Delivering new products and reaching new markets is crucial for driving trade-led growth. Trade and investment support institutions now have access to the ITC Export Potential Map, a new tool providing timely and practical information for advising companies on which products and markets hold the greatest potential, as well as advising policymakers on which sectors are best positioned for catalysing sustainable and inclusive development.

While all countries have scope to expand their trade activities, businesses from least developed countries (LDCs) are best positioned to increase their exports as they have the highest share of untapped potential.

On average, LDCs have products with potential in 24 markets, but export to only 4. Thus, 42% of LDCs’ export potential remains untapped, corresponding to $49 billion of foregone export revenue. ITC’s Export Potential Map helps LDCs discover new opportunities and unlock their dormant potential.

A world of opportunities: exploring export potential

The Export Potential Map translates rigorous trade analysis into practical information about export opportunities. Based on an economic model that draws on trade, tariff, GDP and geographic data, the tool helps countries evaluate their potential to ramp up exports:

- for a country’s established export sectors, the Export Potential Indicator identifies markets that offer room for export growth,
- for new sectors, the Product Diversification Indicator identifies products with favourable chances of export success in regional and global markets.

The Export Potential Map provides:

- Evidence-based prioritization of sectors to inform and develop national and regional export strategies.
- Market intelligence information to help guide businesses in their export decisions.
- Strategic input for trade policy negotiations identifying promising products and target markets.

The Gambia has the potential to export nearly US$ 21 million in groundnut oil, but currently exports only a tiny fraction of this value. One of the key elements to unlocking full export potential is market diversification. The Gambia has traditionally focused on France as their prime destination market for groundnut oil exports. Thanks to large and growing demand, US$16 million of unrealized potential lies in the Chinese market. In addition, other markets in Europe could also be attractive options for market diversification due to the favourable tariff conditions they offer to Gambian exporters.

“I am convinced that the Export Potential Map will help The Gambia discover new attractive target markets for their exports, supporting the country’s active participation in international trade.”

Mr. Abdoulie Jammeh, Director of Trade, The Gambia’s Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
THE EXPORT POTENTIAL MAP AT WORK

The Export Potential Map features a user-friendly interface and innovative and customizable visualizations. All graphs can be downloaded, shared through social media and embedded into reports or websites.

Customized Services:

- Tailor-made studies present export potential results, combined with insights from ITC business surveys, trade policy analysis or employment estimates. The data can be filtered to focus on specific objectives such as linking SMEs or women-owned firms to international markets. Export potential analysis can also provide guidance on how to take advantage of regional integration for value-added product diversification.

- Country-specific Export Potential Map is a tailor-made version of the tool, with customized results to reflect the sectors and regions most relevant to a country’s export potential. Targeted analytical features and national data (if available) can be included. It can also be embedded into national websites.

Export potential analysis has helped inform a wide range of trade interventions:

- Supporting India’s Trade and Investment for Africa (ITC, 2014)
- Spotting Products with Export Potential (CBI, 2014-2015)
- Partnership for Investment and Growth for Africa (ITC, 2016-18)
- Arab-Africa Trade Bridge (ITC, 2016)
- Strengthening the Employment Impact of Sector and Trade Policies (ILO, 2016-17)
- Reconnecting Afghanistan to Global Markets (USAID, 2017)

PUBLICATIONS

The Export Potential Map is featured in these ITC publications:

Spotting products with export potential (2015)
Countries have room for export growth in non-traditional markets, according to an ITC assessment of 64 developing countries’ export opportunities in European, South-South and regional markets.

SME Competitiveness Outlook: Meeting the Standard for Trade (2016)
Country profiles for 35 countries include an export potential assessment based on existing products, as well as diversification opportunities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Export Potential Map
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Spot opportunities for trade development