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1. In 2020, UNIDO finished the implementation of a regional project in Africa entitled "Testing and inspection assessment tool for effective trade facilitation" which assessed and identified technical gaps required for testing and inspection that hindered the effective implementation of trade between transit countries and proposed immediate- and medium-term corrective measures. The project aimed at creating an e-learning tool with modules to be used for trade purposes between transit countries

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9. In the area of transport infrastructure, as part of a public-private development project in

countries, including LLDCs. Taking into consideration unstable and weak internet connection, the trainings are designed in a simple, yet interactive way, which allow for a self-paced learning experience and provide trainees with a certificate upon successful completion. As of 2020, the UNIDO Knowledge Hub hosted nine training courses on Quality Infrastructure and Trade, Quality Policy, E-Commerce, Industry 4.0, Impact Investment (available in English, French and Chinese), and International Business Alliances.

18. In 2020, UNIDO continued supporting “Employment Creation in Mongolia” by upgrading several value chains to international standards food and non-food livestock products. UNIDO, in cooperation with FAO, organized various capacity building activities to support leather and textile value chain and enhance meat and dairy sector, including through Food Safety Management System practices. On-line training and learning content were

in the agro processing sector (12 out of 18 ToTs training sessions were conducted for 244 beneficiaries, as a start, expecting them to become service providers through their respective institutions for raising awareness on food safety measures and standards in order to facilitate market access and trade in the future).

22. In the field of international trade and trade facilitation, UNIDO also supports its Member States, including LLDCs, via regional programmes and projects. The “West Africa Competitiveness and Quality Infrastructure Project” (WACQIP) is the regional component of the “West Africa Competitiveness Programme” (WACOMP). This project is currently being implemented in the West African region, which includes three LLDCs (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger). This project entails two components: a “Quality component” and a “Business Environment and Competitiveness component” with the aim to enhance the countries’ integration into the regional and international trading system.
23. During 2020, a Quality Infrastructure Study has been conducted in several West African countries, including in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, to identify the needs along four regional value chains (cassava and derivatives, mango, textiles and garments, and ICT as cross-cutting value chain). The finalization of the study led to the identification of priority actions to be implemented at regional level and the updating of the work plan based on these identified needs. To this end, a list of 64 draft standards to be harmonized at regional level has been validated, 16 laboratories in the region (one for each country) have been selected and will be accompanied towards international accreditation, an ECOWAS Certification Mark (ECOQMARK) is being developed and will be used to promote quality in the region. These structures are supporting the development of intra-regional and international trade and are key to LLDC’s connectivity to regional and global markets.
24. UNIDO, in collaboration with ECOWAS and UEMOA, successfully supported the drafting, development, and adoption of two ECOWAS standards (ECOSTANDs) on barrier masks for non-sanitary use, as well as on hydro-alcoholic gels. The adoption of these two regional standards was commended by the ECOWAS Heads of States during their 57th Ordinary Session, in September 2020. The two adopted ECOSTANDs aiming at fostering regional trade have become the benchmark in all countries in the West African region, including LLDCs. Such regional responses allow LLDCs to better participate and integrate in intra-regional trade. They benefit from an infrastructure that they could not afford to build up alone. A typical example is the accreditation. A National Accreditation Body is usually afforded by advanced economies. However, a regional system, such as the West African Accreditation Body, covering the 8 WAEMU/UEMOA countries, laboratories and other conformity assessment bodies in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger can support obtaining such accreditations at affordable costs.

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25. The Africa Industrialization Week (AIW2020) was held in November 2020, in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission (AUC), the AfroChampions Initiative, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Government of Niger. Under the theme “Inclusive and sustainable industrialization in the AfCFTA era”, the event featured a series of 29 highly interactive virtual panel discussions and attracted over 2,500 participants drawn from a multi-stakeholder base comprising AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and African LLDCs, among others. UNIDO Director General participated in several sessions to deliberate on ways to accelerate Africa’s industrialization and rally the desired political momentum, resources and partnerships towards an Africa-Industrialization drive in light of the start of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The AIW2020 commemorations were capped by a High-Level Session on 20 November 2020 attended by Heads of State which are also Champions of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III), including thus H.E. Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of Niger, which was honoured as AfCFTA Champion for driving the industrialization agenda on the continent.
26. The Forum on Globalization and Industrialization¹ (FGI) consists of a series of annual forums jointly organized by UNIDO, the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW Kiel) and the Kiel Centre for Globalization (KCG). The FGI highlights the areas where stakeholders are already working together and provides a platform for discovering new avenues of cooperation on the issues related to industrialization, global trade and investment. In the age of technological and international trade uncertainty, FGI2020 was held as a high-level virtual event with over 370 participants. It addressed

Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Nepal. The creation of the REEECH responds to the urgent need for enhanced south-south and triangular cooperation on sustainable energy mountain issues. The establishment of the REEECH stems from the 2016 high-level seminar on “Accelerating sustainable energy for all in LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships”, organized jointly by UNIDO, UNHRLS and

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38. The programming activities for the Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) Zambia gained traction and were significantly intensified in 2020. Among others, UNIDO conducted the PCP Industrial Diagnostic Study, in coordination with numerous relevant stakeholders. Endorsed by the Government in July 2020, the study identified the main opportunities and bottlenecks for advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) in Zambia. The industrial focus areas with the most potential for development impact were selected (mainly three focus areas: value addition, skills development, and policymaking) and potential development partners and opportunities for synergy were mapped while considering the socio-economic landscape of Zambia.

 39. In October 2020, through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF), UNIDO in partnership with UNDP, UN Women and UNICEF started the implementation of a project in Armenia. The aim is to “Accelerate women’s empowerment for economic resilience and renewal: the post COVID-19 reboot”. Key objective of the project is to address gender equality and

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43. In West Africa, LLDCs are negatively affected by climate change and reduced access to natural resources which undermine community relations and jeopardized economic activities of vulnerable smallholders. In Mali, UNIDO successfully trained 270 women in technical skills such as agro-ecology, transformation of agricultural waste into compost and production of bio-fertilizers; production of livestock feed from organic waste and fodder plants; recycling plastic waste in utility or ornamental products and finally restoration and reforestation of degraded areas. In addition, the related project addresses critical business challenges faced by underserved women by enhancing their skills in financial literacy, business management, marketing and entrepreneurship. In the same vein, women's groups benefitted from equipment allowing them to improve their operations and enhance their productivity. By the of end project 20 women's groups will be funded via mobile banking and monitored in order to sustain their green and agro processing IGAs.
44. In South Sudan, UNIDO continued working with the Government to support its efforts to transition from food assistance to food security in the region of Bahr el Ghazal, through a project aiming at

UNIDO engaged a team of local consultants to gather and analyze information at the national level and develop the project document rationale on small scale gold mining. Government institutions, civil society organizations, NGOs, private sector actors and mining cooperatives have been continuously engaged and consulted throughout the process.

iii) In Burkina Faso, UNIDO assessed and selected two project sites (Tonka-la Mine and Gnikpiere with a total of 3,000 beneficiaries), including the validation by the counterparts and main stakeholders. Other activities took place, such as: a) the review of existing ASGM policy framework and institutional capacity; b) the

financing mechanism

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53. In October 2020, UNIDO launched a new online tool, the SDG-9 Industry Tracker³ – an innovative data tool that monitors performance and progress towards SDG9 targets for nearly 130 economies. The launch was a joint effort with the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) to showcase how a holistic approach and data tools are vital for achieving the 20130 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a post-COVID-19 world. With this Tracker, the IAP helps countries build capacity towards evidence-based decision-making by tracking manufacturing value-added, employment, emissions, and technological progress against economies worldwide. Among the LLDCs, available data for all SDG 9 industry-related indicators are available for Ethiopia, Nepal, Niger, and Zambia. This reveals important data gaps in LLDCs in terms of industrial statistics.
54. In addition to the six SDG indicators under its custody, throughout 2020 UNIDO collected and disseminated detailed structural industrial statistics with global coverage, including for LLDCs, providing complete information on structural transformation and the roles of different sectors, including mining and manufacturing for economic development. UNIDO also enhanced its short-term statistical products with worldwide coverage, as useful tools for monitoring sectoral developments, including of the economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. In 2020, UNIDO launched phase II of a technical cooperation project to enhance statistical capacities in industrial statistics in countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries, with the objective of producing policy-relevant indicators of industrial performance. Among its beneficiac2912 0informformild

Decade for Action and COVID-19 era”, on 9 July 2020, b) UNIDO Director General’s participation at