Strategic Plan 2018–2021
Trade Routes to Sustainable and Inclusive Development
If the United Nations is to truly lead, it must work across organizational boundaries, harnessing the full power of its available resources, capacities and partnerships. Critical to its success will be a profound transformation of culture, and visionary and principled United Nations leadership – at all levels and across the system.

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General
# Contents

Foreword .................................................................................................................. 4  
2018-2021 at a glance ......................................................................................... 6

**Horizon 2030** ........................................................................................................ 8  
  Trade for sustainable and inclusive development .............................. 8  
  The changing trade and development landscape ......................... 10

**Trade compass** .................................................................................................. 14  
  Vision and mission ......................................................................................... 14  
  Growing to meet strong demand ........................................................... 15  
  What makes ITC unique ............................................................................ 16

**Route map** ......................................................................................................... 20  
  Our clients .................................................................................................... 20  
  Our strategic focus ....................................................................................... 23  
  Our approach ............................................................................................... 26  
  Core products and services: Integrated solutions .......................... 26

**Exploring together** ......................................................................................... 42  
  Partnering for sustainable development .............................................. 42  
  Managing for results .................................................................................... 44  
  Engaging in the global conversation .................................................... 47

Annex I: ITC results framework ................................................................. 50  
Annex II: ITC three-tier corporate scorecard ........................................ 52  
Annex III: ITC focus areas and programmes ........................................ 54
Foreword

We are living in turbulent times. Globally, we have never been better off in human and social progress. But this global progress masks huge individual differences which technological progress, geopolitical instability, extremism and climate change risk aggravating unless we close existing gaps. We have only partly achieved what we, as an international community, set out to do.

Moving forward our goal must be to leave no one behind. This is a chance we must seize through cooperation, action and determination.

*Trade Routes to Sustainable and Inclusive Development* outlines the International Trade Centre’s vision to promote good trade and sets forth our Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. **Good trade** is trade that creates positive and inclusive economic, social and environmental impact. Put simply, it is trade that helps achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This plan is evolutionary, not revolutionary. It builds on the achievements of the organization to put inclusive and sustainable trade at the heart of its work. Our recent journey gives us confidence moving forward that we are on the right path. ITC has put more emphasis on women, young entrepreneurs and displaced people as well as on a finer analysis of our client groups to target their specific needs. In post-conflict and fragile states, we have linked trade to vocational training in key export sectors, which is creating employment opportunities.

Through regional projects, we are strengthening regional value chains so that smaller businesses can more easily participate in international trade and benefit from foreign direct investment. By focusing on strengthening the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), we have helped provide opportunities to the 99% of our economies.
This strategic plan builds on our commitment to become more effective and efficient by deepening results-based management, investing in new partnerships, fostering innovation, and incorporating lessons from evaluations into our daily work.

ITC intends to capitalize on investments already made to focus on results which achieve greater impact. We will do this with a smart mix of what has worked, and a forward-looking innovative, logic that will steady us in these turbulent times.

We will leverage our funds through partnerships and engagement with the private sector. We will scale our interventions through larger, deeper and longer-term country and regional interventions. This will ensure coherence with local development plans and align our work with other actors, including the World Trade Organization and other UN agencies. We will expand the reach of our global public goods through digital platforms, partnerships with other organizations and collaboration with relevant local institutions. And we will deepen accountability because our Members’ trust is our most precious asset.

I invite you to join ITC in this endeavour. Our journey will continue beyond 2021 to chart a path to a brighter future in 2030. Walk with us. Let us shape the future together, making good trade the route to sustainable development.

Arancha González
Executive Director, International Trade Centre
### 2018-2021 at a glance

#### Horizon 2030

**Why trade?** Trade is one of the means to achieve the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda states: “International trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development.”

ITC will capitalize on development opportunities that are offered by a changing trade and development landscape. ITC’s vision is **good trade**.

#### Trade compass

**What will we achieve?** As the joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, ITC is fully dedicated to increasing the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises’ (MSMEs’) to realize international business transactions. ITC aims to grow its **extrabudgetary delivery by 18%** between 2018 and 2021 to meet demand for its services.

**Who will benefit?** ITC’s primary clients are MSMEs. At least **45%** of ITC’s client MSMEs will be **female-owned or operated**. ITC intends to reach 15,000 MSMEs annually, connect 3 million women to market, build skills of 100,000 youth and catalyze $100 million of investment deals by 2021.

**Where?** ITC will deliver at least **80%** of its country-level assistance in least developed countries (LDCs), land-locked developing countries, small-island developing states, small vulnerable economies, post-conflict and fragile states, and sub-Saharan Africa. ITC will prioritize work in the **agricultural, green economy and services sectors** as these have high potential for employment creation and inclusive growth.

**How?** To achieve its goals, ITC will have designed **20 key initiatives** across its **six focus areas** and their programmes. To leverage ITC funder investments, the organization will expand its partnerships and implement **20 efficiency and effectiveness initiatives** in seven organizational areas.

#### Route map

**Exploring together**

**With whom?** Strong partnerships are at the core of ITC’s work. ITC works with **policymakers, trade and investment support institutions, private sector and other development agencies** for the benefit of MSMEs. ITC chooses partners based on shared objectives, commitment, and partners’ recognition of ITC’s value proposition. ITC will engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships and market its work across multiple communication platforms.
A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Chinese proverb
Horizon 2030

Trade for sustainable and inclusive development

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in 2015, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the 2030 Development Agenda, entitled ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ – a shared vision to pursue three intersecting pillars of economic, environmental and social development. The 2030 Agenda aims to end extreme poverty, safeguard the environment, and build prosperous, peaceful and inclusive societies by pursuing 17 interlinked goals and 169 targets to be achieved by 2030.

Trade is explicitly recognized as one of the means to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda notes that, ‘International trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development.’ It also recognizes the role of the private sector, ‘as a partner in development, and a major driver of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation.’ Member States agreed to ‘continue to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, as well as meaningful trade liberalization.’

The 2030 Agenda frames the new International Trade Centre (ITC) Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. World Trade Organization (WTO) decisions, in particular those stemming from its Ministerial Conferences, also guide ITC’s work. As the joint technical assistance and capacity-building arm of the United Nations, through UNCTAD, and the World Trade Organization, ITC is fully dedicated to supporting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) improve their competitiveness, and use trade as a lever of growth and job creation. Globally, small businesses represent more than 90% of all enterprises and over 70% of jobs. MSMEs integrated into global markets are more productive than those that do not participate in international trade.
ITC directly contributes to several SDGs. To achieve sustained growth and jobs, ITC helps MSMEs to fully participate in regional and international value chains with products and services that meet market demands and standards. To support a more inclusive distribution of development gains, ITC works with women, youth, and marginalized groups in developing countries to empower them through entrepreneurship and skills that provide gateways to jobs and enterprise creation. It targets sectors that provide employment opportunities at scale for these groups, and helps them benefit from international trade and investment opportunities. ITC also provides global public goods in the form of trade and market intelligence.

To multiply its impact, ITC works with trade and investment support institutions (TISIs) who in turn help enterprises trade. It works with policymakers and governments to ensure that policies and strategies facilitate trade and support economic growth.

The multilateral system, including the United Nations, the WTO, and other multilateral, bilateral and non-state development actors, share responsibility for supporting countries to achieve the SDGs. ITC partners with them to ensure ‘good trade’ leads to development gains.
The changing trade and development landscape

Many factors are shaping the rapidly changing trade and development landscape. Systemic factors and wider trends impact ITC’s work by shaping development challenges for both ITC and its clients.

Trade and the 99%

Recent years have seen trade and multilateralism under stress. The impact of the 2008 financial crisis, the unequal distribution of the fruits of growth and progress, and more broadly societal changes have heightened anti-globalization and economic nationalist sentiments in some parts of the world. The search for equality and for ensuring that no one is left behind in our economies has taken a central role.

New trade routes

New trade routes are opening, which reflect not only decreased transportation costs, but also the growing importance of South-South trade and investment flows. Increasing online ‘sales-routes’ are also bringing new opportunities to MSMEs to reach foreign buyers. Expanding international and regional value chains are creating opportunities for domestic enterprises to increase their reach. However, as tariffs decrease, there has been a marked increase in non-tariff barriers which can be particularly difficult for MSMEs to overcome.

Technology driving change

The speed of change in the ‘fourth industrial revolution’ has no historical precedent. Technology and digitization are rapidly disrupting entire systems of production and consumption at the global level, with both positive and negative consequences. Jobs are disappearing in entire sectors while technology is creating new jobs and enabling some countries to leapfrog traditional development paths. A growing services sector, especially digital services, is shaping trade, production and consumption patterns. At the same time, access to technology, the internet, information and digital skills remains unequal, both within countries and among them.

Sustainable production and consumption

The threat of climate change and the increasingly influential role of consumers in how goods and services are produced, has led to a shift towards more sustainable business models. Transparency and traceability in supply chains, supported by certification of ethical and sustainable standards are fast becoming prerequisites for doing business.
Entrepreneurship as employment

Demographic changes and technological progress are impacting the nature of entrepreneurship, with an increasing number of firms being born digital and global. More and more women and youth are engaging in entrepreneurial activities, as are migrants and refugees. However, these demographic groups in particular, often struggle with lack of access to knowledge, networks, technology and finance.

From poverty to prosperity

At the heart of the 2030 Development Agenda is Goal 1, to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere. Over the past two decades, global poverty has shrunk significantly, but the pace of reduction is slowing. There has been a resurgence of poverty across regions due to economic or environmental shocks and escalating conflicts. Income disparities within countries are rising. There is also an increased recognition that poverty is multi-dimensional. Many at the base of the pyramid, including economic migrants and refugees, work in the agricultural sector and in the informal sector, characterized by low productivity and insecurity.

Data to drive intelligence

Access to data and advanced data analytics increasingly shape enterprise competitiveness, Governments and development actors can better foresee challenges and opportunities, shape strategies, understand what drives results and make improved resource allocation decisions. Accessible global public goods in the field of data and diagnostics are fundamental for achieving a level playing field.

Partnerships to enable and transform

The development ecosystem continues to evolve and reflect geo-political changes. South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation are gaining traction as models for development assistance. Official development assistance funds are increasingly earmarked for specific purposes and channelled through tenders. The private sector is increasingly motivated to invest in initiatives which can both ‘do good and lower the cost and risk of doing good business’. The private sector is becoming a powerful lever of public development assistance, as a buyer, investor, and a provider of technical knowledge and funding. New partnership platforms are emerging which combine the expertise of diverse actors to achieve multi-dimensional development outcomes.

An inclusive approach to trade will raise standards of living for everyone.
Vision without strategy is metrics.

Japanese proverb
Trade compass
Our vision and mission

Vision

Good trade.

Mission

To enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and development in developing countries, especially least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition through improving the international competitiveness of MSMEs.

Goals

To achieve ITC’s mission the goals are:

- Improved national business and trade environments for MSMEs;
- Improved performance of trade and investment support institutions to offer high-quality, sustainable business services to MSMEs;
- Improved international competitiveness of MSMEs.

Results

ITC has organized its products and services around six focus areas and associated programmes. To measure progress, ITC is using a three-tier scorecard, with Tier 1 representing the SDG perspective, Tier 2 tracking corporate outcomes and outputs, and Tier 3 monitoring the success of ITC’s corporate efficiency and effectiveness initiatives.

Annex I shows these goals, related indicators and focus areas in ITC’s theory of change. Annex II shows details of ITC’s three-tier corporate scorecard.
Growing to meet strong demand

ITC is financed through a ‘regular budget’, funded in equal parts by the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, and ‘extrabudgetary’ voluntary contributions in the form of unearmarked (‘Window I’) contributions, and earmarked (‘Window II’) funds.

ITC intends to grow to accomplish our mission and meet demand. We envisage an increase in budget, from $92 million in 2018 to $102 million in 2021 based on increased extrabudgetary contributions; better leveraging our funds; more and smarter partnerships, in particular with the private sector; and showing our value-for-money contribution to the SDGs.

Planned budget 2018-21 (in $ million)

* financial projection, December 2017

![Budget Projection Chart]

© shutterstock.com
What makes ITC unique

The joint mandate of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization

As the joint agency of the United Nations (through UNCTAD) and the WTO, ITC is fully dedicated to supporting the internationalization of MSMEs. Its mandate combines a focus on expanding trade opportunities with the aim of fostering sustainable and inclusive development.

Enterprise internationalization

ITC focuses on MSMEs as they are the backbone of the economy, creating sustainable jobs especially for women and youth. ITC is familiar with the unique needs of MSMEs, and has vast experience in improving their international competitiveness and connecting them to markets.

Working with the private sector to develop the private sector

ITC brings together public and private sector actors to help craft a conducive business environment. ITC engages the private sector in contributing to development as funders, buyers, investors and providers of technical expertise.

Nimble, adaptable, innovative

ITC is capable of rapidly changing and adapting to the needs of its partners. We believe in constant innovation and creativity to respond to demand. We embed new technologies in our project solutions and business processes wherever this can add value to our clients.

Depth of experience

ITC has a more than 50 year track record of connecting MSMEs in developing countries to value chains, offering trade intelligence, building sustainable market linkages and delivering positive development outcomes. ITC’s distinctive feature is to offer integrated solutions for increased MSME competitiveness, fostering policy and regulatory, managerial and entrepreneurial capacities at government, institutional and enterprise levels.

Universal membership and neutrality

All UN and WTO members belong to ITC. The organization objectively and impartially carries out technical assistance in support of the internationalization of MSMEs.
WHAT MAKES ITC UNIQUE

- **100% Aid for trade**
- **A clear focus** on helping MSMEs internationalize
- **Working with the private sector** to develop the private sector
- **Nimble, adaptable, innovative**
- **Depth of experience** operating coherently at government, trade support institution and MSME level to grow trade
- **The joint mandate** of the UN and WTO
- **Universal membership and neutrality**
Between the beginning and the end, there is always a middle.

Brazilian proverb
Route map

Our clients

Our primary clients are **micro, small and medium-sized enterprises**. We help our clients become internationally competitive, and capture more value from trade. Competitiveness requires not only a competitive product or service, but also connectivity to market and an ability to change. ITC understands that business needs vary, depending on where companies are on their journey towards international competitiveness. Physical geography, the national business environment and immediate business ecosystem, the industry sector, company maturity, previous international trade experience, and market destinations are all relevant.

We do not believe in a “one size fits all approach”. Instead, we tailor solutions for:

**Informal and small-scale producers.** Informal and small-scale producers of agricultural and artisanal products stand to benefit the most but also require intensive support on a consistent basis. ITC has witnessed an increased demand for its interventions at the base of the pyramid and in particular for at-risk groups in the informal sector. The challenge lies in organizing these producers through agribusiness exporters, co-operatives or social enterprises through which development assistance and market demand can be channelled.

**Aspiring exporters in the formal economy.** To compete in international value chains companies need more than a viable product or service. They also have to dedicate human and financial resources to acquire new knowledge and skills. This requires conviction that the investment can pay off, and in-depth assistance to enter physical and online marketplaces.

**Passive exporters.** These companies are exporting from time to time, and exports are still a small proportion of total turnover. To become active exporters, they need support in identifying more profitable export opportunities, as well as developing supply potential and market connectivity.
Active exporters. Active exporters have demonstrated capacity and ability to trade experience. These companies require support in developing market and product strategies, and export marketing structures. Many need advisory services to diversify and expand into new markets, including matchmaking services with qualified buyers.

Women and young entrepreneurs in these groups face specific challenges and may require specific additional support. Through SheTrades and the Youth and Trade programme, ITC will continue to develop tailored solutions to bring these businesses to market.

SheTrades

SheTrades is one of ITC’s flagship initiatives. Launched in 2015, it seeks to catalyse action in support of women in trade by acting on seven areas: trade policies; financial inclusion; gender disaggregated data; public and private procurement; ownership rights; and capacity building. It is supported by a web and mobile application (SheTrades.com) to support women entrepreneurs to network. SheTrades hosts an annual business event, SheTrades Global for women entrepreneurs, buyers, partners, and investors. Focusing on business development, investment, and innovation, the event features policy dialogues combined with a full schedule of business-to-business meetings.
ITC works across a number of sectors, many of which offer strong potential for employment creation and inclusive growth:

**From agriculture to agri-processing.** Agriculture employs a dispro-portionate number of women and young people, and is closely linked with environmental and nutritional goals. Many countries recovering from conflict rely heavily on viable rural economies. As such, supporting greater value addition and connection to markets can simultaneously achieve multiple development objectives. ITC will support co-operatives and agribusiness associations to help small-scale producers adopt voluntary and statutory standards needed to add value to their products and compete in international markets. Sectoral Alliances for Action will help catalyse stakeholder cooperation.

**Opportunities in the green economy.** ITC will support producers to exploit the potential of the green economy through more sustainable production processes, better engagement with the circular economy, and the promotion of green products and services.

**Tapping into the services economy.** With its fast growth, low barriers to entry and ability to absorb both highly educated and low-skilled labour, the services economy provides a good stepping stone for developing countries to compete and eventually expand their businesses. ITC will work to develop enterprise skills in service industries such as tourism, information technology and commercial trade support services.

**National trade support systems** feature a rich network of public and private agencies supporting aspiring exporters and international businesses. This soft infrastructure comprises government departments, customs administrations, standards bodies, business associations, universities, think tanks and vocational training authorities. The diverse web of public and private organizations form business ecosystems which are just as important for competitiveness as brick and mortar infrastructure. They are the clients through whom ITC cascades and multiplies support to enterprises. Key among them are:

**National governments.** ITC will work with government actors to develop integrated and comprehensive trade development strategies which promote horizontal co-operation across ministries and ensure vertical coherence linking federal, provincial and municipal government actors. ITC will also continue to facilitate the dialogue between the public and the private sector so that genuine business interests are understood and reflected in trade policies and regulations.

**Trade and investment support institutions.** ITC will work with national or sub-national entities charged with providing trade and investment support services to their members, and the wider web of business service providers.
With 13% of global goods trade now happening online, e-commerce offers a unique opportunity for MSMEs, especially women-owned businesses, to internationalize and reach customers directly without intermediation. Through ITC’s E-solutions programme and in partnership with UNCTAD’s ‘E-trade for All’, ITC will continue to support building domestic ecosystems enabling MSMEs to sell their goods and services online.

Our strategic focus

ITC is committed to ensuring that at least 80% of its country-level interventions benefit least developed countries (LDCs), land-locked developing countries, small-island developing states, small vulnerable economies, post-conflict and fragile states, and sub-Saharan Africa. A large number of ITC projects are implemented in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). We intend to increase our presence on the ground, including through ITC project offices, reflecting our engagement in larger and deeper country and regional interventions. We will continue to engage in the development of the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), and work together with national governments, institutions and UN country teams to prioritize “good trade” in national and regional development plans.

Project design services

ITC has always built customized solutions jointly with local partners. To ensure the effectiveness of our interventions, all partners have to share an understanding of MSMEs’ needs and a vision for the way forward. ITC has developed a suite of diagnostic tools for individual project designs and larger trade strategy developments. They help identify the opportunities and challenges facing specific clients in a dynamic trade environment to tailor interventions, together with clients and partners, to unique contexts. Similarly, ITC has created a project design task force with specific expertise to develop customized interventions.

Over the next period, we intend to integrate new data and analytical tools, make needs assessments and benchmarking surveys more granular, and aggregate data in a single database. Additionally, we will leverage our field partnerships for enhanced project designs in, and with, countries.
TRADE ROUTES TO SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

HORIZON 2030

To enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and development in developing countries, especially least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition through improving the international competitiveness of MSMEs.

DRIVERS

Inclusiveness. Integrating businesses of poor communities, women and young entrepreneurs into international trade.

Sustainability. Making supply chains more transparent and traceable, and helping MSMEs to implement standards.

Regional trade. Catalysing regional trade and investment, helping MSMEs to export in the region.

South-South trade and investment. Fostering trade and investment routes, and connecting buyers and sellers in the South.

CLIENTS

Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
Trade and investment support institutions
Governments

PARTNERSHIPS

United Nations organizations
International institutions
Regional institutions
Technical experts
Private sector
Academia

DELIVERABLES

Global public goods. Make information on market requirements comprehensive and globally accessible.

Trade and investment facilitation. Shape and implement new strategies and reforms that make the business environment and investment climate conducive.

Quality and regulatory frameworks. Support national bodies in acquiring international accreditation.

Green trade. Make production along the value chain sustainable and supply chains transparent and traceable.

E-commerce. Introduce e-solutions and bring more businesses into the online market place.

Value added to trade. Help MSMEs to add value to their products and services through innovation.

Knowledge and skills. Transfer knowledge and teach skills to MSMEs through e-learning and regional skills partnerships.
**Inclusive Development**

**Products and Services**
- Digital knowledge products
- Trade and investment advisory services
- Institutional strengthening services
- Enterprise development services

**Good Trade**
- **SheTrades.** Connect 3 million women to market and catalyse financial support for women entrepreneurs in the form of capital or credit.
- **Business support ecosystems.** Strengthen and connect trade and investment support institutions.
- **Poor communities and trade.** Scale-up support to producers in the informal sector and help them connect to international markets.
- **Regional trade.** Catalyse regional trade and investment, helping MSMEs to export within and between regions.
- **South-south trade and investment.** Foster trade and investment routes, and connect buyers and sellers in the southern hemisphere.
- **Youth entrepreneurship.** Build market-relevant skills for 100,000 youth and work with local institutions supporting young entrepreneurs.
- **Trade policy and strategy.** Advance trade and policy development strategies in the services sector.

**UN SDGs**
1. **No Poverty**
2. **Zero Hunger**
4. **Quality Education**
5. **Gender Equality**
8. **Decent Work and Economic Growth**
9. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**
10. **Reduced Inequalities**
12. **Responsible Consumption and Production**
16. **Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions**
17. **Partnerships for the Goals**

To enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and development in developing countries, especially least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition through improving the international competitiveness of MSMEs.
Our approach

We need to continue to evolve in order to be at the cutting edge of trade and international business development. ITC’s path towards ‘good trade’ is based on understanding client needs and supporting greater national ownership of development programmes. Our approach is:

**Innovative and scalable.** ITC will focus on innovative impact-driven products and services that are adapted to the needs of clients. The organization will also pursue innovation that improves its ability to deliver more value for money and greater scale.

**Responsive.** ITC will continue to focus attention on the most vulnerable countries while remaining committed to the delivery of global public goods in the form of trade and market intelligence, self-assessment tools and e-learning.

**Market-led.** ITC will exploit opportunities in regional and international markets by connecting clusters of companies and institutions to value chains with demonstrated market demand.

**Partnering.** ITC will strategically partner with a network of actors in countries and regions to deliver more trade impact for good. These actors include governments, private sector, foundations, academia, regional economic communities (RECs), UN agencies and other relevant organizations.

Core products and services: integrated solutions

ITC will focus its interventions on six areas where it has a comparative advantage and value to add. Each area represents a set of interventions under specific programmes that are adapted and aggregated according to clients’ needs. All programmes are underpinned by a log-frame and a theory of change which contribute to ITCs corporate outcomes and to the SDGs.

This Strategic Plan highlights priorities within ITC’s six focus areas to deliver trade impact for good. Deliverables are dependent on necessary funding being available.
Once you allow yourself to identify with people in a story, then you might begin to see yourself in that story.

Chinua Achebe, novelist (1930 – 2013)
Globally accessible trade and market intelligence

Access to trade and market intelligence is essential to making informed policy, strategy and business decisions. Since its inception in 1964, ITC has been providing globally accessible market intelligence to MSMEs. Over time, ITC has developed a suite of online global public goods addressing trade flows, non-tariff measures, export potential assessments, and private standards for a wider group of users. ITC’s SME Trade Academy, which started in April 2014, now serves more than 15,000 course participants with over 50 online courses.

During 2018-2021, we will invest in providing greater granularity of information, building on new levels of data availability. We will also invest to better connect ITC trade and market data with that of the WTO, UNCTAD and UN Secretariat. With data on four SDG indicators, we will contribute to the global monitoring of progress on the SDGs. We will work to achieve scale by partnering with others, and expanding our network of users. Finally, we will invest in supporting countries to better assess, measure and improve MSME trade competitiveness by expanding the coverage of our MSME benchmarking, and publishing our analysis in ITC’s annual SME Competitiveness Outlook.
KEY INITIATIVES

Global Trade Helpdesk. In partnership with UNCTAD, WTO and other international and regional organizations, ITC will develop a Global Trade Helpdesk with comprehensive information on market requirements, business opportunities and policy outlook. This will involve the maintenance and integration of ITC’s current global public goods and development of new trade intelligence, including a comprehensive database of preferential rules of origin, the provision of real-time customs data, a ‘quality for trade’ information platform, and the further development of the export potential map.

Non-Tariff Measures. ITC will scale business surveys on non-tariff measures by expanding them to cover trade in services, and will deepen analytical work to support addressing of non-tariff measures.

SME Competitiveness Outlook. ITC will expand the analysis of country-specific MSME competitiveness factors, and develop a SME Competitiveness Index to facilitate benchmarking and foster pro-competitiveness reforms.

SME Trade Academy. ITC will seek to multiply the number of current users of its SME Trade Academy, increase the number of courses and integrate all ITC training offerings online.
A conducive business environment

A supportive business environment is a precondition for a competitive economy that fosters innovation. ITC brings to policymakers and regulators the voice of business through public-private dialogue, particularly in the case of countries in accession to the WTO. ITC supports implementation of national policy and regulatory reforms, including those enshrined in multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements, for greater enterprise competitiveness. It helps national governments and regional bodies to formulate and implement trade and investment development strategies.

Trade and investment are increasingly interdependent. ITC will deepen its support to developing countries in their efforts towards trade and investment facilitation. The organization will support clients in addressing non-tariff barriers, including through implementing trade facilitation reforms, harmonizing Sanitary and Phytosanitary and Technical Barriers to Trade measures, regulatory reforms for logistics service providers, e-commerce and informal cross border trade.

We will improve our tools and methodologies for value chain and trade and investment development strategies, with particular attention to regional strategies and services sector strategies. We will also support client countries in developing sustainable mechanisms to implement their strategies effectively.

Trade and investment are interdependent drivers of opportunities for MSMEs.

IN SUPPORT OF THE SDGs:

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDEREquality
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
16. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
KEY INITIATIVES

Trade facilitation reforms. In addition to supporting the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, ITC will develop new downstream services to improve the costs, speed and security of international trade transactions. Particular focus will be on logistics services regulatory reforms and cross-border trade.

Investment facilitation. ITC will scale up work to facilitate investments, both domestic and foreign, by working at the enterprise and institutional level to support improvements in investment climate and develop investment facilitation strategies.

National quality strategy and regulatory frameworks. ITC will strengthen national standards and conformity assessment bodies, such as testing labs, inspection and certification bodies, and assist them to acquire international accreditation.

Trade and investment development strategies. ITC will intensify the work on services strategies with a focus on tourism, e-strategies and information technology-enabled services.
Stronger trade and investment support institutions

Trade and investment support institutions (TISIs) are important service providers to MSMEs. They provide a voice to connect the public and the private sector, and are critical actors for the implementation of national trade and investment strategies. Strengthening the capacity of regional, national and sub-national trade support networks is essential to ensure that MSMEs receive the help they need to grow and benefit from advocacy efforts on their behalf.

ITC has developed a suite of customized services and methodologies to address the needs of institutions, including trade and investment promotion organizations, sector associations and membership-based business associations. ITC supports TISIs to assess and improve performance, develop clearer strategies, adapt their service portfolios, establish results measurement systems, strengthen networks and optimize the use of resources at their disposal.

Examples for TISI segments

---

IN SUPPORT OF THE SDGs:
KEY INITIATIVES

**Strengthening a broader base of institutions.** ITC will expand and improve the use of Assess, Improve Measure (AIM) benchmarking methodology. ITC will use a modular approach and more digital channels for greater reach. We will also develop TISIs’ focus on the SDGs through, for example, specific services to women and youth entrepreneurs.

**Understanding and strengthening business support ecosystems.** ITC will define, measure and strengthen the services that MSMEs can receive from an interdependent ecosystem of business support providers, including the connections and leverage points between key actors.

**Foreign trade representatives in the digital age.** ITC will revamp and scale its programme, assisting countries to strengthen economic and trade diplomacy. We will do this by building and upgrading relevant skills of foreign trade representatives to develop domestic trade and investment flows.

**Impact assessment for TISI services.** ITC will further develop impact assessment methodologies and tools to measure the impact of TISI services on MSME competitiveness, trade and employment.

During the next period, ITC will adapt these tools and methodologies to a broader base of institutions, build their skills and services for the digital age and for providing services to promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Particular attention will be paid to the ecosystem of support, bringing operational aspects of trade and investment and public and private services providers closer together. ITC will continue to develop networks of TISIs, in particular on a regional level, in order to promote regional economic integration and support countries’ efforts to leverage their participation in trade and economic diplomacy.

ITC values the delivery partnerships we have established with a number of institutions around the world, including an advisory board of TISI CEOs who share perspectives and shape ITC solutions.
Connection to international value chains

Eighty percent of world goods trade takes place within international value chains of which 60% is trade in intermediate products. Much of the value in global trade is increasingly driven by services. Competitive MSMEs that tap into these opportunities can increase their trade footprint. To do so, they face significant challenges - inside the firm and at sector level - in providing the differentiated value-added offering that international markets demand. ITC takes a holistic approach to building MSME competitiveness combining focused enterprise advisory services, broader advice on sector development, and building linkages to buyers and investors in value chains.

We help craft alliances among value chain actors to improve coordination and build a supportive ecosystem for MSME growth. We bring expertise and global networks in priority sectors for partner countries including agriculture and agro-processing, textiles and clothing, light manufacturing, and services such as business process outsourcing and tourism. At enterprise level, ITC focuses industry knowledge and expertise on helping MSMEs improve products and processes, attract financing, and improve core capabilities in areas such as quality and packaging. ITC has a special focus on preparing MSMEs to benefit from digital trade.

In 2018-2021, we intend to deepen the understanding of opportunities and competitiveness factors in new and rapidly changing value chains, help MSMEs adjust to new production and consumption patterns, and connect MSMEs to new markets including through online marketplaces.
**ITC is helping MSMEs capture greater value online and offline.**

**KEY INITIATIVES**

**Value added to trade.** ITC will expand and scale work improving value added, benefitting 15,000 MSMEs per year with innovative financing, including impact investment, expanded sustainable sourcing partnerships with private sector partners and a focus on transforming traditional exports through de-commoditization. ITC will continue to promote a quality culture among MSMEs and help them comply in a cost effective way with technical/SPS regulations, market relevant international standards and buyers’ requirements.

**Alliances for Action.** ITC pioneered the A4A approach to develop value chains by aligning investment and building coordination across the full ecosystem of actors involved, especially in agribusiness. From 2018-2021, ITC will roll out the approach to a number of regions and apply it to a range of new commodities.

**E-commerce.** ITC will expand its e-solutions programme helping MSMEs link to markets online. Work will include expanding partnerships with e-commerce actors providing gateway platforms for small companies to aggregate production and become visible in e-marketplaces. ITC will also foster MSMEs’ ability to make use of digital process innovations, such as new payment systems and logistics.
Inclusive and green trade

Women, youth, displaced persons and people in marginalized communities need equal opportunities to find gainful employment and lead rewarding lives. ITC works with market partners, TISIs and enterprises, especially at the base of the pyramid, to increase their opportunities. Inclusive trade offers possibilities to help specific client groups benefit directly and immediately from trade. ITC will deepen its work on inclusiveness to expand opportunities for women and young entrepreneurs to connect to international value chains, and to connect displaced and underserved communities to markets.

Trade offers the opportunity to create incentives for protecting the environment, through generating income opportunities that deepen sustainable production. Green trade is about producing in a sustainable manner along the value chain. The rise of the ‘conscious consumer’ widens the market for sustainable production and opens new opportunities for entrepreneurs from developing countries and economies in transition.

ITC will help farmers and producers to understand voluntary sustainability standards, codes of conduct and audit protocols. Via the newly launched Sustainability Map platform, ITC will offer users access to sustainability initiatives and standards, allowing them to identify and address the challenges related to implementing voluntary sustainability standards. ITC will continue to offer market-led approaches to promoting sustainable value chains, strengthening climate resilience and securing better livelihoods from biodiversity.
KEY INITIATIVES

**SheTrades.** ITC will scale up impact by connecting three million women to market by 2021 and establish an active user base of 100,000 women entrepreneurs on the SheTrades.com platform. ITC will also launch SheTrades Invest, catalysing financial support for women entrepreneurs in the form of capital or credit.

**Building youth entrepreneurship.** ITC will work with local institutions supporting young entrepreneurs and technical and vocational education and training providers (TVET). ITC will build market-relevant skills for 100,000 youth.

**Poor communities and trade.** ITC will scale up support to producers in the informal sector, displaced people and social enterprises, and help them to connect to international markets including through the work of the Ethical Fashion Initiative.

**Transparency and traceability in supply chains.** ITC will expand its Sustainability Map to include more sustainability standards, increase the number of unique users and develop partnerships to expand traceability of specific value chains. Users of the Sustainability Map platform will be able to monitor and track their sustainability practices against key SDGs and other indicators, generate real-time analytics on their achievements and gaps, connect with other value chain partners and post their profiles.

**Better measuring socio-economic impact.** ITC will improve and mainstream the methodology to collect impact information on clients in the informal sector.
Regional economic integration and South-South trade and investment

Regional integration and new South-South trade relationships are opening up additional trade and investment opportunities for MSMEs. They are the fastest growing component of international trade. Yet MSMEs find it particularly difficult to benefit from these opportunities, because of lack of adequate information, risk perceptions, and physical and institutional trade barriers.

ITC’s integrated regional interventions address trade obstacles at policy, institution and enterprise levels. ITC also connects TISIs and businesses within and between regions, for trade, investment and technology transfer that creates mutual benefits for all South-South market partners. ITC will focus on sectors which have the potential to be catalysts for change and where productive capacities can be enhanced, such as agribusiness, light manufacturing and IT-enabled services.

In 2018-2021, ITC intends to expand its work on regional integration, in Africa and beyond, in partnership with UN Regional Economic Commissions. ITC will also support MSMEs to take advantage of new trade routes, help address policy and regulatory barriers and NTBs to foster regional and South-South trade, facilitate sustainable and socially-responsible South-South investments; and strengthen platforms for South-South and intra-regional business and TISI networks.

Expanding new regional trade routes.
KEY INITIATIVES

Catalysing regional trade and investment. ITC will promote greater regional trade and investment, including addressing regional export potential, identifying and addressing non-tariff barriers coupled with analysing regional value chains and developing and implementing action plans. ITC will also expand the reach of this work into new countries and sectors.

South-South trade and investment routes. ITC will foster South-South trade and investment links through identification of potential, supporting market-led adaptation of MSME products and services and connection of TISIs, buyers and seller/investors. Trade and investment deals of at least $100 million will be concluded.
If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

African proverb
Partnerships are at the heart of the SDG agenda. Each partnership is based on a mutually-agreed value proposition. ITC values partners with whom we can deliver on good trade and the achievement of SDGs. We look for complementarity, clear benefits for our target clients, and for minimizing the duplication of expertise that already exists in other organizations. We have built partnerships on global, regional and local levels, including with relevant UN agencies, other multilateral and bilateral development agencies, and an increasingly diverse range of public and private sector partners including multinational corporations, private sector associations, non-governmental organizations, universities and foundations.

In addition to continuing our work with traditional partners, we intend to intensify our efforts to leverage access to knowledge, expertise, funding and networks:

**Growing knowledge and expertise.** We intend to partner increasingly with the private sector to improve our understanding of specialized and changing business processes, to help connect MSMEs to value chains and to stimulate innovation. Academic partnerships will also be enhanced to help ITC build course curricula, structure fellowships, collaborate on research, and incubate new ideas.

**South-South and triangular cooperation.** We intend to work more with institutions in the South to share expertise and to implement projects jointly, for our clients.

**Leveraging private sector funding.** We intend to better leverage resources allocated to ITC with other forms of in-kind and blended finance from private sources.

**Building networks.** We intend to enhance global, regional, national and sectoral partnerships with networks of actors in the private and public sectors to influence policymaking, cascade support, and gain knowledge and influence.
Switzerland and International Geneva

ITC considers its location in Geneva a strategic asset where it has access to some of the best brains on world trade and investment, digital governance and e-commerce. In Geneva, we are able to work in close proximity with the WTO and UNCTAD, and other UN organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and private-public organizations including the World Economic Forum (WEF). In addition, public Swiss institutions and a vibrant Swiss private sector provide ITC with internationally-recognized expertise in many areas of relevance to our work.

Multi-stakeholder partnership platforms

Our country partners as well as our funders aim to reduce duplication among development actors and improve development networks. The drive for efficiencies needs to build on multi-stakeholder partnerships for the purposes of making trade development support more accessible and impactful. The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), and the new Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) all provide good lessons for how to co-operate in the interest of improved client service, whether partners are located in Geneva or elsewhere. Through our innovation lab we have collaborated with the Impact Hub Geneva to bring greater innovation to trade and development interventions.
Managing for results

Over the last three years, ITC has strengthened its corporate results management. An ITC Results Framework was approved in 2017, clearly identifying linkages between outputs, intermediate outcomes and ITC’s contribution to achieving the SDGs (see Annex I). ITC’s project portal was significantly revamped with an easy-to-use interface and strong information retrieval functions for project managers. Evaluation and impact analysis have also been improved under this results framework. Efficiency gains have been achieved by streamlining and automatizing processes. Sources of funding, both financial and in-kind, are today more diversified.

ITC will continue to drive for results through the effective and efficient use of resources. The organization will deepen its results-based management approach at corporate, programme and project levels. It will further develop its human resource management planning and enhance staff skills, while continuing to promote gender balance and diversity. Attention to best-practice and UN rules compliant financial management, physical assets management and procurement will be maintained and demonstrated through positive audit reports and a swift implementation of audit recommendations.

UN reform

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a fully functioning United Nations development system; one that is strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient, effective and results-oriented. This is the agenda being championed by the UN Secretary-General.

An ambitious management reform is underway which aims to bring the delivery of services closer to the client. In 2017, a system-wide service review was completed as a first step to identify overlaps and gaps in UN agencies’ work. Reviews of the division of labour between UN agencies and cooperation at country and regional levels are ongoing. Development, humanitarian and peace-keeping operations are to be brought closer together. The Secretary-General’s reform proposal to the UN General Assembly may have an impact on the way ITC conducts its business over the plan period. ITC will ensure any such changes will be implemented through its annual operational plans. Regardless of the implementation modalities, the thrust of these proposals will focus on impact, efficiencies, sustainability and greater cross-agency collaboration, all of which ITC embraces and is already implementing.
Following our recent focus on innovation, ITC will continue to nurture a learning and innovation culture in the organization. All goals will be tracked through key performance indicators (KPIs) and supported through a systematic risk management plan.

Results-based management

During 2015-2017, ITC made significant strides towards addressing independent evaluation recommendations to better mainstream results-based management (RBM) into the organization. All recommendations addressed to ITC management were implemented by the end of 2017, and we remain committed to carrying on this work during 2018-2021 and beyond.

**Strengthening corporate results management.** ITC will further implement RBM and project management standards recommended by the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DECD). By 2019, ITC will be compliant with the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). ITC intends to maintain its rank as one of the top performers in implementing the ‘UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women’ (UN-SWAP 2.0), which sets common performance standards for the gender-related work of all UN entities. ITC will also refine its methodology for focus area and programme level costing and results measurement.

**Deepening evaluation processes.** ITC’s Independent Evaluation Unit will continue to promote a culture of accountability and learning within the organization to support evidence-based decision-making, and support impact assessment methodologies in key areas of work. ITC will invest further in an impact measurement tool for TISIs, which will serve both client organizations and ITC, and in the RISE methodology to monitor socio-economic impact in projects that work with the informal sector. The SME Competitiveness Survey will be expanded to a larger group of client countries, and serve as a large-scale baseline to measure improvements in MSME competitiveness.

Human resource management

ITC’s project portfolio is changing to include a greater share of larger projects with in-country project offices. Workforce planning is essential to identify the talents and skills required for project-based work while maintaining sufficient core skills in key technical and administrative functions.

**Leadership development.** We will establish a performance-driven culture throughout the organization including using 360-degree feedback based on a transparent and open assessment processes.
Talent management. Staff development and talent management practices will be strengthened to ensure that staff possess the skills required, particularly in large project management, and that talent is retained. Fellowships, staff exchanges, job sharing and secondments are all useful routes to sharing expertise with a diverse range of partners. ITC intends to expand these partnerships.

Workforce diversity. We will continue to mainstream gender to reach gender parity by 2020. We will continue to seek diversity in the composition of our workforce to provide an inclusive, positive work environment.

Resource mobilization

Funders want to invest in initiatives where demand exists and where ITC can deliver impact at scale. ITC will continue to make the case for securing un-earmarked or soft-earmarked ‘Window 1’ multi-year funding, for activities which support innovation, ITC’s offer of global public goods, seed capital for flexible responses to client requests, business development, and the maintenance of core capacities to deliver. At the same time, ITC will aim to maintain a robust project portfolio, balancing project size with sources of funding. Our resource mobilization strategy will be updated to further diversify funding sources and leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships. Success in this area will be contingent on ITC management, as well as ITC membership, delivering on our joint commitment to strengthen the organization and deliver on the needs of our partners.

Learning and innovation

During the period of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021, ITC will continue to foster in-house learning and innovation. In 2017, ITC officially launched its own Innovation Lab, which actively supports internal development and builds external partnerships. ITC will also continue to monitor the development of digital solutions that can benefit the organization and our clients.

Innovation Lab. ITC’s Innovation Lab will continue cooperation with innovation partners in Geneva and beyond to promote scalable development solutions. ITC will also actively engage with United Nations Headquarters and other organizations to pilot new ways of working to address the Sustainable Development Goals.
Knowledge management framework. A knowledge management strategy will be completed to better capture lessons learned across all areas of the Strategic Plan. The process will support an organizational culture that instills a spirit of continuous review and learning.

Risk management

There are risks associated with achieving each objective of the organization. These risks include non-delivery of mandate, reputational risk, staff health, safety and security, legal risks associated with procurement and sub-contracting, and financial risks vis-à-vis funding and cash flow.

Building on the risk framework developed in 2017, risks concerning all key results areas of the Strategic Plan will be monitored at the corporate level. Furthermore, a specific focus will be placed on providing corporate support for the mitigation of risks in projects in conflict and post-conflict countries and benchmarking ITC risk management practices against best practice in the UN and elsewhere.

Engaging in the global conversation

ITC has made great strides in engaging in the global conversation on trade, MSMEs, women’s economic empowerment, youth entrepreneurship and more broadly over issues related to trade and development both in the field and online. Our media reach has grown in breadth and depth. We have embraced social media to share our work and promote the importance of trade for sustainable development. This is also part of our contribution to achieving the SDGs.

In the coming period, we will continue to improve our brand and online presence. We remain committed to making the case for good trade. Through our publications, online engagement, events and media presence, we will also invest in giving more voice to our partners, in particular those on the ground. We will continue to measure our media presence through KPIs which will be included in our annual operational plans.

ITC will roll out its new communications strategy which places a stronger emphasis on advocacy, awareness building in technical domains and the use of ITC experts as part of a community outreach strategy through social media. It will help ITC to target clients, improve access to services, and provide increased visibility to projects and funders.
ITC will continue to lead on the commemoration of the UN International Day for MSMEs and use it as an occasion to launch the annual ITC flagship publication on SME Competitiveness.

World Export Development Forum

The World Export Development Forum (WEDF) is our annual flagship event dedicated to supporting trade-led development. WEDF provides a platform for policymakers, institutional development partners, and business leaders to debate current issues in trade for development. It is an example of the convening power of ITC and the importance of building platforms, where open, constructive technical dialogues can take place.
The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust, novelist (1871 – 1922)
Annex I: ITC results framework

ITC’s contribution to the SDGs

International competitiveness of MSMEs

FOCUS AREA 1

Action

Focus Area 2

Policymakers integrate business interests

Focus Area 3

TISIs better support MSMEs

Focus Area 4

MSMEs introduce changes in their operations

Focus Area 5

FOCUS AREA 6

Market Partners open up value chains

Outputs

Advisory services

Training

Publications

Technical material

Intermediate outcomes

Action

Focus Area 2

Policymakers integrate business interests

Focus Area 3

TISIs better support MSMEs

Focus Area 4

MSMEs introduce changes in their operations

Focus Area 5

FOCUS AREA 6

Market Partners open up value chains

Outcomes

International competitiveness of MSMEs

Indicators C3&C4

Corporole indicators

ITC measures its achievement of outcomes and intermediate outcomes through the listed corporate indicators. They are an integral part of ITC’s Strategic Framework. Achievements against biennium targets are reported to the UN Secretariat. They are also reported to the ITC Consultative Committee of ITC’s Trust Fund (CCITF) as part of Tier 2 of ITC’s Corporate scorecard (see Annex II).
IMPACT
ITC contributes directly to 10 of the 17 SDGs. MSME’s international competitiveness contributes to inclusive and sustainable development through increased incomes and employment, sustainable and inclusive production and consumption. ITC’s work also supports the global partnership for the goals.

OUTCOMES
ITC works with key decision-makers that can influence the market position of MSMEs, including policymakers and regulators, trade and investment support institutions, and market partners.

ITC enables MSMEs to become internationally competitive by supporting all actors to:
- Raise their awareness about important competitiveness issues and market opportunities;
- Increase their knowledge;
- Formulate feasible plans and achieve agreement/consensus, and
- Help them to take action.

Each of ITC’s six focus areas and related programmes emphasize different results in this theory of change. Yet they all build on the same logic and integrate ITC’s expertise in the different areas to achieve the respective programme outcome objectives.

OUTPUTS
ITC achieves the outcomes through providing the listed sets of outputs. The nomenclature and definitions are based on standardized UN reporting requirements.

CORPORATE INDICATORS
ITC measures its achievement of outcomes and intermediate outcomes through the listed corporate indicators. They are an integral part of ITC’s Strategic Framework. Achievements against biennium targets are reported to the UN Secretariat. They are also reported to the ITC Consultative Committee of ITC’s Trust Fund (CCITF) as part of Tier 2 of ITC’s Corporate scorecard (see Annex II).

ITC measures its contributions with corporate indicators:

- **A1** number of clients reporting greater awareness of international trade as a result of ITC’s support
- **A2** number of cases in which trade-related policies and-or strategies and-or regulations have been improved with business sector input as a result of ITC’s support
- **B1** number of institutions reporting improved operational and managerial performance as a result of ITC’s support
- **C1** number of enterprises reporting improved international competitiveness as a result of ITC’s support
- **C2** percentile share of enterprises that are owned, operated and controlled by women reporting improved international competitiveness as a result of ITC’s support
- **C3** number of enterprises having transacted international business as a result of ITC’s support
- **C4** percentile share of enterprises that are owned, operated and controlled by women having transacted international business as result of ITC’s support

FOCUS AREAS
Each of ITC’s six focus areas and related programmes emphasize different results in this theory of change. Yet they all build on the same logic and integrate ITC’s expertise in the different areas to achieve the respective programme outcome objectives.

- **FOCUS AREA 1** Providing trade and market intelligence
- **FOCUS AREA 2** Building a conducive business environment
- **FOCUS AREA 3** Strengthening Trade and Investment Support Institutions
- **FOCUS AREA 4** Connecting to international value chains
- **FOCUS AREA 5** Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade
- **FOCUS AREA 6** Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links
ITC is accountable to its parent organizations, the United Nations, through UNCTAD, and the World Trade Organization, to its funders, and to its member states. ITC tracks and reports its performance, based on the Corporate Scorecard. It translates ITC’s strategic objectives into a coherent set of performance measures, considering development impact (Tier 1), ITC’s corporate outcomes and outputs (Tier 2), and key performance indicators for ITC’s operations (Tier 3).

### Tier 1: Vision

**Good trade**

*Good trade contributes to the achievement of the SDGs.*

- ITC contributes to 10 SDGs and 23 SDG targets
- Focus on SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 17 and significant interventions in areas of SDGs 2, 4, 9, 10, 12 and 16
- Each project has impact indicators linked to SDG targets
- ITC’s programmatic theories of change serve as a basis for projects’ alignment to the SDGs.

### Tier 2: Mission

**To enhance inclusive and sustainable growth and development in developing countries* through improving the international competitiveness of MSMEs**

**3 goals/outcomes** lead ITC towards achievement of its mission.

- Improved national business and trade environments for MSMEs
- Improved performance of trade support institutions for the benefit of MSMEs
- Improved international competitiveness of MSMEs

*especially in least developed countries and countries with economies in transition*

**The listed outcomes correspond to the expected accomplishments (outcomes) on which ITC reports to the UN as defined in the biennial programme plan 2018-2019 of Programme 10 (A/71/6). Indicators of achievement for the outcomes are listed in Annex I (corporate indicators).
To achieve the outcomes, ITC has committed to six focus areas with key initiatives

- Providing trade and market intelligence
- Building a conducive business environment
- Strengthening Trade and Investment Support Institutions
- Connecting to international value chains
- Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade
- Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links

ITC delivers through the following outputs

- Advisory services
- Trainings and workshops
- Publications
- Technical materials
- Special events
- Field projects
- Servicing of meetings
- Parliamentary documentation

Tier 3: Performance

Effectiveness and efficiency initiatives

Work in 7 areas of organizational improvement will enable better delivery of ITC’s results

- Partnerships
- Result-based management
- Human resource management
- Resource mobilization
- Learning and innovation
- Risk management
- Communications
ITC organized its services in six focus areas, which are the areas where ITC has a competitive advantage. ITC’s interventions are implemented through 15 programmes. Each programme has a distinctive Theory of change, a logical model that substantiates the effect of ITC’s interventions, through intermediate outcomes, to outcomes and impact at the level of SDGs.

### Annex III: ITC focus areas and programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS AREAS</th>
<th>PROGRAMMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Providing Trade and Market Intelligence</td>
<td>Transparency in Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Tariff Measures in Goods and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competitive Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Building a Conducive Business Environment</td>
<td>Trade Development Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade Facilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting Trade Negotiations and Policy Reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Connecting to International Value Chains</td>
<td>Value-added to Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E-Solutions: Enabling Trade Through Digital Channels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Promoting and Mainstreaming Inclusive and Green Trade</td>
<td>Empowering Women to Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empowering Poor Communities to Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth and Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trade for Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Supporting Regional Economic Integration and South-South Links</td>
<td>Boosting Regional Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South-South Trade and Investment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By boosting development, trade has helped to cut poverty around the world. For many, trade has meant better opportunities, better healthcare, better conditions in which to raise a family and greater opportunities to lead healthy, productive lives.

Roberto Azevêdo, WTO Director-General

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is our plan to take a different course. This globally-agreed agenda pledges to secure a healthy planet, and build peaceful, inclusive societies to ensure lives of dignity for all.

Mukhisa Kituyi, UNCTAD Secretary-General