



**External Evaluation of UNCTAD Project Account-  
Accelerating Progress of Selected West-African Countries towards the  
Achievement of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Particularly  
MDG8, Through Trade-related Training and Capacity Building\***

**Prepared by**

**DMI Associates  
François Théoleyre,  
Emmanuel Gonon,  
Denise Colonna d'Istria Owen**

**December 2015**

\*This report was commissioned by UNCTAD. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the external evaluator and do not represent the views of the UNCTAD Secretariat or of the organizations or institutions with which the evaluator may be connected, or organizations or institutions that commissioned this evaluation. This evaluation report has been reproduced without formal editing by the UNCTAD Secretariat.

*UNEDITED ADVANCE COPY*

## Executive summary

Project Code	1213J
Executing Entity	UNCTAD/DTL within the TrainForTrade programme
Funding	US\$577,000 from UNDA 8th tranche
Duration	2013-2015 (expected December 2015)
Global Theme	Trade, economic development and integration in global economy
Specific topic	E-Commerce (inclusive definition focussed on the legal and practical requirements for policy making towards e-economy as a whole).

This report presents a final, external and independent evaluation of the project. Evaluative activities were conducted from March to September 2015. Main evaluative activities included desk review of all relevant documentation, e-questionnaire, and direct interviews with key stakeholders both in Geneva (March 2015, during UNCTAD e-Commerce week) and via IT solutions (including telephone, Skype and e-mails).

### **Main findings:**

-Within MDG8 framework, project meets core targets of the UNCTAD mandate and responds to demands from target countries.

-Foreseen activities have been implemented in line with approved project proposal. Some activities had to be re-scheduled or have changed venue due to unforeseen events including Ebola epidemics and security issues in some of the areas targeted by the project; but activities will<sup>1</sup> continue to be executed in line with the logic of intervention and above initial targets in some respects, such as more beneficiary countries than originally foreseen, and more Distance Learning (DL) sessions than originally planned, within the proposed duration of the project. All courses were available and delivered either in English or French.

- Other sources of funding (\$175,000<sup>2</sup>) were mobilised, such as amounts spent to “self finance” participation in additional trainings; this provides additional evidence of the relevance of the trainings and of their adequate response to needs of the targeted countries.

- Participants<sup>3</sup> are satisfied or very satisfied with the activities that are recognised as contributing positively to the development of e-Economy in their respective countries.

- There are already elements of immediate or medium term outcome to be observed in some of the target countries, related mostly to (i) raised awareness at the level of decision makers, (ii) increased understanding and capacity to manage inter-related issues (including data protection, security of transactions, etc...) feeding into the management of the e-Economy (iii) needs and challenges for the development of harmonised legislation within the economic region, and (iv) pursuit of coordinated responses to the needs for further training and capacity building to meet emerging requirements of e-Economy.

Longer-term impact on the development of e-Economy and economic growth of target countries will need to be assessed in the next few years.

- Despite challenges related to Internet connectivity, power supply and sometimes-insufficient training facilities, the on-line sessions were successfully delivered in all target countries<sup>4</sup> of

---

<sup>1</sup>At time of evaluation, the project is not finished. However few activities remain to be implemented, that are already well on track in terms of implementation and budget utilisation.

<sup>2</sup> This is a rough estimate provided by UNCTAD’s project team.

<sup>3</sup>Based on results of electronic survey and review of perception surveys conducted at the end of the DL sessions.

<sup>4</sup> Ratio of completion of the DL course: 83%, with 81% success rate of the trainees.

the project. In several countries the technical tutors trained by the project proved very useful in supporting the delivery of DL courses and in providing sustainable support to capacity building delivered by the project.

**Main critical observation** recognises that the project deals with dense matter for which the audience is not always prepared, showed uneven absorption capacity, or had varying degrees of experience in the subject matter. Given the high relevance of the topic, more time for interactive Q&A and follow up activities are needed to re-enforce/up-date the knowledge imparted by the project and strengthen beneficiaries' networking at all levels. But this requires a longer timeframe.

#### **Conclusion:**

- Relevance and Efficiency are high.
- Effectiveness is good in comparison with means, scope and duration of the project.
- It is too early to assess long term Impact and Sustainability but immediate outcomes are very promising.

At the time of evaluation, the project retains a high relevance in the framework of benefits to be accrued by LDCs from e-Economy, and increasing regional and global integration. Efficiency is high as the project is clearly poised to finalise activities and deliver outputs, with certain outputs exceeding the original plan (number of beneficiary countries and DL courses). Outcomes provide significant but early contributions to objectives of integration and of harnessing the potential of e-Commerce for inclusive and sustainable development, in line with MDG8 targets.

The TFT methodology and distance learning system added value to the capacity building process by extending outreach of the project at low cost, building on already trained local resource persons, and facilitating and supporting a regional integrated approach. Networking within and between countries is incipient at the time of the evaluation, and linkage with training institutions needs to be developed.

The project built synergy with other related projects (notably the work of the ICT Analysis Section within the Division on Technology and Logistics on legal frameworks for the growth of the online economy and the implementation of e-Government services) in collaboration with regional organisations (notably ECOWAS) and facilitated collection and dissemination of relevant data to monitor trends and development of e-Economy in the target region.

The demonstrated efficiency of the project could be multiplied by adapting/delivering the e-learning components to other geographical regions. Further contribution to development through e-Commerce and extension of e-Economy could be obtained by updating/extending the topics covered in the courses.

## CONTENTS

Project at a glance .....	6
INTRODUCTION .....	7
DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND .....	7
FINANCING ARRANGEMENT .....	8
BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT .....	8
LOGIC OF INTERVENTION OF THE PROJECT .....	9
METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION.....	13
EVALUATION AGAINST DAC CRITERIA .....	22
RELEVANCE .....	22
Relevance of the Project within UNCTAD's mandate .....	22
Relevance of the project in the beneficiary countries .....	24
EFFECTIVENESS.....	26
EFFICIENCY.....	31
IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY .....	43
1) Knowledge production.....	43
2) Component dedicated to legal specialists .....	44
3) Component dedicated to practitioners .....	46
Gender.....	47
LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	49
At regional level.....	49
In terms of project management .....	50
Possible recommendations to beneficiary countries (national level).....	51
ANNEXES .....	52

## ACRONYMS

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DL	Distance Learning
DTL	Division on Technology and Logistics
EA	Expected Achievements
ECOWAS	Economic Commission of West African States
EMU	Evaluation and Monitoring Unit
FtF	Face to Face
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
TFT	TrainForTrade programme
ToTT	Training of Technical Tutors
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

## Project at a glance

<b>Final evaluation of project n°1213j</b> <i>Accelerating Progress Of Selected West-African Countries Towards The Achievement Of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Particularly MDG8, Through Trade-Related Training And Capacity Building</i>	
<b>UNDA 1213J</b>	<p><b>Budget: 577 000 \$</b></p> <p><b>Overall objective: to strengthen trade-related capacities in selected beneficiary countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, and Togo).</b></p> <p>Duration: 2013-2015</p> <p>Expected achievements (EA):</p> <p>EA1: Strengthened capacities of local government officials to formulate and implement concrete development-oriented trade policies.</p> <p>EA2: Strengthened capacities of national and regional trade-related training institutions to deliver training courses to build sustainable trade related capacities, including through the use of distance learning tools.</p> <p>Beneficiaries and/or stakeholders: Regulatory authorities, Ministries of Trade and Investment, local trade-related training institutions, trade and transport operators, import/export associations, chambers of commerce and NGOs dealing with trade, investment and development ...</p>
<b>UNCTAD expectations</b>	<p>The evaluation should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of this project.</p> <p>More specifically, the evaluation should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;</li> <li>– Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the project design and implementation while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action, including those addressed to UNCTAD management and UNDA Office;</li> <li>– Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how UNCTAD's work can be strengthened.</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology of evaluation mission</b>	<p>Mission activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Review of relevant project documents and relevant materials designed for this project;</li> <li>– Interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff, and implementation partners involved in this project;</li> <li>– Telephone interviews with a sample of representatives of all beneficiary countries of the project, and other relevant stakeholders;</li> <li>– Surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as may be required; conduct follow-up interviews as may be necessary;</li> <li>– Analysis of the data collected.</li> </ul>

# INTRODUCTION

## DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND

The project responds to the risk, recognised by the international community and reflected in MDG 8 that a “digital divide” emerge, reinforcing existing income and wealth inequalities within and between countries. Yet, a major potential benefit of globalisation is the freer movement of technology, including information and communication technology (ICT), across borders. In principle, ICT can have a levelling effect<sup>5</sup>, giving poor countries and poor people access to markets, information, and other resources that would otherwise have been inaccessible.

Recognising trade and IT supported trade (including e-Commerce) as a vector of development, the UN, notably through UNDA, emphasizes the need to overcome infrastructural bottlenecks in telecommunications, transport, and logistics in parallel with governance aspects, including consumer protection, security of transactions, privacy of records, and intellectual property.

With respect to legal and regulatory issues, capacity building via ODA can assist developing countries in participating positively and shaping global rules and protocols governing e-Commerce for sustainable and inclusive development.

Specialized literature over the last decade has categorised main barriers to e-Commerce as economic, socio-political and cognitive<sup>6</sup>.

- Economic barriers include inadequate ICT infrastructure (bandwidth limits) often linked with low rural Internet usage, unreliable and costly power supply, limited use of credit cards, lack of economies of scale linked to market size, difficulties in transport etc.
- Socio-political barriers involve weak legal and regulatory frameworks that threaten reliability of electronic transactions. Socio-political barriers can be explained in terms of formal and informal institutions. Anonymous online relationships threaten established interpersonal networks. Preference for personal face-to-face communications over e-mails and precedence of established relationships over the Internet's inter-personal efficiency also work against e-Commerce.
- Cognitive factors are related to mental maps of individuals and organizational decision makers. In developing countries, organizations, human, business, and technological resources, a lack of awareness and understanding of potential opportunities, risk aversion and inertia often lead to a negative cognitive assessment of e-Commerce.

For more than a decade, UNCTAD, through its TrainForTrade (TFT) programme, has been focusing on capacity building to strengthen trade-related human and institutional capacities. It promotes multi stakeholder dialogue and innovative partnerships for development cooperation, and it has already brought together several international organizations and donors in

---

<sup>5</sup> According to OECD research; see in particular Andrea Goldstein and David O'Connor, *OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 164 E-Commerce For Development: Prospects And Policy Issues*; <http://www.evancarmichael.com/African-Accounts>.

<sup>6</sup> See Kshetri, Nir (2007) —*Barriers to E-Commerce and Competitive Business Models in Developing Countries: A Case Study*, *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 6, 443-452.

promoting greater integration of developing and least developed countries into the world economy.

As part of its mandate on ICT for Development, UNCTAD has been since 2000 the leading capacity-building provider within the United Nations system supporting the preparation of legal frameworks for e-Commerce through 2 related and on-going initiatives: *the E-Commerce and Law Reform Programme* and *the TrainForTrade Programme*.

Through its TrainForTrade (TFT) programme, UNCTAD has moreover developed a recognised expertise in blending distance learning tools and techniques and face-to-face training delivery to optimise capacity building efforts targeting developing and less advanced countries.

## FINANCING ARRANGEMENT

The Development Account is a capacity development programme of the United Nations Secretariat aiming at enhancing capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the United Nations Development Agenda. The Development Account is funded from the Secretariat's regular budget and is implemented by 10 entities of the UN Secretariat (DESA, the 5 Regional Commissions, UNCTAD, UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNODC).

<p>The project that is the object of this evaluation, numbered 1213J, is financed by UNDA, under its 8th tranche<sup>7</sup> and implemented by UNCTAD.</p>
---

Programming in each tranche of UNDA funded projects is guided by a theme that reflects the gist of the most recent legislation of the General Assembly and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on development.

Theme for UNDA **Tranche 8, 2013-15** was: "Supporting Member States to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the context of the multiple and interrelated development challenges".

## BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen and enhance trade-related capacities of policy makers, officials and relevant institutions in selected West African countries, by fostering the emergence of local technical, pedagogical and substantive competences. The project will therefore aim at ensuring that equitable benefits from increased trading opportunities and economic growth are achieved in these countries, in order to accelerate progress towards agreed development goals (and MDG 8 in particular).

Through the production and delivery of face-to-face and distance learning training courses this project aimed to build sustainable *trade-related capacities* through the *use of e-learning tools*. The project planned to take into account the needs of governments as well as the private sector (trade and transport operators, import/export associations, and NGOs), and to establish a network of national and regional counterparts.

---

<sup>7</sup> Projects are programmed in tranches, which represent the Account's programming cycle.



## LOGIC OF INTERVENTION OF THE PROJECT

The logic of intervention of the project is nested in TrainforTrade (TFT) logic of intervention (higher, umbrella level) that can be presented as follows:

- « Capacity building to strengthen trade-related human and institutional capacities »;
- « Capacity development **frameworks** that generate **endogenous trade-related capacities** for assessing, managing and adopting trade-related strategies and policies that will **facilitate the integration of those countries into the world economy** ».

### Overall Objective

The project overall objective (OO) aims “to strengthen trade-related capacities in selected beneficiary countries”, namely when the project was launched: Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, and Togo. The project aimed at promoting inclusive growth through trade development in West African least developed countries (LDC) in targeting 6 Francophone and 2 Anglophone countries. Furthermore, 5 out of 6 Francophone (exception made of Guinea) countries are members of the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UEMOA - WAEMU), and use the same currency (CFA Franc). And all of those countries are members of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), which provides a comprehensive normative framework for regional development.

### Specific Objective

The main area of focus for the project is **electronic commerce**.

Within the project scope, « e-Commerce » refers to purchases and sales conducted over computer networks, using multiple formats and devices, including the web and electronic data interchange, using personal computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones, of varying level of sophistication. E-Commerce may involve physical goods as well as intangible (digital) **products and services** that can be delivered digitally.

The project addresses e-Commerce **inclusively** and deals with many various electronic relationships between Governments, enterprises, individuals/consumers and other public and private organisations. It is not restricted to the business focus (B2B and B2C), but rather focuses on the **legal and practical requirements for policy making towards e-Economy** as a whole.

### Expected achievements

- i. Strengthened capacities of local government officials to formulate and implement concrete development-oriented trade policies.
- ii. Strengthened capacities of national and regional trade-related training institutions to deliver training courses to build sustainable trade related capacities, including through the use of distance learning tools.

### Actions

3 capacity-building courses:

- 1) Training of Technical Tutors (ToTT),
- 2) The Legal Aspects of e-Commerce, and
- 3) E-commerce for Practitioners.

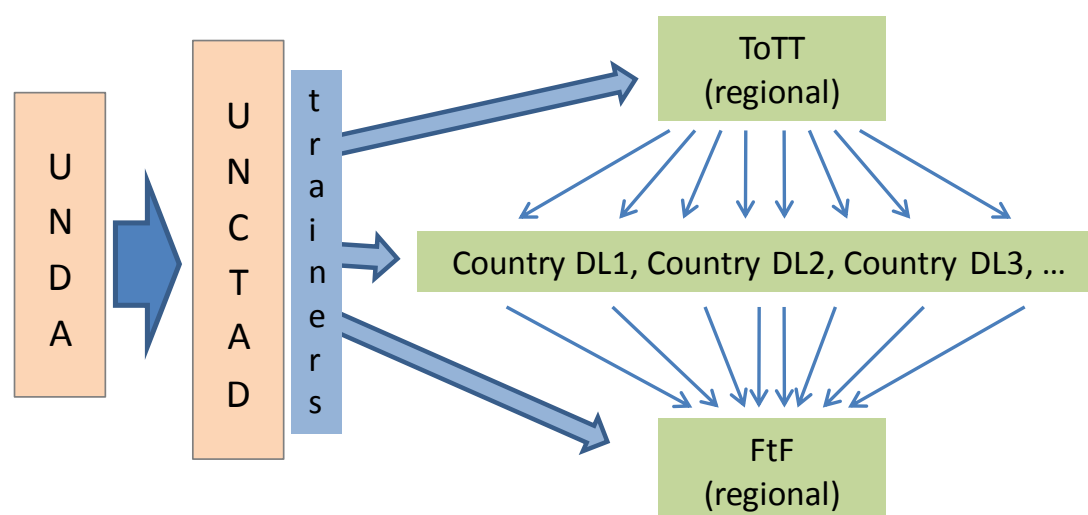
### Activities

(a). Needs assessment missions in the selected West African countries to assess local technical capacities and constraints, and agree on the proposed plan of action;

- (b). Draft the agreed training and capacity-building action plan for each country and for the region;
- (c). Produce, adapt and validate face-to-face and distance-learning training courses according to the TrainForTrade methodology, in cooperation with other UNCTAD programmes;
- (d). Train potential trainers and distance-learning technical tutors to manage, implement and deliver the courses through face-to-face and distance learning using local capacities;
- (e). Train participants through distance learning and with the support of distance-learning technical tutors that will have been trained using validated pedagogic training material;
- (f). Establish a network of trade-related training institutions and experts in West African countries;
- (g). Convene a regional expert group to provide recommendations for the follow-up of the project, with a particular focus on distance-learning activities in West Africa.

The logic of intervention of the project as presented in tabular form in annex 1 of the approved proposal of the project<sup>8</sup> is clear and result oriented.

Actions and activities are clearly defined, articulated and sequenced, according to the proven methodological framework of TFT.



The design of the project was based on an objective tree and a strategy that are both clear and coherent.

In the project proposal, Indicators of Achievements (IA) complement each Expected Achievement (EA) as follows:

Expected Achievements (EA)	Indicators of Achievement (IA)
I. Strengthened capacities of local government officials to formulate and implement concrete development-oriented trade policies.	(i) Increased number of trade-related policy recommendations formulated by the local government officials from the project beneficiary countries.
Observations:	

<sup>8</sup> See annex 6 “Approved Development Account Project”.

The time frame of a 2-year training programme is not consistent with that of formulating and implementing trade policies.

The training cycle of the project is 5 weeks of a DL session in each country followed, for 2 of the participants of each country, with a 3-day face-to-face workshop. That cycle was roughly repeated twice in each of the 2 strands (legal and practitioner focus) of the project. The 2 national participants to a face-to-face session of a given country are rarely in a position to issue directly trade-related policy recommendations that would move along the legal path of the country (drafting, submission, amendments, validation, and implementation), which is at best a pluri-annual process.

The source of verification indicated in the logframe is: « final report of the trainings and other documentation listing trade-related policy recommendations formulated during the workshops ». This points to modest recommendations that reflect further needs of the participants and of the participating institutions, rather than trade policy-making recommendations of « government officials from the project beneficiary countries » defining e-commerce strategy and national policy making.

Recommendations formulated internally at the level of a Ministry of Trade or telecommunication could not be monitored in the participating countries, given the limited framework of this evaluation, especially as the 2015 training cycle of the project is not finished at the time of drafting.

II. Strengthened capacities of national and regional trade-related training institutions to deliver training courses to build sustainable trade related capacities, including through the use of distance learning tools.

(i) The participating institutions have in their possession the necessary distance-learning teaching tools to replicate the course.  
(ii) Increased number of participating institutions that successfully organize distance learning training courses delivered at local level.

Observations:

The expected achievement mentions « trade-related training institutions ». The related IAs, more realistically, refer to “participating institutions” that are mostly trade or economy ministries (including in some cases office of Prime Ministry), regulation agencies, telecom institutions, etc. Those participating institutions are not per se training institutions.

The realistic achievement of IA (ii) exceeds the scope of the project: participating institutions might engage in replicating the training delivered by the project, but it is unlikely they would use a DL platform, unless they requested and obtained further support from UNCTAD or other development partners. A more realistic formulation for this indicator of achievement would be: number of participating institutions that replicate the course locally and pursue capacity building for e-Commerce and e-Economy through distance learning solutions.

### Conclusions on the logic of intervention

The project’s capacity building ambition is divided between

- a technical objective of building sustainable trade-related capacities as a means to (i) meet MDG8 and (ii) further integrate developing countries in the global economy,
- a methodological objective of enhancing access to capacity building via (i) e-learning tools and methods and (ii) development of local capacity building through IT solutions.

Those 2 objectives are ambitious given the limited framework (budget, time) and extended geographical coverage (8 and then 15 countries) of the project. The logic intervention remains relevant at each country level. However:

- At the **regional level**, the project could only achieve **limited** steps towards the technical objective: it raised awareness of decision makers and highlighted main issues to reap benefits from e-Commerce.
- As regards **e-learning methods**, the project provided a successful experience to each participating country and contributed to alleviate fears and misunderstanding. It therefore prepared further use of e-learning methods and utilisation of UNCTAD e-learning suites.
- It also identified in each country a suitable venue, and it **raised awareness of crucial needs for infrastructure** (broadband, stable connections, internet access) both to facilitate e-learning and develop e-Commerce.
- The development of endogenous trade related training capacities, however, exceeds the scope of the project, as the locally trained technical tutors are mostly IT specialists of the local trade Ministry; and most of the project's trainees are professionals involved in policy making in relation to e-Commerce, therefore not likely to undertake training as their core activity.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

This external and independent evaluation was trusted to DMI Associates, an external consultancy based in Lyon. The evaluation is conducted by François Théoleyre, with assistance of a DMI in-house team comprising experts in the fields of M&E, trade as engine of development, regional integration, and IT supported capacity building.

The team worked under close methodological guidance of UNCTAD's Evaluation Unit (EMU) and in compliance with UNEG norms and standards and the evaluation policy of UNCTAD.

As indicated in the methodology section of the inception report, and in line with the requirements of the ToRs, main evaluative activities included:

1. Review of relevant project documents and materials;
2. Interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff, and implementation partners;
3. Focus groups with participants to the ECOWAS Seminar on Cyber law Harmonisation 23-24 March 2015, and face-to-face meetings with TFT focal points in Geneva during the week of 23-27 of March 2015;
4. Telephone or Skype interviews<sup>9</sup> with a sample of representatives of all beneficiary countries of the project, and other relevant stakeholders; (key interviews with Technical Tutors and focal points);
5. Surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders (electronic questionnaires in French and English<sup>10</sup>).

Activities 2, 3 and 4 are organised through semi-structured interviews.

The semi-structured interviews cover the main evaluation criteria as defined by the DAC of the OECD and required by the ToRs.

The basic structure of the semi-structured interviews was elaborated in Geneva before the focus groups and further elaborated with guidance of EMU<sup>11</sup>. In compliance with DAC and UNEG standards (standard 2.4, §10 and 12) we adapt our interview questions to each type of respondent, whether it is a participant to an online training, the focal point of one of the participating country, or the trainer of the course.

As opposed to activity 5 (above) conducted through an electronic questionnaire with closed and open questions, interviews for activities 2, 3 and 4 are not conducted along the lines of a set and fully drafted questionnaire. Based on our experience (and in compliance with UNEG standard 3.7 § 11 et 12) we find interviews are most productive and allow us to probe more in-depth in issues when we engage our interlocutor in a review of his/her specific involvement with the project, leading our interlocutor, through open questions, to cover all aspects of his/her experience, his/her perceptions and triangulating as much as possible what we are told

---

<sup>9</sup>Particularly of e-Commerce practitioners, absent from Geneva meeting. Legal specialists were mostly interviewed through the focus groups conducted in Geneva. March 2015.

<sup>10</sup>The launch of the evaluation being very close to the opportunity to conduct focus groups of key stakeholders in Geneva, the questionnaires were finalised and administered in April-May, after being reviewed under the guidance of the UNCTAD Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU), in coordination with the project manager and other relevant stakeholders (notably TrainForTrade technical specialists).

<sup>11</sup> For use in telephone or Skype interviews, with focal points and tutors.

with what information we have gathered from the desk review (activity 1) and interviews with other stakeholders.

Gender considerations are systematically introduced in all interviews.

### **Kick-off meeting**

At the onset of the evaluation mission, a meeting with EMU allowed to adjust the scope of the evaluation mission. This meeting clarified that the evaluation should concentrate on activities financed by UNDA. It also highlighted that the evaluation focus was not to identify next steps, as the project would not receive follow up funding from the Development Account; but rather to evaluate the performance of the project against set goals and performance indicators, presenting lessons learned and recommendations for future similar interventions. The kick-off meeting with EMU was complemented with closely coordinated work first to organise the focus groups that took place during the initial week of the mission, and later to (i) develop the French and English versions of the electronic questionnaire and (ii) expend for the draft final report the evaluation matrix<sup>12</sup>, stakeholders analysis and interview guidelines that had been presented at the beginning of the evaluation mission.

### **Field work**

The evaluation ToRs did not plan visits to beneficiary countries but a week was spent in Geneva (March 2015) during the UNCTAD e-commerce week. Besides a kick off meeting with EMU (as mentioned above) this key activity of the project also offered the possibility to conduct interviews with: key stakeholders (ECOWAS focal point, representative from UNICITRAL), direct beneficiaries from all the countries covered by the project including several focal points and technical tutors, stakeholders from countries not involved in the project for comparative purpose, UNCTAD project management and 2 of the 3 trainers that developed the courses that form the core of the project.

### **Face to face and telephone/Skype interviews**

To better capture in a short format, given their busy agenda during the e-Commerce conference, the views of the direct beneficiaries of the project present in Geneva, 2 focus groups were conducted (one in English for 8 people, one in French for 25 people). Those focus groups were complemented by direct face-to-face interviews with trainees of the legal component of the project as well as with the 2 trainers (one Francophone and one Anglophone) that produced the material used for the trainings of the legal framework component of the e-commerce project. The week in Geneva also allowed to interview relevant stakeholders (from the OIF, the ECOWAS, UNICITRAL, ICANN<sup>13</sup>, etc.).

A series of interviews were conducted by telephone or Skype with key stakeholders, including focal points and/or technical tutors of the target countries<sup>14</sup>.

### **Complementary data gathering**

---

<sup>12</sup> See below expended evaluation matrix.

<sup>13</sup> The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers is responsible for coordinating the maintenance and methodologies of several databases, with unique identifiers, related to the namespaces of the Internet - and thereby ensuring the network's stable and secure operation. Much of its work concerns the Internet's global Domain Name System (DNS).

<sup>14</sup> See Annex 7.

An electronic survey, based on a questionnaire elaborated in close consultation with EMU, was made of direct beneficiaries of the project. The questionnaire was sent to 360 participants from all training sessions, whether online or face-to-face. The questionnaire was drafted in English and in French and sent to both Francophone and Anglophone participants. Web-based or online questionnaires usually have a rather low response rate, compared to paper-based surveys (especially when administered face-to-face at the end of a session); to boost the return rate of the questionnaire, the evaluators (i) provided the survey URL in a direct email and (ii) sent reminders as soon as the return rate registered a slight decrease, while extending the duration of the survey's online availability.

The e-questionnaire response rate is 28% (101/360), demonstrating that interviewees were keen on providing feedback from their project's experience<sup>15</sup>.

The team also conducted an extensive desk review of project documents and reports, including material used for activities, resource-use information, list of beneficiaries, counterparts and resource persons, and feedback documents (assessments, letters)<sup>16</sup>.

The proposal included a tentative chronogram of the evaluation that was fine-tuned in cooperation with EMU. The stretching of the timeframe of the evaluation allowed including in the scope of the evaluation some activities that could not have been considered otherwise, while taking advantage of the presence in Geneva at an early date (March 2015) of key stakeholders of the project. The end-result is that the evaluation time was stretched from March to September 2015, an extension that induced no significant variation in the scope and objectives of the evaluation as expressed in the ToRs.

Activities to collect and triangulate data were conducted as follows:

The assessment of the ToTT scheme is mostly based on:

- Direct interviews (via Skype or telephone) with all the technical tutors that were later deployed in the delivery of the project course
- Skype or telephone interviews with Focal Points<sup>17</sup> who in most cases selected the technical tutors
- Interview with the expert who delivered the ToTT who is also the project manager
- Desk review of the final report of the ToTT training<sup>18</sup>, including perception survey of the participants.

On-line DL sessions and attendant activities of chat and forum are assessed through:

- Desk review of technical tutors short reports and opinion survey conducted at the end of each session
- 2 focus group (one in French, one in English) and direct interviews of participants at e-Commerce week in Geneva
- Skype or telephone interviews of technical tutors and desk review of their post session reports

---

<sup>15</sup> Literature provides examples of stronger response rates, but they usually occur in an academic environment (students as interviewees), or are gained through various incentive schemes. On comparable e-surveys, the return rate seldom reaches 15%.

<sup>16</sup> The evaluation was facilitated by the kind support of the project team that shared all information in convenient modalities, including USB keys and responded promptly to all subsequent queries.

<sup>17</sup> In one case, focal point and technical tutor is the same person. Several focal points participated in the ToTT seminar.

<sup>18</sup> See Report\_DevAcc\_ToTT.

- Electronic survey of all participants to activities up to April 2015<sup>19</sup>

Face-to-face sessions are assessed through:

- Desk review of project reports, and opinion surveys conducted at end of each session
- 2 focus group (one in French, one in English) and direct interviews of participants at e-Commerce week in Geneva, that provided access to legal specialists (and to a few participants to practitioner's sessions)
- Electronic survey of all participants to activities up to April 2015<sup>20</sup>
- Interviews of the three trainers that developed the on-line training and conducted the face-to-face sessions

### **Stakeholders**

The main group of stakeholders (direct beneficiaries) of the project is made up of government officials and policy makers involved in formulating and implementing effective trade, investment and development policies in each of the target countries.

Other stakeholders (and/or developing partners), foreseen in the project proposal included entities within the private sector, such as trade and transport operators, import-export associations, as well as chambers of commerce. Beyond trade and economy ministries, the project mostly targeted telecom ministry or agency, postal office, etc.

The project proposal also mentions as likely stakeholders local trade-related training institutions and NGOs dealing with trade, investment and development. The evaluation could not track such stakeholders that would have been involved only in the online courses.

Technical tutors did not come from training institutions. The academic world is represented in the project via the main trainers that developed the course.

### **Evaluation matrix**

---

<sup>19</sup> One last distance learning session was organised in May 2015 and participants were electronically surveyed but participants to the last face-to-face scheduled for September 2015 could not be surveyed.

<sup>20</sup> Idem.



The following matrix of evaluation expands the version which was presented at the beginning of the evaluation mission. It was fine-tuned during the early stages of the evaluation and, with guidance from EMU, further details main sources of information and relevant stakeholders for each criterion.

Evaluative Questions	Analysis to be conducted	Instruments and sources of data collection
<b>Relevance</b>		
<p>-Whether the project design and choice of activities and deliverables have properly reflected and addressed the needs of the beneficiaries, taking into account UNCTAD's mandates, and alignment with the objectives of the Development Account;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Logical framework, Consultation process at design time, needs and commitments of beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Relevance of the project in UNCTAD's mandate, expertise and portfolio (e-commerce and development, distance learning platform, interventions at regional level);</li> <li>- Links and synergies with other projects and interventions in the technical field and in the region;</li> <li>- Relevance of the project in the development and trade and economic policies of the beneficiary countries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on previous related interventions of UNCTAD, project document, annual progress report of the project, needs assessment report, project web sites, training package, and other project documents;</li> <li>- <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team</i>, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD, legal and e-Commerce specialists from UNCTAD who were engaged in this project;</li> <li>- <i>Interview with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep</i>, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva;</li> <li>- <i>Survey</i> of participants to the project activities;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interviews</i> with project focal points, technical tutors and selected participants to the project activities.</li> </ul>
<p>-Whether the actual activities and outputs of the project were consistent with the overall goals, intended outcomes, and indicators of achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal logical consistency, quality control system in place;</li> <li>- Relevance of the courses to their intended goals: promote e-Commerce;</li> <li>- Relevance of the delivery method</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on project document, progress reports; content of the courses and pedagogical sequences;</li> <li>- <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team</i>, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone/ Skype interview</i> with project focal points, technical tutors;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva ;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Survey of participants to the project activities;</i></li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>		
-Whether the activities have achieved, or are likely to achieve planned objectives as enunciated in the project's logframe;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reconstruction of logic of intervention and of changes over the implementation span.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on project document, progress reports;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UNCTAD team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD</li> <li>- <i>Telephone/ Skype interview</i> with project focal points, technical tutors.</li> </ul>
-What were the main factors influencing the outcomes of this project, either negatively or positively; what are the lessons to be learned or best practices to be promoted for other similar projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comparative review of implementation in the various countries, lessons and related changes in implementation modalities (capitalisation and knowledge/skills management processes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on project document, progress reports;</li> <li>- <i>Interview with</i> UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD, legal and e-Commerce specialists from UNCTAD who were engaged in this project;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva ;</li> <li>- <i>Survey of participants to the project activities;</i></li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interview</i> with project focal points, technical tutors and selected participants to the project activities.</li> </ul>
-Whether there is initial evidence that the capacities of government officials in formulating and implementing trade policies have been strengthened;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short term outcome at the policy level such as development of legislation, commitments to harmonization of legislation at regional level (Indicators and means of verification: percentage of project beneficiaries indicating the usefulness of the training in their capacity development; percentage of project beneficiaries advocating the policy options they learned from the training; percentage of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on project's <i>progress reports</i>;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interview</i> with project focal points, technical tutors and selected participants to the project activities;</li> </ul>

	project beneficiaries proposing changes to policies).	- <i>Electronic Survey of participants to the project activities.</i>
-Whether there is evidence that the capacity of national and regional trade-related training institutions in delivering trade related training courses have been strengthened;	- Concrete e-Commerce training initiatives as follow-up of the project interventions, such as courses delivered by ToTT, plans to develop research, training and courses; (Indicators and means of verification: percentage of trained technical tutors (and potentially training institutions) that have delivered the training or in the process of delivering the training).	- <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</i> - <i>Interview with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</i> - <i>Focus group discussion with participants to the workshop in Geneva;</i> - <i>Telephone /Skype interview with project focal points, technical tutors;</i> - <i>Survey of participants to the project activities;</i>
-How has the use of creative learning tools tackled the difficulties in distance learning in the beneficiary countries	- Strength and weaknesses in modes of delivery, absorption rates and outcomes	- <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</i> - <i>Telephone /Skype interview with project focal points, technical tutors.</i>
<b>- Efficiency</b>		
-Have resources and funds been used efficiently, leveraging in-house expertise, outcome of previous technical cooperation, outcomes and research outputs, existing databases and networks, and other resources both internal and external to the project office to optimize the project outcomes;	- Rough cost-benefit analysis; - Review of all outputs(ToTT scheme, DL sessions, chat sessions, forum, face-to-face, content of courses, technical infrastructures); - Synergies within and outside of UNCTAD; - Cooperation and partnerships with local institutions and partners; - Funds contributed by other development partners or beneficiaries.	- Desk research on project document, progress reports, project web sites, and budget and expenditure report; - <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</i> - <i>Interview with legal and e-Commerce specialists from UNCTAD who were engaged in this project;</i> - <i>Interview with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</i> - <i>Telephone /Skype interview with project focal points, and technical tutors.</i>
-Have the project activities been delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner;	- Analysis of implementation process (planning methodology, monitoring systems, follow up of spending, timeliness ...)	- Desk research on project document, progress reports, and budget and expenditure report; - <i>Interview with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</i> - <i>Telephone /Skype interview with project focal</i>

		<p>points, tutors and selected participants to the project activities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Survey</i> of participants to the project activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>		
-Whether the activities have been designed and implemented in such a way to ensure maximum sustainability of their impact, for instance, whether and how the beneficiary country stakeholders were involved in the design and implementation of the project;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consultation process at design time, appropriation mechanisms, exit strategy, follow up from UNCTAD and outcome from the face to face workshops in terms of commitment to next steps, etc...</li> </ul> <p>(Indicators and means of verification: number of requests raised to UNCTAD for follow up interventions/ support)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UEMOA and ECOWAS rep, UNICITRAL rep, domain specialist;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interview</i> with project focal points, and technical tutors.</li> </ul>
-To what extent has the project ensured that the capacity of the training institutions in delivering trade related training courses is sustained; was quality control such as accreditation built into the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partnerships with local delivery venues, follow up and skills upgrades of ToTT;</li> </ul> <p>(Indicators and means of verification: number of training institutions that have built up institutional capacity in delivering the training)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Interview with</i> UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interview</i> with project focal points, and technical tutors.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender aspect</b>		
-To what extent has the design and implementation of the project, and the design of the training material incorporated gender concerns, and can outcomes be identified in this regard?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gender sensitivity (in particular balance of participation in project activities) and mainstreaming gender in the development of e-Economy (access to replication of trainings, etc...)</li> </ul> <p>(Indicators and means of verification: percentage of female participants in the project activities, efforts to promote integrating gender in e-commerce and trade policies through the project and its training)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Desk research on project document, progress reports;</li> <li>- <i>Interview</i> with UNCTAD's Team, TFT specialists employed by UNCTAD;</li> <li>- <i>Focus group discussion</i> with participants to the workshop in Geneva;</li> <li>- <i>Telephone /Skype interview</i> with project focal points, and technical tutors;</li> <li>- <i>Survey</i> of participants to the project activities.</li> </ul>

## Limits to the evaluation

Some limitations have to be noted regarding the methodology:

- a) The evaluation team was told to limit its activities to considering those activities and participants that were actually financed by the UNDA. This created special issues as the project was launched with only 8 countries. Later, additional countries were brought in to participate in the trainings. Moreover, in the activity conducted in Geneva, the participants to the project were combined with the participants of a parallel project implemented by UNCTAD who had participated in some of the activities of the project under evaluation. In the focus groups for instance, it was therefore difficult to identify clearly the views of respondents who had actually been financed by the project for their presence in Geneva. The evaluation however considers that this enriched more than it distorted the analysis of the project performance: even when not financed by UNDA, the views of participants to the activities are relevant. The evaluation also assesses positively the fact that the views of the direct targets of the project are complemented by self-financed participants or stakeholders from other projects.
- b) As usual for such mandatory final evaluation of UNDA projects implemented by UNCTAD, the budget of the evaluation is approximately of 2% of the budget of the project. For a project that included 8, then 15 countries, and as many locally implemented activities, the limited man/days budget, without field visits, prevents the evaluation from detailing finely its assessment of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness at the level of each country.
- c) To offset the above limit, and take advantage of a gathering of the main stakeholders, the evaluation was started early (March 2015) whereas the project only finishes in December 2015. Moreover, UNCTAD e-Commerce week in Geneva took place before the desk review was fully completed. In fact, most documents were communicated there. This final evaluation was stretched from March to September 2015. This enabled to assess project activities that took place after the first round of focus group discussions and interviews conducted in Geneva (April/May/June 2015). In fact the project still plans activities for September 2015 that will not be covered by the evaluation. While this delay complicated evaluation drafting, (stretching memory of interviews, etc.) it was positive in the sense that it enabled in depth interviews (both in Geneva and via Skype and telephone) and facilitated the management of the electronic questionnaire (reminders to increase the return rate) and the time consuming interviews of technical tutors and focal points.
- d) To encourage answering the electronic questionnaire, beneficiaries could choose not to disclose some of their personal information. The anonymity of answers to the electronic survey prevented the evaluation team to specifically follow up with non-respondents to significantly improve the response rate. Furthermore, much fewer English-speaking beneficiaries (6) responded to the electronic questionnaire, compared to French-speaking beneficiaries (95). This could introduce some unbalance in the overall assessment of the project by giving more weight to the French speakers' perspective.

## EVALUATION AGAINST DAC CRITERIA

### RELEVANCE

#### Relevance of the Project within UNCTAD's mandate

The project is meant to support the following overarching objective of UNCTAD: “to strengthen capacities in developing countries in the fields of trade, investment and trade supporting services through human resources development, networking and sustainable use of information technology”.

More specifically, the project comes as a complement of UNCTAD's commitment towards developing and less developed countries. Under each of the general headings of the mandate of UNCTAD is the specific translation of this main commitment as applied within the project.

#### ➤ helping fight poverty

For many developing countries, and particularly the LDCs, bridging the IT gap and taking advantage of the potential of e-Commerce could provide opportunities for **poverty reduction, economic growth and development**. It could in particular offer innovative access to new markets, increase income generation by reducing external costs and provide expanding sources of employment.

Global business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce accounted for an estimated \$1.2 trillion in 2013. While still considerably smaller than B2B, this segment appears to be growing faster. In developing countries, B2C e-Commerce is rapidly expanding, particularly in Asia and Africa. China has already emerged as the largest global market for B2C e-Commerce - measured both by online buyers and by revenue. The share of the Asia and Oceania region in global B2C e-Commerce is expected to surge from 28 to 37 per cent between 2013 and 2018, and that of the Middle East and Africa to increase slightly from 2.2 to 2.5 per cent<sup>21</sup>. Africa remains the region with the lowest penetration of e-Commerce, The scope for e-Commerce is rapidly improving as documented in the chart below, although significant barriers remain in areas such as mail delivery of access to electricity.

**B2C e-commerce sales (\$ billions)**

Country	2009	2010	2011	2012
Egypt	2.10	2.50	3.20	3.90
Ethiopia	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.06
Ghana	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.09
Kenya	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.08
Nigeria	0.20	0.40	0.60	0.80
South Africa	0.60	0.80	1.10	1.20

*Source: op cit.*

#### ➤ meet MDGs through trade as engine of development

Beyond close links between the goals contained in the Millennium Declaration and the development potential of ICTs, which in the framework of the project is explicitly related to MDG Goal 8, ICT can also support the achievement of many, if not all, other MDGs.

Most of the knowledge, technical know-how, infrastructures and opportunities related to e-Commerce however, is generated, maintained, taken advantage of by developed country

<sup>21</sup> UNCTAD, Information Economy Report 2015, *Unlocking the Potential of E-Commerce for Developing Countries*.

service providers and naturally reflects their interests. For instance most of e-sales (in the tourism sector notably) are made through overseas providers. Equally, gaps in capacity prevent LDCs governments and private actors alike, to benefit from competitiveness gains based on innovative solutions (secured payments, declarations on line and all processes of e-Government, paperless administrative management, etc.).

There is a considerable amount of money that is actually not accrued in the LDC countries for lack of capacity and infrastructures to capture the benefits offered by current technological advances. The chart below summarises IT penetration in the sub-region, which remains rather low, exception made of Nigeria, Cape Verde, and to a lesser extent Senegal (Data ITU, UNCTAD, 2012), notably hampered by recurrent electricity shortages.

	fixed Internet subscriptions (/100 inhab.)	fixed broadband subscriptions (/100 inhab.)	mobile cellular subscriptions (%)	households with Internet access (%)	individuals using the Internet (%)
Bénin	0.4	0.0	93.3	2.9	4.9
Burkina Faso	0.2	0.1	66.4	3.2	4.4
Cabo verde	4.0	4.3	100.1	22.8	37.5
Côte d'Ivoire	0.2	0.3	95.5	1.3	2.6
Gambia	0.2	0.0	100.0	7.6	14
Ghana	0.3	0.3	108.2	31.8	12.3
Guinea	...	0.0	63.3	1.4	1.6
Guinea Bissau	0.1	0	74.1	1.8	3.1
Liberia	0.4	0	59.3	1.3	4.6
Mali	0.2	0.0	129.1	3	2.3
Niger	0.1	0.0	39.3	1.8	1.7
Nigeria	0.1	0.0	73.3	7.8	38
Senegal	0.7	0.8	93.9	6.3	20.9
Sierra Leone	0.0	...	44.1	...	1.7
Togo	0.6	0.1	62.5	1.4	4.5

➤ **develop human capacity to take full advantage of opportunities in the global economy and technological advances**

Access to information and marketing networks is difficult or impossible for LDCs or developing countries, in particular because of weak IT infrastructure (ranging from deficiencies in electric and broadband networks to gaps in legal framework and contractual security, absence of domain names, etc.), yet only e-Commerce provides an appropriate response to the constraints of limited or remote markets, that would provide LDCs and their citizens or consumers with a fair share of available trade benefits. With its endless possibilities and its low cost, e-Commerce is a key factor of competitiveness for small enterprises. However significant barriers remain in areas such as transport, logistics, inadequate legal frameworks and limited purchasing power.

➤ **and strengthen South-South exchange through a regional approach**

Developing countries can adjust their service industries to suit their own development strategies and become better integrated in the world economy. However there are many common issues and solutions whereby, if working together, LDCs could diminish the costs and achieve a leverage effect (legal basis and risk management for e-Commerce, secured payments, etc...).

UNCTAD offers value addition as it provides a platform to develop e-solutions tailored to the needs of targeted countries. The project can capitalise on shared learning experience developed through the last decade of TFT programme, a demonstrated methodology for e-learning and innovative approaches coordinated and harmonized under a regional umbrella.

The relevance of the project is therefore high in regards to (i) the mandate of UNCTAD<sup>22</sup>, (ii) its proven value-addition and (iii) the needs of the targeted countries.

### **Relevance of the project in the beneficiary countries**

The project originally targeted 8 LDC countries, and between March and August 2013, a needs assessment mission was undertaken at the time of the design of the project in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Togo in order to assess local technical capacities.

The needs assessment report is relatively light in terms of stock-taking of the e-Economy situation in each of the eight LDCs countries. It rather ensured the beneficiary countries were poised to devote human resources to unleash the potential of the project.

The project has gradually been enlarged, on a demand driven basis, to include Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone as beneficiary countries and thus to coincide with the sub-regional scope of the ECOWAS.

This is relevant on several counts:

- Nigeria is one of the most advanced countries in the sub-region in terms of e-Commerce;
- Taking those additional countries on-board enlarges the targeted economic space of the project and in terms of e-Commerce, an enlarged space offers more market opportunities and facilitates the development of contextualised solutions notably in terms of logistics, transports etc.;
- UNCTAD has important projects linking trade, legal framework and IT development in the region. TrainForTrade is a Programme of the Knowledge Development Branch, and the E-commerce and Law Reform programme is a programme of the Science, Technology and ICT Branch, both under the Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL). It seems relevant to align the scope of those projects and it has in fact proven to be a factor of cross-fertilisation, facilitating the study and recommendations on harmonisation of the legal framework and easing the financing of participants to seminars and workshops of common interest to all the countries of the region. This was particularly highlighted at the UNCTAD e-Commerce week, held in Geneva (Mars 2015) where the evaluators held focus groups inclusive of participants from all 15 countries, even if their participation to the activity was not financed by the UNDA project.

The relevance of the project to the needs of the beneficiary countries stems from the fact that all the countries where the project intervened are engaged, albeit at different levels of

---

<sup>22</sup> See UNCTAD.org presenting this area of work of the organisation as follows: "UNCTAD (...) drawing on its policy research, (...) advises countries on how to design and implement ICT strategies and policies to better participate in the global information economy » (UNCTAD.org, ICT4dev) ; see also number 162 of the Accra Accord on cross-divisional capacity-building programmes, including... fostering training and capacity-building aimed at trade practitioners in order to assist member countries in developing sustainable local capacity in trade; and so called "Doha mandate" at end of Plenary XIII (2012) « for the integrated treatment of trade and development, and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development".



advancement, in developing an e-Commerce policy and struggle with the challenge of setting up an adequate legal framework to develop e-Commerce as an engine of development.

This relevance is reflected by:

- The expressions of interest in training activities of the project from the Trade Ministries and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Ministries of the beneficiary countries<sup>23</sup>;
- The willingness of the 8 initial participating countries to meet the methodological requirement of (i) appointing a national authority and a focal point, of (ii) selecting participants to the on-line sessions;
- The requests of additional countries to be included in the project, and the fact that from the start, Côte d'Ivoire chose to self finance its participation<sup>24</sup>;
- The successful current extension undertaken towards Latin American countries;
- Additional requests formulated to UNCTAD to deliver the on-line course in other countries (like Thailand and Bhutan) or other settings.

The high relevance of the project was confirmed by virtually all interviewees<sup>25</sup>, who recognize that the project « *came at the right moment*<sup>26</sup> » and helped considerably to raise awareness of decision makers as to the challenges of e-Economy, (covering both e-Commerce and e-Government, notably in all that relates to e-Commerce from fiscal policy to anti-fraud and consumer's protection).

Since the design of the project (2012), mobile devices and internet access have developed considerably, human resources have been developed and e-Commerce ventures are sprouting in all the countries of the sub-region, even if this boom of the e-Economy is uneven; but national legal frameworks have not been developed accordingly to support security of transactions, and allow in particular the less advanced countries to derive full benefits from technological advances.

The relevance of the project has evolved but not diminished since the beginning of the intervention; IT development<sup>27</sup> requires constant updating of the legal framework for e-Economy and e-Governance. Compared with the situation at the beginning of implementation, E-Systems have developed considerably in the targeted countries; needs however remain high for the beneficiary countries to develop up-dated capacity in the following areas:

- In terms of policy making as national authorities do not have a holistic approach (integrating political, legal and technical response) to e-economy;
- In terms of human resources in the areas relating to e-commerce and its legal framework, more particularly for less advanced countries;
- In terms of a sustainable, inclusive and coordinated regional approach to maximize the benefits of E-commerce as a vector of development.

---

<sup>23</sup> See Claude Lishou report.

<sup>24</sup> Côte d'Ivoire self-financed the training of its technical tutors, before it even was included in the project training activities.

<sup>25</sup> Participants and tutors in regard to their own understanding and professional needs, focal points in terms of national needs, and other stakeholders such as UEMOA and ECOWAS representative, or UNICITRAL.

<sup>26</sup> The phrase, (« *le projet est venu à point* » or « *le projet est tombé juste au bon moment* »), was used by the focal points of 7 out of the 8 initial target countries.

<sup>27</sup> Such as cloud computing, social networks and consumer protection.

## EFFECTIVENESS

Assessment of effectiveness requires examining whether the activities have achieved, or are likely to achieve planned objectives as enunciated in the project's proposal and logframe. This assessment is based on the approved development account project proposal<sup>28</sup> submitted by the project team, and in particular the result based logical framework included in Annex 1.

The following paragraph of the project proposal encapsulates the multi-pronged objectives of the project:

“It is hoped that, by running this project, the capacities of local government officials to assess, promote and implement development-oriented trade-related policies will be improved. The desired effect is for national and sub-national governments in these selected West African countries to generate and manage trade-related knowledge gained from the project and take advantage of e-learning tools and techniques to improve their competitiveness in international trade markets towards increasing their economic growth. It is hoped that local institutions and training centres will also benefit from partnerships formed for this project to enable locally managed capacity building processes relating to trade, including a distance-learning component ».

This statement distinguishes between

-desired effects (for national governments in selected West African countries):

- a) To generate and manage trade-related knowledge gained from the project, and
- b) To take advantage of e-learning tools and techniques to improve their competitiveness in international trade markets towards increasing their economic growth.

-and a hope (for local institutions and training centres) to benefit from partnerships formed through this project to enable locally managed capacity building processes relating to trade, including a distance-learning component.

The project, with still 4 months to run, has already produced some of **its desired effects**:

- a) *to generate and manage trade-related knowledge gained from the project:*
  - (i) knowledge has been generated:
    - ✓ 2 courses have been developed, based on a tested, result oriented methodology for e-learning course development. The two courses are: course for legal specialists, and course for e-Commerce practitioners. The project team used a system called DACUM<sup>29</sup>, which is the TrainforTrade methodology for curriculum development. The system is designed to be result generating; it is customised to meet the needs of the targeted audience. Under this methodology, the material undergoes updating/customisation as needed. This was the case during the project, as the course for legal specialists was developed as early as 2012 (i.e. before project started), but updated and illustrated with examples and practical cases from the latest developments in the target countries. The material was also enriched with elements relating to the new countries that were gradually included in the scope of the project and to emerging issues affecting the surge in e-Commerce mostly in developed countries. The course for practitioners was developed from scratch by the project and the latest edition of

---

<sup>28</sup> See Annex 6.

<sup>29</sup> See Annex 3 detailing TrainForTrade methodology for curriculum development.

face-to-face for practitioners, which has been extremely well received<sup>30</sup>, has built on a recent (less than 3 years) experience in Abidjan<sup>31</sup>.

- ✓ Research was conducted and it is in fact encapsulated in a publication that was circulated at Geneva UNCTAD e-commerce week<sup>32</sup>. It provides a robust factual basis to determine next steps and remaining needs in the target countries to further develop e-commerce.

(ii) Management of trade-related knowledge gained from the project has been positively strengthened:

- ✓ Many participants to face-to-face sessions reported their raising awareness of their respective national authorities as to the needs of a technically supportive and sound legal framework to accompany the development of e-Commerce, and reap the potential benefits of e-Economy. The project has been successful in selecting the right participants that were in capacity to relay the awareness and knowledge imparted by the project to relevant decision makers (such as Minister level, legal counsel to the government, head of telecom agency, legislators, head of independent regulation agency for telecom, etc.).
- ✓ Several countries, following advice from trainees of the project, have initiated the process for plugging gaps in existing legislation, drafting of related legislation or modifying legal dispositions to better accompany the development of e-Economy. For instance, the Togolese association *PayCamp*<sup>33</sup> was created in 2014, immediately following the course, to promote and develop e-Commerce in Togo, and coordinate needs of the public and private sectors. In Niger, a draft for a personal data protection law was presented to the Assembly during the October 2014 session.
- ✓ At regional level, participants to the project have worked to move forward in harmonising legislation related to e-Commerce and e-Economy in order to ensure coherence of the regional economic development and to build up regional integration into the global economy. The project induced a renewed push of UEMOA for members<sup>34</sup> to harmonise the e-Commerce related legal framework. The project highlighted both for UEMOA and ECOWAS representatives the key importance of a harmonised regional legal framework in order for e-commerce to generate developmental benefits and not let e-commerce benefits and generally e-Economy benefits be captive to developed countries or restricted to a few enterprises.

*b) take advantage of e-learning tools and techniques to improve their competitiveness in international trade markets towards increasing their economic growth*

(i) As regards e-learning tools and techniques

- ✓ The project has demonstrated the feasibility, in all the target countries, to use e-learning tools and techniques to deliver the training. In all target countries of the

---

<sup>30</sup> Nearly 100% of good and very good opinions (results of the e-questionnaire, and perception surveys after the sessions). Further verified thanks to the requests received by UNCTAD to deliver the course, whether in Latin America or Asia...

<sup>31</sup> Visit of Jumya enterprise, providing practical know-how on how to accompany the development of e-enterprises, and reap developmental benefits (notably in terms of employment and trade integration) from e-Economy. See session report.

<sup>32</sup> March 2015; see <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/MeetingDetails.aspx?meetingid=742>.

<sup>33</sup> See [savoironews.net](http://savoironews.net) re meeting on September 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Progress is generally slow and uneven in the various member states.

project, the courses have been delivered adequately<sup>35</sup> and participants have “graduated” successfully.

- ✓ Some countries experienced more difficulties in providing the required infrastructure but in all cases suitable venues were eventually identified, and technical issues were solved, a demonstration of motivation from the participating countries and of positive flexibility and close following from the UNCTAD team. In that direction, it is worth mentioning that while, in some countries, participants to on-line sessions experienced difficulties because of poor internet connectivity or lack of personal computers, the UNCTAD team has continuously sought to facilitate the e-learning experience, in particular in allowing the material to be accessed via user-friendly technology (CD-ROMs or mobile phones).
  - ✓ This e-learning experience is also reported as having broken a lot of misconceptions as to distance-learning: The TFT methodology with a local technical tutor has proven key to enable/facilitate participation of less advanced countries, and eliminating or at least easing resistance to new technologies. The technical tutors do offer a sustainable endogenous resource to local capacity building, provided they remain in place and in capacity to support e-learning<sup>36</sup>.
  - ✓ The methodology underlining the project outputs does facilitate participatory knowledge sharing managed by the participants themselves as well as collaborative learning<sup>37</sup>. However, at the time where this external evaluation is conducted, it cannot be verified whether the participants to DL and/or face-to-face sessions will translate tangibly their expressed commitment to duplicating the project’s training at local level. Participants from Senegal are however already scheduling a follow up dissemination of the knowledge produced by the project, to their relevant police forces. They have, to this end, requested support from UNCTAD and the new delivery of the course will take place in 2016, a clear indication of their positive assessment of the effectiveness of the project.
  - ✓ Several technical tutors have expressed willingness to replicate the course in their workplace, and have assured evaluators they are poised to do so. Some have even started to organise to that effect (tentative date already set, inter-ministerial cooperation initiated with ministry of employment, etc.). The possibility of replication of courses has also been picked up in the focus groups conducted in Geneva. Interest and motivation are clear and strong, as is further demonstrated by requests to UNCTAD from new countries. Among original target countries of the project, Senegal expressed interest in developing a specific academic Master programme, based on the project modules, as a complement to already existing related legal courses; and several other focal points discussed the pros and cons of a regional seminar<sup>38</sup>.
- (ii) As regards improving competitiveness in international trade markets towards increasing economic growth.

The most widely used compliment paid to the project by all the stakeholders that were interviewed is that it was “timely”. It is described as coming right when decision makers

---

<sup>35</sup> Even in Cape Verde, where Portuguese is a language barrier, participants to the project have managed to overcome the difficulty.

<sup>36</sup> This would have to be verified in an ex-post evaluation in 2 or 3 years from now.

<sup>37</sup> This is confirmed by a lot of direct interviews and through the electronic survey.

<sup>38</sup> It is worth noting that the legal trainer for the French speaking audience is a law Professor of the University in Senegal that basically offers the most advanced master programme in related matters in the target region of the project. He has actually trained most of the participants to the project, and has been instrumental in developing the UEMOA regional legal framework for e-Commerce. The English trainer for legal specialists is also an academic and he has recruited some participants of the project for a master in his UK University.

needed to measure how deeply, in a global economy, the digital revolution conditions the very possibility of economic growth.

The contribution of the project to improving competitiveness can only be indirect however, as bridging the digital divide is a slow process.

The project correctly highlighted that e-Commerce is strongly dependant on trust and oversight mechanisms, and on cooperation at the regional level. But building trust, structuring an adapted legal framework<sup>39</sup> and the complementary enforcement mechanisms are long and on-going processes that far exceed the scope of the project.

The limited length of the project and its widening geographic spread all prevent it from producing clearly attributable and measurable improvements in competitiveness in international trade markets. It can be observed however, that the trends are positive, with more and more of the target countries providing stable access to internet (with 3 and 4 G connexions), rising levels of equipment and developing local applications on mobiles and tablets; and increasing number of e-based solutions to trade and trade related operations (such as enterprise registration, e-administration of economic matters etc...). The *Information Economy Report* of March 2015 highlights both how e-commerce benefits are lost by countries that do not prepare to harness its potentialities and how all target countries of the project are increasingly in grade to participate in e-economy in terms of equipment<sup>40</sup>.

Trade-related knowledge gained from the project covers specific needs for infrastructure, risks to be avoided in terms of security of transactions, needs for regional cooperation and harmonisation, the link between e-Economy, privacy law, anti-corruption frameworks, fiscal policy, etc.

## Conclusion

In terms of effectiveness, as is the case of all capacity building projects, the time required between the delivery of a course and a tangible change in the legal framework of any participating country or a measurable and attributable increase in competitiveness, far exceeds the duration of the project.

The time and scope of the evaluation does not allow verifying objectively to which extent the project courses will be replicated at the local level, but the potential is there.

Regarding effectiveness, UNCTAD has contributed to raising awareness and providing useful technical knowledge to relevant policy makers in charge of e-economy in the countries of the project, as regards:

- The potential and requirements for sustainable development through e-Economy,
- The need for a regional and coordinated approach to the development of e-Commerce,
- The need for an integrated approach to e-commerce, combining legal and practical aspects, and mobilising the public and private sector, and related policy options,
- The importance of the legal framework for an inclusive and sustainable development of e-Economy, and
- The possibilities offered by e-learning to capture benefits from a whole new sector of trade and strengthen regional development.

<sup>39</sup> The *Information Economy Report 2015* maps the availability of national legislation in four key areas; see p.39 and sqq.

<sup>40</sup> See first section of the overview of the report: « In developing countries, B2C commerce is rapidly extending, particularly in Asia and Africa » and supporting statistical evidence p. 23 and sqq relating to the B2C readiness index for target countries of the project.

The evaluation thus considers that capacities of government officials in formulating and implementing trade policies have been strengthened by the trainings delivered by the project. They have a better understanding of the risks and assumptions involved, and of the challenges and benefits presented by the development of e-Economy, and have been presented with workable policy options.

The evaluation is not in a position to assess capacity of national and regional trade-related training institutions in delivering trade related training courses as a direct result of the trainings delivered by the project<sup>41</sup>.

Individual participants to the trainings delivered by the project have strengthened their capacity in delivering presentations and in participating in working groups for policy making in promotion of e-Commerce. They have access to relevant material to further disseminate the content of the course delivered by the project. Some such further dissemination has taken place or is at the planning stage, mostly within the participating organisations<sup>42</sup>.

The evaluation identified a few instances<sup>43</sup> where participants to the training have launched initiatives to promote e-Commerce in their country.

---

<sup>41</sup> Few participants to the activities of the project come from training institutions and it was confirmed – in particular by the Francophone legal trainer who is a recognised academic-- that relevant training institutions in a position to deliver such training rarely exist in developing countries in general and in the target countries of the project in particular. Senegal and Nigeria however would be most likely to develop such trainings.

<sup>42</sup> I.e. mostly trade Ministries, telecommunications agencies, etc.

<sup>43</sup> Most notably in Togo and in Guinea.

## EFFICIENCY

In the framework of the final evaluation of the project, efficiency will be assessed through:

- Review of all outputs of the project and assessment of all processes,
- The assessment will also include elements of cost analysis.

### A) Review of outputs:

Substantive outputs of the project, directly benefiting beneficiaries are capacity building activities and include:

- The Training of Technical Tutors (ToTT),
- The on-line sessions of distance learning (DL), and
- The face-to-face sessions of training.

Those three substantive activities articulate as follows<sup>44</sup>:

- The ToTT is a means to deliver the DL sessions, and the Technical Tutors are responsible for the delivery and evaluation of the DL modules at country level.
- The DL sessions include modules that have been prepared, taped and delivered by trainers who are experts contracted by UNCTAD. Those same trainers conduct, at the end of each module, interactive online chat sessions (based on a structural process to use the chat with rules and procedure defined with tutors).
- Having successfully completed a DL session is an eligibility criterion to be selected for a face-to-face session. The trainers that prepared the modules for DL sessions conduct the face-to-face sessions.

#### 1) ToTT:

Two Training sessions of TechnicalTutors (ToTT) also called “workshops” took place in Ghana (in English) and in Senegal (in French) in September 2013. The ToTT scheme, as defined by the TFT methodology, focuses on the creation of a pool of national instructors in order:

- (i) to allow replication at the local level by the beneficiaries, and
- (ii) to prepare sustainability of the capacity building activities.

The Technical Tutors participating to the workshops were later deployed to support the delivery of the on-line sessions and the evaluation at the end of each session.

The ToTT workshops trained 34 participants, including 7 (21%) women, from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire<sup>45</sup>, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Togo. Further ToTT sessions foreseen in 2014 were cancelled due to the Ebola outbreak.

All Technical Tutors confirmed the ToTT workshop adequately prepared them to be resource persons in the delivery of the subsequent on-line sessions; it provided them with familiarity with the TFT platform, and prepared them to administer the evaluation of the on-line modules and to guide participants of on-line sessions during the chat sessions. Via the ToTT scheme, the project has demonstrated good effectiveness in achieving one of its expected accomplishments. The well trained TTs contributed to the efficiency in running the DL

---

<sup>44</sup> See graph in earlier section covering logic of intervention.

<sup>45</sup> From the start, Côte d’Ivoire self financed the participation of its trainers, even though it was not one of the target countries.

training.

In particular trainees recognise the value of the pedagogical package they received during the workshop (paper, flash drive and/or DVD).

Their role as local support and resource, in organising and managing on-line sessions is positively acknowledged in all countries, by virtually all participants to on-line sessions<sup>46</sup>.

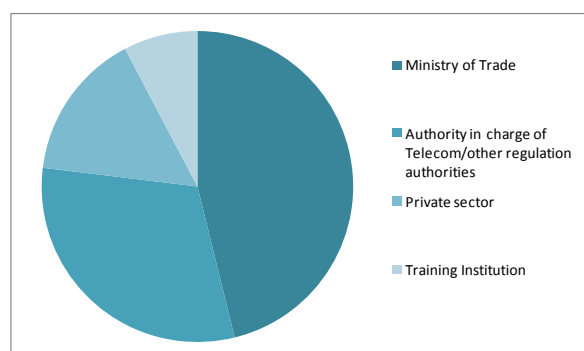
Their selection, made by focal points, was based on a set of clear criteria that had been presented at the time of design by the project consultant that conducted the needs assessment<sup>47</sup>.

The gender ratio of the English ToTT session is of 15% F-85% M; the French ToTT session in Dakar had 29% female for 71% men. Of the 34 tutors, 24 were directly financed by the project, 10 (of which 3 women) came from another project.

Main limits to the ToTT scheme:

The technical tutors are generally IT specialists of the Ministry in charge of the project.

Country	Ministry of origin	Department
Guinée Conakry	Ministry of Trade	National Directorate for Trade
Togo	Ministry of trade and promotion of private sector	IT and website Department
Sénégal	GAINDE 2000 (private sector)	IT Specialist
Mali	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Division Informatique, Statistiques et Documentation
Bénin	Ministry of Industry, Trade and SMEs	
Burkina Faso	Industry and Trade Chamber	IT Directorate
Côte d'Ivoire	Agence Ivoirienne de Gestion des Fréquences	
Niger	Ministry of posts and Telecommunications, and of E-economy	
Gambia	University of The Gambia	Computer Laboratory and Network Administration
Ghana	Ministry of Trade and Industry	Research, Statistical and Information Management
Liberia	Ministry of Trade and Industry	
Nigeria	Nigerian Communications Commission (?)	Legal & Regulatory Services Department
Sierra Leone	Ministry of Information and Communications	Chief Technology Officer



They must meet the double requirement of mastering the technical needs for the on-line

<sup>46</sup> As per electronic questionnaire, perception surveys and interviews.

<sup>47</sup> See needs assessment report 2012.



courses and of understanding the challenges of e-Commerce in their country to promote e-Commerce and ensure sustainability of the project at the local level.

They must combine legitimacy to their peers, technical knowledge of the e-Commerce theme and pedagogical capacity for DL, to ensure delivery and evaluation of the on-line training to relevant stakeholders from public bodies such as Ministry of commerce, Ministry of telecommunication or postal office, Ministry of Justice and regulation agencies. As the project targets « capacity building to formulate and implement concrete development-oriented trade policies », the technical tutors must support decision (policy) makers in successfully completing the course.

As Technical Tutors do not belong to training institutions, and are not professional trainers, they cannot be expected to repeat the course in a training institution as the formulation of the second expected accomplishment of the project might lead to believe. In fact, it appears<sup>48</sup> that Technical Tutors' training focussed mainly on DL techniques and the TFT platform. The role of TT went however well beyond that during the course<sup>49</sup> and at the end of the project many of them will remain the champions of e-Commerce in their countries.

The TTs have contributed, in their respective institutions, to publicize the course, and have raised the profile of e-Commerce. The Technical Tutors all expressed willingness to be trainers for further on-line trainings in related matters and several of them are actively engaged in trying to organise follow up trainings or repeat the trainings for another cohort in their institution or an inter-ministerial grouping<sup>50</sup>. They all consider they have, thanks to the project, the adequate material to repeat the course within their organisation. Several of them however, mentioned that they will change position within their organisation or move laterally to the private sector, and may not be in a position to replicate the training. In most cases, main obstacle to replication is lack of means<sup>51</sup> of their respective institutions and shortage of adequately prepared human resources at the local level.

Pedagogically, TTs have contributed significantly to the success of participants and they are important resource persons in the network of stakeholders that the on-line courses have contributed to foster. Several have reported still being called upon later by former participants to the on-line course, to provide technical assistance to access UNCTAD e-learning platform<sup>52</sup>. They have contributed positively to enable participants to keep accessing the resources of UNCTAD's TFT platform.

Most technical tutors, having a technical (IT) background, have found the course well developed and practical to implement in terms of tools and techniques. As staff from trade or trade related institutions, they judged the content enlightening, most particularly in terms of the legal challenges that the course introduced them to. Several of them reported currently participating in the design of a strategy to develop e-solutions for trade at the national level in

---

<sup>48</sup> From desk review of content of the workshops, which was further substantiated by a few focal points during interviews.

<sup>49</sup> Several participants explained that without the active and customised help of the TT they would not have been in a position to complete successfully the course, either for infrastructure reasons (how to access the material, the platform, how to tape your evaluation answers) but also because of the complexity of the content (links with fiscal policy, privacy rules and protection, competition law issues, links with the penal system) for non specialists (including for instance new members of recently created e-Commerce regulation bodies or newly appointed e-Economy coordinator...).

<sup>50</sup> See effectiveness and impact to date.

<sup>51</sup> Both in terms of facility, and institutional arrangements.

<sup>52</sup> Apparently some recent technical changes in the platform had changed passwords and prevented former participants to access the platform with their out-dated password.

their respective country<sup>53</sup>. Several have also provided testimony that the course helped them to disseminate knowledge on e-Commerce that was previously considered as too technical, too advanced for their country and only relevant for « geeks ».

Conversely, trainees from countries that were added later (and therefore where the DL session was not facilitated by a trained technical tutor) encountered real difficulties in completing the DL. This demonstrates the efficiency of the ToTT scheme to facilitate the DL sessions.

The evaluation concludes that Distance Learning:

- (i) Has been efficiently carried out, with support of the ToTT scheme;
- (ii) Distance Learning prepared/lay the ground for further capacity building by facilitating and easily replicating the use of IT technology for learning among trade specialists;
- (iii) Facilitated the future delivery of training without UNCTAD's further intervention, as the TT are local resources that will remain engaged in the field. This is a significant contribution to project sustainability.

## 2) On-line sessions, chat sessions, forum:

These capacity building activities form the bulk of the outputs of the project.

The project trained in total 694 people that can be ventilated as follows:

324 legal specialists (165 and 159 respectively, from 2 sessions of on-line courses)

370 « practitioners » (3 sessions of 168, 125 and 77 participants respectively)

The project does not disaggregate data between Anglophone and Francophone participants to DL sessions, but the project started as mostly Francophone<sup>54</sup> and gradually opened up to more Anglophone participation, through additional Anglophone countries included in the project perimeter to extend it to the ECOWAS space.

A basic DL session comprises 5 modules delivered over 5 weeks. At the end of each weekly module, participants are evaluated on line and an interactive chat session enables them to address questions directly to the distance trainer in English or French. Moreover they can post and receive answer to questions via the forum supported by the TFT platform.

The success rate of participants, recognised with an UNCTAD diploma, is quite high in all countries and practically all countries completed full DL sessions:

In DL 2014 the whole Burkina Faso group missed the 2 first weeks of the legal DL, due to a coup that blocked all ministries. They however managed, with close support from the project team, to catch back on their cohort, and finish normally.

One country collectively did not finish a DL session: Cape Verde, mostly because of linguistic constraints, as DL trainings were only offered in English and French.

Within each country group, very few participants dropped out of any given DL session; the few who did drop out apparently managed to enrol in a later session or were excused by

---

<sup>53</sup> Ex: Guinea is setting up an inter-ministerial committee to organize duplication of training thanks to the material provided by the project. Focal point and technical tutor are spearheading this initiative, and foresee that one of the participants to the online course and face-to-face session would become the trainer for further sessions.

<sup>54</sup> 8 initial countries comprised 6 Francophone countries of the UEMOA, and 2 Anglophone countries, Ghana and Gambia. At the end, implementation included the 15 ECOWAS member states, i.e. a more diverse environment in terms of official languages: 8 francophone, 5 Anglophone and 2 Lusophone countries.

urgent professional emergencies<sup>55</sup>.

The demand to attend sessions was generally greater than the infrastructure and TFT standards allowed<sup>56</sup>; the only country where filling a DL session was complicated is Guinea, for lack of candidates with a sufficient educational background and/ or work experience in the relevant e-commerce areas.

The selection process at the national level was made through focal points<sup>57</sup> in close consultation with the project team who verified eligibility criteria and promoted gender balance. In several countries, various participants took both DL courses for legal specialists and for practitioners.

Because of their level of IT infrastructure development, some countries experienced difficulties with weak or unstable Internet connections<sup>58</sup> but somehow solutions were found that enabled everywhere<sup>59</sup> the successful delivery of all 5 modules at each session.

Globally, venues had correctly been selected during the need assessment. Some technical changes were necessary to ensure adequate delivery of the DL online sessions<sup>60</sup>, but that did not derail the successful delivery of the 5 modules in each target country of the project.

The following table gives examples of how/where countries variously met the requirements of the TrainForTrade DL system:

Country	Hosting institution	Financing
Benin	Ministry of Trade	Ministry of Trade
Ghana	Ministry of Trade	Ministry of Trade
Guinea	Ministry of Trade	Ministry of Trade
Burkina Faso	Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Ministry of Trade/CCI
Senegal	University training centre	Project
Togo	University training centre	Project
Sierra Leone	World Bank Center	Self financed
Gambia	Initially university; later Ministry of Trade	Self financed
Côte d'Ivoire	Ministry of ITC	Self financed

The table shows the predominance of national ministries, justified by a focus on policy making and institutional facilitation for e-commerce.

Assessment of the on-line sessions is overall positive or very positive.  
97 of the 101 respondents to the electronic questionnaire considered the course was very well organised, and provided valuable information, directly relevant to the participant's professional duties.

<sup>55</sup> E.g. the passing of a legal text, (including related to electronic contracts!), for which they were responsible at the national ministry level; or a ministerial change, etc.

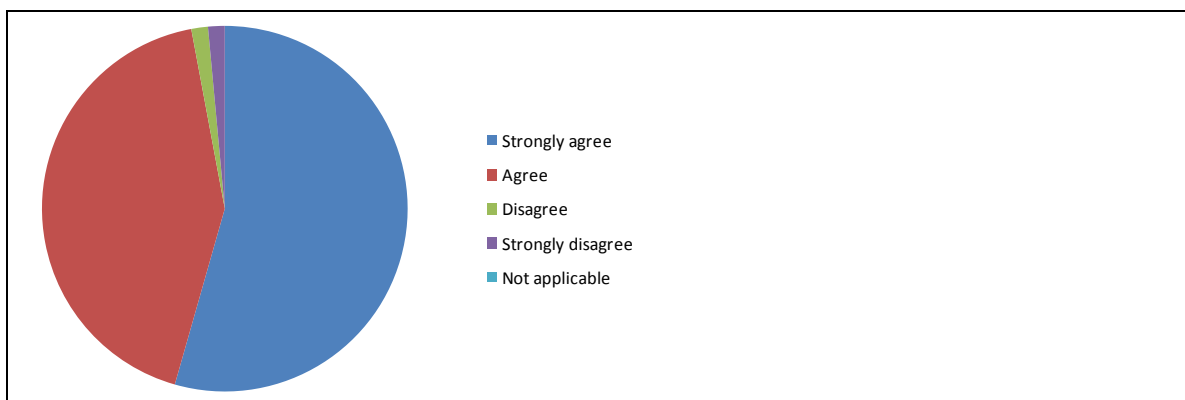
<sup>56</sup> The ideal size is of about 20 participants by local session.

<sup>57</sup> Several focal points reported that participation to DL was often mandated by the higher national authority. They ensured the interface with UNCTAD.

<sup>58</sup> This was also reflected in the difficulty to conduct some Skype interviews by the evaluators.

<sup>59</sup> In all countries (8 in 2012, then 11 countries in October 2013, March and October 2014; and 13 and 15 countries respectively in February and May 2015) of each DL session.

<sup>60</sup> In a few cases, the originally planned room did not offer enough connected posts for the participants. In one case (Gambia), foreseen delivery room was too distant from the working place of most participants.



Main issues with DL sessions are:

- The French version of the assessment test in the training module was apparently translated from English with some questions difficult to understand because of problems with the translation. Some of the correct answers were evaluated as wrong because of the formulation of the question. This problem was later rectified by UNCTAD.
- The assessment test at the end of each training module of the DL courses did not always provide the correct answers at the time the trainee would need them.
- Some participants complained that the project gave access to the individual test results of all the participants in a given national session. This created difficulties when senior officials would turn out to have lower scores than lower ranking participants, and occasionally made the role of technical tutor sensitive. All in all, the evaluation considers it is a transparent practice and it has been acknowledged, including by elder/high ranking participants, that it also provided some incentive to overcome the difficulty of the course.
- The course was demanding in terms of duration, especially for legal specialists who had, at the same time (half a day for 5 weeks in a row) to keep the legal process of their country running at times of emergency<sup>61</sup>.
- The real-time chat sessions were sometimes hard to follow, with too many people participating in the sessions at the same time. Chat sessions, which require that all participants to the current DL module be on line at the same time, are difficult to attend for many. Conversely the chat session is very difficult to handle for the trainer, with too many participants repeating the same question. Because of lack of practice, the trainees do not follow threads nor cluster questions properly, thus requiring the trainer to spend a lot of time in repeating answers or creating frustration for those who do not receive an answer to their question.
- Participants to the DL sessions have not made much use of the web forum available on the TtT platform. This is something that ought to be emphasized: the experience of the project which is expanding in Latin America shows that the forum offers more flexible support than the limited and simultaneous chat sessions; however, in the countries where the project operates, the number of people adequately equipped (Internet, laptop) to participate in the forum is small<sup>62</sup>. Overall trends however, are that trainees need more and more to connect individually, and to study the material whenever is convenient to them. The DL learning platform specialists need to reconsider the balance between group work and individual study time. Group work fosters and enables networks, but participants still need the convenience of individual study time to access and master the material. The DL offer must be carefully customised to the capacity of the target group, in order to retain the inclusive developmental value of support from the TT and direct chat with international trainers. The project has been

<sup>61</sup> This issue was raised in Mali, Burkina and Cape Verde.

<sup>62</sup> This again reflects the level of equipment and of IT expertise of the countries and individual stakeholders.

innovative in adapting the format of the DL courses so that they can be accessed via smart phones. This option is seldom used by participants of the project's countries at this point, but has great potential for the future.

### 3) Face-to-face sessions

In total at time of evaluation the project has trained face-to-face 179 people<sup>63</sup>, of which 145 trainees were participants to e-Commerce sessions (78 to the sessions for legal specialists and 67 for those more particularly targeting practitioners) and 34 participants to the ToTT scheme.

At the time of evaluation, there remains to add to the assessment those participants that will attend the Anglophone face-to-face session that will be held in September 2015 in Accra as a follow up to the DL session for practitioners that has been held in May 2015<sup>64</sup>.

Face-to-face sessions have been held according to plan, except for the 2 (FR and EN) sessions originally planned to be held in 2015 (as follow-up to the DL course for legal specialists) in Gambia and Senegal. Those 2 sessions had to be cancelled due to the Ebola outbreak: Guineans were quarantined, could not travel within the region, and could only participate to a meeting in Geneva; moreover, several countries wouldn't send participants to any session in the region for fear of contamination. The 2 face-to-face sessions were rapidly evolved into a single workshop to seize the opportunity of UNCTAD e-Commerce week. An unplanned benefit of this change due to an uncontrollable situation is that it enlarged worldwide the ECOWAS scope of the project. Moreover, the combining in Geneva of the EN and FR face-to-face for legal specialists facilitated a regional networking<sup>65</sup> that is in line with the logic of intervention of the project.

The evaluators consider this was a demonstration of positive flexibility even if:

- The cost of this activity was high, due to travel and per diem costs; and
- The scope of the Geneva face-to-face was limited to legal specialists<sup>66</sup>, as it was a follow up of the legal focussed DL.

Participants overwhelmingly consider face-to-face sessions as very good or excellent<sup>67</sup>.

Participants to face-to-face sessions<sup>68</sup> reported participating in follow up activities after the session, mostly in the form of report writing<sup>69</sup> to their authorities. Depending on the country of origin, those reports either

- Sensitise authorities to the global challenges and prospects of e-Commerce (less advanced countries) and to the need to bridge the digital divide for sustainable and inclusive development,
- Advocate the need to develop/harmonise a regional legal framework for e-Commerce along

---

<sup>63</sup> Of which 34 technical tutors (see above).

<sup>64</sup> At time of drafting, 27 participants are foreseen for this face-to-face session; 7 of them (from Gambia) will be financed by the project, of which 2 women, and 10 from Ghana.

<sup>65</sup> By combining English and French speakers who are otherwise separated for FtF sessions.

<sup>66</sup> The Geneva face-to-face session did not include many participants from the practitioners' component, but several participants successfully followed both DL sessions for legal specialists and for practitioners. Evaluators had therefore a chance to interview beneficiaries of both components of the project at Geneva.

<sup>67</sup> The statistics of good and very good of the perception survey of each session was always nearly 100%.

<sup>68</sup> Interviews in Geneva; focus groups and electronic questionnaire.

<sup>69</sup> Post training report is mandatory for all face-to-face participants financed by the project.

the lines promoted by the project (This is a particularly complex issue given the project operates at the ECOWAS level, but also includes UEMOA countries, where relevant elements of a common legal framework are at different stages of adoption in the countries),

- Advocate for harnessing the potential of e-Economy (including e-Government, legal signature, need for revision of contract law, etc...) for development and reaching MDG8 goals,
- Disseminate capacity building materials to advocate policy recommendations and enlist support to raise the national and regional profile in e-Commerce, and define related strategies,
- Raise specific issues (legal signature, link with penal law for fraud, fiscal systems and anti-corruption mechanisms etc...) according to the specific needs of their countries.

#### 4) Content of courses, and DL technical infrastructures

The electronic survey allows concluding that the content of the training courses in both components of the projects was positively perceived by the vast majority (97%) of participants.

The theme came « at the right moment » for countries struggling to reap benefits from IT supported solutions to trade in a sustainable and inclusive development process, at the regional level.

The focus on the legal framework for e-Commerce and the specific attention to related themes of electronic signature, of contracts, fraud, redress of fraud, and emerging concerns for consumer protection were assessed as providing an adequate integrated approach to promoting e-Commerce, e-Economy and e-Governance.

The participants particularly appreciated that the supporting cases for the DL sessions were customised for the audience, and presented with user-friendly videos.

The participants to the face-to-face sessions stressed how the field visits (to port facilities for instance for Technical Tutors; to the *Jumya* enterprise for the francophone practitioners in Abidjan in 2015) provided depth to the training and enabled participants to see concretely the link with transport, customs, education and employment policies.

#### 5) Other processes

The selection process for DL and face-to-face sessions is mostly in the hands of the target beneficiary countries, but it was adequately steered by the focal points, therefore ensuring smooth logistics, and the quality of the audience at each activity<sup>70</sup>.

The TFT methodology, and the initial needs assessment conducted cost effectively<sup>71</sup> by a « regional » expert, demonstrated its efficiency *a contrario*: in countries later added to the project, the lack of a clearly appointed focal point created logistic complications for the organisation of both DL and face-to-face sessions. It can be regretted however that the needs assessment report concentrates on fostering an official demand to participate, associated with a commitment to meet the requirements of the project, but does not provide much insight in the countries' main provisions and challenges in regard to e-Commerce and e-Economy in general.

---

<sup>70</sup> The evaluators could verify that debates at Geneva face-to-face were lively, broadly participatory and insightful in terms of the content. Quality of the audience was also positively assessed by the three trainers that conducted chat sessions.

<sup>71</sup> Cheaper travel and per diem than if conducted by UNCTAD staff.

In all processes, reviewed correspondence and interviews of beneficiaries attest to the responsiveness of the UNCTAD team, that consistently remains easy to access and ready to identify solutions to technical and logistic issues.

Several respondents identified positively the capacity and readiness of the UNCTAD project manager to answer technical questions related to the IT platform as a key vector of success. Some complaints were voiced regarding the limited exposure to the expert trainers who developed the course for those who do not attend face-to-face sessions (i.e. the majority of the DL trainees). Overall however, most participants have a positive assessment of the chat sessions<sup>72</sup>.

Limited criticism was also heard as to the actual practicality of some training. While the training was dispensed by academics, their capacity was highly regarded and the evaluation is of the opinion that the demands for the training (both legal and practitioner DL) that were expressed at the Geneva e-Commerce week are a good measure of its perceived quality<sup>73</sup>. The project management is clearly documented and the project team was very supportive of the evaluation team.

The support material created by the project for the DL sessions is of good quality, adequately updated and customised to meet the needs of the audience.

#### Elements of cost analysis

Distance learning may create significant costs during the phase of development and updating of pedagogical material; however, this material is subsequently used to train a larger target population and to widen access to the training to more beneficiary countries.

Cost for production and delivery of on-line training becomes gradually residual, as it is more and more disseminated, and only requires additional examples or up-dated case studies.

Please find below the tables of the costs of the main training activities of the project<sup>74</sup>:

<b>Estimated cost of ToTT-Training of technical tutors in French</b>			
Category of cost	Unit cost (USD)	Quantity	Sub-total (USD)
Expert Travel**	6'000	1	6'000
Meeting room rental+ Breaks	3'000	1	3'000
Participants Travel funded by this project*	2'000	5	10'000
Total cost of ToTT- fr			19'000
<b>Estimated cost of ToTT-Training of technical tutors in English</b>			
Category of cost	Unit cost (USD)	Quantity	Sub-total (USD)
Expert Travel**	6'000	1	6'000
Room + Breaks	4'000	1	4'000
Participants Travel funded by this project*	2'000	2	4'000
Total cost of ToTT- en			14'000
<b>Grand total (USD)</b>			<b>33'000</b>

Note:

\*: Out of a total of 34 participants, there are 24 participants that were funded by UNCTAD, out of which 7 were funded by this UNDA project.

\*\* : Includes project manager and experts' travel cost.

<sup>72</sup> Answers adequate or very adequate: a total of 70%.

<sup>73</sup> Thailand in particular launched the implementation of the modules at its own cost.

<sup>74</sup> The financial figures were presented based on estimates provided by the project team. Actual figures could not be obtained/ verified at the time of the evaluation.

<b>Estimated cost of 9 on-line courses hosted locally in beneficiary countries</b>			
Category of cost	Unit cost (USD)	Quantity	Sub-total (USD)
Est. Meeting room rental+ Breaks*	9'000	1	9'000
Expert fee (DL tutors) **	2'000	8	16'000
<b>Total (USD)</b>			<b>25'000</b>

Note:

\*: Meeting room cost in Dakar and Guinea were expensive, while in some other countries, the government self-financed the training centre and related cost.

\*\*: The last on-line session for the English network was given by the consultant free of charge.

\*\*\*: Average estimated cost of 616 participants of online courses: USD 25000/616 = USD

41

<b>Estimated cost of 7 face-to-face training for selected participants that finished online courses</b>			
Category of cost	Unit cost (USD)	Quantity	Sub-total (USD)
Expert Travel*	6'000	6	36'000
Meeting room rental+ Breaks	3'000	7	21'000
Participants Travel**	2'000	116	232'000
<b>Total (USD)</b>			<b>289'000</b>

Note:

\*: Includes project manager and experts' travel cost. The expert travel was funded by another project for the Geneva workshop.

\*\*: A total of 116 participants were funded by this project to travel to the training venue, out of a total of 179 participants that received the face-to-face training.

By increasing interaction between trainers and trainees and making available to all actors working material and communication equipment for a longer duration, in any case superior to the length of face-to-face seminars, DL has helped the beneficiaries to better understand the rules, frameworks, processes and perspectives of the new international economic environment and it enlarged national communities of stakeholders relevant to the development of e-Economy.

As a further element of cost comparison: Benin benefits from support from several operators, in particular the World Bank, which has a local videoconferencing centre (GDLN). However, the cost of one day of training using this system is around eight times higher than the UNCTAD distance learning training. In the end, the project did not pay for the WB facility in Benin. It used the facility provided by the Ministry of Trade.

## Conclusions

The evaluation team considers the project demonstrated its efficiency as:

- Activities were delivered according to plan, and in a timely manner. Those activities that could not be conducted for reasons outside of the control of the project (such as



the coup in Burkina Faso or the Ebola outbreak) were postponed and/or re-scheduled while remaining in line with the logic of intervention.

- In coping with the Ebola outbreak that basically prevented the delivery of the 2 planned face-to-face sessions for legal specialists in follow-up to the DL session 2014, the project demonstrated positive flexibility in scheduling those 2 face-to-face sessions back-to-back with the worldwide e-Commerce week of UNCTAD, thus broadening the scope of exposure of participants and facilitating wider networking.
- The proven TFT methodology, resting on an initial needs assessment, the formal identification of a national focal point and the training of ToTTs, has usefully framed the delivery of the course and prepared some sustainability, as the technical tutor is in place in each country, and has pedagogical tools to replicate training.
- The overall efficiency of training was supported by a complementary mix of on-line sessions and face-to-face activities that proved mutually re-enforcing. The evaluation team considers the criterion of having successfully taken the on-line course to become eligible for a face-to-face session as important to ensure sustainability of the capacity building effort. The fact that many participants took DL courses both for legal specialists and for practitioners is also viewed positively as it reinforced the global perspectives of the stakeholders in a situation where e-Commerce and generally the e-Economy need to be framed and organised by public sector rules and regulations to ensure both governance and efficiency of the system to enable sustainable development.
- Distance Learning allowed expanding reach of the project to a greater number of target countries within a limited budget; by offering a wealth of knowledge developed through the last decade of TFT programme and a platform to share experiences, it contributed to south-south cooperation and regional development.
- Through the DL sessions, e-Commerce training was also extended within each country to a greater number of participants in a cost effective manner compared to separate national capacity building projects.
- The opportunities offered by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in training and the value of the TrainForTrade methodology were highlighted in a practical manner, with a high potential for future trainings to strengthen human resources.
- E-Commerce as a vector of development was promoted on a regional basis, and the project strengthened in each country of intervention awareness and understanding of needs and potential options for the coordinated development of an adequate legal framework and supportive environment at the regional level.

The main limits to efficiency are:

- The many target countries of the project in regard to its limited budget, coupled with the (costly) need to develop courses both in French and English<sup>75</sup>, prevented going any further within the project framework in order to address emerging themes and needs in a sector in permanent evolution;
- The limited number of participants (2 per country directly sponsored by the project) to face-to-face sessions also reduces the capacity to de-multiply the benefits of the project, especially when as decision makers, they are not likely to further disseminate directly the content of the course;
- The high cost of transports within the sub-region, limits the possibilities of additional

---

<sup>75</sup> With the added difficulty of Portuguese speaking countries that have to identify suitable participants for courses either in French or English.

regional meetings in support of South-South cooperation. Networking activities are reported as satisfactory and appreciated in the electronic survey<sup>76</sup>. However it is too early for the evaluation to vouch those activities will have a tangible follow up in terms of policy making. Generally, participants to an UNCTAD project stay on a newsletter list for about 3 months duration<sup>77</sup>.

---

<sup>76</sup> 84% of respondents answered the project contributed to networking (*a little + yes a lot* answers) at either regional or national level.

<sup>77</sup> This period could usefully be extended to deepen follow up and networking.

## IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

The project was designed within a global UN development approach that emphasises defining country needs and priorities in sustainable development through an on-going participatory process and, in so doing, strengthening human resource and institutional capabilities<sup>78</sup>.

Capacity building is a key means to assist developing countries in accessing a larger share of multilateral and global research and development programmes.

Because this final evaluation started when the project had yet 9 month to run, the evaluation report mostly highlights early or potential elements of impact and sustainability. It will require ex-post and follow-up at national and regional levels to verify impacts and sustainability of the outcomes of the project, in a field that undergoes constant and rapid evolution.

### 1) Knowledge production

As mentioned in the section related to effectiveness, the project has contributed to knowledge production and sharing, mostly however in terms of awareness raising at the target countries and regional level.

But it has also been instrumental in producing robust data at the regional and global level regarding the state of development of the legal framework required to underpin the development of e-commerce and support LDCs in better harnessing the potential of e-commerce:

- ✓ The project's UNCTAD trainer<sup>79</sup>, who contributed to developing and implementing<sup>80</sup> the on-line course for French speaking legal specialists, also supported the development, within the framework of the project, of a report on the state of harmonisation of the legislations related to e-Commerce in all the French speaking countries of the ECOWAS. This report fed into a wider report, the UNCTAD yearly **Information Economy Report**. Published annually by the Science, Technology and ICT Branch, Division for Technology and Logistics (DTL), the report analyses current trends and major international policy issues regarding information and communication technologies and their use for, and effect on, trade and development.

The March 2015 issue of the Information Economy Report was released during the e-Commerce week in Geneva (March 2015)<sup>81</sup> and builds on UNCTAD's E-Commerce and Development Report<sup>82</sup>.

The March 2015 issue of the Information Economy Report reflects the increasing pervasiveness of the information economy and its key role in trade and development.

As key data was collected through the project's network<sup>83</sup>, and compares the experience of the countries of the project, the participatory data collection and analysis of main challenges and potential for e-Commerce as vector of development in the target region of the project are

<sup>78</sup> See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/capacity-building>.

<sup>79</sup> Professor Abdoullah Cissé, who was employed as a consultant for the project, is an expert in Cyber-law, « avocat à la cour de Dakar », working as Law Professor at Université Cheikh Anta Diop, in Dakar, Senegal.

<sup>80</sup> Meaning he provided local examples, translated and customised the English course, taped the course on the TFT platform, held the weekly chat sessions at the end of each module, and conducted the French speaking face to face sessions for the legal specialists.

<sup>81</sup> A key activity of the project for the legal component, as it featured the legal specialist face to face session 2015, and facilitated regional and global networking.

<sup>82</sup> Published annually since 2001.

<sup>83</sup> Professor Cissé, in his double role of project trainer and leading academic figure in those matters in the region, collected and analysed data for this publication.

important initial impacts of the project. It is the first step towards a coordinated legal framework and it provides evidence to support concrete policy options. This result is sustainable in the sense that some key stakeholders (of the project and of e-Commerce in their respective countries) expressed their willingness to follow up on developments in the field of e-Commerce, and the project has given them options and a map of relevant resources in these areas.

The project put in place the basis to continue data collection on new developments and trends in the field. The electronic survey reflects the perceived importance of the network to share success stories, to provide guidance to policymaking, to avoid repeating mistakes and to plug gaps in the legal framework.

The project laid the foundations for a network of regional specialists, and offered a platform for the sharing of experience at the global level during the e-Commerce week in Geneva. UNCTAD's project on e-Commerce is likely to ensure sustainability of the project's data collection process.

Sustainability of this network will need however to be verified in the next years.

- ✓ The project also provided knowledge build up and data into the 2015 information economy report through the involvement of the English speaking trainer<sup>84</sup> who attended a peer review meeting in Geneva in December 2014, in preparation of the 2015 issue of the report

Both project trainers built on the knowledge acquired through working with stakeholders from the target countries to (i) identify challenges to e-Commerce, (ii) highlight relevant experience and local solutions, and (iii) map trends for promising developments<sup>85</sup>.

The evaluation considers it is a substantive achievement of the project (i) to highlight, both for LDCs and for entrepreneurs, the state of affairs in LDCs as expressed in the preface to the Information Economy Report: « the greatest dynamism in electronic commerce can be found in developing countries, but that potential is far from fully realized »<sup>86</sup>, (ii) to provide robust data in support of this finding, and (iii) options to realise this potential. The sustainability of the project outcome will need to be verified through macro-economic trends in the years to come.

Several early elements of impact from each component can however already be attributed to the project:

## **2) Component dedicated to legal specialists**

Regarding new policy making framing the development of e-commerce in the target region:

- At UEMOA level and national level of UEMOA members: The project French speaking trainer who is also the main legal specialist of e-related economic matters at sub-regional

<sup>84</sup> Ian Walden is Professor of Information and Communications Law and head of the Institute of Computer and Communications Law (ICCL) in the Centre for Commercial Law Studies, Queen Mary University of London.

<sup>85</sup> See Information Economy Report 2015: (i) p. 34 and sqq, (ii) p. 23 and sqq, and (iii) p. 6-7, 30 and 43.

<sup>86</sup> Forewords to the report by Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations. See p. iii of the report [http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ier2015\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ier2015_en.pdf).

level vigorously undertakes speeding up the legal harmonisation process. The project thus offered a key platform to share experience and lessons learned, and promote a partnering approach in line with MDG8.

Moreover, UNCTAD received a request from the head of the special police brigade of Senegal against cybercrime (Chef de la *Brigade Spéciale de la lutte contre la cybercriminalité du Sénégal*) to run the on-line course on legal aspects for all UEMOA brigades. UNCTAD project team is gearing towards repeating the course in 2016.

At regional level, this demonstrates the project reinforced awareness of the need for a harmonized legal framework; it also verifies that the project built strong awareness of the need for each country to adopt a holistic approach, inclusive of Police, Justice Agents, and all inter-connected operators. The evaluation considers the demand for further delivery of the on-line course developed by the project is a very positive and tangible element of sustainability of the project.

- At ECOWAS level: the taking into account of the need for inclusive development resting on harmonised legal frameworks and for effective enforcement of legal dispositions has been strongly promoted by the project. All ECOWAS countries gradually rallied to the project and participated in the various debates initiated in the framework of the project. The trainings delivered by the project operated as a magnet for a broader target region, articulating needs and potential of developed and less advanced countries.

The evaluation considers that the demand-driven enlargement of the project from the initial 8 countries to the whole ECOWAS area reflects positively on its relevance. This positive assessment is backed by the effort made by several countries to self-finance their presence to face-to-face sessions. The clearest signal is given by Cap Verde, since the country had on top of everything else, to overcome the language barrier.

- A better understanding of the need for and better access to support for e-economy development (in particular understanding of UNICITRAL resources, of ICANN platform, issues of corruption and link with local penal systems, the link with fiscal policies, etc...) has been imparted by the project<sup>87</sup>.

UNCTAD played an important role as clearing house for innovative solutions (including adapted IT solutions for effective training to promote e-economy) and the participation of the project's stakeholders at the UNCTAD e-Commerce week in Geneva (March 2015) paves the way to future contribution to MDG8 and post 2015 agenda as it enabled regional and global partnerships.

- The challenges and pitfalls to avoid in developing the institutional background for telecom, transport and postal sector, and/or related regulatory agencies and mechanisms, was also an important theme addressed by the project, with concrete examples and policy options. It is likely to impact the development of the e-economy in the region.

Introducing participants to resources (of UNICITRAL "standards" for instance), fostering high level technical debate and practical guidelines on the challenges of articulating national, regional and global legal frameworks, and on emerging themes such as cybercrime, cross

<sup>87</sup> To participant countries and beyond, as the scope of the project gradually expanded. Synergies were also developed with other projects of UNCTAD, and at the global level.

border enforcement of law, etc. are positive outcomes of the project and provide early signs of likely impact. While solutions may evolve with time, the linkage of all these policies in a holistic approach is sustainable and was greatly promoted and strengthened by the project.

- Some of the less advanced countries took the measure of their needs in “legistical science” i.e. in their need to develop local capacity to improve the quality of their legal texts, (whether it is primary law, secondary laws and regulation, the articulation of both or the enforcement of their enacted legal texts).

The evaluation verified that these issues are discussed among the participants of the project, and the pros and cons of the various possibilities for the development of an e-Economy legal framework are being hotly debated<sup>88</sup>. This intensifying dialogue is a positive outcome of the project, reflecting how the project promoted a regional inclusive approach.

-At the national level, several participants from different countries reported the on-line course promoted and facilitated the development of inter-ministerial groups of various scopes to work on locally suitable solutions to promote e-economy and to prioritise actions.

It is a clear outcome of the project (that prepares a likely sustainable impact) to have fostered a holistic approach to cyber development, and to have brought together e-learning, e-Commerce, e-Economy, and, to an extent, e-Government (bank regulation, identity, penal procedures for fraud) issues.

### **3) Component dedicated to practitioners**

As regards the content of the training delivered through the project, the previous section details several outcomes and early signs of impact and sustainability of the legal training dispensed by the project.

The evaluation team has less verifiable elements of impact and sustainability related to the component dedicated to practitioners. It is the understanding of the team<sup>89</sup> that this component however really brought home, especially for less advanced countries, the developmental opportunities offered by e-Commerce and presented concrete steps to take to unleash those potentialities.

We can use the case of Guinea to pinpoint positive outcomes and early elements of sustainable impact:

- The creation of an inter-ministerial national committee for e-Commerce, in line with a poverty reduction policy, directly stemming from the project is a promising but early outcome;
- Presentations of e-Commerce challenges and opportunities at governmental level have been made and repeat courses with the project technical tutor are also in the pipeline; they would address challenges related broadly to e-Government solutions, as a follow up to project inputs on electronic signature and validity of electronic contracts;

<sup>88</sup> Among francophone countries, Senegal is most intent on creating an academic training module or master, to that effect. Some francophone countries however lag behind and express fear that they need to start at a more general level of legal production know-how and therefore need support to catch up in such regional programmes. At the regional level, issues related to « fair and level playing field » are raised, with fears that some countries might actually hold captive less developed others. Issues related to free or captive software are also raised as well as related risks.

<sup>89</sup> Derived mostly from the electronic questionnaire and interviews with participants to the face-to-face sessions.

- Upon return from the face-to-face session in Abidjan, participants (notably from the Ministry of Trade) structured linkage with the Ministry of employment around the themes covered by the project, in the framework of an inclusive development effort in line with MDGs.

The evaluation cannot verify tangible impacts and sustainability of the component delivering training for practitioners. Those will have to be assessed through data that will be collected at the macro-economic level in each country in the next few years. However, both the on-line course and the face-to-face sessions dedicated to practitioners are assessed by the beneficiaries as key to create awareness of challenges and opportunities offered by e-Commerce and of related policy options. Before the project took place, both challenges and opportunities were under-estimated by project's beneficiaries<sup>90</sup>, who feel the project was key to prepare them to tackle developing sustainable and effective policies.

The evaluation considers the project had a positive outcome in highlighting the necessary balance between institutional and entrepreneurial needs and responsibilities in developing e-commerce and related e-Economic policies. In so doing, the project contributed to a better articulation of the public and private sector needs to promote e-Commerce as an engine of development. The regional and integrated approach of the project prepared beneficiary countries to harness benefits from e-Commerce. The evaluation assesses this outcome as an early sign of likely sustainable impact.

## Gender

At the level of outputs, the project carefully collected data on gendered participation to project activities.

Reaching gender balance in terms of project beneficiaries is difficult however, because in most target countries of the project, e-Commerce (and trade in general) is handled at institutional level mostly by men: Trade policies and legal framework in general, and for digital economy in particular are dominated by men. Practitioners as targeted by the project (i.e. in view of policymaking and MDG8) are also male dominated in most of the target countries of the project. The project did not address directly participation of women in economic activities and e-Commerce. It did however promote participation of women in its training activities and had a positive impact in dispelling some stereotypes relating to women's involvement in IT related work or business:

- Participation of women to training activities was strongly encouraged at focal point level in each of the target countries. UNCTAD team carefully seconded the selection process on clear technical criteria to ensure a balanced participation.

- In several countries of the project, female participants to the project managed to get good or even better results to the on-line tests than some of their male colleagues. This served to establish that e-learning solutions could work for all; and that distance learning and e-Commerce are not just for male “geeks”. This was recognised at focus group level and by several focal points.

---

<sup>90</sup> Of their own admission: one person recently tasked with promotion of commerce in a country where tourism is a key trade sector recognised discovering thanks to the project, that e-Commerce was key in terms of tourism development and therefore part of her remit.

-Several respondents (from both sexes) to direct interviews reported that women, (in-so-far as they could infer from the activities they participated in), seemed to put more focus on the need for an integrated approach and on the linkage with inclusive and sustainable development requirements (e-Commerce as a tool for remote communities, fair access to information needs, protection of customers rights and need for enforcement of legal dispositions).

#### Gender in numbers

The gender of focal points and technical tutors deployed in the project is as follows:

3 technical tutors (Senegal, Gambia and Cote d'Ivoire) are females.

3 focal points (Guinea Conakry, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria) are females.

The following table presents gender statistics of the project at the end of activities<sup>91</sup>:

	<b>Total participants</b>	<b>Women</b>
Technical Tutors	34	7
Financed by the project	24	4
On-line sessions	616	131
Financed by the project	508	97
Face-to-face participants	179	41
Financed by the project	116	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Financed by the project</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>129</b>

Responses to the online questionnaire authorises another gender observation: out of 101 respondents; 26% were female, while 74% were males.

The gender ratio reflects the overall unbalanced and reduced involvement of women in e-economy in the target countries.

It would be interesting to revisit the gender issue in a year or so, to assess whether there are significant differences in follow up activities at the country level that can be attributed to gender of TT, of focal points or to a higher ratio of females within a DL session.

While the evaluation cannot verify tangible impacts of the project in terms of gender, it is possible to say that the project was gender sensitive, provided fair access of women to the training opportunity and contributed to dispel negative stereotypes on women in relation to IT.

<sup>91</sup> The table includes data that was shared with the evaluation team late in the drafting period of the evaluation report. It includes final activities of the project that could not be taken into consideration during the assessment. Those later adjustments do not alter earlier assessments.  
The 179 participants of the face-to-face sessions are selected from the 616 participants of the on-line sessions.



## LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation, undertaken before the end of a 2-year project of the UNDA 8<sup>th</sup> tranche that will not be further funded, aims less at issuing recommendations than at drawing lessons from the design and implementation of the project, to serve as a font of knowledge for the pursuit of MDG8, post 2015 agenda for ICT (SDG) and next steps in UNCTAD's mission to support LDC countries in overcoming barriers to e-commerce understood as a vector of development and in benefiting from inclusive and sustainable development .

The following considerations provide lessons that aim to be of use for further work of UNCTAD at regional and national level and for optimisation of the use of UNDA resources.

### At regional level

As explained above, the regional level is key to offer larger markets that enable economies of scale and to ensure security and reliability of cross-border transactions. Furthermore, UEMOA provides a single currency market of 8 countries and 80 million inhabitants. It is thus at regional level that further work is necessary.

#### ❖ Within the framework of UEMOA

1. Need to support the definition of a clear strategy with timely schedule of transposition of UEMOA legal texts at the national level of all the members.
2. Need to support commitment of states to the legal harmonisation process, gradually integrating emerging themes (such as e-administration, cloud computing, legal anti-corruption systems, electronic signature etc...).
3. Support a comprehensive capacity building plan to further disseminate understanding of IT issues, (and notably of the UEMOA legal framework and its impact on e-Commerce, and more generally on e-economy) to relevant institutions at the national level (such as police, members of parliament, Justice staff, postal and telecommunication agencies etc.).

#### ❖ In the larger framework of ECOWAS

- 1) Support expressed need and willingness of members states of the regional organisation (including Senegal, Benin and Mali; see *Livre d'or* after Abidjan face-to-face session<sup>92</sup>) to build up sustainability of the project and diversify/update content of the trainings.
- 2) Multiply/support linkages with CCI and SME organisations to increase their outreach and their efforts to sensitise the governments to the benefits that can be reaped from e-commerce, notably in terms of economic opportunities, employment and consumer service (see comments related to perception of visit to *Jumia* enterprise during Abidjan face to face 2015).

#### ❖ Regarding distance learning

The possibility of developing central hosting facilities initially on a regional level (and later their articulation with training venues at national level) should be considered. In the longer term, this approach would reduce the cost of communications, make

<sup>92</sup> At <http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=999>. The Senegalese delegation to the Abidjan 2015 face-to-face session speaks of seeking ways and means to replicate and diversify the trainings.

available more resources, improve learning conditions<sup>93</sup> and contribute to the development of economic activities on a national and regional level.

The regional organisations could be privileged interlocutors of UNCTAD, along with beneficiary countries<sup>94</sup>, in the process of developing distance-learning systems (content and delivery facilities; certified or recognised modules, etc...). It is at this level that South-South cooperation can best support inclusive and sustainable development, that customised regional competences can more easily be developed and that the benefits from e-Commerce can be best accrued by LDCs, thereby enabling the sustainability of the project inputs.

### **In terms of project management**

1. Resources need to be adjusted to the scope of the project. When working at regional level, with diverse languages, and heterogeneous levels of development, the budget of the project seems quite low to go beyond sensitisation; face-to-face training only 2 persons per country might lead to a sprinkling of efforts, certainly reduces opportunities for regional networking and complicates dissemination of the content of the training. Budget value of UNDA projects should be revisited under the prism of necessary regional scope.
2. Try and diversify where the face-to-face sessions take place to give a chance to enlarged participation from each country<sup>95</sup>. This is a complex issue, as costs and availability of intra-regional transports impact significantly the cost of face-to-face sessions. However, it could provide leverage to bring some of the less advanced countries up-to-par in terms of institutional capacity building, instead of limiting capacity building to individuals, when countries do not host face-to-face sessions.
3. Make provisions for evaluators to conduct field visits and arrange for data collection missions in geographically linked countries. Otherwise lessons learned remain too general to enable practical enhancements in programming and modalities of delivery at the local level.
4. Deepen the train-the-trainer (ToTT) scheme to go beyond technical tutoring and assistance to delivery, to the next level of actual capacity to adapt content and deliver training sessions to relevant audiences. In particular, foresee and strengthen linkage from the start with university or training institutions<sup>96</sup> to ensure continuity of the provision of relevant training.
5. Continue to adapt the course and develop modules regarding emerging issues related to e-commerce needs of beneficiaries, in line with TrainForTrade and UNCTAD's expertise, with assistance and collaboration from other development partners. Themes that were identified by the beneficiaries of the current project<sup>97</sup> include: anti-corruption, legal redress for fraud and linkage with penal policy, consumer protection, security of payments, e-Government and protection of personal data, electronic signature, certification of signature and issues related to software copyrights and

---

<sup>93</sup> Including for instance modules in Portuguese.

<sup>94</sup> And other relevant development partners.

<sup>95</sup> Because there is no need for transportation costs, each face-to-face session trains a large number of participants from the host country. In this regard, Dakar and Abidjan, as regional transportation hubs, offered a real advantage to stakeholders from Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire.

<sup>96</sup> Training institutions are mentioned as targets in the project document but technical tutors generally came from public service organisations, and mostly from trade ministries. Technical Tutors are not training specialists, which reduces the likelihood of their replicating trainings.

<sup>97</sup> As per the e-survey and direct interviews.

sustainability, reliability of statistical data related to trade in the region notably for lack of domain registration.

6. The project has demonstrated the benefits of applying the training methodology of UNCTAD in the development of DL (standardized material of international quality, active participation of national counterparts, good preparation for the face-to-face seminars, results in terms of capacity building, etc.). It has allowed for a better definition of the countries' technological needs (IT infrastructure for e-commerce) and promoted upgrades through the specific identification of requirements for hosting the DL.

It has been efficient in reducing the cost of the training. Its global missions towards LDC's, as well as the regional context required for the development of e-Commerce, give UNCTAD added value to facilitate the sharing of knowledge within and between beneficiary countries. As such, the project offered a model for exchanging experiences and building networks. Follow-up activities (new modules on new themes, support to networking at the regional level, support to develop a regional capacity for DL) are however necessary to bolster the project's outcomes.

#### **Possible recommendations to beneficiary countries (national level)**

1. While pedagogical support, coordination and technical expertise are provided through international technical assistance, an effort should be made at the national level (possibly with support from regional institutions, or orchestrated via partnership with relevant national or regional training institutions, and/or international donors and development partners) to make equipment and facilities available for training so as to ensure good quality DL. A particular point of entry could be to equip facilities for training or retraining of civil servants in selected Ministries, at Parliament level, and at the executive level.
2. Beneficiary countries should contribute more to the development of new trainings through organizing DL sessions (duplicating UNCTAD's package, or around new themes) and financing (or fundraising, possibly through CCIs or other partners in development) the logistic of the sessions, and building up therelevant human resources pool of both ToTT candidates and other candidates for the DL training. The project has to an extent demonstrated that when countries see the benefit they can reap from training, they are willing to invest. This dynamic trend must be harnessed.

## **ANNEXES**

Annex 1 - ToRs of the evaluation mission	53
Annex 2 – Inception report	59
Annex 3 – DACUM	73
Annex 4 – Methodology of the e-survey	74
Annex 5 – List of documents reviewed	86
Annex 6 – Development account project	97
Annex 7 - Primary sources – direct interviews	133

## ANNEX 1

CONFÉRENCE DES NATIONS UNIES SUR  
LE COMMERCE ET LE DÉVELOPPEMENT



UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

### Terms of Reference (TOR)

#### **External Evaluation of UNCTAD's Development Account 8<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project- Accelerating Progress of Selected West-African Countries towards the Achievement of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Particularly MDG8, Through Trade-related Training and Capacity Building**

##### **1. Introduction and Purpose**

The project implemented by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), entitled: “Accelerating Progress of Selected West-African Countries towards the Achievement of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Particularly MDG8, Through Trade-related Training and Capacity Building”, started in 2013. In compliance with the requirements of the Development Account, the project will need to undergo an external evaluation.

This evaluation should assess, systematically and objectively, the project framework and design, project management, and project performance. The evaluation should provide information that is credible, useful, and practical, and make constructive and forward-looking recommendations in order to strengthen the work of UNCTAD in this area.

The primary audiences of the evaluation report are UNCTAD management and programme officers, the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA project stakeholders, UNCTAD's member States, and other stakeholders.

##### **2. Background**

A number of supply-side constraints affect the capacities of countries to utilize the opportunities of trade for economic growth, development and poverty reduction. Such constraints include a lack of knowledge and skills to ensure that trade policies are development-friendly and adapted to local conditions. Therefore, countries need to put in place appropriate capacity-development frameworks that generate endogenous trade-related capacities for assessing, managing and adopting trade-related strategies and policies that will facilitate the integration of those countries into the world economy.

For more than a decade, UNCTAD, through its TrainForTrade programme, has been focusing on capacity building to strengthen trade-related human and institutional capacities. It promotes multi stakeholder dialogue and innovative partnerships for development cooperation, and it has already brought together several international organizations and donors in promoting greater integration of developing and least developed countries into the world economy.

This particular UNDA funded project focuses on West African, which have specifically requested UNCTAD's assistance with trade-related training. The project aims to tailor-make its training solutions to the needs and context of the beneficiary countries, especially the least developing countries, using their recognized capabilities in e-learning development and delivery. The project also explores the use of creative learning tools to facilitate the trainees to receive the training and exchange experiences through online portal.

The goal of this Development Account project is to build sustainable trade-related capacities in selected West African countries through the increased use of e-learning tools. The expected accomplishments of the project are as follows:

- i. Strengthened capacities of local government officials to formulate and implement concrete development-oriented trade policies.
- ii. Strengthened capacities of national and regional trade-related training institutions to deliver training courses to build sustainable trade related capacities, including through the use of distance learning tools.

The implementation of the project will be monitored and evaluated using the following indicators of achievement (IA):

IA1:

Increased number of trade-related policy recommendations formulated by the local government officials from the project beneficiary countries.

IA2:

- i. The participating institutions have in their possession the necessary distance-learning teaching tools to replicate the course.
- ii. Increased number of participating institutions that successfully organize distance learning training courses delivered at local level.

The main activities of the project include:

(a). Undertake needs assessment missions in the selected West African countries in order to assess local technical capacities and constraints, and agree on the proposed plan of action; (b). Draft the agreed training and capacity-building action plan for each country and for the region; (c). Produce, adapt and validate face-to-face and distance-learning training courses according to the Train for Trade methodology, in cooperation with other UNCTAD programmes; (d). Train potential trainers and distance-learning technical tutors to manage, implement and deliver the courses through face-to-face and distance learning using local capacities; (e). Train participants through distance learning and with the support of distance-learning technical tutors that will have been trained using validated pedagogic training material; (f). Establish a network of trade-related training institutions and experts in West African countries; (g). Convene a regional expert group to provide recommendations for the follow-up of the project, with a particular focus on distance-learning activities in West Africa.

The project started in 2013 after the funds were received, and is expected to be completed by June 2015.

### **3. Scope of the Evaluation**

The evaluation will consider all activities that have been implemented under this project that were financed from the Development Account. It should examine primarily the project design and its logical framework, with the analysis of project management and the achieved results. More specifically, the evaluation should address the following issues:

#### ***a) Relevance***

- Whether the project design and choice of activities and deliverables have properly reflected and addressed the needs of the beneficiaries, taking into account UNCTAD's mandates, and alignment with the objectives of the Development Account;
- Whether the actual activities and outputs of the project were consistent with the overall goals, intended outcomes, and indicators of achievement;

#### ***b) Effectiveness***

- Whether the activities have achieved, or are likely to achieve planned objectives as enunciated in the project's logframe;
- What were the main factors influencing the outcomes of this project, either negatively or positively; what are the lessons to be learned or best practices to be promoted for other similar projects;
- Whether there is initial evidence that the capacities of government officials in formulating and implementing trade policies have been strengthened;
- Whether there is evidence that the capacity of national and regional trade-related training institutions in delivering trade related training courses have been strengthened;
- How has the use of creative learning tools tackled the difficulties in distance learning in the beneficiary countries;

#### ***c) Efficiency***

- Have resources and funds been used efficiently, leveraging in-house expertise, outcome of previous technical cooperation outcomes and research outputs, existing databases and networks, and other resources both internal and external to the project office to optimize the project outcomes;
- Have the project activities been delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner;

#### ***d) Sustainability***

- Whether the activities have been designed and implemented in such a way to ensure maximum sustainability of their impact, for instance, whether and how the beneficiary country stakeholders were involved in the design and implementation of the project;
- To what extent has the project ensured that the capacity of the training institutions in delivering trade related training courses is sustained; was quality control such as accreditation built into the system;

#### ***e) Gender aspect***

- To what extent has the design and implementation of the project, and the design of the training material incorporated gender concerns, and can outcomes be identified in this regard?

#### 4. Deliverables and Expected Output

The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of this project.

More specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere, including the synergies generated through collaboration with other UNCTAD offices and other international organizations;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the project design and implementation while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action, including those addressed to UNCTAD management and UNDA Office;
- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how UNCTAD's work in this decade long TrainForTrade Programme can be strengthened. In particular, if appropriate, the evaluator should include recommendations on how the logframe could be improved for future projects.

Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation:

- 1) An inception report<sup>1</sup>;
- 2) A first draft evaluation report; and
- 3) The final evaluation report<sup>2</sup>.

The inception report should outline the evaluator's understanding of the issues under evaluation including an evaluation framework, and a detailed work plan with the timeframe. The evaluation framework should include a matrix relating evaluation issues and questions to evaluation criteria, indicators, sources of information and methods of data collection.

The draft report should be presented to the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and relevant stakeholders for quality assurance and factual corrections, if any.

The final output of the evaluation is a report that must compose below key elements:

- 1) Executive summary (maximum 2 pages);
- 2) Introduction of the evaluation background and a brief description of the project, the budget utilization and the planned and actual project activities and outputs;
- 3) A clear description of the methodology used;
- 4) Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section 3 of this ToR;
- 5) Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.

In the evaluation report, all the assessments made must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and/or well-substantiated logic. It follows that all the recommendations made should be supported by the assessments made.

<sup>1</sup> Quality of the inception report should meet those set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports:

[http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=608](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608)

<sup>2</sup> Quality of the evaluation report should meet those set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607>



The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of those interviewed or surveyed, for the record. If necessary, the report may be accompanied by a supplement including supporting materials. If English is not the native language of the evaluator, he/ she is requested to ensure that the final report be copy edited before submission to UNCTAD.

## **5. Methodology**

The evaluator must use a mixed-method approach to triangulate all available data sources to reach conclusions and findings. Such evaluation methodology may include but is not limited to the following:

- Review of relevant project documents and relevant materials designed for this project;
- Interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff, and implementation partners involved in this project;
- Telephone interviews with a sample of representatives of all beneficiary countries of the project, and other relevant stakeholders;
- Surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as may be required; conduct follow-up interviews as may be necessary;
- Analysis of the data collected.

All relevant materials will be provided to the evaluator including but not limited to: Project documents and reports; progress reports; self-assessment questionnaires and reports; publications, documents and/or reports produced through the project; material used for activities; training materials; online database; budget and expenditure report; list of beneficiaries and workshop/ seminar participants, counterparts and resource persons; existing feedback (assessments, letters, surveys, etc.).

## **6. Description of Duties**

The evaluator reports to the Chief of the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit. He or she will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and in coordination with the project manager. The evaluator will be responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, assessment and reporting. The evaluator must take full responsibility for the contents of the report generated and ensure its independence and accuracy.

The evaluator should observe the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines, standards<sup>3</sup>, and norms<sup>4</sup> for evaluations in the UN system, as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy<sup>5</sup>, in the conduct of this assignment.

## **7. Timetable**

The total duration of the evaluation is equivalent to 22 work days and will take place between 2 March 2015 and 31 July 2015.

<sup>3</sup> "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Standards (2005), [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=22](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22);

<sup>4</sup> "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Norms (2005), [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=21](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=21);

<sup>5</sup> "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), December 2011, [http://unctad.org/Sections/edm\\_dir/docs/osg\\_EvaluationPolicy2011\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/Sections/edm_dir/docs/osg_EvaluationPolicy2011_en.pdf).

Activity	Days
Desk research and study of relevant documentation	4 days
Preparation of data collection tools and inception report	3 days
Interviews with key project staff and workshop participants(including a data collection mission to Geneva, Switzerland)*	3 days
Interviews with project participants and other stakeholders	5 days
Data analysis and draft report write up	5 days
Final report write up	2 days

Note:

*\*: The evaluator needs to make himself/ herself available for a data collection mission during the week of 23 March to conduct interviews and/or focus group discussions in Geneva.*

## 8. Monitoring and Progress Control

The evaluator must keep the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit informed of the progress made in the evaluation on a regular basis. The evaluator will also present the draft report to the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and the project manager before the final submission, giving sufficient time for the verification of factual findings as well as its compliance with the ToR (approximately 1 week). To this end, a draft of the report must be presented by 1 July, 2015 for verification by the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit and the project manager, before submission of the final report.

The deadline for submission of the final report will be 31 July, 2015.

## 9. Qualifications and Experience <sup>6</sup>

- **Education:** Advanced university degree in economics, trade, development, public administration or related field.
- **Experience:** At least 5 years of experience in conducting evaluations, preferably interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. Demonstrated knowledge of trade is required. Knowledge of E-Commerce is a plus.
- **Language:** Fluency in oral and written English. Fluency in oral and written French is a major advantage.

## 10. Conditions of Service

The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations, but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

The evaluator needs to complete in advance the mandatory online trainings required for the mission to Geneva.

<sup>6</sup> The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

## **ANNEX 3**

### **DACUM**

The DACUM (Design a Curriculum) methodology is to brainstorm on the subject at hand in order to:

- (i) establish training objectives;
- (ii) define the target population(s);
- (iii) describe what the trainees should be able to do as a result of the training;
- (iv) sequence training objectives;
- (v) group them into training modules to form the curriculum of the course;
- (vi) design tests for each module; and
- (vii) define the content of training aids to be developed.

Training aids generally consist of an online handbook, multimedia presentations with knowledge checking questions, and online tests.

## Annex 4

### **Methodology of the e-survey**

The evaluation was basically foreseen as based on an extensive desk review of the project documents. However, thanks to a flexible approach to the time frame of the evaluation, a number of interviews have been made possible.

In particular face-to-face interviews of direct beneficiaries of the project legal component were made possible at the very onset of the evaluation mission, during the week long E-commerce seminar hosted by UNCTAD that took place in Geneva at the end of March 2015. This week long seminar gathered worldwide participants, thus enlarging the opportunities of networking and exchanging experience for the participants of the project<sup>1</sup>.

Complementary to data collected through face-to-face or collective interviews<sup>2</sup> conducted during the E-commerce seminar week in Geneva, and of telephone and Skype interviews collected between May and June 2015, an electronic survey was designed to better assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of UNCTAD's project on "Accelerating Progress of Selected West-African Countries towards the Achievement of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Particularly MDG8, Through Trade-related Training and Capacity Building".

The targeted audience of the e-electronic survey encompasses all project's beneficiaries, whether they have benefited from the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce or E-Commerce for Practitioner on-line training sessions, or all face-to-face sessions implemented during the project life<sup>3</sup>. ECOWAS seminar on cyberlaw harmonisation held in Geneva.

The electronic questionnaire draft, with an English and a French version, benefited from collaborative efforts and close guidance from EMU. Despite the presence of Lusophone beneficiaries (from Guinea-Bissau), no Portuguese version has been drafted. In complement to primary data collected during training sessions or seminars via end of session reports and perception surveys, the electronic questionnaire aimed at enlarging perceptions of beneficiaries, in particular regarding follow up activities, further needs, and quality of delivery.

It intended to assess levels of absorption, commitment of the participants to the online sessions, and all issues related to instance learning, including capacity and intention to replicate courses, promote e-commerce and capitalize on the experience of the project.

The online questionnaire was sent to 361 participants in total (including participants to the face-to-face sessions held in Senegal, Ghana and Ivory Coast, to online courses from all the project countries, and to the Geneva e-commerce week. The survey was first sent on the 24<sup>th</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This face-to-face training session of the project came as a replacement of a legal specialist face-to-face session that was planned in Dakar but had to be re-scheduled because of the Ebola outbreak. The project session was held immediately before UNCTAD's e-commerce week. The evaluation team was able to attend both the project session and the general seminar.

<sup>2</sup> 2 focus groups were held in the margins of UNCTAD e-commerce week.

<sup>3</sup> To the exception of the last on-line and face-to-face sessions the project will be implementing after July 2015. This includes a face-to-face in English for practitioners to be held 27-09-2015.

of June and sent again twice. A panel of 101 answers (95 francophone and 6 Anglophone) were received which represents 27,9 % response rate.

Sample Characteristics, out of the 101 participants who filled the questionnaire:

- Nationality (% of the total):

Bénin	14,9
Burkina Faso	10,9
Cape Verde	0,0
Côte d'Ivoire	16,8
Gambie	2,0
Ghana	4,0
Guinée Bissao	5,9
Liberia	0,0
Mali	13,9
Niger	0,0
Nigeria	0,0
Sénégal	16,8
Sierra Leone	0,0
Togo	14,9

- Organisation (% of the total):

Ministry of Trade	61,3%
Ministry or telecom authority	20,0%
Regulatory authority	0,0%
Private structure operating in the field	13,3%
Training Institute	5,3%

Quality control of answers given to the e-questionnaire is ensured by the following means:

- **Quantity** – as noted above, the number of answers greatly varies from country to country, thus diminishing the role of quantity as a quality-control element. It must be pointed out that those discrepancies in numbers can be explained as some countries have been drawn into the project only recently. Also, in some of the less advanced countries, participants to the on-line sessions do not have their own computer and the survey may not have reached the targeted population evenly. Overall however, replies have been consistent and well-detailed, including in countries where the response rate is lowest
- **Consistency** of answers has been used as the preferred criterion of validation. On average, replies are consistent with one another. They also appear consistent when grouped according to type of activity. In most cases, the answers to the evaluation e-questionnaire are also consistent with the perception surveys conducted at the end of each session.

- Cross-checking the information retrieved from the answers to the questionnaires with the information collected through the focus groups and by the desk research also served as an important tool of verification of the data.

## ANNEX 7

### Primary sources – direct interviews

#### Face-to-face interviews in Geneva

Pays	Prénom	Nom	Institutions	Titre
Benin	Hubert Arsène	DADJO	Ministère de la Justice	Magistrat, Sous-directeur technique
Benin	Sévi Rodolphe	ADJAIGBE	Ministère de la Communication et des TIC	Chercheur en Droit, Chef du Service de la Réglementation
Burkina Faso	Lydie	ZONGO	Ministère de l'Industrie du Commerce et de l'Artisanat	Directrice de la Promotion du e-commerce
Burkina Faso	Abdoulaye	OUEDRAOGO	Ministère du Développement de l'Economie numérique et des Postes	Directeur de la Réglementation des Communications électroniques
Côte d'Ivoire	Kadio Hervé Honoré	KOUA	Ministère du Commerce, Direction des Systèmes d'Information	Administrateur des Services Financiers, Sous-Directeur en charge du Commerce électronique
Côte d'Ivoire	Héraclès Mayé	ASSOKO	Ministère de la Poste et des TIC	Directeur des Affaires Juridiques et de la Coopération internationale
Côte d'Ivoire	Korotoumou	DIABATE	Ministère de la Poste et des TIC	Directrice par intérim de la Direction des Affaires Juridiques et de la Coopération Internationale
Guinée	Saikou	BALDE	Ministère du Commerce	Inspecteur Général adjoint
Guinée	Fatimatou	BALDE	Ministère du Commerce	Chef de Section au Centre d'Appui aux Filières d'Exportation
Mali	Fatoumata Sekou	DICKO ep. MAIGA	Ministère de la Justice et des Droits de l'Homme	Chef de Cabinet, Présidente de la Commission Technique d'Elaboration des Textes du Cadre TIC
Mali	Assetou	SOUMARE	Société des Télécommunications du Mali (SOTELMA-SA)	Responsable du Département des Affaires Juridiques et de la Réglementation
Niger	Mahamane Laoualy	ADO SALIFOU	Ministère des Postes, des Télécommunications et de l'Economie Numérique	Directeur des Affaires Juridiques et Contentieux
Niger	Atté	BOEYI	Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement	Directeur de la Législation
Sénégal	Diakaria	DIALLO	Présidence de la République	Responsable Réseaux et Sécurité
Sénégal	Yannick Olivier	SOME	Groupement Interbancaire Monétique de l'Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africain	Assistant Juridique
Sénégal	François Mame Samba	NDIAYE	Observatoire de la Qualité des Services Financiers, Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et du Plan	Juriste
Sénégal	Ibrahima	THIAM	Confédération Nationale des Employeurs du Sénégal	Chargé de Programmes
Togo	Dodzi Yawovi Sylvanus	AWUTEY	Autorité de Régulation des Postes et Télécommunications	Juriste
Cape Verde	Ailine	CONCEICAO	Agencia Nacional das Comunicacoes	Attorney in the Study and Strategic Office
The Gambia	Ebrima	CEESAY	The Gambia Public Utilities Regulatory Authority	Legal, Licensing and Enforcement Manager
The Gambia	Sanusi	DRAMMEH	The Gambia Government	ICT Officer
Ghana	Evelyn	BEDIAKOH-ADU	National Communications Authority, Legal Division	Lawyer
Ghana	Freda	BENJAMIN-LAING	Ministry of Justice & Attorney General Office, Legislation Drafting Division	State Attorney
Guinea-Bissau	Suleimane	MANE	Authority Regulation National Communication	Chief, Legal Affairs and Consumer Protection
Liberia	Roosevelt	GOULD	Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Chief Lawyer
Liberia	Zotawon	TITUS	Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications	Deputy Minister in charge of ICT
Nigeria	Aarinola	OKUSANYA		
Nigeria	Princess Greatness	EZE		
Sierra Leone	James	COBBA	Ministry of ICTs	Chief Technology Officer
ECOWAS	Raphaël	KOFFI	Economic Community of West African States	Principal Programme Officer, Head of Telecommunication/ICT Division
UNCTAD Instructor	Abdoullah	CISSE	BITEYE & CISSE Association	Avocat-Conseiller juridique Dakar

UNCTAD Instructor	Ian	WALDEN	Queen Mary, University of London	Professor of Information and Communication
Speaker	Albert	ANTWI-BOASIAKO	e-Crime Bureau, Accra	Consultant
Speaker	Luca	CASTELLANI	UNICITRAL Regional Centre for Asia and the Pacific	Legal Officer
Speaker	Rosheen	AWOTAR-MAUREE	International Telecommunication Union	Cyber security Officer
Observer	Emmanuel	ADJOVI	Direction de la Francophonie Numérique, Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF)	Spécialiste de programme "Société de l'Information"
Observer	Anne-Rachel	INNE	ICANN	VP Government Engagement
UNCTAD	Cécile	BARAYRE		
UNCTAD	Marc	ASSAF		
UNCTAD	Stéphanie	KELPE		
UNCTAD	Aylwin	ZABULA		
UNCTAD	Sabrina	IELMOLI		
UNCTAD	Dominique	CHANTREL		

Total : 44 interviewees, including 14 stakeholders

### Focus groups conducted in Geneva

French speaking: 25

English speaking: 8

### Interviewees through Skype or Phone

Conakry	point focal	mme Bangoura
	tuteur tech	Saikou Yaya Balde
Togo	point focal	Komla Nyedji Galley
	tuteur tech	Sena Yao Feda
Sénégal	point focal	Fara Makha Diop
	tuteur tech	Binta Thiam
Mali	point focal	Modibo Keita
	tuteur tech	Moriba Camara
Bénin	point focal	René Akowanou
	tuteur tech	Mohamed Assouma Seidou
Burkina Faso	point focal	Nazaire Pare
	tuteur tech	Elie Sawadogo
Cote d'Ivoire	point focal	Diabaté Korotoumou
	autre	Héraclès Mayé Assoko
Niger	point focal	Issaka Jaharou
Gambia	point focal	Yahya Samateh
	tuteur tech	Edrissa Sowe
		Mama Nderry Touray
Ghana	point focal et tuteur tech	William Kartey
		Enock Akwesi Kwaakye



Nigeria	point focal	Monilola Udoh
	autre	Niteabai prosper Dominic
Sierra Leone		James Kanja Cobba
UNECA	point focal	Mohamed Timoulali
Cape Verde		Ailine Conceicao
UNCTAD	trainer	Pierre Berendes

Total interviewees: 26