

UN Development Services Webpage

UNCTAD services to be included in the webpage:

Agency mission, mandate and history

Established in 1964, UNCTAD promotes the development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy. UNCTAD has progressively evolved into an authoritative knowledge-based institution whose work aims to help shape current policy debates and thinking on development, with a particular focus on ensuring that domestic policies and international action are mutually supportive in bringing about sustainable development.

Mandate

The organization works to fulfil this mandate by carrying out **three key functions**:

- It functions as a **forum for intergovernmental deliberations**, supported by discussions with experts and exchanges of experience, aimed at **consensus building**.
- It undertakes **research, policy analysis and data collection** for the debates of government representatives and experts.
- It provides **technical assistance** tailored to the specific requirements of developing countries, with special attention to the needs of the least developed countries and of economies in transition. When appropriate, UNCTAD cooperates with other organizations and donor countries in the delivery of technical assistance (information on service lines provided below pertain to this area of work).

Strategy

The Sao Paulo Consensus (SPC) sets thematic priorities that orient the content and determine the scope of UNCTAD's assistance. In parallel with these UNCTAD XI mandates, the 2003 technical cooperation strategy sets the overarching goals, the conceptual framework and the operational modalities that allow UNCTAD's assistance to be effective.

As the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and the interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development, UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities address these issues in a mutually complementary fashion.

The thrust of UNCTAD's technical cooperation is capacity development in the four main areas of its work i.e. globalization and development; international trade in goods and services and commodities, investment, technology and enterprise development; and services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency.

UNCTAD's technical cooperation aims at enhancing capacity development in beneficiary countries. In pursuing that goal, UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities seek to enhance the human and institutional capacities of developing countries to strengthen their national development policies and to create an environment conducive to sustainable development.

The technical cooperation strategy that was adopted by the Trade and Development Board in October 2003 (decision 478(L)) is based on several consultations with member States and on the application to UNCTAD assistance of the **“capacity development” concept** being used in the UN system. The strategy aims at setting the overarching principles, objectives and instruments of UNCTAD operations. The main goal is to enhance the endogenous capacity of beneficiary countries to face challenges and benefit from opportunities and to set and implement their own development strategies, as well as to emphasize the development of human, institutional, productive and export capacities of beneficiary countries.

The strategy calls for more inter-divisional cooperation within the secretariat and strengthened cooperation with other agencies providing technical assistance in the field of trade and investment. The strategy also refers to: intensified country-level activities, subject to availability of human and financial resources, partnerships with civil society, and networking activities; and monitoring and evaluation instruments. Both the Board decision and its annex pinpoint the need for predictable and sustainable resources and call for “long-term sustainable activities, particularly through multi-year funding mechanisms and interdivisional operations based on the thematic priorities set by the UNCTAD work programme”.

Beneficiaries

The population at large is the ultimate beneficiary of capacity-building and technical cooperation programmes.

Governments are the main direct beneficiaries of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities.

These services are available to all developing countries and countries in transition individually or through intergovernmental organizations, such as regional or subregional groupings. Priority is given to the 50 least developed countries (LDCs). The

main beneficiaries are usually officials in the relevant government departments. Participants in training and human-resource-related activities are selected by the countries concerned in consultation with the UNCTAD secretariat.

Through their Governments, individual companies, both public and private, in particular small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), can benefit from numerous UNCTAD projects.

Thus, representatives of the private sector are invited on a regular basis to attend, in particular, national seminars and workshops on various issues, which help them to have a better understanding of how to integrate themselves into the global economy.

Involving the private sector in technical cooperation activities helps to raise the business community's awareness of issues related to international trade and development and alert it to new trading opportunities, as well as enhance the national policy dialogue.

National ownership is a necessity for turning national stakeholders into active partners in the design and implementation of capacity-building programmes. That goes hand in hand with increasing reliance on expertise from developing countries and emerging economies: ownership and commitment by beneficiaries remain the priority.

Academia also benefits from UNCTAD cooperation, particularly through the Virtual Institute on Trade and Development launched in 2004. Several UNCTAD activities targeting parliamentarians and civil society are usually organized in close coordination with the national authorities, particularly regarding topics such as the WTO issues.

Overview of major service lines and examples

I. International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

1. Trade Analysis and research
2. Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy
3. Commodities
4. Trade, Environment and Development
 - (i) The BIOTRADE Initiative
 - (ii) Climate change programme

5. Competition and Consumer Policies

II. Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development

1. Investment Policies and Investment Promotion

- (i) International Investment Agreements
- (ii) Investment Policy Reviews
- (iii) FORINVEST (Policy Framework for Attracting Foreign Investment)
- (iv) STAMP (Strengthening and/or Streamlining Agencies concerned with Maximizing and Promoting FDI)
- (v) Other investment-related programmes
- (vi) UNCTAD's Work Programme on Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property
- (vii) UNCTAD/ICC Investment Advisory Council

2. Science and Technology

- (i) *Connect Africa project*
- (ii) *Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) Review*
- (iii) *Network of Centres of Excellence on Science and Technology (NCE)*

3. Enterprise Development

4. Insurance

5. Corporate transparency

III. Trade Logistics, Capacity Development and Information and Communication Technologies

1. Trade Logistics

- (i) Transport and trade facilitation

- (ii) Training on transport and trade facilitation
 - (iii) ASYCUDA programme
2. Human Resources and Information and Communication Technologies for Capacity Development
- (i) Building capacity through human resources development
 - (ii) Capacity development and e-applications
 - (iii) Capacity development for trade support institutions
3. Information and Communication Technologies and e-business

IV. International Finance

Debt Management – the DMFAS programme

V. Special Focus of UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Activities

- (i) Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance

VI. UNCTAD's Assistance to the Palestinian People

Examples of activities

Trade Policies, Trade Negotiations and Integration in the International Trading System

UNCTAD has long experience in providing advice and training to build up the capacity of countries in international trade negotiations so as to enable them to better integrate in the international trading system. Support is also provided for regional trade and regional integration arrangements. It has provided assistance to developing countries in practically all GATT trade rounds, and in subsequent negotiations within WTO.

Support is provided through capacity building, advisory services, workshops and training seminars for developing countries, especially LDCs, and countries with economies in transition in building human, institutional and regulatory capacities. Such activities include:

- Assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their accession to the WTO; Accession to the WTO is a very long and complex negotiation which requires extensive human resources and institutional capacities. The challenge is even bigger for developing countries and LDCs who have limited financial, human and institutional capacities to follow-up trade issues. This is a major area of UNCTAD's technical assistance programme through which 19 acceding countries, including all acceding LDCs, are being assisted. This work, includes assistance on pre, during and post WTO accession negotiations, implementation and policy and regulatory reform. Assistance provided included technical advice, training of officials in WTO-related issues, procurement of IT equipment, and the provision of specialized consultancy services in specific areas to assist negotiating teams. In 2006, technical and advisory missions were undertaken, to Bhutan, Sudan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Timor Leste, Algeria, Laos PDR and Yemen to assist them in their preparations including for meetings of their Working Party, or accession-related documents. Intensive training sessions were organized in Geneva and in the capitals for members of the negotiating team on managing the Working Party on Accession;
- Capacity-building activities, involving collaboration with the private sector, for the strengthening of policymaking in services and promotion of international trade in services; UNCTAD's innovative work on trade in services in terms of ground-level support and country and sector-specific assessments has the objective of helping countries to assess the contribution of services, reform the sector with an emphasis on development including strengthening access to essential services, and generate important data and reference material for multilateral and regional trade negotiations.
- Assistance with regional trade negotiations among developing countries and between them and developed countries; Developing countries, in particular LDCs and African countries, and their regional organizations approached UNCTAD to assist them for their beneficial participation in the WTO Doha Work Programme, ACP- European Union (EU) trade negotiations, regional trade negotiations addressing development issues arising from negotiations with the EU on partnership agreements, regional trade negotiations among developing countries, accession to the WTO, dispute settlement and the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and other trade preferences. Assist developing countries and LDCs to better understand technical issues involved in negotiations, carefully assess the state of play with regard to the different elements of the negotiating agenda and the development implications of each negotiating proposals, and pursue their strategic interests in the negotiations, and to ensure the outcomes duly reflect their critical developmental

concerns and interests. UNCTAD assisted developing countries in their preparations for participation in the *Doha negotiations* on modalities for agriculture, Non-Agricultural Market Access Negotiations (NAMA), services and development issues, among others, following up on the outcome of the 6th WTO Ministerial Conference. These included substantive contributions to the African Union Conference of Ministers of Trade (Nairobi, April); a consultation meeting for Asian and Pacific LDCs on the Doha negotiations (Geneva, June); technical meetings and seminars organized for individual countries (like Botswana, Cameroon, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, Zambia) or country groups like LDCs. UNCTAD continued to provide support on the FTAA negotiations to Latin America countries, and regional trade negotiations among developing countries. UNCTAD assisted Geneva-based trade negotiators, upon request, on an individual or group basis on trade negotiation issues of interest to them, particularly on agriculture, NAMA, services, LDCs-specific issues, small economies, and development issues. Important capacity building support was provided, including in services negotiations (see below). In the implementation of the project on Trade Capacity Development for sub-Saharan Africa, financed by UNDP, in 2006 UNCTAD organized and participated in two workshops for African countries. The Trade Negotiations and Africa Series: No. 3 entitled “Policy Issues for African Countries in Multilateral and Regional Trade Negotiations” was published. UNCTAD contributed substantively and attended to a number of high level workshops on Economic Partnership Agreements and WTO Doha negotiations organized by the African Union, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), South Centre and the Commonwealth Secretariats. These workshops dealt with critical issues affecting African countries in these negotiations. UNCTAD also contributed to a dialogue organized by International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) on issues of interest for African countries in the services negotiations. The ACP-EU negotiations of EPAs entered into a decisive stage in 2006 with the drafting of negotiating texts on the architecture of EPAs based on the agreed regional configurations among the ACP States and between them and the EU. UNCTAD provided expert and advisory services as well as organized strategy sessions on these negotiations, upon request, to the ACP States and through events organized by other agencies.

- Assistance in improving the utilization of the Generalized System of Preferences schemes and other preferential trade arrangements; UNCTAD continued promoting awareness and understanding among developing countries on better utilizing preferences available under the GSP through regular provision of information on the dedicated website, publication of Handbooks on the GSP schemes and providing other technical and administrative services. The Handbooks on GSP schemes of Japan and Turkey were prepared and updated, and several other issues of GSP Handbooks and a study on rules of origin are under preparation. The UNCTAD GSP database was continuously updated based on the primary data submitted by the GSP donor countries. It provides useful information on trade under

various GSP schemes, including their utilization rate. Data is currently available up to 2005 for Japan, the EU and the United States, and up to 2004 for Canada.

- Training activities on trade-related dispute settlement mechanisms; During its ten years of existence WTO dispute settlement has dealt with a high number of cases, interpreting and clarifying Members' existing rights and obligations under the WTO agreements. Besides creating a sophisticated body of jurisprudence, WTO panel and Appellate Body reports may also have implications for current and future negotiations. UNCTAD aims at making the rulings more accessible to trade negotiators. UNCTAD continued to develop knowledge and skills and to contribute to strengthening institutional capacities in developing countries to deal with dispute settlement in international trade, investment and intellectual property.
- Capacity-building activities under the JITAP (Joint ITC/UNCTAD/WTO Integrated Technical Assistance Programme to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries); as part of its capacity building support on the multilateral trading system, UNCTAD participates in implementing JITAP, with WTO and ITC. The programme's assistance targets eight African countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, Zambia. Support to the WTO (with ITC) in the setting up of multilateral trading system reference centre and national enquiry points in participating countries. This support, which involved training and installation of library software, was provided by the Central Statistics and Information Retrieval Branch of UNCTAD's Division on Globalization and Development Strategies. For each country, UNCTAD provided: (a) a general introduction and demonstration of the UNCTAD Website with a brief overview of UNCTAD, including on the online information resources available in the different parts of the site and sub-sites; (b) UNCTAD documentation content and structure; (c) UNCTAD on-line databases; and (d) other possibilities for document retrieval sources such as the UN Official Documents System, UNCTAD Reference Library on- line catalogue, UN Library Catalogue and other university libraries. An open source library management system¹ is installed and two days training on its utilization is provided. This software allows the Reference Center to catalogue and classify the information in hardcopy format, electronic format, CD-ROMS, Periodical, selected websites. Once the information is catalogued it can be easily retrieved and disseminated.
- Technical backstopping support of the Third Round of negotiations by the Generalized System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) Committee of Participants, as well as assistance in disseminating information on the GSTP to the general public. The GSTP negotiations, launched in June 2004 on the occasion of UNCTAD XI, focused on two issues: (1) techniques for exchanging tariff concessions that would lead to the objective of substantial trade liberalization (across-

¹ (PhpMyBibli) (www.pmbservices.fr).

the-board, line-by-line, linear reduction formula (combined with request-and-offer and sectoral negotiations); and (2) improvement and modernization of rules of origin of GSTP products (current rules were negotiated in the 1980s). The GSTP Negotiating Committee met at senior officials' level (Geneva, 11-12 December) and decided to conclude the negotiations by the end of 2007, including through finalizing work in the two areas of negotiations. The GSTP received a boost with the accession, in November, of Mercosur comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. LDCs that apply for accession to the GSTP Agreement in 2007 will be invited to participate in the negotiations.

Investment Policies and Investment Promotion

UNCTAD is the focal point within the United Nations Secretariat for matters related to foreign direct investment (FDI). It seeks to improve the understanding of developing countries and economies in transition of policy choices; strengthen their abilities to formulate and implement policies, measures and action programmes; and promote understanding of emerging issues, including the role of international arrangements for the purpose of attracting and benefiting from foreign direct investment (FDI). UNCTAD also hosts the secretariat of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA).

Investment Policy Reviews

Investment Policy Reviews (IPRs) conducted by UNCTAD provide developing countries with an external tool to assess how they stand at a given point in time in attracting FDI in consonance with national objectives, and assist in promoting the role of FDI as a source of external financing for development. IPRs encompass the following:

- An examination of the country's objectives and competitive position in attracting FDI;
- An audit of the country's FDI policy framework and administrative structures and procedures;
- A survey of firms to obtain investor perceptions and experience;
- A round-table meeting of stakeholders to discuss preliminary findings, policy options and recommendations; and
- A presentation in appropriate intergovernmental and international forums whereby other Governments and private sector representatives can familiarize themselves with the country's investment environment and policies.
- In 2006, two IPRs were completed (Rwanda and Morocco) and two were published (Columbia and Rwanda). A further IPR, Nigeria, was in progress.

- Follow up on IPRs were carried out for Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Peru, Rwanda and Zambia.

FORINVEST (Policy Framework for Attracting Foreign Investment)

FORINVEST provides assistance to developing countries in strengthening their capacity to create and manage the policy and operating climate in which foreign investment and international business can thrive.

It provides advisory services and training packages related to investment policy, investment legislation, investment codes, technology transfer and mechanisms for attracting investment, such as export processing zones and build-operate-transfer arrangements.

Enterprise Development

The objectives are:

- To improve SMEs' growth and international competitiveness; and
- To stimulate entrepreneurial potential.

In this respect, the *EMPRETEC* programme was established to:

- Improve the beneficiary country's development prospects and the outlook for job creation;
- Mobilize entrepreneurial resources;
- Help SMEs to compete in liberalizing and globalizing markets by fostering entrepreneurship, innovation and partnering; and
- Offer SMEs the skills, technology, opportunities, training and information necessary to help them realize their objectives, expand their activities and establish productive, stable linkages with foreign companies.

The programme creates the institutional capacity to stimulate employment-creating investment, technology transfer and exports through the development of indigenous entrepreneurs and innovative SMEs.

EMPRETEC promotes the creation and growth of SMEs through a business support network. The network is a self-sustaining and active coalition of public officials, entrepreneurs, corporate managers, bankers and executives of transnational corporations.

The main beneficiaries are SMEs, entrepreneurs with potential, women entrepreneurs, key country institutions and Governments.

It is important to highlight the fact that EMPRETEC transfers its methodologies to the counterpart institution in all the countries where the programme becomes operational. UNCTAD/EMPRETEC works with national institutions rather than individual entrepreneurs.

EMPRETEC Centres: 51 National EMPRETEC Centres (including 26 SEBRAE/EMPRETEC centres located in Brazil) are now in operation. Since the programme's inception in 1988, EMPRETEC programmes have been initiated in 27 countries, assisting entrepreneurs (Empretecocos) through local market-driven business support centres. To date, over 110,000 entrepreneurs have received entrepreneurship training (from almost 400 experienced UNCTAD-EMPRETEC master and national trainers) and follow-up support services.

Trade Logistics

(i) Transport and trade facilitation

The objectives are:

- To improve the performance of transport operators and auxiliary services; and
- Set up the necessary institutional and operational environment for the introduction of multimodal transport.

The activities regarding transport and trade facilitation include the creation of platforms to support the development of multimodal transport systems and to design solutions to overcome impediments to trade, advice and operational support for port management, modernization and harmonization of national transport legislation and regulations, elaboration of proposals to improve the efficiency of transit transport operations and advice on transit agreements between landlocked countries and their neighbours, and institutional and individual capacity building in these areas.

(ii) Training on transport and trade facilitation

The objectives are:

- To develop ad hoc and long-term institutional and individual capacity to implement trade and transport facilitation actions;
- To develop long-term institutional and individual capacity in port and shipping management.

Training and human resource development are carried out through transport and trade facilitation workshops at national and regional levels. There is also participation and ad hoc support to trade-logistics-related courses provided by academic or partner international organizations. The strategic planning workshop for senior shipping management (STRATSHIP) aims at improving the performance of shipping management. It is organized at least once a year and is based on a mixture of presentations, case studies and a computer-based management tool. The Port Training Programme for middle managers on modern port management, jointly developed with TRAINFORTRADE (see below), includes an eight-module course leading to a Port Management Certificate, providing middle managers with a full understanding of modern port management. A distance-learning version of the Port Management course is also available.

(iii) ASYCUDA programme

The objective is: The main objective of the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) programme is the modernisation of Customs, using information technology to speed up and simplify the clearance process of goods. The system manages the whole clearance process, from (and prior to) the arrival of the goods up to their warehousing and ultimate release after payment of duties and taxes. Project implementation includes a comprehensive training package that allows for the full transfer of ASYCUDA know-how and skills to national staff, thus ensuring the programme can be sustained by the national administrations.

In 2006 there were more than 54 operational ASYCUDA. The ASYCUDA programme remains the largest technical co-operation programme within UNCTAD, encompassing over 90 countries and 5 regional projects.

The ASYCUDA++ system became operational, or the number of operational sites was extended in Albania, Barbados, Burundi, Congo, Madagascar, Saint Lucia and Tanzania.

Activities for the implementation of ASYCUDA ++ or for the migration to ASYCUDA ++ started or continued in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Guinea, Nigeria, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago. Projects were signed in Mauritania, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent, and Eastern Africa.² Furthermore, support or extension projects were signed with the Central African Republic, Gabon, and Timor Leste. Technical cooperation agreements were renewed and extended with

² The Eastern African countries concerned were Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Seychelles and Swaziland, in cooperation with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and funded by the European-Union.

the Secretariats of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which allowed the organization of various activities (e.g. training, documentation) and the provision of regional support. A second regional support centre for Southern and Eastern Africa opened in Tanzania.

Human Resources and Information and Communication Technologies for Capacity Development

(i) Building capacity through human resources development

The objective is:

- To build national and regional capacities to formulate, negotiate and implement policies and strengthen trade-related skills that maximize the benefits of globalization for UNCTAD member countries, particularly the LDCs.

TRAINFORTRADE, the Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and the Virtual Institute on Trade and Development are the three UNCTAD complementary programmes that – by developing human resources – aim to build national and regional capacities to formulate, negotiate and implement policies and strengthen trade-related skills that maximize the benefits of globalization for UNCTAD member countries, particularly the LDCs.

These programmes operate in the fields of international trade, trade-related services, investment, tourism and port management, and create a network of expertise in developing countries, thereby reinforcing South–South cooperation.

The three programmes work with UNCTAD’s research and analytical departments to design learning materials, deliver training courses and develop systematic cooperation to exchange knowledge among partner institutions. They combine the use of a wide range of UNCTAD substantive expertise with networking and pedagogical capability in order to create comparative advantage and added value. They also make extensive use of ICT for distance learning and networking, so as to develop learning resources and activities adapted to the context of beneficiary countries, including the LDCs.

The target population are government officials involved in formulating and implementing effective trade, investment, and finance and development policies. Since other actors play a key role in these processes, the programmes also target trade and transport operators, import/export associations, chambers of commerce and NGOs dealing with trade, investment and development. To reach this population, the Virtual Institute works with the staff of universities involved in teaching and

research on policy aspects of international economic and development issues. Regional organizations are also actively involved in TRAINFORTRADE activities.

The three programmes offer distinct but complementary services to their beneficiaries:

- TRAINFORTRADE produces and delivers training packages and implements training activities in the framework of technical cooperation projects. Its quality derives from a rigorous methodology, comprising nine phases, which focus on the analysis of training needs, course development and the implementation and evaluation of training. It also adopts a train-the-trainers approach, which creates a cascade effect and facilitates sustainability at the national and regional levels.

- The UNCTAD Virtual Institute on Trade and Development is a new capacity-building initiative targeted at academic institutions that was launched in June 2004 as one of the multi-stakeholder partnerships endorsed by the Eleventh Conference of the organization. Its objective is to help strengthen the teaching and research capacity of participating universities in core UNCTAD areas (trade policy, investment, globalization) by developing systematic cooperation and knowledge exchange between UNCTAD and academia, and among participating university members of the Institute. Since universities play a key role in educating future and current decision makers and frequently advise Governments on national and international economic policies, this should contribute to the building of capacity in member countries to formulate, negotiate and implement policies that would maximize the benefits of globalization in terms of their economic and social development.

The Institute supports universities by (a) providing them with access to UNCTAD's analytical work, teaching materials and tools, including those that are specifically developed for the Virtual Institute; (b) assisting them in adapting relevant UNCTAD resources to their own national and educational contexts and in integrating them into their regular training activities and courses; and (c) facilitating a network of university members with expertise in trade and development that enables them to learn from each other through sharing training resources, curriculum development tools and experience, and encouraging collaboration among them and with UNCTAD on the development of relevant and up-to-date courses in response to their countries' training and development needs.

- The *Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda* conducts training needs analyses and develops training materials reflecting each region, with inputs from UN regional commissions, academic institutions and Governments in the countries where the course is held. Each training course focuses on (a) the main development-related features and trends on the international economic agenda; (b) the interfaces between trade, investment and development

issues and their implications for the formulation and implementation of integrated development strategies; and (c) the best practices in designing and implementing national, regional and international policies on trade and sustainable development.

(ii) Capacity development and e-applications

UNCTAD also aims at building up and strengthening local capacities in member countries by using information and communication technologies (ICT).

As part of the partnerships launched at UNCTAD XI, UNCTAD has designed a technical assistance package (the E-Tourism initiative) aimed at promoting the application of ICT in the sector of tourism so as to enable developing countries themselves to exploit their tourism resources and benefit from greater autonomy in creating and promoting their own brand.

The package builds on the experience accumulated by UNCTAD in the application of information technologies in economic development projects. It comprises three elements: (a) an electronic platform and a business model that helps countries to identify, standardize, coordinate and propose tourism services offered by local enterprises online; (b) a method: collecting information about the tourism and craft sectors, standardizing it and distributing it on the Internet; and (c) a partnership approach: enabling all stakeholders to coordinate their resources and objectives.

Information and Communication Technologies and e-business

ICT and e-business have considerable potential benefits to developing countries, from the business, consumer and institutional perspectives.

The objective is:

- To support interested developing countries in the establishment and implementation of policies and actions aimed at realizing the opportunities for economic development generated by ICT and their application to business and government operations, emphasizing efforts in sectors and industries of particular interest to developing countries.

In order to make its technical cooperation activities in this field more effective, a multi-stakeholder partnership on ICT for Development was launched during UNCTAD XI (June 2004). The Partnership envisaged several components, including the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, and the E-Tourism initiative mentioned above. Other component are work on free and open source software, and on e-finance. UNCTAD has also joined the Global ePolicy Resource Network (ePol-net).

Policy advice and capacity-building activities carried out by UNCTAD in the area of ICT and e-business include:

- Support for the formulation of national e-strategies for development;
- Reinforcement of the policymaking capacity of developing countries in the field of ICT, with a special focus on the statistical measurement of access to, and use and impact of, ICT;
- Strengthening of the capacity of developing countries to be active participants in international discussions concerning ICT, e-business, e-commerce and related matters, including through policy analysis dissemination and awareness creation among policymakers in developing countries;
- Analysis of legal and regulatory frameworks for e-business and e-commerce;
- Discussion of the implications of free and open source software;
- Use of ICT and e-business to maximize the development potential of sustainable tourism in developing countries; and
- General capacity building for the adoption of e-business and e-commerce practices by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Availability of expertise and technical capacity

UNCTAD professional staff (approximately 350 individuals) is involved in both research and analytical work and operational activities. They are available to provide expertise and technical capacity upon request.

Organizational set-up (HQ, Regional Offices)

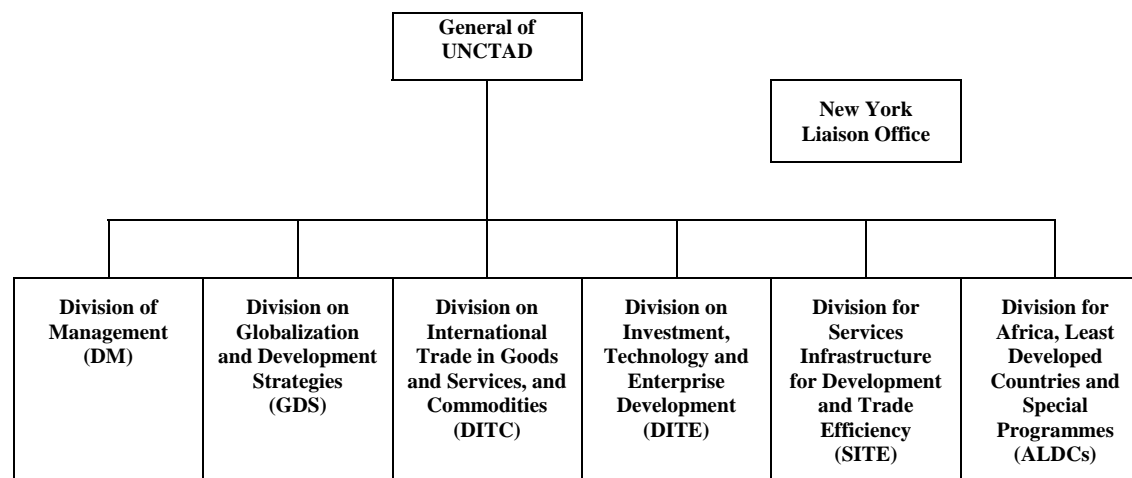
United Nation Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Headquarters are in Geneva – no field offices

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Office of the
Secretary-



Agency-specific UN Reform Update

UNCTAD, as a non-resident agency is particularly keen to participate in the “Delivery as ONE process”. It is fully committed to take practical initiatives to facilitate this participation. A number of proposals in this respect have been put forward in the Review of the Technical Cooperation Activities of UNCTAD - Report by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD (TD/B/WP/195) to be reviewed at the forthcoming meeting of the Forty-ninth session of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget, 10–14 September 2007.

Focal point contact information and link to agency webpage

All major technical cooperation programmes of UNCTAD have web-sites that can be accessed through the UNCTAD website: www.unctad.org

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