

## **Sweden Speaking points at JAG July 20, 2023**

ITC is considered a long-term strategic partner for Sweden in its international development aid related to trade and we are proud being one of its major donors.

We see merit not only in XB-funding, but also as major provider of support through the Window 1, giving flexibility to ITC, and we would like to encourage other donors to provide or increase non earmarked support to ensure predictability and long-term stability for ITC, which also affects the working environment for staff and management.

Sweden wishes to highlight the importance of ITC remaining focused on the delivery target for LDCs. The current LDC delivery is expected by ITC to be 40 %, under the 45 % delivery mark set out in the Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

Committing to inclusion is essential to bridge economic and social gaps. Ensuring that vulnerable and disadvantaged groups can take part in economic activity is of highest importance in delivering on the SDGs. Sweden is a strong proponent for gender equality and is pleased to see that the SheTrades initiative continues to develop and deliver good results.

We are equally pleased to see that ITC is strengthening its efforts to reach out to refugees, IDPs and youth as well as other vulnerable groups to empower and make possible entrepreneurial opportunities for all.

Greening the economy and providing strengthened incentives for enterprises to intensify their transformation towards a circular economy is essential. Sweden is pleased to see that the “Green to compete” initiative launched in 2020, with soft earmarking from Sweden, is continuing to reach results. We would encourage other donors to step up their efforts and support to this initiative and will follow closely as it progresses.

Furthermore, Sweden would like to highlight the importance of ITC promoting a good working environment within the organisation and appreciates ITC’ efforts made so far in improving the situation, which came to the general public attention in December 2022. We are pleased to see that much needed processes and functions are now being introduced and Sweden encourage ITC to continue this important work to ensure an enabling working environment in the long-term. This is not only an issue essential for the wellbeing of the staff but also for the organisation’s abilities to keep delivering good quality work and results, benefitting our partner countries.

Lastly, I yet again want to stress the importance of Sweden’s long-term partnership with ITC and look forward to following the implementation in the coming years.