UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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# eTrade Readiness Assessment

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UNITED NATIONS
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# NOTE

Within the UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics, the E-Commerce and Digital Economy Branch carries out policy-oriented analytical work on the development implications of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and e-commerce. It is responsible for the preparation of the Digital Economy Report (DER) as well as thematic studies on ICT for Development.

The Branch promotes international dialogue on issues related to ICTs for development and contributes to building developing countries' capacities to measure the information economy and to design and implement relevant policies and legal frameworks. It also monitors the global status of e-commerce legislation (UNCTAD Cyberlaw Tracker). Since 2016, the Branch has coordinated a multi-stakeholder initiative entitled eTrade for all (etradeforall.org), which aims to improve the ability of developing countries, particularly least developed countries (LDCs), to use and benefit from e-commerce. The initiative is also behind the UNCTAD eTrade for Women (eT4w) programme, launched in 2019, which aims to promote a more inclusive digital economy, in particular through its network of Advocates. These female digital entrepreneurs are active in all developing regions and contribute to capacity-building, mentoring and awareness raising activities for more inclusive gender policies.

Reference to companies and their activities should not be construed as an endorsement by UNCTAD of those companies or their activities.

The following symbols have been used in the tables:

**Two dots (..)** indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported. Rows in tables have been omitted in those cases where no data are available for any of the elements in the row;

**A dash (-)** indicates that the item is equal to zero or its value is negligible;

**Reference to "dollars" (US$)** means United States of America dollars, unless otherwise indicated;

**Details and percentages** in tables do not necessarily add up to the totals because of rounding.

**Reference to "JOD"** means Jordanian Dinar. For the purpose of this report: JOD 1 = US$ 1.41 (17 July 2021).

# PREFACE

The eTrade for all Initiative, launched at the fourteenth Ministerial Conference of UNCTAD in July 2016, is a practical example of how to harness the digital economy in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, notably Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5, 8, 9, and 17. The initiative seeks to raise awareness, enhance synergies, and increase the scale of existing and new efforts by the development community to strengthen the ability of developing countries to engage in and benefit from e-commerce by addressing seven relevant policy areas:

- E-commerce readiness assessment and strategy formulation
- ICT infrastructure and services
- Trade logistics and trade facilitation
- Payment solutions
- Legal and regulatory frameworks
- E-commerce skills development
- Access to financing

As a spin-off of this initiative, the eTrade Readiness Assessment programme (eT Ready) offers an analysis of the digital and e-commerce ecosystems in the beneficiary countries. Each assessment provides policy recommendations based on the challenges and opportunities for e-commerce development identified across the seven policy areas. In order to operationalize the recommendations, UNCTAD set up an Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM) in 2020, and the first results have highlighted the progress made by beneficiary countries in the implementation of certain reforms aimed at accelerating e-commerce and the digital economy.

The 27 assessments conducted to date by UNCTAD in collaboration with eTrade for all partners also contribute to capacity-building in beneficiary countries and to the necessary coordination between the various public and private stakeholders. This multi-stakeholder approach facilitates their participation in the various discussions on the subject at the national, regional, and international levels, such as UNCTAD's Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy. Finally, these assessments are more useful than ever in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, which has led to an explosion in e-commerce and an acceleration of digital transformation, a trend that is expected to continue throughout the post-COVID-19 recovery. The international community, governments and the private sector must work together to find innovative solutions to take advantage of these opportunities for inclusive e-commerce.

The eT Ready of Jordan is the twenty-eighth such assessment conducted by UNCTAD, and the third covering a developing (non-LDC) country. Jordan has an incredible potential to harness the opportunities offered by e-commerce to diversify its economy by boosting trade and exports, create jobs, and stimulate innovation and productivity, while building trust among consumers and merchants to engage in online transactions. I hope this report and the follow-up support provided by UNCTAD will contribute to the efforts of the Government of Jordan in accelerating its digital transformation, to create an enabling environment for businesses, and foster e-commerce for sustainable development.

**Shamika N. Sirimanne**
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