

ITC, Joint Advisory Group 10 July 2018

Check against delivery

Norway's intervention (Draft as of 9 July)

First of all, Norway aligns herself with the Canadian statement on behalf of donors.

We would like to commend ITC for the new Strategic Plan. The Plan clearly links the work of ITC to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Strategic Plan sets the direction. Norway would like to highlight the priority given to the least developed countries, which we fully endorse. In 2016, the LDCs as a group experienced its lowest growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) since 2000 – 3.8 per cent. Working towards the Sustainable Development Goals, means working together. To reach the goals, we have to address the causes of poverty, and we must pay special attention to the LDCs. They are the countries most in need of technical assistance and capacity building, and this should be reflected in their share of delivery.

The Annual Report reflects the growing prominence of the digital economy in ITC's work. Many argue that the digital transformation represents a make or break moment for several developing countries. If we are not able to successfully harness digital technology for development, the digital divide will persist and probably widen.

Norway is now in the process of developing a digital strategy for our international development cooperation. Three factors are vital ingredients in developing a digital economy: 1) Building competence to unleash local talent, 2) Creating conditions that attract investments and 3) Using data to build better public services.

Norway sees ITC as an important partner in our efforts for gender equality. Do women in business and trade do a better job than men? We don't know. But that's not the point. The point is simple maths. If you double the number of

candidates, you increase the chances of finding the most successful entrepreneurs.

ITC has over the past few years focused more on impact and presenting results. The key question within Aid for Trade should always be: How did this particular intervention affect trade? Although direct attribution is sometimes difficult, we need to be able to show that capacity building and technical assistance probably contribute to increased trade. If not, we will be in serious trouble when it comes to securing resources for Aid for Trade.

In closing, I would like to join others in thanking Arancha and the rest of her team for their dedicated efforts to use trade as one of the means to achieve the SDGs.

Thank you.