

Greater trade capacity for poorer countries

Launched in 2009, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is now fully operational thanks to the funding received from 23 countries that have invested in the EIF Trust Fund.

The EIF aims at enabling least developed countries (LDCs) to build and strengthen their trade capacities, better integrate trade in their national development strategies and use trade as a tool for growth and poverty reduction. LDCs have access to project funding from the EIF Trust Fund, which has now reached USD100 million.

"In July 2009, the EIF took off. Today it has reached the cruising altitude. In the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis and following setbacks to promptly achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the EIF has become more important than ever", said Ambassador Maruping of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Chair of the EIF Board.

Today, the EIF Steering Committee, chaired by Ambassador Himanen of Finland, held its first meeting to receive the report outlining how the EIF has become operational. This is a clear signal of the readiness by the EIF stakeholders to implement the programme.

Since July 2009, 20 projects have been approved for implementation with another 30 to 40 expected to be approved this year.

"For the LDCs, the enhancement of the IF is probably the single most tangible outcome that the global Aid for Trade initiative has produced so far", commented Ambassador Himanen.

"Whilst we appreciate the financing received so far, it still remains important that Donors progressively work towards mainstreaming the EIF and Aid for Trade into their aid strategies and scaling up the provision of funding, in-country and through the EIF Trust Fund, to meet the demand. LDCs must take up the challenge and also step up efforts in showing results with impact", said Ms Tembo, EIF Executive Director.

EIF Board Members:

Chair: Ambassador Dr. Mothae A. Maruping (Kingdom of Lesotho)

Mali:	Ms Fanta Karabenta
Nepal:	Mr Chandra Kumar Ghimire
Uganda:	Mr Peter Elyetu Elimu
EU:	Mr Jan Ten Bloemendal
UK:	Ms Fiona Shera
Norway:	Ms Ingrid Glad
IMF:	Mr Brad McDonald
ITC:	Mr Francesco Geoffroy
UNCTAD:	Ms Masoumeh Sahami
UNDP:	Mr Douglas Gardner / Mr David Luke
World Bank:	Mr Richard Newfarmer
WTO:	Ms Annet Blank
UNIDO:	Mr Bernardo Calzadilla (Observer)
IF Executive Secretariat:	Ms Dorothy Tembo (Executive Director)
Trust Fund Manager:	Mr Bernhard Schlachter (UNOPS, Director Switzerland Operations Center)