

PRESS RELEASE: 13 May 2022

Global conference in Accra: Making the shift to sustainable trade

(Geneva/Accra) While small businesses are a cornerstone for economies everywhere, the pandemic has shown just how critical they are. Many supply chains have been disrupted as these firms struggled to survive.

Business resilience to shocks is a concern, with climate change and food security crises on the horizon.

Trade and investment promotion organizations around the world will meet in Accra on 17-18 May to explore [***Bold Solutions for Resilience and Recovery***](https://intracen.org/itc/events/tpo-network-world-conference-and-awards)***,*** the theme of this year’s conference.

Firms that are more resilient to crisis often tap the services of these national trade bodies to build resilience to carry them through challenging times.

The 2022 World Trade Promotion Conference (WTPO) will be hosted by the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) and the International Trade Centre (ITC), a development agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization that connects small business to global markets. It brings together 200 leaders of national trade promotion organizations from around the world.

‘Good trade can drive socio-economic recovery that is inclusive and sustainable,’ says Pamela Coke-Hamilton, ITC Executive Director. ‘Trade promotion organizations can make all the difference in helping companies achieve good trade. They must help businesses to mitigate risks and embrace opportunities of a green transition. They must help women, youth and vulnerable groups join global value chains, and overcome systemic barriers that keep them from developing their businesses for export.’

**A resource for business: National trade promotion organizations**

Companies are three times as likely to export when they work with business support organizations, according to ITC business surveys in 16 countries. Firms that had those relations in place before the COVID crisis also appeared to have better access to information and benefits, such as pandemic-related government assistance.

These organizations contribute directly to national economies. A[**study**](https://intracen.org/news-and-events/news/investing-1-in-promoting-trade-yields-huge-results-for-exports-and-growth-itc) of European trade promotion organizations showed that for each dollar invested in these agencies, they generated an additional $87 in exports and an additional $384 for a country’s gross domestic product.

**Global awards**

Three awards will be announced at the event on the evening of 17 May. They recognize national trade promotion organizations for initiatives to help businesses to trade across borders. Nominees are:

**Best use of partnerships**: Brazil, Jamaica, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia

**Best use of information technology:** Austria, Canada, Malaysia, United Republic of Tanzania

**Best initiative for sustainable and inclusive trade:** Sri Lanka, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, Zambia, Zimbabwe

The 13th WTPO Conference and Awards will take place at the Labadi Beach Hotel in Accra, Ghana on 17-18 May. Created in 1996, the conference takes place every two years. Conference hosts are selected by their peers from around the world. See the [**programme**](https://intracen.org/media/file/10878) and [**register here**](https://intracen.org/itc/events/tpo-network-world-conference-and-awards) . The event will be livestreamed on social media platforms of the [International Trade Centre](https://intracen.org/). Follow the event at #WTPO2022 and #wtpoawards.

**Notes for the editor:**

**About the** [**International Trade Centre**](https://intracen.org/) - The International Trade Centre is the joint agency of the [World Trade Organization](http://www.wto.org/) and the [United Nations](http://www.un.org/). ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets. It thereby contributes to sustainable economic development within the framework of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

**About the** [**Ghana Export Promotion Authority**](https://www.gepaghana.org/) **-** The Ghana Export Promotion Authority is the national trade promotion organization of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. It facilitates, develops and promotes Made In Ghana products in the competitive global economy. It plays a leading role in developing a strong market position for non-traditional exports. A previous winner of the WTPO awards, GEPA was selected by trade promotion organizations from around the world to host this year’s edition of the World Trade Promotion Organizations conference and awards.

**About the** [**United Nations in Ghana**](https://ghana.un.org/) **–** The UN works in partnership with the Government and people of Ghana (development partners, private sector, academia and civil society) for sustainable economic and social development, peace and human rights and towards achieving Ghana’s development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a proud supporter of the World Trade Promotion Conference and Awards in Accra. Its information centre is supporting the outreach and coverage of this event.

**Related stories:**

**Press release** – [The International Trade Centre (ITC) today announced that 14 national trade promotion organizations have been shortlisted for the 2022 World Trade Promotion Organization (WTPO) Awards.](https://intracen.org/news-and-events/news/awards-shortlist-excellence-in-trade-promotion)

**Opinion article** by Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, ITC - [‘Going Green’ Helps us to Prepare for Future Shocks](https://intracen.org/news-and-events/news/going-green-helps-us-to-prepare-for-future-shocks)

**Opinion article** by Pamela Coke-Hamilton and Dr. Afua Asabea Asare, Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Export Promotion Authority - [Time for a Shift: Making Trade Sustainable](https://intracen.org/news-and-events/news/time-for-a-shift-making-trade-sustainable)

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