



Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF)

Supporting least developed countries for a better integration into world trade.

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. The EIF partnership of 51 countries, 24 donors and 8 partner agencies works closely with governments, development organizations, civil society and academia. Together, they leverage their collective know-how, reach and reputation to tackle the world's most pressing trade-for-development issues.

Rationale

The insufficient integration of least developed countries (LDC) in global trade remains a challenge for the international community. Despite an increase of LDC participation in global trade since the turn of the century, LDCs' share in world trade has remained below 1% since 2008. At the same time, the share of developing countries' trade continues to grow, reflecting the 21st century trend of an increasingly strong position of developing countries in world trade.

LDCs, however, have not been able to catch up on to this trend and are at risk of being left further behind. Most LDCs remain considerably limited in their trade capacity due to weak institutional, regulatory and policy capacity, poor business climate and limited private sector capability. In view of strengthening LDCs' integration in world trade, the need to face these supply-side constraints in LDCs remains pressing.

Objectives and activities

The EIF started in 2008 with the objective to promote LDCs' integration into global trade. Through critical diagnostic analysis, institutional and policy support, capacity development and coordination mechanism-building, the EIF helps LDCs' governments to mainstream trade into their national development strategies and eliminate supply-side constraints to international trade. EIF's projects include support to producers, training of officials to develop and implement home-grown trade agendas and capacity building among small businesses – many of which are owned by women. Under the Strategic Plan 2019-2022, the EIF puts a stronger focus on women's economic empowerment, youth employment and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Further, it increases its investments in trade facilitation for goods and services, regional and global value chains (GVCs) and technology and innovation.

SECO country/region

Global

Main funding partners (Phase 2)

Australia, Denmark, Estonia, EU Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Norway, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland (SECO), UK

Implementing partners

WTO, ITC, UNCTAD, WBG, IMF, UNDP, UNIDO, UNWTO

Duration

2016-2024

Total budget

USD 136.7 million
(with a target of USD 150 million)

SECO contribution (Phase 2)

USD 2 million



Governance Structure

The governance of the EIF is shared among all three constituencies of the EIF partnership – EIF countries, donors and partner agencies – through the EIF Steering Committee and the EIF Board. The management of the EIF programme and the Trust Fund is supported and ensured by the EIF Executive Secretariat and the EIF Trust Fund Manager.

The main executing agencies are the EIF partner and founding agencies: World Trade Organization (WTO), International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), World Bank Group (WBG), International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The EIF provides country-specific support to 46 LDCs and five graduated LDCs (Cabo Verde, Maldives, Samoa, Equatorial Guinea and Vanuatu). The activities of the EIF are organized through two focal areas: the first seeks to improve policy and institutional environments for trade and investment; and the second to build productive capacity in the LDCs. Where possible, the EIF is increasingly combining analytical, institutional, and productive capacity aspects of trade development interventions for a greater impact, including through harnessing dynamics in regional trade. Further, a growing demand from the LDCs to address cross-cutting topics has enabled the EIF to initiate calls for projects supporting trade and women's economic empowerment, investment, small business development, youth employment, e-commerce and harnessing the potential of technology.

Results so far

Since 2008, the EIF has delivered the following results:

- Over \$232 million USD invested in LDCs between 2008 and 2021.
- 44 new regulations supporting trade and investment adopted in EIF-supported LDCs.
- Trade integrated into National Development Plans in 46 countries, enabling the anchoring of trade priorities and increasing coordination between ministries across government.
- Over \$468 million USD in new exports generated, through 159 new international market linkages.
- Stronger institutional coordination for trade: 45 EIF countries have established trade coordination mechanisms, public-private coordination mechanisms as well as sector strategies integrating trade.
- Enhanced use of digital tools across LDCs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, with 62 e-commerce initiatives and 74 new technologies introduced through EIF projects.
- Training of over 148,000 people in value chain practices, almost 60% of whom are women and the majority of whom are smallholder farmers.
- Over 13,000 micro, small and medium sized enterprises have been supported through EIF projects.
- Additional resources for LDCs and trade generated with over \$107 million of additional resources secured through co-financing of EIF projects.

How to get involved

LDCs governments submit requests for funding to the EIF Secretariat through project proposals that they have developed on the basis of the priorities identified in the EIF Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies. Different tools are available on the EIF website to support LDCs in the elaboration of their requests. The EIF's unique approach guarantees full LDC ownership, which is reflected in their co-financing of the majority of EIF projects.

Further information and contact details

EIF website and contact: www.enhancedif.org / [EIF.secretariat@wto.org](mailto: EIF.secretariat@wto.org)
EIF Information at SECO: [info.wehu.cooperation@seco.admin.ch](mailto: info.wehu.cooperation@seco.admin.ch)

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