ICT CONNECTIVITY ISSUES IN LLDCs

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ITU Regional Development Forum for Asia-Pacific (RDF-ASP)
Digital transformation and innovation for a sustainable and
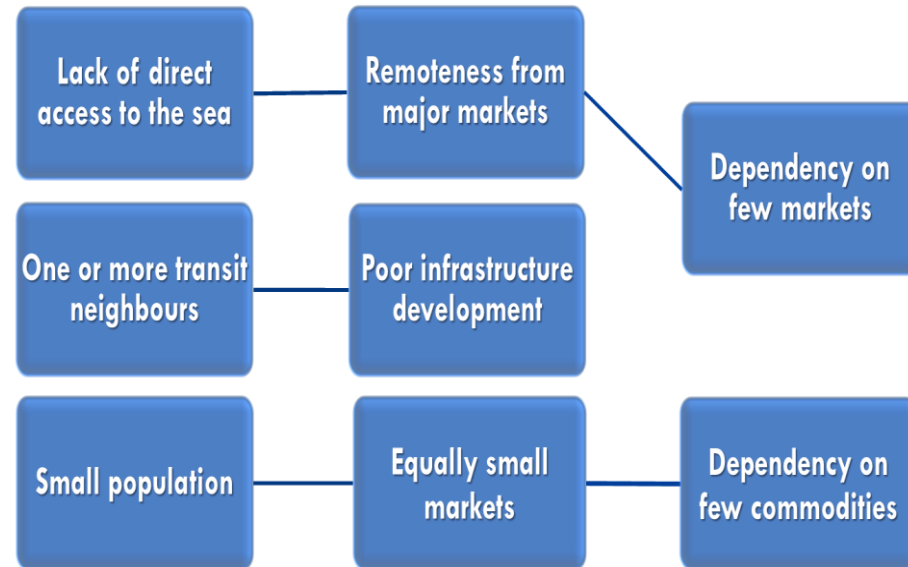equitable digital future: Supporting the SDGs
13 -15 September 2023

INTRODUCTION OF LLDC

## 32 LLDCs: In Asia 10, in Africa 16, in Europe 4, in South America 2

- The total population of LLDCs is 533 million (2020) – equal to 7% of the world's population.
- LLDCs cover 15.9 million km2 or 22% of the world's land area. Average distance to a seaport 1370 km.
- LLDCs account for 1.2% of world trade, and it continues to decline.
- Only a few LLDCs account for 60% of the total LLDCs exports,
- Double time and cost for exporting and importing compared to transit countries/ coastal economies,
- LLDCs are 20% less developed than the countries with direct sea access.
- Half of LLDCs are least developed countries.

COMMON CHALLENGES IN LLDC

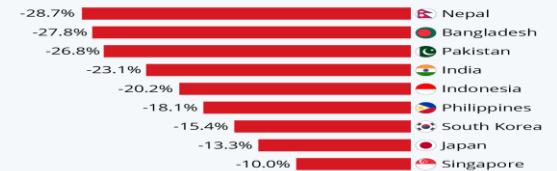| Lack of direct access to the sea | Remoteness from major markets | Dependency on few markets |
| One or more transit neighbours | Poor infrastructure development | |
| Small population | Equally small markets | Dependency on few commodities |

COVID impact in LLDCs

- Increased and urgent demand for health care, medical equipment and pharmaceutical products
- Highly dependent on transit countries
- More costs and times for export and import
- Heavily reliant on commodity exports;
- High levels of external debt and debt crisis
- Less remittances flows
- Food crisis
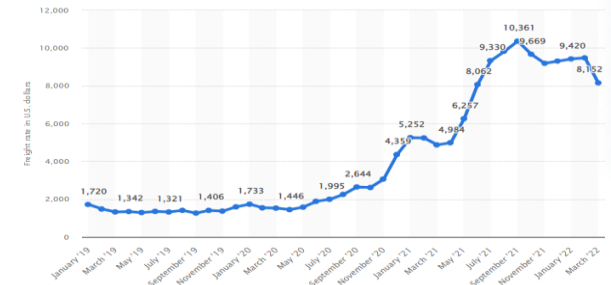
COVID-19 to Cut off Remittance Flow to Asia
Expected percent change in size of remittances payments from 2018 to 2020 to selected Asian countries

-28.7%	Nepal
-27.8%	Bangladesh
-26.8%	Pakistan
-23.1%	India
-20.2%	Indonesia
-18.1%	Philippines
-15.4%	South Korea
-13.3%	Japan
-10.0%	Singapore

Source: Asian Development Bank

statista

ICT/CONNECTIVITY DEVELOPMENT

2020s
Acceleration of digital world due to the global pandemic

2010s
Digitalization of Services

2000s
Phones turns "smart"

1990s
Data and global networked society

1980s
The dawn of mobile and e-mail

Digital connectivity impacts all sectors and aspects of people's life.

GLOBAL ICT/CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

World

Without access 5%

With access but not online 32%

Online 63%

Share of the population, 2021
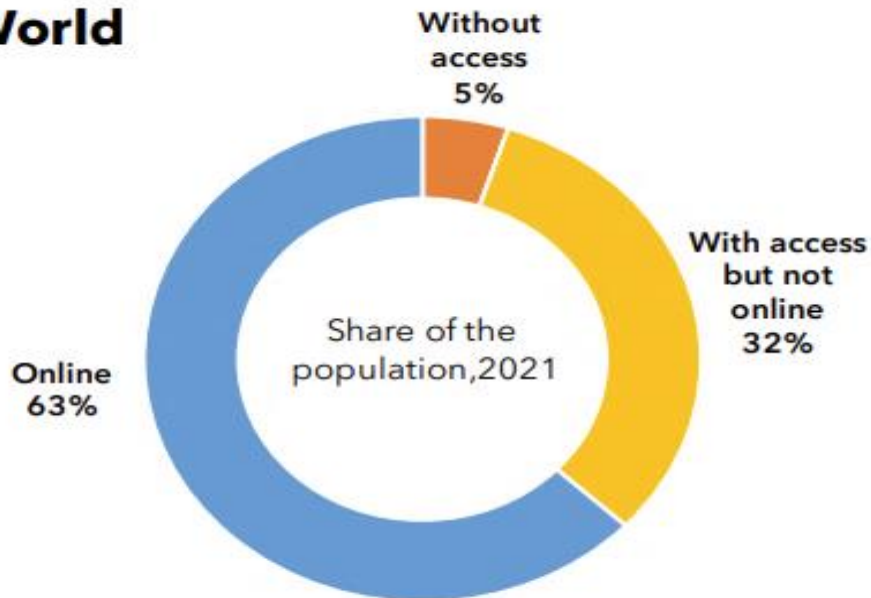
Connectivity in the Decade of Action

The three challenges of the 2020-2030 decade:

Closing the coverage gap: even though 95 per cent of the world population is now within range of a mobile broadband network, at least 390 million people have no possibility to connect to the Internet.

Closing the usage gap: one in three individuals who could go online choose not to, mainly due to prohibitive costs, lack of access to a device, and/or lack of awareness, skills, or purpose.

Achieving meaningful connectivity for all: For many Internet users, connectivity is not good enough to do online what they want whenever they want.

ICT DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN LLDCS

Vienna Programme of Action:

Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance

- (b) Energy and information and communication technology infrastructure

Sustainable Development Goals:

Target 4.4: Proportion of youth/adults with ICT skills, by type of skills

Target 5b: Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex
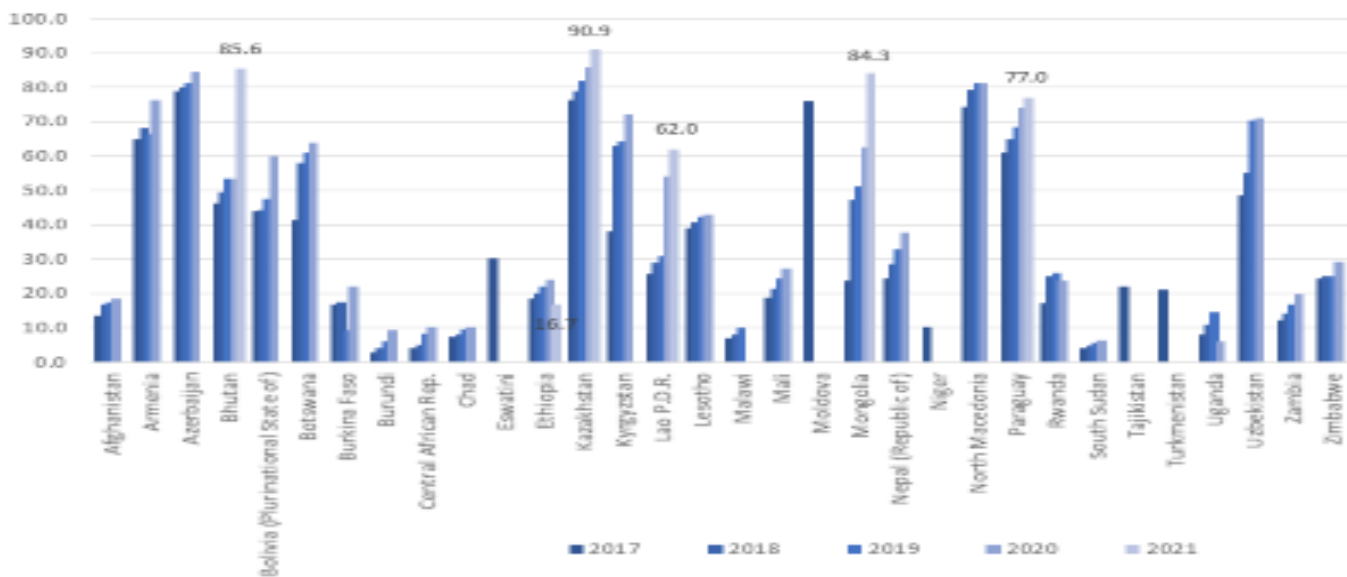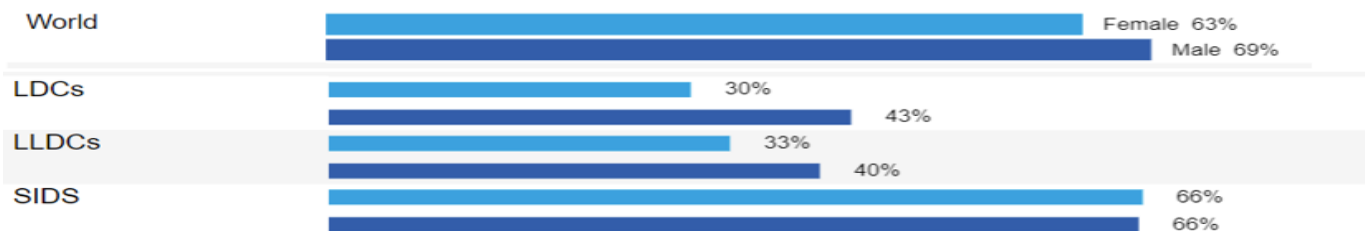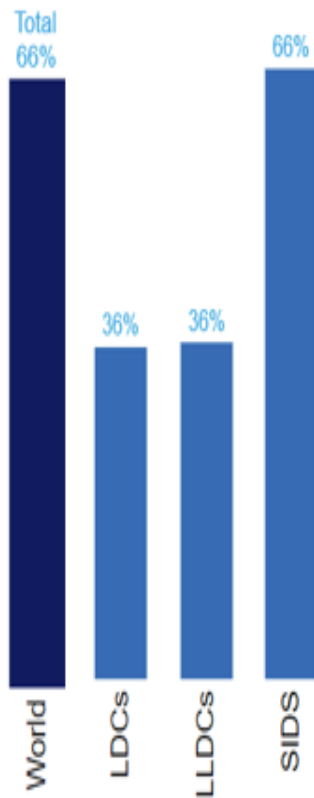
Target 9c: Percentage of the population covered by a mobile network, broken down by technology

Target 17.6: Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions, broken down by speed

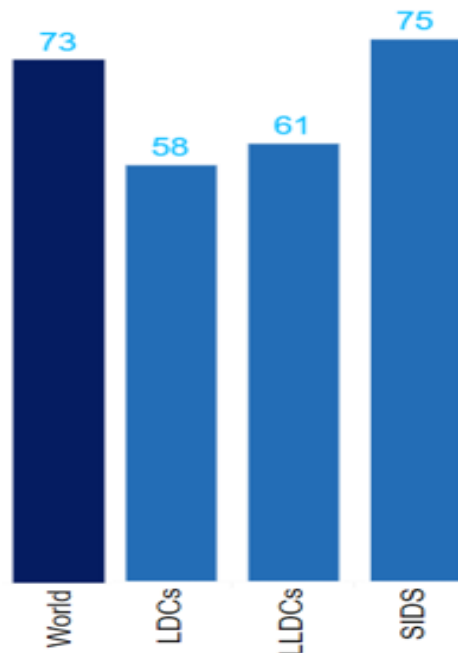Target 17.8: Proportion of individuals using the Internet

Connectivity in LLDCs

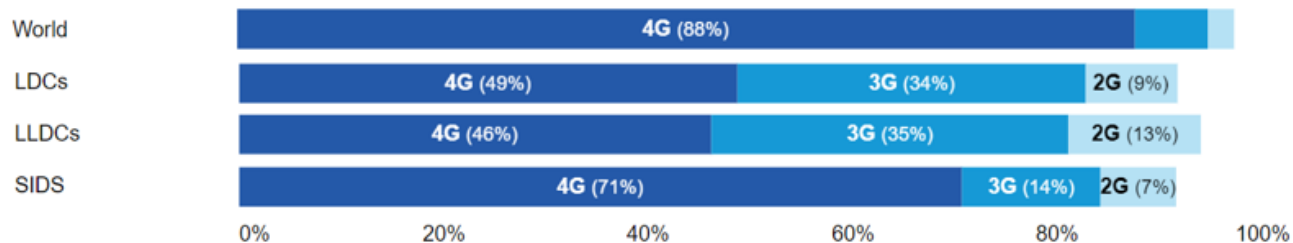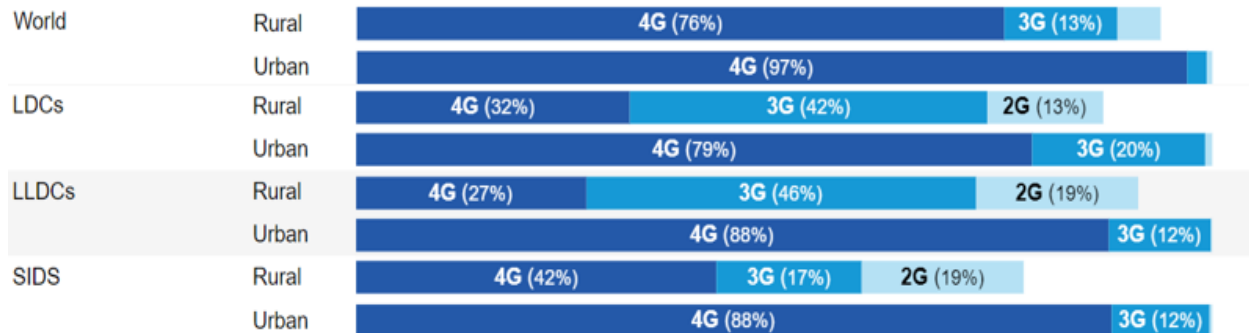## Percentage of individuals using the internet by region, 2022

Connectivity in LLDCs

Percentage of individuals owning a mobile phone, 2022


Population coverage by type of mobile network, 2022

World	4G (88%)		
LDCs	4G (49%)	3G (34%)	2G (9%)
LLDCs	4G (46%)	3G (35%)	2G (13%)
SIDS	4G (71%)	3G (14%)	2G (7%)

Population coverage by type of mobile network and area, 2022

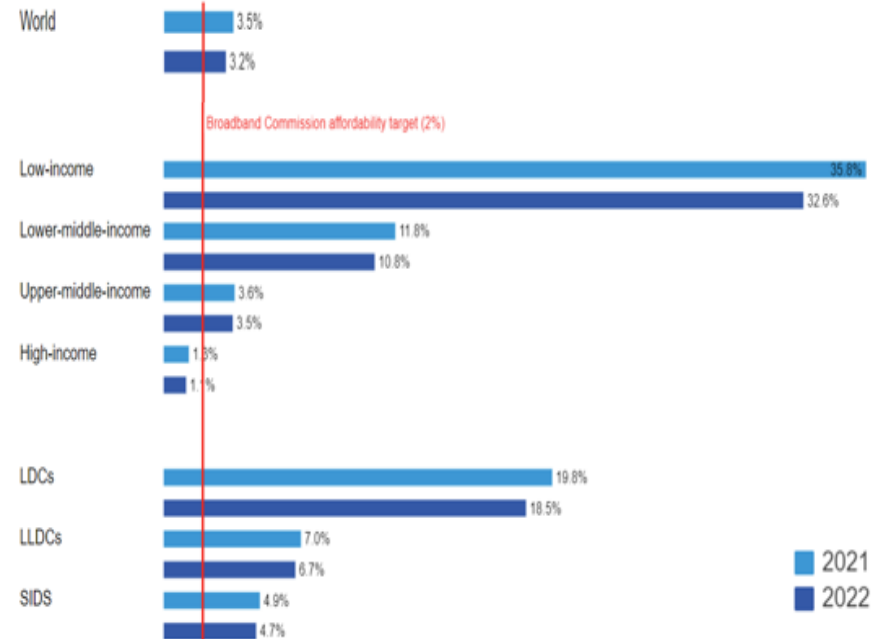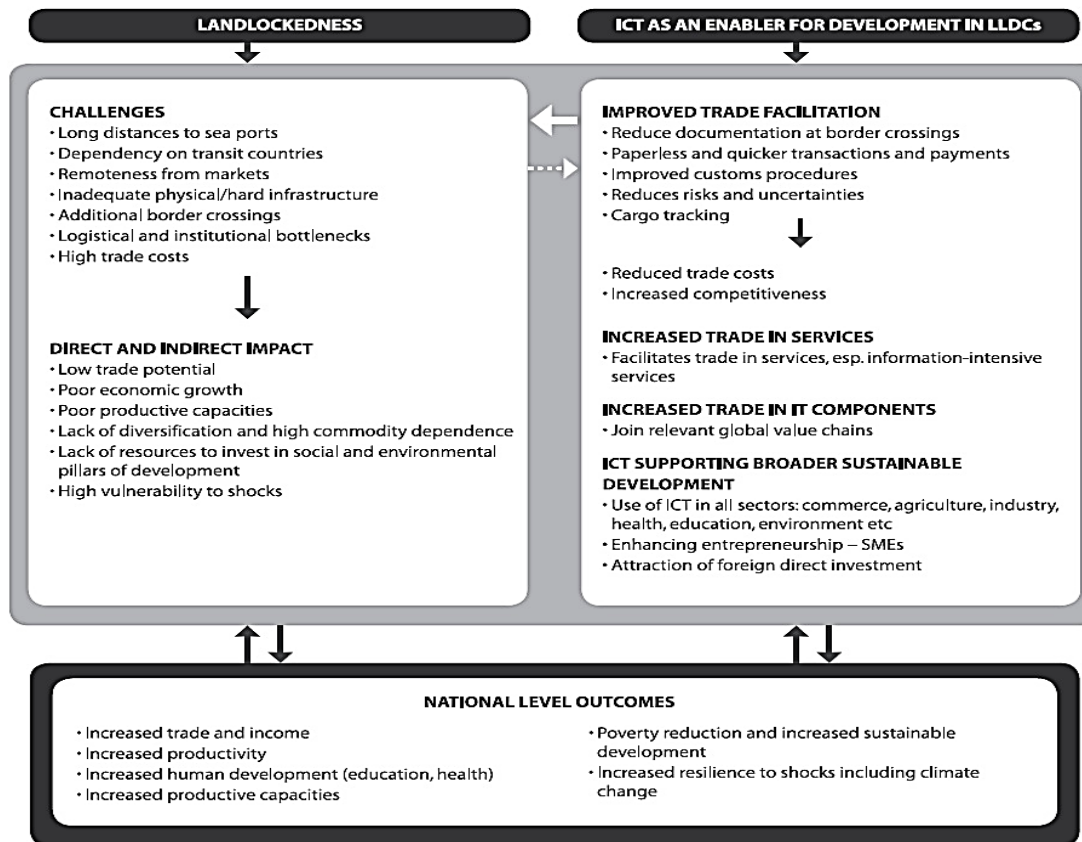|				
World	Rural	4G (76%)	3G (13%)	
	Urban	4G (97%)		
LDCs	Rural	4G (32%)	3G (42%)	2G (13%)
	Urban	4G (79%)	3G (20%)	
LLDCs	Rural	4G (27%)	3G (46%)	2G (19%)
	Urban	4G (88%)	3G (12%)	
SIDS	Rural	4G (42%)	3G (17%)	2G (19%)
	Urban	4G (88%)	3G (12%)	

Connectivity in LLDCs

Data-only mobile broadband (2GB) basket price as % of GNI per capita, 2021-2022
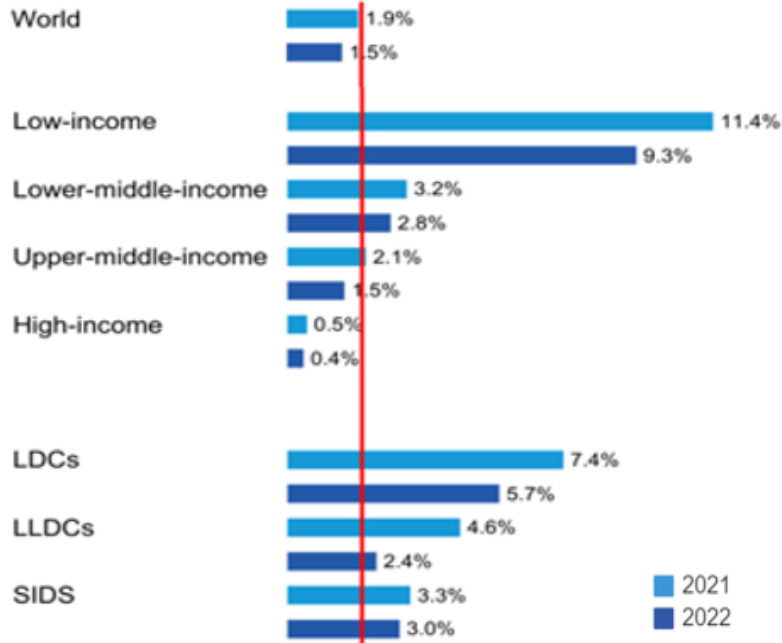
Fixed broadband (5GB) basket prices as % of gross national income per capita, 2021-2022

THE ROLE OF ICT IN LLDCs

International Resolutions on ICT Development in LLDCs

- International Telecommunication Union, Resolution 30, 2010

- World Conference on International Telecommunications, Resolution PLEN/1, 2012

- World Telecommunication Development Conference, Resolution 16, 2014

- Astana Ministerial Declaration and "Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Landlocked Developing Countries through connectivity and trade facilitation", 2018

Digital transformation in LLDC: Case of Mongolia

- The Government of Mongolia set out a 5 year plan to build a '**Digital Nation**'
- Mongolia wants to deliver digital transformation up to 90 percent by 2024

MINISTRY OF DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

GOVERMENT OF MONGOLIA

- Necessary legal framework was created to accelerate digital transformation
- A set of digital development laws were approved:
  - Law on Personal Information Protection,
  - Law on Public Information,
  - Law on Cybersecurity,
 - Rules of Digital Signatures, and Virtual Asset Service Providers

Digital transformation in LLDC: Case of Mongolia

- Startups and private sector innovation have accelerated in Mongolia.

- Digital governance has taken new steps against red-tape bureaucracy and corruption.

- The country launched the E-Mongolia platform, which provides government services online.
  - about 2,000 government services online
  - over 75 per cent of the adult
  population use

WAYS FORWARD

- Provide targeted support for LLDCs for policy update and development, financing new technology and infrastructure, and innovation;

- Increase investment and funding to the ICT soft and hard infrastructure development;

- Develop a regional approach to address the connectivity challenges;

- Create enabling environment for the supported development of ICT;
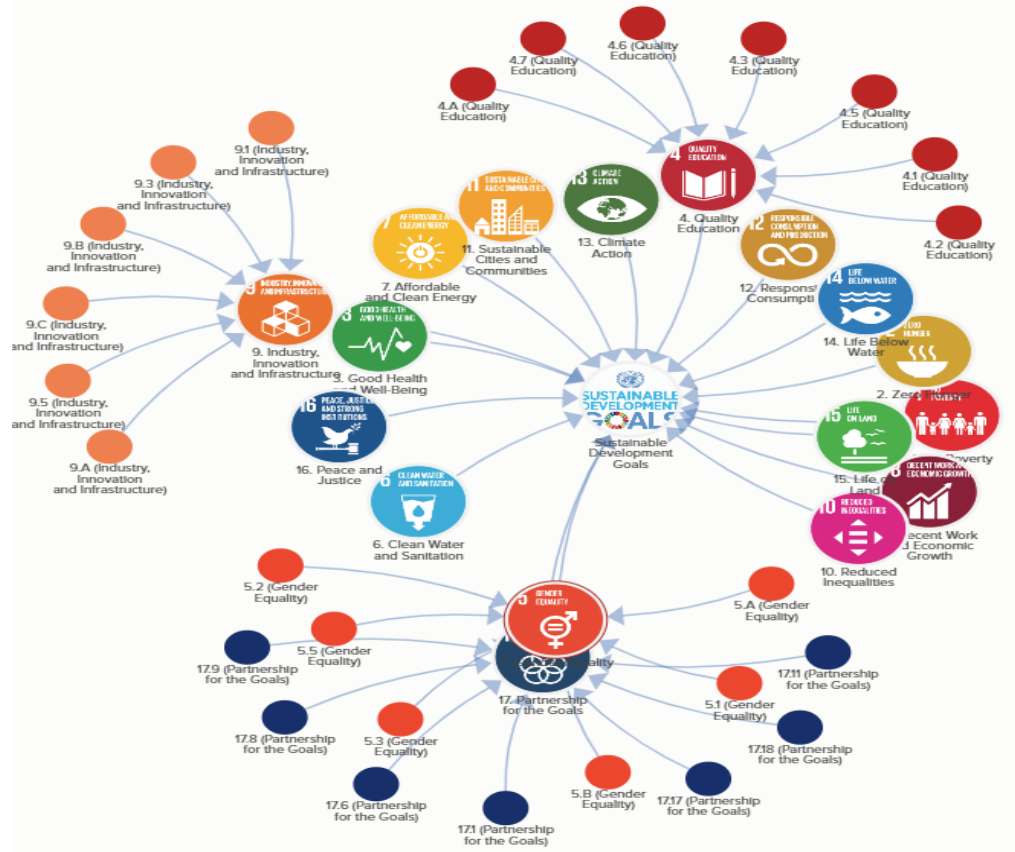
WAYS FORWARD

LLDCs consultations emphasized the need for streamlined customs procedures, improved infrastructure, digital connectivity, access to finance and inclusive reforms.

- ✓ Digitalize and adapt to emerging technologies for seamless, contactless, and paperless border crossings. The priority digital reforms areas include:

- ✓ Encourage the digital transition of trade finance operations in LLDCs by promoting the adoption of digital solutions and providing support to partner banks.

- ✓ Support through capacity-building initiatives, knowledge-sharing platforms, and public-private partnerships to enhance digitalization, trade competitiveness and market access.

FURTHER COOPERATION WITH ITU

- ✓ Providing support for strategic interventions through a joint research, thematic studies and policy recommendations for digital development of LLDCs

- ✓ Providing a platform for ICT knowledge sharing, support for intra-LLDC collaboration, other South-South engagement and global cooperation

- ✓ Exchanging ICT expert views and providing the best practices to LLDCs

- ✓ Providing support to develop public and private partnerships that support digitalization in LLDCs

- ✓ Organizing high-level expert group meetings and capacity building workshops

Thank you for your attention!

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