



Landlocked Developing Countries: Things to **KNOW** Things to **DO**



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Landlocked Developing Countries
Small Island Developing States

United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries,
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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This booklet reviews the status of implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action at the 5-year or so-called midterm point of the Programme, covering the period 2014 - 2019. It highlights facts TO KNOW and proposes actions TO DO, based on the Vienna Programme of Action and recommendations proposed in the outcome document of the comprehensive high-level midterm review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 held on 5 and 6 December 2019 in New York.

More information about the comprehensive high-level midterm review can be found at

www.lldc2conference.org/mtr

Front Photo: Lao PDR. Asian Development Bank, Flickr

Back Photo: Nepal. Mokhamad Edliadi/CIFOR, Flickr

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About the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

What are Landlocked Developing Countries?

Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) are developing countries that lack territorial access to the sea. Thus, they face the double challenge of development and limited access to international markets.

There are 32 LLDCs, located on four continents with a combined population of 509 million people (2018). The total combined land area of LLDCs is 15,926,539 square kilometers (2018)¹, representing 12.5 per cent of the world's total. The LLDCs are geographically distributed as follows:

Africa

16 countries:

Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Central African Republic
Chad
Eswatini
Ethiopia
Lesotho
Malawi
Mali
Niger
Rwanda
South Sudan
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Latin America

2 countries:

Plurinational State of Bolivia
Paraguay

Europe

4 countries:

Armenia
Azerbaijan
North Macedonia
Republic of Moldova

Asia

10 countries:

Afghanistan
Bhutan
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Mongolia
Nepal
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

What are the challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries?



Photo: Ethiopia. Richard Stupart, Flickr



Photo: Bhutan. Abhijit Kar Gupta, Flickr

1

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES

The LLDCs are confronted by structural challenges that are directly and indirectly related to their geographical disadvantages, which inhibit their full participation in global production networks and isolate them from global markets. For them, global trade has to inherently transit through other countries, mostly also developing countries - a process which involves dealing with cumbersome border-crossing procedures and inadequate transit transport infrastructure.

2

HIGH TRANSPORT COSTS

These difficulties substantially increase transport and trade transaction costs for the LLDCs. On average, LLDCs pay more than double what the transit countries incur in transport costs and take longer time to send and receive merchandise from overseas markets. The high transport costs erode LLDCs' competitive edge, discourage investment, reduce economic growth and subsequently limit the capacity of landlocked developing countries to promote and achieve sustainable development.

Photo: Bolivia. Mariano Mantel, Flickr

RELIANCE ON PRIMARY COMMODITIES

The economies of LLDCs are also characterized by dependence on a limited number of primary commodities and other low-value added products, limited or low-quality infrastructure, weak human and institutional capacities and low productivity. Overall, the level of development in LLDCs is about 20 per cent lower than it would have been if they were not landlocked.



Photo: Burkina Faso. Robert GLÖD, Flickr



Photo: Krygyzstan. Vyacheslav Oseledko/ADB, Flickr

In November 2014, in Vienna, Austria, the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries was held to comprehensively review the Almaty Programme of Action that was adopted in 2003, and to provide a new development blueprint that would address issues faced by LLDCs in the next decade. **The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024** was adopted at the conclusion of this Conference, as a successor to the Almaty Programme of Action.



Photo: Zimbabwe. youngrobv, Flickr



Photo: Paraguay. Abriles_, Flickr

What is the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024?

The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on LLDCs in Vienna, Austria in November 2014, constitutes a renewed forward-looking approach by the international community to tackle the challenges that LLDCs face in a more comprehensive and coherent manner than before. The Programme is a holistic development agenda with specific goals, objectives and actions that seek to contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction in the LLDCs.

The Programme is based on renewed and strengthened partnerships between landlocked and transit developing countries and their development partners, within the context of South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as strengthened partnerships with relevant international and regional organizations, and between the public and private sectors.



2ND UN CONFERENCE
ON LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
VIENNA · NOVEMBER 2014

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME ARE:

#1

To promote unfettered, efficient and cost-effective access to and from the sea by all means of transport, on the basis of freedom of transit, and other related measures, in accordance with applicable rules of international law;

#3

To develop adequate transit transport infrastructure networks and complete missing links connecting LLDCs;

#5

To promote growth and increase participation in global trade through structural transformation related to enhanced productive capacity development, value addition, diversification and reduction of dependency on commodities; and

#2

To reduce trade transaction and transport costs, and improve international trade services through simplification and standardization of rules and regulations, so as to increase the LLDCs' competitiveness in international trade;

#4

To effectively implement bilateral, regional and international instruments and strengthen regional integration;

#6

To enhance and strengthen international support for LLDCs to address needs and challenges arising from landlockedness, with the view of eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development.

// Learn More

Vienna Programme of Action for
Landlocked Developing
Countries for the Decade
2014-2024



Scan a QR code

The Six Priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs

1

PRIORITY

**Fundamental
transit policy
issues**

2

PRIORITY

**Infrastructure
development and
maintenance**

3

PRIORITY

**International trade
and trade
facilitation**

4

PRIORITY

**Regional
integration and
cooperation**

5

PRIORITY

**Structural
economic
transformation**

6

PRIORITY

**Means of
Implementation**

THE VIENNA PROGRAMME OF ACTION, THE HOLISTIC DOCUMENT CENTERED UPON ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AIMS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY STEMMING FROM THEIR LANDLOCKEDNESS, THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC ACTIONS IN THE PRIORITY AREAS.



Photo: Uzbekistan. Asian Development Bank, Flickr

Priority

1 FUNDAMENTAL TRANSIT POLICY ISSUES

Things to **Know**

- Freedom of transit and transit facilities play a key role in the overall development of landlocked developing countries. LLDCs should be provided with access to and from the sea in order to fully integrate into the global trading system.
- A significant level of ratification of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) was achieved. As of October 2019, 25 of the 26 LLDCs that are WTO members ratified the TFA, while 28 of the transit developing countries ratified the Agreement.
- Ratification, in particular by LLDCs, of key international trade and transport related conventions remains low.
- Regional, sub-regional and multilateral initiatives between LLDCs and transit countries to support transit have been increasing.
- Cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and regulations between LLDCs and their transit neighbours is crucial for cross-border trade.
- Effective participation of key stakeholders, both public and private, is important to improve transit facilitation.

Specific **Objectives**

- Reduce travel time along corridors and for transit cargo to move a distance of 300 to 400 kilometres every 24 hours.
- Significantly reduce the time spent at land borders.
- Significantly improve intermodal connectivity to ensure efficient transfer of cargo between ports, roads and rails.

Photo: Armenia. Asian Development Bank, Flickr

Things LLDCs & Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Enhance efforts to meet the VPoA specific objectives of reducing travel time along the corridors; reducing cargo dwell times at seaports and reduce time spent at the land border.
- Accede to and ratify international, regional and sub-regional conventions and other legal instruments related to transit transport and trade facilitation, including the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- Implement international and regional conventions and bilateral agreements on transit transport and trade facilitation.
- Enhance coordination and cooperation between and among national agencies responsible for border and customs controls.
- Promote simplification, transparency and harmonization of legal and administrative regulations and requirements related to transit systems.
- Develop effective logistic systems by aligning incentives for efficient transport and transit operations, promoting competition and phasing out anti-competitive practices.
- Promote involvement of road, rail and inland waterway transport business associations by enhancing Public-Private-Partnerships and encouraging private sector to participate in knowledge sharing and implementation of transit cooperation initiatives.
- Collaborate and share transit and transport related data, in particular travel time along corridors.
- Formulate national transit policies and mechanisms that allow the participation of all stakeholders.
- Make use of available tools to facilitate transit such as the WCO Transit Guidelines.

Things Development Partners need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs and transit countries in implementing international conventions, agreements and initiatives.
- Support LLDCs and transit countries in establishing efficient and sustainable transit transport regimes and sharing of best practices, experiences and policies.
- Encourage regional and sub-regional organizations to provide technical and financial assistance to LLDCs to implement initiatives that promote transit transport cooperation.
- Support the development and collection of transit and transport related data to monitor the specific objectives of the VPoA.

Priority

2

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

(A) TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Things to **Know**

- Some progress has been made in improving road and rail transport infrastructure, completing missing links and generally improving the quality of infrastructure for increased connectivity of LLDCs, but challenges remain.
- Major constraints in developing and maintaining infrastructure connectivity include limited financial resources, institutional bottlenecks, limited skilled human resources and lack of capacity in formulating financially viable infrastructure projects.
- Inadequate physical infrastructure, few harmonized rules and procedures and limited cross-border investment and participation in many LLDCs continue to impede trade and economic development.
- Physical links of LLDCs to regional transport infrastructure networks fall short of expectations.
- There is an urgent need to address the missing links and upgrade transport infrastructure to a level that can establish seamless and efficient infrastructure networks within countries and across their borders.
- Addressing the transport infrastructure needs in LLDCs will require deploying financial resources, both public and private, technical capacity-building assistance and exploring innovative partnerships.

Specific **Objectives**

- Significantly increase the quality of roads, including the share of paved roads.
- Expand and upgrade railway infrastructure in LLDCs, where applicable.
- Complete missing links in regional road and railway transit transport networks.

Photo: Chad. anmede, Flickr

Things LLDCs & Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- LLDCs to implement comprehensive policies for infrastructure development and maintenance.
- Intensify efforts to close the transport infrastructure gaps in LLDCs and build resilient infrastructure.
- Promote sustainable transit systems through upgrading and maintenance of networks; development of corridors along transit routes; cross-border mechanisms, including one-stop border crossing; and economies of scale for transport systems through intermodal transport, inland container depots, dry ports etc.
- Promote an integrated and sustainable approach to the management of international transport corridors to improve transit transport and regional connectivity.
- Harmonize gauges to facilitate regional connectivity.
- Promote railway transport where its use is viable and rail networks already exist.
- Promote multilateral and regional permit systems for road transport and expand multilateral quota systems among LLDCs and transit countries.
- Gradually liberalize road transport services; and develop logistics hubs.
- Develop policies to promote private sector participation and PPPs in infrastructure development and maintenance.
- Develop inland transport networks, including ancillary infrastructure, such as all-weather road, river and riverside support infrastructure.
- Invest in capacity-building and legal, regulatory and policy reform to create an environment supportive of greater public and private investments in infrastructure.

Things Development Partners Need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs in infrastructure development and maintenance, and in experience sharing with their transit neighbours.
- Multilateral and regional banks to provide more support to LLDCs and transit countries for infrastructure development and provide dedicated infrastructure funding.
- Support completion of missing links in road and rail networks and support the development of resilient infrastructure.
- Assist LLDCs to develop the capacity to prepare bankable, large-scale infrastructure projects and to explore innovative financing mechanisms for projects.

Priority

2

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

(B) ENERGY AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Things to **Know**

- Adequate ICTs and energy infrastructure can help reduce LLDCs high trading costs, modernize transit systems and reduce delays, improve competitiveness, enhance productive capacity and deepen their integration into the global market.
- Percentage of the population with access to electricity in LLDCs has increased and reached 56.3% in 2017.
- Although LLDCs experienced an increase in electricity in rural areas between 2014 and 2017, the rural urban gap is still significant and two thirds of the LLDC population does not have access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking.
- ICTs play an important role in raising sectoral productivity, lowering costs, facilitating market expansion, enhancing access to services, including e-services such as e-commerce, transparency and participation in governance.
- LLDCs have experienced significant growth in mobile cellular subscriptions.
- The number of individuals using internet in LLDCs has doubled between 2010 and 2017.
- However, the LLDCs continue to significantly lag behind world average in ICT access and use. Additionally, they face high costs of broadband and a lack of a regionally harmonized regulatory environment is a hindrance to cheaper ICT services and greater coverage.

Specific **Objectives**

- Expand and upgrade supply, transmission and distribution infrastructure for modern and renewable energy services.
- LLDCs to make broadband policy universal.
- Promote open and affordable access to internet for all.
- LLDCs to engage to address the digital divide.

Things LLDCs & Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Promote cross-border energy trade and transit through transmission lines to third countries and promotion of cross-border power projects.
- Develop national policies to promote modern, reliable and renewable energy, with a view to enhance energy capacities and ensuring access to energy for all.
- Encourage private sector participation in the development of country's energy sector.
- Modernize transit, transport, customs and other border facilities by utilizing ICTs.
- Develop a national broadband policy to improve access to international high-capacity fiber-optic cables and high bandwidth networks.
- Invest in ICT infrastructure and development of ICT skills, address the rural-urban divide and integrate ICTs in all relevant areas for competitiveness enhancement.
- Promote digital bridges for affordable broadband access and improvement of telecommunications and related services.
- Create appropriate enabling environment including the necessary policies, legal and regulatory framework to support ICT development.
- Enhance their participation in e-commerce by adopting policies that facilitate the development of the necessary e-commerce infrastructure.

Things Development Partners Need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs' energy and ICT sector development, promote energy-efficiency investment and facilitate green economic transformation.
- Provide financial and technical support to LLDCs to develop and implement energy projects, including to take full advantage of climate funding for energy.
- Support efforts to develop national broadband policy and necessary infrastructure in LLDCs.
- Provide capacity-building measures in modern and affordable ICTs.
- Support efforts of transit developing countries to facilitate LLDCs' access to ICTs, and transfer of skills, knowledge and technology.

Photo: Zambia. Patrick Bentley/SolarAid, Flickr

Priority

3

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TRADE FACILITATION

(A) INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Things to **Know**

- Participation of LLDCs in international trade depends on transiting through other countries. Additional border crossings and long distances from major markets, coupled with cumbersome transit procedures and inadequate infrastructure increase the total expenses for transport and other transaction costs.
- The high trade costs affect the competitiveness of the LLDCs in international trade as well as their ability to produce and purchase goods at low cost and limit their ability to attract investment.
- LLDCs continue to be marginalized from global markets; their share in global merchandise exports remained below 1% in 2018.
- LLDCs' export structure is dominated by limited number of products - mostly low-value raw agricultural products and mineral resources.
- LLDCs are yet to fully participate in global and regional value chains which account for a rising share of international trade.
- Services are enablers of effective participation in international trade; they can enhance LLDCs' productivity, reduce the cost of doing business and promote job creation.
- South-South trade is an opportunity for other developing countries to become key destinations for LLDC products, as well as sources of FDI.

Specific **Objectives**

- Increase LLDCs' participation in global trade, with a focus on substantially increasing exports.
- Increase the value added and manufactured component of LLDCs' exports to promote market and product diversification.
- Strengthen economic and financial ties between LLDCs and countries in their region to deepen intraregional trade.
- Invite Member States to consider needs and challenges of LLDCs in international trade negotiations.

The background of the slide is a photograph of a busy outdoor market. In the foreground, a woman is seen from the side, wearing a white headscarf and a patterned headband. She is looking down at something in her hands. To her left, another person is partially visible, wearing a colorful patterned garment. In the upper left corner, there is a blue bowl filled with green and yellow fruits. The overall scene is vibrant and depicts a typical market environment in a developing region.

Things LLDCs Need to **Do**

- Develop national trade strategy and integrate trade policies into national development strategies.
- Promote conducive environment for integration of national firms into regional and global value chains; and support national firms, especially SMEs, to participate in international trade.
- Fully leverage bilateral and regional preferential trading arrangements.
- Strengthen the services sector and make efforts to integrate into electronic commerce (e-commerce), including through putting in place the necessary legal framework and developing national e-commerce strategies.

Things Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Promote investment in LLDCs that would boost their productive and trading capacities and foster participation in regional trade arrangements.
- Improve market access for LLDC products without arbitrary or non-tariff barriers.
- Together with LLDCs, conduct studies on logistical costs and logistical competitiveness.

Things Development Partners Need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs to diversify their exports, integrate into value chains and effectively participate in trade negotiations, including by working with LLDCs to identify specific sectors and sub-sectors with export potential and implement targeted policies to promote their development.
- Enhance market access for LLDCs' products especially by addressing tariff peaks and escalations as well as nontariff barriers imposed on manufactured goods from LLDCs.
- Support strengthening of LLDC's institutions that foster trade and competitiveness, enhance private-public dialogue and capacity development.
- Offer technical assistance and capacity-building to support LLDCs' WTO accession, meet their commitments and integrate into the multilateral trading system.

Priority

3

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND TRADE FACILITATION

(B) TRADE FACILITATION

Things to **Know**

- Cumbersome customs procedures and documentation requirements, weak institutions and limited human capacities continue to make trade costs for LLDCs high.
- Streamlining customs and transit procedures and formalities, and transparent and efficient management of border agencies can have a concrete impact on reducing cost and stimulating competitive trade for LLDCs.
- Addressing high trade costs faced by LLDCs is fundamental to their integration into global trade and global value chains.
- The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) contains provisions for expedited movements, release and clearance of goods across borders, including goods in transit and it is expected to reduce trade costs by up to 17%.
- As of October 2019, 25 of the 26 LLDCs that are WTO members ratified the TFA, while 28 of the transit developing countries ratified the Agreement during the review period.
- LLDCs have adopted a wide range of measures at simplifying trade regulations, documents and procedures, with support from their development partners and transit countries.

Specific **Objectives**

- Simplify and streamline border crossing procedures so as to reduce port and border delays.
- Improve transit facilities and their efficiency with the aim of reducing transaction costs
- Ensure that all transit regulations, formalities and procedures for traffic in transit are published and updated in accordance with WTO's Agreement on Trade Facilitation.

Things LLDCs Need to **Do**

- Consider rapid and full implementation of the TFA, including best endeavour provisions to realize greater impact in addressing trade costs.
- Notify TFA Category C measures to the WTO, as well as their implementation plans, to facilitate access to available assistance.
- Establish and/or strengthen national committees on trade facilitation.
- Continue implementing and/or scaling up trade facilitation initiatives such as integrated border management systems, one-stop border posts, joint processing of legal and regulatory requirements with transit countries, modernization of border posts and customs services, etc.
- Utilize trade facilitation tools developed by international organizations to strengthen national capacity.
- Develop policies and regulations to promote PPPs and facilitate involvement of private sector in trade facilitation initiatives.

Things Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs in trade facilitation initiatives, including the implementation of WTO TFA.
- Fully implement the WTO TFA which is fundamental to reducing the high trade costs faced by LLDCs.
- Harmonize, simplify and standardize rules, requirements and procedures; enhance collaboration among customs and border-crossing agencies; improve transparency; establish one-stop border posts, joint customs controls and integrated border management at borders with LLDCs.
- Share best practices in customs, border and corridor management and in implementation of trade facilitation policies.
- Utilize available trade facilitation tools to build national capacity and promote secure and reliable transport across borders.

Things Development Partners Need to **Do**

- Support LLDCs in trade facilitation efforts and simplification and harmonization of import, export and customs procedures.
- Enhance support to LLDCs to implement trade facilitation reforms, including the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- Encourage sharing of experiences and best trade facilitation practices to create environment that allows for multi-country customs transit guarantee regimes.
- Support capacity-building, including training programmes, in the areas of customs, border clearance and transport.
- Enhance Aid for Trade to LLDCs, including regional Aid for Trade.

Priority

4

REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION

Things to **Know**

- LLDCs have been increasingly participating in bilateral and regional trade, transport, transit and investment agreements, as well as adopting common regional programmes and policies on trade, transport and border-crossing procedures.
- Between end of 2014 and April 2019, 9 LLDCs have entered into new regional trade agreements, based on notifications to WTO of physical regional trade agreements.
- The participation of LLDCs in regional trade agreements has increased in all regions.
- The African Continental Free Trade Area entered into force in May 2019 and is expected to facilitate integration of LLDCs into regional trade and value chains and expand their trade capabilities.
- Regional integration and policies provide an opportunity for LLDCs to improve transit transport connectivity, lower transport costs, increase FDI and foster intra-regional trade.
- There is need to promote meaningful regional integration to encompass cooperation among countries in a broader range of areas that go beyond trade and trade facilitation, such as investment, research and development, and policies aimed at accelerating regional industrial development and regional connectivity.

Photo: Burundi. Dave Proffer, Flickr

Things LLDCs & Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Prioritize regional integration by strengthening regional trade, transport, communication and energy networks.
- Develop coherent regional infrastructure and trade facilitation measures and promote harmonization of regional policies to strengthen regional synergy, competitiveness and regional value chains.
- Strengthen participation in bilateral and regional integration frameworks and increase cooperation with neighbouring states in areas such as tourism and transit.
- Consider greater focus on the quality, rather than the quantity, of regional integration agreements, and strengthen cooperation beyond trade, including on development of joint projects in infrastructure, transport, research and development and industrial development.

Things Development Partners Need to **Do**

- Support efforts made by LLDCs and their transit partners to deepen regional integration, through implementation of key regional transport projects and regional transport agreements.
- Encourage and assist LLDCs through building the necessary skills that would enable them to leverage the opportunities provided by the regional initiatives.
- Support ongoing regional integration processes involving LLDCs.
- Promote greater sharing of experiences and best practices in promoting regional integration between regions and sub-regions.

Priority

5

STRUCTURAL ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Things to **Know**

- Increased value addition and economic diversification are key for structural economic transformation of LLDCs, coupled with institutional and human capacity-building.
- For majority of LLDCs, exports are limited to a small number of products; 26 out of the 32 LLDCs are commodities-dependent, meaning that commodities account for more than 60% of their exports.
- The value-added contribution of the manufacturing sector in LLDCs remains low. One of the main challenges for LLDCs is to reverse the de-industrialization trend.
- Technology intensity in LLDCs is low and R&D expenditures in LLDCs were only 0.24% of their GDP in 2016. New technologies and the digital economy present opportunities for LLDCs.
- Conducive national policies, skills building, international support and foreign direct investment (FDI) are necessary to facilitate access to science, technology and innovation.
- The private sector is a key driving force in bringing about structural economic transformation, as well as being involved in activities related to transit and trade facilitation, a source of tax revenue, domestic investment and partner for FDI.
- LLDCs' continued high vulnerability to the negative impacts of climate change, which are exacerbating drought, desertification and land degradation, is of serious concern.

Specific **Objectives**

- Increase value addition in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors, with the aim of achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- Increase economic and export diversification.
- Promote service-based growth, including from tourism.
- Encourage the inflow of foreign direct investment in high-value added sectors.

Things LLDCs & Transit Countries Need to **Do**

- Develop and implement a structural transformation strategy and targeted industrial policies, supportive of business activity and strengthening of private sector.
- Focus on higher value-added products, higher productivity sectors and value addition and promote higher productivity, with overall objective of building productive capacities.
- Identify specific sectors with potential for export promotion, diversification and value-addition and provide targeted incentives.
- Utilize new and existing technologies in the production of manufactured and agricultural products to add value and connect into higher ends of regional and global value chains and explore opportunities provided by e-commerce and digital economy.
- Seek more diversified FDI through creation of conducive environment.
- Modernize the services sector by strengthening links between and among financial intermediaries, creative industries and business, and legal and technical services.
- Create industrial clusters, such as export-processing zones and regional centres of excellence.
- Prioritize private sector development, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, including through enabling regulations and policies, as well as specific grants, finance and enhanced access to credit and training and skillsbuilding.
- Ratify and utilize the International Think Tank for LLDCs in sharing experiences, know-how, research and other resources on issues related to LLDCs.
- Prepare and implement national climate change mitigation and resilience policies, with the support of international community.

Things Development Partners need to **Do**

- Support efforts by LLDCs to improve their productive capacities, create economic diversification and increase value addition.
- Contribute to LLDCs' efforts to access innovative technologies, scientific knowledge, technical know-how, and best practices.
- Higher investments from the international community into research and development in LLDCs are needed.
- Support LLDCs in building institutional and human capacities aimed at attracting FDI in high-value added sectors and responsible investment.
- Support LLDCs in building resilience, developing capacity to respond to external shocks, the redoubling of efforts to address climate change and increasing investments in climate change adaptation and mitigation and DDR, including disaster preparedness, early warning and early action.

Things to **Know**

- The development and progress of any country is the primary responsibility of that country itself.
- LLDCs have made efforts to mobilize domestic resources for development of infrastructure and transit facilities, as well as for overall socioeconomic development. However, lack of adequate financial resources and capacity limitations constrain LLDCs in achieving sustained growth and sustainable development.
- Development partners and multilateral organizations have a crucial role to play in successful implementation of the VPoA and in supporting the efforts of LLDCs to achieve sustainable development and eradication of poverty.
- ODA flows remain a major source of external financing for many LLDCs. ODA flows to LLDCs as a group increased in real terms from US\$24 billion in 2014 to \$28 billion in 2017 and represent 17% of total ODA flows to developing countries.
- Aid for trade plays a key role in assisting capacity-building for LLDCs on the formulation of trade policies, implementation of trade facilitation measures, development of trade-related infrastructure, and linking them to global and regional value chains.
- South-South and triangular cooperation are vital to LLDCs, especially in the areas of productive capacity-building, sharing of best practices, financial and technical assistance and technology transfer and in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, science and technology, trade, investment and transit transport cooperation.
- The private sector can contribute to build and strengthen LLDCs' productive capacity, export growth, technology transfer, diffusion of productive know-how and skill, employment generation, infrastructure development and opening up of new markets for high-value added products and services.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to LLDCs continued to decline from an all-time high of \$36.3 billion in 2011 to \$22.7 billion in 2017.
- External inflows, including ODA and FDI, are highly concentrated in a few LLDCs.

Things to Do

- Strengthen partnerships for the accelerated implementation of the VPoA.
- Existing ODA commitments need to be fulfilled and efforts should be made to enhance ODA to LLDCs, while development assistance should align with LLDC priorities.
- Development partners should continue to increase their support for the Aid for Trade initiative.
- Developing countries should provide support for the effective implementation of the VPoA within the framework of South-South Cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation.
- Organizations and bodies of the United Nation system, relevant international organizations, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and other relevant regional and sub-regional organizations are requested to provide technical assistance and capacity-building for the implementation of the VPoA.
- Multilateral and regional development banks should provide dedicated infrastructure funding for the LLDCs.
- LLDCs should adopt policies and measures to attract more FDI and more diversified FDI, with the support of development partners.
- Other forms of international development cooperation, public-private partnerships and other innovative development financing approaches should be utilized.

Implementation

FOLLOW-UP, AND REVIEW

Things to **Know**

- The implementation, follow-up and review of VPoA is being undertaken at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels.
- Follow-up and review is a continuous process aimed at reinforcing partnerships and mutual accountability at all levels and by all actors.
- UN-OHRLLS ensures coordinated follow-up, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the VPoA, along with advocacy efforts.
- UN-OHRLLS has developed, in the context of the inter-agency consultative group on VPoA, a set of indicators for measuring progress in the implementation of VPoA in LLDCs.
- The Comprehensive High-Level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, 5-6 December 2019, New York.

Things to **Do** at National Level

- Continue to mainstream VPoA into national and sectoral development strategies.
- LLDCs and transit developing countries to establish national coordination mechanisms, where appropriate.
- Involve all relevant stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring, review and reporting.

Things to **Do** at Regional Level

- Undertake monitoring and review through existing intergovernmental processes.
- Regional and sub-regional organizations to mainstream the implementation of the VPoA into their relevant programmes, in coordination with UN-OHRLLS, within their existing mandates.
- Relevant regional and sub-regional organizations and the private sector to participate effectively in relevant sessions of the regional commissions.

Things to **Do** at the Global Level

- The UN General Assembly to continue undertaking annual reviews of the implementation of the VPoA through reports of the Secretary-General.
- The Governing bodies of organizations in the UN system to mainstream the VPoA into their programme of work.
- Forge greater synergies between the VPoA and other global processes, including in the context of the follow-up processes of the 2030 Agenda.
- Provide continued and enhanced investment and technical assistance to LLDCs aimed at strengthening their statistical capacity for the collection and analysis of data, in order to produce reliable and frequent statistics to monitor the implementation of the VPoA.

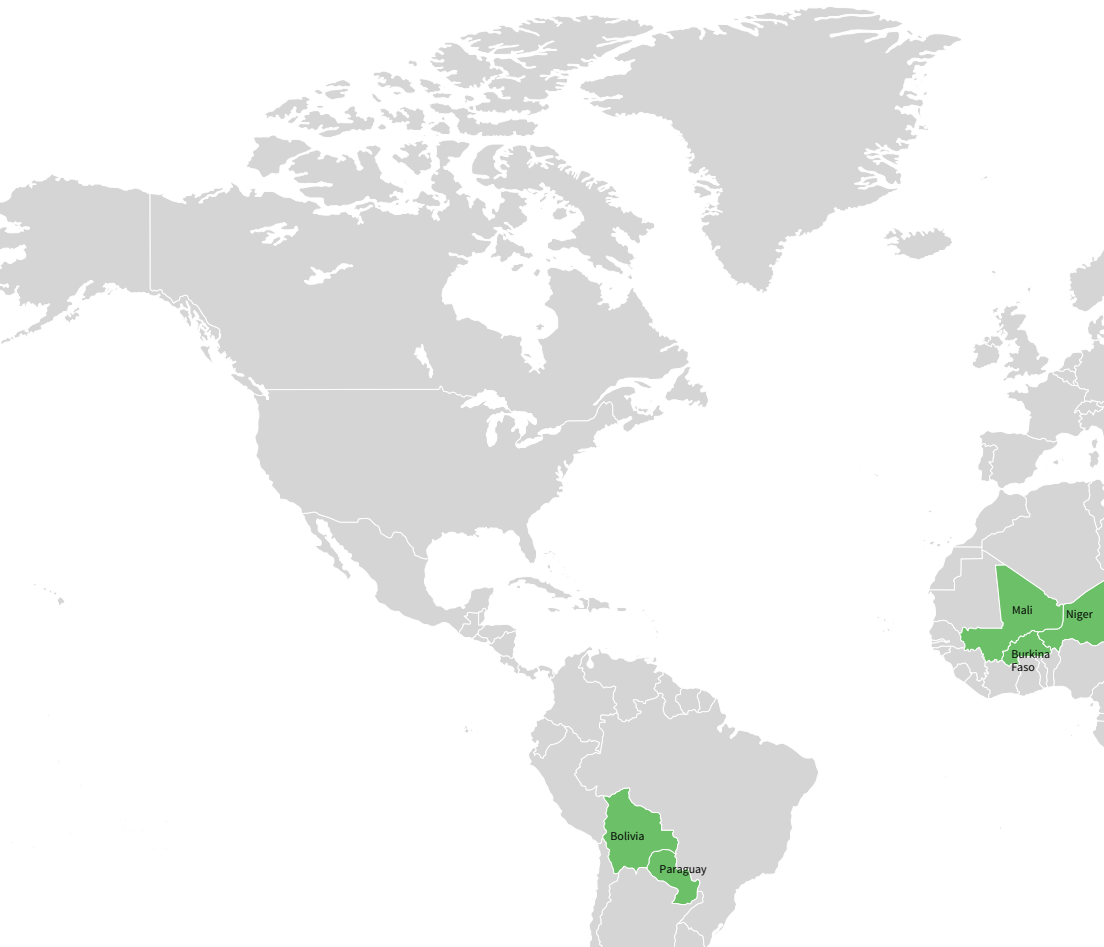
For selected recommended reading please go to:

www.unohrrls.org/about-llcs/publications



Photo: People's Republic of China. Asian Development Bank, Flickr

The World's 32 Landlocked Developing Countries

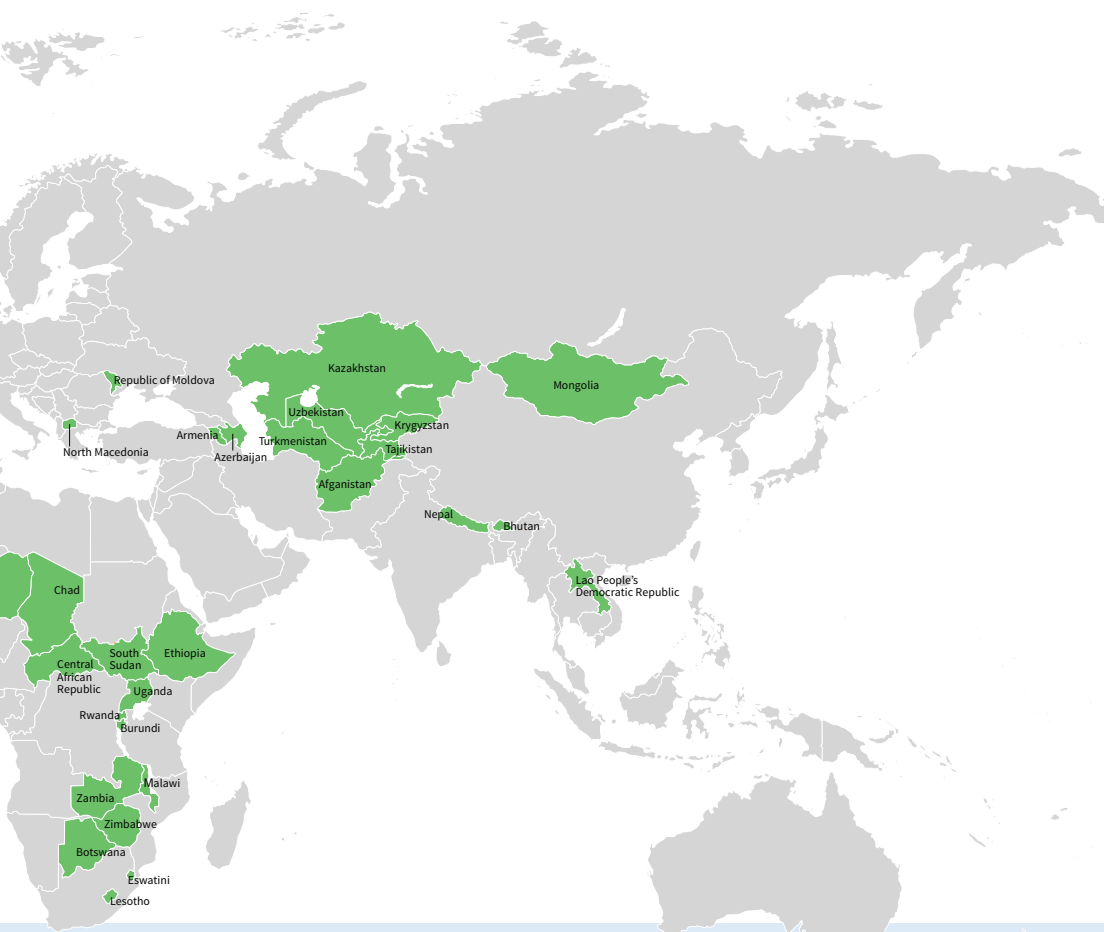


SOUTH AMERICA

Bolivia
(Plurinational State of)
Paraguay

AFRICA

Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Central African Republic
Chad
Eswatini
Ethiopia
Lesotho
Malawi
Mali
Niger
Rwanda
South Sudan
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe



EUROPE

Armenia
Azerbaijan
North Macedonia
Republic of Moldova

ASIA

Afghanistan
Bhutan
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Lao People's
Democratic Republic

Mongolia
Nepal
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



UN-OHRLLS

supporting

Least Developed Countries

Landlocked Developing Countries

Small Island Developing States