UNCTAD’s support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)

During the period under consideration, UNCTAD supported African countries in implementing their developmental objectives in relation to the NEPAD thematic areas of agriculture, food security and rural development, climate change and national resource management, regional integration and infrastructure, economic and corporate governance, and cross-cutting issues of gender, ICT and capacity development. Specific selected examples of activities and impact are provided in these thematic areas in addition to communication, advocacy and outreach in support of Africa's development, support to African institutions, women and youth empowerment and of collaboration with other UN agencies in support of NEPAD. UNCTAD's support cuts across its 3 main pillars of operations, namely research and policy analysis, technical assistance, and inter-governmental consensus-building.

I. Agriculture, food security and rural development

a) Support to policy formulation on rural development: The UNCTAD Least Developed Countries Report (LDCR) 2015 titled "Transforming rural economies" was launched in November 2015 in more than 25 cities. The Report focuses on the transformation of rural economies and shows, among others, that women comprise half the rural workforce in LDCs but face serious constraints on realizing their productive potential, slowing rural transformation. The Report details a series of policy measures aimed at implementing a new approach to rural development centred on Poverty-oriented structural transformation (POST). The UNCTAD LDCR was presented and discussed at the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board (TDB) meeting in Geneva to member states and will be launched jointly with UNDP Human Development Report 2015 in Laos in February 2016.

b) Catalyzing organic agriculture in Africa (Tanzania and Ethiopia): UNCTAD participated in the Third African Organic Agriculture Conference along with other international organizations, farmers, researchers, academics, policy makers, entrepreneurs and representatives of African organic movements, sharing experiences, lessons learned and development prospects. In support of organic agriculture development in the United Republic of Tanzania, UNCTAD prepared a report on "Enhancing linkages between tourism and sustainable agriculture sectors in the United Republic of Tanzania". The report included recommendations on how to strengthen such linkages and increase awareness of the potential advantages of organic products; developing regions to serve as multipliers based on successful local experiences; fostering public-private partnerships to implement pro-poor tourism strategies and the promotion of pro-poor tourism and branding. These recommendations were discussed at a national stakeholders' meeting held in December 2015 in Dar-es-Salaam. At the request of Ethiopia for support in boosting its exports in green sectors and products of comparative advantage, UNCTAD collaborated with the Government in preparing a national strategy on green exports. The First National Stakeholder Workshop of Ethiopia’s National Green Export Review took place in December 2015 in Addis Ababa. Jointly organized by UNCTAD and the Ethiopian Ministry of Trade, this event brought together close to 40 representatives from national ministries, trade promotion agencies,
financial institutions, sectoral associations, universities and research centers. It launched the preparation of the national green export review and enabled national stakeholders to evaluate, discuss and select a set of priority green sectors to be examined.

c) Enhancing fisheries exports: UNCTAD's implemented a project titled "Building the capacities of selected LDCs to upgrade and diversify their fish exports" to improve the export prospects of least developed economies with a special focus on meeting international food safety and quality standards. Implementation of the project in Comoros, Uganda and Mozambique started with the undertaking of policy-oriented research and analysis on export development and diversification in fisheries. The study comprises country case studies and statistical information on domestic, regional and global fishery market opportunities. It examined policies and strategies pertaining to fish exports in beneficiary countries, including Uganda, Comoros and Mozambique, focusing on the impact of international food safety and food quality standards on fish exports. As part of the project, UNCTAD developed a draft manual on improving national food safety and sanitary standards to assist national stakeholders in beneficiary countries to upgrade national standards and improve compliance with the requirements of major fish importing economies and other private or industry standards pertaining to fisheries. A preliminary draft of the manual has been shared during national capacity building training workshops and it will be made available during forthcoming workshops.

d) Supporting the Pan African Cotton Road Map: In March 2015, UNCTAD participated in a series of meetings for the 10th anniversary of the EU-Africa Partnership on Cotton which was established in July 2004 and has been active in 20 African countries. At the meetings in Cotonou UNCTAD addressed the consolidation of the Action Framework of the Partnership and the Pan African Cotton Road Map, focusing on identifying the way forward for its full implementation.

II. Climate change and natural resource management:

As one of the implementing partners of the Nairobi Framework, which was established to improve the level of participation of developing countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol, UNCTAD, through the BioFuels Initiative, supported the organization of the 7th Africa Carbon Forum held in April 2015 in Marrakech, Morocco. In the margins of the Africa Carbon Forum and in collaboration with UNEP, UNCTAD organized a workshop on Harvesting opportunities for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+). The event provided a platform to assist developing countries in exploring ways to incorporate REDD+ schemes such as REDD+ payments into their national forestry policies in safeguarding forest assets and ecosystem services for future generations. Complemented by other sources of livelihoods such as BioTrade, eco-tourism and orchestrated energy policies, REDD+ payments could play an important role in forest preservation and climate change mitigation.

III. Regional integration and infrastructure
As the focal point of the United Nations system on trade and trade-related matters, UNCTAD has a direct impact on building the capacities of the region to harness benefits from increased intra-African trade and regional integration. Three examples are in the area of non-tariff
measures, negotiations towards the creation of a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and regional investment.

a) Support to regional economic commissions in area of non-tariff measures: UNCTAD works together with African regional secretariats (SADC, EAC, COMESA, ECOWAS, SACU) to strengthen regional economic integration in Africa regarding regulations affecting trade. The ability to strengthen regional integration depends increasingly on mutual cooperation on trade regulatory measures such as sanitary requirements and goods standards. These non-tariff measures (NTMs) represent a challenge for exporters, importers and policy makers. Addressing them is necessary to promote regional trade and regional value chains as well as being competitive on world markets. Furthermore, these regulations are and will increasingly be used to achieve the SDGs. The Tripartite RECs have been trained by UNCTAD on NTMs and have adopted the UNCTAD MAST NTM classification. Training for the Tripartite region was held in November 2015 and subsequently NTM data are being collected for 12 Tripartite countries to enhance the transparency on NTMs and to allow policy makers to address trade obstacles. An ongoing project, started in 2015, analyses the opportunities of addressing NTMs in ECOWAS to strengthen regional integration. A workshop held in Kenya in December 2015 addressed the possibilities of using NTMs for regional integration and sustainable development in Africa. In June 2015 a training course in Morocco supported Northern African policy makers on NTMs. UNCTAD works on non-tariff measures aiming to assess and improve export opportunities for developing countries and to promote integration into regional and global value chains. UNCTAD collects and analyses NTM data for the EU, the US and other trading partners of Africa to enhance their export opportunities. UNCTAD leads the international efforts on NTM data and works with the African Development Bank within the Transparency in Trade Initiative in Africa on NTMs.

b) Support to the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA): UNCTAD is supporting African countries in the CFTA negotiations, which were officially launched in June 2015 during the 25th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union. UNCTAD will assist the African Union Commission and grouping and individual countries in all areas of the negotiations. In support of the formation of the CFTA to boost intra-African trade, UNCTAD implemented several activities: for example, UNCTAD trained over 20 trade-in-services trade negotiators from 19 Anglophone African countries, 4 African regional economic communities (ECOWAS, EAC, SADC and COMESA), and the AUC on the services economy, services trade and trade negotiations as well as options and approaches to CFTA services negotiations. The training was undertaken during a Training Workshop on Trade in Services Negotiations for AU CFTA Negotiators in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 2015. The training helped African services trade negotiators to improve on their technical understanding and negotiating skills. An event titled "CFTA: Making it work for Africa" was organized jointly by UNCTAD, the Government of Kenya, the African Union Commission and the Commonwealth Secretariat on 16 December 2015, in Nairobi. Some 90 participants in the event including several African Ministers, representatives from the private sector, academia, civil society organizations and international governmental organizations stressed that the expeditious conclusion of African CFTA negotiations and a follow-up implementation was necessary for the beneficial integration of Africa into the global economy.

c) Investment. Following the African Union (AU) Commission's mandate to "develop a comprehensive investment code for Africa with a view to promoting private sector participation" a process was launched where academic experts develop a draft new Pan
African Investment Code (PAIC). In November 2015, UNCTAD provided comments on the draft with the aim of fostering the overall legal clarity and coherence of the Code, as well as some broader strategic policy issues related to the purpose and nature of the Code.

d) Inter-regional agricultural trade. In November 2015, UNCTAD participated in a NEPAD and ECCAS conference in Malabo on “Promoting regional agricultural trade and value chains for 2025: Malabo speaks to Central Africa” which aimed to establish an Action Plan for increasing intra-regional and inter-regional agricultural trade and for developing agricultural value chains. Key messages of UNCTAD’s Commodity and Development Report 2015: Smallholder Farmers and Sustainable Commodity Development were shared with the working group on “The Legal and Regulatory Framework: Requirements for the development of the agri-business sector in Central Africa”. UNCTAD also provided inputs on Public-Private Partnerships in rural infrastructure contracts and in devising mechanisms for stimulating investments by small or medium sized actors in the agri-business value chains.

IV. Economic and corporate governance

a) Competition law and policy: A major area where UNCTAD supports African countries at improving on economic governance relates to the formulation and implementation of competition law and competition policy. In this regard, UNCTAD has been implementing activities in order to strengthen competition law enforcement in Zimbabwe, within a Trade and Private Sector Development Project funded by the EU. UNCTAD organized two awareness raising seminars on the role of competition law and policy in Zimbabwe in collaboration with the Competition and Tariff Commission of Zimbabwe (CTC) in Harare and Bulawayo in June and September 2015, respectively. The objective of the events was to create awareness and understanding among business representatives on the benefits of competition law and policy, enhance their knowledge on competition law, its enforcement and the structure and work of the CTC. The outcome of these seminars were better understanding by the stakeholders of competition principles and competition law, as well as their implications for the business community; and the contribution of competition to the development process in Zimbabwe. UNCTAD has been assisting the CTC in developing an online complaint filing system to facilitate lodging complaints relating to anti-competitive business practices by citizens in Zimbabwe. The system will be operational by March 2016. The expected impact is increased number of complaints to the CTC and CTC being better informed about such practices in the market, therefore taking quicker action to deal with them. Furthermore, a Competition Assessment Toolkit was also developed for Zimbabwe. The impact of this toolkit is to assess the state of competition in selected sectors; to identify existing Government policies or laws/regulations that limit competition; or to assess the potential impact on competition of a new policy, law, regulation or government measure. The toolkit may be used by Government institutions, ministries, research institutions and the CTC. The toolkit developed has been applied to the information and communication technology sector in Zimbabwe. A report was prepared whose outcome will be to inform stakeholders and Government about competition issues, if any, so that they can take actions to improve competition in the ICT sector in Zimbabwe.

b) Enhanced Integrated Framework: Another important area where UNCTAD supports African countries in improving upon economic governance relates to adequate formulation and execution of trade policies and trade-related programmes and trade facilitation, especially under the umbrella of Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). As part of the EIF, in 2015 UNCTAD has initiated and concluded the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies
(DTIS) update for Djibouti (February 2015), Mali (April 2015), Niger (December 2015) and Ethiopia (February 2016). The DTIS is the cornerstone of the EIF programme in terms of integrating and mainstreaming trade into a country’s national development plan. The study updates have identified constraints hampering the integration of the countries into the multilateral trading system and provided recommendations on areas where technical assistance and policy actions may help the country to overcome such constraints. An action matrix is included in the study providing a list of recommended trade priorities to be integrated into the national development strategy. Subsequent to the update of the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) of Djibouti and Ethiopia, UNCTAD will hold a workshop in Djibouti aimed at identifying measures to improve the management of the corridor between Djibouti and Ethiopia. The workshop is aimed at identifying and tackling the issues affecting trade between Djibouti and Ethiopia and to establish a road map for the improvement of trade facilitation between the two countries.

c) Debt and debt sustainability: Following the adoption of the UNGA Resolution on Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes on 14 September 2015, as well as the finalization of UNCTAD's Principles on Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing and the publication of the UNCTAD Roadmap and Guide for Sovereign Debt Workouts, UNCTAD initiated a debt policy dialogue mission to Africa from October to December 2015. The objective was to engage senior policy makers and intergovernmental organizations on UNCTAD's initiatives in the area of debt policy and to raise awareness of the growing challenges to Africa's debt sustainability. A first successful round of meetings with AERC (African Economic Research Consortium), MEFMI (Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa), WAIFEM (West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management), EAC (East African Community) and BCEAO (Central Bank of West African States) resulted in plans for a more permanent cooperation between UNCTAD and African regional organisations in the area of debt policy analysis and design, that will be further pursued in the first half of 2016. UNCTAD also runs a development account project on regulatory and institutional frameworks on sovereign debt governance to improve capacity for policy-makers in five LDCs, two of which are African countries (Togo and Mauritania). In 2015, two successful training workshops were organised to enhance capacities of government officials in these countries to apply the UNCTAD Principles of Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing to identify gaps in their regulatory and institutional framework on sovereign debt governance, and discuss suitable policy options. In addition, UNCTAD has continued to provide support to African and other debtor countries in preparing their negotiations on the restructuring of bilateral official debt in the framework of the Paris Club. Since the last report, The Republic of Chad reached the Completion Point under the enhanced initiative for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries and met with Paris Club creditors in June 2015. On a bilateral basis, creditors agreed to provide additional relief beyond the standard terms, leading to a full cancelation of The Republic of Chad's eligible debt to the Paris Club.

d) Trade facilitation under ASYCUDA. Regarding Customs automation, the work carried out by UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme provides not only increases of revenue collected by Customs of often more than 25% in LDCs, but helps reduce clearing times and costs depending on the initial situation (i.e. time delay may be reduced from weeks to days or hours). 29 African countries benefited from the Programme support in 2015. Numerous training sessions were organized allowing for the transfer of ASYCUDA know-how and skills to national teams, thus ensuring the long term sustainability of the system by national Customs administrations. For example, the ASYCUDA System for Performance
Measurement (ASYPM) was launched in D.R. Congo. Performance measurement within a customs administration is a means to increase efficiency and detect bad practices. Customs management through the system has at its finger tips data and diagrams providing live and accurate information of all its Customs operations.

e) Investment policies. Africa has been the main beneficiary of UNCTAD investment policy review (IPR) programme since its inception in 1999. Out of a total number of 41 completed IPRs, 24 were prepared for African countries. During the reporting period, UNCTAD published the IPR for Madagascar. It has also started preparing the IPR of the Gambia. To help countries implement the recommendations of the IPRs and further improve their investment environment, UNCTAD provided technical assistance to IPR beneficiary countries. Over the reporting period, UNCTAD, in cooperation with the World Bank, has been providing assistance to the Government of Kenya to develop its National Investment Policy document. The draft document should be completed and launched in 2016. UNCTAD also assisted the Government of the Republic of the Congo and of the Sudan to prioritize actions required to implement the IPR recommendations.

V. Cross-cutting issues: ICT and capacity development

UNCTAD contributes towards capacity building in the region through a series of activities that include policy and technical advisory services, training courses, seminars, simulation exercises, workshops or symposia on specific issues, supply of trade and investment related data and technical cooperation projects.

An important area in which UNCTAD contributes towards capacity building relates to trade and poverty reduction. For example, as part of its project on "Strengthening of capacities of trade and planning ministries of selected least developed countries to develop and implement trade strategies that are conducive to poverty reduction", UNCTAD organized a regional workshop in Maseru, Lesotho in April 2015 that brought together over 60 participants from 13 LDCs in the region including senior officials from the trade and planning ministries, and other relevant stakeholders from civil society and the private sector. In addition to the institutional issues, the workshops identified the necessary policy actions to make trade more inclusive. The United Nations Department for Economics and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Enhanced Integrated Framework Secretariat (EIF) contributed to a policy roundtable at the workshop.

Measuring the information economy. Another area of capacity building relates to the measurement of the information economy and use of ICT. In June 2015, UNCTAD organized a training of trainers on information economy statistics for African participants in Addis Ababa, in collaboration with UNECA Africa Centre for Statistics. It certified 11 new trainers. Following that, a regional training course on information economy statistics for Anglophone African countries was planned for January 2016. In response to a request from the National Bureau of Statistics of Kenya (KNBS) and the Kenyan Communication Authority (CA) in September 2015, UNCTAD provided assistance in preparation for the national ICT survey in 2016. This technical assistance targeted the planning phase and involved drafting a baseline report and training relevant survey personnel. A first mission and substantive analysis of existing ICT statistics in Kenya took place in November and December 2015, to be followed in January 2016 by further training of KNBS staff in order to implement the survey in February and March 2016. This will be the first survey of ICT use by enterprises in Kenya. The work is being financed by a Swedish trust fund project to build capacities on ICT for development. At the request of Egypt's Ministry of Communications
and Information Technology (MCIT), UNCTAD launched an ICT Policy Review in 2015 to assist Egypt in developing its national e-commerce strategy. UNCTAD is conducting a comprehensive assessment and diagnostic on the current status of e-commerce in Egypt to establish short, medium and long-term targets and policy recommendations. UNCTAD is collaborating with the World Bank on the e-payment component of the e-commerce strategy.

A. Selected examples of communication, advocacy and outreach in support of Africa's development

The UNCTAD Economic Development in Africa Report 2015 titled "Unlocking the potential of Africa's services trade for Growth and Development" was launched in July 2015 in several African countries' capitals including Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania. The Report was also presented and discussed with member states at UNCTAD Trade and Development sixty-first Session in September 2015. The Report advocates for a better leveraging of services trade in Africa as an engine of growth, employment creation and development. The Report provides specific and actionable policy recommendations to that effect. The main messages and policy findings of the report were also disseminated to a group of high level Government officials from African Francophone Least Developed Countries in Cotonou, Benin in December 2015. It was also featured at the "Africa Rising Seminar on the growing potential of trade in services" in Stockholm, Sweden in October 2015.

B. Selected examples of support to African institutions, women and youth empowerment

Trade and Gender research and policy analysis: UNCTAD conducts research and analysis on the gender ramifications of macro-economic policies, and specifically trade policies, in selected developing countries. UNCTAD has developed a teaching package on trade and gender which aims to provide an up-to-date learning resource on trade and gender issues for all stakeholders - researchers, policy-makers and civil society representatives - involved in research, policy formulation and advocacy in this area. The package includes a two-volume manual and an online course. The first iteration of the on-line course was held in February-March 2015. Participants from 19 African countries were selected for the course. The second iteration of the online course started on 4 January 2016 to conclude on 23 February 2016. All participants received a scholarship to participate in the course. The objective of this distance learning initiative is to equip academics, government officials and civil society in developing and transition countries with analytical tools to analyze the two-way relationship between trade and gender, and to produce gender-sensitive policy recommendations. Twenty-five researchers from 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa also took part in a regional workshop organized by UNCTAD on Trade and Gender Analysis in June 2015 at the North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa. Building on the online course on trade and gender, the workshop focused on the use of quantitative methods in trade and gender research. The objective of the workshop was to provide participants with the knowledge needed to undertake gender assessments of trade policy.

In March 2016, UNCTAD will start activities in the Great Lakes region within a UN Development Account project "Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in the Great Lakes Region". The countries directly involved in the project are Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The project will last until December 2019. Analytical work will deal with the following issues: (i) how to address the complexity and opacity of trade barriers to informal cross
border trade (ICBT), in a context of multiple overlapping trade arrangements; and (ii) how to accommodate the specificities of ICBT, especially involving women, when designing and implementing suitable supply side services that support cross-border trade flows. Women cross-border traders face an array of constraints, many gender-specific, which translate into significant competitive disadvantages. The nature of constraints, their depth and extent, and the potential gains to traders from actions/interventions taken to address and reduce the barriers and obstacles will be analyzed. Better understanding of these issues will enable informed and targeted actions.

C. Selected examples of collaboration with other UN agencies in support of NEPAD
At the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial meeting in Nairobi in December 2015, UNCTAD organized a series of advocacy and outreach activities on Africa's special development needs in collaboration with other institutions. In partnership with the Government of Kenya and the African Union, UNCTAD organized an event on "Boosting investment for productive capacities: A call to action". The high level panel, which consisted of the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ministers of Industry and Trade from the continent and the Netherlands and the U.S. Ambassador based in Kenya, discussed paths towards the development of productive capacities in developing countries including Africa. Two other side events were organized by UNCTAD, one in collaboration with the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) on "Measures to improve Financing for Development Policies of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda" and another in collaboration with the Trade Policy Training Center in Africa (TRAPCA) on the role of capacity-building institutions in achieving the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA).

D. Financial resources committed to Africa from 2012, 2013 and 2014. The total expenditures on national and regional projects in support of Africa in 2014 were US$10,425,656 (27.5% of total expenditure compared to US$9,312,149 (23% of total expenditure) in 2013 and US$ 9,364,120 (25.8% of total expenditure) in 2012.