

# Sustainable, competitive and resilient value chains: the One UN response

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## Value chains that work for all

In today's interconnected world, sustainable, competitive, and resilient value chains are a powerful engine for inclusive development. Well-functioning value chains enable countries to integrate effectively into international markets, create quality jobs, foster innovation and technology transfer, and support sustainable livelihoods. They also provide businesses with opportunities to enhance efficiency, build trust with consumers, and strengthen competitiveness while promoting social and environmental responsibility.

Despite challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, evolving trade dynamics, and shifting regulatory landscapes, value chains that are designed for sustainability and resilience can adapt, thrive, and continue to generate development opportunities.

By strengthening responsible business practices and promoting collaboration between governments and the private sector, stakeholders can maximize the developmental benefits of value chains. Investing in quality infrastructure, upgrading skills, leveraging technology, and reinforcing good governance - all in alignment with international human rights and environmental standards - further amplifies their positive impact on people, economies, and the planet.



## The One UN approach: Our commitment, our strengths

The One UN approach encompasses the supply chain and all the additional activities and stakeholders that create, influence, or derive value from a product throughout its entire lifecycle.

The United Nations stands ready to leverage its unique strengths - global neutrality, convening power, normative and human rights expertise, and deep field presence - to support countries and businesses in building value chains that are not only competitive, but also equitable and environmentally responsible.

UN bodies whose mandates include support for sustainable, competitive, and resilient value chains are committing to combine their individual strengths to enable more effective, holistic, and coordinated action to the benefit of our partners. Together, we can ensure that economic development aligns with environmental integrity, decent work, and human rights while contributing to stability and peace.

Leadership of:



UNECE



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



This community is open to UN entities working on Sustainable Value Chains.

## Our common approach

By working together, UN entities can help countries build competitive, sustainable and resilient value chains - turning current risks into engines of long-term, inclusive and equitable growth and creation of decent jobs.



### Goal: Competitive, sustainable and resilient value chains, market access and trade



### Strengthened governance and policy environment

- Advising on trade policy
- Promoting policy coherence and a whole-of-government approach
- Increasing transparency, traceability and accountability
- Fostering competitiveness, circularity and resilience
- Bridging communication gaps
- Providing sex-disaggregated data for sound policy decision making
- Providing policy advisory services
- Strengthening the policy environment and social partners' role in promoting human rights and decent work



### Dynamic private sector ecosystem

- Capacity building at national and regional level
- Advising on SME competitiveness
- Strengthening quality infrastructure and standards
- Attracting and facilitating investment
- Support the development of incentives and infrastructure for sustainability and circularity
- Building the business case for sustainability and circularity
- Generating and providing access to trustworthy ESG data
- Strengthening business respect for human rights and decent work
- Supporting the effective implementation of due diligence requirements
- Ensuring conflict sensitivity of investments and risk management
- Promoting public-private dialogue
- Supporting links between academia and private sector



### Empowered SMEs and workers

- Supporting the uptake of sustainable production practices, including circular business models, and resilience
- Promoting diversification and value addition
- Reinforcing human rights, gender equality, decent work, and responsible business conduct
- Promoting entrepreneurship development, particularly for women and youth
- Engaging stakeholders and facilitating access to knowledge, particularly for women and youth
- Supporting SME competitiveness, including fostering access to finance/investment, technology and markets
- Lowering compliance burdens to maintain performance standards
- Supporting market access, including B2B linkages, fair and inclusive participation and support in understanding and fulfilling sustainability standards and regulations

## Tailored responses



### Africa

Building regional value chains by strengthening standards, quality infrastructure, circularity and productive capacities. Emphasis on inclusive approaches, integrating smallholders, advancing responsible business conduct, measuring impacts of investments on conflict, and improving market access for sustainable and resilient agricultural systems to leverage the momentum created by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

### Asia-Pacific

Supporting producers to meet evolving environmental and social requirements in production and trade. Focus on capacity-building, due diligence, and deforestation-free sourcing, combined with policy guidance to strengthen inclusive production, enhance circularity and resilience, and maintain market competitiveness in regional and global value chains.

### Europe

Supporting countries in enhancing their market access by strengthening competitiveness and aligning with evolving supply chain legislation as well as EU sustainability and market access requirements. The focus is on promoting sustainable consumption, global standards on responsible business conduct and due diligence, as well as value chain transparency and traceability.

### Latin America and the Caribbean

Reducing commodity dependence through responsible diversification, strengthened agro-industrial systems, and improved market access. Focused on policy advice and trade support, including due diligence and deforestation-free value chains, while promoting inclusive production to build competitive, circular and resilient agro-industrial and manufacturing ecosystems.

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