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Trade and Development Board

Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission

Multi-year expert meeting on enterprise development policies and
capacity-building in science, technology and innovation (STI)

Geneva, 20–22 January 2009

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Enterprise development policies and capacity-building in science, technology and innovation
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1. Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the expert meeting is reproduced in chapter I above. A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.II/MEM.1/1 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3 Enterprise development policies and capacity-building in science, technology and innovation

3. This first session of the multi-year expert meeting is being held further to the decision taken at the forty-fourth executive session of the Trade and Development Board on 10 July 2008. According to the decision of the Board, the multi-year expert meeting is to address four sets of interrelated policy issues in the fields of enterprise development and science, technology and innovation (STI). Among these, the present meeting will review the main elements identified for implementing an entrepreneurship policy: raising awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option; developing mechanisms for generating and highlighting potential entrepreneurial opportunities; supporting individuals who assume the risk of starting a firm or commercializing knowledge; and helping those struggling to grow their firms to gain access to necessary resources. It will highlight three main approaches that are relevant to encourage entrepreneurship in the start-up phase: entrepreneurship infrastructure (industrial parks, clusters and one-stop-shops); the promotion of university–industry–government collaboration; and access to financial resources, a major hurdle in developing countries.

4. A related set of issues explores policy options available to developing countries to help them build capacity in the field of STI, with a special consideration to creating an environment conducive to increasing enterprise productivity and competitiveness, in order to help generate the employment and income needed to reduce poverty and promote economic growth. The expert meeting should help identify the fundamental elements of STI policy interventions that have a more direct impact on poverty, particularly in terms of the ability of people living in poverty to benefit from STI. Among the multiple dimensions of the issue, three particular aspects are suggested for consideration by the experts: the means to improve awareness and understanding of the poverty implications of the design and implementation of STI policies and institutions, including with regard to innovation and technological upgrading; identifying best practices and experiences in promoting the technological upgrading of enterprises and the development of technology-based businesses to support poverty eradication; and enhancing the regulatory framework of STI in order to facilitate the access of people living in poverty to the benefits of STI, including through the promotion of open access approaches.

5. The outcome of the meeting will be used to complete a checklist of good practices and key components of entrepreneurship and STI policies that can help establish an environment conducive to increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the enterprises of developing countries, to promote economic

growth and reduce poverty. The checklist will help Governments benchmark their respective entrepreneurship and STI policies, to enable more effective policy design and implementation. It will also identify effective ways to support innovation and technological upgrading among small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurs.

6. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared two issues notes. The expert meeting will also benefit from the lessons learned from UNCTAD's technical assistance projects in this area. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare brief papers on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.II/MEM.1/2 Key elements of entrepreneurship policy

TD/B/C.II/MEM.1/3 The role of capacity-building for supporting pro-poor science, technology and innovation policies

Item 4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

7. The report of the expert meeting will be submitted to the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission at its next session. The expert meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Inputs from experts

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (approximately five pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting. The papers, which will draw on national and private sector experience, will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Experts are requested to submit papers by 1 January 2009 to: Mr. Victor Konde, Enterprise Development Branch, Division on Investment and Enterprise, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, fax: +41 22 917 0122; e-mail: Victor.konde@unctad.org with copy to: Mr. Angel Gonzalez-Sanz, Science, Technology and ICT Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, fax: +41 22 917 0052; e-mail: angel.gonzalez-sanz@unctad.org.