

# GLOBAL FORUM

ON INCLUSIVE  
TRADE FOR LDCs



## 2018 OUTCOME STATEMENT

Acting on inclusive trade for LDCs



**13–14 June 2018**

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION GENEVA

#EIFGLOBALFORUM2018 #INCLUSIVETRADE4LDCS

# HIGHLIGHTS + THEMATIC ACTION



More than **300** participants



from more than **50** countries



in **11** plenaries and panels



with approximately **45%** of speakers from LDCs



examining **3** action areas and **4** themes



and **2** strategic partnership launches



alongside **11** partner exhibitions



sending over **1,000** Tweets from the Forum and making more than **8.5 million** impressions



contributing to over **20 articles** about the event and its participants on EIF's Trade for Development News



making it into **24** external media stories in outlets such as Devex, reaching over **2.9 million readers**



with partners calling on global leaders to substantially **increase their support** for trade development in LDCs and the Enhanced Integrated Framework



and **1 first-of-its-kind Call to Action** for inclusive trade in LDCs.

*A diverse range of people – from ministers to business leaders to farm managers – came together at the Global Forum on Inclusive Trade for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The Forum, which was held from 13 to 14 June 2018 at the World Trade Organization (WTO), fostered practical solutions, offered results-oriented theoretical discussions, presented on-the-ground successes, and supported an innovative call to ramp up actions on inclusive trade for LDCs.*

## THEMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The Forum provided dynamic, diverse spaces along four themes:

### INFORM

Discussions ranged from the just-launched African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to the future of multilateral trade for the world's poorest countries to the particular issues facing less-connected island nations. The Forum cultivated the ready exchange of information – and discussants came up with ideas for scalable actions.

At the plenary on 'Forging new paths for LDCs in multilateral and regional trade', participants brainstormed on youth-centred solutions for development. These include giving young people in LDCs access to education about trade and business, connecting them with the private sector, and providing skills training, especially on technology – all to give youth a competitive edge. Youth are the key, discussants agreed, and they need good, reliable jobs.

### CONNECT

For the first time, representatives from more than 40 LDCs – including 23 partner organizations and governments – came together to act for inclusive trade. One particular area of interest was the agriculture and trade nexus and its massive potential for sustained impact. 'Connecting' was the key word in these conversations – connecting the two sectors, connecting the ministries involved, connecting farmers to markets, and connecting markets to buyers.

This drawing of necessary connections and networks reached well beyond the walls of the WTO. During the 18-hour event, people from Australia to Oman to the United States joined the livestream of the discussions, the event hashtag trended at #1 in Geneva and in Switzerland, and people engaged across the Forum's themes and around the globe.

### ACT

At the Forum's Closing Ceremony, a group of esteemed LDC attendees made a united call: for inclusive trade action for LDCs, to highlight the need for action to leverage trade to fight poverty and in support of the multilateral trading system to support LDCs in global markets. This Call to Action is a first, and promises to benefit the citizens of LDCs and develop a trading system that depends on them.

### EMPOWER

At the Dragons' Den, 'empowerment' was the refrain of the hour, with three women from LDC businesses taking centre stage. Their unique presentations – enlivened by their expertise, examples of market-based results and their evident joy in their chosen fields – reversed the usual panel politics. These entrepreneurs combined evidence and passion to make their case for the 'dragons' to back up real-world investment opportunities in Samoa's coconut oil-based products, crops that support Bhutanese youth, and Malawi's groundnuts.

# ON THE FIRST GLOBAL FORUM

The Forum was a first-of-its-kind event exclusively dedicated to achieving inclusive trade in the world's poorest nations. LDC status is determined by a combination of three factors: per capita income, human assets like education and nutrition, and economic vulnerability. Despite strong efforts to incorporate LDCs into the global trading system, there is a widening trade gap, and more efforts are needed.

At the event's Opening Ceremony, more than 300 in-person participants joined then Vice President and Minister of Women's Affairs for The Gambia Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang, UK Permanent Representative to the WTO Julian Braithwaite, and UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi, among others, to speak about the need to support LDCs. An introductory video by WTO Director General Roberto Azevêdo kicked off two days of focused discussions. Panellists agreed that while there is often a focus on the challenges facing LDCs, a pivot is needed to also look at the many opportunities that trade offers.

*"Action is needed to build synergies and strong partnerships. Action is needed to fight poverty around the world, taking into consideration the significant contributions of women and youth entrepreneurs. Action is needed to foster inclusive trade."*

– Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang,  
then Vice President and Minister  
of Women's Affairs, The Gambia

Speakers recognized that investments in LDCs are on the decline, and global uncertainties, whether trade or politics or climactic, impact LDCs more. That precariousness means that new, alternate and diverse methods are required to meet LDC



▲ People and organizations beyond the Forum engaged over the two days, including this Maersk tweet about the LDC infrastructure in Africa discussion.



▲ The forum hashtag trending on Twitter in the Geneva area during the forum

# BUILDING INCLUSIVE TRADE

*'Inclusivity' was the theme across the two days, and targeted panels took this concept to the next level. The specific issues that LDCs face – from getting to the point of graduation to strategizing for female-led businesses amidst informal economic structures – were explored by representatives of LDCs, who led the discussions.*

At the session titled 'Making the connections between inclusive trade, economic growth and LDC graduation', panellists referred to the diversity across LDCs and the strict graduation criteria, and also to the difficulties countries face after they have graduated. Economic vulnerability in a precarious world system was a key theme, as were concerns around a reduction in development assistance and maintaining economic movement.

Cashews in The Gambia was the focus of an EIF video that kicked off the 'Talking trade strategies for small businesses, women and youth' session. The success story inspired panellists to share their own countries' challenges and opportunities in bringing inclusive trade to women, youth and entrepreneurs who don't have access to finance and markets. These include taking into consideration the informal sector (which can form up to 90% of LDC's economies), building technical skills through vocational training, and encouraging women and youth to take the plunge in business and trade.

*"The LDC paradigm has to be revisited, taking into account new contextual reality and trends. In order to help them, we need to reconsider them."*

*– Debapriya Bhattacharya,  
Chair of the LDC IV Monitor and  
Distinguished Fellow,  
Centre for Policy Dialogue*

*"Graduation is very country-specific. We can have broad parameters, but the challenges have to be addressed in a very country-specific manner."*

*– Shishir Priyadarshi, Director of the Development  
Division, WTO*





# LDC LEADERS UNITE IN CALL TO ACTION



*The Forum featured an important LDC Call to Action, a unified voice on the need to better support trade for development in LDCs. The then Vice President of The Gambia launched the call during the Forum's Opening Ceremony, with support from ministers from the Central African Republic, Malawi and Uganda.*

Over the next two days, participants fleshed out its content through discussion and debate to ensure the Call to Action encompasses the concerns of all LDCs. At the Closing Ceremony of the Forum, four dignitaries echoed the united call: the Vice President and Minister of Women's Affairs Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang of The Gambia, Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Central African Republic H.E. Hassan Come, Minister of State for Trade of Uganda Werikhe Michael Kafabusa, and Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism of Malawi Henry Amon Robin Mussa. It is a call for inclusive trade action for LDCs, a call to highlight the need for action to leverage trade to fight poverty, and a call in favour of the multilateral trading system to support LDCs in global markets.

This collective statement affirms the role of trade as an engine for sustainable growth and commits to inclusive trade policies that support women, small businesses and youth.

Their call asserts that now is the time to further integrate LDCs into an inclusive trading world, and they invited the global community to work with them to support trade for development. They committed to continue leading and driving their trade agendas and to work with the EIF, referencing EIF's unique role in coordination and mobilizing efforts for inclusive trade.



# CALL TO ACTION

## 2018 GLOBAL FORUM ON INCLUSIVE TRADE FOR LDCs

- 1. We, the Vice President of The Gambia, Minister of Commerce and Industry for the Central African Republic, Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism for Malawi, and Minister of State for Trade for Uganda, highlight the need for action to leverage trade to fight poverty, recognising that trade is an engine for inclusive and sustainable economic growth.*
- 2. We note that the global community increasingly recognizes the benefits of investing in trade, with trade playing a key role in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and EIF the only programme specifically mentioned in Goal 8, highlighting its mandate as a mechanism to channel resources to LDCs. With SDG 17.11 aiming to double LDCs' share of world exports, echoing the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) and with the IPOA charting a strategy for sustainable and inclusive LDC growth and calling for half of the LDCs to meet the graduation criteria by 2020, the time to act is now.*
- 3. We come together at the Global Forum on Inclusive Trade for LDCs to enhance LDCs' participation in global trade. We are committed to supporting a strong and inclusive rules-based multilateral trading system and to further strengthen support for LDCs to enhance their position in global and regional markets.*
- 4. To support inclusive trade, we are committed to increasing our domestic resources, and pledge to design trade policies that are both pro-poor and inclusive. We are dedicated to fostering policies that help sustain productive capacities in LDCs, especially for small businesses, women and youth.*
- 5. However, we believe that the LDCs' share of global trade cannot be significantly increased without additional resources from donors and the private sector. The EIF is important in mobilizing efforts to achieve inclusive trade through a focus on strengthened government capacity for trade mainstreaming, Aid for Trade coordination, addressing critical supply chain constraints, harnessing the potential of innovation and technology, and creating favourable business environments for attracting investment.*
- 6. As partners with the EIF, we commit to taking concrete steps and joint actions to use trade to sustain policy environments, build productive capacity, achieve sustainability of results, consolidate growth, reduce poverty and promote shared prosperity. We value the EIF support, provided by its donors, for LDCs to own and implement a trade agenda conducive to sustainable economic growth. Accordingly, we call on the international community to increase its support to the EIF, so we continue to strive to ensure that trade works for everyone following the principle of leaving no LDC behind.*

*H.E. Vice President Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang, The Gambia  
H.E. Minister Hassan Come, Central African Republic  
H.E. Minister Henry Amon Robin Mussa, Malawi  
H.E. Minister of State for Trade Werikhe Michael Kafabusa, Uganda*

# AGENDA

2018 GLOBAL FORUM ON INCLUSIVE TRADE FOR LDCSA

## Wednesday, 13 June

## Thursday, 14 June

08h15-09h15	REGISTRATION	REGISTRATION
09h30-10h30	📍 CR <b>PLENARY Minding the trade gap: What lies ahead for LDCs</b>	📍 CR <b>PLENARY Dragons' Den: Bright ideas for inclusive trade development in LDCs</b>
10h30-10h45	📍 CR SHORT BREAK OUTSIDE CR	📍 CR SHORT BREAK OUTSIDE CR
10h45-12h15	📍 CR <b>PLENARY Forging new paths for LDCs in multilateral and regional trade</b>	📍 CR <b>Free trade in Africa: How can LDCs benefit?</b>   📍 S3 <b>Acting strategically to scale up LDC trade integration in the Asia-Pacific</b>
12h15-14h15	📍 A LUNCH & KNOWLEDGE-SHARING ACTIVITIES <b>12h30: MoU signing, EIF and Commonwealth Secretariat</b>	📍 A LUNCH & KNOWLEDGE-SHARING ACTIVITIES <b>12h30: MoU signing, EIF and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)</b>
14h15-15h45	📍 W <b>Agriculture and trade – a winning combination?</b>   📍 CR <b>The Trade Facilitation Agreement: What does it mean for LDCs?</b>	📍 CR <b>Strengthening inclusive agribusiness for export growth</b>   📍 W <b>Making the connection between inclusive trade, economic growth and LDC graduation</b>
15h45-16h00	📍 A BREAK & KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PAVILION ACTIVITIES	📍 A BREAK & KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PAVILION ACTIVITIES
16h00-17h30	📍 CR <b>PLENARY Talking trade strategies for small businesses, women and youth</b>	📍 CR <b>Closing ceremony: Continuing the conversation</b>
17h30-17h45	SHORT BREAK	
17h45-19h00	📍 G <b>Welcome Reception: Celebrating the call to action</b>	

### Session theme guide:

- INCLUSIVE TRADE & ECONOMIC GROWTH
- MULTILATERAL & REGIONAL TRADING SYSTEMS
- GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS

### Session room guide

- 📍 W :Room W
- 📍 A : Atrium
- 📍 CR : Council Room
- 📍 S3:Room S3
- 📍 G : Gallery

# DRAGONS' DEN: BRIGHT IDEAS FOR INCLUSIVE TRADE IN LDCs



- Alberta Vitale, Associate Director of Women in Business Development in Samoa, spoke of her country's organic coconut oil products, which are sourced from 796 certified growers in 183 villages across the island. The industry employs traditional and new knowledge in its product development, but it remains isolated from international markets. Instead of seeing this as an obstacle, Vitale shared how it can be an opportunity to engage with vulnerable communities and ensure the products meet the highest quality standards, given the growing global demand for coconut oil. Her pitch aimed at increasing production capacity and accessing new markets. The 'dragons' asked her about standards and quality assurance, the key inclusivity question of women's roles, and from her buyer The Body Shop, how much more could they obtain by scaling up her business.
- Damchae Den, Executive Director of the Bhutan Association of Women Entrepreneurs, shared the challenges associated with her country's particular geographic location, as well as climate change. She pitched a project in Thimphu that offers two-year apprenticeships for youth to learn in four sectors, with a focus of remaining mindful of their environment and of their impact on the world. There is potential in organic foods, she said, and her program offers technical skills to grow herbs, turmeric, mushrooms and more – with the promise of collective happiness for her students and those they work with. Dem faced off against questions on Bhutan's export goals, young people's scepticism toward agriculture jobs, medium-term sustainability and the public-private partnership, and the specifics of what would be available for purchase.
- Betty Chinyamunyu, CEO of the National Smallholders' Farmers Association of Malawi, pitched an innovative project that improves farmers' production capacity and gives them access to markets. Her story is of the transformation from farmer to entrepreneur to change-agent. Participating farmers have more than doubled their yields, reduced post-harvest losses and exported regionally, and incomes have increased threefold. They want to produce even more fair trade items such as organic nuts, and to create value-added items like peanut butter for export. She confronted questions about farming risks to crops, the viability of niche markets, financing and partnerships, and whether their agriculture was climate-smart, considering Malawi's climate change-related issues.

# REPOSITIONING LDCs IN MULTILATERAL AND REGIONAL TRADE

*During our current period of global trade upheaval, this topic is particularly relevant for LDCs. Joost Pauwelyn, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, set the stage on the first morning with an analogy that compares world trade to a pack of wolves – with LDCs in the middle of the fight.*

Pauwelyn cited an UNCTAD report statistic that Foreign Direct Investment dropped by 24% last year and that global value chains are stagnating. What are LDCs to do? He urged the LDC representatives in the room to push for what they want, and encouraged all trade-centred and trade-associated participants to move from ideological trade agendas to data-driven ones, from the abstract to the concrete.

Panellists Arancha Gonzalez, Executive Director, ITC, and Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, spoke of opportunities on the ground to support small businesses, and discussants mentioned the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the central topic of the ‘Free trade in Africa: How can LDCs benefit?’ panel. Speakers broke down the details of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, which entered into force last year, in ‘The Trade Facilitation Agreement: What does it mean for LDCs?’ panel. The presentations explored the particulars of these topics and emphasized that the focus needs to be on political will and implementation, as well as efforts from the private sector.

*“Everybody in this room has a choice. We can either continue along the path we have now and we can drown separately, or we can swim together. And I’m for swimming together... I hope we’ll all swim.”*

*– Patricia Scotland,  
Secretary-General of the  
Commonwealth of Nations*

*“Let me start by thanking [EIF] for having put LDCs in the trade scene. Because if you watch television or you listen to the radio or you look at your iPad, you would think that trade today is a matter of four or five big guys fighting like dogs, with lots of other countries just watching.”*

*– Arancha Gonzalez, Executive Director,  
International Trade Centre (ITC)*





## AGRICULTURE AND TRADE, A WINNING COMBINATION

*With two engaging panels devoted to the Forum action area ‘global agricultural value chains’, participants emphasized the need to recognize the role of agriculture as a driver of trade and inclusive value chain development in LDCs.*

During the Opening Ceremony, Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Central African Republic Hassan Come stated that his country has an abundance of natural resources, but that they are underutilized. “We can only harness that potential through trade,” he said.

Cross-sectoral partnerships and alignment across agriculture and trade ministries are needed, noted a number of the discussants in the ‘Agriculture and trade – a winning combination?’ session. Participants recognized that Africa’s potential needs to be unlocked, including through better aligning agriculture programmes and budgets with trade-related priorities. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), highlighted FAO’s commitment to work with EIF to achieve these objectives. Others highlighted ways to leverage regional trade, such as through the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), as well as to increase engagement across stakeholders, such as through FAO. Zambia shared innovations underway to develop closer alignment in agriculture and trade.

Continuing this theme, growth in the sector needs to be driven by market demands. At the ‘Strengthening inclusive agribusiness for export growth’ discussion, The Body Shop’s Heather Ducharme spoke of their demand-driven sourcing and supply chain development programmes. Panellists

discussed the many faces and opportunities for adding value in agribusiness and how to generate scale. Trish Kabi of Alosang Enterprise in Lesotho shared her experience in growing, packaging and marketing high-value agriculture products, which are generating scores of new jobs for the country. Likewise, Said Salime explained how Comoros is adding value by successfully targeting high-quality product markets, like Japan.

*“This is a defining moment for Africa. We have an opportunity. We need to leave a legacy for our future generations, who will benefit from the sustainable business models we put in place today.”*

– Matiti Trish Kabi, Alosang Enterprise, Lesotho

*“If we look at why trade amongst ourselves isn’t growing, we discover the bottlenecks. We always blame infrastructure, but [there are] also other factors on the soft side that are fragmenting supply chains and stopping the flow of products.”*

– Martha Byanyima, Coordinator of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Unit at the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA)



# GLOBAL REACH: IN THE GLOBAL TRADING SPACE, REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD

## PARTICIPANTS

The Global Forum hosted a truly international group of experts, with more than **300 in-person participants** from the WTO, Geneva, and other European locales, and **from more than 40 LDCs** – from Cabo Verde and Nepal to the Solomon Islands and Lesotho.

On YouTube, the livestreamed sessions drew in over **200 users over two days**, from the Congo to Cambodia, from Sudan to Switzerland.

On Facebook Live, the livestreams were **viewed over 1,300 times** around the world.



## MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Coverage of the Forum included stories in international, regional and local media, including Devex's 'Using trade as a tool for development', AllAfrica's 'African Nations Pledge to Use Trade to Reduce Poverty', the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation's 'Malawi shares trade developments at the EIF Global Forum', and New Business Ethiopia's 'Geneva panel reflects on benefits Africa's free trade area'.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

The event hashtag #EIFGlobalForum2018 was

- featured in **1,134 tweets**
- from **294 people**
- making over **8.5 million impressions** in Twitter feeds around the world

*"We need to foster trade development in our countries, as trade is the best weapon to fight poverty. And, importantly, that action will include women, who are so often part of informal economies."*

*– Her Royal Highness Abze Djigma,  
Mossi Princess, Burkina Faso*

*"The EIF Global Forum succeeded in exposing the numerous, often complex constraints and opportunities that affect LDCs' ability to trade at the regional and international levels and to remain competitive on a level playing field, which ultimately benefits all countries and consumers – not only LDCs."*

*– Forum participant*

*"The fact that the agenda of inclusive trade should not be working in a vacuum is an idea that came out clearly."*

*– Ratnakar Adhikari,  
Executive Director, EIF*



## WE HEAR YOU!

*By including focused time for audience and social media-driven questions in each session, and through our participant surveys, EIF is listening to you as we move into the future and its work with LDCs.*

*"A well-designed and well-executed Global Forum for LDCs. Lets take the work a notch higher by focusing EIF support on creating capacity to utilize opportunities in the AfCFTA."*

*– Forum participant*

*"The Partners Hub was a very useful way for the World Bank Group to reach out to our LDC clients, inform them about our product offerings and country interventions, and – perhaps most importantly – to listen to their stated priorities in matters of trade-related technical assistance and capacity strengthening. The Hub also allowed for very fruitful interaction with the representatives of major donors attending the Forum."*

*– Pierre Sauvé, Senior Trade Specialist,  
World Bank Group*

*"I think the global big picture was missing – US/China trading relations and impacts on the rest of the world. Brexit. These are daily in the media headlines but not really mentioned. The section on Africa trade agreements was very interesting, but the multilateral response was not really sufficient. How can the development machinery support trade for inclusive development is a good question – for next time!"*

*– Forum participant*

*We take your constructive feedback seriously. Below is a representative selection of feedback for us to reflect on, digest and incorporate into our future events.*

*"Firstly, I think EIF proved that there is value in this type of conversation, which feels very new in the development space. How can the momentum raised be built upon and brought into mainstream debates in the future? The insights raised need to reach a wider audience. But it was an excellent step on that journey."*

*– Forum participant*

*"The structure of the Forum content was alright, but I think next time there should be joint sessions for all LDCs instead of breaking them up according to their regions, for instance Africa and Asia, etc. This will help to get insights of what is going on in the other regions to develop trade."*

*– Forum participant*

*"Timing could be improved as it is not enough for the participants to ask questions to panellists. More time allocated for question and answer session."*

*– Forum participant*

*"All sessions, featured great learnings and experiences... The selection of panelists should be balanced. There were very little numbers of representative from the Caribbean and Pacific in the first day sessions."*

*– Forum participant*

# PHOTO EXHIBITION

The EIF works with people at all levels and stages of the trade landscape, from weavers and harvesters to policymakers and ministers. At the Forum and throughout the WTO, a selection of photos from LDCs was presented, showing that the shape trade takes is as varied as the geographies, and as diverse as the kinds of labour that women and men across the globe do.

All centred on the idea of inclusivity, the images were presented along the themes of partnership, agriculture and trade, and a story from the small three-island nation of Comoros and its scented ylang-ylang.

Photos this page © Ollivier Girard/EIF



*The Global Forum on Inclusive Trade for LDCs is the first event for LDCs dedicated to achieving equitable trade benefits for all.*



*The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is the only multilateral partnership dedicated exclusively to assisting Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in their use of trade as an engine for growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.*

#### EIF TRUST FUND MANAGER

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

#### 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

World Trade Organization (WTO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

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#### ADDITIONAL FORUM SPONSORS



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