

IMPACT AT THE AGENCY LEVEL

ITC'S IMPACT SURVEY

DECEMBER 2014

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Acronyms

AfT	Aid for Trade
CRM	Client Relationship Management
DD	Difference-in-Differences
ITC	International Trade Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TSI	Trade Support Institution
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

Context

The scrutiny on impact assessments in the international development community has intensified in recent times; this is especially so following the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. Within the Aid for Trade (AfT) space, a biennial Global Review to monitor the progress of the initiative and to ensure that the needs of recipient countries are being met was first held in 2007. More recently, the High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation was held in Mexico at the beginning of 2014. These and other initiatives all speak towards a growing consensus to strengthen the evidence base of AfT interventions and move from anecdotal towards systematic evidence of impact.

The general lack of liquidity in a post financial crisis world has been well documented across all sectors – public and private. This is acutely apparent in the development community. Domestic budgets are under pressure and as such there is a renewed urgency to prioritize those projects demonstrating the greatest impact on growth and development objectives. Improved insight into development results and impact is therefore paramount.

Many stakeholders, including donors, have made significant progress in the field of impact evaluation, although as yet there is no consensus on how to assess the impact of trade-related technical assistance at an agency level. Identifying an organization's global impact across multiple countries, sectors, and intervention types is an arduous challenge. Resource constraints around time and budget are obvious, but the most difficult challenge remains methodologically designing an attribution analysis. Linking a specific project/programme to exact socio-economic outcomes, with any degree of certainty, is the key challenge for impact assessment. This is especially so in the international trade arena where connections across the results (or impact) chain depend on a great many factors beyond the reach of one specific project or programme.¹

Against these challenges, ITC piloted an agency wide impact study of selected projects in 2013. This was the first time that ITC focused on the agency level of analysis for results and impact. The objective was to demonstrate ITC's impact and provide insights to impact evaluations at programme/project level. A client survey on impact was used to understand the client's perceptions on ITC's results in strengthening the international competitiveness of enterprises – ITC's third strategic objective. A total of 23 projects were identified that were expected to have an impact in 2013, amounting to over one thousand direct beneficiary enterprises. The survey focused on indicators related to exports, job creation and environmental sustainability.

The purpose of this document is to consider impact evaluation methods in ITC's operational context, by describing where we are in terms of assessing impact, what has been done and where we would like to go in the future. The first section describes the general role of impact evaluation and the technical difficulties at the agency level. The second section describes the building blocks we have begun constructing in this pilot phase of agency level impact analysis. The third section focuses on the results of this study; and the fourth on the lessons learned and recommendations. The paper concludes with an overview of the dimensions we will explore in the future and a brief discussion around the architecture that will be needed towards demonstrating credible results and impact of ITC.

¹ As cited by Darcy and Hofmann (2003: 23) "assessing impact at the organizational level raises major difficulties around the question of aggregation and the comparability of data from different contexts".

1. What is Impact Evaluation?²

1.1. Terminology

In the development aid context, a widely used definition of impact is that articulated by the OECD-DAC Glossary (2002) – see Box 1, where impact is defined as “the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended”. While there is no specific definition of ‘impact evaluation’ in the Glossary, the OECD defines it as “an assessment of how the intervention being evaluated affects outcomes, whether these effects are intended or unintended. The proper analysis of impact requires a counterfactual of what those outcomes would have been in the absence of the intervention”.

Box 1. Key Terms to Understand Impact Evaluation³

Term	Definition
Attribution	Ascribes a causal link between an observed (or expected) change and a specific intervention.
Contribution	Describes the intervention as one of many contributory causes to the outcome, based on a results chain or theory of change.
Counterfactual	The situation or condition which hypothetically may prevail for individuals, organizations, or groups were there no development intervention i.e. <i>with</i> versus <i>without</i> comparison.
Effect	The intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.
Evaluability	Extent to which an activity or a program can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion.
Evaluation	The systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
Monitoring	A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.
Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention’s outputs.
Outputs	The products, goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Performance	The degree to which a development intervention or development partner operates according to specific criteria/standards/guideline, or achieves results in accordance with stated goals or plans.
Results	The output, outcome or impact of a development intervention.
Results chain	The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives – beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, culminating in outcomes, impacts and feedback.
Triangulation	The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to verify and substantiate an assessment.

These definitions have a number of key aspects. Firstly, impact is about cause-and-effect and specifically addresses issues of *attribution* and thus *contribution*. These attribution-based definitions do not however require that effects be solely produced by the intervention under evaluation. The existence of other causes is incorporated into this definition so that the intervention will have contributed to the demonstrated effect –

² The conceptual framework in this section draws heavily on the Network of Networks for Impact Evaluation (NONIE), World Bank Impact Evaluation in Practice and UNEG Impact Evaluation Guidance Document 2013. The terms *impact evaluation* and *impact assessment* are often used interchangeably, as will be apparent in this document.

³ Source: OECD, 2010.

possibly even only partially, through the inclusion of secondary or indirect effects. Another element is the focus on “long term effects” – i.e. short- and medium-term outcomes play some part in the generation of long-term impacts. This concept however, does not explicitly define when in the results chain such an effect begins but only highlights its duration.⁴

In order to establish attribution, it is an increasingly accepted view within the evaluation community that in order to qualify as an impact evaluation, proper methods must be applied to compare the results of interventions to an explicit counterfactual, may it be constructed or reconstructed by the evaluation. The following subsection briefly explores the various techniques used to measure impact and explains the conditions to be met for their use in the AfT context.

1.2. Methods used to measure impact

Ideally impact evaluations are embedded in broad corporate performance management and reporting systems. Quality data is the basic element of any evaluation and having a system to collect this data is a necessary condition for impact evaluation. Equally important, planning for impact in the design phase with a consideration on attribution is a critical driver for better evidence on results and impact.

In measuring impact, a critical step is to address attribution between interventions and the observed results. The attribution analysis is often referred to as the centrepiece of impact evaluations.⁵ It is fair to acknowledge that there are new impact assessment techniques being employed and piloted by UN entities, international financial institutions, bilateral agencies, NGOs, academia, national bureaus, local institutes, and even grass-roots organizations. Based on recent experiences presented in the international development communities, the two most referred approaches to identifying impact are Randomized Control Trial (RCT) and Difference-in-Differences (DD), both are applicable, to varying extents, in AfT.

In this respect, the methods described below are to convey the selected practical tools, relating to RCT and DD approaches, which would make impact assessment in ITC’s operational environment. A caution is that the application of individual techniques would be pending on the specific contexts of the operations.

1.2.1. Randomized control trial (RCT)

In the development field, RCTs are often applied in scientific research interventions, such as agricultural experiments for increased productivity or clinical research for endemic disease control rather than in AfT. Nevertheless, it is important to understand the fundamentals of impact evaluation techniques such as RCT since they are considered as the most rigorous to understanding the logic of causal effects. RCT applies random techniques to select members of a population to compose a treatment group and a matching control group. Thereafter, it compares the observed changes in the two groups; as such, the differences in results between the treatment and control groups could be attributed to the intervention. In the context of AfT development, the methods proposed below are considered as essential and practical, to varying extents, in identifying impact.

- i. Rigorous theory of change, which implies describing the complex logic links between the intervention and the expected outcomes. It will facilitate identifying what are the intended causal-effects and what effects are to be measured. A caution is that unintended and unexpected outcomes should not be neglected by the assessment.
- ii. Comparison with a control group. Based on the key characteristics of the target population, a target group and a matching control group are to be constructed to enable comparison, to ascertain the net effects by excluding the non-intervention related effects.
- iii. Stratified random sampling. In relation to the characteristics of different groups within the target population, this technique ensures inclusiveness of minority groups. It divides the population into defined strata based on meaningful characteristics related to each category of beneficiaries, such as gender, age, income level, ethnicity, business sector, size of enterprises, and each stratum will be sampled and thereafter addressed in the impact assessment.

⁴ Source: UNEG, 2013:6-7.

⁵ Source: Leeuw, F. and Vassen, J., 2009.

- iv. Baseline data, which records the starting situation of the target population against the objectives that the intervention wants to achieve, is indispensable to make any meaningful comparison to determine changes over time.

1.2.2. Difference-in-differences (DD)

In the AfT context, RCT is not always feasible, for example because of practical and ethical considerations in selecting a beneficiary group and a control group. As an alternative, practitioners often apply various techniques in relation to DD to determine the impact generated by interventions. Essentially, DD techniques compare the changes observed between a target group and a comparison group, and the difference of the two sets of changes is considered as the impact of the intervention. This method allows the option of reconstructing a comparison group (when control group is not feasible) and a set of data related to before-intervention (similarly, when baseline data is not available).

- i. A comparison group: In an AfT intervention, when a control group is not available for comparison in an impact assessment, it is necessary to reconstruct a comparison group with similar characteristics of the target group. For example, ITC's Poor Community and Trade Programme (PCTP) Evaluation surveyed both the beneficiaries and a comparison group to determine the impact on beneficiaries.⁶
- ii. Propensity score matching, a commonly-used technique to construct a comparison group based on the defined characteristics of the target group. In AfT, it could be employed in selecting a group of non-targeted entrepreneurs with similar characteristics of the supported entrepreneurs, to compare the progress made during the intervention period.
- iii. Single difference: to compare the results with baseline of each group – target group and comparison group. This is the first difference to be analysed; this step would tell what changes have happened to the target group and to the comparison group.
- iv. Double differences: to compare the two set of changes observed in two groups – target group and comparison group. The difference of the two set of changes is considered as the impact of the intervention. A caution is that the sole comparison of after intervention results between target group and comparison group is not sufficient to determine the impact, because the starting points of the two groups could be different.

2. Piloting Agency Wide Impact Evaluation

2.1. ITC's impact-oriented survey

ITC started conducting impact surveys in 2013, which is a very useful tool to understand the perceptions of beneficiaries of the projects with potential impact in 2013. It is one of the methods to understand the impact generated by ITC interventions. This survey solicits feedback from beneficiaries, consolidated at agency level, on the perceived changes that happened to beneficiaries. The survey results are presented in Section 3. This approach was applied with due consideration to the limited availability of baseline data and lack of data on comparison groups.

In the future, to determine the impact of ITC interventions in rigorous and comprehensive manners, it is imperative to complement the survey results with other methods and empirical techniques tested by development communities in impact assessments, including rigorous theories of change, quality baseline data, construction of control groups or comparison groups, understanding of the characteristics of the beneficiaries, and the comparison of before- and after-interventions.

⁶ Source: ITC, Poor Communities and Trade Programme Evaluation, <http://www.intracen.org/itc/about/how-itc-works/evaluation-publications-and-synthesis/>

2.2. Impact assessment at the agency level

Impact assessment at agency level is complex given the multiple components, simultaneous causal strands, and different intervention models in different countries and contexts. Within the AfT field, an effective methodological framework with which to conduct agency wide impact assessment is yet to materialize. ITC interventions have aspects which are both complicated (multi-level, multi-contexts) and complex (the nature of the change processes induced by our interventions).

While the literature and practice continues to evolve, the appropriate framework with which to conduct agency-wide impact evaluations is yet to materialize – especially within the complex AfT system. Numerous goals have been adopted, but clear guidelines on how to achieve these goals are largely absent. Cadot et al. (2014:2) explain that while the evaluations have progressed from accountability (ensuring that trade related infrastructure has been built) to outcomes (ensuring performance has improved), there is, as yet, no agreement on the main yardsticks to measure outcomes. Progress remains impeded by the lack of information, context specificity, and donors⁷ using different evaluation frameworks. The authors state further that while three biennial reviews have delivered useful discussions on approaches and methodologies, very little insight has come to the fore.

Given these and other limitations to impact evaluation in its present form, some argue that “the current trend for measuring agency wide ‘global impact assessment’ seems to be adapting impact measurement to serve as a tool for the marketing department – identifying in rather loose ways ‘plausible linkages’ between long-term social change and given interventions” (Giffen, 2005). Alternatively, Maxwell and Conway (2003) put forward that “if impact cannot be established scientifically or precisely (i.e. cannot be measured), it can at least be estimated and described by postulating and testing logical linkages between aid activities and observed changes”. While consensus on the appropriate methodology to measure trade-related impact at an agency level is still lacking, analysing impact is still none the less a vital component of building a more competitive ITC, as it demonstrates cost-effectiveness and value for money in service delivery. Analysing impact is a vital building component of a more competitive ITC, as it demonstrates reliable results and impact of ITC’s operations.

Historically, attempts to assess impact at ITC have been limited to project-level evaluations. The next section details the approach we have taken in the first phase of the agency level impact assessment.

2.3. ITC mandate and mission

The agency wide impact survey is aligned to ITC’s mandate and strategic objectives. As indicated in the Strategic Framework approved by the UN General Assembly for the period 2012 to 2013, the objective of the ITC is to foster sustainable economic development and contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the developing and transition economies through trade and international business development. Under this goal, the expected accomplishments are:

- 1 Strengthened integration of the business sector into the global economy through enhanced support to policymakers;
- 2 Increased capacity of Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) to support businesses; and
- 3 Strengthened international competitiveness of enterprises through ITC training and support.

The impact orientation is equally reflected in the ITC Proposed Strategic Framework 2016-2017.⁸ In line with the mission and goals, the main effects of ITC activities are leading to inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade and international business development in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and the socio-economic impact, such as poverty reduction and women’s empowerment, is indistinctly part of the expected effects. The first phase of the impact study requested selected enterprises to estimate the impact of ITC interventions through an enhanced, impact-focused client survey. Given the need for pragmatism in phase one, the study focused only on the third corporate goal, i.e. we looked at interventions only directly targeting enterprises. An appropriate methodology to assess impact on policymaking institutions and TSIs will be addressed in subsequent phases.

⁷ Note: Donors include NGOs, multilateral and bilateral sources.

⁸ Source: United Nations, 2014.

2.4. Impact period and participants

The availability of client data had a bearing on the study period covered by the phase one. Client contact information is currently stored in ITC's Client Relationship Management (CRM) system. This tool was introduced in 2011 and client contact information loaded into the system from the first quarter of 2012. ITC Project Managers were requested to indicate the start and end dates of the impact period of identified projects. Initially, all active projects active as of January 2012 with an expected impact period of 2013 were considered for the study. After a series of internal data collection efforts, it was decided to cover 23 projects and a total of 1,020 direct beneficiaries⁹ by the assessment.

2.5. Corporate impact indicators

Taking into consideration the new development indicators associated with the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the selection of phase one impact indicators were, where possible, consistent with the five key transformative shifts¹⁰ and to the twelve universal goals, as articulated in the report *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development*. A list of seven impact indicators designed for indicating results in exports, job creation and environmental sustainability was formulated (see table 1). These indicators are standardized across ITC.¹¹ It should be noted that the indicators related to job creation are directly linked to ITC strategic goals and mission; those on environmental sustainability mainly serve as a proxy indication of the direct or indirect environmental impact of ITC interventions.

Table 1: ITC impact indicators

Exports	
I.1.	Change in national exports
I.2.	Change in sectoral exports
I.3.	Change in enterprise exports (disaggregated by gender of owner and/or manager)
1.4.	Export diversification by new countries
1.5.	Export diversification by new products
Jobs creation	
I.6.	Number of jobs created (at company/sector level) (disaggregated full-time/part-time and by gender)
Environmental sustainability	
I.7.	Change in enterprise exports that are more environmentally sustainable

⁹ See Annex 1 for the full list of projects

¹⁰ The five transformative shifts are: i) Leave no one behind; ii) Put sustainable development at the core; iii) Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth; iv) Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all; and v) Forge a new global partnership.

¹¹ SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely) applied.

2.6. Impact-orientated survey

The survey questionnaire was launched in an online format on 17 February 2014 in four languages - English, French, Spanish and Russian. The survey covered 23 ITC projects and over 1,000 emails were sent to potential beneficiaries. During the survey, enterprises were asked questions relating to exports, job creation and environmental sustainability. To ensure relevance of the interviewees' knowledge, the survey asked up front whether the interviewees were actively working in the surveyed companies. If the contacted person no longer worked for the company in subject, suitable contact persons were solicited.

The first part of the questionnaire captured mainly the contextual considerations, i.e. the countries presently based in, the profile of importing or exporting companies, company size by the number of employees. Clients were also asked to indicate the industry sector they are working in, such as agricultural products, manufactured products, and services, and then the subsectors.

Part two of the questionnaire explored clients' views of the impact of ITC interventions.¹² The questions were customized according to the answers in part one. For example, when a client was identified as exporting firms, s/he was asked whether working with the ITC had a positive/negative/no impact on their exports in 2013 and whether working with the ITC resulted in export diversification in 2013, either by new markets or by new products. Clients were also asked whether they were active in environmentally friendly/sustainable¹³ export products or services, and, if yes, whether there were more environment-friendly exports.¹⁴

In export related questions, clients were requested to indicate their 2013 export values either in an exact value (in USD) or falling in a pre-defined range (in USD). The survey asked an approximate percentage of 2013 export values attributed to ITC assistance, either increased or decreased exports. Export values were disaggregated between environment-friendly and non-environmental goods and services. Clients also needed to indicate whether the nature of operations changed and whether the change was related to ITC interventions.¹⁵

To understand impact on job creation, clients were inquired to describe how the employment profile of their companies had changed in 2013, whether working with the ITC had increased/decreased/ no effect on the number of full- or part-time jobs in 2013; and, if there was a change, how many jobs were created (lost) due to ITC interventions, with specifications on full- or part-time jobs and by gender.

The final part of the questionnaire solicited clients' feedback on: how projects could be improved, which changes (if any) had been implemented in their company following ITC assistance, and any other additional comments.

3. Results highlights

The impact orientated survey produced 307 answers, an answer rate over 30 per cent, of which 169 were valid for impact analysis.¹⁶ Of the valid answers, 34 per cent related to both importing and exporting companies, 28 per cent export-only enterprises, and 10 per cent import-only enterprises.

The survey results were weighted to correct for the low answer rate of respondents and enable meaningful analysis of the available data. Unless otherwise specified, the results presented below refer to weighted data.

In terms of the ownership composition of responding companies, 60 per cent are owned by a woman or several women and 50 per cent are managed by a woman. Regarding the size of responding companies,

¹² In consideration of the profile ascertained in Part One of the questionnaire, only relevant questions were asked. For example, if a client is only active in imports, s/he was not asked questions related to exports or environmental sustainability.

¹³ Where we defined environmentally friendly/sustainable products as those products that "inflict reduced or no harm upon ecosystems or the environment ideally in the course of their entire life cycle including any of the following stages: raw material extraction/ production through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, maintenance and disposal or recycling".

¹⁴ Only clients that self-identified as actively exporting these products or services were asked whether working with the ITC had resulted in more environment-friendly exports in 2013.

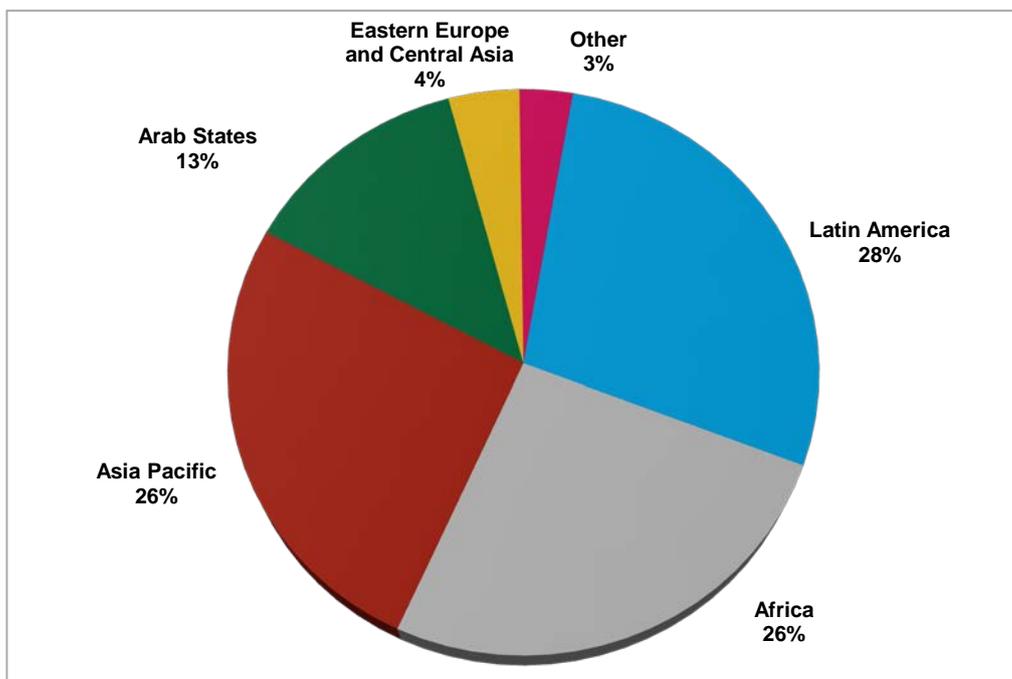
¹⁵ i.e. whether they exported products or services to new countries (and if so how many) and whether their exports had diversified by new products (and if so, how many).

¹⁶ The reasons for the exclusion of are mainly those respondents either indicated that they did not work for a company, that they had not participated in an ITC project or they provided insufficient information to be analysed.

78 per cent are considered as SMEs with less than 250 employees and 22 per cent employing more than 250 employees.

The regional compositions of answers are distributed according to Figure 1 below. As can be seen, the regional split of answers is largely aligned and follows the distribution of ITC corporate priority country targets.

Figure 1: Regional Composition of companies responded to the survey (weighted results)



3.1. Main findings on the clients’ perceived results

- Working with ITC has a positive impact on exports, particularly for SMEs
- Companies attribute 30 per cent of their 2013 export value to ITC
- Working with ITC contributes to the creation of jobs for both men and women

3.1.1. Results on exports

“As a result of your involvement in ITC project(s), how have your exports changed in 2013?”

About 70 per cent of responding companies responded that working with ITC had a positive impact on 2013 exports, and 30 per cent of the respondents stated that working with ITC had no impact on their exports. No company reported negative impact on their exports related to working with ITC. The effects of ITC interventions are more pronounced for smaller companies, as 80 per cent of SMEs indicated positive impact in their exports, compared with only 30 per cent of the large companies.

Export Value

“In your opinion, what share of the 2013 export value would you attribute to your involvement in ITC project(s)?”

The 63 companies that provided export values reported a total export of roughly 45 million USD for 2013. Of the 36 companies that shared details on their export values and the share attributable to ITC, they exported between 14 and 15 million USD in 2013 and attributed between 3.5 and 3.6 million USD to ITC, an average of 30 per cent.

Diversification

The responses to the questionnaires indicated that ITC contributes to diversification both in terms of new markets and in terms of new export products. Responding companies claimed country diversification in 50 per cent of the cases and they exported on average to five new countries. Product diversification occurred in 38 per cent of the cases; and in half of these cases, companies exported at least two new products.

3.1.2. Results on jobs

"As a result of your involvement in ITC project(s), how has the number of full-time or part-time jobs changed in your company in 2013?"

Among the respondents, 35 per cent claimed that working with ITC contributed to an increase in overall employment levels; 58 per cent claimed that ITC interventions had no effect on employment levels and 7 per cent (weighted results) claimed that a number of jobs had decreased as a result of ITC activities. In terms of the latter, only five of the responding companies claimed that overall employment decreased due to ITC interventions. Of these companies, all were non-exporting companies and thus we are unable to compare the loss of jobs with variation in overall export values. One company attributed the lost jobs to ITC but also explained that it was "...due to lack of business as we mainly rely on government jobs". Two of the responding companies attributed lost jobs to ITC as employees had become multi-skilled. No further information could be gleaned on the remaining three companies. Based on the respondents' comments it seems that the lost jobs are not directly attributable/ correlated with ITC assistance.

The job creation indicator did not exhibit a gender bias – i.e. ITC interventions leading to job creation occur equally for both men and women without distinction (no trends). More part-time jobs than full-time jobs occurred as a result of ITC interventions; among the companies that increased the number of jobs, half created five jobs or more. Large companies created part-time and full-time jobs whereas SMEs created full-time jobs exclusively.

3.1.3. Results on environmental sustainability

The survey showed that 43 companies claimed that their exports were more environmentally friendly as a result of involvement in ITC projects. Examples of these exports include certified tea and clothing made with organic cotton. It should be noted that, of the responding companies, only three were specifically part of an ITC intervention with an environmental focus. All the three companies confirmed that ITC had a positive impact on their export values and one claimed job creation as a result of participating in an ITC project.

4. Lessons learned

The on-going work on studying the impact of ITC interventions has resulted in a number of lessons to be reflected in future operations. The following is a distillation of these as well as a brief description of the advancements in progress which will build a ground for subsequent phases of impact evaluation at ITC.

Measuring long-term development results and impact of AfT interventions (such as poverty reduction, women's empowerment, and economic growth) requires rigorous methods relevant to the interventions, and reliable observation over a long time-series. In a trade development context, these changes lie much beyond any linear attribution analysis; often increased exports are not entirely the result of a single trade development intervention, but rather the results of common efforts of different sectors, partners and beneficiaries themselves. Thus, it is more realistic to construct an impact analysis model which takes into consideration the macro-level intervention logics of multi-sectors, partners, and beneficiaries, and the context-specific outcomes and indicators. This kind of analysis model should reflect, to the extent possible, the complex realities on the ground while distinctively delineating the various non-linear impact paths.

The second lesson is about the availability and reliability of data. Data is the basic element of any evaluation including impact assessment, and it could be costly to collect quality data, particularly when interventions are relatively small. The finding on compromised quality of performance data is expressed

repeatedly by recent project evaluations, and this finding is consistent with key messages conveyed by the Annual Evaluation Synthesis Reports of 2013 and 2014 prepared by the Evaluation Unit¹⁷.

Despite the constraints, ITC is committed to demonstrating ITC's development results and impact in partner countries. The impact survey provided useful insights about the positive impact ITC has generated on enterprises, in particular SMEs, which attributed 30 per cent of their 2013 export value to ITC and considered that ITC contributed to the creation of jobs for both men and women. These results are largely consistent with the findings of ITC's recent evaluations. In order to continue this promising path, the credibility of the impact will have to be further strengthened through systematically applying impact assessment methods.

ITC is already progressively carrying out a series of approaches to address these challenges, to enhance the capacity in measuring and demonstrating long-term results and impact. In operations, ITC is building more convincing logic chains between ITC activities and claimed results, embedding impact consideration into every project, and ensuring the integration of evaluation recommendations into the project cycle. In the side of evaluation of performance management, ITC is engaged in developing theories of change at the programme level to address attribution issues related to ITC interventions. These approaches are developed in line with ITC's Strategic Plan 2015-17¹⁸, which organizes work in six thematic focus areas and 16 programmes.

ITC will work to improve the impact orientated survey and continue to locate key programme components for SME competitiveness. Based on the indicators developed in the first phase impact survey, the survey will be enriched with SME competitiveness index impact variables. To address the issue of attribution, the objective of this will be to use the results obtained for triangulation with evidence at the project and programme level. ITC is gradually developing new standards for impact assessment and an overall impact assessment architecture to guide programme and project development.

Following the programmatic approach outlined in the Strategic Plan 2015-2017, this will necessitate an intervention logic that analyses and organizes current ITC services into an impact-oriented, logical and coherent sequence, identifying needs for improvement as well as gaps to be addressed. These actions will facilitate ITC's understanding of attribution issues in the beneficiaries' change process, and support evaluating the impact on the ground.

To promote the integration of impact measurement in programme and project operations, ITC will develop guidelines for impact evaluation. Part of the efforts is to review the various impact measurement practices currently applied at ITC, with a view to consolidating experiences and generating lessons for the development of a corporate impact framework. ITC will also implement a series of training programmes to raise in-house awareness and understanding around the applicable impact assessment methodologies and techniques, which will enable ITC operational managers to plan, measure, and present long-term development results and impact.

¹⁷ Source: <http://www.intracen.org/itc/about/how-itc-works/evaluation-publications-and-synthesis/>

¹⁸ Source: <http://www.intracen.org/itc/about/working-with-itc/corporate-documents/strategic-plan/>

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Annex 1: List of projects included in Phase One

Project number	Project Title	Project Start Date	Project End date	When do you expect the impact to be measurable?	
				Impact period start date	Impact period end date
ZAM/1B/01A	Zambia - Access to finance for agribusiness SMEs	Sep-10	Jun-12	Dec-12	Dec-13
BGD/47/114A	Netherlands Trust Fund (NTF II) – Bangladesh	Jan-10	Jun-13	Jan-13	Dec-15
INT/61/105A	Supply chain management training and professional certification (MLS-SCM)	Apr-08	Dec-15	1 year after certification	During 1 year
RAF/20/133B	ACCESS II - Business Counselling for women entrepreneurs	Oct-10	Dec-12	Jan-13	Dec-14
INT/28/10A	Expansion du commerce intra et inter-regional entre les Etats membres de la CEMAC, de l'UEMOA et les trois francophones du Mekong	Nov-11	Dec-13	Jun-12	Ongoing
INT/71/06A	Women and trade - Building the capacity to address gender based trade constraints	Jun-10	Mar-13	Apr-13	Ongoing
INT/U1/62A	Empowering Mexican Women Business Enterprises (WEBs) in the Silver Jewellery and Beads Industry to Enter the US Market - ITF/W1	Jun-11	Dec-12	Mar-12	Ongoing
PER/71/10A	Empowering Peruvian Women Business Enterprises(WBEs) in Alpaca to enter the US Market	Jun-11	Mar-13	Sep-11	Ongoing
TUN/61/120A	Tunisia: Improving export capacities for Tunisian producers	Jan-09	Nov-12	Nov-12	Mar-13
RLA/75/26A	Promoting CARIFORUM Creative Industries	Sep-10	Mar-12	Sep-11	Dec-13
INT/R2/01A	Revolving fund for market analysis and research	Mar-00	Dec-13	1 year after workshop	5 years after workshop
INT/U1/09A	Trade for Sustainable Development Programme (T4SD)	Jun-09	Dec-13	1 year after workshop	5 years after workshop
INT/71/03A	Africa: Improving economic benefits for women in the coffee sector (Women and Trade)	Apr-10	Mar-13	Jan-13	Dec-15

IMPACT AT THE AGENCY LEVEL

Project number	Project Title	Project Start Date	Project End date	When do you expect the impact to be measurable? Impact period start date	Impact period end date
INT/U1/16A	Trade and Environment Programme (T&E)	Jan-10	Dec-13	Jan-11	Dec-14
KYR/61/123A	Kyrgyzstan: Enhancing the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector and improving the quality management infrastructure	Sep-09	Jun-13	Feb-12	Continuous
TAJ/61/124A	Tajikistan: Enhancing the export competitiveness of the textile and clothing sector and improving the quality management infrastructure	Sep-09	Sep-13	Feb-12	Continuous
SEN/47/109A	NTF II Enhancing Export Competitiveness of Mangoes from the Niayes Region in Senegal.	Jan-10	Jun-13	Jan-14	Dec-14
RAB/20/132A	Algeria: Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	Apr-09	Dec-13	Jan-14	Dec-15
RAB/20/133A	Egypt: Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	Apr-09	Dec-13	Jan-14	Dec-15
RAB/20/134A	Jordan: Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	Apr-09	Dec-13	Jan-14	Dec-15
RAB/20/135A	Morocco: Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	Apr-09	Dec-13	Jan-14	Dec-15
RAB/20/136A	Tunisia: Enhancing Arab capacity for trade (EnACT)	Apr-09	Dec-13	Jan-14	Dec-15
INT/75/27A	Support EAC's Regional Trade Integration	Feb-12	Dec-13	Oct-12	Jul-15



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