

ITC contribution to the Report of the Secretary General to GA-71 on Follow-up to and implementation of the SAMOA Pathway

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The International Trade Centre (ITC) has undertaken a series of actions to implement the commitments and partnerships launched at the Third International Conference on SIDS held in Samoa in 2014.

Supporting small and medium sized enterprises to enter value chains and internationalise, and use trade as a tool for poverty eradication and for development is a fundamental mandate of the ITC.

ITC puts the spotlight on **entrepreneurship and competitiveness** of SMEs because, as recognized by paragraph 27 (e) of the SAMOA Pathway, this is a means to foster inclusive sustained economic growth and employment. For SIDS, given their limited domestic market, the companies and SMEs have to focus on harnessing regional and global demand for their products and services. This is where ITC's work on helping SMEs to internationalize plays a major role in the Caribbean, African and Pacific SIDS.

Under the **Alliances for Action** approach, ITC is working in partnership with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) in 11 countries in the Caribbean – **Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago** – with the aim to promote competitiveness and income-risk diversification for smallholder farmers and SMEs across the Caribbean while improving commercial linkages and targeting several product-market combinations. The project “Coconut Industry Development for the Caribbean” is part of an European Union-funded ‘intra-

ACP' programme that seeks to promote increased trade, value-addition and production across the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States.

Coconut and associated products market trends offer tremendous opportunity to local agribusiness industries the Caribbean. There are untapped opportunities for thousands of smallholder farmers and SMEs to raise incomes and profitability by connecting them to local, regional and international value chains and by developing required productive and marketing capacities. The **Alliances for Action** model engages smallholder farmers and MSMEs in order to manage risk and facilitate networks that provide the required technical expertise and targets catalytical investment to address systemic challenges. Business modelling is undertaken with farmer associations to combine coconut tree planting with other crops and value added products that can provide a stable income stream until coconut trees provide marketable crops. Work is undertaken in partnership with financing institutions, policymakers and buyers on measures to reduce the perceived risks and align policies to support farmer led organizations and alliances partners in the expansion of coconut production and commercialization.

In **Saint Lucia**, ITC worked with the Trade Export and Promotion Agency of Saint Lucia (TEPA) and local TISI's to enhance the country's trade competitiveness and support Saint Lucian SMEs. Between 80 and 100 enterprises benefited from the exporter capacity-building programme. Enterprises operating in the sector covered by the "**Tastes of Saint Lucia**" initiative were the main beneficiaries from the assistance provided to comply with its labelling and packaging requirements (30-50 enterprises). The programme followed the logic of an exporting step-by-step guide for Saint Lucian enterprises and covered the most relevant thematic areas that a company engaged in exports needs to be well acquainted with, including market research, supply chain management, quality, marketing and branding, labelling, packing and packaging, logistics, transactions, legal aspects of trade and export finance. An enhanced version of the "Tastes of

Saint Lucia” brand was developed with the help of the ITC marketing team. A logo design study was undertaken **before April 2017** to help select the best option for new Taste of Saint Lucia brand. The project ended in December 2017.

In Africa, the partnership between ITC, UNDP and the Government of **Comoros** established in 2014 is highly contributing to the implementation of paragraph 107 (d) of SAMOA Pathway related to trade. The project funded by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) aims at improving the competitiveness of the three traditional export sectors vanilla, cloves and ylang-ylang for boosting exports. The project is strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of producers and exporters to play a more active role in the commercialization of their products on international markets and to take better advantage of international trade benefits. In **April and May 2018**, ITC has organized study trips to Madagascar for two delegations of Comorian producers of the targeted cash crops. During their field visits, they have discovered how the successful industry in Madagascar operates and brought back valuable knowledge to fully exploit the potential for trade of Comorian vanilla, ylang-ylang and cloves.

Additionally, ITC is partnering with other EIF partners, namely UNDP, UNIDO and UNCTAD, in project formulation activities in **Guinea Bissau** and **São Tomé and Príncipe** to respond in a coordinated fashion to the needs identified in their Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies DTIS to advance their trade efforts for sustainable development.

In the Pacific, under projects funded by the EU, ITC is helping to increase incomes of poor communities and enterprises in **Fiji** by improving key support services in the crop agriculture and livestock sectors. In these projects ITC has applied its market-led value chain development approach, which is based around building efficient and inclusive platforms for **alliances for action** with equitable international buyers, national processor-exporters, clusters of farmers, farm, trade, research and business development support services, policy-makers,

government and international development agencies. Engaging this mix of stakeholders has led to innovative and pragmatic ideas to improve quality compliance with market requirements and develop new “speciality” products aimed at market niches that are attractive for low volume producers like most SIDS. In 2015, ITC launched a geo-mapping and profiling tool that is also linked with mobile applications for improving development activity coordination, mass communications and supply chain organisation. Now, more than 11,000 farmers are in the database and visible on Google and Open Street maps.

In line with paragraph 30 of the SAMOA Pathway, ITC has ramped up its work on **tourism**. ITC and UNWTO have entered a strategic partnership to aggregate the two organizations’ resources and competencies and to share perspectives in the process of rethinking a joint approach to Aid for Trade (AfT) in tourism. The partnership also aims at having a more integrated and innovative approach of tourism development for inclusive growth, leading to the achievement of all dimensions of sustainable development for developed countries.

Furthermore, to ensure an efficient response to the needs of such countries, ITC along with eight other UN Agencies including UNWTO, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, WTO and UNEP coordinate their efforts through the Steering Committee on Tourism for Development – SCTD, a partnership aimed at boosting tourism’s development potential for the poorest and most disadvantaged communities. In the last few years, ITC was instrumental in launching as part of the SCTD joint initiatives in some SIDS, including **Cape Verde**.

Supporting the implementation of SAMOA Pathway priority area on **gender equality and women’s empowerment**, ITC is implementing the three partnerships launched during the SIDS Conference in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Samoa. As part of the Women and Trade programme, these

partnerships (supported with funding from the Government of Australia) aim to help deliver increased incomes and exports for women entrepreneurs by building women's capacity to capitalize on market opportunities in formal markets and increase the economic benefits in the Pacific region.

In Papua New Guinea, ITC is supporting the crafts sector to increase market opportunities for a traditional bag made from unique hand yarn twisting and weaving techniques – the bilum. ITC connects women bilum weavers to high-end international fashion buyers with the goal of increasing their incomes and overall economic empowerment. In 2015, ITC worked with bilum-producing cooperatives from around the country to set up the Bilum Export and Promotion Association (BEPA), in partnership with Papua New Guinea government's Small and Medium Enterprises Corporation. To date, through BEPA, the project has supported the participation of 400 women producers in seven locations, in 10 capacity building activities focused on product development (colour theory, measuring tapes, making swatches, tok Bilum – the Bilum dictionary), business management (time sheets and pricing, understanding supply chains), and on the role of BEPA. In 2018 ITC will continue to provide technical support and facilitate commercial linkages for BEPA members.

In Vanuatu, ITC is supporting the creation of the first Women in Export Association in Vanuatu as a mechanism to federate handicraft makers and other women entrepreneurs spread over several islands and to give them quality, standards and new product tips for international sales. In the process the association will also support other women owned tourism supported enterprises. In late 2015, ITC has already facilitated exports of a consignment of handicraft from Sanma province into Queensland, Australia.

In Samoa ITC worked to increase access to public procurement for women owned SMEs. Working in partnership with the National University of Samoa (NUS), which has been licensed to deliver ITC's proprietary training programmes, the

project trained 50 government procurement officers from six ministries on how to make their processes more accessible to women entrepreneurs. The project also trained over 50 women entrepreneurs to enable them to better bid for government contracts, supporting them to bid for six government tenders. In close collaboration with UNDP One UN and the National University of Samoa (NUS), ITC delivered a special workshop to 35 women in business on the power of social media as a business tool to open up new global market outreach for local women entrepreneurs.