



International
Trade
Centre

Advancing firm digitalization in French Speaking Africa

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*Transforming trade.
Changing lives.*



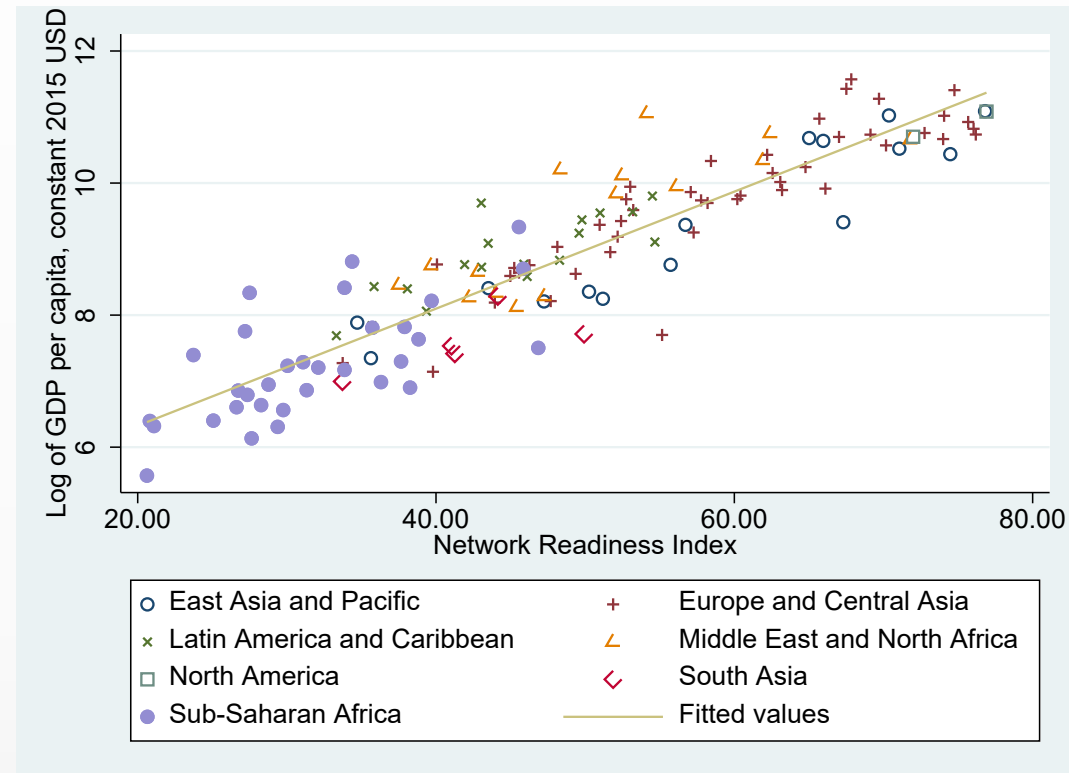
Digital technologies are key to firm performance

- Digital technologies are pivotal to boosting **firm productivity**.
- Yet whether firms can make advanced use of technologies depends on several factors:
 - **External:** presence and quality of **digital enablers** at the country level
 - **Internal:** **competitiveness** of firms



Where do **countries** stand in digital readiness?

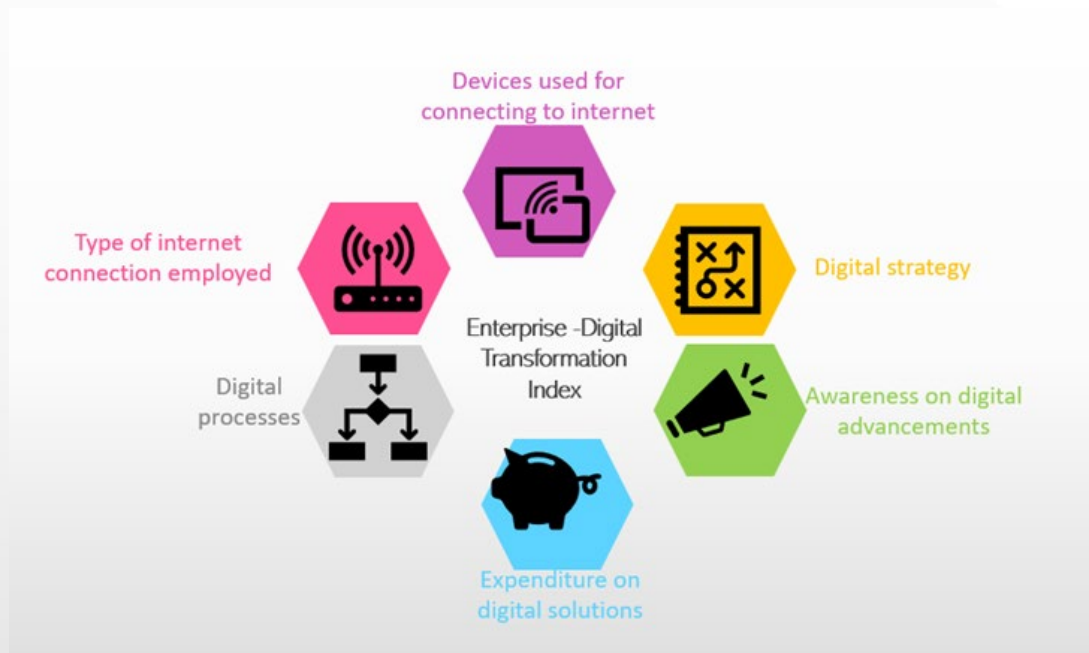
- **Network Readiness Index:**
 - Measures a country's level of **digital preparedness**
 - Composed of indicators for fundamental dimensions of digital readiness: **infrastructure, skills** and **regulations**
- Digital readiness is **uneven** across countries and regions



Source: ITC, based on NRI from Portulans Institute.

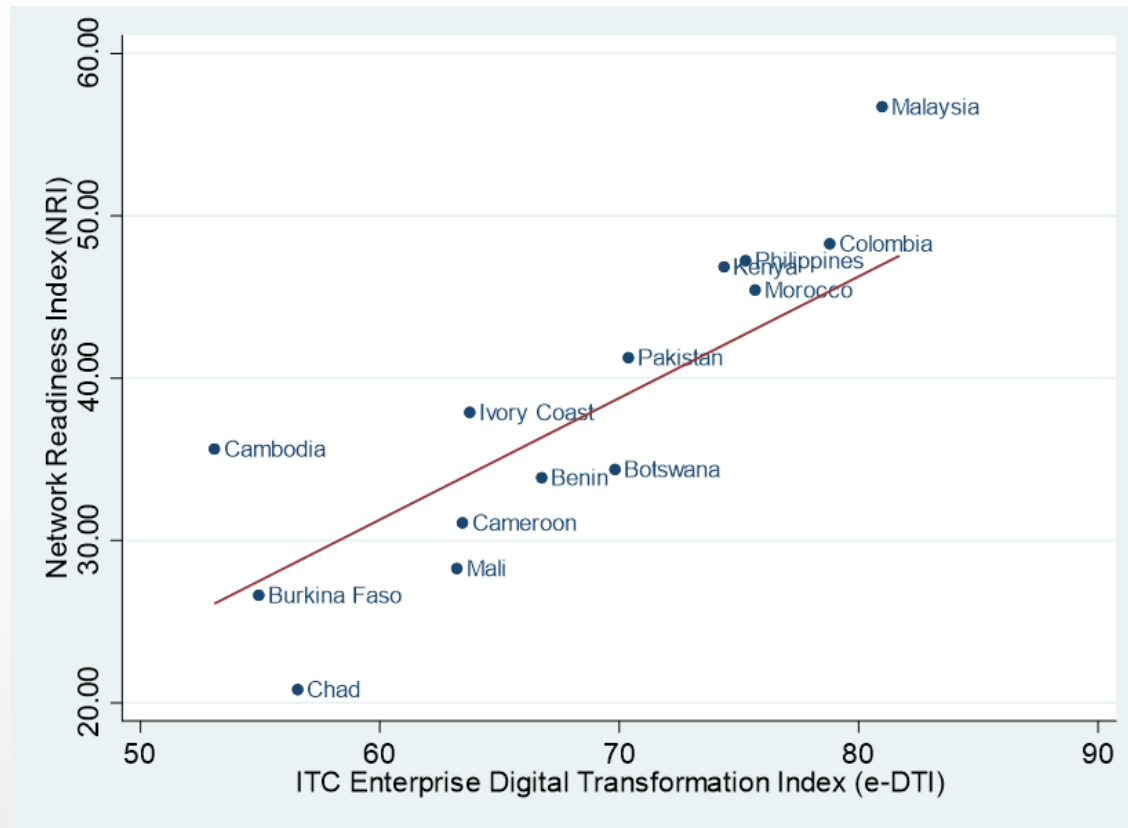
Where do **firms** stand in digital readiness?

- ITC Digital Transformation Survey
 - Over 7400 companies
 - 78 countries
 - Between 2022-2024
- ITC Enterprise Digital Transformation Index (e-DTI):
 - Based on firms' responses to the Survey
 - 6 variables, selected through confirmatory factor analysis



Firms adopt digital technologies if countries are digitally ready

Firms' level of digital adoption is positively associated with a country's digital readiness



Source: ITC, based on NRI for Portulans Institute and ITC Digital Transformation Survey.

Digital transformation in French-speaking Africa



Gathering data on digitalization in francophone Africa

ITC and CPCCAF joined forces in 2022 to assess the digital transformation of small business.

- 4,973 businesses interviewed in 11 countries in French-speaking Africa.

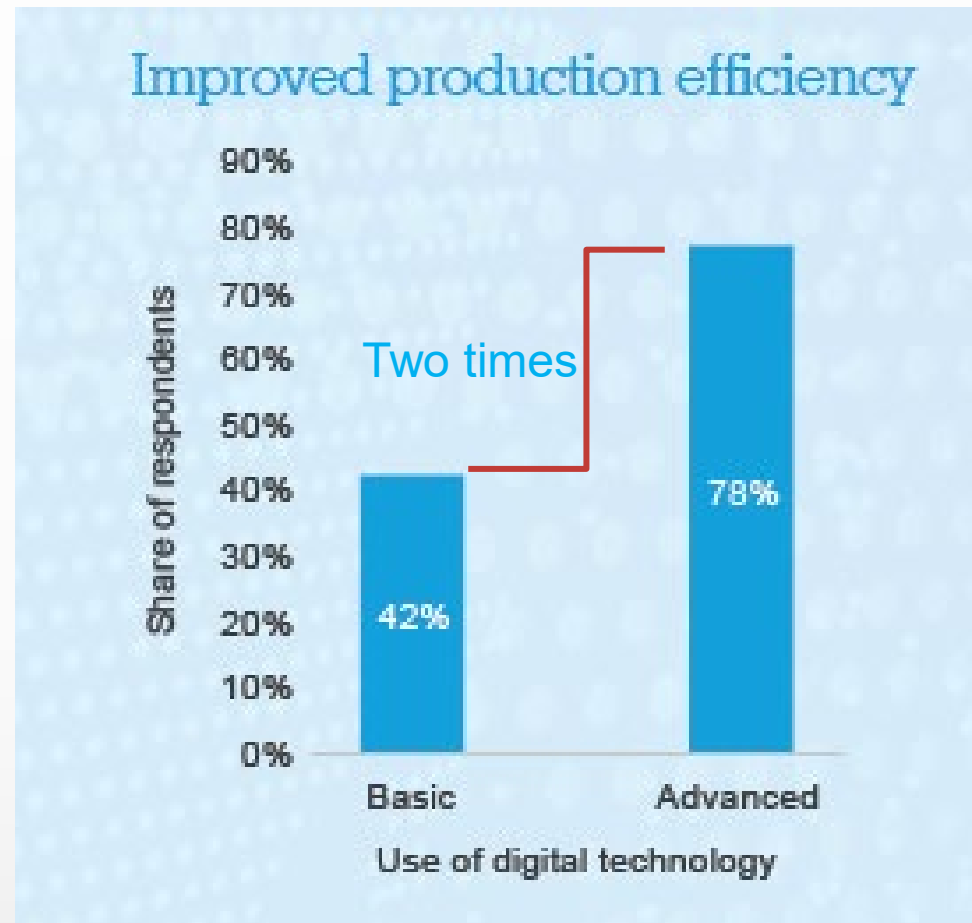


Advanced tools deliver real transformation

COVID-19 spurred the use of digital technologies:

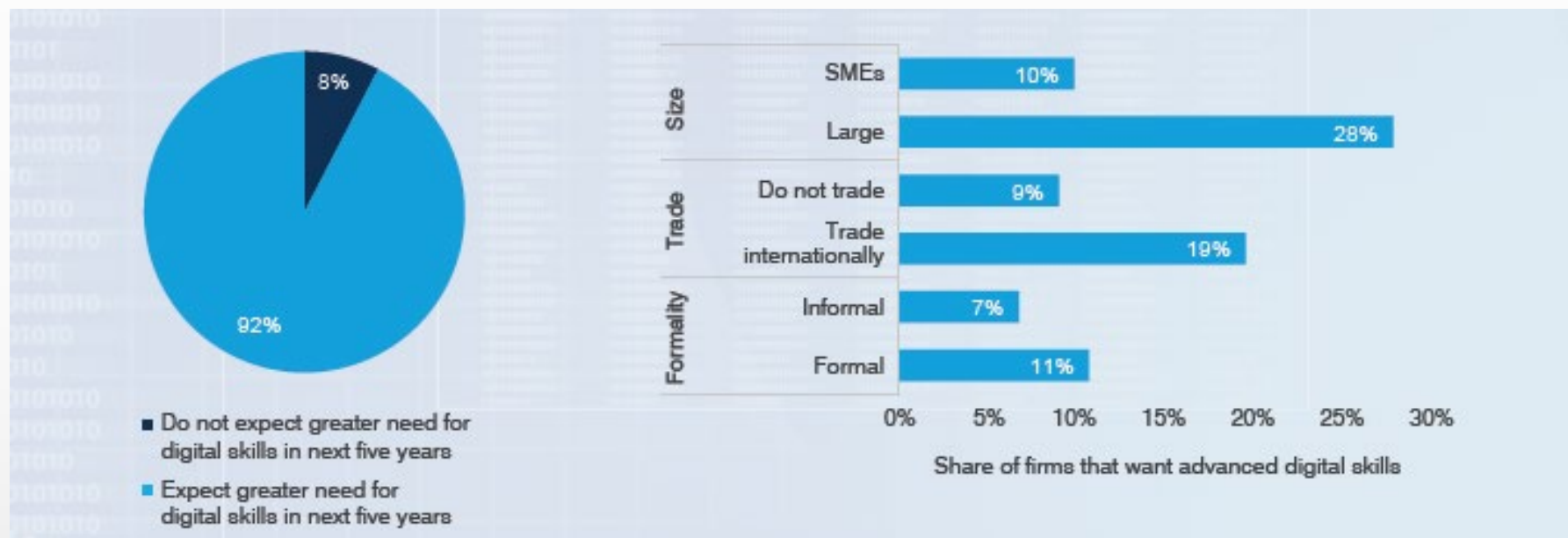
- Mostly to connect with partners across the supply chain;
- With a reduction in costs and increase sales.

Real efficiency and competitiveness gains come from the use of advanced tools.



Investing in digital skills is key

- Equipping a workforce with digital skills delivers dividends.
- But most respondents need to develop basic digital skills.



Remove obstacles to online participation

- High internet costs, low quality prevent deeper digitalization.
- Small firms: costly devices, fast connections are unaffordable.
- Staying current with new developments increases the chances of benefiting from use of digital technologies.



Advancing firm digitalization

Concluding remarks

- Closing **digital infrastructure** gap
 - Ensuring affordability
 - Investments from all sources
- Developing **digital skills**
 - Financial support for training for workers
 - Enhancing IT preparedness and digital skills learning within schools
- Updating countries' policy and **regulatory toolkit** for the digital age
 - Regulatory reforms to increase access to digital technologies
 - Fostering cross-border technology diffusion

Thank you!

