



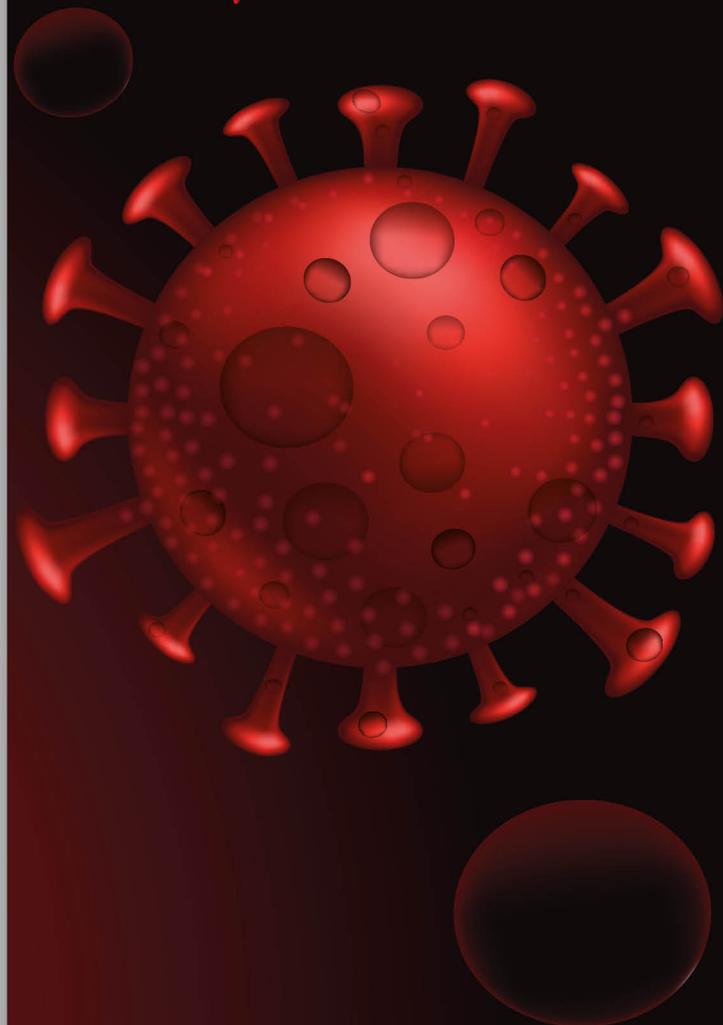
COVID-19 BUSINESS FACILITATION

APRIL 2020

# How UNCTAD's e-government platform helps countries stay open for business during COVID-19



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UNITED NATIONS  
**UNCTAD**

# How UNCTAD's e-government platform helps countries stay open for business during COVID-19

Faced with the challenge of a global pandemic countries are using UNCTAD's **e-government platform** to continue providing essential services and new COVID-19 fiscal rescue measures to businesses through online single windows while offices are closed.



## Preview

### BENIN

182 businesses created online during first week of closure

### KENYA

Export registration certificates delivered online with payment by phone

### MALI

Plans being developed to roll out online social security and tax registration to capital and provinces

## Discover the online services governments can provide with UNCTAD's e-government platform

### IMPLEMENTATION OF COVID-19 FISCAL RESCUE MEASURES

- Social security administration for temporarily retrenched workers
- Processing of business grant requests
- Handling of tax relief or late payment applications
- Monitoring of disbursements
- Post-crisis recovery of state aid through tax systems

### PROCESSING TRADE OPERATIONS

- Processing
- Company registrations
- Transferring property title
- Issuing business licensing

UNCTAD's online platform, called **eRegistrations**, also makes it easier for different government ministries and agencies to collaborate, share information and exchange documents.

During the crisis, UNCTAD staff have worked remotely with governments to develop new online services using the platform. Simple online services can be created within two days, with more complex services (involving multiple governments offices) up and running within a week.

## How governments are using eRegistrations to adapt to COVID-19

The examples below of government adoption show how UNCTAD's e-government platform is a value-for-money, adaptable and easy-to-implement solution for governments and donors to ensure continuity of services online in times of crisis.

### BENIN



The business registration system MonEntreprise.bj has become the only way for entrepreneurs to normalize in Benin since most public offices are closed to the public. There is been a small decrease in enterprise creation; 182 enterprises were created during the week of 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March. The Government has asked UNCTAD to develop additional services (business closure, modification of registration). The requested developments are underway.

### BHUTAN



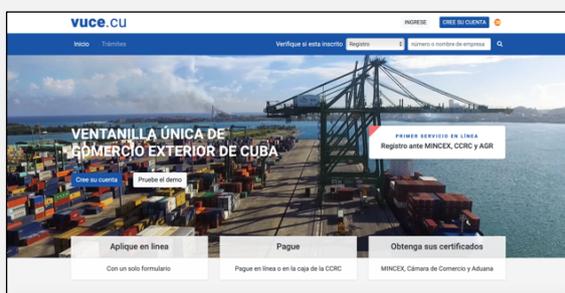
The Government urged UNCTAD to fully automate all business licensing procedures. UNCTAD is currently working on the top ten activities (related to agriculture farming and processing, drinkable water, medicinal plants). Information gathering is slowed down, but development is well under way. It is anticipated that Bhutan could become a good model of paperless, online administration.

## CAMEROON



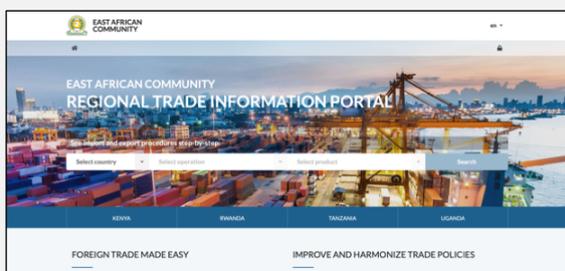
MyBusiness.cm is still operating in two provinces, including the business city of Douala. Extension to seven other provinces will start shortly with funding from the EU and France.

## CUBA



The Cuba eRegulations system is ready for launch. UNCTAD is finalizing, through online discussions, arrangements with the Cuban security authorities regarding the local security clearance requirements. The development of an eRegistrations system is going as planned.

## EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

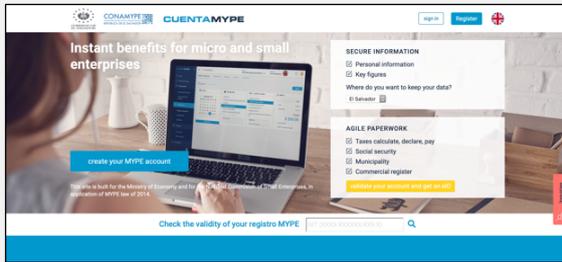


The trade information portals installed in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania describe trade procedures online, step by step. Being online, the need for physical interaction is removed. These systems also empower government officials to evaluate the necessity of the physical steps involved, and to take emergency measures to simplify and automate procedures.

As a result, in Kenya, the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) just agreed to accept new exporter registration applications sent by email and send out registration credentials by email instead of asking users to come deposit or get them in person. The Coffee Directorate decided this week to allow payment through the M-Pesa mobile phone system for all its services.

Similarly, in Rwanda, the Land Management and Use Authority, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, announced that land title certificates could be made digital immediately by adding a Quick Response code to them, eliminating the need for users to come collect them in person

## EL SALVADOR



The **MSME account** online tool for small entrepreneurs is the backbone of the country’s future tax credit system. It is currently being and was due to be launched in April for an initial use by 8,000 entrepreneurs. As it was originally envisaged that users would need to obtain an electronic ID by being physically present at a government office, UNCTAD is studying alternatives to obtain eIDs remotely but without compromising security. Additional features are also being added, such as “click to call” facilities, to allow users to communicate through VOIP (voice over IP) with public agents.

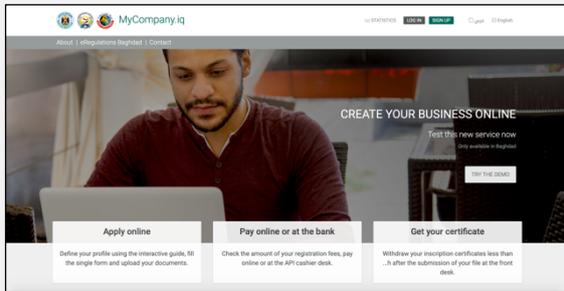
At the same time, since the closure of government offices on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, business procedures can be undertaken online through <https://miempresa.gob.sv/>

## GUATEMALA



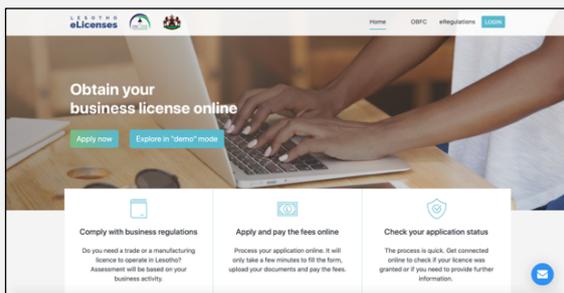
Since 17<sup>th</sup> March the Registry of Commerce is closed to the public. **MiNegocio.gt** (eRegistrations) is now the only channel to register businesses. In the week of 16<sup>th</sup> March, 150 businesses were registered online.

**IRAQ**



Despite the political turmoil, civil unrest and COVID-19, the implementation of the **eRegistrations system for online business registration** is going forward. The Council of Ministers considers it a priority and wants to launch it at the end of April 2020. UNCTAD provides hotline assistance and training to the Iraqi team. The online single window is configured, online payment solutions have been integrated, and installation on a local server is underway.

**LESOTHO**



As of 23<sup>rd</sup> March, all users of the One-stop Business Facilitation Centre, a physical one-stop-shop for business licenses, are requested to apply remotely through UNCTAD’s **eLicenses** system.

Discussions are underway for additional developments.

**NOTICE!!!! NOTICE!!!! NOTICE!!!!**

**Subject: COVID 19 - Online operations at OBFC**

Due to the scourge of COVID-19 wreaking havoc globally and LESOTHO will not be an exception, we urgently recommend to all OBFC clients to apply **ONLINE** for:

- Company incorporation: [www.companies.org.ls](http://www.companies.org.ls)
- Trade or manufacturing license: [www.lesotho.elicenses.org](http://www.lesotho.elicenses.org)

The payment can be made online.  
End documents will be sent electronically.

For safety reasons, please avoid any physical contacts. OBFC Officers will be here to assist you where you encounter problems online [just call +266 22326647].

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Monaheng Monaheng  
Director OBFC.

**MALI**



The Government has asked UNCTAD to urgently deploy the **online registration system** to the provinces (so far it only operates in Bama) and to add new services (registration with social security and the tax department).

In the light of COVID-19, the Government has overcome traditional obstacles to set a target of making all processes online, using mobile money and electronic certificates.

UNCTAD will keep working remotely on the development of new services and the deployment of online registration in the provinces.

## UNCTAD eRegistrations

**eRegistrations** is an **e-government** system, designed to computerize simple or complex administrative procedures. It can be easily adapted and configured to any administrative process. It was developed by UNCTAD's Division on Investment and Enterprise.

**eRegistrations** is suited both to operations involving only one administration (such as registering at the business registry) and to simultaneous operations at multiple administrations (such as registering a company at the tax office, with the municipal council, with social security, at the labour department and at the business registry).

It acts as a single electronic window and can be installed at the municipal, national or supra-national levels.

Being online, processes can be made faster and more efficient, improving productivity and quality of delivery.

The system integrates payment systems including mobile money, card payments, bank transfers, and electronic certificates. It also integrates communications tools to allow online chat and voice communications between users and government agencies, and among agencies.

[www.eregistrations.org](http://www.eregistrations.org)

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Disclaimer: this document has not been formally edited.

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