



ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

A Compendium of Policy Options





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Foreword

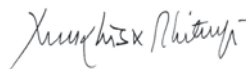
The goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will guide development policy action over the coming years, in the pursuit of a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. The eradication of poverty is among the most prominent of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the challenge of poverty eradication is the greatest for the least developed countries, where almost half of the population still lives in extreme poverty. This is why UNCTAD argues that the LDCs is the battleground where the Sustainable Development Goals will be won or lost. At least eighteen of the 169 Sustainable Development Goal targets refer explicitly to the least developed countries, and dozens more are of central importance to their development success. This testifies to the concern of the international community with the development challenges of these countries.

Revitalizing sustained and sustainable economic growth and employment creation in the LDCs, and accelerating the structural transformation of their economies, will be indispensable to achieve the SDGs. In particular, achieving an annual growth rate of 7 per cent as established in the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 and reiterated under SDG 8, is of paramount importance.

Although external factors have a strong impact on the pace and structure of GDP growth in LDCs, the governments of these countries can influence the process of structural transformation and reduce their external vulnerability by choosing appropriate policies. It is essential that LDCs themselves take the lead in their development policy design and implementation. Over the years, the analytical reports of UNCTAD's Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes have aimed at supporting LDC governments in this task and have advanced the understanding of all development partners on policy issues that are common to most LDCs.

This Compendium reviews the policy recommendations derived from these analytical reports over the past 14 years. It is primarily addressed to LDC policymakers, as an easily accessible reference, offering a comprehensive and coherent set of policy options which LDC governments may consider in their challenging undertaking of achieving the SDGs. At the same time, the Compendium also serves as an appeal to their development partners for collaborative support at the international level.

Linking the wealth of UNCTAD experience and expertise on least developed countries to the challenges of the SDG imperative that they face today, we hope this Compendium will provide a potent arsenal of useful policy advice for LDC governments in the battle to end poverty.



Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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