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- Virtual Institute
- Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda
- TrainForTrade
- E-Tourism Initiative (January-July 2008)

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DIVISION ON TECHNOLOGY AND LOGISTICS

KNOWLEDGE SHARING, TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

TRADE-RELATED CAPACITY-BUILDING THROUGH HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

TRAINING
AND
CAPACITY-
BUILDING

NOTE

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In 2008, the global economy began a retrenchment as a result of the international financial crisis, and as several economies witnessed a slowdown in growth and the possibility of recession. The effects of economic contraction on budgetary expenditures in developed countries may affect the level of development support they provide. These same effects will also heighten the need for knowledge and local expertise in developing countries to steer themselves through the crisis, to lay down foundations for sustainable economic growth and development, and to protect themselves against future crises. In this regard, the availability of locally grounded training, education and research in the areas of trade, economics and development will further gain in importance.

UNCTAD's twelfth quadrennial conference (UNCTAD XII) held in Accra, Ghana, in April 2008 had two positive impacts on the work and activities of the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch (KSTCD). First, the Accra Accord, which establishes the UNCTAD's mandate for the next four years, reaffirmed the value of training, education and research for economic development, and granted the Virtual Institute, the Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and TrainForTrade a consolidated mandate to continue and expand their activities in the above fields. Second, the e-Tourism programme was moved into another division to strengthen the work on small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) development, allowing the KSTCD Branch to focus exclusively on training and capacity-building. Whilst this document contains information about the e-Tourism activities for the first half of 2008, its focus and perspective are on the programmes of the Virtual Institute, the Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and TrainForTrade.

The three capacity-building programmes of the KSTCD Branch address challenges in developing country training and research institutions through different and complementary activities, tailored to the needs of their specific target audiences. The UNCTAD Virtual Institute on Trade and Development works mainly with academia and to some extent research institutes in developing countries; the Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda (so-called Paragraph 166 course) is UNCTAD's flagship training course for policymakers on trade and development; and TrainForTrade works with trade practitioners, trade officials and private enterprise.

The three programmes have existed for several years and are now well embedded both in the work of UNCTAD and at the national level in many participating institutions. Their usefulness has been consistently highlighted by both beneficiary and donor countries at intergovernmental meetings of UNCTAD, and in external evaluations and reports of advisory groups on the KSTCD Branch's activities. Experts participating in these groups have repeatedly praised the work of the three programmes, especially for their focus not just on training, but on capacity development at the local level.

UNCTAD believes that access to external technical expertise alone is not enough to develop the skill and knowledge capacities of developing countries. The KSTCD Branch therefore emphasizes the need to develop and support local institutions to ensure the long-term sustainability of its capacity-building efforts. To this end, the three programmes of the KSTCD Branch have integrated various tools and methods into their work, such as information and communication technologies (ICTs) and networking arrangements, as well as drawing on their pedagogical advantages in the creation of high-quality materials and the delivery of training. The KSTCD Branch also leverages various partnerships, both across divisions within UNCTAD and with partner institutions, such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and United Nations regional commissions.

This document summarises the main achievements and best practices in the course of the KSTCD Branch's activities in 2008.

The UNCTAD Virtual Institute (Vi) works with academia in developing and transition countries to strengthen their teaching and research of trade and development, and facilitates cooperation between the members of its university network in both “the North” and “the South”.

In 2008, the network grew from 23 members to 28⁽¹⁾, including the addition of three northern institutions to diversify the Vi's support to universities in the South and encourage greater networking and cooperation. The network also admitted two new members in Latin America.

In the same period, the Vi has also:

- Provided professional development opportunities to developing country teachers and researchers at workshops and through fellowships;
- Supported joint research between member institutions and launched the concept of mentored research projects for universities from least developed countries (LDCs);
- Updated its teaching materials as well as supported their adaptation to suit members' local conditions;
- Provided advisory services to developing country universities on course development and delivery, as well as access to expertise in international organizations in Geneva through several study tours;
- Developed multimedia teaching resources for use in the classroom or online, including expert presentations and short films on relevant topics;
- Launched a new website, which now has almost 1,000 registered users, receives almost 1,300 individual hits a month and records over 1,700 monthly downloads of its online materials;
- Advocated for stronger links between researchers and policymakers and facilitated communication between the two groups through dialogue activities such as round tables;
- Created new promotional material, including a short film, to help promote the programme and increase its financial resources in line with the demand from the current and prospective beneficiary universities; and
- Thanks to the generous contribution from the Governments of Spain and Finland, expanded activities for Latin America and LDCs.

⁽¹⁾ Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Belarus State Economic University (Minsk); University of Campinas, Brazil; Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada; University of Chile (Santiago de Chile); University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China; EAFIT University, Medellín, Colombia; Cairo University, Egypt; Université Pierre Mendès France, Grenoble, France; University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, Germany; Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India; School of International Relations, Tehran, Iran; L'Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, Milan, Italy; University of Jordan (Amman); University of Nairobi, Kenya; University of Mauritius (Réduit); Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique; Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Lima); State University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russian Federation; Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal; University of Pretoria, South Africa; Universitat de Barcelona, Spain; University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania; Makerere University Business School, Uganda; Vadym Hetman Kiev National Economic University, Ukraine; Universidad de la República, Montevideo, Uruguay; Foreign Trade University, Hanoi, Vietnam; University of the West Indies (Cave Hill Campus, Barbados)

Professional development: workshops and fellowships

Vi regional professional development workshops aim to enhance the knowledge and research skills of participating academics on specific topics covered by Vi teaching materials. The objective is to facilitate the use of these materials in regular teaching programmes at universities, and to encourage policy-oriented research on these topics. For this reason, as well as examining substantive issues such as investment or commodities, the workshops also cover methodological questions and data problems. Finally, in line with the Vi's emphasis on policy relevance in research, the workshops tackle questions of communication with policymakers and their involvement in the research process, and provide networking opportunities between the two groups.

This year's regional professional development workshop in Uganda focussed on the topic of foreign direct investment (FDI), covering both economic aspects and legal elements, in particular international investment agreements (IIAs). Twenty-four academics from 10 English-speaking African countries, mostly LDCs, attended the workshop, where they also had the opportunity to share their expertise, present their own research on the topic and get feedback from the resource persons and their peers. The workshop was co-funded by the Governments of Spain and Finland.

James Njuguna (Kenya) presents his research paper at the investment workshop in Uganda, November 2008



On the round table with policymakers

"My expectations were exceeded because it was very interesting to get the views of the policymakers. To me, the meeting was very fruitful because the two sides were able to say their views, as far as research is concerned."

Uganda workshop participant⁽²⁾

"I am thinking about writing a proposal for the Vi funding (Vi mentored research projects) and in this respect I want to contact the Ugandan Investment Authority to see in which area they would like someone to conduct policy relevant research."

Richard Sebaggala, Uganda

⁽²⁾ Comments given in the report are taken from feedback questionnaires where participants had the option of giving or not their names

On the workshop in general

"I have added to my knowledge in the sense that the country experiences, challenges and success are information I would have not read in text book. Learning from experts in the field has opened new possibilities of looking at the problems in FDI and finding possible solutions."

Victoria Ndzinge-Anderson, Botswana

"I got comments for improving my study on FDI and also materials that will enlighten my knowledge on FDI. A number of opportunities in terms of networking in research with some participants and the Vi were secured."

Charles Domician, Tanzania

The Vi has been concerned about the follow-up to its training workshops, with regard to the use of the knowledge and resources acquired, in participants' regular work. The Vi has worked hard to "embed" its training after the workshop has ended: this is partly achieved by the Vi's membership model, which offers long-term support. However, following feedback from previous workshops, this year the Vi launched a scheme of mentored research projects (MRPs) that will support workshop participants from LDCs in conducting research projects on the topics dealt with at the workshops. MRPs will be offered on a competitive basis, and successful applicants will have their project supported by an UNCTAD mentor, leading to submission of the final paper for publication or use in policymaking.



Madina Guloba (Uganda) and Martha Hailu (Ethiopia) at the investment workshop in Uganda

One year on... Impact of the trade and poverty workshop, Tanzania, 2007

"The question of Uganda signing the EPA brings in many questions on what this would mean for our environment, poverty reduction, employment, investment and food security. Hence, the workshop helped point out ways of how to capture some of these questions. Since I was new to the area of trade, the workshop made it easy for me to know more about the various research engines/databases and their usage, which has been useful in my other research work, say analysing the growth potential of Uganda, gender mainstreaming in cross-border trade in the Nile Basin, and during certain stakeholder workshops in the country."

Madina Guloba, Economic Policy Research Centre, Kampala, Uganda

The Vi also offers smaller scale national level professional development workshops. This year the Vi supported its member university in Viet Nam, the Foreign Trade University in Hanoi, by delivering, in cooperation with the UNCTAD's investment division, a two-day workshop on intellectual property rights and their developmental implications for teachers at the university, as well as other partner universities in the country.

Now in its third year, the Vi fellowship scheme also provides support to young academics seeking to develop their skills as researchers or prepare new teaching courses for their institution. This year, four fellows were accepted to work at UNCTAD for a period of four to six weeks. Three of the fellows, from LDCs in Africa (Uganda, Tanzania and Senegal) were supported by a grant from the Government of Finland and one fellow, from the Russian Federation, participated on a self-funded basis. All four fellows received support and guidance from the Vi secretariat as well as mentoring or advice from UNCTAD and other experts in their field of study.

The fellows worked on topics such as (a) the constraints facing the coffee exporting sector in Uganda; (b) the impact of financial liberalisation on the financial sector in Sub-Saharan Africa; (c) competitiveness of Senegalese enterprises and the use of ICTs: case study of call centres; and (d) e-commerce and international trade. During their time in Geneva, fellows also had the opportunity to make contacts and network with experts in various organisations as well as discuss some of the issues facing their countries in international negotiations, for instance the WTO, with the permanent missions in Geneva. At the end of their stay, the fellows presented their research to an invited audience from UNCTAD and their country missions.

On the impact of the fellowships

"I have a paper that I'm developing, and it's almost complete... That is quite a beautiful outcome! And secondly, I've gained more skills and more knowledge. That is something that I've gotten on very many aspects of the paper — How to write it, how to structure it, how to improve it, how to target it for the different people that I'm trying to speak to, and also the continuous appraisal that is here."

Francis Ejones, Vi fellow, 2008

The work of the membership: joint members' projects and the local adaptation of training materials

2008 began with the third Vi members meeting in Geneva. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for members to discuss areas of mutual academic interest, to present research and agree on the future work plan of the Vi network. This year's meeting launched two joint research projects, and a discussion took place about regional activities in Latin America and support to Vi members from the LDCs, sponsored by the Governments of Spain and Finland. The meeting also initiated the second round of the Vi's localisation programme (the adaptation of generic Vi teaching materials to suit local needs).

Member universities in Colombia and Viet Nam are writing a comparative study on the coffee sector in their countries - both of which are successful producers and global traders of coffee. Members in Egypt and Jordan are researching a study on Qualified Industrial Zones and, in doing so, are aiming to shed light on the trade creation and diversion effects of regional trade agreements in the Middle East. In Latin America, members from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Uruguay, in cooperation with the member university in Spain, have agreed to work on a joint research project on the future for cooperation and integration in the region. Discussions are also under way about a regional project on corporate social responsibility. The research is being coached by UNCTAD experts and the Vi secretariat, and will ultimately be submitted for publishing, as well as being presented at the fourth Vi meeting in 2009 and published on the Vi website.

Member universities also began adapting a second round of teaching materials, with 12 local versions of materials to be completed within the year or in early 2009. Members from Chile, Egypt, Kenya, the Russian Federation and Uganda are working on the adaptation of the material on regional trade agreements; those from Chile and Jordan are working on the material concerning trade data analysis; the member university in Mauritius has already completed localization of the material on trade and poverty; and a member from the Russian Federation decided to adapt the material on competitiveness and development. Two new localizations also started of the material on transfer of technology, conducted by the universities in the Russian Federation and the West Indies.

Because Vi teaching materials are produced for an international audience, they do not contain detailed information and data about each particular country in which they could be used. To address this issue, the Vi provides grants and expertise for the "localisation" of teaching materials to better suit members' local conditions. Additionally, other members who wish to have access to case studies or data from other regions, or a country from their own region, or model their own work on a successful precedent also make use of the localisations.

"I must say that this experience with the (localisation of) teaching material has been a huge experience in many ways... and such an excellent starting point for further developments in teaching and writing about international negotiations"

Maria-Alejandra Calle, Colombia

Access to expertise: study tours and curricular support

The value added that the Vi brings to its member universities includes UNCTAD's expertise on trade and development matters, as well as the access to the expertise available at partner international organizations. Several Vi services have been built around this comparative advantage: study tours of Geneva institutions for postgraduate students, advisory services on the establishment and design of masters level teaching programmes, video conference presentations and debates with UNCTAD experts, and direct teaching support to university Masters programmes.

This year, the Vi organized two study tours for its member universities in the Caribbean and the Russian Federation, with more than 70 students involved. The Vi also offered two shorter sessions for guest universities from Duke in Durham, United States, and a Vi affiliate member, Jorge Tadeo Lozano University in Bogota, Colombia. The students spent up to two weeks at UNCTAD and with Vi partner institutions, such as WTO, the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC), the World Intellectual Property Organization, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) and the South Centre.

The tours provide students with an in-depth overview of the trade policy and development agenda, and expose potential future trade professionals to the environment of trade negotiations, as well as international experts and representatives of the students' countries in charge of negotiations in Geneva. In the case of the University of the West Indies, the study tour is a mandatory component of the master's programme in international trade policy.



Students of St. Petersburg University, Moscow State Institute of International Relations and the Higher School of Economics at this year's Russian study tour

In addition to study tours, the Vi also provided advisory and curriculum support to the Makerere University Business School in Uganda on the development of a master's programme in trade and development. The programme is essential for Uganda as it seeks to increase the quality and quantity of its trade professionals to work in both the public

sector and private sector professional associations. Advice was also provided to the Foreign Trade University in Viet Nam on the development of their new courses on trade in services, and intellectual property rights and development. The preparation of these courses was triggered by the post-WTO accession needs of the country for professionals knowledgeable on these issues.

The Vi also facilitated several teaching inputs to master's programmes via the use of video-conferencing and direct training. Staff from UNCTAD's *World Investment Report* team gave virtual presentations to students at universities in Cairo, Egypt; Lima, Peru; and Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Russian Federation. These were followed by interactive discussions. A presentation on international investment agreements (IIAs) was organized for the University of Chile. The Vi also facilitates the travel of UNCTAD staff to teach courses in member universities; this year, one UNCTAD staff member delivered a course on international trade logistics for the University of Mauritius, and provided materials and advice on future development of the course at that university. These contributions also aim to assist local teachers to take over the delivery of such courses in the future.

Access to knowledge: the website, training materials and newsletters

At the start of 2008, the Vi launched a new website with enhanced functionalities to better cater for the needs of its members. The site features a new database of teaching resources and several interactive and multimedia features. For example, members can now upload documents and research to the site, and comment on existing resources and news items. The site also contains newly produced multimedia resources, such as expert presentations for use in the classroom or for private study and short films. The Vi and its network members can now share information and resources more easily and benefit from more opportunities for networking with each other. Towards this end, the Vi also produced four quarterly newsletters in 2008, which keep universities and individuals up to date on network activities, research and teaching opportunities, and newly available

resources, web-links and publications.

In addition to the multimedia resources produced for teaching, the Vi created a new promotional documentary film about its work in capacity-building for trade and development policies. The film features the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, representatives of beneficiary country Governments and universities, as well as Vi donors and partners, who speak about their experience with the Virtual Institute and its services. The film will be used to promote the Vi and assist in fund-raising activities.

During 2008, the Vi updated its teaching material on FDI and IIAs, and published a new teaching material on the transfer of technology, which was requested by network members at the second Vi meeting. Work has been started - jointly with the WTO research division and UNCTAD colleagues working on trade analysis - on converting the Vi teaching material on trade data analysis into a book by adding chapters and producing a CD-ROM with exercises. The Vi also hopes to publish soon the results of a joint project between two universities in India and Colombia - a teaching material on trade and the environment. The material will be available to all members of the Virtual Institute.

The Vi also provides its members with access to other organisations and their publications via cooperation agreements it has developed with several institutions. In 2008, the World Bank, ICTSD and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) joined existing Vi partners, the WTO, the South Centre, the United Nations Economic Commissions for Africa (UNECA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), thus increasing the opportunities for members to access up-to-date knowledge on trade and development issues.

Expansion of the network: new members in 2008



The Vi network 2008

The Vi secretariat is a small team based in Geneva, comprising three permanent staff, with the addition of consultants, when funding permits. For this reason, it has become increasingly challenging to expand the membership of the network and to sustain the desired level of support to Vi members. In 2008, the strategy therefore was to grow the developing country membership very modestly and to add developed country universities, which may be able to help the Vi in providing support to Southern partners.

In 2008, the network core membership expanded by roughly 23% as the Vi was joined by universities in Barcelona, Spain; Milan, Italy; and Berlin, Germany; and two universities from Latin America, in Montevideo, Uruguay, and in Lima, Peru. Three universities - from Brazil, the Russian Federation and South Africa - also joined as affiliate members. The number of individual members of the Vi network grew from 250 to 630, an increase of roughly 150 per cent. Individual members have access to some - but not all - of the online resources, the newsletter and some other online features. They also receive information about upcoming professional development opportunities.

"The UNCTAD workshop is a valuable learning process. I recommend that it be sustained and advertised to more universities and research institutes and policymakers. I would like to continue as a member of the Vi and hopefully link my university to Vi."

Uganda workshop participant

The Training course on key issues on the international economic agenda - or Paragraph 166 course as it is also known - primarily targets policymakers - both in government ministries and agencies, and in permanent missions to the United Nations in Geneva. It is delivered in two forms: three-week regional courses for policymakers working in the Government, and short (half-day) courses for Geneva-based diplomats.

New two-year series of regional courses started in 2008

The participants of the regional course are predominantly government officials who work on specialized tasks in trade ministries, investment agencies or central banks. The course gives them a comprehensive overview of how economic factors such as international trade, finance, investment and technology are related to one another, how they can impact positively on the economic and social development of their countries and how appropriate policies in these areas can bring gains from the globalized economy. At the end of the course, participants are able to better understand the links between their specific work and the overall economic development objectives of their countries, enabling them to better contribute to the formulation of national trade-related policies and international negotiating positions coherent with their countries' interests.

The year 2008 saw the launch of a new two-year series of regional courses. In order to prepare for this new session, and to incorporate feedback from past participants, a brainstorming session with UNCTAD resource persons was organized in April 2008 to discuss the future structure and content of the courses. How to strengthen the links and coordination between individual modules so that the course gives a clear and coherent message? How to gradually build elements throughout the entire course in preparation for the final simulation exercise? How to make participants reflect on and apply the acquired knowledge? How to increase the relevance of the course for participants' countries?

In response to these questions, the content, sequencing and messages of individual modules were reviewed for coherence. The programme was enriched with detailed case studies and lessons learnt from previous policy decisions - such as national investment strategies or information technology strategies - and critical examinations of negotiating proposals tabled, for instance, at WTO. Greater emphasis was also placed on the application of knowledge acquired during the sessions to concrete policy situations, through exercises and group discussions. The participants, for instance, reflected on how their Governments' policies were influenced by globalization processes and international rules and commitments, or on where their country would wish to be in 20 years, and what measures they would suggest to get there. The simulation exercise, which focused on reaching national consensus among stakeholders on a WTO negotiation issue, also benefited from the fact that various facets of the issue were gradually addressed in each specialized module. Finally, the design of the programme continued with the collaboration of United Nations regional commissions, Virtual Institute members and national experts ensuring a rich, relevant programme combining global, regional and local perspectives on trade, investment, finance and development issues.

Two three-week regional courses were organized in 2008 – one for transition economies in Minsk, Belarus (June-July 2008), and one for Western Asia in Manama, Bahrain (October-November 2008). Forty-two participants from 20 countries in the two regions attended the courses.



Participants at the Minsk course, 2008



Participants at the Manama course, 2008

UNCTAD continued inviting academics as both participants and resource persons to the course. The intention is to encourage the integration of course materials and knowledge into regular academic programmes at participating countries' universities. The course also aimed to facilitate exchanges between policymakers and academics so that the academics better understand policy concerns and policymakers are better aware of analytical research and findings that could help them in the formulation of policies.

The inclusion of academics since 2006 has improved (a) the quality of the debate; (b) approach to problem solving based on research and empirical evidence; (c) exchange of ideas and information from participants across the region; and (d) the understanding of different perspectives and experiences on regional issues.

The course for transition economies was hosted by Virtual Institute member university, Belarus State Economic University. Vi member coordinator and investment expert, Alena Petrushkevich contributed a presentation about investment trends in her country. Six academics from Belarus, the Russian Federation and Latvia also attended the course as participants, often along with policymakers from their countries, which facilitated country-relevant interaction, and opened opportunities for further cooperation between them. An academic from Egypt also attended the course for Western Asia in Bahrain.

The new website with online registration that was launched in 2006 continued to provide downloadable pre-course reading materials and exercises, and its online discussion forum was used in the two courses.

Short courses for Geneva-based diplomats entered their second year

The objective of short courses is to update Geneva-based policymakers on the most recent issues and developments on the international economic agenda, so that they may provide relevant information and advice to their Governments and best represent the interests of their countries in international negotiations.

The success of the first series of monthly half-day short courses in 2007 led UNCTAD member States to request their continuation in 2008. The programme of the courses is demand-driven: the diplomats themselves propose areas on which they would require updating. Their suggestions are complemented by courses on emerging topics on which UNCTAD and its individual divisions conduct research work.

In 2008, a series of six short courses for Geneva-based delegations were delivered in the following areas:

- Trade and environment;
- Explaining the capital flow paradox;
- SMEs and the global value chains;
- Aid for Trade and development;
- Adapting to the new energy realities: trade and development perspectives; and
- Addressing the global food crisis through trade and development strategies.

To facilitate the access and use of course materials by both the participants and other interested parties not able to attend the courses, UNCTAD developed a special website (<http://p166.unctad.org/shortcourses>). The site contains all the documentation (presentations, background readings, presenters' information, lists of participants, and, most recently, videos of the presentations given at each course.

An average of 47 diplomats from developing, transition and developed countries participated in each short course, with a peak attendance of 63 participants.



Participants at the short course in Geneva on Aid for Trade and development, September 2008

Impact of the courses

UNCTAD pays particular attention to the evaluation of the course's impact and its multiplier effects in participating countries. A first evaluation is conducted at the end of each course, and focuses on immediate participants' opinions about the course, as well as their plans with regard to the use of the newly acquired knowledge and materials in their future work. Six months later, another evaluation is conducted to check how the course knowledge was actually used and whether their plans have been implemented. The course team stays in touch with the participants to follow up, provide further assistance, and keep track of participants' work.

The end-of-course evaluations completed by participants of the Minsk course showed that 96 per cent of the participants appreciated the design and coherence of the programme, which treats development from the multiple perspectives of trade, finance and investment.

"I have understood more about the dynamics and the challenges of international trade negotiations. We were exposed to different negotiating positions and the course enhanced my negotiating skills."

Tatiana Sadovskaya, Head of Sector of Innovation Development of Economy,
Institute of Economics, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus

Ms. Sadovskaya also said that many aspects of the course could be incorporated into her teaching programmes for postgraduate students at the National Academy of Sciences. She subsequently informed UNCTAD that her Government had entrusted the National Academy of Sciences with a review of the Government's approach to the services sector. A research group was established to this end, which she was invited to join. She felt that the knowledge gained from the course will be very useful for her work in the group.

Ms. Alena Petrushkevich, who served as a resource person in the Minsk course, appreciated that the programme combined the most contemporary topics in international economics, as well as their developmental implications for economies in transition.

"The course exceeded all my expectations. Its approach was focused not just on presenting information and theory on policy design but on generating debates and brainstorming on economic development, and presentations by participants of their findings. The methods used by UNCTAD experts were an essential advantage of the course which distinguished it from many others."

"The simulation exercise on the General Agreement on Trade in Services was unique in that it synthesized the concepts learned in all the training modules".

Ms. Alena Petrushkevich, Associate Professor, Belarus State Economic University

In the evaluations conducted at the end of the spring 2008 series of short courses, all the diplomats invariably stated that the courses had raised their awareness of trade topics. For 71 per cent of them, the training, debates and materials received were directly useful for their work. The understanding of the background of economic concepts helped them, some said, to further their negotiations at the WTO more skilfully. The remaining 29 per cent of participants valued the courses' contribution to raising their awareness of areas in which they were currently not involved but which were of interest for their future careers. Many also complimented the efficient organization of the courses and the selection of topics that responded very well to their personal expectations.

Future courses

Over the years, the regional course has forged itself a solid reputation, and is now recognized as an innovative product on the market for trade-related technical assistance services, particularly due to its unique integrated approach to trade and development. This recognition results in an increased interest from member States to send participants to the course – which is regularly oversubscribed – and their willingness to host the course and contribute, within their possibilities, to sharing some of the course costs.

The importance and relevance of the course are also recognized by the ambassadors of member States leading the course's Advisory Body. The body recently reiterated its support for the programme, called for doubling the number of regional courses delivered, and supported UNCTAD Secretary-General's efforts to raise the necessary funds.

Three regional courses - for Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific -are planned for 2009 using the currently available financial resources. Short courses will also continue to be offered to Geneva-based diplomats throughout next year.

TrainForTrade has developed over the years an expertise in promoting local ownership in the field of trade-related and development issues by involving multiple stakeholders from relevant ministries, private institutions, as well as academia and non-governmental organizations. Evaluations carried out by independent experts acknowledge the results obtained through the programme's approach to capacity-building.

The TrainForTrade training and capacity-building strategy is based on three elements:

- A sound methodology for the development and continuous updating of pedagogical material;
- A flexible learning method that includes both face-to-face deliveries and the use of distance-learning (DL) tools adapted to the technological conditions of all developing countries, including LDCs; and
- An institutional approach which promotes local ownership through the setting up of national/regional steering groups and train-the-trainers activities.

Course development

In 2008, in cooperation with other UNCTAD divisions and programmes, TrainForTrade continued revising, updating and adapting its courses to better meet beneficiaries' needs. An updated version of the course material on "Third Generation Investment Promotion" targeting member countries of the Latin American and the Caribbean Economic System (SELA) is now available in English. A distance-learning version of the same course is also available in Lao language.



Also, two distance-learning courses, on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce and on Competition Law and Policy have been adapted into Khmer. New versions of the workshops for the training of instructors and of DL tutors are now offered in both Khmer and Lao. These courses are now used to train local trainers and DL tutors for course deliveries in Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Moreover, updated versions of the DL courses on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce and on International Investment Agreements were prepared into Spanish and uploaded to the TrainForTrade platform (<http://learn.unctad.org>) for the use of trade operators from the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and its secretariat.



Future trainers in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

In cooperation with the UNCTAD Trade, Environment and Development Section, a new course on energy and environment is being designed in the framework of the TrainForTrade project for Angola. The course, developed in Portuguese, targets government officials and decision-makers.

Course deliveries

In 2008, seven train-the-trainer courses, out of which one for DL tutors, were organized for 106 African, Asian and Latin American trade operators who can now take an active part in local seminars and initiate training schemes in their countries. Also in the past year, a total of 21 face-to-face and DL workshops benefited 609 trade operators (about 229 women and 380 men) from 39 developing countries, including 17 LDCs. About 291 of these trainees followed distance-learning courses all over the world. These workshops were organized in cooperation with other UNCTAD services, such as the Information and Communication Technologies Analysis Section, Division on Technology and Logistics; the Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch and the Competition and Consumer Protection Branch, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities; the Enterprise Development Branch and the Policy and Capacity-building Branch, Division on Investment and Enterprise.

In addition, during the past year, TrainForTrade organised in Phnom Penh, Valencia, and Bamako three high-level workshops on training and trade-related issues, on training and port management issues, and on training and sustainable tourism issues. These meetings offered the possibility of discussing new technical assistance activities for South-East Asia, Latin America and French-speaking African countries.

Activities by region

Africa:

The past year saw the launch of technical assistance activities in Angola. In previous years, TrainForTrade had designed a four-year project to respond to the request made by the Angolan Government for strengthening their training and institutional capacities in the field of international trade. Thanks to the funds made available in 2007 by the European Commission, the first activity of the project started in January 2008.

As an initial step, TrainForTrade carried out in Luanda an in-depth needs assessment mission to discuss with the national steering committee the priority actions to be taken in the fields of investment, transport and logistics, competition law, and energy and environment, and to set up an action plan for the first year of the project.

Based on such plan, TrainForTrade implemented an extensive programme on International Investment Agreements (IIAs). Starting in June, a nine-week DL course was organised to improve the understanding of the participants on IIA key issues. The course was held in Portuguese and was attended by 78 participants from Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Príncipe. In addition, a case study was developed to analyse the IIAs signed by Angola in the light of their investment policies. Moreover, from 4 to 7 November, a four-day intensive training in Portuguese was delivered in Luanda to 25 international investment agreement negotiators from Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Príncipe. The objective of this face-to-face training session was to reinforce the participants' knowledge and improve their skills in negotiating the international investment agreements.

In the framework of the same project, assistance was provided to government officials, judges and jurists to draft a competition law for Angola; TrainForTrade also organized a three-week training of port trainers in Luanda and started the design of specific training material on trade, energy and environment.

Guinea also benefited from the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade technical assistance activities. A joint UNCTAD / International Trade Centre (ITC) project, funded by the French Development Agency, was signed in 2008 for the "Strengthening of Guinean capacities in the field of international trade through training, support to intermediate institutions and direct assistance to food-processing businesses and units". This two-year pilot project aims at promoting the integration of Guinea in international trade through capacity development and training. In cooperation with the Ministry on Trade and Competitiveness of Guinea, project activities were launched on 28 October in Conakry with the establishment of an annual work plan covering activities in the fields of trade facilitation, international investments agreements and transit systems.

In the area of ***sustainable tourism for development***, TrainForTrade continued to promote its training and capacity-building activities for African countries. As a follow-up to the decisions taken during the roundtable on sustainable tourism held in Geneva in November 2007, TrainForTrade organized the Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism for Development targeting African French-speaking countries in Bamako, Mali, in October 2008. The event, preceding the International Forum on Non-Exploitative Tourism⁽³⁾, was carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Handicraft and Tourism of Mali. About 31 delegates from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal, as well as representatives from donor institutions, exchanged experiences and views on ways of developing sustainable tourism in their countries. Recommendations adopted at the workshop valued the importance of training and capacity development activities for LDCs. Participants also stressed the necessity of involving policymakers and trade operators in the decision process, and welcomed the use of ICTs in the field of sustainable tourism to help fighting poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



Participants in the Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism for Development, Bamako, Mali

(3) Forum International du Tourisme Solidaire - (FITS)

Also in the field of sustainable tourism, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Madagascar and the German Cooperation Agency (GTZ) programme on "Sustainable Management of Natural Resources", TrainForTrade prepared a project with the objective of reducing poverty through the development of the tourism sector, as foreseen in the Madagascar Plan of Action (MAP). This three-year project is in line with TrainForTrade priorities on tourism for sustainable development. The first activities will be implemented at the beginning of 2009.

Moreover, a joint UNCTAD/ITC TrainForTrade project to promote a "Sustainable Community Tourism" in Benin was officially agreed in the past year. This 18-month project, to be funded under the Integrated Framework of Benin, aims at developing local capacities in the field of tourism in Abomey, Ganvié and Ouidah. A joint E-Tourism/TrainForTrade project document has also been prepared for Mali under the Integrated Framework.

Asia:

The year 2008 saw the implementation of the recommendations made by the mid-term independent evaluation of the regional project for Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic carried out in the previous year. Progress was made on the transfer of the project management to local authorities (two national project teams were recruited and trained), thereby facilitating local ownership of project activities. Stronger partnerships with the Cambodian Royal School of Administration and the Lao Economic Research Institute for Trade were discussed. National networks of trainers and DL tutors were established in both countries. Capacity-building activities, such as the organisation of training seminars⁽⁴⁾ and round-tables⁽⁵⁾, are now being organized and run by local teams.

As a result of the training and capacity activities which have been carried out by TrainForTrade in the Lao People's Democratic Republic for the past four years, the first online course in the Lao language was organized from 20 November to 19 December 2008. The delivery of this DL course on National Investment Promotion was made possible thanks to:

- *The design of a TrainForTrade course adapted to Lao needs;*
- *Its translation into vernacular language and its further adaptation to the distance-learning delivery;*
- *A strong partnership with a relevant local training institution; and*
- *An appropriate pedagogical training provided by the programme to local instructors, course developers and DL tutors so as to build local training capacity. A national team is now able to locally organize and manage face-to-face and distance-learning courses, according to the needs established at the national level by the Lao Steering Committee on training and capacity-building for trade and trade-related issues.*

This allows the local TrainForTrade team to reach out target population which is in need of training but cannot access traditional courses either for lack of time or language skills.

⁽⁴⁾ For example the training seminar on investment promotion organized in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

⁽⁵⁾ Such as the round table on e-Commerce or the ones on competition law.

In February 2008 the TrainForTrade programme organised in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the UNCTAD High-Level Conference on Trade-Related Capacity Development in Selected East-Asian Countries. About 135 representatives from Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Viet Nam - as well as France and other donor countries and organisations - attended the event. The conference adopted a concluding statement, in which the participants reaffirmed their commitment towards trade-related capacity development programmes such as those developed by the UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme.

As a result of the Phnom Penh conference, Indonesia requested the implementation of an UNCTAD project on Strengthening Capacities in the Field of International Trade Targeting Key Institutions of the Republic of Indonesia. TrainForTrade has been working in close cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Indonesia and the Centre for Education and Training of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to respond to this request.

Latin America:

During the past months TrainForTrade has been extremely active in the region, consolidating its presence with successful course deliveries and through the expansion of its activities to new countries and topics, with the support of the Kingdom of Spain.

In the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNCTAD and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, TrainForTrade organized several training needs analysis missions to Central American countries. Based on the results of these missions, a capacity-building plan was prepared and started to be implemented.

In June 2008 a training of DL tutors took place in Guatemala City, Guatemala, to expand to all Latin American Spanish-speaking countries the network of TrainForTrade DL Tutors, which was developed in South America in 2007. The course was organized for ten participants from Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Paraguay who are now able to coordinate the delivery of TrainForTrade DL courses in their countries.

Delivery of the DL course on Legal Aspects of e-Commerce in Cuba, Paraguay and Colombia



Thanks to the financial support of the Spanish Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade, and in cooperation with the UNCTAD Information and Communication Technologies Analysis Section, a four-week DL seminar on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce was delivered in August and September to 99 participants from ten ALADI member States. This seminar was followed by a face-to-face regional workshop on Cyberlaws organised jointly with the ALADI Secretariat and the Argentinean Ministry of Foreign Affairs. About 20 participants from nine ALADI member States exchanged views on e-business issues, reviewed related existing laws and discussed plans for the creation of a regional harmonized legal framework for Internet-based commerce.

From the distance-learning course on Legal Aspects of e-Commerce

"I consider that the workshop was very interesting and comprehensive with regard to the duties I am fulfilling in the field of consumers protection; and I am convinced that it [this course] will enhance the work I do thanks to the acquired knowledge."

"In my opinion it is vital to develop this type of courses where participants have the possibility of exchanging their experiences with all the professionals involved in the development of e-commerce issues."

Participants from the ALADI Member countries

A distance-learning regional course targeting negotiators on international investment agreements was delivered via the UNCTAD distance-learning platform to 108 policy-makers and local experts from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. This five-week training was followed by a face-to-face workshop on dispute settlement organised in Costa Rica by the UNCTAD International Investment Agreements Programme in November 2008.

TrainForTrade also carried out, together with the UNCTAD Investment Facilitation Section, a training course on Investment Targeting for Economic and Social Development. The workshop, held in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from 4 to 7 November, benefited 42 participants from 16 SELA member States. This event was organised in cooperation with the SELA permanent secretariat.

Port Training Programme

The TrainForTrade/Port Training Programme continued its training and capacity-building activities with the involvement of the ports of Conakry, Cotonou, Dakar, Douala, Dublin, Dunkirk, Ghent, Gijón, Leixões, Lomé, Marseilles, Mindelo, Praia and Valencia. Activities started or continued in the framework of English-, French-, Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking networks, and in Khmer for Cambodian ports (3rd cycle).

French-speaking network :

In 2008, African port members of the TrainForTrade Port Training Network continued to implement the Port Training Programme and delivered new cycles of the "Modern Port Management" course in the following ports:

Structure	Country	Training cycles
Cotonou Autonomous Port	Benin	5 th cycle
Douala Autonomous Port	Cameroon	5 th cycle
Conakry Autonomous Port	Guinea	3 rd cycle
Dakar Autonomous Port	Senegal	6 th cycle
Lome Autonomous Port	Togo	4 th cycle

About 78 participants from the port communities of Cotonou, Douala, Dakar and Lomé are now preparing their final assignments to be presented before a panel of port experts in order to be granted the UNCTAD Port Certificates in 2009. The participants of the Conakry Autonomous Port in Guinea were trained on the "Modern Port Management" course in 2007 and presented their assignments in 2008.

Portuguese-Speaking network :

The training of port trainers in Luanda

A Training of Trainers workshop for African Portuguese-speaking port communities was organised in Luanda, Angola, from 14 July to 1 August 2008, with the support of the Port Authority of Luanda. The workshop focused on Modules 5 to 8 of the Modern Port Management course, and concluded the training cycle started in Portugal in July 2006. The course was attended by 14 participants from Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. The workshop aimed to train future trainers on the modern functioning of an innovative port which incorporates the needs of port communities, so as to contribute to the efficiency of port activities. This seminar held in Angola was carried out in the framework of the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade project for Angola financed by the European Commission.



During the same period, a coordination meeting of the Portuguese-speaking network was organised in Luanda with representatives from three PALOP countries⁽⁶⁾: Angola, Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde. Conclusions of the meeting recommended, inter alia, the extension of the programme to the Ports of Mozambique.

English-speaking network :

In 2008, fact-finding missions¹ were organized jointly by UNCTAD and the Dublin Port Company (Ireland) in Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania to assess the needs of local port communities in the areas of human resources development, training and capacity-building. These missions followed the recommendations of the Dublin Coordination Conference of June 2007 and were founded under the project financed by the Irish Aid.

The next step in the development of the English-speaking network of UNCTAD's Port Training Programme was the organisation of the first Training of Trainers workshop on the "Modern Port Management" course, modules 1 to 4, in Dublin, Ireland. This intensive workshop was programmed on a full-time basis from 22 September to 10 October 2008. A total of 31 instructors from the port community of Dublin, UNCTAD and from the port communities of Ghent, Gijón and Valencia delivered the corresponding modules

⁽⁶⁾ "Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa" (Portuguese-speaking African countries)

Feedback from the Dublin train-the-trainers workshop:

Comments from the participants

"The course was good and well delivered; it enhanced my understanding of social and economic factors within which a port operates".

"From the subjects covered that I liked the most, were the examples and practical illustrations on issues such as cargo handling, which are relevant to my job".

"The topic [is important] for my job and my responsibilities, in particular when it refers to future challenges and the evolution of a port".

The 15 participants selected amongst senior managers of the Port Communities of Tema, Takoradi and Accra (Ghana), Sabang and Medan (Indonesia), Kuantan (Malaysia), Male (Maldives) and Dar es Salam (United Republic of Tanzania), have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to become trainers in their own countries. They are now able to use the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade Port Training Programme pedagogic material and to replicate the training at the national level for the benefit of middle managers from their own port communities.



Port Trainers from English-speaking Developing Countries meet the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs in Dublin

Spanish-speaking network :

TrainForTrade launched its Port Training Programme activities for Latin America at the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade International Coordination Conference for Port Communities of Spanish-speaking Developing Countries. The event took place in Valencia in March 2008 and gathered port authorities from 11 Latin American countries. At the end of the conference participants expressed their interest in port training activities and invited all Spanish-speaking port communities to get involved in the TrainForTrade Port Training Programme. As a follow-up to the conference several fact-finding missions have been organized in the region, followed by the organisation of a Training of Trainers workshop in Gijón, Spain.



Representatives of Latin American and European port communities meet in Valencia

From 10 to 28 November 2008, UNCTAD experts as well as instructors from the port communities of Gijón and Valencia delivered the first four modules of the "Modern Port Management" course to 15 future trainers of the Spanish-speaking port training network. The participants - who are senior port managers in Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru - acquired the skills and knowledge to serve as trainers in their own countries.

Feedback from the Gijón workshop:

I would like to convey our thanks for the knowledge acquired through this training which will enable Latin American ports represented in Gijón to better compete in a globalized world and to play a better role in the logistics chain, especially with regard to future challenges and the evolution of a port.

Edwin Ramirez, Guatemala

The activities related to the Spanish-speaking network of UNCTAD's Port Training Programme were possible thanks to the close cooperation with the Spanish partner ports of Valencia and Gijón, in the framework of the memoranda of understanding that were signed between them and UNCTAD, and with the support of the Government of Spain.

TrainForTrade Activities in 2008



Tourism is an information-intensive sector. The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has completely transformed the value chain in tourism - the ways local suppliers can interact and cooperate to develop new value-added services and sell them directly to increasingly demanding markets, and how they manage the revenues gained. By facilitating access to market information and best practices, ICTs offer tourism businesses, especially SMEs, unprecedented opportunities to increase their competitiveness.

The growth of tourist flows and the differentiation of tourists' requirements on the one hand, and the organisation of suppliers to meet the expectations of specific market segments on the other, have increased the importance of destination management. Three elements are crucial in this regard: (a) the participation of the private sector, including SMEs; (b) support from the public sector; and (c) the use of ICTs as a core of a system facilitating cooperation among the different stakeholders. To this end, Governments should adopt policies and take actions to gather, around ICTs, the SMEs and other partners active in the tourism sector. Incentives should be put in place to encourage the pooling of resources, the development of partnerships and strategic cooperation within the tourism sector.

Launched at UNCTAD XI in Sao Paulo in 2004 as one of the ICT-related Partnerships for Development, the e-Tourism Initiative⁽⁸⁾ promotes the contribution of tourism to development through the use of ICTs, networking and "competitive collaboration" among the different stakeholders involved. The Initiative seeks to put more power into the hands of small and medium-sized enterprises and help destinations become more autonomous in the presentation and management of their resources.

The implementation of the initiative's activities reflects the three pillars of UNCTAD's work: research, technical cooperation and consensus-building. The initiative therefore starts its activities in countries by conducting country case studies which provide updated analysis and information about the use of ICT in the tourism sector. In a second stage, this information serves as input to training courses and validation seminars for national stakeholders. These seminars result in a joint formulation of recommendations and projects/action plans. In parallel, the Initiative develops a generic electronic tourist platform based on free and open-source software. This platform can later be customized for the use of any specific interested country.

Training material

Since January 2008, a large part of the efforts of the initiative have been devoted to the design and development of a new training package aiming at building local consensus on e-business solutions in the tourism sector of developing countries. Such consensus among all actors of the highly fragmented and heterogeneous tourism sector is crucial for the adoption of viable solutions. From UNCTAD's point of view, to arrive at such consensus, it is highly desirable to start with a light and simple solution and a limited number of operators. This would require a low level of innovation and networking capabilities, as well as the lowest possible effort for integration from all stakeholders. The package then aims at creating an understanding among the stakeholders of the importance of working together and equipping them with behavioural, organizational and technological tools that are required for a successful implementation of more sophisticated models as other needs emerge from the destination.

⁽⁷⁾ As of August 2008, e-Tourism activities are pursued in the framework of the Enterprise Development Branch, Division of Investment and Enterprise, UNCTAD.

⁽⁸⁾ Additional information can be found on the e-Tourism website (<http://etourism.unctad.org>).

The training package is built around five modules. Module 1 aims at leading the participants to better understand and grasp the benefits of ICTs for destinations. The objective of module 2 is to develop the notion and spirit of public-private partnerships around ICTs, including a presentation of best practices in this field. Module 3 is related to the strengthening of local knowledge of best practices in promoting, positioning and marketing destinations on the World Wide Web. Web 2.0 and social networking techniques are presented and concrete examples of their impact on tourism demonstrated in this module. Module 4 aims at increasing the capacity of the audience to choose the most relevant management models and the most recent ICT applications available. Finally, module 5 is dedicated to the presentation of the ICT tool - the Data Collector - for its further adoption by the destination.

In order to provide up-to-date inputs for the training modules, surveys have been conducted and analysis carried out. As an example, questionnaires about public-private partnerships have been developed and sent to selected countries to gather primary data about best practices in this field. In the same vein, and in collaboration with the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, a survey on collective e-branding has been initiated. The aim of this survey is to provide developing country tourism stakeholders with appropriate tools for understanding the benefits of collective e-branding, as well as an overview of best practices in the area.

Software development for the tourism sector

The Data Collector, is the ICT component of the above package and also the first component of the future Electronic Tourism Platform. This tool is a stand-alone solution running on a personal computer, which allows the destination stakeholders to gather and standardize all local tourist information. This allows beneficiary countries that adopt this solution to start immediately the collection of data in accordance with the standards defined by organizations such as the Open Travel Alliance⁽⁹⁾. The innovative open source approach selected will enable a free distribution of the software code and make it possible for beneficiaries to customize and improve the tool according to their own evolving needs and wishes.

Technical assistance

Thanks to the United Nations Development Account, six countries in Western Africa will receive this training package. In parallel, in the context of the memorandum of understanding signed with University of Quebec in Montreal, UNCTAD continues with the development of the electronic tourism platform.

Additionally - following expressions of interest from Indonesia, the Vice-Ministry of Tourism of Bolivia, the Chilean Economic Development Agency and Ministry of Trade, the Rwanda Office of Tourism and National Parks (ORTPN) and the Rwanda Information Technology Authority (RITA) - project proposals have been drafted and submitted to various donors. A project proposal has also been prepared for the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Furthermore, two other proposals have been developed for Mali and Madagascar, jointly with the TrainForTrade Programme.

The e-Tourism Initiative's capacity-building, as well as research and analysis activities seek to increase knowledge and understanding of e-tourism issues among the public and private sectors of developing countries. Summary sessions for managers are usually held after the workshops to define a common strategy towards addressing some of the constraints identified by the participants and head toward further implementation of e-tourism activities in the participating countries.

⁽⁹⁾ <http://www.opentravelalliance.org>

Support and partnership

In 2008, the Programme benefited from the support of the Governments of France, Germany, Italy and Portugal, as well as the Sixth Tranche of the United Nations Development Account. The Ministry of Tourism of Quebec decided to continue its cooperation agreement with the UNCTAD e-Tourism Initiative. Finally, at the end of June 2008, a letter of intent was signed with the Rotterdam Erasmus University.

6. OUTPUTS OF THE PROGRAMMES

Outputs	Date	Countries involved	Type of event	Participants
Training				
Canada-Colombia seminar on trade policy for the EAFIT University	March	Canada, Colombia	National	100
Course on international trade logistics for the University of Mauritius	May	Mauritius	National	22
Lecture on investment policy reviews for the Belarus State Economic University	May	Belarus	National	55
Workshop on the teaching and research of economic and legal aspects of international investment agreements for African academics	November	English-speaking Africa	Regional	24
Workshop on development dimension of intellectual property rights for the Foreign Trade University	December	Viet Nam	National	29
Regional training course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda	June-July	Eastern Europe and the CIS	Regional	24
	October-November	Western Asia	Regional	18
Short courses on key international economic issues for Geneva diplomats	February	UNCTAD member States	International	48
	March	UNCTAD member States	International	43
	June	UNCTAD member States	International	29
	September	UNCTAD member States	International	52
	October	UNCTAD member States	International	63
	November	UNCTAD member States	International	34
Investment promotion	April	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	Provincial	35
	November	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	National	6
International investment agreements	June-August	PALOP	Regional	78
	August-September	Latin American countries	Regional	108
	November	PALOP	Regional	25
Investment targeting for economic and social development	November	SELA	Regional	42
Legal aspects of e-commerce	August-September	ALADI	Regional	99
	October	ALADI	Regional	20
Training of trainers	February-March	West Africa and France	Regional	17
	May	West Africa	Regional	17
	June	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	National	14
	July-August	PALOP	Regional	14
	September-October	English-speaking developing countries and Ireland	Regional	15
	Novembre	Latin American countries and Spain	Regional	15
Training of DL tutors	June	Latin American countries	Regional	10
Port Training Programme	all year	Benin	National	20
	all year	Cameroon	National	22
	all year	Cambodia	National	16
	all year	Guinea	National	10
	all year	Senegal	National	12
	all year	Togo	National	14

6. OUTPUTS OF THE PROGRAMMES

Outputs	Date	Countries involved	Type of event	Participants
Meetings				
Third UNCTAD Virtual Institute members meeting	February	Developing, transition and developed countries	International	23
High-Level Conference on Trade-Related Capacity Development in Selected East-Asian Countries	February	Cambodia	Regional	135
International Coordination Conference for Port Communities of Spanish-speaking Developing Countries	March	Latin American countries and Spain	Regional	32
Regional Workshop on Sustainable Tourism for Development	October	French-Speaking African countries	Regional	31
Coordination meetings				
Angola Steering Committee meeting	January	Angola	National	35
Cambodia TrainForTrade Trainers' meeting	January	Cambodia	National	22
Lao Steering Committee meeting	February	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	National	18
Lao TrainForTrade Trainers' meeting	February	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	National	13
Cambodia Steering Committee meeting	April	Cambodia	National	10
Regional Steering Committee meeting	April	Lao People's Dem. Rep. and Cambodia	Regional	13
Coordination meeting for Port Communities of the Portuguese-speaking Network	July	PALOP	Regional	14
Guinea Steering Committee meeting	October	Guinea	National	50
Study tours and fellowships				
Russian Federation Vi member universities study tour	April	Russian Federation	National	48
University of the West Indies study tour	May	Caribbean countries	Regional	22
Vi fellowships	September	Russian Federation	National	1
	June-July	United Rep. of Tanzania	National	1
	July-August	Senegal	National	1
	June-July	Uganda	National	1
Videoconferences				
WIR 07 presentation for Cairo University	January	Geneva/Egypt	National	15
WIR 08 presentation for Russian Federation universities	November	Geneva/Russian Federation	National	150
WIR 08 presentation for Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú	December	Geneva/Peru	National	60
IIA presentation for University of Chile	December	Geneva/Chile	National	10

Belgium

- The **Port of Ghent** cooperated with the TrainForTrade programme on issues related to port management. In particular, it took part in training seminars organized by the Port Training Programme.

Canada

- The memorandum of understanding signed with the **University of Quebec in Montreal** continued to be a key asset for the e-Tourism Initiative activities.
- The agreement between the e-Tourism Initiative and the **Tourism Ministry of Quebec** also continued to show excellent and concrete results in 2008.

France

- Activities of the TrainForTrade Port Training Programme were organized in Marseilles, in collaboration with the **Port Authority** and with the support of the **Regional Authority of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur**.
- The cooperation between TrainForTrade and the **Dunkirk Port Authority** also continued, particularly for the update of the training material on port management.

Ireland

- A Training of Trainers for English-speaking port communities was organized by TrainForTrade in Dublin in cooperation with the **Dublin Port Company** and the support of **Irish Aid**.
- This Port Company also participated in assessment missions to Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- A memorandum of understanding between UNCTAD and this port company was signed in December 2008 to set the regulatory and financial framework of the cooperation between these two entities.

Portugal

- The **Administração dos Portos do Douro e Leixões** contributed to the update of four distance-learning modules of the TrainForTrade course on Modern Port Management in Portuguese.

Spain

- The **Port Authority of Valencia** and the **Port Authority of Gijón** contributed to the organization of the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade International Coordination Conference for Port Communities of Spanish-speaking Developing Countries in Valencia in March, and to the first training of trainers, modules 1 to 4, in Gijón, in November.
- The two ports also participated in TrainForTrade training needs analysis missions to Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Mexico.

International Organisations

- The **International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO** (ITC) has been contributing to Geneva-based study tours for postgraduate students of Virtual Institute member universities. Starting from 2008, cooperation has also intensified in capacity-building on ITC market analysis tools for academics from Vi member universities in Africa. Vi and ITC have jointly developed a multimedia training resource on the use of ITC market analysis tools, and ITC is featured in the new Vi documentary video. ITC is also implementing two technical assistance projects in Benin and Guinea, together with the UNCTAD/TrainForTrade programme.
- In cooperation with the **Latin American Integration Association** (ALADI) TrainForTrade carried out its training activities in the fields of e-Commerce and Cyber law.

International Organisations (continued)

- The **Latin American and the Caribbean Economic System (SELA)** was closely involved in the delivery of a training course in the field of investment promotion.
- The TrainForTrade programme set up a partnership with the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, to work together on issues related to local development for poverty reduction in the field of sustainable development for tourism, in the framework of its WACAP/Hub for Innovative Partnerships.
- The **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)** Programme dedicated a Volunteer to the TrainForTrade project for Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic who was based in Phnom Penh.
- The **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA)** cooperated with the TrainForTrade programme in the field of distance-learning.
- The Virtual Institute cooperated with a number of other partners whose papers and studies are now available on the Vi website. Among these partners are: the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**'s **ARTNeT** (Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade), the **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**, the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)**, the **South Centre**, and newly also the **International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD)**. A similar agreement is being negotiated with the **World Bank**.
- The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** has been an active contributor to the Virtual Institute's study tours and is a partner in the joint UNCTAD-WTO publications of a book on applied trade data analysis. WTO publications of interest to academia are made available on the site of the Vi and the WTO is featured in the new Vi video.
- This year, the **Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC)**, the **International Organization for Migration**, the **International Labour Organization**, **Oxfam**, the **United Nations Research Institute for Sustainable Development** and the **World Intellectual Property Organization** have also contributed to specific Vi activities, in particular the study tours for students of postgraduate programmes at Vi.
- The course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda benefited from the support of the **Belarus State Economic University** for the implementation of its regional course for countries with economies in transition, as well as from the **Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Bahrain** for the organization of a course targeting Western Asian government officials. The **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)** contributed to the delivery of the course in Bahrain.
- Several **Geneva-based missions** have also been active contributors to the activities of the Virtual Institute, notably its study tours and the Vi video. These include the Missions of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the Russian Federation, Colombia, Egypt, Senegal, Finland, Norway, as well as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

The European Commission

- Supported the implementation of the four-year TrainForTrade project in Angola.

France

- The Government continued to support the TrainForTrade regional project for Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- It also contributed to the funding of the Phnom Penh Conference.
- The French Agency for Development funded the joint ITC/TrainForTrade project for Guinea.

Finland

- Since 2006, the Government of Finland has been providing support to Virtual Institute's activities for LDCs. In 2008, it funded the Vi fellowship programme for LDC academics, and co-funded a professional development workshop for English-speaking LDC academics from Africa on the teaching and research of economic and legal aspects of international investment agreements.

Greece

- The Government of Greece provided funds for the organisation of the Training of Trainers workshop in Cotonou, Benin.

The Integrated Framework

- The Integrated Framework funded the joint ITC-UNCTAD TrainForTrade project on sustainable tourism for Benin.

Ireland

- Irish Aid continued to support training and capacity-building activities for port communities of English-speaking developing countries.

Portugal.

- The Government continued to support TrainForTrade activities for Portuguese-speaking African countries.
- It also provided financial support to TrainForTrade to increase staff resources of the programme at headquarters.

Spain

- The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism continued to fund TrainForTrade training and capacity-building for Latin American countries.
- A new contribution for further activities came from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, to further develop activities with Southern American countries and extend them to Central American ones.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation also provided funds to support Virtual Institute activities in LDCs and in Latin America. Spain was the main donor for the professional development workshop for English-speaking LDC academics from Africa on the teaching and research of economic and legal aspects of international investment agreements. It also funded the recently initiated joint research project on the future of regional cooperation and integration in Latin America, which involves Vi member universities from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Spain and Uruguay.

The United Nations

- Granted funds from the United Nations Development Account to support e-Tourism activities.

In 2008, the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch successfully addressed the three elements of its name in equal measure, by (a) sharing knowledge through ICT, training materials and dialogue; (b) training individuals on the front line of international trade, negotiations and the economic development of their countries; and (c) building the capacities of their institutions. As this document demonstrates, the activities of all three programmes expanded during 2008 and the number of beneficiaries increased, largely thanks to the commitment and support of a number of donor countries. The strong mandate provided by UNCTAD member States in Paragraph 162 of the Accra Accord, as well as the results achieved in 2008 open new and challenging perspectives for each of the three programmes in the forthcoming year.

Perspectives for the Virtual Institute

2008 was a successful year for the Vi, seeing (a) the expansion of its membership in Latin America and among developed countries; (b) increased cooperation among its members; (c) a growing number of localized versions of Vi teaching materials; (d) the launch of a new website; (e) deeper cooperation with its main partners - WTO and ITC ; and (f) and acquisition of new content partners.

In the coming year, the Vi will be concentrating on the consolidation of its membership (no significant increase is envisaged) and its services. The Vi will also conduct an assessment of the main project funding its activities, taking stock of its effectiveness four and half years after its inception in Sao Paulo, at UNCTAD XI. In doing so, the Vi team intends to pause for reflection about the future orientation of the programme and its membership at the fourth Vi meeting, to be held in May 2009. This reflection will, among other things, address the tension between the consistently high or increasing demand for its services and the limited staff and extra-budgetary resources to respond to this demand.

Based on the existing funds from donors and cooperation with partners, the Vi is committed to the implementation of an extensive programme of work in 2009, including (a) the continuation of previous activities (localizations, network cooperation projects, study tours, fellowships, national professional development workshops, etc.); (b) more in-depth cooperation with partners (a forthcoming book with the WTO and work with the ITC on capacity-building for member universities in Africa); (c) greater attention given to the area of policy-relevant research (2 large joint research projects and subsequent academic workshops in Latin America; and (d) mentored research projects for LDC academics).

Perspectives for the Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda

The past year has been very successful for the course with the launch of a new series of regional courses, an increasing number of applications and of countries wishing to host the course, as well as appreciation and support from the advisory body set up to advise the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the course. The year 2008 was also the second year of short courses for Geneva-based delegates, with growing attendance and interest in the course, which has become a well-known opportunity for delegates to get updates on topical issues and discuss with UNCTAD researchers, as well as keep abreast of UNCTAD's activities.

During 2009, the programme of the regional courses will focus on achieving more coherence between the modules, put a greater emphasis on problem-solving activities and case studies, and further increase the homogeneity of course participants. Three regional courses are envisaged for 2009: one for African countries (Cairo, Egypt, 25 January-12 February 2009), one for Latin America and the Caribbean (Medellin, Colombia, 1-19 June 2009), and, subject to the availability of funding, a course for Asia and the Pacific in autumn 2009. Additionally, there will also be a new round of short courses for Geneva-based delegates on issues requested in previous evaluations by the delegations.

Perspectives for TrainForTrade

Based on the results achieved in 2008, the TrainForTrade Programme will continue to implement its training and capacity-building strategy in the framework of Paragraph 162 of the Accra Accord. Support will continue to be provided to beneficiary countries with the aim of facilitating a progressive transfer of ownership of project decision-making and implementation of new activities.

In the field of training on tourism for sustainable development, the programme will continue to centre its activities on the development of partnerships with a wide range of tourism associations and organizations, including ministries, local communities, non-governmental organizations and civil society. In the coming year, TrainForTrade will progressively implement the work plan that was established jointly with African French-speaking LDCs in Bamako, Mali, in November 2008.

The TrainForTrade Port Training Programme will continue to expand its training and capacity-building activities to new port communities in English- and Spanish-speaking countries through train-the-trainers activities and the implementation of the port certificate for middle managers. The coming year will also see the reinforcement of the French and the Portuguese-speaking networks, in accordance with the decisions taken by the members in 2008.

In the coming year, in order to address the requests of potential beneficiaries, TrainForTrade will extend its training and capacity-building activities to a growing number of countries in Asia and Africa. It will also remain focused on a successful cooperation with regional organizations. This includes the expansion of training activities in Latin America, in cooperation with and for the benefit of its regional institutions, and the development of new activities with African regional organizations.



As can be seen in this document, these three programmes were very successful in 2008, but at the same time, the success of the KSTCD Branch's activities brings an increasing number of requests to expand their scale and scope. Demand now outstrips the capacity of the programs and their resources to respond to the needs of all the interested member States of UNCTAD. It is therefore apparent that additional resources will be needed to sustain the achievements of 2008, respond to this increased and more diversified demand, and help the programmes achieve the goals set for the year.



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