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## ENHANCING SMES COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH BETTER REGULATORY TRANSPARENCY

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### ABOUT ITC

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The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint development agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which focuses on the international competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) from developing countries. More than 80% of ITC's interventions are in Sub-Saharan Africa, Least Developed countries (LDCs), Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), Small Island developing States (SIDS) and post-conflict and fragile economies. Since 1964, ITC has been developing innovative tools and solutions, which help MSMEs connect to international markets using trade as a platform for inclusive growth, and job creation especially for women, young people, and poor communities.

### ITC FOCUS AREAS

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With support from funders and development partners, ITC works with policymakers, trade and investment support institutions (TISIs), the business community and other stakeholders in the public and private sectors to enable trade success of MSMEs. ITC delivers integrated solutions around a core set of six focus areas:

- Trade and market intelligence for SME competitiveness
- Supporting regional economic integration and South-South links
- Connecting to value chains: SME competitiveness, diversification and links to export markets
- Strengthening trade and investment support institutions
- Promoting and mainstreaming inclusive and green trade
- Building a conducive business environment

### STRENGTHENING SME COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH ACCESS TO REGULATIONS

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Good knowledge and understanding of trade regulations is crucial for MSMEs to seize trade opportunities, expand their ability to export, connect to markets and be major job creators and engines of inclusive growth.

Addressing access to information, one of the top three most important factors holding MSMEs back from exporting, ITC has developed market intelligence tools that provide MSMEs with the regulatory information they need to conduct market research, identify sustainable trade opportunities, export and grow.

Through its Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) Programme, ITC:

- brings the concerns of MSMEs about regulatory and procedural trade obstacles to the attention of policymakers and other stakeholders, enabling concrete answers. The objective is to increase transparency of NTMs through company-level data collection and dissemination, contribute to the design of efficient policies, reduce trade costs and scale up MSMEs competitiveness.
- offers to MSMEs, free of charge, a regulatory mapping, which is a comprehensive database of the regulations that products must comply with in order to be exported or imported in a specific market. In 2017, information on more than 18,000 regulations on exports and imports applied by 90 countries was available online through the Market Access Map tool.

Providing better access to trade regulations as well as transparency into its application is one good way ITC uses to level the playing field for MSMEs, and accordingly strengthen their competitiveness and empower them to trade for good and impact.

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For more information, please visit [www.ntmsurvey.intracen.org](http://www.ntmsurvey.intracen.org) – [www.intracen.org](http://www.intracen.org)

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