



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General
8 October 2012

Original: English

Trade and Development Board

Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission

Fourth session

Geneva, 26–30 November 2012

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars

Progress report on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to the areas of work on science, technology and innovation, and information and communication technologies

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Introduction

1. The generation, diffusion and application of science and technology are increasingly important for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction. In this context, developing countries need support in building their capacities in science, technology and innovation (STI) and on information and communication technologies (ICTs) with a view to addressing the emerging challenges of economic and social development in a sustainable manner. Paragraphs 158–161 of the Accra Accord governed this UNCTAD area of work.¹ The Doha Mandate reconfirmed the UNCTAD mandate related to STI and ICT, notably in paragraphs 56(p) and (q).

2. During 2011–2012, UNCTAD continued to assist all developing countries in their activities in STI and ICTs. Some 72 developing countries or transition economies benefited from at least one of the programmes and activities in these areas of work. The programme continued to ensure balanced coverage of its services, with 15 least developed countries (LDCs) benefiting directly from the various related activities.

¹ Further information on the activities of the Science, Technology and ICT Branch of the UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics is available in the *DTL Activity Report 2011* (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/dtl2012d1_en.pdf).

I. Accra Accord, paragraph 158

Box 1. Accra Accord, paragraph 158

“UNCTAD should further strengthen its research and analysis in the area of science, technology and innovation, including ICTs, and should promote effective international and national policies, in collaboration with other relevant international organizations working in this area. It should also draw lessons from successful experiences with the transfer and diffusion of technology through all channels, including FDI. It should also enhance its support to the efforts by developing countries, in particular LDCs, to respond to technological changes and assess the effectiveness of domestic innovation policy. UNCTAD should help strengthen North–South and South–South cooperation in harnessing knowledge and technology for development, and assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition through science, technology and innovation policy reviews and related technical assistance.”

3. UNCTAD continued to strengthen its research and policy analysis on STI and ICTs through a number of activities, including by producing two flagship reports (*Technology and Innovation Report* and *Information Economy Report*) and by organizing a number of expert meetings.

4. The *Technology and Innovation Report 2011*² identified key issues in technology and innovation for the greater use of renewable energy technologies (RETs). The report argues that there are numerous benefits of RETs for developing countries and points to several areas of interface between technology and innovation, RETs and climate change that need immediate policy attention, including:

(a) Efforts in developing countries to disseminate the use of RETs will be critical to alleviate energy poverty as well as to promote industrial development, by complementing existing traditional energy sources. The link between access to energy and general well-being and development is increasingly being recognized in policy debates worldwide;

(b) National governments in developing countries can play a pivotal role in promoting such energy mixes that combine conventional sources of energy with RETs in ways that will not only help reduce energy poverty, but also simultaneously promote climate-friendly solutions to development. The report proposes that developing countries adopt a national integrated innovation policy framework to create policy incentives in national innovation policies and national energy policies for the greater use, diffusion, production and innovation of RETs;

(c) International negotiations and developments in the context of climate change and the green economy as part of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) framework raise several important issues for developing countries. Joining forces with the work being done by other United Nations agencies in this regard, the report calls for the international agenda to place a greater focus on eliminating energy poverty within the climate change discourse. As the report stresses, these are mutually compatible goals and can be achieved by placing a greater emphasis on RETs in the climate change financing architecture and the technology transfer discourse;

² http://unctad.org/en/docs/tir2011_en.pdf.

(d) The diffusion of RETs in developing countries involves much more than transferring technology hardware from one location to another. The report, noting the complexity of technological change in different contexts, calls for targeted international support to foster RETs related learning.

5. The *Technology and Innovation Report 2012*, titled *Innovation, Technology and South-South Collaboration*, is expected to be launched in October 2012. The report deals with the potential of South–South collaboration for building technology and innovation capacity across the developing world. Through an elaborate analysis of data, trends and the analytical issues related to bridging the technological divide, the report provides policy recommendations for South–South collaboration on technology and innovation issues.

6. The fourth and final session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enterprise Development Policies and Capacity-building in Science, Technology and Innovation, held from 16 to 18 January 2012, focused on the role of pro-poor entrepreneurship and innovation policies in promoting sustainable economic development, poverty alleviation and inclusive growth, particularly for disadvantaged groups such as women and youth. With regard to STI, the meeting discussed, inter alia, the framework for the implementation of science, technology and innovation policy (STIP) reviews. The exchange of views and discussion among experts served well to identify best practices in developing and implementing pro-poor development policy and practice from an entrepreneurship and technology perspective. Regarding the STI policy framework, the discussion stressed that in order to sustain policy action, the relations between STI stakeholders needed to be nurtured and supported. Governments needed to take a proactive role in supporting technological development and innovation. Experts referred to the multi-year expert cycle as a forum where member States had had an opportunity to engage in a policy dialogue about STI and development and stressed that it would be important that this agenda were carried forward in UNCTAD.

7. An important part of UNCTAD technical assistance in the area of science, technology and innovation is its programme of national STIP reviews. The reviews seek to enable participating countries to assess the effectiveness of their policies and practices for capacity-building in STI activities and support the integration of such policies in their overall development strategies. STIP reviews typically look at the design of STI systems, the linkages between small and medium-sized enterprises, large firms, science and technology institutions, and business associations, and the policy dialogue in the STI area.

8. *A Framework for Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews*,³ published by UNCTAD in 2011, provides guidance on the concepts and methodology for the implementation of STIP reviews in developing countries. It explains to UNCTAD stakeholders the thinking that underpins the STIP review programme, the major aspects of the implementation process of STIP reviews and their expected short- and medium-term outcomes. It also presents some conclusions extracted from the experience accumulated in UNCTAD through the implementation of the programme.

9. The STIP Reviews of Peru and El Salvador⁴ were published in October and November 2011, respectively. The STIP Review of the Dominican Republic⁵ was officially launched in June 2012.

(a) The STIP Review of Peru was officially presented at three national stakeholders workshops held in October 2011 in Lima, Iquitos and Arequipa. The

³ http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict2011d7_en.pdf.

⁴ http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict20102_en.pdf and http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict2011d4_en.pdf.

⁵ http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/dtlstict2012d1_en.pdf.

workshops discussed with the academic and business community the diagnosis and recommendations of the STIP Review of Peru and helped promote the engagement of the STI stakeholders in the implementation strategy. Strong positive feedback regarding the quality and relevance of the report was given by a wide range of stakeholders. The STIP Review process, including the substantive discussions in the preparation phase as well as dissemination during the national workshops, resulted in increased interest across different government ministries, private sector actors and academics in reinforcing STI policies in Peru. The Government requested UNCTAD support for the implementation of a number of follow-up activities to the STIP Review. The first of them, a workshop on the use of intellectual property tools to promote enterprise innovation, was organized in Lima in June 2012 in cooperation with the national intellectual property and competition policy agency (INDECOPI);

(b) The diagnosis and recommendations of the STIP Review of El Salvador have already fed into public policy and programme design processes. Some of these include the elaboration of the national industrial policy and a national innovation, science and technology policy and proposals for increasing funding for the promotion of STI in the country. The Government of El Salvador also recently put in place a number of programmes that address several of the recommendations mentioned in the review. The Government identified several activities that could be carried out in cooperation with UNCTAD to support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the review. One of these activities concerned the issue of capacity-building for the design and management of innovation support programmes. Accordingly, a national workshop on the issue of the design and management of funding mechanisms for innovation was organized by UNCTAD, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Economy, for officials from the Ministry, the national development bank and other organizations involved in programmes to support enterprise innovation;

(c) The STIP Review of the Dominican Republic was presented to national stakeholders at an event co-organized with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in June 2012 (a first draft had been discussed in a national stakeholders workshop in September 2011). Seventy participants from academic centres, government institutions and businesses provided positive feedback about the report's findings and recommendations. The findings of the STIP Review were considered a useful input for ongoing policy processes in the field of technology and innovation in the country.

10. In the area of ICTs for development, the *Information Economy Report 2011*, published in October 2011, deals with ICTs as an enabler for private sector development. The report notes how recent changes in the ICT landscape have enhanced the scope for new technologies to act as a powerful force for improving enterprise competitiveness. Important growth barriers faced by businesses can be mitigated with effective ICT use. It urges national governments and development agencies to better exploit opportunities in this area and stresses the need to connect those parts of the development community dealing with ICTs and enterprise development, respectively. The report identifies four facets of the ICT-private sector development interface:

(a) First, without access to affordable and relevant ICTs, the private sector is at a disadvantage vis-à-vis enterprises in locations with such access. Moreover, the private sector is also a critical player in the development of infrastructure;

(b) Second, governments should play an active role in fostering greater ICT uptake in the private sector, especially among microenterprises and small enterprises;

(c) Third, a vibrant ICT sector contributes by creating jobs, spurring innovation and, not least, by supporting ICT use in the entire economy and society. UNCTAD predicts

that many people in low-income countries will be affected in the coming years by an expansion of the offshoring of micro-work and of the dynamic mobile sector;

(d) The fourth area concerns the role of ICTs in making private sector development interventions more effective and inclusive. The report gives special attention to the gender dimension of private sector development and stresses that several specific challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries can be better addressed with the help of ICTs. For example, ICTs could help enable women-owned enterprises to access finance, training and information. Such benefits are particularly crucial for women who often face constraints with regard to the ability to travel and leave their families.

11. The UNCTAD review of donor and national strategies in this area showed that the potential for leveraging the four facets is far from fully exploited. For example, out of strategies of bilateral development agencies reviewed, more than 40 per cent made no reference to the ICT dimension, and many others addressed only one of the four facets. To accelerate progress, the *Information Economy Report 2011* recommends that the ICT dimension be systematically mainstreamed into private sector development strategies. In order to have real impact, governments and their development partners should seek to reflect adequately the role of ICTs in all four facets. Policy interventions should also be made more demand-driven, based on a solid understanding of the specific needs and situations of the enterprises targeted. Such an approach benefits greatly from effective partnerships involving governments, donors, the private sector and civil society.

12. In the last months of 2011, preparations began for the *Information Economy Report 2012*, the theme of which will be the software industry in developing countries.

13. Three publications under the UNCTAD current studies on science, technology and innovation were issued in 2011.⁶

(a) The study *Measuring the Impacts of Information and Communication Technology for Development* explores the importance of measuring ICT impacts and the related statistical challenges. The diversity and rapidly changing nature of ICT complicate measurement, and there is a complex web of relationships between individual impact areas – such as economic growth and poverty alleviation – and background factors – such as a country's level of education and government regulation.

(b) The publication *Water for food. Innovative water management for food security and poverty alleviation* examines the challenges related to agricultural water management in the context of climate change, increased demand for food production and environmental sustainability, and reviews the potential role of technologies towards water productivity, resilience in agricultural water management and sustainable livelihoods. It reviews a number of appropriate technologies and associated management practices, including traditional practices (such as water harvesting and storage), as well as new and emerging ones (such as geographical information systems), and discusses key areas for future action to accelerate the diffusion and adoption of these technologies and practices.

(c) Finally, the study *Applying a gender lens to science, technology, and innovation* found that many STI policies lack a gender perspective and therefore do not adequately address all development concerns. Therefore, the policymaking process needs to integrate a gender perspective throughout, from diagnosis and policy design, to implementation, monitoring and follow-up. The study recommends that STI policies undergo a gender impact assessment to ensure that they deliver equality of opportunities to

⁶ http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict2011d1_en.pdf, http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict2011d2_en.pdf and http://unctad.org/en/Docs/dtlstict2011d5_en.pdf.

men and women. The study was prepared in collaboration with the Gender Advisory Board of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) and identifies three areas as entry points for applying a gender lens in STI policy, namely (i) “science for women” (developing science and technology which support women’s development and livelihood activities); (ii) “women in science” (promoting gender equality in science and technology education, careers and leadership); and (iii) national and grassroots level support to the role of women in innovation systems.

II. Accra Accord, paragraph 159

Box 2. Accra Accord, paragraph 159

“UNCTAD should also contribute to consensus-building in the international debate on science and technology for development, including ICTs and their implications for development, and continue to provide support as the secretariat to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. UNCTAD should continue to help developing countries to participate effectively in international discussions on technology transfer and knowledge-sharing, and to identify policy options and best practice in this area. UNCTAD should furthermore continue to assist developing countries in identifying ways and means to operationalize technology transfer clauses in international agreements and in the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in order to maximize their potential benefits.”

14. In line with the request in paragraph 159 of the Accra Accord (see box 2), UNCTAD made several contributions to consensus-building in the international debate related to STI and ICTs. As the secretariat of the CSTD, UNCTAD provided substantive and technical servicing to the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the CSTD, which took place in May 2011 and May 2012, respectively (see boxes 3 and 4).

Box 3. Fourteenth session of the CSTD

In 2011, the CSTD considered two priority themes: (a) measuring the impact of ICT for development and (b) technologies to address challenges in areas such as agriculture and water.

The Economic and Social Council adopted the resolutions recommended by the CSTD after this session. Resolution 2011/17 on science and technology for development encouraged governments to take several actions to support sustainable agricultural practices, improve physical and research and development infrastructures and assist smallholder farmers. The resolution also encouraged the CSTD to provide relevant technical and policy support and advice, upon request, and to promote cooperation and the exchange of best practice examples in agricultural STI.

Regarding resolution 2011/16 on the assessment of progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the Economic and Social Council agreed to extend the mandate of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum until the fifteenth session of the CSTD. In addition, it called upon all stakeholders to keep the goal of bridging the digital divide as a primary concern and encouraged governments to collect data on ICTs. The resolution also invited all stakeholders to contribute to the open consultation of the United Nations Group on the Information Society on the overall review of the implementation of the WSIS outcomes.

Box 4. Fifteenth session of the CSTD

In 2012, the CSTD looked at (a) innovation, research, technology transfer for mutual advantage, entrepreneurship and collaborative development in the information society; and (b) open access, virtual science libraries, geospatial analysis and other complementary ICT and science, technology, engineering and mathematics assets.

The Commission recommended two draft resolutions which the Economic and Social Council adopted. The first resolution, on science and technology for development, encourages governments to consider multiple actions such as the promotion of ICT platform development, the support of partnerships to ensure the viability of virtual science libraries and to overcome infrastructural constraints that limit access to and use of ICT resources, the encouragement of the formation of national research and education networks and better integration of geographic information systems in education programmes.

The second resolution, on WSIS implementation, recommended that an appropriate preparatory process be launched for the ten-year review of WSIS.

15. In addition to the plenary sessions in May, UNCTAD organized intersessional panels of the CSTD. These panels provided an opportunity to study the various issues related to the priority themes which were considered at the CSTD plenary sessions. Multiple experts participated and discussions were taken into account for the related reports of the Secretary-General.

16. The fifth and final meeting of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) took place in Geneva in February 2012. The Working Group agreed to make recommendations regarding five specific areas: (a) shaping the outcomes of IGF meetings; (b) working modalities including open consultations, the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group and the secretariat; (c) funding of the IGF; (d) broadening participation and capacity-building; and (e) linking the IGF to other Internet governance-related entities.

17. On 18 May 2012, the Chair of the CSTD also held an open consultation on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the Internet. Sixty governments and 80 other participants attended.

18. The report⁷ of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum and summary report of the Chair of the CSTD⁸ on the outcome of the open consultation were discussed at the fifteenth session of the CSTD.

19. UNCTAD provided substantive support to the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly under the agenda item on information and communication technologies for development.⁹ The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution under this agenda item.¹⁰

⁷ http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a67d65_en.pdf.

⁸ http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ecn162012crp2_en.pdf.

⁹ UNCTAD prepared reports of the Secretary-General on the agenda item (A/66/64).

¹⁰ A/RES/66/184.

20. As part of UNCTAD's work to help developing countries to participate effectively in international discussions related to technology transfer and knowledge-sharing and get a better understanding of the role of technology and innovation in the development process, two activities are of note: the knowledge economy component of the paragraph 166 regional courses on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and the Innovation and Technology Day.

(a) As part of the paragraph 166 regional courses, two modules on the knowledge economy were delivered in Colombia for Latin American countries (July 2011), in Singapore for Asia and the Pacific countries (November 2011) and in Belgrade for countries with economies in transition (July 2012). Their objectives were to discuss and provide a basic understanding of STI in social welfare, economic growth and development in the respective regions. The Division on Technology and Logistics also organized two one-day sessions for Geneva-based delegates to present to them some key aspects of STI and ICT policies for development;

(b) On 24 April 2012, in the context of the thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIII), the first joint initiative of UNCTAD and the Qatar Foundation took place. This initiative, the Innovation and Technology Day, constituted an open forum for technology pioneers, entrepreneurs, policymakers and experts that was designed to facilitate dialogue and action on key issues related to innovation, technology and development. The event was opened by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the Executive Chairman of the Qatar Science and Technology Park, followed by a keynote address by the former President of Finland. Experts emphasized the direct link between technology and innovation on the one hand and economic and social development on the other. They called for the technology dimension to be better reflected in the development agenda. As new technologies – including ICTs, biotechnology and nanotechnology – are creating new opportunities, policymakers, innovators and other stakeholders should work together with a view to building indigenous capabilities to seize upon these opportunities. UNCTAD should, on the basis of experiences and through dialogue, help member States to identify what policies can allow a country at a certain level of development to leverage STI for development.

III. Accra Accord, paragraph 160

Box 5. Accra Accord, paragraph 160

“UNCTAD should continue to provide technical assistance to countries in the area of ICT, notably on ICT policy reviews, pro-poor policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, and measuring the information economy, including through the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development launched at UNCTAD XI.”

21. Along the lines of paragraph 160 of the Accra Accord (see box 5), UNCTAD provides technical assistance to countries in the area of ICT, in response to continued strong demand. Its technical assistance activities in this field reached all developing-country regions, and relied mainly on extrabudgetary support from the Governments of Finland and Spain. Technical cooperation activities were undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law and other regional institutions.

ICT Policy Reviews

22. The *ICT Policy Review of Egypt* was officially launched in October 2011.¹¹ It evaluates the main achievements and remaining challenges in the areas of ICT infrastructure, skills development for the ICT sector, ICT use in the educational system, e-content development in Arabic and the promotion of an export-oriented ICT sector. The review will have impact on ICT developments in Egypt by providing valuable inputs to the preparation of the country's next national ICT strategy, including best practices that help the Government identify its medium- to long-term strategic ICT objectives and the options available to achieve them.

E-commerce and law reform

23. In order to seize the development opportunities created by ICT, effective legal and regulatory frameworks are essential. In 2011, UNCTAD technical assistance activities in this field aimed primarily at facilitating increased regional harmonization of cyber legislation, with projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In July 2011, an external evaluation of the UNCTAD programme on ICT and Law Reform found that it has been pioneering the introduction of the legal dimension of ICT to its beneficiaries and initiating cyberlaw reform and harmonization processes. UNCTAD technical assistance has led to draft cyberlaws being enacted or prepared for government endorsement in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as well as in the member States of the East African Community (EAC), and to growing regional harmonization in Latin America and the Caribbean. The mix of legal advice and training, backed by awareness-raising and institutional capacity-building, builds the confidence and commitment of beneficiaries to achieve compliance with international ICT standards as part of their efforts towards graduation from LDC status.

24. In Africa, as part of the assistance provided to the EAC since 2007 for the harmonization of cyber legislation in the five member States, three events were organized in 2011 in cooperation with the EAC secretariat (see box 6). In the context of technical assistance to the EAC, an UNCTAD study released in June 2012 looked at how mobile money – the use of mobile phones for money transfers, payments and more sophisticated financial activities such as credit, savings and insurance – could benefit from region-wide rules to coordinate and harmonize regulations. The report *Mobile Money for Business Development in the East African Community: A Comparative Study of Existing Platforms and Regulations* focuses on the EAC as a way of addressing wider issues raised by mobile money.

Box 6. UNCTAD support to the East African Community on cyberlaw harmonization

Two regional meetings of the EAC Task Force on Cyberlaws (Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania) were held to take stock of progress made by the EAC partner States in the implementation of the EAC Legal Framework for Cyberlaws, Phase I and to discuss and endorse the EAC Legal Framework for Cyberlaws, Phase II (issues of competition, intellectual property rights, taxation and information security). Following the need expressed to raise awareness, a briefing on cyber legislation was given to Kenyan parliamentarians to facilitate the enactment of laws, focusing on the issues of cybercrime and information security, consumer protection, data protection and privacy, Internet service provider liability and content control. The briefing provided an impetus for fast-tracking cyberlaws in Parliament and was particularly relevant to the delivery of the Kenyan

¹¹ http://archive.unctad.org/en/docs/dtlstict2011d6_en.pdf.

development strategy, Vision 2030, which depends largely on ICT platforms. At the last Task Force meeting in October 2011, EAC partner States requested UNCTAD to continue building the capacity of various stakeholders in support of the implementation of the Framework, Phase I. In response to this demand, a TrainForTrade training of technical tutors was organized by UNCTAD in February 2012 in preparation for distance delivery of the training course on the legal aspects of e-commerce for EAC countries in May 2012. Participants from Kenya and Rwanda benefited from the training course. A new course is planned for October 2012 to respond to capacity-building needs in this area.

25. In Latin America and the Caribbean, activities continued to be conducted in partnership with the UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme and the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System. A new edition of the distance learning course on legal aspects of e-commerce was delivered in October–November 2011 for 192 participants from 17 countries in the region. This training is helping to build the capacity of these countries to develop adequate and harmonized legal frameworks for electronic commerce.

26. In Asia, the Secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) requested in February 2012 a review of the harmonization of e-commerce laws in ASEAN. The review will be conducted together with the ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Senior Officials (TELSOM) and should be finalized in 2013. It will take stock of progress in the adoption and implementation of e-commerce laws in the ten ASEAN member States and identify remaining challenges to overcome in the implementation and enforcement of e-commerce laws.

27. In addition, UNCTAD is associated with the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on online dispute resolution mechanisms and with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Conference on e-commerce, conveying the developing country perspective in these areas.

Measuring the information economy

28. In the area of measuring the information economy, UNCTAD continued to support member States' efforts to improve the availability of ICT statistics, especially with regard to ICT use by the business sector and to the ICT sector. Without access to reliable data, policymakers are at a disadvantage when formulating, implementing and evaluating their policies. In most developing countries, however, there is still a significant lack of reliable data in this area.

29. Whenever possible, UNCTAD collaborates closely with the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development to coordinate the delivery of technical assistance in order to optimize the use of resources.¹² For example in June 2011, UNCTAD delivered the seventh training course on the production of ICT statistics on the information economy, organized in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics for Arab countries in Amman. In December 2011, UNCTAD contributed to an expert group meeting titled "Standardizing Information Society Measurements in the ESCWA Region".

¹² <http://measuring-ict.unctad.org>.

30. UNCTAD also carried out its annual survey of national statistics offices worldwide to collect data related to the information economy in 2011. Some developing countries – such as Cameroon, Costa Rica, Ecuador and El Salvador – provided data for the first time. The statistics related to core indicators on the information economy are now publicly available through the UNCTAD statistics portal,¹³ which will support benchmarking by countries. The availability of relevant data has improved as a result of UNCTAD’s work. For example, for core indicators on the use of ICT in enterprises data, availability has increased in developing and transition economies. Between 2005 and 2010, the number of developing countries reporting core indicators on ICT use in business grew from 10 to 27, an increase of 170 per cent. During the same period, the number of countries reporting core indicators on the ICT sector rose by about one third.

31. The work on measuring ICT was also addressed in the context of several international meetings in New York (United Nations Statistical Commission), Paris (Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society meeting), Mauritius (World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Meeting) and Geneva (WSIS Forum).

32. Discussions are under way with donors to raise the additional funding needed to continue to develop the areas of ICT statistics for which UNCTAD is responsible, and to build capacity regarding the collection and analysis of internationally comparable ICT statistics.

IV. Accra Accord, paragraph 161

Box 7. Accra Accord, paragraph 161

“UNCTAD should contribute to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) action lines on capacity-building, an enabling environment, e-business and e-science, in cooperation with other relevant international organizations. UNCTAD, also in its capacity as secretariat to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, should assist the Commission in implementing its mandate on the follow-up to the WSIS outcomes.”

33. As requested in paragraph 161 of the Accra Accord, attention has also been paid by UNCTAD to the implementation of the WSIS (see box 7). In this context, UNCTAD contributes through its leading role in the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. In addition, UNCTAD co-organized the WSIS Forum 2011 and the WSIS Forum 2012 with the International Telecommunication Union and UNESCO in May of each year. At the WSIS Forum 2011, UNCTAD, the International Trade Centre and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations co-organized the action line facilitation meeting on e-business focusing on the promise of mobile technologies, and UNCTAD contributed to Partnership sessions on measuring the ICT sector for policy analysis. During the WSIS Forum 2012, UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre co-organized the action line facilitation meeting on e-business which focused on how to promote a vibrant ICT sector. In cooperation with the Partnership, UNCTAD also supported two sessions on ICT measurement issues, namely measuring WSIS targets and measuring e-waste.¹⁴

¹³ <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx>.

¹⁴ Summaries of all sessions are available in the WSIS Forum outcome documents. The outcome of WSIS Forum 2011 is available online at

34. During 2011, UNCTAD contributed to the inter-agency coordination of the United Nations Group in the Information Society. During the WSIS Forum 2012, UNCTAD assumed the Chairmanship of the United Nations Group in the Information Society until the end of 2012. As the Chair, it opened a side event in the run up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) to focus attention on the catalytic impact ICTs have on all three pillars of sustainable development – economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

35. During the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the CSTD, the Commission reviewed progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the WSIS and produced draft resolutions for further adoption by the Economic and Social Council. During the fourteenth session, *Implementing WSIS Outcomes: Experience to Date and Prospects for the Future* was made available.¹⁵ The publication summarizes progress at the midpoint between the second phase of WSIS and the comprehensive review of implementation scheduled for 2015. It identifies areas that have registered the most progress, where obstacles and constraints are encountered as well as innovative measures to overcome them. The publication also identifies some of the major changes that have taken place in the communications landscape since 2005, which affect how ICTs interact with society and how the information society is developing.

<http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2011/forum/inc/Documents/WSISForum2011OutcomeDocument.pdf>. The outcome of the WSIS Forum 2012 is available online at:

<http://groups.itu.int/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=-yrie0EkP84E%3d&tabid=2103>.

¹⁵ http://archive.unctad.org/en/docs/dtlstict2011d3_en.pdf.