

# E-commerce and digital economy technical assistance

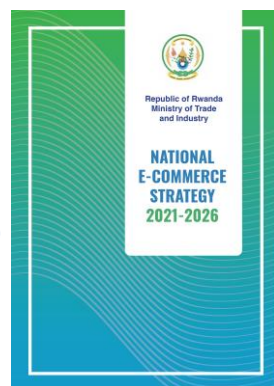
**Incheon Businesses and Law Forum 12 September 2023**

Dominic Leong

Programme Manager, Digital Economy Capacity Building Section, E-commerce and Digital Economy Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

# UNCTAD offers technical assistance to countries

- eTrade Readiness Assessments
- National e-commerce strategies
- E-commerce and law reform
- Measuring e-commerce and the digital economy
- Empowering women digital entrepreneurs





# 35 partners sharing a common vision

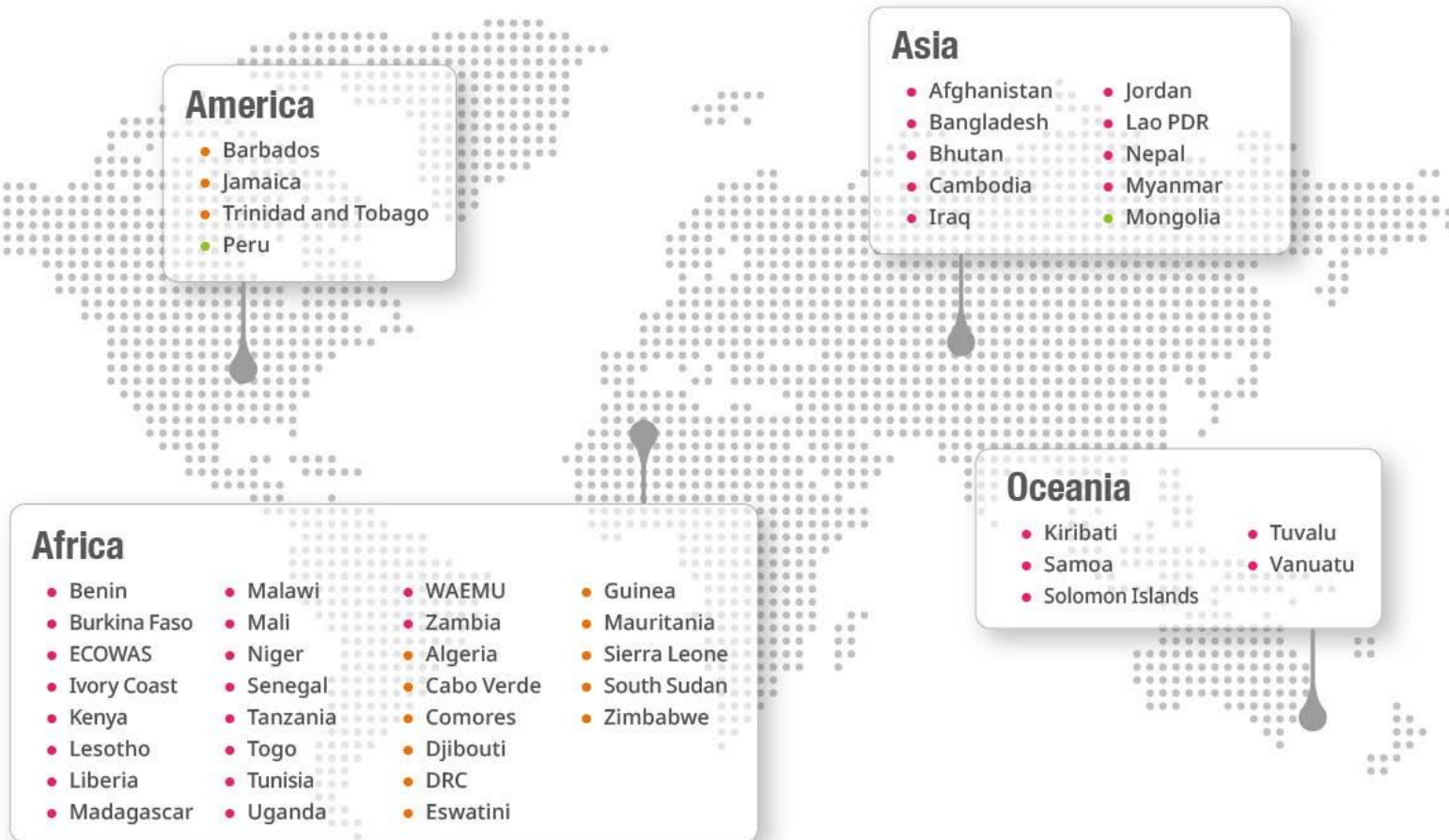




# eTrade Readiness Assessments

## UNCTAD eTrade Readiness Assessment status

- as June 2022



- Ongoing:
  - ECOWAS (funded by the Netherlands)
  - Mongolia (co-funded by the Republic of Korea and the EBRD)
- Starting:
  - Peru (funded by SECO)
  - Trinidad and Tobago (self-funded)
- Upcoming:
  - Mauritania (with GIZ)
  - Algeria (with GIZ)
- Implementation Support Mechanism: Action Plans
- Enhanced collaboration with UNRCOs

32 Finalized

2 In Progress

14 Requested







# E-commerce Strategies (ECS) / Action Plans (AP)

## UNCTAD E-commerce Strategy status

- as May 2021



### ➤ Ongoing:

- ECOWAS ECS (funded by the Netherlands)
- Kenya ECS (with GIZ)
- Jordan AP (with GIZ)
- Tunisia AP (with GIZ)
- Solomon Islands ECS (as part of the PDEP, with financial support from Australia)

### ➤ Upcoming:

- Trinidad and Tobago ECS (self-funded)
- Malawi AP (funded by the Netherlands)

6 Finalized

3 In Progress

9 Requested



UNITED NATIONS  
UNCTAD

# UNCTAD's E-commerce and Law Reform work

## Context

For inclusive e-commerce to happen and spur development gains, trust is required by both buyers and sellers of online goods and services.

## Objective

Since 2002, this work has helped countries develop the most appropriate legal, institutional and policy frameworks to build confidence in e-commerce.

## 4 Main Activities



Regional and national capacity-building workshops



Preparation and revision of e-commerce laws (domestic and regional) aligned with international and regional instruments.



Regional Cyberlaw reviews and thematic studies (taxation of e-commerce study, Pacific cyberlaw review)



UNCTAD Global Cyberlaw Tracker. The first ever global mapping of cyberlaws which tracks the state of e-commerce legislation adoption in the 194 UNCTAD member States.

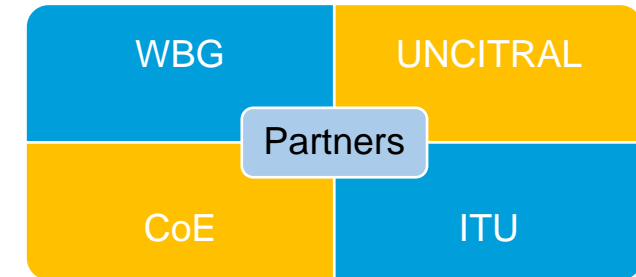
# UNCTAD's Capacity-building Courses

## Legal Aspects of e-commerce (LAEC)

- Modules: Content regulation, Consumer Protection, E-transaction, cybercrime, Securing e-commerce, E-payments & Taxation, Privacy Online, Trade & e-commerce, Regulating e-commerce
- Next Course: SIDS November 2023

## Digital identity for trade and development (DITD)

- Modules: Fundamental Concepts of Digital Identity, Data Protection, DI Usage, Governance, DI Technology Solutions & Risks
- Completed course for SIDS early 2023



# UNCTAD's Capacity-building training workshops

## Main Activities:

- **Implementation support for partner countries:**
  - Deliver capacity-building training workshops (ASEAN, EAC, ECOWAS, LAC)
  - Provide technical support with preparing and enacting legal frameworks (ASEAN, EAC, Pacific, SIDS)
  - Develop recommendations for further harmonization of legislation



Workshop on digital identity for trade and development, ASEAN, 2019



Workshop on Cyberlaw harmonization in the EAC, 2008



# Pacific Cyber Law Review: Overview

Table IV.1. Status of legislation in key areas related to the digital economy, Pacific SIDS, 2022

Jurisdiction	E-transactions / e-signatures	Consumer protection*	Data protection and privacy	Cybercrime and security	Intellectual property and copyright	Online content regulation*	Domain names*	Online dispute resolution	Digital ID	E-payment	Taxation
Cook Islands	None	Partial	None	None	Partial	None	Comprehensive	None	None	None	None
Federated States of Micronesia	None	Partial	None	None	Partial	None	None	None	None	None	None
Fiji	Comprehensive	None	None	Comprehensive	Partial	Comprehensive	None	None	None	None	None
French Polynesia	None	None	None	None	Unknown	None	None	None	None	None	None
Kiribati	None	Partial	None	None	Partial	None	None	None	None	None	None
Marshall Islands	None	Partial	None	None	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	Partial	None
Nauru	None	None	None	Comprehensive	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	None	None
New Caledonia	Unknown	Unknown	None	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Niue	None	None	None	None	Partial	None	Partial	None	None	None	None
Palau	None	Partial	None	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	None	Partial	None
Papua New Guinea	Comprehensive	None	None	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Partial	None	None	None	Partial	None
Samoa	Comprehensive	Partial	None	Partial	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	None	None
Solomon Islands	None	None	None	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	None	None	None
Tonga	None	Partial	None	Partial	Partial	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	None	None	None	None
Tuvalu	None	None	None	Partial	Partial	Partial	Comprehensive	None	None	None	None
Vanuatu	Comprehensive	None	None	Partial	Partial	Partial	None	None	None	None	None

# UNCTAD's Global Cyberlaw Tracker

**Objective:** Helps identify legislative gaps so that the UN and other partners can work with governments to build the kind of legal environment ensures online business is secure.

**Main Activity: Tracker update:** Database updated every 2 years (**next update 2023**) to track the state of e-commerce legislation in the 194 UNCTAD MS in the field of

- e-transactions
- consumer protection
- data protection/privacy and
- cybercrime adoption

**The Pacific Digital Economy Programme supports the development of inclusive digital economies.**

## UNCTAD support



**Research and analysis**

- Digital Economy Report: Pacific Edition
- E-commerce legislation review



**Capacity building**

- Regional trainings:
  - ✓ Measuring the digital economy
  - ✓ E-commerce and law reform
  - ✓ Digital ID
- eTrade for Women



**Technical assistance**

- National e-commerce strategies
- Measuring e-commerce and the digital economy



Funded by  
the European Union

Supported by:



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM



Pacific  
E-commerce  
Initiative



# Thank you!





# Common policy challenges faced by developing countries

Policy areas	Main challenges
<b>E-commerce readiness assessment and strategy formulation</b>	Limited awareness of e-commerce relevance among policy and law makers, consumers, and businesses.  Lack of statistical data on electronic commerce and the digital economy. Persistent barriers for women and youth to engage in e-commerce, preventing the leveling of playing fields through increased inclusion.
<b>ICT infrastructure and services</b>	Limited Internet access in rural/ remote areas and costly access to fixed and mobile-broadband Internet.
<b>Trade logistics and trade facilitation</b>	Inadequate facilities for physical delivery of online purchases.
<b>Payment solutions</b>	Overreliance on cash-based transactions, plus low access to and limited experience with online payments and the use of credit cards.
<b>Legal and regulatory frameworks</b>	Weak legal and regulatory frameworks, including protection of consumers online.
<b>E-commerce skills development</b>	Inappropriate education for the digital economy and lack of business development skills and adequate e-commerce skills for MSMEs.
<b>Access to financing</b>	Unsuitable financial mechanisms for start-up enterprises to engage in e-commerce.

# Challenges are cross-cutting and relate to weak e-commerce governance



... compounded by sometimes fragmented interventions by development partners in digital-related initiatives, leading to sub-optimal results

# Emerging good implementation practices

- ✓ **Strong political leadership** at the Government level exercised by a championing ministry
- ✓ Carry out **legal and regulatory gap analysis** for e-commerce, adopt baseline e-commerce legislation, and update relevant laws and regulations.
- ✓ **Stakeholder mobilization and coordination** key to develop national e-commerce strategies/policies
- ✓ **Identification of priorities necessary** for a robust resource mobilization strategy and alignment of development partners' interventions

# Country focus: Tuvalu



- The Government has put in place a system to track progress in eT Ready implementation, identify gaps and coordinate resources mobilization, through the establishment of **Tuvalu's National e-Commerce Committee**, which serves as policy coordination body.
- The Government has **leveraged different types of support from eTrade for all development partners:**
  - Assistance to a national trade development strategy (EIF, UNESCAP).
  - National e-commerce strategy development (PIFS).
  - Customs automation (UNCTAD).
  - Legal reform (EIF, UNCITRAL, UNCTAD)
- Tuvalu has acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (2005) (the “Electronic Communications Convention”) – it will enter into force in June 2023.



## Concluding messages

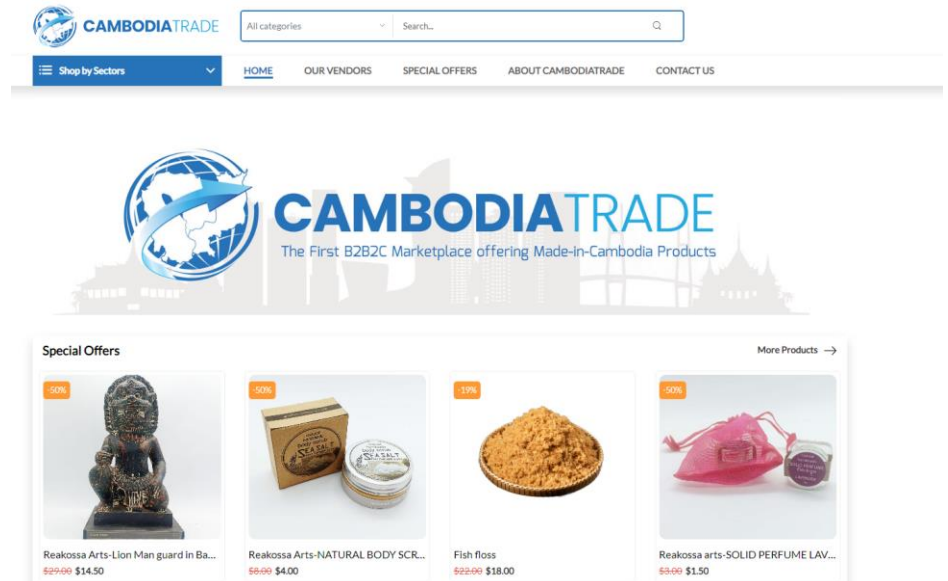
- **Capacity-building and multi-stakeholder cooperation** remain a top priority to enhancing e-commerce readiness.
- Given the cross-cutting nature of e-commerce and gaps, **cooperation between development partners** and the beneficiary countries is critical for effective implementation
- Improved **inter-ministerial coordination** and **public-private sector cooperation** are also needed – for the benefit of all development partners.
- **Resource mobilization from development partners** for capacity-building to ensure participation in the negotiations and implementation needs to be scaled up.

# Thank you!



# Country focus: Cambodia

- **National E-commerce Strategy launched in 2020.** Led by Ministry of Commerce, with strong involvement by the private sector.
- **Partnerships:** EIF and UNDP working towards implementing the strategy's recommendations through the "Go4eCam" project
- **A CambodiaTrade online marketplace** launched in 2022.
- **Digital Economy and Society Policy Framework 2021-2035** sets a long-term vision to build a vibrant digital economy.
- Country has made strides in digital payments with a **blockchain-based central bank digital currency** and a package of **new laws and regulations aimed at governing e-commerce**





# eTrade for Women

## 2022-2023 Advocates



**Lennise Ng**

South-East Asia

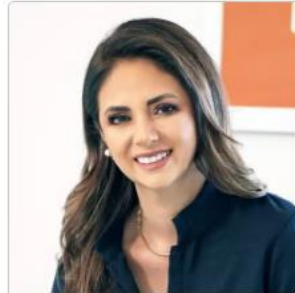
**DROPEE**  
Co-founder and CEO  
Malaysia



**Damilola Olokesusi**

English-Speaking Africa

**SHUTTLERS**  
Co-founder and CEO  
Nigeria



**Pierangela Sierra**

Latin America

**TIPTI**  
Co-Founder & CEO  
Ecuador



**Birame Sock**

Francophone Africa

**KWELY**  
Founder  
Senegal



**Mona Ataya**

Arab Region

**MUMZWORLD**  
Founder & CEO  
United Arab Emirates

**TARGET 5>B**



**PROMOTE  
EMPOWERMENT OF  
WOMEN THROUGH  
TECHNOLOGY**

The **eTrade for women initiative** works towards:

- Profiling women **leaders** in e-commerce in developing countries
- **Inspiring** new women digital entrepreneurs
- Championing **good practices** to foster more inclusiveness in digital policy making
- Leverage **communities** of around **200** like-minded women digital entrepreneurs to impact local ecosystems in **40** developing countries
- Giving women a **stronger voice** in policy processes at national and international levels

The initiative is organized around **5 Advocates** - digital champions in their respective regions- and supported by eTrade for all partners.

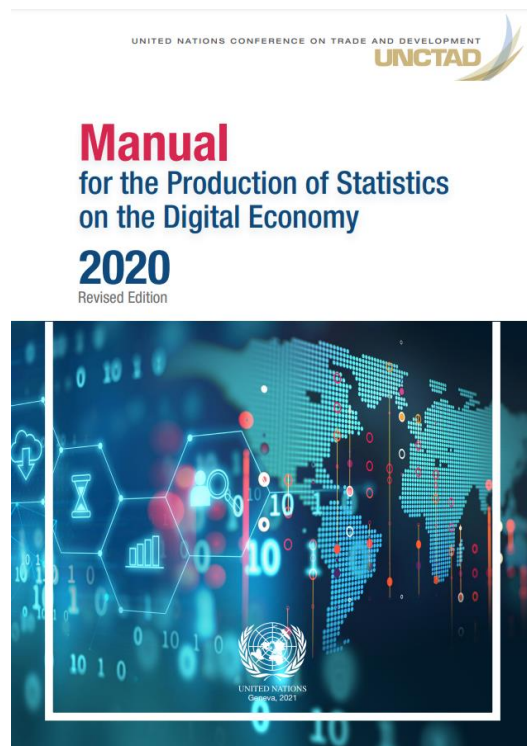
*“The community is already helping me by providing trainings that are answers to my current needs. I have access to a network with women from different countries, to partnerships, and I can now offer my services to a bigger audience.”*

Armelle Koffi, Founder and Project Engineer, ORA Technologies et Multimedia Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire





# Measuring e-commerce and the digital economy



**Context:** The lack of data related to the size and nature of the digital economy constitutes significant gap in the policy makers' toolkit.

**Objective:** to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to produce better, more reliable and internationally comparable statistics on

- ICT use by enterprises
- The size and composition of the ICT sector
- E-commerce and digital trade

**Main activities:**

- **Training course** based on the *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Digital Economy 2020* (online)
- **Technical assistance** on measuring e-commerce, digital trade and ICT use by enterprises
- **Technical assistance** on surveys of international trade in digitally delivered services
- **Methodological development:** Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade, Measuring Value of E-commerce

27 people from 13 Pacific countries and areas trained in 2022