

NATIONAL SERVICES POLICY REVIEW



UGANDA



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For further information on the Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch and its activities, please contact:

Ms. Mina MASHAYEKHI
Head, Trade Negotiations and
Commercial Diplomacy Branch
Division of International Trade in Goods and
Services, and Commodities
Tel: +41 22 917 56 40
Fax: +41 22 917 00 44
E-mail: trade.negotiations@unctad.org
www.unctad.org/tradenegotiations

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FOREWORD

For many years, UNCTAD has been emphasizing the importance of developing countries strengthening and diversifying their services sector. Since 1990 the share of services in GDP in developed countries grew from 64 percent to 72 percent. By contrast, in developing countries the share of services in GDP grew from 46 percent to 50 percent, with services accounting for only 35 percent of formal employment. These figures suggest a large un-tapped potential for developing countries to advance the development of their services sectors.

The Accra Accord states that “The services economy is the new frontier for the expansion of trade, productivity and competitiveness, and for the provision of essential services and universal access.” The Accord calls upon UNCTAD to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to establish regulatory and institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms to strengthen the capacity, efficiency and competitiveness of their services sector, and to increase their participation in global services production and trade, including by “providing support in national services assessment and policy reviews.” UNCTAD developed its tailor made National Services Policy Reviews (NSPR) in response to the Accra Accord.

The services sector in Uganda is now the largest sector in the economy. The aggregate contribution of services to GDP in 2008/09 was 51.2 percent with a growth rate of 9.4 percent, faster than the growth rates in the agriculture and industrial sectors for the same year. The Uganda NSPR focused on four future growth areas within the services sector, namely professional, insurance, accountancy and construction services.

In conducting the NSPR a national team of experts, with technical assistance from UNCTAD, engaged with a broad group of stakeholders from government, industry, academia and civil society to identify challenges and opportunities in the abovementioned services. The UNCTAD team worked closely with Cyprian Batala, Assistant Commissioner, External Trade, Laurean Bategana, from the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry, Dr. Francis Mangeni, Director of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs at the Secretariat of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, George Walusimbi-Mpanga, who formed the national team, and His Excellency Ambassador Arsene Balihuta and Mr. Elly Kamahungye, both of whom at the time were with the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the UN offices in Geneva. The review process included an analysis of the current policy framework for professional, insurance, accountancy and construction services; regulatory and institutional challenges inhibiting sectoral development; national development objectives; prospective policy options to strengthen domestic supply capacity and SMEs competitiveness; and the potential impacts of services and services trade liberalization on sectoral FDI, SMEs, efficiency, employment, access to foreign markets and universal access to basic services.

The resulting wide-ranging but concrete recommendations from the NSPR are set out in detail in the body of this report and include proposed measures to enhance the contributions of the professional, insurance, accountancy and construction services to Uganda’s economy. In the professional services sector recommendations to leverage Uganda’s large pool of medium and high skill workers and enhance professional services exports in the East Africa Community was stressed. In the accountancy services sector the need for legislative reform to grant a legal mandate to the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda as a means of increasing professional and ethical compliance was highlighted. In the insurance sector, the need for the proposed mandatory National Health Insurance Scheme to provide medical insurance cover to the majority of the Ugandan population, largely in the informal sector was considered important as was the need to create a body charged with the duty to advise Government on appropriate risk management policies. In the construction services sector, stakeholders were of the view that updating and adopting the draft National Construction Industry Policy would be key in addressing a large number of policy, regulatory, institutional and capacity gaps.

I hope that the contents of this publication will contribute to providing a strategic vision for the development of Uganda’s services sector, and assist the country to continue to derive development benefits from trade in services.



Supachai Panitchpakdi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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This publication presents the results of a National Services Policy Review (NSPR) undertaken by the Government of Uganda in cooperation with UNCTAD.

Part I presents a report prepared by UNCTAD to support Uganda's NSPR entitled "Strategies for Advancing Development of the Services Sectors of Uganda". The UNCTAD Report was prepared by a team led by Mina Mashayekhi, Head, Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch. Team members included Deepali Fernandes and Robert Hamwey. Comments were provided by Alberto Gabriele and other TNCDDB staff. The report draws on the ongoing substantive work of UNCTAD in the services sector.

Part II presents the NSPR Report of Uganda. It was prepared by a national team of experts with guidance and substantive support provided by UNCTAD. The national team included Francis Mangeni and George Walusimbi-Mpanga. Francis Mangeni is Director of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs at the Secretariat of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, with the main responsibility of policy and implementation of programmes on regional integration through trade and investment and on trade and economic relations with the rest of the world. George Walusimbi-Mpanga is Executive Secretary of the Uganda Services Exporters Association, Uganda's National Enquiry Point on Trade in Services. He has also been a member of Uganda's Trade Negotiating Team at the World Trade Organization (WTO), and other regional and bilateral organizations as well as a member of the High-Level Task Force that negotiated the Protocol to establish the Common Market of the East African Community. Inputs were also made by Cyprian Batala, Assistant Commissioner, External Trade, Uganda's Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry and Laurean Bategana, Senior Commercial Officer, Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry, who served as the national focal point for the NSPR.

Part III provides a brief report of the Meeting on National Services Policy Reviews convened in Geneva on 16 March 2010 and other annexes. UNCTAD convened this meeting to provide an opportunity for national teams from the Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal and Uganda to present their NSPR reports to each other, UNCTAD, Geneva-based United Nations delegates and trade negotiators, and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Government of Uganda or those of UNCTAD.

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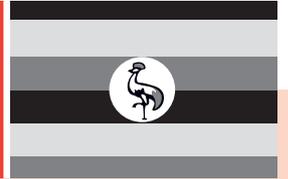
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STRATEGIES FOR ADVANCING DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICES SECTORS OF UGANDA

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