

When: 3-7 February 2025
Where: Palais des Nations
Geneva, Switzerland

Joint measurement and policy workshop on illicit financial flows

Background

UNCTAD's Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes (ALDC) in partnership with UNCTAD's Statistics Service works with African countries to develop and implement effective policies to tackle illicit financial flows (IFFs) based on robust measurements and evidence of the most harmful IFFs in each country, and enables the countries to focus on increasing their fiscal space for sustainable development. UNCTAD strives for consensus-building, cutting edge thinking to support African countries to build their institutional capacity to understand IFFs better, and address more effectively their sustainable development financing needs.

In this regard, UNCTAD is coordinating a joint measurement workshop and policy expert group meeting with the main objective of *examining policy options that can be implemented to curb IFFs and strengthen domestic resource mobilization for African countries based on nationally compiled IFF statistics*. The meeting will take place between 3-7 February 2025.

Objectives of the workshop and expert group meeting

Curbing IFFs, which has been a source of leakage for funds, can provide much needed revenue for African governments to appropriately respond to economic crises, and increase investments. For instance, UNCTAD's *Economic Development in Africa Report 2020: Tackling Illicit Financial Flows for Sustainable Development in Africa* notes that to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African governments will need to raise USD 200 billion a year, while it estimates the fiscal vulnerability due to the COVID-19 pandemic to be about USD 110–114 billion. With years of stalled progress and setbacks, these annual costs are much higher today. It is therefore even more vital that policy responses are formulated on reliable evidence-base data, without which government efforts risk remaining ineffective or inadequate.

The main aim of the joint measurement workshop and expert group meeting will be threefold:

- i. To discuss applied methodologies to measure tax and commercial IFFs, as well as sharing results and lessons learnt;
- ii. To develop a suitable framework for identifying policies in a standard format for African countries that reflect national priorities; and
- iii. To ascertain the framework through an expert-led review.





Expected Outcome

The key outcomes from the workshop and expert group meeting are expected to be:

- i. For the measurement phase, the finalization of dissemination of official IFF statistics for reporting to the SDG indicator 16.4.1 and a related action plan for further sustained national work on compiling IFF statistics; and
- ii. For the policy phase, a document outlining a guiding framework that can be used by African countries to design appropriate country specific policies with utility in curbing IFFs.

Format of the workshop and EGM

The workshop will be held in-person at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland on 3-7 February 2025. The proceedings will be carried out in English.

Contacts

Christine Awiti
UNCTAD
christine.awiti@un.org

Bojan Nastav
UNCTAD
nastav@un.org