



International  
Trade  
Centre

EVALUATION REPORT

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# Evaluation of the UKTP Programme

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Independent Evaluation Unit

December 2023

This evaluation report makes reference to the following SDGs:



## TOTLE OF EVALUATION

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC is the only international agency dedicated to the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Formed in 1964, ITC is the focal point for trade related technical assistance within the United Nations system.

For all of ITC's interventions, evaluation is a key instrument to ensure accountability against expected results and to support organizational learning. Evaluations inform ITC's decision-making in policy, programme and project management, with the purpose of improving performance and enhancing ITC's contributions towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ITC Independent Evaluation Unit has carried out this evaluation under its 2023 Work Programme and is responsible for this publication.

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## Acronyms

<b>A4A</b>	Alliances for Action
<b>ABS</b>	Agri-Business System
<b>ACP</b>	African, Caribbean and Pacific
<b>AFD</b>	Agence Française de Développement
<b>AGI</b>	Association of Ghana Industries
<b>B2B</b>	Business-to-Business
<b>BFI</b>	British Film Institute
<b>BSOs</b>	Business Support Organizations
<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CARIFORUM</b>	Caribbean Forum
<b>CASA</b>	Commercial Agriculture for Smallholder and Agribusiness
<b>CBI</b>	Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries
<b>CCA</b>	Conseil du Coton et de l'Anacarde
<b>CCC</b>	Cashew Connect Côte d'Ivoire
<b>CDB</b>	Caribbean Development Bank
<b>CEDA</b>	Caribbean Export Development Agency
<b>COCOBOD</b>	Ghana Cocoa Board
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus disease 2019
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DBT</b>	Department for Business and Trade
<b>DECI</b>	Division of Enterprise Competitiveness and Institutions
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>DIT</b>	Department for International Trade
<b>EDB</b>	Economic Development Board
<b>EPA</b>	Economic Partnerships Agreement
<b>EQM</b>	Export Quality Management
<b>ESG</b>	Environment Social Governance
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAPP</b>	Fund for Agricultural Development Agricultural Partnerships Project
<b>FCDO</b>	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>FY</b>	Financial Year
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEPA</b>	Ghana Export Promotion Agency
<b>GIVC</b>	Green and Inclusive Value Chains
<b>IE</b>	Institutions and Ecosystems Division
<b>IEC</b>	International Economics Consulting
<b>IEU</b>	Independent Evaluation Unit
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation
<b>IFE</b>	International Food and Drink Event
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>LDCs</b>	Least Developed Countries
<b>LLDCs</b>	Land-locked developing countries
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MA</b>	Market Access
<b>MOTI</b>	Ministry of Trade and Industry
<b>MOUs</b>	Memorandums of Understanding

<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
<b>NDS</b>	National Development Strategy
<b>NEDS</b>	National Export Development Strategy
<b>NES</b>	National Export Strategy
<b>NTF-V</b>	Netherland Trust Fund Phase V
<b>NTM G&amp;S</b>	Non-Tariff Measures, Goods and Services

# Evaluation of the UKTP Programme

Independent Evaluation Unit, International Trade Centre

## Executive summary

### Programme description

The United Kingdom Trade Partnership (UKTP) Programme is an initiative funded by the United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) designed to support African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries in taking advantage of the duty-free, quota-free access to the European Union (EU) and UK markets that they enjoy under the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The programme was designed to support ACP countries<sup>1</sup> to effectively implement and maximise the benefits of the EPAs, promoting trade under the existing EU EPAs and the subsequent EPAs with the UK.

The programme's expected main outcome is to increase trade between ACP countries and the UK/EU. In addition, the programme has five key outputs, namely to:

- (i) increase awareness of EPA preferences and benefits;
- (ii) create a more transparent business environment for exports;
- (iii) improve institutional/business services to support market access;
- (iv) increase the capacity of firms to export to the UK/EU market;
- (v) connect firms to buyers in EU and UK markets.

Programme objectives  
"Outputs"

The programme's budget was approximately \$15.5 million (£17 million). The UK's FCDO reduced the annual budget allocation and reprioritized activities in 2020 following the reductions to the UK's funding for Over-seas Development Assistance (ODA). The programme was originally intended to last three years, from April 2019 until March 2023; it was later extended under a new operating model to last until March 2024.

**Table 1 – Projects details**

ID	Project Title	Implementing Div./Section	Start Date	End Date	Total Budget (USD)
B908	Programme Management : UK TP Programme	DECI/SEC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	2,785,000.00
B906	Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DMD/TMI	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	2,141,560.00
C166	Non-ODA: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	20 Jan 2022	31 Mar 2023	204,000.00
B900	CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	1,531,031.00
B905	Fiji: UK Trade Partnership Programme	DECI/SEC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	1,144,700.00
B902	Côte D'Ivoire: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DCP/OA	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	1,105,000.00
B907	Zimbabwe: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DSIT/GIVC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	1,065,000.00
B904	Madagascar: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	1,336,302.00
B967	PNG: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	1 Jan 2020	31 Mar 2023	582,600.00
B901	Comoros: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DCP/OA	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	721,070.00
B903	Ghana: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DSIT/GIVC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	977,255.00
B899	Cameroon: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	3 Jun 2019	31 Mar 2023	972,500.00
C272	Central Asia: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	DECI/SEC	23 Feb 2023	23 Apr 2024	960,000.00

Source: Evaluation ToR

### Evaluation framework

The evaluation took place between March 2023 and October 2023 and answered a set of specific questions directly linked to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

<sup>1</sup> Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe

### *Purpose and objectives*

The evaluation, and was driven by an overarching question: what are the lessons to learn from this Programme on what worked well/less well to inform ITC and the funder on where to focus efforts on future programming for export and import promotion?

The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information on the added value of ITC's intervention; on the projects' contribution to trade, market intelligence and export promotion; insights and learning on the achievement of the Programme's longer-term objectives, including on cross-cutting issues; and to identify drivers for the effective provision of the UK's bilateral trade-related assistance, in view of supporting FCDO and ITC's expertise to make sustainable trade happen.

### *Scope*

The scope of the evaluation encompassed all projects and activities in the UKTP Programme between March 2019 and March 2023. The evaluation covers the programme implementation and management across all target countries, except for the Central Asia portfolio, which had activities planned to be implemented between February 2023 and April 2024.

### *Methodology*

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach based on the use of Key Informants Interviews (conducted both remotely and on-site in ITC Geneva, in Madagascar and in the UK), of a documentary review and of an online survey. The evaluation also used a participatory and collaborative approach to engage with stakeholders (especially UKTP Programme management) in the evaluation process, so they may better understand the evaluation and the programme being evaluated and ultimately use the evaluation findings for decision-making.

A non-experimental design was used, especially given the fact that the Programme did not get a chance to gather clear baseline information before the start of interventions, so a pre-test/post-test design was not possible.

### *Limitations*

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach based on the use of Key Informants Interviews (conducted both remotely and on-site in ITC Geneva, in Madagascar and in the UK), of a documentary review and of an online survey. The evaluation also used a participatory and collaborative approach to engage with stakeholders (especially UKTP Programme management) in the evaluation process, so they may better understand the evaluation and the programme being evaluated and ultimately use the evaluation findings for decision-making.

A non-experimental design was used, especially given the fact that the Programme did not get a chance to gather clear baseline information before the start of interventions, so a pre-test/post-test design was not possible.

## **Findings**

### *Relevance*

Overall, the evaluation found clear evidence that the UKTP Programme was relevant to its beneficiaries, the implementing partners, and the client. The evaluation also found that the UKTP's objectives and design responded well to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities. The activities around each specific country project were also targeted and were adapted to meet the needs of the country's stakeholders. However, the participation of some stakeholders during the design phase appears to be limited. The adaptability of the interventions also contributed to the relevance of the different interventions.

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*"[UKTP] made us aware of our potential and [...] has also opened doors for us to do business with overseas customers."*

*Exporter of Coffee, Papua New Guinea*

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The reprogramming, caused by the reductions to the UK's funding for ODA and annual programming had an impact in the relevance and outcomes of the UKTP project. The reprogramming prioritised those outputs with higher and more direct impact, moving away from macro-level components. This change in resource allocation led to a shift in project priorities, affecting both the nature and extent of interventions.

### Coherence

The evaluation found that the UKTP had strong external and internal coherence. Regarding the UKTP's external coherence, the involvement of ITC with other organisations was generally good, with ITC showing strong collaboration with institutions such as the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries from the Netherlands, with which ITC is implementing other projects. However, such close cooperation with domestic stakeholders was not seen across all countries. In terms of internal coherence, the evaluation evidence of good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams.

*"Across CARIFORUM countries, we managed to leverage the Alliance for Action and establish very close collaborations."*

*Official, ITC*

Overall, the evaluation found limited interaction between the FCDO network and the UKTP, depending on the country projects. Stakeholders highlighted that the FCDO network and the role of regional trade advisors could have been better defined, as the communication with a number of them was not consistent.

### Effectiveness

Overall, the evaluation has found that the UKTP programme was effective, with the self-reported data showing that the programme achieved all its targets for the expected results. Stakeholder interviews, questionnaire results and the literature review highlighted that the different interventions undertaken under the UKTP made significant progress towards achieving UKTP's objectives in the period under review.

*"After [UKTP], we were able to tell our coffee story, we also have a new packaging which ties into our story as well. It also makes us think about our supply chain (farmers) in every decision we do."*

*Exporter of Coffee, Papua New Guinea*

**Output 1** By mid-2023, the UKTP had achieved its objectives with regards to Output 1 i.e., increasing firms, and institutions awareness of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits.

**Output 2** Despite this output being one of the targets of the reprogramming, the evaluation found that the UKTP Programme overall achieved related objectives to create a more transparent business environment for exports.

**Output 3** Despite the fact that this output was deprioritised during the project's final financial year, the Programme overall improved the ability of business support organisations to provide support to traders.

**Output 4** The UKTP surpassed all its targets during the period at hand, with 458 companies having made changes to the business operations. UKTP also supported 931 companies with advisory services and facilitated financing worth over USD 7.3 million.

**Output 5** Overall, the evaluation found that the UKTP achieved all its indicators under this Output. Specifically, the UKTP prepared a total of eight market studies: two for CARIFORUM, two for Cameroon (cocoa, Penja Pepper), two for Côte d'Ivoire (cashew nuts and tropical fruits), one for Fiji on ginger, and one for PNG on coffee.

### Efficiency

The evaluation explores the data relayed to efficiency. Due to budget cuts, monitoring and evaluation function were deprioritized by the FCDO. However, the International Trade Centre (ITC) conducted quarterly and annual reports, and annual SME surveys to assess whether the program was meeting its expected results. Despite budget cuts, coordination and communication with the ITC team were generally rated as excellent by stakeholders.

Efficiency in program implementation was highlighted, and the allocation of financial resources across various projects showed similarities in budget utilization. The program exceeded targets across many impact and outcome indicators, and the engagement of national stakeholders played a key role in its technical efficiency. Reprogramming efforts focused on export promotion projects, leading to higher efficiency and additional exports. However, the deprioritisation of monitoring and evaluation due to reprogramming had negative consequences, as learning and improvements couldn't be identified through the data provided.

*"ITC collaboration was excellent."*

*Official, CARICOM*



The UKTP program faced budget cuts and reprogramming challenges but demonstrated high technical efficiency in achieving its objectives. The programme also successfully managed to adapt to the COVID-19-related challenges. In terms of risk management and safeguarding, the UKTP's inception phase was instrumental to identify country and sector specific risks that could impact the implementation of the project.

### Impact

The evaluation highlights the significant impact that UKTP had on increasing the ability of supported companies to access UK and European markets. According to data from ITC, the UKTP exceeded its export objective by boosting EU and UK exports, achieving a total of USD 80 million worth of additional trade, in comparison to the objective of USD 20 million. While the program didn't reach its goal of having 100 companies (with 35 being women-owned) doing business with the UK/EU, it did facilitate sales to these markets for 50 companies, including 18 women-owned businesses.

The additional USD 80 million in exports primarily resulted from activities related to Output 4 and Output 5, which directly supported companies in their exporting efforts. Nevertheless, it's important to note that these gains weren't distributed evenly among all project participants, with a low number of companies recording any noticeable change in exports. The program also facilitated USD 29.4 million worth of indirect trade, sur-passing its objective of USD 25 million.

*"The majority of farmers supported were women and we increased their earning capacity. This positively impacted families-nutrition and health."*

*Business Support Organization, Zimbabwe*

Furthermore, the evaluation found that the program significantly contributed to job creation, maintenance, and improvement. ITC reported that the UKTP played a role in maintaining, improving or creating 14,128 jobs, with 65% of them (9,176) benefiting women. These results greatly exceeded the program's objective of creating 3,500 jobs. The evaluation suggests the need for improvements in measuring job and trade impacts and highlights challenges related to data collection and methodology, particularly regarding the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the attribution of export increases.

Additionally, the program indirectly contributed to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 (ending poverty), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production). It achieved these contributions through various activities, such as improving the resilience and incomes of smallholder farmers, promoting gender equality in different industries, and focusing on sustainable business practices and environmental governance. Activities in Madagascar, in particular, allocated a significant portion of their budget to SDG 9 and SDG 12-related initiatives.

### Sustainability

The evaluation finds that the UKTP benefits are likely to be sustained over time. The program's primary focus on enhancing the private sector's capacity to access new markets is seen as a sustainable strategy for the future. Stakeholders have reported that the knowledge and techniques transferred through the pro-gram have elevated the professionalism and competitiveness of participating companies. This transfer of know-how is expected to contribute to future success by enabling participants to meet access standards for both UK and EU markets.

Regarding the impact of reprogramming on the program's sustainability, in Output 1, the program shifted its market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy towards embedding market analysis tools into local websites instead of collecting data directly. This move, if well-managed and consistently updated, has the potential to create lasting impacts by improving the accessibility of market access information through country-specific websites.

*"We have been able to replicate the knowledge by teaching our colleagues how to use the platforms for their own needs and job specifics."*

*Official, Ministry of Industry, Trade and MSMEs, Dominican Republic*

Output 2 of the program focused on creating a more transparent and predictable business environment for the international business communities in specific countries and supporting national quality infrastructure in Comoros. While Output 3 was deprioritized in the last financial year, it is expected to maintain its positive outcomes because of the program's initial interventions in the first three years.

However, Outputs 4 and 5 also experienced some impact. Despite this, overall, the sustainability of actions is expected to not be impacted.

### Lessons and recommendations

Key lessons and recommendations arising from the Programme evaluation are summarised below:

Lessons	Recommendation
<p><b>Lesson 1</b>                      Reprogramming allowed ITC to explore partnerships with smaller institutions and more directly with SMEs, allowing for more cost-effective implementation of the programme, although this had ramifications on sustainability.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 1</b>                      Future UKTP programmes and future UK-funded programmes, in general, should focus on activities that can be implemented within a given financial year.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 2</b>                      The M&amp;E function is a critical part of any large aid-for-trade programme, given its critical role in recording progress and challenges and ensuring learning for future projects.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 2</b>                      Future UKTP programmes should contain a strong M&amp;E function, covering both technical and financial outputs.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 3</b>                      The deprioritisation of outcomes focused on business environment and trade facilitation will likely have an impact on the long-term sustainability of the project.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 3</b>                      Future UKTP programmes should also work on improving the business environment of the countries they work with.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 4</b>                      The limited coordination between the UKTP and the different UK Missions might have limited the impact of the interventions, as the UKTP did not leverage the wide network and contacts that such Missions have, both in their host countries and in the UK.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 4</b>                      Improve the collaboration and coherence with the UK Missions.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 5</b>                      The lack of country-specific exit strategies might have a negative impact on the programme's overall sustainability</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 5</b>                      Future UKTP programmes should adopt strong exit strategies and overall sustainability measures.</p>

## Evidence trail of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<b>RELEVANCE</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stakeholders' needs were well identified and expressed at the stage of Programme planning and design, and the UKTP's objectives and design responded well to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities.</li> <li>▪ The activities around each specific country project were targeted and adapted to meet the needs of country's stakeholders, though the participation of some national stakeholders during the design phase appears to be limited.</li> <li>▪ The project's implementation strategy and activities implemented both at the global and country levels reflect a mix of demand and supply side requirements.</li> <li>▪ Reprogramming and annual programming had an impact on the relevance and outcomes. The reprogramming prioritised those outputs with higher and more direct impact, and annual programming also had a significant influence on how the UKTP interventions were executed.</li> <li>▪ The UKTP project demonstrated that a focused approach, prioritizing activities that directly contribute to sales in target markets and job creation, can yield positive outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>The UKTP's objectives and design responded well to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities. Although the participation of some national stakeholders during the design phase appeared to be limited, the activities around each specific country project were targeted and adapted to meet the needs of the country's stakeholders, considering demand and supply side requirements. The adaptability of the interventions also contributed to their relevance.</p> <p>Despite these challenges, the UKTP project demonstrated that a focused approach, prioritizing activities that directly contribute to sales in target markets and job creation, can yield positive outcomes.</p>	<p><i>Note: no specific recommendation is formulated under "relevance". Evaluation management notes that implementing recommendations formulated in relation to other criteria will contribute to strengthening the Programme relevance.</i></p>
<b>COHERENCE</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ External coherence: the involvement of ITC with other organisations working on trade capacity building was generally good, with some exceptions. Overall, the UKTP projects are considered to be aligned and complementary with other in-country stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Internal coherence: the evaluation evidenced good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams both for design and implementation of activities.</li> <li>▪ The evaluation found limited interaction between the FCDO network and the UKTP, depending on the country project. Similarly, there was limited interaction with British stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p>ITC demonstrated strong collaboration with institutions such as the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (the Netherlands), with which ITC is implementing other projects. However, such close cooperation with domestic stakeholders was not seen across all countries.</p> <p>In terms of internal coherence, the evaluation concluded that there was good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams.</p> <p>In general, UKTP projects in all the different countries are aligned and complementary to programmes executed by other stakeholders. However, the evaluation concludes that interaction was limited between the FCDO network and the UKTP in certain country projects. The uncertainty around</p>	<p><b>Rec. 1 - Leverage on FCDO Networks</b></p> <p><i>Improve the collaboration and coherence with the UK Missions (both with FCDO and DTB staff).</i></p> <p><i>Suggested actions for ITC:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Hold regular working sessions and updates throughout the life of the project.</li> <li>b. Engage with the UK missions with their different projects and events, boosting the visibility of the selected participants towards UK-based companies.</li> <li>c. Co-organise trade missions, events, and B2B sessions.</li> </ol>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	<p>reprogramming contributed to putting a strain in the communication channels.</p>	<p><i>Responsibility for implementation: Programme management</i></p> <p><i>Note: As was done in some countries, have frequent meetings, and sharing of activities in advance with country and regional advisers.</i></p> <p><i>Suggested actions for FCDO and DBT:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct regional and country trade advisers, and development advisers to communicate frequently on projects and activities happening in the relevant countries</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>

**EFFECTIVENESS**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The UKTP programme was found effective, with the self-reported data showing that it achieved all its targets for the expected results.</li> <li>▪ Reporting on indicators related to Output 1 demonstrate that the UKTP, by providing trade data updates, undertaking training and awareness raising, and embedding of the ITC Market Access into local market websites, increased firms and institutions' awareness of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits.</li> <li>▪ The UKTP achieved the objectives set up for Output 2 despite this particular output being one of the targets of the reprogramming and facing significant budget cuts.</li> <li>▪ For Output 3, the UKTP achieved all of the three indicators despite the fact that this Output was deprioritised during the project's final financial year.</li> <li>▪ The UKTP surpassed all of its targets during the period considered for Output 4, and achieved all its targets under Output 5.</li> <li>▪ The evaluation found that raising EPA awareness was mainly done through Output 1. The TOAM did raise some obstacles to trade, mostly obstacles within internal markets and on the import side of trade.</li> </ul> | <p>An assessment of the outputs and outcomes indicators reported in the Annual Report 2023 showed that the UKTP increased firms and institutions' awareness of how to use EPA preferences and benefits (Output 1).</p> <p>The UKTP also achieved its objectives of creating a business environment more transparent and conducive for export to UK/EU markets (Output 2) despite the fact that this output was one of the targets of reprogramming and faced significant budget cuts. The output focused on improving the ability of business support institutions to provide support to traders (Output 3) was also achieved even if this output was deprioritised during the project's final financial year.</p> <p>With regard to increasing the capacity of targeted firms to export to the UK/EU market (Output 4), the UKTP surpassed all its targets. Additionally, UKTP achieved all indicators under the output focused on activating market opportunities (Output 5).</p> <p>The UKTP's reprogramming deprioritised Outputs 2 and 3, which relate to business and trade facilitation, but the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism component of the programme was helpful in resolving certain barriers to trade.</p> | <p><i>Note: no specific recommendation is formulated under "effectiveness". Evaluation management notes that implementing recommendations formulated in relation to other criteria will contribute to strengthening the Programme effectiveness.</i></p> |
|---|--|--|

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p><b>EFFICIENCY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The evaluation found that the programme and projects were implemented relatively efficiently, and this was supported by the stakeholders' consultations.</li> <li>▪ Regarding the analysis of the Programme Value for Money, the evaluation found. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That the overall Programme expenses, USD 13.9 million is 9% lower than the projected amount of USD 15.3 million.</li> <li>- Indications of efforts to efficiently use unspent budget of FY 19/20 in financial years that followed.</li> <li>- Quarterly expenses of the overall programme amounting to USD 0.93 million on average.</li> <li>- That the share of expenses of Q4 (Jan 21 to Mar 21) of FY 20/21 amounted to 19% of the whole programme budget.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ An overall analysis of the allocated financial resources across the different projects shows similarities across the different projects in terms of budget utilisation.</li> <li>▪ Despite the pandemic and budget constraints, UKTP completed all activities and targets under the different components, demonstrating high technical efficiency, especially demonstrated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The change in the market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy.</li> <li>- The buy-in and readiness of national stakeholders.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The cost effectiveness of the programme was determined using two indicators namely exports created per dollar spent on the programme and direct jobs supported per dollar spent.</li> <li>▪ The overall programme is estimated to generate an average additional USD 5.7 in exports across all the countries. The highest returns were generated in West African countries,</li> <li>▪ The evaluation notes that different delivery models were used to implement the programme, and that it was not possible to assess efficiency of the different delivery models in relation to data made available.</li> <li>▪ Reprogramming and annual reprogramming enhanced the project's efficiency, although these were highly disruptive. The budget cuts and reprogramming strategy ended up</li> </ul>	<p>Although M&amp;E were deprioritised by FCDO due to budget cuts, systems in place generally provided sufficient information to support adaptive management, at this stage.</p> <p>ITC, FCDO and external partners had a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting. Several interviewees assessed that coordination and communication with the ITC team was excellent, leading to higher efficiency. While real-time implementation assessment was not available for the programme due to the budget cuts, the overall flexibility of the programme was key to its efficiency.</p> <p>Despite the pandemic and budget constraints, UKTP completed all activities and targets under the different components, demonstrating high technical efficiency, especially through exceeding targets across most impact and outcome indicators, change in the market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy due to budget reductions, buy-in and readiness of national stakeholders.</p> <p>The budget cuts and reprogramming strategy ended up focusing on export promotion projects through enterprise support and B2B events, which also resulted in higher efficiency with notable recording of additional exports. However, the deprioritisation of M&amp;E, including impact measurement, negatively affected programme synergies and efficiency of the UKTP as learning from the different projects could not be shared for improving future performance and results.</p>	<p><b>Rec. 2 - Adapt to the budget cycles and budget cuts</b></p> <p><i>Future UKTP programmes and future UK-funded programmes, in general, should focus on activities that can be implemented within a given financial year. Activities implemented across financial years have the risk of being defunded, limiting the programme's effectiveness, sustainability and impact.</i></p> <p><i>Directed to UKTP:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design activities and follow-up activities to be fulfilled within a single UK financial year (even if the project is a multi-year one).</li> <li>▪ Identify activities that require more than a single year support and highlight to FCDO the risks associated with disrupting or shortening the support to that activity.</li> <li>▪ Track and report the changes experienced in the original planning due to the change in budget.</li> </ul> <p><i>Responsibility for implementation: Programme management</i></p> <p><i>Note to ITC management: When facing a deprioritisation or change in budget, track and report the changes and impact of that change in budget on the overall project (including dropped activities, change in output/outcome indicators, etc.) and make this report available to all stakeholders involved, enhancing clarity and certainty.</i></p> <p><i>Directed to FCDO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance communication with regards to possible budget changes between financial years.</li> <li>▪ In consultation with ITC, earmark/secure the necessary funding to implement those activities that require more than a financial year to be implemented, thereby ensuring efficiency and sustainability of such activities.</li> </ul>

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>focusing on export promotion projects through enterprise support and B2B events, which resulted in higher efficiency with notable recording of additional exports. FCDO and UKTP deprioritised monitoring and evaluation, including impact measurement due to reprogramming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UKTP's country-led approach, reprogramming and annual programming enhanced efficiency of the programme overall. While the monitoring and reporting system provided sufficient information to support adaptive management, the evaluator assesses that the deprioritisation of M&amp;E impacted negatively on the ability to measure efficiency.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Rec. 3 - Strengthen M&amp;E framework</b></p> <p><i>Future UKTP programmes and future UK-funded programmes, in general, should focus on activities that can be implemented within a financial year. Activities implemented across financial years have the risk of being defunded, limiting the programme's effectiveness, sustainability and impact.</i></p> <p><i>Directed to UKTP:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design activities and follow-up activities to be fulfilled within a UK financial year.</li> <li>Track and report the changes experienced in the original planning due to the change in budget.</li> </ol> <p><i>Responsibility for implementation: Programme management</i></p> <p><i>Note to ITC management: When facing a deprioritisation or change in budget, track and report the changes and impact of that change in budget on the overall project (including dropped activities, change in output/outcome indicators, etc.) and make this report available to all stakeholders involved, enhancing clarity and certainty.</i></p>

**IMPACT**

- The evaluation found that the programme was impactful in increasing the ability of the supported companies to reach out to UK and European markets. However, the UKTP did not manage to meet the number of enterprises doing business with the UK/EU. Most of the additional USD 80 million worth of exports generated by the Programme appears to stem from the activities relating to Output 4 and Output 5, for which the outputs provide direct export support to the companies.
- The evaluation notes that effects of the programme may have been distortive as they benefitted some companies over others, especially those with greater absorption capacity, higher baseline sales values (e.g. larger companies), and those already exporting. ITC reported that the UKTP facilitated a total of USD 29.4 million worth of

The UKTP Programme increased the ability of the supported companies to reach out to UK and European markets and in creating, maintaining or improving jobs. However, the UKTP did not manage to meet the number of enterprises doing business with the UK/EU, having achieved only 50% of its target objective of 100 companies.

The effects of the programme may have been distortive as they benefitted to e.g., larger companies over others.

Overall, there is room to improve the measurement of jobs and trade increases collected by the UKTP. The numbers reported by ITC are hard to benchmark, as jobs maintained do not include a value for those lost,

**Rec. 4 - Achieving sustainable impact**

*Future UKTP programmes should also work on improving the business environment of the countries they work with, taking a sectoral approach This could also be achieved through partnerships with other programmes.*

*Directed to UKTP*

- Identify possible partnerships to work together on business environment and sectoral reforms.
- Balance out the work between the business environment and institutional reforms and direct company support.
- Work around business environment should be sector-focused trade facilitation, with a direct

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>indirect trade, in comparison to the objective of USD 25 million.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The evaluation found, on the basis of the data provided by ITC, that the programme was impactful in creating, maintaining or improving jobs. Madagascar concentrates most of the gains, with 75% of all jobs created, maintained or improved in the country (74% of jobs for women). This reflects the labour-intensive nature of the sector covered in Madagascar – textiles and garments.</li> <li>▪ Overall, the evaluation found that there is room to improve the measurement of jobs and trade increases collected by the UKTP. The numbers reported by ITC are hard to benchmark, as jobs maintained do not include a value for those lost, while reasons for retention would have been helpful to collect. The design of the project did not have a clear vision on how to make observable comparisons of performance between the different cohorts. Additionally, the Finally, the indicator on indirect trade facilitated by the UKTP shows a limited link to the work of the UKTP.</li> <li>▪ The UKTP supported several SDGs, including SDG 1 on ending poverty, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. The UKTP’s capacity-building activities, multistakeholder partnerships and activities aimed at promoting LDC trade have also contributed towards the achievements of SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals.</li> </ul>	<p>while reasons for retention would have been helpful to collect.</p>	<p>connection to exporting specific products to the UK.</p> <p><i>Responsibility for implementation: Programme management</i></p> <p><i>Directed to FCDO and DBT:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct trade advisers to work closely with the in-country UKTP team, tasking them with identifying the need and opportunities for reform.</li> <li>▪ Recognise the value that business environment reforms have. Without business environment reforms, B2B activities might have a direct but short impact. Coupled with business environment reforms, B2B activities can have a wider and more substantial impact across the targeted sector.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note to FCDO and DBT: It is important to note that the activities under this recommendation cannot be implemented within a single financial year</i></p>

**SUSTAINABILITY**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The programme’s implementation report identifies the UKTP’s approach to ensure sustainability and promoting local ownership of the different interventions: focusing on high potential businesses, creating commercially beneficial relationships between value chain stakeholders, developing institutional capacity where it can provide benefit during the project and where the institution can take over the assistance, designing and adapting based on evidence.</li> <li>▪ The evaluation found that the benefits of the programme are likely to be sustained: With regard to the work done under Output 1 and Output 2, the evaluator found the work to be sustainable in the future. Training undertaken under Output 3 are expected to have lasting impacts in the different</li> </ul>	<p>The evaluation concluded that the benefits of the programme are likely to be sustained, although exit strategies could have enhanced this area.</p> <p>Overall, the impacts of the reprogramming on the project’s sustainability were relatively small and targeted to specific outputs. With regards to Output 2, the reprogramming led to focus on creating more transparent and predictable environment for the international business communities in Mauritius, Côte d’Ivoire, Madagascar, and supporting the national quality infrastructure in Comoros. The reprogramming did not negatively impact the outcomes of Output 3, supporting business support organisations, despite this output being deprioritised</p>	<p><b>Rec. 5 - Design Exit Strategies</b></p> <p><i>Future UKTP programmes should adopt exit strategies and overall sustainability measures.</i></p> <p><i>Directed to UKTP:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Design sustainability measures and exit strategies for each specific country project, reporting changes and challenges as they emerge and adapting the exit strategy in light of the same.</li> </ol>
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Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>organisations, especially if these are able to retain the trained staff. Through Output 4, the UKTP managed to have a substantial impact on the way the targeted MSMEs conduct business. With regards to Output 5, the survey highlighted expectations of sustaining the results and changes made under UKTP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overall, the evaluation found that the impacts of the reprogramming on the project's sustainability were relatively small and targeted to specific outputs.</li> </ul>	<p>during the last financial year. Output 4 and Output 5 were also impacted by the reprogramming, and the evaluator found that the focus on these two outputs might play against the sustainability of the programme.</p>	<p>Directed to FCDO and DBT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The FCDO should consider the implications of abrupt ending of activities, and being in country, help liaise with other donors/international organisations that may continue some of the activities.</li> <li>b. The FCDO should consider the exit strategy of any new activity at the start of design and implementation and consider the risks of funding cuts throughout implementation.</li> </ol> <p><i>Note to ITC management: UKTP did consider channels to keep projects 'alive' and sustain some communications with countries. A more strategic approach to high funding risk projects of this nature is needed to improve the sustainability of results, and to remove reputational risks arising from cuts and redirections. The exist strategy is also helpful to motivate the staff of ITC in having a vision of the trajectory of activities.</i></p>



## 1. Introduction and methodology

1. This report presents the results from the evaluation of the **United Kingdom Trade Partnership (UKTP) Programme**, carried out by the ITC, under the management of the Division for Enterprise Competitiveness and Institutions. This Programme, implemented between 2019 up to now, was designed as project portfolio carried out across multiple African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries to support the utilisation of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the beneficiary ACP countries and the United Kingdom.
2. The evaluation, carried out between March and December 2023, covered the entirety of the Programme from its start. The report presents methodological elements (Chapter 1), followed by a description of the UKTP Programme (Chapter 2). The report then presents the evaluation findings (Chapter 3), and the conclusions, lessons and recommendations stemming from the evaluation (Chapter 4).

### 1.1 Context, purpose, objectives and scope

#### 1.1.1 Context

3. The UKTP Programme is an initiative funded by the United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) designed to **support ACP countries in taking advantage of the duty-free quota-free access to the European Union (EU) and UK markets that they enjoy under the EPAs**. The programme was designed to support ACP countries to effectively implement and maximise the benefits of the EPAs, promoting trade under the existing EU EPAs and the subsequent EPAs with the UK. Such an objective was pursued by various channels, such as increasing awareness of firms and institutions on how to access the UK/EU markets and better-identifying trade obstacles across all Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligible EPA countries. The programme also aimed to build the capacity of targeted firms/products to export to UK/EU markets in selected pilot countries: **Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe**.
4. The programme was originally intended to last three years, from April 2019 until March 2023. The programme was later extended under a new operating model to last until March 2024. Following the conclusion of the original implementation period, the International Trade Centre's (ITC) Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) contracted Mr Paul Baker, Chairman of International Economics Consulting Group, to conduct the evaluation of the UKTP.

#### 1.1.2 Purpose

5. The overarching purpose of this Evaluation is to provide ITC, as the Programme implementer, as well as the Programme funder with evidence-informed and actionable recommendations for strengthening related Aid for Trade interventions, especially their design, implementation, sustainability, and specifically their framework and functioning.
6. The evaluation answered a set of specific questions directly linked to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria to assess development interventions. As highlighted in the terms of reference (TOR), the evaluation was driven by an overarching question, setting the strategic orientation for this evaluation: **what are the lessons to learn from this Programme on what worked well/less well to inform ITC and the funder on where to focus efforts in future programming for export and import promotion?**

#### 1.1.3 Objectives and intended use/users

##### *Objectives*

7. More specifically, the objectives of the evaluation were to:
  - Provide information on the contribution of the various projects to achieving the Programme objectives and on the added value of ITC's intervention.
  - Provide learning information on the projects' contribution to trade, market intelligence and export promotion.

- Formulate lessons learned and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project design and implementation.
  - Provide insights and learning on the achievement of the Programme's longer-term objectives and:
    - On cross-cutting work on large-scale Programmes, in view of supporting ITC future programming.
    - On identifying drivers for the effective provision of the UK's bilateral trade-related assistance, in view of supporting FCDO and ITC's expertise to make sustainable trade happen.
    - On the agility of the Programme to face crisis and contextual changes over the period up to now.
8. As described in Section 2.3 and under Chapter 3, the UKTP Programme was affected by budget cuts that impacted the prioritisation of efforts, with consequences on the scope of M&E activities. Therefore, the present evaluation was carried out to take stock on the Programme achievements to date and to suggest ways to strengthen both ITC and FCDO related interventions.

#### *Intended use & users*

9. The terms of reference for the evaluation are explicit about its intended target audiences. The main intended users of this evaluation are:
- Senior ITC Management, as the evaluation aims to provide strategic information for ITC programming on bilateral trade relations as well as for the positioning and coordination of large-scale trade-related interventions.
  - ITC divisions, as the evaluation aims to provide insights on the operationalization and coordination modalities for mobilizing all ITC divisions and forms of expertise.
  - The Funder (FCDO), as the evaluation process, took stock of the Programme interventions with an analytical perspective to inform future programming on trade-related assistance.
  - Partners and beneficiaries, as the evaluation is expected to be made publicly available to any stakeholders and rightsholders interested in learning more about ITC actions and trade interventions.

#### 1.1.4 Scope

10. The scope of the evaluation encompassed all projects and activities in the UKTP Programme between **March 2019 and March 2023**. The evaluation covers the programme implementation and management across all target countries, except for the Central Asia portfolio, which had activities planned to be implemented between February 2023 and April 2024. The evaluation considered the Programme since its design and inception stage as a **project portfolio**. The evaluation looked into account the **structure, systems, and procedures** that supported the operations of the UKTP Programme. The evaluation did not take into account the individual performance of those involved in its governance procedures or strategic and operational management.

## 1.2 Evaluation process and methodological framework

### 1.2.1 Process

11. The evaluation took place **between March 2023 and October 2023**. The evaluation was structured across three main phases:

#### Inception phase

This phase, which started in February 2023 and ended in April 2023, included an initial desk study, a field mission to Madagascar and a series of stakeholder consultations with different departments of ITC, FCDO and private sector beneficiaries to gather information and achieve a common understanding of the evaluation's objectives and the activities implemented to date. At the outset, the team reviewed all relevant programming documents, identifying and reviewing the context and concept of the project, its goals, specific objectives, outputs, activities, work plan, objectively verifiable indicators, envisaged stakeholders, and assumptions. Subsequently, the team reviewed the different annual reports, together with the relevant information provided by ITC and the project's Theory of Change (ToC) based on the results framework. The key output of this phase was the Inception Report.

**Implementation phase** The implementation phase started following the approval of the inception report, and it lasted from April 2023 to September 2023. The implementation phase involved data collection (both remotely and on-site) and analysis, as described in Section 1.4. Following the data collection, analysis was carried out, answering the different evaluation questions outlined in section 2.5.

**Closing phase** After the submission of the complete draft report, a presentation was made by the consultant to ITC in order to receive feedback on the findings. Thereafter, the report was revised to incorporate feedback and produce the final report.

### 1.2.2 Criteria and questions

12. Specific questions and sub-questions addressed by the evaluation, organized by criteria, are summarised in the table below.

**Table 1 - UKTP Evaluation Questions**

Questions	Sub-questions
<p><b>Relevance</b> How well was the UKTP Programme planned and designed to answer needs relative to the use of EPA by ACP countries?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well were the stakeholder's needs identified and expressed at the stage of the Programme planning and design, including the scalability (up/down) of interventions?</li> <li>• How well are proposed Programme activities, as well as expected results, aligned with beneficiary needs, including women's business enterprises and enterprises in different segments and locations, including on the destination market?</li> <li>• How well did the programme reflect demand requirements and design activities around those?</li> <li>• How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the relevance of the interventions?</li> <li>• What lessons can be learnt from UKTP to enhance the relevance of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coherence</b> How well were the UKTP Programme interventions aligned with other ITC interventions and other trade-related technical assistance interventions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well were the projects and activities positioned and articulated with other complementary projects or activities in ITC UN Partners and the wider development community at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation? To what extent did UKTP realize synergies between projects within the programme and with other ITC programmes? Where possible, the evaluation will also consider other aid for trade programmes in countries working on similar themes.</li> <li>• How well were the projects and activities of the projects and activities articulated with other relevant trade-related projects or activities, including from FCDO, DIT and the EU, at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation?</li> <li>• How well did UKTP leverage the FCDO network, including regional trade advisors? What can be learned from this structure of intervention?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Effectiveness</b> How well does the UKTP Programme perform to deliver on its specific intended outputs and outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well did the programme achieve its intended outputs to date? And what intended or unintended results can be observed to date?</li> <li>• How well did the programme perform to increase the awareness of firms and institutions on how to access the UK/EU markets? On raising their awareness of the potential benefits of EPA? And on trade obstacles across all ODA-eligible EPA countries?</li> <li>• Depending on country contexts, what seemed to be the most effective in supporting EPA uptake and trade facilitation for different beneficiary segments and for women's business enterprises?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Efficiency</b> How well were the UKTP Programme resources allocated and used to carry out intended activities and to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How clear were the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting? How good is the M&amp;E system in place? Did it enable real-time implementation assessment and course correction?</li> <li>• How good was the Programme Value for Money (i.e., how adequate were the inputs for the programme? How well did the inputs lead to the intended outputs? How well did the outputs lead to the intended</li> </ul>

Questions	Sub-questions
achieve the UKTP Programme objectives?	<p>outcomes as well as to benefits for developing countries? and how well did UKTP achieve impacts in relation to inputs provided)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well-suited are the different delivery models (grants, service providers, consultants) to deliver in an economical and timely way?</li> <li>• How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the efficiency and programme synergies of UKTP?</li> <li>• What lessons can be learnt from UKTP on enhancing the efficiency, M&amp;E, and programme synergies of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact</b> How well did the UKTP Programme perform in achieving its longer-term objectives to increase trade between EPA countries and the UK, create job opportunities, plus achieve SDGs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well did the programme contribute to building the ability of targeted firms/products, including women business enterprises, to export to UK/EU markets?</li> <li>• How well did the programme contribute to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of jobs? (by gender)</li> <li>• How adequate was the measurement of jobs and trade appropriate to provide evidence on the intended impact of UKTP?</li> <li>• How well did the programme contribute to achieving relevant SDGs?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability</b> How well did the UKTP Programme integrate issues related to the sustainability of interventions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well were issues related to the Programme sustainability identified and integrated at the stage of Programme planning, design, and implementation?</li> <li>• How likely are the benefits of the programme to be sustained? To what extent will beneficiaries use or build on the results of activities after the Programme closure?</li> <li>• How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the sustainability of the outcomes in the future?</li> <li>• What lessons can be learnt from UKTP to enhance the sustainability of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?</li> </ul>

Source: Terms of Reference for the UKTP Evaluation

### 1.2.3 Approach and design

- The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach based on the use of Key Informants Interviews (conducted both remotely and on-site in ITC Geneva, in Madagascar and in the UK), of a documentary review and of an online survey. The evaluation also used a participatory and collaborative approach to engage with stakeholders (especially UKTP Programme management) in the evaluation process, so they may better understand the evaluation and the programme being evaluated and ultimately use the evaluation findings for decision-making.
- A non-experimental design was used, especially given the fact that the Programme did not get a chance to gather clear baseline information before the start of interventions, so a pre-test/post-test design was not possible.

## 1.3 Data collection

### 1.3.1 Documentary review

- As part of the inception process, the evaluation completed a systematic review of all the documentation provided and referenced by ITC to the evaluation expert (Corporate, Programme and Project documentation – see list of documents in Annex).

### 1.3.2 Key Informant Interviews

- During the inception phase, the evaluation expert conducted a field mission to Madagascar to meet with the ITC project team and relevant project stakeholders, including the Economic Development Board, the Ministry of Trade and Consumption and several private sector companies. The evaluator also

conducted field missions to Switzerland to meet with ITC’s programme and project management teams and to the United Kingdom to meet with the funder of the project.

17. The evaluator conducted interviews with ITC staff, FCDO and Department for Business and Trade (DBT) staff, national coordinators in the country, Trade and Investment Support Institutions (TISIs) and firms in the country that received technical assistance support, and ITC consultants engaged in the project. The evaluator also spoke to one external evaluator of ITC who was covering stakeholders based in Ghana for a separate project to receive his findings on the UKTP for those markets. In total, 70 persons were interviewed as part of the evaluation.
18. All other key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted virtually in a semi-structured format, with an interview guide to structure the interview but without any strict order of questions. The identified stakeholders are presented in table 2.

**Table 2 – Stakeholders targeted for KIIs**

Source	Programme Management Level	Project level
Officials from ITC	●	●
Consultants hired by ITC to implement activities under UKTP.		●
Funding agencies, such as officials from the UK’s FCDO	●	●
Relevant UK line agencies, such as the UK’s DBT	●	●
Private sector in the target countries. An appropriate representation of stakeholders amongst Small-Island Developing Islands (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Land-locked developing countries (LLDCs), and across national languages and geographies will be ensured.		●
Private sector in the UK, based on a list provided by ITC of different private sector stakeholders that have benefited from the project intervention. This data is expected to be available from the different enterprise surveys conducted.		●
Trade support institutions benefiting from interventions of the programme or of relevance to the implementation of activities.		●

Source: Inception Report for the UKTP Evaluation

### 1.3.3 Online survey

19. Twenty-three institutions that were supported under the UKTP participated in the online survey, which was distributed in both English and French. Some of these were also consulted through KIIs. The online survey was undertaken to complement the responses obtained from the KIIs, given the wide range of programme stakeholders across diverse locations. The survey also served to validate the insights obtained from the KIIs. The survey was designed by the independent evaluator in close collaboration with ITC’s IEU. The survey was distributed by ITC and administered by the evaluator.

## 1.4 Evaluation management, conduct and quality control

20. The Evaluation was commissioned and managed by ITC’s IEU. The IEU selected an individual evaluation expert following a call for expression of interest and a formal application process. The IEU internally reviewed and validated the design of the TOR, the inception report, as well as the final evaluation report for quality assurance, ensuring that the process and deliverables met the relevant principles and guidelines. In addition, the team of IEU provided guidance and oversight throughout the evaluation process.
21. The evaluation was conducted independently by an expert external to ITC, selected by ITC’s IEU. The evaluation was conducted by Mr Paul R Baker, Chairman of International Economics Consulting Group. The evaluator was not subject to any undue influence by any of the parties involved in the delivery,

management, or supervision of the programme. The evaluator had not been engaged in the programme in any manner prior to the evaluation. The evaluator had the full freedom to conduct the evaluative work impartially and was able to freely express his assessment. The documents and data provided as evidence in the evaluation were entirely obtained from ITC and were not audited or independently verified for their accuracy. In other words, the evaluation relied on the good faith of ITC's personnel to share without interference all documents pertaining to the programme. Whenever requested information, data or documents were not provided by ITC to the evaluator, this has been indicated in the evaluation report, with explanations provided by ITC included in the report as to why the information was not provided. Interviews with third parties to ITC were conducted without ITC being present, thereby allowing respondents to engage freely in their feedback to the evaluator. The survey was administered by the evaluator, independently of ITC. The survey link was distributed to potential trade support institutions by ITC, clarifying that the survey was anonymous, and results aggregated to minimise the fear of retribution.

22. The independence of this evaluation is also vested in the IEU's Head of Evaluation to directly commission, produce, publish, and disseminate duly quality-assured evaluation reports in the public domain without undue influence by any party.

## 1.5 Limitations

### 1.5.1 Width of project portfolio in relation to evaluation resources

23. The evaluation process faced a number of challenges, but the evaluator was able to adapt the necessary mitigation strategies to overcome those. The evaluator relied on two surveys as sources of information. On the one hand, the survey, described in section 1.3.3., was implemented as part of the evaluation process and was aimed at those TISIs that benefited from the project. On the other hand, the evaluation also relied on the results of the SME Survey implemented as part of the UKTP programme to monitor progress on outcome and impact.
24. Both surveys faced low response rates, which might question their representativeness. The evaluator, given the limited resources allocated to the evaluation and the wide geographical coverage of the programme, had to rely mostly on online tools to conduct the KIs, for which organising meetings was, at times, challenging due to the responsiveness of the interviewees.

### 1.5.2 Monitoring and reporting data

25. The evaluation also noted that there is room for improvement in terms of the processes used to keep standard programme documentation across all project countries. The evaluation did not have access to the progress documents at the country-level. In addition, steering committee meeting minutes were only available for one country, namely Comoros. The breakdown of accounting data by activity area and inputs was not made available to the evaluator.
26. A major limitation was the de-prioritisation of the M&E component of UKTP, at the request of the FCDO. Comparing the achievements between countries, and between implementation models, was not possible, due to the lack of comparable baseline information, missing detailed reporting (by country follow-ups and country updates), and most importantly, different tracking indicators or information reported for different countries. Outside events which could affect the performance results were also not reported. The evaluation could not distinguish on the different modalities adopted by each of the countries. Moreover, even yearly comparisons were difficult to analyse as there was not fixed reporting structure from year to year.
27. For efficiency, evolution of expenditure over time is also explored to assess whether the system in place considered rebalancing of resources for higher efficiency. Budget data and actual spending (up to 31 December 2022) were obtained from the UK's Devtracker website, as the financial data available in the quarterly and annual reports was insufficient. Regarding technical efficiency, the management of delivery of the project outputs is assessed against the project implementation plan and targets.
28. It is important to note that the actual spending was not reported based on a standardised coding approach for spending categories, and no information was provided to the evaluator on how much was spent on the project activities. However, using the Development Tracker tool developed by the FCDO, the evaluator was able to collect information on the time series distribution of expenses. UKTP's UK

Trade Partnerships Programme Annual Reports on the other hand provided details on activities and events took place during the projects.

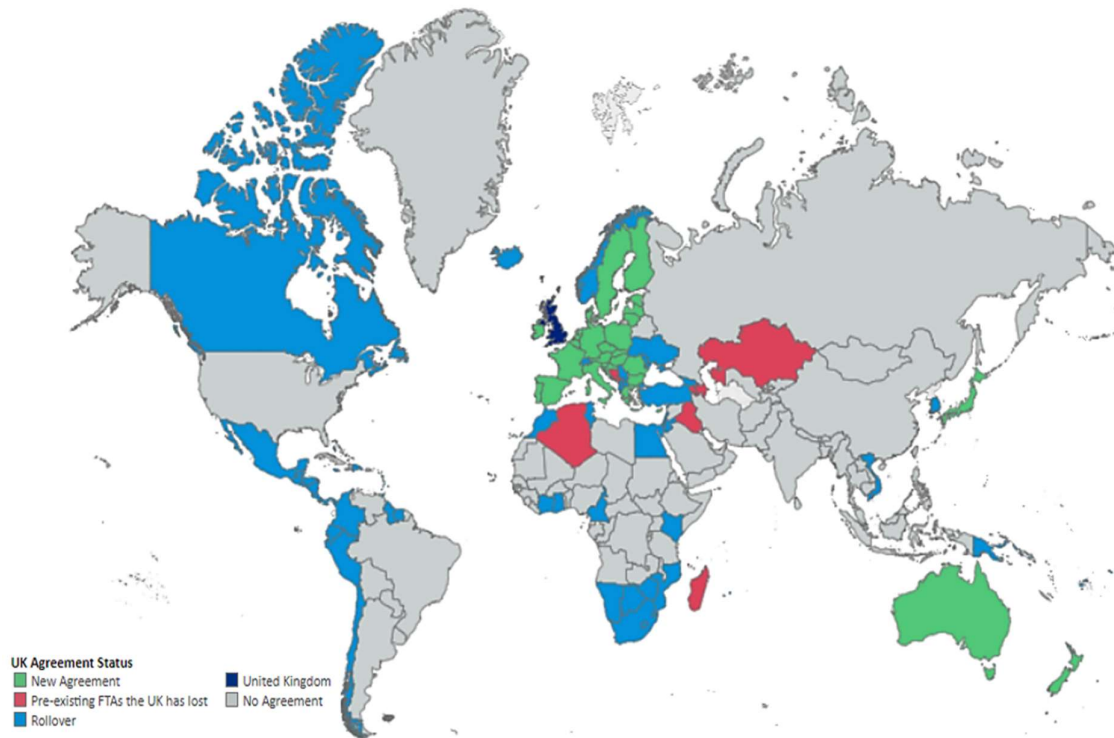
29. The evaluator would like to commend ITC's team managing the UKTP for being extremely helpful and responsive throughout the evaluation process to connect to stakeholders and share information. This contributed to bridging the aforementioned limitations.

## 2. Context and Programme overview

### 2.1 Context

30. The UK's departure from the EU posed a challenge not only for the UK but also for third countries. The EU, at the time of Brexit, had established a network of EPAs with members of the ACP Group of States. One of the consequences of Brexit was, amongst others, the newly acquired ability for the UK to conduct and implement its own trade policy, which can diverge from that of the EU. But it also meant that the UK might no longer benefit from the preferential market access granted by the EPAs to third countries, and vice-versa.
31. Restoring the previous level of market access has been one of the UK's top priorities, with the FCDO and the then Department for International Trade (DIT), now DBT, being active players in either "grandfathering" existing trade agreements or approaching new trade partners with which the EU (28) had no prior trade agreement with, as it would be the case with the recent UK-Australia and New Zealand Trade Agreement.

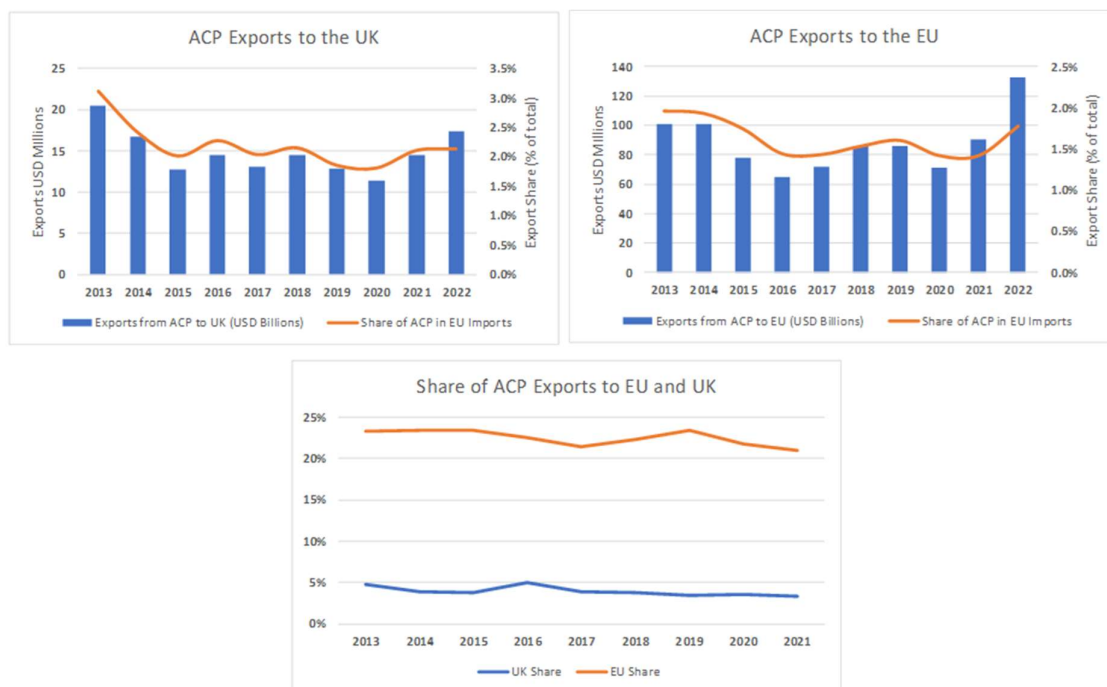
**Figure 1 – The UK's Network of Trade Agreements as of March 1, 2023**



Source: IEC's Trade Insights Database. Accessed on March 25, 2023

32. The EU and UK markets are important partners for Member States of the ACP Group, the primary target of the EPAs. The EU and UK markets accounted for 21% and 3.4%, respectively, of the ACP groups' total exports in 2021. This share has declined for both markets by around two percentage points over the last decade. Moreover, ACP countries have experienced a fall in exports to the UK market, in absolute and relative terms, having lost market share in the UK. ACP countries also lost market share in the EU, even if, in absolute terms, exports did increase (Figure 2). These trends highlight the importance of implementing a trade promotion programme, which aims to intensify trading from the ACP countries to these markets.



**Figure 2 – Value of ACP exports to the EU and UK**

Source: ITC TradeMap. Accessed March 25, 2023

33. While EPA utilization rates by ACP-based exporters are high, there is an overall need to promote trade. For example, in the case of Cameroon, the utilization of preferences of dutiable exports to the EU reached 98.7%, while for Ghana, it reached 97.9% and 97% utilisation rate for Jamaica. However, trade could be further expanded through the EPAs with both the EU and the UK. Furthermore, a recent study highlighted three main areas during the transition to UK-only EPA agreements, which may prevent EPA countries from capturing all the benefits of EPAs:
- Government and regional organizations' limited capacity to transition the EPA agreement within a limited timeline;
  - Low private sector understanding and knowledge of EPA preferences; and
  - Constraints at the firm level to exporting to the UK and EU.

## 2.2 Programme structure and design

34. The UKTP programme was designed to deliver **technical assistance and capacity building in 24 countries across the ACP** membership that are party to EPAs with the UK. The UK-funded 4-year programme implemented by ITC, aimed to contribute to the UK's development cooperation commitments in the EPAs. Thus, the UKTP aimed to support ACP partners to maximise the use of both the EU EPAs and the replicated UK EPAs that entered into force after the Brexit transition period. The Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) replaced the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) on 19 June 2023, and is proposed to increase the scope of the UKTP in the second phase.

### 2.2.1 Programme objectives and scope

35. The programme was designed to support ACP countries to effectively implement and maximize the benefits of the EPAs, promoting trade under the existing EU EPAs and the subsequent EPAs with the UK. The aforementioned objective was pursued by various channels, such as increasing awareness of firms and institutions on how to access the UK/EU markets and better-identifying trade obstacles across all Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligible EPA countries. The programme also aimed to build the capacity of targeted firms/products to export to UK/EU markets in selected pilot countries:

Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe.

36. The programme's expected main outcome is to increase trade between ACP countries and the UK/EU. In addition, the programme has **five key outputs**.
37. Under the first two outputs, ITC implemented activities related to increasing awareness of firms and institutions on how to use UK EPAs' preferences and potential benefits across all beneficiary countries (i.e., EPA Contracting Parties)<sup>2</sup>. ITC enhanced the accessibility to essential and strategic information in the Caribbean, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Ghana, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe. In addition, ITC implemented activities aiming to enhance the transparency of the business environment to export to UK/EU markets in Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, and Madagascar<sup>3</sup>.
38. Outputs 3 to 5 were implemented in selected country pilots: Cameroon, CARIFORUM, Comoros, Fiji, Ghana, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe. An overview of the different activities implemented per outputs is presented below.

**Table 3 – Overview of outputs and key activities**

Expected Outputs	Key activities
<b>Output 1</b> Increased awareness of EPA preferences and benefits	1.1 Prepare specifications for online trade helpdesk tools. 1.2 Integrate ITC and EPA countries' data into the helpdesk tools. 1.3 Test and refine trade helpdesk tools with selected users. 1.4 Launch the online tools. 1.5 Develop and conduct capacity-building program. 1.6 Design support & marketing materials / EPA Sensitization workshop for stakeholders.
<b>Output 2</b> A more transparent business environment for exports	2.1 Set up the online trade obstacles monitoring mechanism in target countries. 2.2 Identify and train national focal points for monitoring mechanisms in each country. 2.3 Engage with agencies to ensure responsiveness to concerns expressed. 2.4 Train and inform the private sector on the monitoring mechanism. 2.5 Conduct interviews with exporters and importers to identify obstacles complementing the online mechanism. 2.6 Analyse data from interviews to identify challenges and priorities for recommendations. 2.7 Validate results of analysis and recommendations. 2.8 Advocacy on discounted sale of main crop to processors.
<b>Output 3</b> Improved institutional/business services to support market access	3.1 Establishment of participatory Alliance platforms. 3.2 Supporting institutions in selected areas such as marketing and branding, production and supply chain and skills development. 3.3 Selected capacity building for specialized agencies in quality and testing. 3.4 Advisory and coaching to institutions on market linkages and delivery of B2B events
<b>Output 4</b> Increased capacity of firms to export to the UK/EU market	4.1 Advisory and training in product development for UK and EU markets. 4.2 Capacity building to develop quality culture. 4.3 Training and assistance on export branding, packaging, supply chain and export management.

<sup>2</sup> Those countries include: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Zimbabwe.

<sup>3</sup> This was achieved by reinforcing the existing Trade Obstacle Alert Mechanism (TOAM) in the case of Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritius, and by implementing the basis for a new TOAM platform in the case of Madagascar. See ITC (2021). Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme. International Trade Centre, Geneva.

Expected Outputs	Key activities
	4.4 Training on sustainability compliance, traceability, and reporting. 4.5 Supporting SMEs to access finance, price hedging, collateral management, and other financing instruments. 4.6 Training on quality requirements.
<b>Output 5</b> Connecting firms to buyers in EU and UK markets	5.1 Position and promote enterprises in target markets. 5.2 Facilitate market linkages through Buyer/seller meetings, trade show assistance and inward buyer visits. 5.3 Facilitate Inward investment where applicable. 5.4 Develop E-commerce where applicable.

Source: Inception Report, various countries. Note: Whilst the activities were tailored to the needs and characteristics of the countries, they share certain similarities and characteristics

### 2.2.2 Programme design

39. The UKTP programme was delivered in two phases. An inception phase, culminating with a consolidated inception report on January 20, 2020, was used to tighten the project's design by mapping relevant stakeholders to involve, assessing their readiness and needs, and subsequently specifying activities to conduct before the actual implementation phase.
40. UKTP's implementation effectively started in January 2020 and was expected to finish at the end of March 2023. The project was extended until March 2024, covering countries benefiting from the UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme (i.e., mainly Central Asia). All projects were carried out under the supervision of a Programme Management component and included four cross-country projects and eight country projects.
41. Whilst the programme started as an UK/EU initiative at the planning stage, the implementation stage was finally centred on the UK market, especially after December 31, 2020, and the end of the Brexit transition period.
42. The UKTP programme works as a project portfolio: eight country/regional projects<sup>4</sup> and two cross-regional projects were developed to tailor the Programme to the different needs, stakeholders, and contexts of the ACP countries involved. All projects have a shared overall objective for all countries, identical to the Programme objectives. Additionally, the Programme includes two cross-regional projects, identified as "Non-ODA" and "Trade Market Information".

## 2.3 Portfolio

43. The projects were implemented between March 2020 and March 2023 due to the delays caused by the reprogramming. The entire portfolio of projects was originally budgeted at USD 22.8 million, but subsequently reduced to USD 15.6 million for the original period of implementation. Expenses were roughly 9% lower than this (see section 3.4 Efficiency). The project is expected to meet its original budget (GBP 17 million) by March 2024.
44. The global workstream on trade intelligence leveraged existing ITC tools to adapt them to the context of different countries, with a view to raising awareness of the EPA and EU/UK markets, as well as identifying and removing potential obstacles to trade. Trade intelligence activities covered a mix of developing on-line digital tools, delivering workshops, and offering trainings.
45. Country components of the UKTP covered a variety of sectors, each chosen depending on country priorities, existing ITC work in the countries, and/or depending on the readiness of the sector to export to the UK/EU markets. The sectors and activities were defined at the inception phase and subsequently revised in line with COVID-19 and budget re-allocations from the FCDO. A description of the relevance

<sup>4</sup> The countries/region considered as pilots are: Cameroon, CARIFORUM, Comoros, Fiji, Ghana, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe

and content of the different activities is provided in sections 3.1 Relevance and section 3.3. Effectiveness.

**Table 5 – Portfolio overview**

ID	Title	Summary of project components	Expected results	Original Budget (USD)	Revised Budget (USD)	Expenses (USD)
B908	Programme Management: UK TP Programme	Coordinate the project portfolio.	Outputs 1,2,3,4,5	5,292,746	3,714,789	2,858,802
B906	Trade Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	TMI interventions in 24 selected countries consisting of activities to foster transparency and access to information on trade opportunities and market access requirements for MSME's.	Outputs 1,2	3,148,142	2,170,559	2,137,817
B900	CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Leverage existing trade partnerships across the region to grow exports in the specialty foods sector and creative (music and film) industries.	Outputs 3,4,5	2,284,153	1,657,810	1,341,318
B905	Fiji: UK Trade Partnership Programme	Bring together the ginger farming communities across Fiji to improve export outcomes, increase employment opportunities and to grow the economy.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,600,263	1,132,625	1,103,963
B902	Côte D'Ivoire: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Focus on building new trade opportunities and local jobs in the agri- business sector, especially for cashew nuts and tropical fruits.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,555,365	1,115,419	1,093,752
B907	Zimbabwe: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Support over smallholder farmers and several large businesses to improve production and implement export strategies several varieties of peas.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,612,213	949,614	943,352
B904	Madagascar: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Work with MSMEs and cooperatives in the textile and clothing sector, to increase the volume and value of exports and to support local industries to grow employment opportunities.	Outputs 3,4,5	2,012,324	1,292,518	1,254,260
B967	PNG: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Brings PNG famers and exporters together to expand coffee beans market opportunities and to build sustainable export industries.	Outputs 3,4,5	863,529	607,710	594,421
B901	Comoros: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Support the entire value chain in the vanilla and clove industries in Comoros to increase trade volumes and bring higher export earnings and new agri-business jobs.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,122,111	745,518	729,696
B903	Ghana: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Work with local trade partners to build greater export potential and improve the volume and value of trade in cocoa derivatives between Ghana and the UK.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,648,743	973,495	875,713
B899	Cameroon: UK Trade Partnerships Programme	Work with MSMEs along the value chain to increase exports of Penja pepper and cocoa to the UK and EU markets.	Outputs 3,4,5	1,676,156	1,212,028	1,083,791
<b>Total</b>				22,815,745	15,572,085	14,016,885
C166 Non-ODA: UK Trade Partnerships Programme						
C272 Central Asia: UK Trade Partnerships Programme						

Source: UK's DevTracker

## 2.4 Programme management and funding

### 2.4.1 Programme management

46. The Programme has a Management Unit composed of four staff based in Geneva consisting of:

The Programme Manager	With overall management responsibility for EPAS. He/she provides vision, ensures quality control, and maintains the relationship with DFID and key implementing partners.
The Programme Management Officer	Who oversaw baseline and data gathering, quarterly and annual financial and progress reporting, and coordination across teams and communications.
The Budget Adviser	Who oversaw all financial processes, including – but not limited to - quarterly and annual financial reporting and forecast in line with DFID requirements.
A Programme Assistant	Who oversaw the administrative processes, including processing financial transactions, overseeing legal processes for MOUs and recruiting consultants.

47. The Trade and Market Information (TMI) sections on Market Access (TMI-MA) and Non-Tariff Measures, Goods and Services (NTM G&S) implemented activities relating to trade information and EPA awareness building (output 1) under the guidance of the Programme Management Unit. TMI will take the lead on work in non-pilot countries and will deliver with project teams in pilot countries. Several sections took the lead in implementing activities relating to strengthening the services of trade support institutions (output 3), strengthening the capacity of firms to export to the UK/EU markets (output 4), and activating market opportunities through Business-to-Business (B2B) matching (output 5). These sections that were engaged in these other areas included the Division of Enterprise competitiveness and Institutions (DECI)'s Sector and Enterprise Competitiveness (SEC), Institutions and Ecosystems Division (IE), Green and Inclusive Value Chains (GIVC).

48. The Programme Management Unit drew on implementation teams across ITC sections for pilot projects:

Geographical sections	<p>The Office of Latin America and the Caribbean team ensured the work of the programme in CARIFORUM countries complements ongoing work under EU-funded Caribbean projects.</p> <p>The Office for Africa teams drew on expertise and relationships gained from earlier and ongoing programmes in Côte D'Ivoire, Cameroon, Comoros and other areas.</p> <p>The Office for Asia and Pacific supported the activities relating to Fiji.</p>
Sectors teams	<p>The ABS team provided support in a number of areas and across different sectors, such as agricultural value chains in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and the Caribbean. The SEC team supported the activities related to outputs 4 and 5 in Madagascar.</p>
Technical teams	<p>The SEC Team played an important cross-cutting role in improving firms' capacity to meet market requirements. Thematic areas, such as marketing, packaging, branding, and other areas of SME development, played an important role during the delivery.</p> <p>The IE Team provided the diagnostic of the strengths and challenges of meso institutions and offered recommended action to support the strengthening of their services portfolio to members and clients.</p> <p>ITC's Project Design Taskforce (PDT), under the Division of Strategic Planning, Performance and Governance (SPPG), provided guidance during the design phase, prior to ITC being awarded the programme, and during the initial implementation phase, on the design aspects and alignment to ITC's mandate and own strategic plans.</p>

49. ITC reported to FCDO through the following channels:

Bi-weekly management calls	Programme management held bi-weekly management calls with FCDO programme management in London. During these calls, ITC programme management and FCDO London brought in field staff or colleagues as needed.
Regular ad-hoc meetings	Regular ad-hoc meetings with the FCDO office in Geneva.
Quarterly activity reports	ITC sent quarterly activity reports, financial summaries, funding requests and risk reviews for the overall programme and individual country-level interventions from the start of implementation (after the inception phase was complete).

50. The Management and governance framework for each pilot country included:

- A local coordinator and other field staff,
- Lead and support institutions with clear definitions of roles and,
- A Steering Committee, where appropriate, chaired by the lead institution to provide strategic guidance. CARIFORUM, Fiji, Comoros, Ghana, Zimbabwe, for example, did not have a Steering Committee.

#### 2.4.2 Programme funding

51. The funding source of the activities undertaken under the UKTP is the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The programme's budget was GBP 17 million after reprioritized activities in 2020 following the reductions to the UK's funding for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). Originally intended to last three years, from April 2019 until March 2023, the programme was later extended under a new operating model to last until March 2024. The programme continues to operate with the original budget.
52. From the available yearly budget allocation data, the annual budgets from financial years April 2019 - Mar 2020 to April 2022 - Mar 2023 decreased year to year with allocated funds of USD 6.1 million in April 2019 - Mar 2020, USD 5.3 million in April 2020 - Mar 2021, USD 2.7 million in April 2021 - Mar 2022 and USD 1.3 million in April 2022 - Mar 2023<sup>5</sup>.
53. In terms of the overall programme funds allocation, the Programme Management Unit and the Trade Intelligence Programme were allocated 24% and 14% of the funds, respectively, while the Country Programmes shared 62% of the funds.

<sup>5</sup> Values were available in USD only.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Relevance

#### How well was the UKTP Programme planned and designed to answer needs relative to the use of EPA by ACP countries?

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How well were the stakeholders' needs identified and expressed at the stage of the Programme planning and design, including on the scalability (up/down) of interventions?
- How well are proposed Programme activities, as well as expected results, aligned with beneficiary needs, including women business enterprises, and enterprises in different segments and locations including on the destination market?
- How well did the programme reflect demand requirements and design activities around those?
- How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the relevance of the interventions?
- What lessons can be learnt from UKTP to enhance the relevance of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?

#### 3.1.1 How well were the stakeholders' needs identified and expressed at the stage of Programme planning and design?

54. Overall, the evaluation found that stakeholders' needs were well identified and expressed at the stage of Programme planning and design. Although EPA countries have up to 90% utilization rates of preferences<sup>6</sup>, UK Government data highlights that the market share of ACP trade has dropped in recent years. Specifically, a scoping study commissioned by the UK Government identified three main areas that may be preventing EPA countries from exporting more to the UK and EU<sup>7</sup>:
1. Limited capacity of Government and regional organisations to transition the EPA agreement within a short period;
  2. Low private sector understanding and knowledge of EPA preferences; and
  3. Constraints at the firm level to exporting to the UK and EU.
55. A recent study by the World Bank confirmed these findings, highlighting businesses' lack of knowledge and awareness as one of the reasons for the lack of trade between countries with trade agreements<sup>8</sup>. Feedback from the stakeholders further highlighting the inability to access the UK and EU markets reflects (1) a lack of export diversification in many partner countries (i.e. not enough different types of products to export); (2) low volumes of production; (3) lack of supply chain integration and linkages with UK/EU firms; (4) inability of firms to meet quality standards; as well as the (5) limited ability of firms to comply with the administrative processes associated with exporting using EPA preferences. Without support to address the challenges, ACP-based exporting firms will continue to experience high market access costs, thereby reducing the impact of the EU/UK EPAs.
56. Supporting UK developing country trading partners to benefit from trade agreements with the UK/EU is in line with the UK Secretary of State's pledge to "develop alongside the Department for International Trade a bold new Brexit-ready proposition to boost trade and investment with developing countries and promote sustainable economic development and job creation" as well as Prosperity Fund objectives to establish an adaptable and high-impact programme to promote international trade and economic growth.

<sup>6</sup> UNCTAD – Database on GSP Utilisation. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Available at: <https://gsp.unctad.org/>

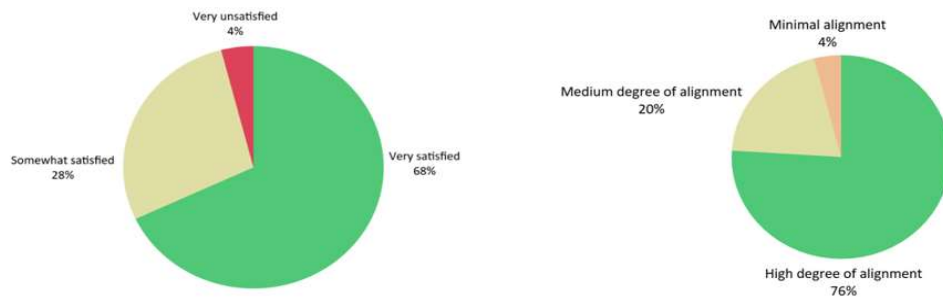
<sup>7</sup> International Economics Consulting (2018). Expanding Trade and Investment Plan. Mauritius

<sup>8</sup> Espitia, A.; Mattoo, A.; Mimouni, M.; Pichot, X. & Rocha, N. (2020). "Preferential Tariffs", in: Mattoo, A.; Rocha, N. & Ruta, M. (eds.) Handbook of Deep Trade Agreements. The World Bank Group, Washington.

57. The evaluation found that the UKTP’s objectives and design responded well to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities. The different stakeholders consulted agreed that the programme identified and addressed their needs well. Whilst the main outputs were common for all the country projects, the fact that each country project undertook a dedicated inception phase, with specific value chains identified based on their national priorities and trade potential to the EU and the UK, contributed to ensuring the relevance of the different activities.
58. The activities around each specific country project were also targeted and were adapted to meet the needs of the country’s stakeholders. The project lifecycle included collaborative involvement of Business Support Organizations (BSOs), government and MSME representatives, as reflected in the notes of the 1st Steering Committee for Cameroon. In Ghana, for example, the process of identification and selection of potential enterprises – i.e., SMEs – for the project started with initial consultations with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI), Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) and the Ghana Export Promotion Agency (GEPA), amongst others<sup>9</sup>, to understand the cocoa derivatives export market and actors. Project sensitisation was organised for 22 MSMEs and 1 Cocoa Value Addition Association to introduce them to the project and a call for application was sent to them afterwards. Out of the 22 MSMEs, 11 MSMEs expressed interest in the project and became beneficiaries.
59. However, the participation of some national stakeholders during the design phase appears to be limited, with certain stakeholders highlighting the limited interaction that ITC had with them during the inception phase. Particularly, business support stakeholders mentioned that the time granted to them to review, evaluate, and provide comments on the draft report was too short and that their involvement came in too late to be able to guide or adapt the activities proposed effectively.
60. The adaptability of the interventions also contributed to the relevance of the different interventions. For example, in Comoros, the initial focus of the project activities did not include training on trade fairs, commercialisation and packaging for vanilla. This was later added at the request of the country’s cooperatives. Similarly, in Fiji, whilst vanilla was initially selected as a priority value chain, it was later removed since the sector was still nascent and not at a scale for commercialisation.
61. Evaluation evidence confirms the relevance of the projects. Most survey respondents were highly satisfied with the programme’s design, activities, and deliverables. The majority (96%) of the respondents to the survey stated that the degree of alignment was high (68%) or moderate (28%), while a few (4%) indicated their dissatisfaction with the project’s design, activities, and deliverables.
62. The survey conducted by the evaluator to trade support institutions also reflected a high degree of relevance of the interventions to the needs of the institutions it supported. Over two-thirds of respondents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with the UKTP, and over three-quarters of respondents expressed a high degree of alignment between the UKTP and their institution’s needs and priorities (Figure 4).

**Figure 4 - Beneficiary perceptions of the alignment of UKTP to TISI needs**

Answers to the question: *What is your general level of satisfaction with the programme’s design, programme activities, and deliverables? To what extent do you feel that the programme is aligned with your institution’s needs and priorities?*



Source: Author Survey, N=25

<sup>9</sup> Additional stakeholders consulted included: Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Standards Authority, Private Enterprise Foundation, Association of Ghana Industries, Ghana Investment Promotion Authority, Federation of Association of Ghanaian Exporters, Cocoa Marketing Company and Ghana Free Zones Authority.



### 3.1.2 How well are proposed Programme activities, as well as expected results, aligned with beneficiary needs, including women's business enterprises and enterprises in different segments and locations, including on the destination market?

63. The UKTP's activities were successfully aligned with the needs of the different beneficiaries. For example:

**Cameroon** The project was aligned with Cameroon's National Development Strategy 2020-2030<sup>10</sup>, which seeks to increase the share of exports of manufactured goods from 26% in 2015 to 54.5% by 2030. The strategy focuses on enhancing exports in several sectors, including, among others, agro-industry, textile, leather, mining, petrochemicals, and the digital sector. It also aims to create a dedicated export promotion agency. In particular, the capacity-building activities of UKTP complemented the government's efforts in priority sectors for agro-industrial development, particularly in the cocoa and pepper subsectors.

**CARIFORUM** The project supported the Caribbean Community's<sup>11</sup> (CARICOM) trade policy, which aims to promote the exports of internationally competitive goods produced in the region and secure market access for these exports<sup>12</sup>. The project was also aligned with the Dominican Republic's trade policy of promoting exports, and it supported the country's strategy of enhancing exports of services related to the creative economy and the audiovisual industry<sup>13</sup>. The project, which focused, amongst others, on promoting specialty foods, was also aligned with CARICOM's Common Agricultural Policy<sup>14</sup> and the "25 by 25 Vision"<sup>15</sup>, which prioritise the region's agricultural development to increase food security and complemented the efforts of the regional bloc to promote creative industries<sup>16</sup>.

**Comoros** The project was aligned with the National Agricultural Investment Plan and the Plan Comores Emergent (PCE)<sup>17</sup>, whose main goal is to enhance the country's food security and relaunch key export sectors such as vanilla, clove and ylang-ylang.

**Côte d'Ivoire** The project was aligned with the National Export Strategy (NES) 2015-2019<sup>18</sup>, which aimed to promote economic growth and development by diversifying exports and developing new export sectors. The NES focused on six priority sectors, such as tropical fruits and cashews, which were the subject of several capacity-building activities under the project.

**Ghana** The project was aligned to the Ghana National Export Development Strategy (NEDS)<sup>19</sup> and complemented other local government initiatives such as "1 District 1 Factory", "Planting for Food and Jobs", and "Planting for Export and Rural Development", initiatives that aim to increase the competitiveness of local products and transition the economy to a manufacturing industrial export-driven economy. The NEDS identifies several priority products, one of which is processed cocoa – a product targeted by the project.

**Madagascar** The project was aligned with the National Development Plan 2015-2019<sup>20</sup>, which highlighted the need to strengthen higher value-added sectors and sectors that generate decent and long-term employment. The project also complemented the

<sup>10</sup> Ministère de l'Économie, de la Planification et de l'Aménagement du Territoire (2020). Stratégie Nationale de Développement 2020-2030. République du Cameroun.

<sup>11</sup> CARICOM includes all CARIFORUM countries except the Dominican Republic.

<sup>12</sup> CARICOM (n.d.) Trade Policy. Caribbean Community. Available from: <https://oldsite.caricom.org/trade-policy/#:~:text=This%20policy%20seeks%20to%20fully,that%20is%20the%20most%20advantageous>

<sup>13</sup> WTO (2023). Trade Policy Review: Dominican Republic. Summary. Report by the Secretariat. World Trade Organisation, WT/TPR/S/435

<sup>14</sup> CARICOM (n.d.) Common Agricultural Policy. Caribbean Community. Available from: <https://caricom.org/documents/common-agriculture-policy/#:~:text=The%20Agricultural%20Policy%20lays%20the,nutrition%20security%20in%20the%20Region.>

<sup>15</sup> CARICOM (2022). 25% by 2025 Reduction in the Regional Food Bill. Caribbean Community.

<sup>16</sup> CARICOM (2022). The CARICOM Secretariat Strategic Plan 2022-2030. Caribbean Community

<sup>17</sup> D'orey, M. A. J. (2020). External finance for rural development. Country case study: Comoros. Overseas Development Institute. Available from: [https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/odi\\_comoros\\_rev.pdf](https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/odi_comoros_rev.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> ITC (2015). Stratégie Nationale D'exportation 2015-2019 République de Côte D'ivoire. International Trade Centre.

<sup>19</sup> MOTI & GEPA (2020). National Export Strategy Document. Republic of Ghana.

<sup>20</sup> Government of Madagascar. (2015). Plan National de Développement 2015-2019. Government of Madagascar

Government's efforts to increase competitiveness and promote the development of Small and Medium Enterprises, stimulate innovation and promote exports<sup>21</sup>.

#### Fiji

The project is aligned with Fiji's National Export Strategy programme<sup>22</sup>, which aims to enhance export competitiveness, value-addition, and diversification. The project also complemented Governmental activities promoting agricultural exports, particularly in the ginger sector, which is one of Fiji's traditional export commodities.

#### Zimbabwe

The project was aligned with Zimbabwe's National Development Strategy 1 (NDS 1) 2021-2025<sup>23</sup>, which focuses on promoting exports, diversifying export markets and strengthening mineral and agricultural value chains. The NDS 1 also emphasises increasing agricultural production and productivity – an area supported by the project.

#### Papua New Guinea

The project supported Papua New Guinea's National Trade Policy (NTP) 2017-2032<sup>24</sup>, which seeks to support product development for exports and improve export competitiveness. The NTP also aims to modernize the agricultural sector to increase productivity as well as double the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP by 2025. The project, which supported several activities in the coffee sector, complements the government's initiatives.

64. The relevance of the support provided to trade support institutions is recognised in the Evaluation conducted by ITC in 2020<sup>25</sup>. As highlighted in the evaluation, the work in this area is "relevant to the development needs of participating countries and government priorities because those that do participate in the programme have the increase in trade and exports as strategic priorities to boost economic growth."

### 3.1.3 How well did the programme reflect demand requirements and design activities around those?

65. The activities implemented both at the global and country levels reflect a mix of demand and supply side requirements. As highlighted by the project staff, when selecting the value chains, ITC identified their export potential to the EU and the UK, meeting the demand requirements. Furthermore, activities under Output 1-2 tackled the lack of information (supply-side), whilst activities implemented under Output 3-5 prepared the participants to meet the client's demands (demand-side).
66. Furthermore, the project's implementation strategy considered demand and supply requirements. In Zimbabwe, for example, ITC followed the Alliance for Action (A4A) methodology, a multi-stakeholder initiative that brings together private and public actors to raise sector competitiveness and promote income-risk diversification across smallholder farmers and SMEs. This methodology aims to improve commercial linkages and participation in trade by targeting value chain operators focusing on several product-market combinations. Specifically, the various value chain stakeholders, including lead firms and support institutions, work together and form market-led partnerships that enhance value chain integration, technical support, policy alignment and local institutional capacity building.

### 3.1.4 How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the relevance of the interventions?

67. Reprogramming and annual programming had an impact on the relevance and outcomes of the UKTP project. One of the key effects was the removal of certain activities due to budget cuts necessitated by the reprogramming. This change in resource allocation led to a shift in project priorities, affecting both the nature and extent of interventions. The impact of the reprogramming, however, varied across different countries. While Madagascar experienced minimal impacts, as their budget was not affected, Papua New Guinea faced significant changes, including the removal of a vital activity, such as the mapping of export procedures. Similarly, a training on coffee processing in Papua New Guinea had to cancel its practical component due to budget cuts. In Ghana, budget cuts affected activities such as support to development or improvement of company website, capacity building on visibility for MSMEs,

<sup>21</sup> Ministère de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat (n.d.) Attribution. Government of Madagascar. Available from: <https://micc.gov.mg/le-ministre/>

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Trade, Cooperatives, Small and Medium Enterprises (2023). National Export Strategy. Government of Fiji.

<sup>23</sup> Republic of Zimbabwe (2020). National Development Strategy 1, 2021-2025. Republic of Zimbabwe.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry (2017). Papua New Guinea National Trade Policy, 2017-2032. Government of Papua New Guinea.

<sup>25</sup> ITC (2020). Evaluation of the ITC Programme 'Strengthening Trade and Investment Support Institutions'. International Trade Centre

support to virtual B2B and market penetration, etc. Furthermore, ITC stakeholders highlighted that the implementation team had to abandon their climate and gender action plans.

68. The reprogramming prioritised those outputs with higher and more direct impact. Those outputs working on macro-level components, such as Output 2, which aimed to create a transparent and predictable business environment for international trade, and Output 3, which aimed to improve institutional/business services to support market access, were deprioritised, with the efforts focused on meso-level components, particularly Output 4, focused on building capacity of firms to export to the UK/EU market, and Output 5, connecting firms to buyers in EU and UK markets.
69. Annual programming also had a significant influence on how the UKTP interventions were executed. Originally designed with a three-year approach for country projects, the transition to an annual programming approach in 2020 altered the project's time horizon and implementation dynamics. As highlighted by project stakeholders, this shift posed challenges regarding project continuity, planning, and alignment with changing development priorities. Notably, this change influenced the outcomes in countries like Comoros and Papua New Guinea. Specifically, Comoros faced setbacks due to the inability to predict annual programming shifts early on, impacting Comoros' strategic planning, which shifted from building cooperatives and helping export-ready companies to supporting the national quality infrastructure. It has been reported that the critical factor in deciding this switch brought by the reprogramming was the visibility of the intervention.
70. Despite these challenges, the UKTP project demonstrated that a focused approach, prioritizing activities that directly contribute to sales in target markets and job creation, can yield positive outcomes. The Annual Report 2022/2023 highlights that reprogramming Output 2 was effective. In the original design, UKTP had planned business surveys that would underpin the establishment of the Trade Obstacle Alert Mechanisms (TOAMs). During the reprogramming, UKTP hypothesized that the TOAM support could continue without the underlying business surveys and strategic dialogue that were to precede it, and that proved to be correct.

### 3.1.5 What lessons can be learnt from UKTP to enhance the relevance of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?

71. **Improved Communication and Coordination:** It is crucial to establish effective communication and coordination mechanisms from the very beginning of the programme. This could involve ensuring clear lines of communication between all involved parties, including the implementing agency, funding organization (FCDO), and local stakeholders, to streamline processes, prevent misunderstandings, and ensure everyone is aligned towards project goals. This is particularly relevant in the event of reprogramming, where clear and direct communication is necessary.
72. **Focused Allocation of Resources:** Instead of spreading resources thinly across various aspects of the project, consider concentrating resources strategically to achieve greater impact. Stakeholder consultations suggest that in the next phase, a more focused approach can lead to more substantial outcomes. Prioritise areas with the highest potential for positive change and allocate resources accordingly.
73. **Sector Risk Assessment:** Acknowledge that certain sectors might carry more risks than others. When selecting sectors for intervention, it is important to assess potential risks and challenges associated with each sector. This assessment can guide decision-making and resource allocation, helping to manage potential setbacks more effectively. ITC stakeholders highlighted that this approach has been adopted in the UKTP's extension, with the project focusing on UK export-ready sectors and companies and critical imports for the UK.
74. **Ambitious Sector Selection:** When choosing sectors for intervention, strive for ambitious goals that can lead to significant trade impact. While some sectors might seem less ambitious in terms of trade potential, considering those sectors with the greatest potential to create additional trade, jobs and overall economic development can yield better results and contribute to overall project success.
75. **Strategic Utilization of Future Extensions:** If the project has opportunities for future extensions or phases, ensure that these extensions are utilized strategically (i.e., identify opportunities for collaborations with third projects, which can take forward the work carried out to date). Use insights and lessons learned from the current phase to make more informed decisions about extending the project to new areas or countries. Consider economies of scale and focus on maximizing the efficiency of future extensions.

## 3.2 Coherence

### How well were the UKTP Programme interventions aligned with other ITC interventions and other trade-related technical assistance interventions?

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How well were the projects and activities positioned and articulated with other complementary projects or activities in ITC UN Partners and the wider development community at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation? To what extent did UKTP realize synergies between projects within the programme and with other ITC programmes?
- How well were the projects and activities of the projects and activities articulated with other relevant trade-related projects or activities, including from FCDO, DIT and the EU, at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation?
- How well did UKTP leverage the FCDO network, including regional trade advisors? What can be learned from this structure of intervention?

#### 3.2.1 How well were the projects and activities positioned and articulated with other complementary projects or activities in ITC UN Partners and the wider development community at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation? To what extent did UKTP realize synergies between projects within the programme and with other ITC programmes?

76. Regarding the UKTP's external coherence, the involvement of ITC with other organisations was generally good, with some exceptions. In Côte d'Ivoire, ITC cooperated closely with the CBI, the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries from the Netherlands. CBI was present in the Steering Committee meetings for Côte d'Ivoire's activities, which enabled the two institutions to coordinate activities and achieve synergies. For example, CBI and ITC worked on the Cashew Connect event, each funding 50% of the event. ITC also collaborated with the German Export Promotion desk to facilitate the attendance of Ivorian exporters at Fruit Logistica, each funding half of the cost of attendance, sharing matchmaking activities and holding regular meetings to avoid overlaps. In Ghana, UKTP worked closely with the SANKOFA project, funded by SECO and implemented by ITC. Similarly, the UKTP worked closely with the Association of Ghana Industries to implement a series of capacity building activities and trainings amongst the Association's members.
77. However, the same close cooperation was not seen with certain domestic stakeholders. One major trade support institution in Ghana highlighted that, despite the existence of a Memorandum of Understanding with that institution, ITC did not coordinate with them over their participation in an overseas event, which led to separate stands from the same country being set up.
78. In terms of internal coherence, the evaluation evidenced good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams. In the CARIFORUM project, ITC heavily involved the Alliance for Action, an ITC initiative to establish a network that transforms food systems and advances the Sustainable Development Goals through producer partnerships that cultivate ethical, climate-smart, sustainable agricultural value chains to identify and recruit experts across different activities.
79. ITC had a good transition with the Netherland Trust Fund Phase V (NTF-V), also implemented by ITC in Ghana. NTF-V has a market development and sales generation activity, but it was put on hold while UKTP was being implemented. Following the conclusion of the UKTP, the NTF-V has onboarded 10 companies previously benefiting from UKTP support, and in Comoros, the work on the national quality infrastructure has been taken up by an EU-funded project implemented by ITC. ITC stakeholders highlighted that, in the current phase, the two projects are complementary with UKTP focusing on small women-led artisanal chocolate makers while NTF pursues work with other UKTP beneficiaries.

### 3.2.2 How well were the projects and activities of the projects and activities articulated with other relevant trade-related projects or activities, including from FCDO, DIT and the EU, at the stage of Programme planning? And during their implementation?

80. Overall, the UKTP projects are considered to be aligned and complementary with other stakeholders:

**Cameroon** The UKTP support focused on the Cocoa sector and the Penja Pepper sector in Cameroon. It complemented the World Bank's Cocoa Sector Support Program, which sought to improve the profitability and productivity of the Cocoa sector in Cameroon. The UKTP intervention was also coherent with the EU-funded Penja Pepper Improvement Project, which focused on enhancing the production and marketing of the Penja Pepper in Cameroon and the USAID-funded Cameroon Cocoa and Forests Program, which seeks to promote sustainable cocoa production in the country. The UKTP intervention also supported the Penja Pepper Alliance's objective to strengthen the Penja Pepper value chain in Cameroon. There was no clear collaboration or coordination with the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, a €25 million initiative funded by the European Union, which supports Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in strengthening the economic, social and environmental sustainability of cocoa production in their countries.

**CARIFORUM** The Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export), a CARIFORUM-established intergovernmental agency, concentrates on export promotion for the region. The UKTP intervention provided specialised support to food processing companies and music and film companies, coherent with the activities of Caribbean Export. Other relevant interventions included the Orange Innovation Challenge supported by the Inter-American Development Bank and focused on subsectors of the orange economy such as audiovisual, digital arts and animation, among others. The Cultural and Creative Industries Fund, supported by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Caribbean Export Development Agency, also sought to enhance the enabling environment for the development of the cultural industries sector in CDB borrowing member countries. The UKTP intervention was also coherent with the World Bank Trade Facilitation Program, which focused on aligning countries' trade practices with the World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement.

**Comoros** Several initiatives aim to improve the performance of targeted value chains in Comoros. These include a World Bank project to support the transformation of cash crops and a project by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to increase the revenues of micro, small and medium enterprises and actors in selected value chains in specific yielding sectors. The UKTP intervention focused on the post-harvest part of the value chain taking into account processing and marketing, while the other larger initiatives such as those of the AFD and the World Bank dealt with production in quantity and quality.

**Côte d'Ivoire** There are synergies with the West Africa Competitiveness Program (WACOMP) developed by the European Union with the Economic Community of West African States. The initial work of WACOMP served as a basis for ITC's intervention to promote the cashew and tropical fruit sectors. The She Trades intervention in Côte d'Ivoire focused on value chain development of the cashew sector for women producers, while the UKTP program supported a number of these producers to export cashew nuts and tropical fruits to the UK and European markets. The UKTP intervention also complemented a World Bank project to improve farmers' productivity through access to digital services by offering farmers the opportunity to expand internationally. There is also complementarity with the Cashew Value Chain Competitiveness Promotion Project funded by the World Bank, the Ivory Coast Government and the private sector. In particular, the UKTP supported the investment component of the latter project. That being said, Côte d'Ivoire hosted an EPA implementation programme funded by the European Union, which was neither consulted with nor appeared known to the ITC staff. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Trade Support and Regional Integration Programme (PACIR II) has a budget of €9 billion, funded by the European Union, to provide support for the upgrading and competitiveness of Ivorian enterprises; strengthen their export potential and their presence in regional and international markets through support for priority export sectors; and support the implementation of the Ivorian EPA strategy by strengthening the capabilities of the Ministry of African Integration, the Ministries of Trade and Industry. Finally, there appeared to be no interaction with the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, a €25 million initiative funded by the European Union, which supports Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in strengthening the economic, social and environmental sustainability of cocoa production in their countries.

**Ghana** Ghana is also covered by the WACOMP project, and while the WACOMP is not focused on the cocoa value chain, the UKTP project explored synergies in

the area of export competitiveness, such as sharing of information on training modules developed by WACOMP on trade competitiveness, certification by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and quality standards relevant for SMEs. Many of the donor-funded projects in Ghana are concentrated at the upstream of the cocoa value chain and the UKTP intervention added value to these initiatives by providing support to SMEs to respond to growing opportunities. Nevertheless, Ghana hosted an EPA programme funded by the European Union, which was neither consulted nor appeared known to the ITC staff. Compete Ghana has a budget of €4 million from the European Union, running from 2019 to 2023, to support the country to implement and capitalise on the opportunities of the EPA. It aims at strengthening the institutional framework for implementing the EPA, and encouraging enterprises to export to the EU through a series of enterprise competitiveness activities, including facilitating access to B2B events. There was also no reported interaction with the Sustainable Cocoa Initiative, a €25 million initiative funded by the European Union, supports Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana in strengthening the economic, social and environmental sustainability of cocoa production in their countries.

#### Madagascar

The UKTP intervention had synergies with the Programme d'Appui au Développement des Exportations et de l'Intégration Régionale (PADEIR) supported by the EU and the Government of Madagascar and the Programme de Renforcement des Capacités Commerciales (PRCC) supported by the AFD. The PADEIR aims to build institutional capacity on trade policy development, implement an export strategy, create a new export agency and promote exports to the EU, among others. The UKTP project added to the PADEIR program by capacitating export-oriented companies to export more and improve sustainability while also building the capacities of sector-related institutions. The UKTP also complemented the PRCC, which included a textile and clothing component.

#### Fiji

The UKTP intervention was complementary to several ongoing interventions. By increasing the capacity of the public sector to promote private sector agribusiness, it added to the International Fund for Agricultural Development Agricultural Partnerships Project (FAPP), which focused mainly on MSME-level assistance through a grant mechanism and activities on farming practices to transition from subsistence farming to business farming. The UKTP project also complemented the work of the Market Development Facility funded by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs on export processing for Fijian exporters in relation to new markets, processing and packaging techniques, and marketing and branding with regard to target market requirements.

#### Zimbabwe

The UKTP intervention supported 5 lead firms working with 270 smallholder farmers to promote the production and export of horticulture produce to the UK and EU. The UKTP worked within existing projects in the country, namely the Sodelani Ranching tomato contract farming initiative and the Schweppes lease farming project for tomato production. Furthermore, the UKTP program complemented the Smallholder Irrigation Revitalisation Programme funded by the International Fund for Agriculture Development, the Government of Zimbabwe and the OPEC Fund for International Development, as well as the Smallholder Irrigation Programme implemented by the Food and Agricultural Organisation in partnership with the Government of Zimbabwe and funded by the European Union. The UKTP intervention also supported the Technoserve horticulture export programme in Gweru, Midlands province.

#### Papua New Guinea

The UKTP intervention in Papua New Guinea focused on the coffee sector, and several development partners are implementing initiatives to support the industry. These initiatives include the World Bank's and IFAD's Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Program (PPAP), which seeks to improve coordination between the cocoa and coffee industries and the Transformative Agriculture and Enterprise Development Program (TADEP) supported by the Australian Centre for Agricultural Research and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which seeks to increase agricultural productive capacity and improve market access for farmers, particularly women farmers. The UKTP intervention is also coherent with the Market Development Facility, which focused on the coffee value chain with SMEs and the improvement of certification standards.

### 3.2.3 How well did UKTP leverage the FCDO network, including regional trade advisors? What can be learned from this structure of intervention?

81. Overall, the evaluation found limited interaction between the FCDO network and the UKTP, depending on the country project. An exception to the above is Fiji, Papua New Guinea, CARIFORUM and Madagascar for which stakeholders highlighted an excellent and close interaction. Within FCDO, it is necessary to distinguish between Headquarters, the network and the trade advisors. ITC Stakeholders

highlight that communication with Headquarters was frequent, whilst the wider FCDO network and the role of regional trade advisors could have been better defined, as there was no kick-off meeting with the different advisers, and the communication was not consistent. An exception to the above was Zimbabwe, in which the ITC team UKTP provided monthly feedback to the British Mission in Zimbabwe. Other FCDO-funded projects, such as the Trade and Advocacy Fund 2 (TAF2+), also faced a similar situation. ITC stakeholders highlighted that whilst there were some initial conversations, the discussions stopped early on, and no collaboration was reached. This can be partly attributed to the high turnover experienced by FCDO and DBT. Furthermore, the reprogramming and the uncertainty around the future of the programme also led to small breakdowns in communications.

82. Similarly, there was limited interaction with British stakeholders. The evaluator confirmed with several ITC staff that there was limited interaction with UK-based institutions during the implementation of the activities. An exception to the above was the collaboration with the British Film Institute (BFI), which hosted UKTP's Jamaican beneficiaries at the London Film Festival, and additional participation in UK-based trade fairs such as the Chockfest Festival in Leicester, Café Culture in London, the London Coffee Festival and the Food and Drink Expo in Birmingham.

### 3.3 Effectiveness

#### How well does the UKTP Programme perform to deliver on its specific intended outputs and outcomes?

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How well did the programme achieve its intended outputs to date? And what intended or unintended results can be observed to date?
- How well did the programme perform to increase the awareness of firms and institutions on how to access the UK/EU markets? On raising their awareness of the potential benefits of EPA? And on trade obstacles across all ODA-eligible EPA countries?
- Depending on country contexts, what seemed to be the most effective in supporting EPA uptake and trade facilitation for different beneficiary segments and for women business enterprises?

#### 3.3.1 How well did the programme achieve its intended outputs to date? And what intended or unintended results can be observed to date?

83. Overall, the evaluation has found that the UKTP programme was effective, with the self-reported data showing that it achieved all its targets for the expected results. Stakeholder interviews, questionnaire results and the literature review highlighted that the different interventions undertaken under the UKTP made significant progress towards achieving UKTP’s objectives in the period under review. As highlighted by ITC’s stakeholders, the diversity of the portfolio of countries facing different risks and markets and beneficiaries within countries contributed to achieving the different output objectives. Figure 5 illustrates some feedback from the survey administered to trade support institutions.

**Figure 5. Beneficiary feedback on the outputs of UKTP**

Answers to the question: *What is your general level of satisfaction with the programme’s design, programme activities, and deliverables?*



Source: Author Survey; N=25

#### Output 1: Firms and institutions are aware of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits

84. The evaluator, assessing the outputs and outcomes indicators reported in the Annual Report 2023, found that the UKTP, by providing trade data updates, undertaking training and awareness raising, and embedding of the ITC Market Analysis Tools into local websites, increased firms and institutions’ awareness of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits. ITC Market Access Tools into local market websites, increased firms and institutions’ awareness of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits.
85. By mid-2023, the UKTP has achieved its objectives regarding Output 1. With regard to trade data updates and with the objective to improve market access information, UKTP provided updated information for 188 data fields, more than meeting the original objective of 100 data fields. Some of the data updates consisted of:
- Trade flows in 22 jurisdictions.



- Tariffs and preferences for 24 jurisdictions.
  - Taxes for 24 jurisdictions.
  - Regulatory requirements for 16 jurisdictions (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Cameroun, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Bahamas, Barbados, Mauritius, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles and Trinidad and Tobago).
86. Following reprogramming by FCDO, UKTP's market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy shifted to embedding its market analysis tool into local websites and using the launch event for such tools as vehicles for raising awareness of the EPA and market opportunities. In total, the UKTP completed embedding 14 (out of a programme target of 10) market analysis tools:
- **TradeMap** has been embedded into the websites of Zimtrade, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA), of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Côte d'Ivoire, of the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts website, in the Mauritius Trade Easy Portal, and Fiji Invest website.
  - **Market Access Map** has been embedded into the website of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA), of the Dominican's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and MSMEs, of the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) and in the Mauritius Trade Easy Portal.
  - **Export Potential Map**: a customised version has been published for Dominican Republic, for its integration into the country's set of solutions for trade information services: RD-Datacomex platform.
87. Embedding of these tools into local websites also boosted the number of visits to market analysis tools to 37 thousand (as of end-March 2023), compared to the original objective of 10 thousand. However, as highlighted by ITC stakeholders, a strong correlation between the webinars and visits was observed. It should be noted that the number of visits to the portals created for national partners represent a small fraction of the overall visits to the market analysis tools. In addition, there is no indication whether the webinars created new recurrent users, or these are a one-off visits.
88. Over the life of the project, the UKTP programme implemented a total of 33 events and trainings (8 more than the original objective of 25), reaching a total of 2,136 participants (compared to the 1,000 participants as objective), of which nearly half were women (1,025, compared to the original 350 set as objective).

**Table 6. Output 1: Firms and institutions are aware of how to use EPA preferences and potential benefits**

Indicator(s)	Cumulative Results	Programme Target
Number of events and trainings on EPA and market access	33	25
Number of participants to events and trainings on EPA and market access (by gender)	2,136 (1,025 w)	1,000 (350 w)
Number of market access information (trade, tariffs and regulatory requirements) country-year fields completed	188	100
Number of market analysis tools embedded in national or regional institutions' websites	14	10
Number of visits of the market analysis tools in EPA countries	37,101	10,000

**Output 2: Business Environment more transparent and conducive for export to UK / EU markets**

89. Overall, the evaluation found that the UKTP achieved the objectives set up for Output 2 despite this particular output being one of the targets of the reprogramming and facing significant budget cuts.
90. The UKTP led to the re-activation of the Trade Obstacle Alert Mechanisms (TOAMs) in Côte d'Ivoire and Mauritius and the establishment of TOAMs in Madagascar and Seychelles, thereby surpassing the programme's target (a total of four TOAMs were developed or strengthened, in comparison to the original objective of two TOAMs). At the end of FY22/23, Madagascar's TOAM had 65 users registered, 30 obstacles had been reported, of which 23 obstacles (11 for imports and 12 for exports) were under

resolution and seven were being validated. In the case of Mauritius, the TOAM had led to the resolution of one administrative obstacle through the assignment of additional customs officers and one regulatory issue on custom clearance.

91. This particular activity could be considered one of the success stories of the reprogramming. Whilst in the original design, UKTP had planned business surveys that would underpin the establishment of the TOAMs, during the reprogramming, UKTP hypothesized that the TOAM support could continue without the underlying business surveys and strategic dialogue that was to precede it. This assumption was correct, leading to an increase in the project efficiency. However, ITC stakeholders highlighted that the lack of business surveys prior to the TOAMs diffculted ITC's institutional engagement, as the surveys were instrumental in (1) highlighting the burdensome nature of the non-tariff measures faced by the domestic stakeholders, and therefore, rallied domestic support for the TOAM, and (2) facilitated the identification and introduction of ITC to the local stakeholders.
92. With regard to the second indicator, on adopted trade-related policies, according to the annual review and annual reports, the UKTP led the drafting of Comoros' National Policy on Quality, which was launched on November 6, 2021, thereby meeting the project's indicator.

**Table 7. Output 2: Business Environment more transparent and conducive for export to UK/EU markets**

Indicator(s)	Cumulative Results	Programme Target
Number of mechanisms to monitor trade obstacles developed or strengthened in EPA countries	4	2
Number of trade-related policies, strategies or regulations developed or changed with business sector input – on which actions are taken	1	1
Number of changes that were implemented to mitigate regulatory and procedural trade obstacles	7	5

Source: Annual Review 2022/2023

### **Output 3: TISIs and trade/ business support providers extend and improve their services to the focus sector for UK / EU Market Entry**

93. With regard to Output 3, the UKTP achieved all of the three indicators despite the fact that the Output was deprioritised during the project's final financial year. The output focused on improving the ability of business support organisations to provide support to traders.
94. UKTP supported a total of 16 institutions to improve their operational and managerial performance. The needs of the different institutions were assessed through ITC's CUBED survey. Specifically, the UKTP supported strategic planning for business support institutions in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Comoros, and supported the improvement of customer relationship management in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon. However, as highlighted in the Annual Report 2022-2023, this area showed mixed results. Whilst the UKTP was successful in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, it suffered setbacks in Comoros, Papua New Guinea and Fiji. The setbacks were mainly due to the targeted organisations ceasing operations due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic or the lack of public funding. The UKTP also supported Comoros' Service de la Normalisation et de la Qualité and Office National de Métrologie and Madagascar's EDBM and GEFP, with varying success.
95. The UKTP also undertook a total of 36 workshops to strengthen the managerial and operational capacity of the institutions, with over 100 participants having obtained their certifications in client relationship management and developing sustainable business models for business support organisations. Over 300 participants also benefited from a Digital Transformation course. A total of 32 institutions participated in workshops and coaching sessions.

**Table 8. Output 3: TISIs and trade/ business support providers extend and improve their services to the focus sector for UK/EU Market Entry**

Indicator(s)	Cumulative Results	Programme Target
Number of cases of institutions having improved operational or managerial performance in serving SMEs to enter UK / EU as a result of UKTP support	16	15

Number of workshops/coaching sessions delivered to strengthen the managerial and operational capacity of institutions	36	20
Number of institutions participating in workshops/coaching sessions to strengthen the managerial and operational capacity of institutions	32	30

Source: Annual Review 2022/2023

#### Output 4: Targeted firms have increased capacity to export to UK/EU market

96. The UKTP surpassed all of its targets during the period considered.

**CARIFORUM** In CARIFORUM, the UKTP supported the (1) Food processing; (2) Music; and (3) Film sectors. A total of 60 companies (all sectors together) were selected as primary beneficiaries from seven (7) eligible countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines).

- **Food sector:** The capacity-building activities in the Caribbean centred on enabling market penetration for those companies that are export-ready through capacity development activities for certification, market compliance and digital marketing. A total of 31 companies, out of which 50% women-operated businesses, participated. The UKTP provided tailored market linkage activities including direct coaching from a UK market sales advisor and organised a series of activities and masterclasses aiming to improve the ability of companies to trade, such as understanding UK market requirements, route-to-market strategies, SME digital marketing skills, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, market compliance, UK/EU export logistics, among others. The companies also attended an exhibition at the London Specialty Fine Food Festival in 2022.
- **Music sector:** Activities for this sector targeted a total of 30 companies, of which 10 were women-operated. 69 additional companies, of which 24 are women-operated businesses, were retained as secondary beneficiaries. The activities included specific training on Music marketing, Music distribution, Music Publishing and Live Music. Seven companies, of which four were women-led, benefited from dedicated coaching. The coaching focused on implementing short-term marketing actions (marketing, promotion, distribution, and content creation tasks) and carrying longer-term strategies.
- **Film:** The UKTP supported film companies through capacity building in film marketing and distribution and advisory on business planning and project preparation in preparation for attending industry events. The activities also delivered individual coaching sessions to 14 companies (out of which seven (7) are women-led businesses) from Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and Grenadines.

**Côte d'Ivoire** 97. In Côte d'Ivoire, 36 MSMEs in the tropical fruits and cashew sectors directly benefited from UKTP, of which one-third were women-led or operated. The support focused on quality interventions (UK and EU norms and standards/certifications), access to finance, business and product branding and marketing, training in packaging, export management and matchmaking. Through UKTP's interventions, participants reported having improved their operations in terms of environmental sustainability and social responsibility, and all companies that participated in UKTP activities reported having made changes to their business operations.

**Ghana** 98. In Ghana, a total of 17 11 companies, of which 12 6 were women-owned, were supported by the UKTP. Specific activities included: training and information sharing on UK market access requirements and consumer preferences, training and coaching on access to finance, assessment of laboratory and quality control facilities, training on improvement of quality controls, company assessment and follow-up trainings on social and environmental standards, preparation for trade fairs B2B events, including online event, individual coaching on marketing and branding, training on product packaging, and participation in trade fairs and B2B events. There was also one-on-one coaching on product innovation and recipe adaptation, and UK market entry coaching. The UKTP also supported the Association of Ghana Industries to conduct assessment of five SMEs for compliance of regulatory requirements on factory and processing facility laboratories. Additionally, UKTP delivered a comprehensive tailored one-on-one coaching and advisory sessions.

**Cameroon** 99. In Cameroon, 32 companies, 16 for the Cocoa sector and 16 for the Penja Pepper. UKTP developed sector-specific and tailored interventions for each sector, Cocoa and Penja Pepper such as capacity-building and coaching sessions on good and sustainable production/processing practices, certification norms, and standards, supply management, traceability, international negotiations, marketing and branding, market analysis, logistics, packaging, and B2B trainings.

- **Cocoa:** The UKTP delivered Train the Trainers sessions on good practices in cocoa sector, which ultimately led to 1,323 producers improved their knowledge on best agriculture practices in cocoa production. The UKTP also facilitated cooperation for Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between exporters and cooperatives, which led to sale contracts being executed, amounting to approximately 528,000 USD.
- **Penja pepper:** the UKTP delivered a series of trainings on safe pesticides usage, proximity coaching techniques, good Penja pepper processing practices and requirements for the UK market, and Organoleptic Recognition.

**Zimbabwe** 100. in Zimbabwe, the UKTP worked with 5 exporter/lead firms that worked with 270 smallholder farmers, out of which 47% were women, to promote the production and export of horticulture produce to the UK/EU. Arising from the interventions, the UKTP successfully established peas exports markets for farmers under two lead firms. Chili markets were established in the UK and Europe under the other two lead firms. Lead firms and smallholder farmers began to diversify their crops in line with market demands and weather conditions. Practical training on how to plant the crops were organised for 40 farmers. The UKTP was also very active in linking the supported institutions with finance providers, which increased the participants' ability to raise finance.

**Madagascar** 101. In Madagascar, the UKTP focused on supporting a total of 14 companies in the textile and apparel industry, of which three were women-owned. The capacity-building activities focused on (1) Resource Efficiency and Circular Production coaching, (2) training on environmental management, (3) material sourcing training, (4) quality management training, (5) lean manufacturing training and coaching, (6) product design and development training; (7) digital marketing and branding; (8) corporate social responsibility reporting and benchmarking; and (9) pattern-making training. UKTP also supported selected beneficiary companies in participating in international trade fairs and improving their skills for buyers' outreach. The project supported the development of access to finance guides for ten companies. A company managed to double its efficiency, whilst another one reported having tripled its productivity, moving from 2,500 pieces produced per day to 8,000.

**Comoros** 102. Comoros: the UKTP's interventions in Comoros were deprioritised during the reprogramming. During its period of activity, the UKTP focused on providing sessions on access to financing, with the UKTP organised three workshops on financial literacy in the different islands of the Comoros and a workshop on Sustainable Finance to allow the financial institutions to better support sustainable enterprises and become larger players in the field.

**Fiji** 103. Fiji: the UKTP's interventions in Fiji focused on the ginger sector. UKTP offered technical assistance to beneficiary farmers in market orientation, financial literacy, good husbandry, and postharvest practices. The UKTP was originally meant to cover vanilla, but it was dropped due to the reprogramming and lack of commercial viability. In the first phase, UKTP worked closely with 53 beneficiaries, 51 baby ginger farmers and two (2) ginger processors/exporters. The intervention's direct objective was to enhance the production of baby ginger at the farm level (currently the weakest link in the baby ginger value chain) through the provision of both technical and financial support. The programme also set up a web-based map application enabling Fijian buyers/processors/exporters to reach out to their contracted baby ginger farmers, plot and display their newly planted blocks on map, including farm size under cultivation.

**Papua New Guinea** 104. Papua New Guinea: in Papua New Guinea, the UKTP focused its support on the coffee sector, with 20 small and medium enterprises being supported, of which five were women-owned. The activities focused on enhancing the quality of the coffee being offered through meeting private voluntary standards, to developing a recognisable brand, and marketing practices across social media. Through direct support to the SMEs, up to 60,000 farming families in the supply chain were also indirectly benefitting from the programme. As a result of UKTP's interventions, six SMEs received direct sales and/or sales contacts due to their new social media activities. A woman-owned beneficiary company reported exports of 19,2 tons of coffee worth

USD126,984 to the USA by a female beneficiary company, and another woman-owned beneficiary company reported having sold coffee worth USD20,000 to a client in Alberta, Canada, thanks to the digital marketing training received.

**Table 9. Output 4: Targeted firms have increased capacity to export to UK/EU market**

Indicator(s)	Cumulative Results	Programme Target
Number of enterprises in pilot countries having made changes to their business operations for increased competitiveness toward UK/EU markets as a result of UKTP support (including women business enterprises)	458 (170)	360 (95)
Number of enterprises reached with advisory services (including women business enterprises)	931 (338)	800 (250)
Value of financing facilitated (including to women business enterprises)	USD7,266,420	USD5,000,000 (USD280,000)

Source: Annual Review 2022/2023

105. According to the enterprise survey conducted by ITC for companies supported by UKTP, the respondents have indicated that the most significant change has been made in branding and marketing, followed by sales and distribution, product and service offerings, and quality management. A relatively smaller number of firms indicated making changes to production, sourcing, R&D and enterprise skills (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Enterprise-level changes reported to have been implemented as a result of UKTP**

Word cloud of answers to question: In which of the following areas did you make changes?



Source: ITC Enterprise Survey, N=16

#### Output 5: Market opportunities activated

106. Overall, the evaluation found that the UKTP achieved all its indicators under this output. Specifically, the UKTP prepared a total of eight market studies: two for CARIFORUM, two for Cameroon (cocoa, Penja Pepper), two for Côte d'Ivoire (cashew nuts and tropical fruits), one for Fiji on ginger, and one for PNG on coffee.
107. As part of Output 5, the UKTP also supported companies in attending EU and UK trade fairs:
- In 2020, UKTP supported 7 African companies from Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros and Zimbabwe to participate in the Food Matters Live Trade Fair (London-based) on 13-14 October 2020. The companies reported securing 30 meetings on the platform. UKTP facilitated the participation of 5 African companies at the virtual Food Ingredients (Fi) Europe Connect food and beverage trade fair, with 47 reported connections.
  - In 2021, the UKTP supported companies from Cameroon, Madagascar and Zimbabwe for the Biofach 2021, and supported two companies to attend the Food Ingredients Regions virtual trade fair. The UKTP also supported companies, through a dedicated UKTP Pavilion, to attend the 2021 Speciality & Fine Food Fair, which drew a bridge between the UK and 16 export-ready businesses

from the Caribbean (6), Comoros (7), Ivory Coast (2) and Cameroon (1). Their participation generated 340 contacts.

- In 2022, the UKTP supported 25 participants from 12 countries (Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Zimbabwe) to participate as exhibitors at the International Food and Drink Event (IFE) in London. Participating companies reported 1,582 contacts, with hundreds of leads being pursued and reported as the transactions materialised. The UKTP also supported four companies to attend Fruit Logistica.

- In 2022, the UKTP supported 9 beneficiaries from 8 countries – Cameroon, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, PNG and Trinidad & Tobago, at the Food & Drink Expo. Overall, all the companies established a total of 369 contacts. The UKTP also supported 14 beneficiary companies showcasing their unique products for businesses and consumers in the UK as part of the Speciality and Fine Foods Fair. The companies reported over 500 new contacts.

108. Overall, the UKTP's internal reporting highlights that a total of 4,414 contacts were achieved, surpassing the 2,800 set as target, but falling short from meeting the objective for women-owned enterprises, reaching less than half the target (250, in comparison to the 500 planned). The UKTP also led to 137 business contacts, surpassing the target of 90 originally planned and meeting the target of women-owned businesses.

**Table 10 Output 5: Market opportunities activated**

Indicator(s)	Cumulative Results	Programme Target
Number of business contacts established (including in women-owned SMEs)	4,414 (243)	2,800 (500)
Number of enterprises that have made business contacts as a result of UKTP support (including women business enterprises)	137 (16)	90 (15)
Number of market studies completed	8	8

Source: Annual Review 2022/2023

### 3.3.2 How well did the programme perform to increase the awareness of firms and institutions on how to access the UK/EU markets? On raising their awareness of the potential benefits of EPA? And on trade obstacles across all ODA-eligible EPA countries?

109. Overall, the evaluation found that raising EPA awareness was mainly done through Output 1. As highlighted by the Annual Report 2022/23, the UKTP completed 6 Editions of the two-week workshop “Understanding UK EPAs and spotting trade opportunities in the UK”. The intervention on EPA awareness and awareness and use of trade data has indirectly facilitated USD 29.4 million in exports in addition to the USD 80 million in sales to the UK and EU directly facilitated by the export promotion projects. While the indicated trade facilitated through these activities could be challenged (see section 3.5 Impact on measures used), the awareness raising would have sowed the seeds to explore market opportunities further according to some entrepreneurs and managers of business.
110. The TOAM did raise some obstacles to trade, primarily obstacles within the internal markets and primarily on the import side of trade. Nevertheless, the target was set to resolve 5 obstacles across all countries, and this objective was met, as 7 obstacles have been reported to be resolved. Additionally, the evaluation noted that these kinds of mechanisms tend to work better with larger or more dispersed countries. Stakeholders in Mauritius reported that TOAM was not necessarily effective for them, nor indispensable, as the business community is able to solve any obstacle by directly discussing it with the relevant authorities (through informal discussions). In addition, it is worth noting that issues raised through the TOAMs, in most cases, might simply be solved by providing already available information or solving implementation deficiencies (such as classification alignment challenges or valuation disagreements, etc.), and do not necessarily lead to regulatory changes.

### 3.3.3 Depending on country contexts, what seemed to be the most effective in supporting EPA uptake and trade facilitation for different beneficiary segments and for women business enterprises?

111. With respect to trade facilitation, the UKTP's reprogramming deprioritised Outputs 2 and 3, which relate to business and trade environment facilitation. Nevertheless, seven obstacles to trade were effectively removed during the lifetime of the UKTP.
112. Based on the output indicators of trade and different targets across countries, evaluating the benefits of one activity or implementation model over another is difficult. Nevertheless, based on the evaluator's experience, activities aiming to improve market access information tend to reach many stakeholders but have a minimal direct impact on trade value. However, those activities are still necessary in the broader context of trade and inclusivity, as well as lack of trade information repeatedly highlighted by exporters as the most common challenge to trade. On the other hand, B2B activities and more enterprise handholding activities (such as branding, marketing, packaging, quality management, etc.) tend to have a much direct and substantial measurable impact on a much more limited number of beneficiaries. Associated with these observations, within the theory of change diagram, as the output numbers increase towards the end of the value chain for exporting, the greater and quicker are the observable results from the interventions.
113. Comparing the achievements between countries and between implementation models was not possible. This is due to the lack of comparable baseline information, missing detailed reporting (by country follow-ups and country updates), and, most importantly, different tracking indicators or information reported for other countries. Unforeseen external events (such as COVID-19 lockdowns, political unrest, etc.) which could affect the results were also not reported. Moreover, even yearly comparisons were difficult to analyse as there was no fixed reporting structure from year to year. A significant reason for the reporting challenges, are believed to be linked to the prioritization of the M&E system, and the fact that the responsibility of different areas of the UKTP were divided across different ITC departments.

### 3.4 Efficiency

#### How well were the UKTP Programme resources allocated and used to carry out intended activities and to achieve the UKTP Programme objectives?

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How clear were the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting? How good is the M&E system in place? Did it enable real-time implementation assessment and course correction?
- How good was the Programme Value for Money (i.e., how adequate were the inputs for the programme? How well did the inputs lead to the intended outputs? How well did the outputs lead to the intended outcomes as well as to benefits for developing countries? and how well did UKTP achieve impacts in relation to inputs provided)?
- How well-suited are the different delivery models (grants, service providers, consultants) to deliver in an economic and timely way?
- How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the efficiency and programme synergies of UKTP?
- What lessons can be learnt from UKTP on enhancing the efficiency, M&E, and programme synergies of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?

#### 3.4.1 How clear were the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting? How good is the M&E system in place? Did it enable real-time implementation assessment and course correction?

114. Monitoring and evaluation activities were deprioritised by FCDO due to budget cuts. Nevertheless, annual reviews conducted by ITC were helpful in assessing whether the programme was delivering its expected results relative to the indicator targets set for the review period. While the monitoring and reporting system generally provided sufficient information to support adaptive management, for a programme of this size, a more robust results-based management M&E system would have been more appropriate. Programme and project management processes can be improved to provide a constant feedback loop and strong documentation records. For example, the minutes of Steering Committee meetings were not available except for Cameroon. Financial documentation related to the project, such as financial progress reports, expenditure reports and audits, were also not made available to the evaluator.
115. The evaluator found that ITC, FCDO and external partners had a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting. Internally in ITC, the projects were managed by different departments. While monitoring and accountability reporting by the different units was sufficient, consultations showed that the synergies between the different teams could be improved. Moreover, reporting was uneven across departments, making comparability of results difficult. Since the project was touted as a learning model based on various pilot initiatives for delivering technical assistance, the data was not sufficiently detailed or consistent to allow for comparative performance analysis.
116. Several interviewees assessed that coordination and communication with the ITC team was excellent, leading to higher efficiency. This was also supported by the survey results, with 68% of respondents reporting that they were very satisfied with the programme's design, activities, and deliverables. However, some stakeholders pointed out that budget cuts were not well communicated by FCDO, leading to a period of extreme uncertainty (as some stakeholders pointed out, "we did not know whether the project would close down"). Such instability of funding impacted negatively on their organisation. Where funding issues affect project delivery, they constitute a risk on ITC's and FCDO's credibility. Clear procedures should be put in place to communicate any changes to the Programme to relevant partners in the future.
117. While real-time implementation assessment was not available for the programme due to the budget cuts, the overall flexibility of the programme was key to its efficiency. A significant example of this was the reprogramming due to COVID-19, and the changes in UK government priorities, which allowed the



approach to be adapted quickly to continue implementation. Reprogramming also allowed ITC to explore partnerships with smaller institutions and more directly with SMEs, allowing for more cost-effective implementation of the programme, although this has ramifications on Sustainability (See section on Sustainability below). However, ITC stakeholders interviewed highlighted that funds would for the most part be allocated to ITC at the end of the financial year, creating undue stress on ITC staff to adapt programming accordingly. While it was reported to the evaluator that FCDO and ITC met regularly for risk and finance meetings, better planning regarding the allocation of funds to the implementing agency would have enhanced efficiency. The UK's rather unpredictable year-by-year changes to the budget made it very difficult to have a medium-term lens for the activities, which made the achievements all the more remarkable. Nevertheless, for an aid for trade programme, a longer-term horizon should be considered in the future by the UK government.

### 3.4.2 How good was the Programme Value for Money (i.e., how adequate were the inputs for the programme? How well did the inputs led to the intended outputs? How well did the outputs led to the intended outcomes as well as to benefits for developing countries? and how well did UKTP achieved impacts in relation to inputs provided)?

118. The evaluation found that the programme and projects were implemented relatively efficiently, and this was supported by the stakeholder consultations. However, it was difficult to provide a comprehensive assessment of the efficiency of the programme and projects due to the limited financial data made available to the evaluator.
119. The analysis of the Programme Value for Money was divided as follows: Allocative Efficiency, Technical Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness. For allocative efficiency, project expenditure is assessed against the budget. The evolution of expenditure over time is also explored to assess whether the system in place considered rebalancing of resources for higher efficiency. The allocative efficiency dimension examines the combination of resources used (resource mix) to achieve the maximum advantage for a given cost. The evaluator looked at the project's expenditure to identify how much has been spent on specific project activities to assess whether the project activities of the programme were delivered against budget. The evaluator also explored evolution of expenditure over time, to assess whether the system in place considered changing variables to rebalance the resources and create a more efficient use of the resources. Evidence was gathered to support two main indicators namely expenses by project compared to budgeted amounts and time series of expenses by project from April 2019 until December 2022

#### Overall programme: Quarterly expenditure compared to budgeted amounts

120. Table 11 below presents the difference between the programme budget and spending from start until the final year (April 2019 to Mar 2023). The total revised budget amounts to USD 15.3 million, with funding provided by FCDO and UKTP. It should be noted that the budgets were planned to be reduced across the financial years, with USD 6.1 million allocated in the financial year April 2019 - Mar 2020 (FY 19/20), USD 5.3 million allocated in the financial year April 2020 - Mar 2021 (FY 20/21), USD 2.7 million in the financial year April 2021 - Mar 2022 (FY 21/22) and finally USD 1.3 million in the financial year Apr 2022 - Mar 2023 (FY 22/23).
121. Some important factors affect the efficiency of the project from an allocative perspective emerge, namely:
- The overall expense of the programme, USD 13.9 million is 9% lower than the projected amount of USD 15.3 million. Nevertheless, it is noted that the utilisation of the planned yearly budgets had large deviations with expenses in these years. In FY 19/20, the budget was underutilised by 62%, most probably due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while in the next three financial years, FY 20/21, FY 21/22, FY 22/23 the expenses were above the yearly planned budgets by +19%, +46% and +12% respectively.
  - As shown in the table below on cumulative budget utilisation, there are indications of efforts to efficiently use the unspent budget of FY 19/20 in the financial years that followed. Despite an underutilisation of 62% of the budget in FY 19/20, the expenses in the subsequent financial years improved as the cumulated deficit in budget utilisation reduced from -62% to -9%.

**Table 11. Difference between budget amount and actual spending for the whole programme**

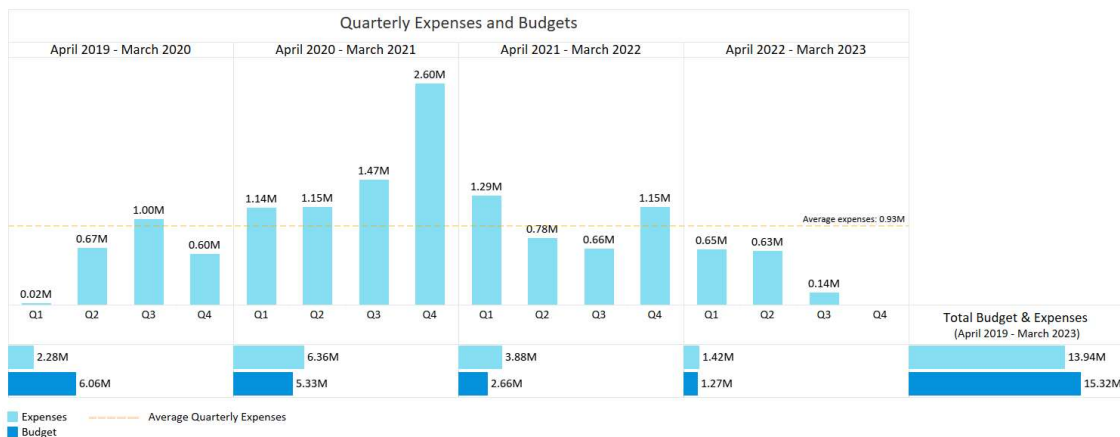
Year by year				Cumulative			
Financial Year	Budget	Expenses	Budget utilisation	As of Date	Cumulative Budget	Cumulative Expenses	Cumulative budget utilisation
Apr 2019 Mar 2020	6,057,192	2,282,942	-62%	Mar 2020	6,057,192	2,282,942	-62%
Apr 2020 Mar 2021	5,332,434	6,358,809	+19%	Mar 2021	11,389,626	8,641,751	-24%
Apr 2021 Mar 2022	2,655,007	3,881,821	+46%	Mar 2022	14,044,633	12,523,572	-11%
Apr 2022 Mar 2023	1,272,192	1,420,907	+12%	Mar 2023	15,316,825	13,944,479	-9%
<b>Apr 2019 Mar 2023</b>	<b>15,316,825</b>	<b>13,944,479</b>	<b>-9%</b>				

Source: FCDO Development Tracker

**Overall programme: Time series analysis**

122. The analysis of the quarterly expenses of the overall programme indicates these amounted to USD 0.93 million on average. As shown in Figure 1 below, there is significant variance in expenses along the quarters, with a peak observed in the financial years FY 20/21 and FY 21/22. Expenses were lowest in the beginning financial year FY 19/20 and in FY 22/23.
123. The share of expenses of Q4 (Jan 21 to Mar 21) of FY 20/21 amounted to 19% of the whole programme budget. This was due to a concentration of activities during that quarter. Possible explanations for the high number of activities in Q4 of FY 20/21 could be linked to the slow start of the project in FY 19/20, indicated by the low budget utilisation, and delays caused by COVID 19 pandemic which struck in FY 19/20 and pursued in FY 20/21. The activities in Q4 FY 20/21 included field missions to Cameroon for Penja pepper and Cocoa; branding, marketing, and export strategy training in Côte d'Ivoire; webinar in Ghana; programme support to enterprises and national workshops in Madagascar; webinars and digital gatherings in Zimbabwe; and other activities in Comoros and Fiji.

**Figure 7. Time series analysis of expenses and budgets (in USD) of the overall programme**



Source: FCDO Development Tracker

124. An overall analysis of the allocated financial resources across the different projects shows similarities across the different projects in terms of budget utilisation. All the projects had low expenses compared to their budgets in the first financial year. Côte D'Ivoire had the lowest utilisation rate of only 8%, and the project with the highest utilisation was Zimbabwe, with a mere 52% usage. This is due to the fact that funding for the first financial year was used an inception phase, which usually leads to lower levels of expenditure. The underspent budget was used in the subsequent years.

**Table 12. Budget and Spending for UKTP Projects**

Financial Years	Projects	Programme Management	Cameroon	CARIFORUM	Comoros	Côte D' Ivoire	Fiji	Ghana	Madagascar	PNG	Trade Intelligence	Zimbabwe	Grand Total
APR 2019 - MAR 2020	Budget	1.38	0.36	0.45	0.38	0.36	0.66	0.47	0.53	0.15	0.79	0.53	6.06
	Expenses	0.63	0.13	0.19	0.17	0.03	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.03	0.21	0.28	2.28
	Utilisation	46%	36%	42%	45%	8%	29%	47%	42%	20%	27%	53%	38%
APR 2020 - MAR 2021	Budget	1.03	0.46	0.58	0.23	0.49	0.41	0.16	0.38	0.24	1.08	0.27	5.33
	Expenses	1.22	0.39	0.65	0.24	0.54	0.85	0.26	0.48	0.25	1.11	0.38	6.36
	Utilisation	118%	85%	112%	104%	110%	207%	163%	126%	104%	103%	141%	119%
APR 2021 - MAR 2022	Budget	0.45	0.27	0.31	0.12	0.25	0.04	0.25	0.34	0.2	0.29	0.14	2.66
	Expenses	0.68	0.43	0.32	0.31	0.42	0.06	0.21	0.33	0.21	0.68	0.23	3.88
	Utilisation	151%	159%	103%	258%	168%	150%	84%	97%	105%	234%	164%	146%
APR 2022 - MAR 2023	Budget	0.73	0.09	0.23	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.09	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.01	1.27
	Expenses	0.32	0.13	0.19	0.02	0.09	0.01	0.15	0.23	0.11	0.11	0.05	1.42
	Utilisation	44%	144%	83%	100%	900%	33%	167%	575%	550%	1100%	500%	112%
<b>TOTAL</b>	Budget	3.58	1.17	1.57	0.75	1.12	1.13	0.97	1.29	0.61	2.17	0.95	15.32
	Expenses	2.86	1.08	1.34	0.73	1.08	1.1	0.84	1.25	0.59	2.12	0.94	13.94
	Utilisation	80%	92%	85%	97%	96%	97%	87%	97%	97%	98%	99%	91%

Source: Author calculations based on FCDO DevTracker, accessed on 1 Sept 2023

124. Despite the pandemic and budget constraints, UKTP completed all activities and targets under the different components, demonstrating high technical efficiency. UKTP exceeded targets across most impact and outcome indicators. The programme created, maintained, or improved employment for 14,046 people including 9,126 women. It also reported USD 80 million in increased trade with the UK and EU reported by SMEs that benefited from the programme. Additionally, the value of trade facilitated indirectly by UKTP is estimated at USD 29.4 million. However, in certain countries, the gains from the project were concentrated in few enterprises and this may have created distortive effects in the local market. This is further explored in section 3.5 on Impact.

**Table 13. Programme Indicators and Results (up to 31 March 2023)**

	Indicator	Cumulative to 31 March 2023	Programme Target for 31 March 2023
<b>Impact</b>	Number of men and women whose jobs are created, maintained or improved as a result of UKTP support	14,046 (9,126 women)	3,500
	Value of increased trade with UK and EU reported by assisted SMEs in pilot countries (including women owned SMEs)	USD 80,058,243	USD 20,000,000
<b>Outcome</b>	Value of trade expected to be facilitated indirectly as a result of UKTP support (including trade with UK/EU)	USD 29,425,000	USD 25,000,000
	Number of enterprises having transacted business (trade or investment) with UK/EU as a result of ITC's support (including women-owned enterprises)	50 (18 women-owned/led)	100 (35 women-owned/led)

Source: ITC Enterprise survey

125. The change in the market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy due to budget reductions increased technical efficiency. Existing ITC market analysis tools, namely TradeMap, Market Access Map and Export Potential Map, which are centrally available, were embedded in the local websites of country BSOs. In total, UKTP embedded 14 out of a programme target of 10 market analysis tools, which enabled UKTP-updated trade data to reach a wider audience. However, the success of the tools is also dependent on the ability to maintain updated trade data on the platforms beyond the life of the

programme. In this regard, UKTP reported that it has supported ITC in establishing important data exchange arrangements that will be likely to continue after the end of the programme, although no details are provided. Events to launch the market analysis tools were also used to promote the EPA and market opportunities. Such integration of EPA awareness in market access training led to increased efficiency and should be considered for future UKTP programming.

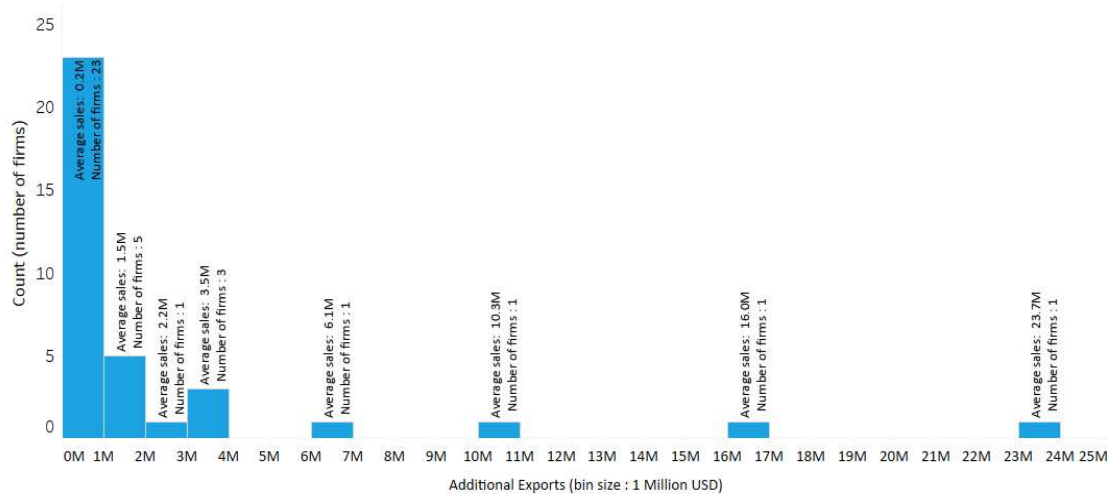
126. The buy-in and readiness of national stakeholders were key to the technical efficiency of the project. One important example was the adoption of the National Policy on Quality in Comoros in 2021. UKTP facilitated the revision and adoption of an action plan for the development and implementation of the policy and assisted the Government of Comoros in developing the policy by assessing the quality infrastructure, organising a workshop to validate the assessment, and establishing the strategies for policy formulation. This successful intervention demonstrated that a programme of short duration can lead to policy reform with the required national buy-in. It also showed that demand-led business environment programming should be considered for higher technical efficiency.
127. The cost effectiveness of the programme was determined using two indicators namely exports created per dollar spent on the programme and direct jobs supported per dollar spent. The selection of these indicators was based on the theory of change. Per the ToC, several objectives were identified for the programme, such as how well the programme contributed to building the ability of targeted firms/products to export to UK/EU markets and to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of jobs. Firms were expected to benefit from increased exports to the UK/EU and also be able to support and create jobs. The indicators were calculated for the overall programme and at the country level. The benchmark value used to assess cost-effectiveness is the generation of USD 87 additional exports per dollar spent on export promotion . Based on the cost-effectiveness performance criteria in Table 7, the overall programme scores performed well with regard to cost-effectiveness.
128. The overall programme is estimated to generate an average additional USD 5.7 (equivalent to GBP 4.5) in exports across all the countries. The highest returns were generated in West African countries, as shown in Table 14 below. In Ghana (for Cocoa) and Cameroon (for Cocoa and Penja), the additional exports per US dollar invested reached USD 30.2 and USD 17.7, respectively. For Zimbabwe, USD 1 spent generated a mere additional USD 1.1 in other exports. For Papua New Guinea and Comoros, the efforts in generating exports towards the EU/UK were unsuccessful as per dollar spent only generated an additional USD 0.8 and USD 0.7 in exports respectively. The average return is not evenly distributed across all participants as shown in Section 3.5, on Impact. There is a concentration of exports generated by the programme across a few companies.

**Table 14 Summary of reported enterprise sales per USD spent under UKTP**

Project	Project costs (USD million)	Export directly generated (USD million)	USD of sales (exports) per USD spent	Above expected benchmark* of USD 87 (Yes/No)
Overall programme	13.9	80	5.7	No
Cameroon	1.1	18.5	17.7	No
Comoros	0.7	0.5	0.7	No
Côte d'Ivoire	1.1	3.6	3.3	No
Fiji	1.1	9.4	8.3	No
Ghana	0.8	27.2	30.2	No
Madagascar	1.3	19.6	15	No
PNG	0.6	0.47	0.8	No
Zimbabwe	0.9	1	1.1	No

Source: Author calculations based on Impact and Outcome tables built from ITC enterprise survey  
 Note: \*: Benchmark of expected returns per USD invested in trade promotion according to ITC (2016).

129. Overall, UKTP generated USD 80 million in additional exports for USD 13.9 million invested. The frequency distribution chart below shows that a total of 36 firms across all countries generated additional exports. However, 64% of these firms generated an average of USD 200 thousand in sales, and only 3 firms generated above USD 10 million in exports.

**Figure 8. Frequency distribution of additional exports per firm for the Overall Programme**

Source: Author calculations based on Impact and Outcome tables built from ITC enterprise survey

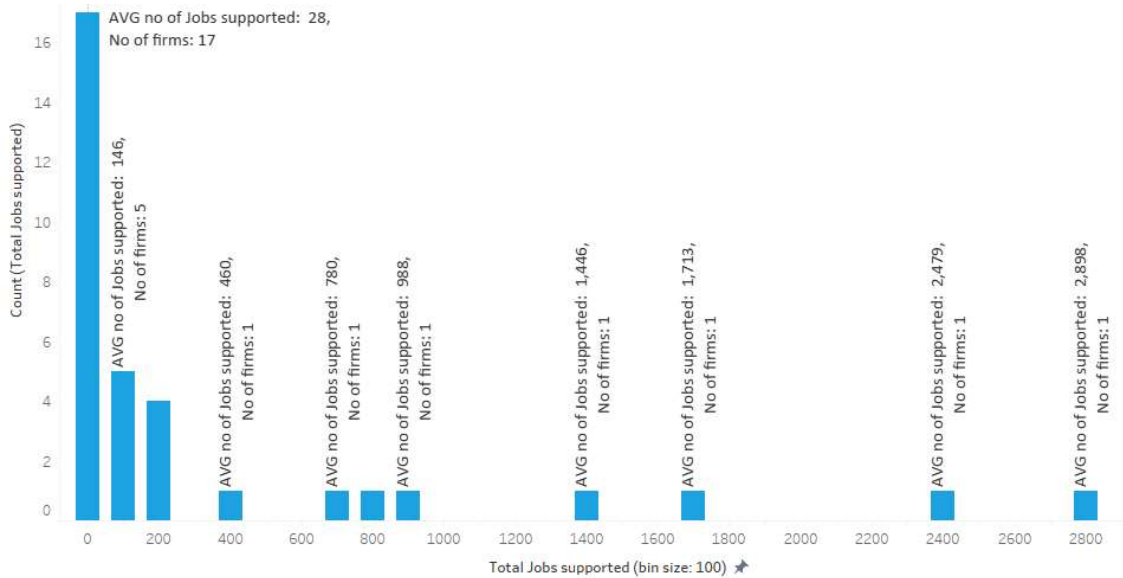
130. The overall programme is estimated to have supported 14,046 jobs across all the listed countries with 66% of women jobs supported and an average expenditure of USD 975 per direct job supported. Through the survey conducted with beneficiary firms, the jobs supported directly through this project was collected. Table 15 summarizes the jobs supported per dollar spent on the project. From a gender perspective, on average 66% women jobs have been supported for all countries. Madagascar reported supporting 10,538 jobs with the least dollar spent (USD 124) per job supported, while Côte d'Ivoire supported higher share of women jobs with 79% of the jobs supported being women jobs.
131. Figure 9 shows that 29 firms reported having supported jobs, which 59% sustaining an average of 28 jobs in their firm.

**Table 15 Direct jobs supported per dollar spent**

Project	Project costs (USD million)	Men jobs supported	Women jobs supported	Total jobs supported	Share of women jobs supported over total	USD spent per direct job supported	Number of firms supported
Overall	13.9	4,830	9,216	14,046	66%	975	29
Cameroon	1.1	250	161	411	39%	2,559	13
C. d'Ivoire	1.1	421	1,566	1,987	79%	553	5
Fiji	1.1	145	229	374	61%	3,028	2
Ghana	0.8	138	95	233	41%	4,030	3
Madagascar	1.3	3,707	6,831	10,538	65%	124	9
PNG	0.6	62	50	112	45%	5,417	1
Zimbabwe	0.9	229	244	473	52%	2,000	1

Source: Author calculations based on Impact and Outcome tables built from ITC enterprise survey

**Figure 9. Frequency distribution of jobs supported per firm for the overall programme**



Source: Impact and Outcome tables build on the survey

132. In terms of risk management and safeguarding, the UKTP’s inception phase was instrumental to identify country and sector specific risks that could impact the implementation of the project. In addition, and as highlighted in the UKTP’s Annual Reviews conducted by FCDO, both the UKTP FCDO team and ITC hold risk registers which are updated regularly, furthermore risk has been incorporated as a standing agenda in monthly/quarterly discussions. Overall, the FCDO considers that the UKTP presents moderate operational risks, with minor fiduciary and safeguarding risk. With effective management and continually monitoring and changing activities in alignment to the global restrictions due to COVID and budget levels the revised targets were met.
133. Furthermore, the UKTP also made significant efforts in terms of communications, with the programme producing a total of 12 news updates, showcasing programme updates and developments on ITC’s dedicated webpage for the UKTP. Such communications efforts increased the visibility of the project and the donor.

### 3.4.3 How well suited are the different delivery models (grants, service providers, consultants) to deliver in an economic and timely way?

134. Different delivery models were used to implement the programme. In Zimbabwe, grants were provided to microfinance institutions for one-on-one sessions on smallholder farmer loan financing and for financial management training. In Fiji, consultants were hired to provide similar training to farmers. The programme also used UK-based consultants to represent companies at certain trade fairs instead of or in addition to travel by the company itself (due to travel restrictions). For in-country capacity development of SMEs, different delivery models were implemented. In Ghana, such training was delivered through local partners whereas in Côte d’Ivoire and Cameroon, ITC-hired experts or ITC staff led the training.
135. It was not possible to assess efficiency of the different delivery models due to no data being made available to the evaluator. The evaluator had proposed to compare different cost models in the same country to avoid introducing country specificities in the comparisons. Specifically, it was proposed to analyze the activities and outputs against cost and implementation period for the different delivery models. Data to carry out such an analysis was not made available to the evaluator, and while the evaluator scanned the annual review reports to identify the activities, the reports did not report a breakdown of data of expenses against activities.

#### 3.4.4 How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the efficiency and programme synergies of UKTP?

136. The evaluator found that reprogramming and annual reprogramming enhanced the project's efficiency, although these were highly disruptive. The reprogramming focused Output 2 where UKTP had already built strong partnerships which were an essential factor for success. For example, reprogramming assumed that TOAM support could be executed without business surveys and strategic dialogue preceding the implementation. This assumption proved to be correct in the cases of Madagascar and Mauritius, although ITC stakeholders noted the challenges arising from the lack of business surveys in terms of institutional engagement. In Madagascar, TOAM was successfully launched in October 2022 and by the end of the FY 22/23, 65 users were registered on the platform and 30 obstacles had been reported, of which 23 were under resolution and 7 were being validated. In Mauritius, the existing TOAM was expanded to cover obstacles in services and a new version of the web application as well as a mobile application were launched.
137. The budget cuts and reprogramming strategy ended up focusing on export promotion projects through enterprise support and B2B events, which resulted in higher efficiency with notable recording of additional exports. Overall, the UKTP has enabled 4,414 contacts to be established by 137 companies and directly facilitated USD80 million in sales to the UK and EU. The mixed approach used by UKTP, i.e. direct facilitation of market linkages, capacity development for market engagement and sponsorship for participation in trade fairs and market tours, led to the intended outcomes efficiently. For example, the participation of Papuan companies at the World of Coffee in Milan generated buying interest in Papua New Guinea in general as a country. Market tours to Germany and UK organised before and after the show provided an efficient way of expanding the companies' contacts database. Participants of the Salon du Chocolat from Cameroon, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Grenada, and Jamaica also benefited from tasting sessions and meetings with brand ambassadors, providing them with valuable information about consumer preferences in the target market. However, the activities to activate market opportunities mostly supported exporting and export-ready firms, a factor that contributed to the high efficiency of Output 5. Reprogramming also led to direct interaction with SMEs and smaller institutions, increasing efficiency. However, this affects the sustainability of the programme as there is unlikely to be any follow-up capacity building activities without the involvement of business support organisations.
138. FCDO and UKTP deprioritised monitoring and evaluation, including impact measurement due to reprogramming. This impacted negatively on programme synergies and efficiency of the UKTP as learning from the different projects could not be shared for improving future performance and results. In the future, mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that M&E is maintained in case of reprogramming, especially for programmes the size of UKTP. Reprogramming and annual programming, as well as the allocation of budget to ITC towards the end of the fiscal year caused frustration among ITC staff who reported unreasonable increased workload and undue stress. The allocation of budget to ITC towards the end of the fiscal year also led to increased workload and undue stress on staff.

#### 3.4.5 What lessons can be learnt from UKTP on the enhancing the efficiency, M&E, and programme synergies of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?

139. UKTP's country-led approach, reprogramming and annual programming enhanced efficiency of the programme overall. Flexibility of the UKTP was a key factor to the efficient delivery of the programme. The capacity to adapt projects and approached to new information such as stakeholder inputs, and the pandemic were important for retaining stakeholder support and delivering the relevant activities to achieve the outcome and impact targets. Reprogramming also increased cost-effectiveness but the evaluator assesses that the approaches used might have impacted negatively on sustainability. Moreover, the management of the adaptation of the programme led to a lot of pressure on ITC staff.
140. UKTP was also able to adapt to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring the programme's efficiency. For example, the UKTP created online modules for institutional training on the SME Trade Academy to allow continuing delivery during lockdowns. According to ITC's stakeholders, "[this] is a growth area for ITC and increasingly the SME Trade Academy wants to lead the way (with mandate from leadership) on training digitalization to enhance reach and impact, and increase efficiency (including avoiding travel)". In addition, UKTP successfully adopted online tools to continue delivering the service (from delivering coaching sessions via MS Teams or Zoom, to participating in on-line trade fairs).

141. While the monitoring and reporting system provided sufficient information to support adaptive management, the evaluator assesses that the deprioritisation of M&E impacted negatively on the ability to measure efficiency. Reporting requirements did not result in regular and thorough reporting of all projects and thus efficiency of the governance mechanism as well as operational efficiency could not be assessed. An independent midterm evaluation with a strong M&E framework can greatly contribute to enhancing the efficiency of a programme like the UKTP. Additionally, robust, and user-friendly results-based management tools are important to ensure consistent reporting for such a programme covering numerous regions and using different delivery models.



### 3.5 Impact

#### How well did the UKTP Programme perform in achieving its longer-term objectives to increasing trade between EPA partner countries and the UK and EU and to create job opportunities and to achieving SDGs?

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How well did the programme contribute to building the ability of targeted firms/products, including women business enterprises, to export to UK/EU markets?
- How well did the programme contribute to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of jobs? (by gender)
- How adequate was the measurement of jobs and trade appropriate to provide evidence on the intended impact of UKTP?
- How well did the programme contribute to achieving relevant SDGs?

#### 3.5.1 How well did the programme contribute to building the ability of targeted firms/products, including women business enterprises, to export to UK/EU markets?

142. Based on the data provided by ITC, the evaluation found that the programme was impactful in increasing the ability of the supported companies to reach out to UK and European markets. Specifically, ITC reports that the UKTP increased EU and UK exports by around USD 80 million, surpassing the revised objective of USD 20 million. It is worth highlighting that the reprogramming forced a significant reduction in the overall objectives due to the reduced depth of support on SME capacity building and less market linkage events supported. The trade outcome was reduced from USD 37.7 million to 20 million.

**Table 16. UKTP's Outcome: Increase in Sales to the UK/EU by Pilot Country**

Country/Region	Increase in Exports to the UK/EU (USD '000s)
Cameroon	18,593.2
CARIFORUM	n/a
Comoros	n/a
Côte d'Ivoire	3,675.0
Fiji	9,436.7
Ghana	27,254.9
Madagascar	19,602.9
Papua New Guinea	470.1
Zimbabwe	1,025.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80,058.2</b>

Source: ITC data and ITC Annual Report 2022/23. Note: There is no data available for CARIFORUM and Comoros. The support for Comoros was discontinued, focusing on the country's National Quality Infrastructure policy.

143. However, the UKTP did not manage to meet the number of enterprises doing business with the UK/EU, having recorded that 50 companies had achieved sales to those markets thanks to the UKTP, of which 18 are women-owned, in comparison to the objective of 100 companies, of which 35 should be women-owned.
144. The majority of the additional USD 80 million worth of exports appear to stem from the activities relating to Output 4 and Output 5, for which the outputs provide direct export support to the companies. However, whilst the programme shows an overall positive picture, it is important to highlight that those gains were not evenly spread across all the project participants.

#### Figure 10. UKTP's contribution to increase exports to the UK/EU markets

Beneficiary answers to the question: To what extent do you consider that the Programme did contribute to an increase in exports to the EU or UK? [Open ended answers]

<b>New revenue channels</b> in the UK market, including cocoa processing and capacity-building workshops for exporters, associations, and public and private actors.	
Platforms for operators to report and <b>resolve barriers</b> when importing/exporting to the UK and EU.	
<b>Capacity-building workshops</b> to increase exports and attract investment. The platform has been used by the diplomatic service of the Dominican Republic overseas to increase exports and attract investment.	
<b>The support</b> provided e.g., one company invested in digital advertising	

Source: Author Survey, N=25

145. The effects of the programme may have been distortive as they benefitted some companies over others, especially those with greater absorption capacity, higher baseline sales values (e.g., larger companies), and those already exporting as shown below:

- Cameroon: Over 72% of the project beneficiaries in Cameroon recorded positive trade increases. However, 86% of the increase in exports is linked to a single company, with a second company representing 12% of the increase. Excluding those two companies, the average sales increase sits at USD 32,000.
- Côte d'Ivoire: Only 17% of the participants (i.e. five out of 28 companies) recorded an increase in trade with the UK/EU. For companies that register trade increases, those range between USD 210,000 and USD 1.75 million.
- Fiji. The UKTP focused on two well-established companies, which led to significant export increases for both companies (USD 6.1 million and USD 3.3 million).
- Ghana: Results reported that the country recorded the biggest increase in exports for any country (at USD 27.3 million). The evaluator found that 87% of all export gains were achieved by one single company, and only three participants reported an increase in trade (out of a total of nine participants).
- Madagascar: Out of the 14 companies supported in Madagascar, nine reported increases in exports to the EU and the UK, with increases ranging from USD 2,000 to USD 10.3 million. One company accounted for 53% of the total gains.
- Papua New Guinea: Papua New Guinea recorded the smallest increase in trade, with a total of USD 470,074 generated over the life of the project. This figure includes trade generated with Australia, a critical market for the country. The majority of the gains were generated in 2022, with three of the five participants recording trade increases, ranging from USD 28,000 to USD 250,000.
- Zimbabwe: In Zimbabwe, a total of four companies have reported trade data for at least two years. UKTP's interventions in Zimbabwe have led to one company recording positive trade increases, with the other three companies reporting a drop in exports over the life of the project. Zimbabwe's positive export increases, i.e. without taking into account the drop in revenue reported by the companies – were slightly above USD 1 million.

146. ITC reported that the UKTP facilitated a total of USD 29.4 million worth of indirect trade, in comparison to the objective of USD 25 million. This figure of indirect trade is expected to reflect the amount of trade indirectly facilitated by ITC's market access tools. It should be noted that the enterprise survey conducted by ITC for firms supported by the programme revealed that new markets reached (entered) because of the programme's intervention, including primarily the United States, other international markets (other than the UK or EU), and selling more to domestic segments (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11. New markets entered as a result of UKTP enterprises**

Word cloud of beneficiary answers to the question: Which new markets have you successfully entered?



Source: ITC Enterprise Survey, N=16

3.5.2 How well did the programme contributed to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of jobs (by gender)?

147. The evaluation found, on the basis of the data provided by ITC, that the programme was impactful in creating, maintaining, or improving jobs. Specifically, ITC reports that the UKTP contributed to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of 14,128 jobs, of which 65% of those, 9,176, were women. The results far exceed the programme’s objective of 3,500 jobs created, maintained, or improved. Similar to the trade outcome indicator, the jobs impact indicator was reduced from 8,010 jobs are created, maintained or improved as a result of UKTP support to 3,500.

**Table 17 UKTP’s Impact: Jobs created, maintained or improved**

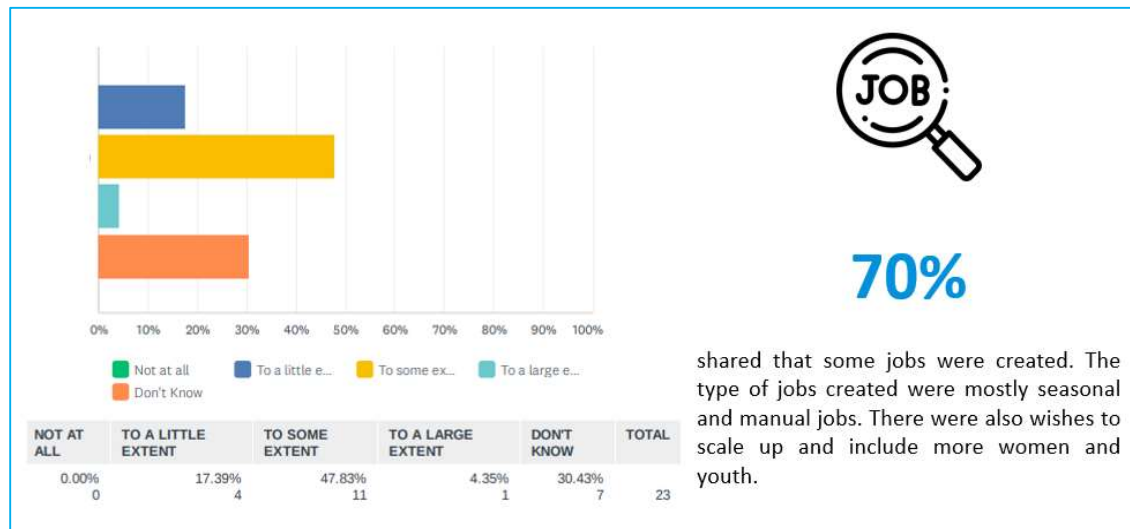
Country/Region	Jobs created, maintained, or improved	
	Total	Of which Women
Cameroon	411	161
CARIFORUM	-	-
Comoros	-	-
Côte d’Ivoire	1,987	1,566
Fiji	374	229
Ghana	233	95
Madagascar	10,538	6,831
Papua New Guinea	112	50
Zimbabwe	473	244
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,128</b>	<b>9,176</b>

Source: ITC

148. Madagascar concentrates most of the gains, with 75% of all jobs created, maintained or improved in the country (74% of jobs for women). This reflects the labour-intensive nature of the sector covered in Madagascar – textiles and garments, as well as the sector’s bias towards hiring women. It should be noted that in 2020, “the crisis led to a potential profit loss of more than 52.4 million euros from [Madagascar’s] textile and clothing industry, and the jobs of almost 150,000 workers were under threat.”

**Figure 12. Perception of the jobs created by UKTP**

Answers to the question: To what extent do you consider that the Programme did contribute to an increase in jobs through your exports to the EU or UK?



shared that some jobs were created. The type of jobs created were mostly seasonal and manual jobs. There were also wishes to scale up and include more women and youth.

Source: Author Survey, N=25

### 3.5.3 How adequate was the measurement of jobs and trade appropriate to provide evidence on the intended impact of UKTP?

149. Overall, the evaluation found that there is room to improve the measurement of jobs and trade increases collected by the UKTP, particularly with regards to the indicators used to measure the programme's impact. The indicator of enterprises doing business with the UK/EU appears relevant to the assignment, as it highlights the expanded ability of companies in the targeted sectors to export. The relevance of the jobs "maintained or improved" indicator could be questioned as it is a highly subjective indicator to measure. For example, in the case of Madagascar, it was claimed that 10,538 jobs amongst the companies supported were maintained, created, or improved. The evaluator believes the metric of jobs "maintained" and "improved", while understandable at the start of the pandemic due to the uncertainty and apprehension of the economic costs of COVID-19, should not have been kept once it was fully realised that the impact of COVID-19 would be short-lived, therefore distorting the overall impact emerging from UKTP. Moreover, many countries introduced staff retention schemes by subsidising jobs to keep people in employment.
150. The numbers reported by ITC are hard to benchmark, as jobs maintained do not include a value for those lost, while reasons for retention would have been helpful to collect. A survey conducted by the Economic Development Board of Madagascar and reported by the IFC (World Bank Group) estimated that "the industry [risked] losing USUSD 64 million and up to 60 per cent of its jobs owing to contraction of demand in the main consumer markets, disruptions to the supply chain and large-scale cancellation of orders" at the start of the pandemic in 2020. According to ILO analysis, around 32% of enterprises that were surveyed did not recruit new staff, 13% dismissed workers, and 45% of firms introduced temporary lay-offs, 32% introduced compulsory unpaid leave. The fact is that overall unemployment did increase in many countries by a small increment, but it would have been useful to compare the employment of the sector in general from 2019 to 2023 and compare the jobs created or lost against those of the industry. In the abstract, as they are presented, it is not possible to make an objective analysis of the figures and how the achieved results compare to the overall sectoral trend. Moreover, in most of these countries, informality is a critical concern, and exporting firms often must report to a higher standard than those operating in a domestic market. Collecting such information would have been valuable to make the case for the impact of the program.
151. The design of the project did not have a clear vision on how to make observable comparisons of performance between the different cohorts. ITC states that the project was meant to pilot various methodologies to achieve results, however it seems that little information was collected to adequately perform substantive testing on the achievements made under different modalities of implementation. The fact that the M&E system was abandoned did not help, although even at the inception phase, this was clearly not going to be achievable with the data collected. In addition, the methodology used to measure trade increases assumes the 2019 levels of exports as the baseline, applying it to all subsequent years without considering fluctuations in demands from existing clients. It also considers that all additional exports to the EU and the UK are attributed to or resulting from interventions led by the UKTP. This fails to consider the fact that the company might be implementing additional efforts to achieve that increase in sales. Furthermore, the calculation of export increases also does not take into account export declines that the companies might have experienced whilst they were supported by UKTP. In addition, it calculates the "cost" of creating, improving or maintaining a job. However, this calculation ignores the fact that the company must pay for additional labour employed, invest to adopt new business practices or make changes, contribute to participation in trade fairs, etc. In other words, by collecting only a small part of the costs, which are directly related to the programme, the benefits appear to be inflated.
152. Finally, the indicator on indirect trade facilitated by the UKTP shows a limited link to the work of the UKTP, as the indicator appears to measure the contribution of market access tools to the ability of companies to produce the right goods for the right markets, hire the workers and invest in the technology to start production, meet all the quality requirements, link to buyers, etc. It would be a leap of faith to expect such tools, whilst important to trade, to equip firms with the tools to reach the final action of exporting. At best, such tools contribute to sowing the seeds of a long process which eventually allows firms to reach markets.

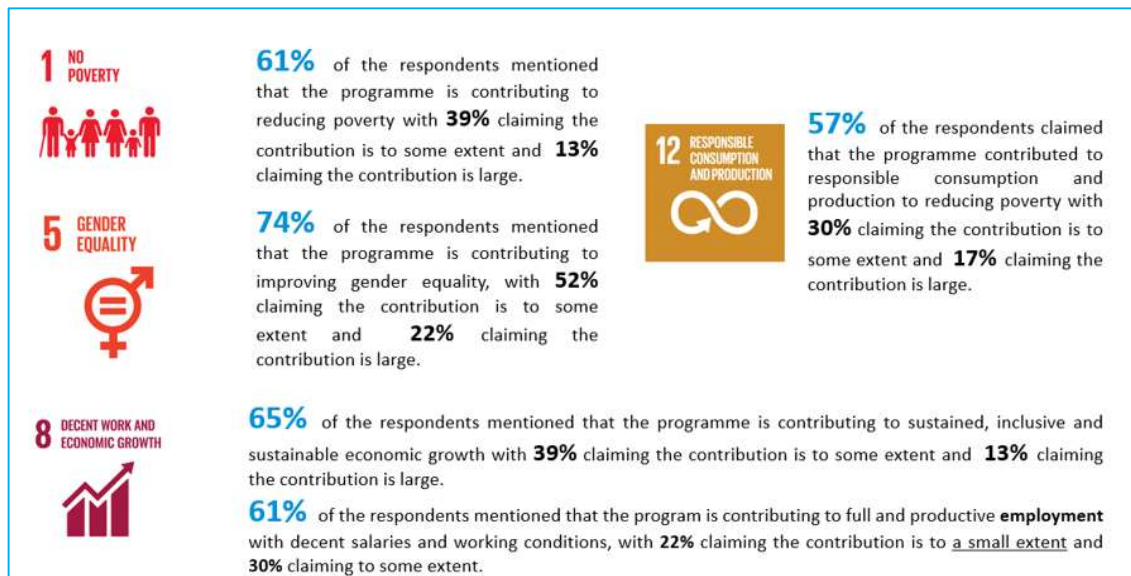
### 3.5.4 How well did the Programme contribute to achieving relevant SDGs?

153. The evaluation found, based on survey reports, that the UKTP likely contributed, although in an indirect way, to SDG 1, ending poverty. This was achieved via the sensitisation sessions, tools and training, which improved the resilience and incomes of smallholder farmers, traders and musicians and the

increased exports, which allowed exporters to support their needs. 61% of respondents to the survey indicated that the interventions contributed to reducing poverty (Figure 13). SDG 1 was not reported as having been contributed to under the ITC open data portal.

154. The UKTP also supported SDG 5 on gender equality by promoting the involvement of women in different industries and supporting the exports of women-owned businesses, exposing them to more opportunities. The efforts in training, sensitising, and ensuring the participation of women in the program have also contributed to achieving SDG 5. 74% of respondent mentioned that the programme is contributing in some way to improving gender equality (Figure 13).
155. Activities under the UKTP that focused on improving manufacturing productivity contributed to SDG 9 Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, while activities focusing on capacity development of firms for sustainable business practices, environment social governance (ESG), and lean manufacturing management, contributed to SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production. 57% of respondents claimed that the programme contributed to SDG 12. Activities in Madagascar attributed around 60% of its budget to activities relating to SDG 9 and SDG 12.
156. Survey results (Figure 13) also highlighted the contribution of UKTP towards SDG 8, on Decent Work and Economic Growth, with the training on CSR practices expected to allow firms to engage in sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth. SDG 8 related activities were reported by the ITC open data portal to account for half the budget of trade intelligence activities, one-fifth of the activities in Madagascar, and all of the activities in Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Ghana, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe.

**Figure 13. Perception of the SDG**



Source: Author Survey, N=25

157. The UKTP's capacity-building activities, multistakeholder partnerships and activities aimed at promoting LDC trade have contributed towards the achievements of SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals. SDG 17-related activities were reported by the ITC open data portal to account for half the budget of trade intelligence activities spent on achieving this.

## 3.6 Sustainability

**How well did the UKTP Programme perform in achieving its longer-term objectives to increasing trade between EPA partner countries and the UK and EU and to create job opportunities and to achieving SDGs?**

This section of the evaluation report answers the following questions:

- How well did the programme contribute to building the ability of targeted firms/products, including women business enterprises, to export to UK/EU markets?
- How well did the programme contribute to the creation, maintenance, or improvement of jobs? (by gender)
- How adequate was the measurement of jobs and trade appropriate to provide evidence on the intended impact of UKTP?
- How well did the programme contribute to achieving relevant SDGs?

### 3.6.1 How well were issues related to the Programme sustainability identified and integrated in the Programme planning, design and implementation?

158. The programme's implementation report identifies the UKTP's approach to ensure sustainability and promoting local ownership of the different interventions:

- **Focusing on high potential businesses.** The programme aimed to focus on larger and mature companies, which were expected to absorb and act on the technical assistance provided. The evaluator found that this was partially achieved, with the beneficiary companies showing a mix profile between MSMEs and large companies. This was highlighted by several stakeholders across CARIFORUM and Ghana, particularly. Based on the results (see 3.5 Impact), it does appear that the larger companies were the ones that reaped better results, and were able to incorporate the activities relating to enterprise support (output 4) to a greater extent.

- **Creating commercially beneficial relationships between value chain stakeholders.** The programme also aimed to build alliance relationships with buyers and lead firms who are committed to sourcing from these countries and who will commit to building relationships with programme-supported suppliers. This objective was achieved in Zimbabwe, for example, where 5 exporter/lead firms that worked with 270 smallholder farmers. In CARIFORUM, on the other hand, stakeholders highlighted the lack of interaction amongst each other, which they highlighted as a missed opportunity to build alliances and create collaboration amongst the artists. In Madagascar, the activities of the UKTP helped forge an alliance amongst small women entrepreneurs in the garment sector.

- **Developing institutional capacity where it can provide benefit during the project and where the institution can take over the assistance.** The project aimed to work with institutions to create the conditions for institutions to acquire full ownership of the capacities created. Nevertheless, the assistance was limited in most instances and not sufficient to build the capacity or establish the systems to enable trade support institutions to sustain results. The capacity of intermediary organisations to take over and sustain results for the Trade Obstacle Alert Mechanism, by engaging with the private sector for awareness raising, or for the public institutions to resolve obstacles was limited. Export promotion organisations – public or private, also received limited support and capability building. There were instances where ITC staff under the UKTP did try to connect institutions with other donor facilities or help establish links to other organisations to implement their mandate more effectively. This was for example the case for the MOU signed between the Madagascan Economic Development Board (EDB), and the Mauritian EDB.

- **Designing and adapting based on evidence.** The UKTP was expected to use diagnostics to make good initial decisions and collect information following the results framework to adapt, such as SME survey, institutional assessment, non-tariff and regulatory assessment and the political economy analysis. The evaluation found that these tools were implemented. However, rather than

sustainability, it would be more appropriate to target these tools to ensure the relevance of the interventions.

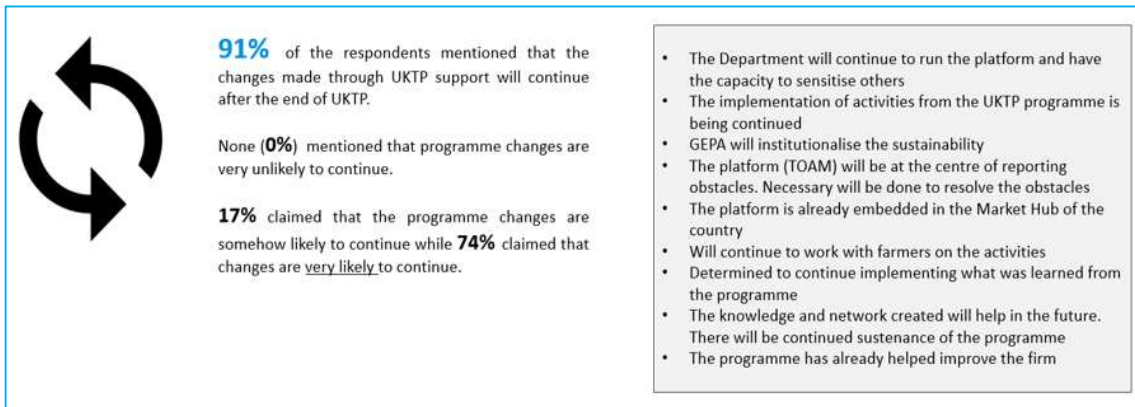
159. The evaluator assesses that the limited budget for each country project would make it unrealistic to expect a comprehensive exit strategy to be implemented. The programme's initial inception report designed an exit strategy focused on (1) MoUs with local institutions (UKTP signed MOUs with GEPA and AGI in Ghana, and the Penja Pepper Association in Cameroon), (2) business support institutions taking the lead on implementing activities and events, and (3) financial sustainability of such entities. The exception to the above is Ghana, where the collaboration between the UKTP and the NTF-V led to 10 companies previously benefiting from UKTP support being onboarded by NTF-V, and Comoros, where the assistance on quality is being taken over by an EU-funded project implemented by ITC.

### 3.6.2 How likely are the benefits of the programme to be sustained? To what extent will beneficiaries use or build on the results of activities after the Programme closure?

160. The evaluation found that the benefits of the programme are likely to be sustained. The programme's focus on improving the ability of private sector operators to reach out to new markets has the potential to continue in the future. As reported by multiple stakeholders, the techniques and knowledge transferred have improved the companies' professionalism and competitiveness. Such activities are considered sustainable given their potential to contribute to future results due to the transferred know-how, which should allow the participants to meet access standards for UK and EU markets.
161. With regard to the work done under Output 1 and Output 2, the evaluator found the work to be sustainable in the future. It is worth noting that the database architectures used under Output 1 are managed by ITC as a global public good. With regards to Output 2, the UKTP worked on the TOAMs of Mauritius and Cote d'Ivoire's TOAM, which original version was no longer act and adapt that and Mauritius' opt Cote d'Ivoire to better meet the users' needs and raise further awareness about the system to the private sector. Additionally, the UKTP programme, through Output 3, trained over 100 participants from over 20 different institutions in client relationship management and developed sustainable business models for business support organisations. Furthermore, the UKTP implemented a course on Digital Transformation, which reached over 300 participants. Such trainings are expected to have lasting impacts in the different organisations, especially if these are able to retain the trained staff.
162. Through Output 4, the UKTP managed to have a substantial impact on the way the targeted MSMEs conduct business. In Fiji and Zimbabwe, the UKTP worked with farmers on improving primary production practices, an activity that has the potential to have lasting impact and allow the participants to enter export markets in the future. This method also allowed UKTP to indirectly promote more inclusive and sustainable value chains by partnering with allied inclusive and sustainable growth programmes such as the FCDO's Commercial Agriculture for Smallholders and Agribusiness (CASA) facility, and selecting SMEs that drive sustainable sourcing from smallholder farmers and small businesses and entrepreneurs. In Côte d'Ivoire, the UKTP worked with farmers to introduce different plants to diversify monoculture cultivations for healthier and sustainably productive soils, respect for biodiversity, related norms and circular production. Furthermore, the activities aiming to improve access to finance, particularly in Fiji and Zimbabwe, will likely have sustained impacts, as access to finance plays a crucial role in increasing the value of production and the uptake of good farming practices. In addition, companies also reported making changes on waste management, resource efficiency, pollution prevention and climate issues on the basis of the training received (although the climate action plan per projects were abandoned because of the budget cuts). Stakeholders also highlighted that the training allowed them to apply improvements that led to more sustainable products and ecological certifications thanks to UKTP's interventions. This was particularly relevant in Ghana, Madagascar and Cameroon.
163. With regards to Output 5, respondents to the survey highlighted their expectation of sustaining the results and changes made under UKTP (Figure 14). Over 9 out of 10 respondents expect changes to continue after the UKTP ends. Example of continued activities include the platforms established under UKTP, maintaining the network of contacts, good agricultural practices and firm level changes.

#### **Figure 14. Sustainability of the project's actions perceived by the beneficiaries**

*Answers to the questions: To what extent do you consider that the Programme did contribute to the following [SDGs]? In your opinion, how likely is it that the changes you made through UKTP support will continue after the end of UKTP?*



Source: Author Survey, N=25

### 3.6.3 How did reprogramming and annual programming affect the sustainability of the outcomes in the future?

164. Overall, the evaluation found that the impacts of the reprogramming on the project’s sustainability were relatively small and targeted to specific outputs. With regards to Output 1, the UKTP’s market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy shifted to embedding its market analysis tool into local websites, rather than collecting data. The creation of country-specific websites, if managed and kept updated as part of the institution’s own website, could have lasting impacts in terms of accessibility of market access information.
165. With regards to Output 2, the reprogramming led to focus on creating more transparent and predictable environment for the international business communities in Mauritius, Côte d’Ivoire, Madagascar, and supporting the national quality infrastructure in Comoros. The TOAMs are expected to be sustainable, given the involvement of the business support organisations in country. However, the reprogramming meant that a regional TOAM could not be implemented covering Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Dominican Republic, which would have increased the sustainability of the overall programme. Comoros’ national quality infrastructure policy is also expected to lead to sustainable outcomes, as the policy was adopted by the local government, which should take it forward and implement it.
166. The reprogramming did not negatively impact the outcomes of Output 3, supporting business support organisations, despite this output being deprioritised during the last financial year. This is because the UKTP had a substantial reach during the first three years of operation and meet all the objectives of the programme, and the activities implemented throughout this Output – i.e., training on strategic planning, client relationship management, etc. - should yield outcomes even after the completion of the programme. For example, the UKTP reported that 6 business support organisations had adopted changes to their digital transformation journeys due to the training receive.
167. Output 4 and Output 5 were also impacted by the reprogramming. In Cameroon, where a Rainforest Alliance certified trainer assessed three cocoa cooperatives against the Alliance’s protocol of standard compliance to determine their readiness for the Rainforest Alliance audit. Whilst training on the aforementioned certification and coaching were to follow, these were cancelled due to the programme budget constraints, having a significant impact on the sustainability of the UKTP’s interventions in country. PNG’s workplan was cut significantly. Comoros was abandoned. As highlighted by ITC’s stakeholders, the reprogramming and annual programming led to UKTP losing the ability to plan long term, to focus on short term activities.
168. It is worth highlighting that the focus on Outputs 4 & 5 might play against the programme’s sustainability. Evidence provided by Cadot et al (2012) highlight that export support activities such as the one implemented through the UKTP, “[have] a durable impact along the extensive margin in terms of export destinations and products but provided only a temporary boost to exports along the intensive margin. [...] [Market] prospection and promotional activities prove to be the most fruitful”.



#### 3.6.4 What lessons can be learnt from UKTP to enhance the sustainability of trade-related technical assistance programmed annually?

169. Based on the experience of working with FCDO funding and approval cycles, which is not unique to the UKTP, but a characteristic of many FCDO-supported programmes, one has to adapt to one-year programming cycles, and focus on quick wins as opposed to longer-term activities, since there is no ability to predict whether funding will be made available in the future or not. This becomes a problem for addressing important concerns which demand longer-term involvement with beneficiaries, or where the time span for generating change requires discreet interventions at different times of the year.
170. As such, the re-organisation of activities around specific Outputs 4 and 5 was the correct approach given the programming limitations of the funding agency. Output 4 nevertheless does require a medium-term approach in some cases, as it includes change management at the enterprise level. Some feedback from the interviews suggested that longer-term accompaniment by consultants would have helped the companies further institute change in their operations.
171. The re-focusing on shorter-term results does mean that performance in other areas becomes even more important. For example, better leveraging other projects within and outside of the UKTP is critical to work within a short-time frame (external and internal coherence is needed), efficiency will be driven upwards, and a flexible approach to implementation is critical (decentralisation can be beneficial for this to occur), while the sustainability of actions may be compromised as investing in the institutional framework, M&E systems and building capacity will inevitably enjoy less focus.

## 4. Conclusions, lessons and recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

The evaluation provides conclusions for each of the key evaluation questions, based on findings provided (Chapter 3) for the detailed evaluation questions.

#### 4.1.1 Relevance: How well was the UKTP Programme planned and designed to answer needs relative to the use of EPA by ACP countries?

172. Overall, the evaluation concludes that the UKTP Programme was relevant to answer the needs relative to the use of EPA by ACP countries and to its beneficiaries, the implementing partners, and the client. This evidence came from various sources.
173. The UKTP's objectives and design responded well to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities. Although the participation of some national stakeholders during the design phase appeared to be limited, the activities around each specific country project were targeted and adapted to meet the needs of the country's stakeholders. The adaptability of the interventions also contributed to the relevance of the different interventions.
174. Furthermore, the project's implementation strategy considered demand and supply requirements; subsequently, the activities implemented both at the global and country levels reflect a mix of demand and supply side requirements.
175. Despite these challenges, the UKTP project demonstrated that a focused approach, prioritizing activities that directly contribute to sales in target markets and job creation, can yield positive outcomes.

#### 4.1.2 Coherence: How well were the UKTP Programme interventions aligned with other ITC interventions and other trade-related technical assistance interventions?

176. The evaluation concludes that UKTP's external and internal coherence was generally good. Regarding the UKTP's external coherence, the involvement of ITC with other organisations was generally good, with ITC showing strong collaboration with institutions such as the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries from the Netherlands, with which ITC is implementing other projects.
177. However, such close cooperation with domestic stakeholders was not seen across all countries. In terms of internal coherence, the evaluation evidence of good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams. With regard to internal coherence, the evaluation team concluded that there was good coherence and coordination among ITC's teams.
178. In general, UKTP projects in all the different countries were aligned and complementary to programmes executed by other stakeholders. However, the evaluation highlighted limited interaction between the FCDO network and the UKTP in certain country projects. The uncertainty around reprogramming also put a strain in the communication channels.

#### 4.1.3 Effectiveness: How well does the UKTP Programme perform to deliver on its specific intended outputs and outcomes?

179. The evaluation concluded that the UKTP Programme was effective, with self-reported data showing that the programme achieved all its targets for the expected results. An assessment of the outputs and outcomes indicators reported in the Annual Report 2023 showed that UKTP increased firms and institutions' awareness of how to use EPA preferences and benefits (Output 1).
180. UKTP also achieved its objectives of creating a business environment more transparent and conducive for export to UK/EU markets (Output 2) despite the fact that this output was one of the targets of reprogramming and faced significant budget cuts. The output focused on improving the ability of business support institutions to provide support to traders (Output 3) was also achieved even if this output was deprioritised during the project's final financial year.

181. With regard to increasing the capacity of targeted firms to export to the UK/EU market (Output 4), the UKTP surpassed all its targets. Additionally, UKTP achieved all indicators under the output focused on activating market opportunities (Output 5). The UKTP's reprogramming deprioritised Outputs 2 and 3, which relate to business and trade facilitation, but the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism component of the programme was helpful in resolving certain barriers to trade.
182. It was difficult to evaluate the benefits of one activity or implementation model over another based on the output indicators of trade and different targets across countries. It was also not possible to compare achievements between countries and between implementation models due to the lack of comparable baseline information, missing detailed country reporting and different tracking indicators or information reported.

#### 4.1.4 Efficiency: How well were the UKTP Programme resources allocated and used to carry out the intended activities and to achieve the UKTP Programme objectives?

183. The evaluation concludes that the programme and projects were implemented relatively efficiently, and this was supported by stakeholder consultations.
184. Although monitoring and evaluation were deprioritised by FCDO due to budget cuts, the M&E system generally provided sufficient information to support adaptive management. ITC, FCDO and external partners had a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities in terms of monitoring and accountability reporting. Several interviewees assessed that coordination and communication with the ITC team was excellent, leading to higher efficiency. While real-time implementation assessment was not available for the programme due to the budget cuts, the overall flexibility of the programme was key to its efficiency.
185. Despite the pandemic and budget constraints, UKTP completed all activities and targets under the different components, demonstrating high technical efficiency. UKTP exceeded targets across most impact and outcome indicators. The change in the market intelligence and EPA intervention strategy due to budget reductions also increased technical efficiency. Additionally, the buy-in and readiness of national stakeholders were key to the technical efficiency of the project.
186. The overall programme is estimated to generate an average additional USD 5.7 in exports across all the countries, with the highest returns generated in West African countries. Overall, UKTP contributed to generate USD 80 million in additional exports for USD 13.9 million invested. The evaluator could not assess the efficiency of the different delivery models due to data not being made available.
187. The reprogramming and annual reprogramming enhanced the project's efficiency, although these were highly disruptive. The budget cuts and reprogramming strategy ended up focusing on export promotion projects through enterprise support and B2B events, which resulted in higher efficiency with notable recording of additional exports.
188. The deprioritisation of M&E, including impact measurement, negatively affected programme synergies and efficiency of the UKTP as learning from the different projects could not be shared for improving future performance and results.

#### 4.1.5 Impact: How well did the programme contribute to building the ability of targeted firms/products including women business enterprises, to export to UK/EU markets?

189. Based on the data provided by ITC, the evaluation concludes that the programme was impactful in increasing the ability of the supported companies to reach out to UK and European markets and in creating, maintaining or improving jobs. However, the UKTP did not manage to meet the number of enterprises doing business with the UK/EU, having achieved only 50% of its target objective of 100 companies.
190. The effects of the programme may have been distortive as they benefitted some companies over others, especially those with greater absorption capacity, higher baseline sales values (e.g. larger companies), and those already exporting.
191. Overall, the evaluation concludes that there is room to improve the measurement of jobs and trade increases collected by the UKTP. The numbers reported by ITC are hard to benchmark, as jobs maintained do not include a value for those lost, while reasons for retention would have been helpful to collect.

192. The UKTP supported several SDGs, including SDG 1 on ending poverty, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. The UKTP's capacity-building activities, multistakeholder partnerships and activities aimed at promoting LDC trade have also contributed towards the achievements of SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals.

**4.1.6 Sustainability: How well did the UKTP Programme integrate issues related to the sustainability of interventions?**

193. The evaluator concludes that the benefits of the programme are likely to be sustained, although exit strategies could have enhanced this area.
194. For Outputs 1 and 2, the evaluator concludes the work to be sustainable in the future. Through Output 4, UKTP had a substantial and sustained impact on the way targeted MSMEs conduct business. Regarding Output 5, survey respondents highlighted their expectation of sustaining results and changes made under UKTP.
195. The impacts of the reprogramming on the project's sustainability were relatively small and targeted to specific outputs. With regards to Output 2, the reprogramming led to focus on creating more transparent and predictable environment for the international business communities in Mauritius, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, and supporting the national quality infrastructure in Comoros. The reprogramming did not negatively impact the outcomes of Output 3, supporting business support organisations, despite this output being deprioritised during the last financial year. Output 4 and Output 5 were also impacted by the reprogramming, and the evaluator highlighted that the focus on these two outputs might play against the sustainability of the programme.

**4.2 Lessons and recommendations**

**Lesson 1**

**Reprogramming allowed ITC to explore partnerships with smaller institutions and more directly with SMEs, allowing for more cost-effective implementation of the programme, although this had ramifications on sustainability.** In addition, while it was reported to the evaluation team that FCDO and ITC met regularly for risk and finance meetings, better planning regarding the allocation of funds to the implementing agency would have enhanced efficiency.

**Recommendation 1**

Future UKTP programmes and future UK-funded programmes, in general, should focus on activities that can be implemented within a given financial year. In case that the UK's funding continues to adopt a year-by-year approach, activities implemented across financial years have the risk of being defunded, limiting the programme's effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

Directed to UKTP:

- a) Design activities and follow-up activities to be fulfilled within a single UK financial year (even if the project is a multi-year one).
- b) Identify activities that require more than a single year support and highlight to FCDO the risks associated with disrupting or shortening the support to that activity.
- c) Track and report the changes experienced in the original planning due to the change in budget.

Note to ITC management  
 When facing a deprioritisation or change in budget, track and report the changes and impact of that change in budget on the overall project (including dropped activities, change in output/outcome indicators, etc.) and make this report available to all stakeholders involved, enhancing clarity and certainty. This recommendation would not be relevant in the event that the UK's funding moves back to multi-year programming.

Directed to FCDO:

- 1. Enhance communication with regards to possible budget changes between financial years.
- 2. In consultation with ITC, earmark/secure the necessary funding to implement those activities that require more than a financial year to be implemented, thereby ensuring efficiency and sustainability of such activities.

**Lesson 2**

**The M&E function is a critical part of any large aid-for-trade programme, given its critical role in recording progress and challenges and ensuring learning for future projects.** Furthermore, the UKTP adopted a pilot approach with the different countries that, in the evaluator's view, will bear limited lessons learnt due to the lack of data and information about those pilots. The loss of the M&E function within UKTP also impacted the ability of the team to measure and collect the impact indicators.

**Recommendation 2**

**Future UKTP programmes should contain a strong M&E function, covering both technical and financial outputs.** In addition, a mid-term stocktaking exercise should be undertaken to draw lessons learned, informing the second part of the implementation.

Directed to UKTP:

- a) Strengthen the M&E function, including keeping records of activities (such as End of Activity reports, etc.) as well as reporting and tracking of expenses. The monitoring and finance teams should work closely with the intervention and programme managers to capture programme cost data and coherently attribute this to individual interventions across the different parties involved in the project implementation.
- b) Codify actual expense activities by category, which will help to better analyse expenses through monetary and quantitative indicators (such as a Value-for-Money analysis). The current reporting in this programme did not associate the expenses with their related activities' category, making the analysis of allocative efficiency difficult. For example, UKTP could set up cost centres that will ensure that all expenses are recorded and available in a centralised location. Each cost entry would be assigned to a cost type, cost category and cost centre code, which would simplify the tracking and monitoring of all incomes and expenses incurred against the budget.

Note to ITC management  
Mid-term evaluations or simpler stocktaking exercises are valuable instruments that can benefit not only the programme being implemented but also all ongoing and future programmes. Even in the event of a budget cut, the IEU should take the lead and implement such reviews.

**Lesson 3**

**The deprioritisation of outcomes focused on business environment and trade facilitation will likely have an impact on the long-term sustainability of the project.** Whilst working on direct company support is expected to yield more direct and faster results, work on the business environment and the strengthening of TISIs is expected to reach a significantly larger number of firms. Furthermore, focusing on direct company support led to the programme showing highly targeted outcomes and impact results, with multiple instances of a single company representing 80% of the project gains.

**Recommendation 3**

**Future UKTP programmes should also work on improving the business environment of the countries they work with.** This could also be achieved through partnerships with other programmes.

Directed to UKTP:

- a) Identify possible partnerships (i.e., other international organisations and projects) to work together on business environment and sectoral reforms.
- b) Balance out the work between the business environment and institutional reforms and direct company support.
- c) Work around business environment should be sector-focused trade facilitation, with a direct connection to exporting specific products to the UK.

Directed to FCDO and DBT:

- a) Direct trade advisers to work closely with the in-country UKTP team, tasking them with identifying the need and opportunities for reform.
- b) Recognise the value that business environment reforms have. Without business environment reforms, B2B activities might have a direct but short impact. Coupled with business environment

Note to FCDO and DBT  
It is important to note that the activities under this recommendation cannot be implemented within a single financial year.

reforms, B2B activities can have a wider and more substantial impact across the targeted sector.

**Lesson 4**

**The limited coordination between the UKTP and the different UK Missions might have limited the impact of the interventions, as the UKTP did not leverage the wide network and contacts that such Missions have, both in their host countries and in the UK.**

**Recommendation 4**

**Improve the collaboration and coherence with the UK Missions** (both with FCDO and DTB staff), so as to leverage intelligence and networks in the field.

Directed to UKTP:

- a) Hold regular working sessions and updates throughout the life of the project.
- b) Engage with the UK missions with their different projects and events, boosting the visibility of the selected participants towards UK-based companies.
- c) Co-organise trade missions, events, and B2B sessions.

Note to ITC management  
As was done in some countries, have frequent meetings and sharing of activities in advance with country and regional advisers.

Directed to FCDO and DBT:

- a) Direct regional and country trade advisers, and development advisers to communicate frequently on projects and activities happening in the relevant countries

**Lesson 5**

**The lack of country-specific exit strategies might have a negative impact on the programme's overall sustainability.** Whilst the programme relied on the innate sustainability of the activities, specific measures to ensure sustainability could have been adopted, such as through the design of exit strategies.

**Recommendation 5**

Future UKTP programmes should adopt strong exit strategies and overall sustainability measures.

Directed to UKTP:

- a) Design sustainability measures and exit strategies for each specific country project, reporting changes and challenges as they emerge and adapting the exit strategy in light of the same.

Note to ITC management  
UKTP did consider channels to keep projects 'alive' and sustain some communications with countries. A more strategic approach to high funding risk projects of this nature is needed to improve the sustainability of results, and to remove reputational risks arising from cuts and redirections. The exist strategy is also helpful to motivate the staff of ITC in having a vision of the trajectory of activities.

Directed to FCDO and DBT:

- 3. The FCDO should consider the implications of abrupt ending of activities, and being in country, help liaise with other donors/international organisations that may continue some of the activities.
- 4. The FCDO should consider the exit strategy of any new activity at the start of design and implementation and consider the risks of funding cuts throughout implementation.

## Annex A: List of documents

### A. Corporate documentation

- Strategic Plan 2022-2025
- Strategic Plan 2019-2022
- Operational Plans for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

### B. Programme documentation

- MoU for the EPA support Programme, May 23 2019 (including annex 6: ToR for Inception period)
- CUBED institutional assessment for UKTP
- UKTP Inception progress report
- UKTP Inception progress report Annex 3: UKTP log frame (spreadsheet)
- UKTP annual Review 2020, by FCDO
- UKTP annual Review 2021, by FCDO
- UKTP annual Review 2022, by FCDO

### C. Project documentation

#### B908 - Programme Management: UKTP Programme

- Implementation document B908
- Draft Completion Report (Jan 2023 version)

#### B906 - Trade Market Intelligence: UK Trade Partnerships Programme

- Implementation document B906
- UKTP Inception report for TMI, draft 2019
- Delivery plan October 2020-March 2021
- Delivery plan TMI January-June 2021
- Delivery plan TMI August 2021-March 2022
- Delivery plan TMI November 2021-May 2022
- Delivery plan TMI February-June 2022

#### C166 - Non-ODA: UK Trade Partnerships Programme

- Implementation document C166
- Implementation plan Non-ODA activities

#### B900 - CARIFORUM: UK Trade Partnerships Programme

- Implementation document B900
- UKTP Inception report CARIFORUM, Sept. 2019
- Delivery plan CARIFORUM October 2020-2022
- Delivery plan CARIFORUM July 2020-February 2022
- OUTPUT 5: Specialty Food Market Appraisal.

#### B905 - Fiji: UK Trade Partnership Programme

- Implementation document B905
- UKTP Inception report Fiji, Jul. 2020
- Delivery plan Fiji October 2020 – February 2022
- Delivery plan Fiji October 2020 – December 2021
- Delivery plan Fiji October 2020 – February 2023
- Market research report on processed baby ginger

#### B902 - Côte D'Ivoire: UK Trade Partnerships Programme

- Implementation document B902
- UKTP Inception report CIV, Nov.2019
- Delivery plan CIV October 2020 – March 2022
- Delivery plan CIV October 2020 – February 2023
- Delivery plan CIV September 2020 – February 2023

#### B907 - Zimbabwe: UK Trade Partnerships Programme

- Implementation document B907
- UKTP Inception report Zimbabwe, Jun. 2020

- Delivery plan Zimbabwe October 2020 – February 2022
- Delivery plan Zimbabwe January 2021 – March 2023
- Delivery plan Zimbabwe February 2022 – March 2023

**B904 - Madagascar: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- Implementation document B904
- UKTP Inception report Madagascar, Nov. 2019
- Delivery plan Madagascar January – October 2021
- Delivery plan Madagascar October 2020 – February 2022
- Delivery plan Madagascar September 2021 – February 2023
- Delivery plan Madagascar January – October 2022

**B967 - PNG: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- Implementation document B967
- UKTP Inception report PNG, Sept. 2020
- Delivery plan PNG October 2020 – September 2021
- Delivery plan PNG October 2020 – February 2023

**B901 - Comoros: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- Implementation document B901
- UKTP Inception report Comoros, Jan. 2020
- Delivery plan Comoros October 2020 – October 2021
- Delivery plan Comoros October 2020 – February 2022
- Delivery plan Comoros October 2020 – May 2022
- Delivery plan Comoros October 2020 – March 2023

**B903 - Ghana: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- Implementation document B903
- UKTP Inception report Ghana, Nov. 2019
- Delivery plan Ghana October 2020-February 2022
- Delivery plan Ghana January 2021-December 2022
- Delivery plan Ghana January 2021-March 2023
- •Market research and brand strategy for cocoa in the UK

**B899 - Cameroon: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- Implementation document B899
- Delivery plan Cameroon October 2020-March 2022
- Delivery plan Cameroon October 2020-February 2023

**C272 - Central Asia: UK Trade Partnerships Programme**

- • Implementation document C272

**D. Other relevant documentation**

- UK Government's Strategy for International Development, May 2022
- Global EPA support programme Business Case, March 2019
- FCDO slides on Centre of Expertise
- ITC inquiry, Trade and Foreign Policy Memorandum, March 2022

**E. Gender and Climate Assessments**

- CARIFORUM Climate Risk Assessment (word)
- CARIFORUM Climate Risk Assessment (excel)
- Fiji Climate Risk Assessment (word)
- Fiji Climate Risk Assessment (excel)
- Ghana Climate Risk Assessment (word)
- Ghana Climate Risk Assessment (excel)
- Ghana Gender action plan
- Fiji Gender assessment report
- EOI UKTP Risk screening





