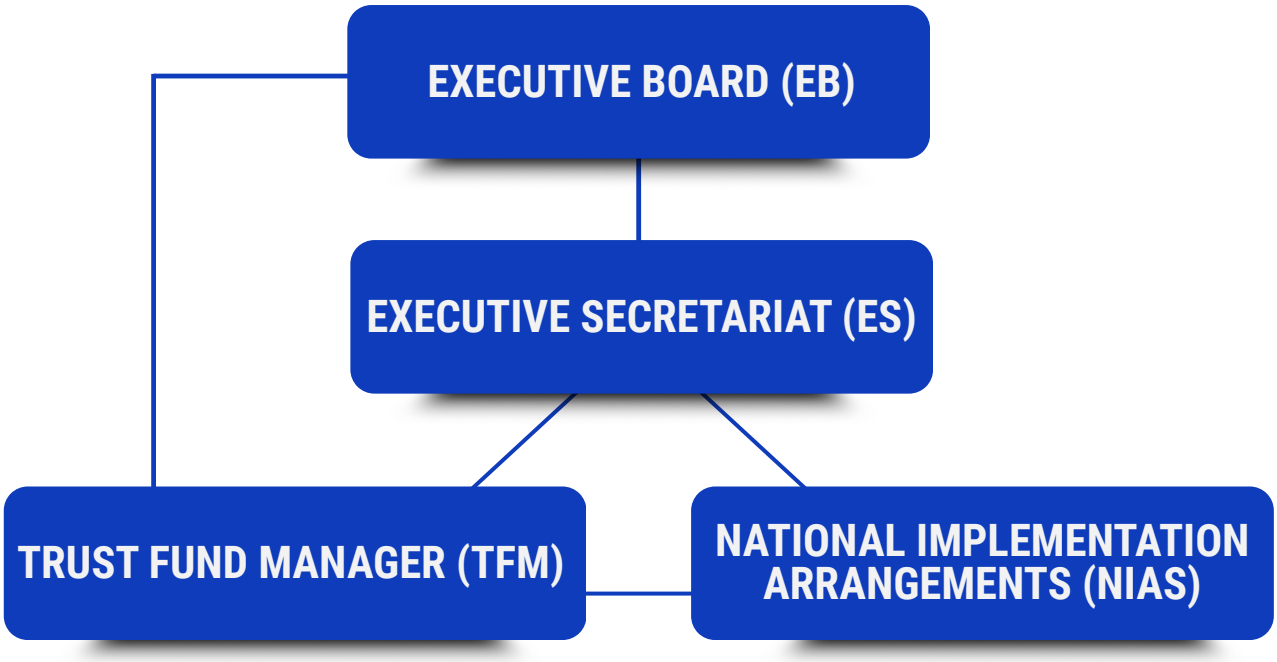
WHY TRUST AND INVEST IN THE EIF

The EIF is an established partnership with a strong track record in mobilising resources and delivering programmes driven by national ownership.

Investing in the EIF helps LDCs expand trade, attract investment and create decent jobs.

Phase Three builds on this foundation with a catalytic approach to unlock additional finance, scale successful interventions and amplify results for beneficiaries, delivering greater value for money for both funders and LDCs.

ORGANIGRAM OF THE EIF GOVERNANCE



EIF PARTNER AGENCIES

International Monetary Fund (IMF)
International Trade Centre (ITC)
UN 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 (UN Tourism)

EIF TRUST FUND MANAGER

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)



THANK YOU TO THE EIF PHASE THREE FUNDERS!

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