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EVALUATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES\*

**In-depth evaluation of the training courses on key issues on the international economic agenda**

Prepared by an independent evaluation team:

Mr. Mario Presser  
Mr. Stefano Lazzarotto  
Mr. Rizwan Sheikh

**Executive summary**

At its forty-first session in September 2004, the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and Programme Budget of the Trade and Development Board decided to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the *Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda* mandated by paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action for discussion at its session in 2005 dealing with technical cooperation activities.

This report assesses how the requirements set in this specific mandate have been met. All things considered, including the shortcomings that were identified, the training courses' record was considered very positive by the evaluation team. UNCTAD developed an innovative product on the market for technical assistance services in trade policy. The delivery of the courses met their objectives concerning efficiency, effectiveness and relevance. There is some qualitative evidence which indicated positive impacts on some members' institutional capacity building in public agencies, research institutions and universities associated with foreign trade matters. There were reported positive in-house spillovers for UNCTAD itself. The evaluation team stresses that paragraph 166 activities – given UNCTAD's well-known comparative advantages – should continue to aim at excelling in the delivery of the training courses and building sustainable institutional and societal capacities through initiatives aimed at having multiplier effects at these levels. The recommendations for improvements outlined in this report would strengthen the process both in terms of quality, including its long-term impact, and quantity.

\* The late distribution of this document is due to technical reasons.

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## BACKGROUND

1. UNCTAD functions as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development issues and as a forum aiming at consensus building for policy formulation in a globalizing world. One of UNCTAD's main roles consists in helping developing countries, particularly least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, better understand how to design trade and development policies for efficient integration into the world economy.

2. At UNCTAD X Bangkok in 2000, the Plan of Action reaffirmed technical cooperation as one of the three main functions of UNCTAD – besides dialogue facilitation and research and analysis – and stated that the effectiveness and relevance of UNCTAD's technical cooperation depended on its integration with the secretariat's policy analysis and the work of intergovernmental bodies. At the same time, member States agreed that UNCTAD should strengthen its capacity-building activities and adopted the following mandate in paragraph 166 of the Plan of Action:

*UNCTAD's existing capacity-building programme should be strengthened. This would enable officials and other individuals from developing countries and some interested countries with economies in transition to become better informed, through regular training courses in cooperation with the United Nations Staff College, of key issues on the international economic agenda, in particular with development dimensions within UNCTAD's field of competence. These courses would draw on the expertise and policy analysis work of the UNCTAD Secretariat, with the support of an advisory body to be established by the Trade and Development Board. In course delivery, cooperation and coordination would be assured with relevant research and academic institutions and with other relevant international organizations, taking into consideration the commitment of UNCTAD to the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance for the LDCs. The organization of the courses should be financed from UNCTAD's existing regular budget resources and available extra-budgetary resources. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD is invited to submit detailed costed proposals to the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget.*

3. This decision was taken following the Third WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle. At least in part as a result of UNCTAD's Positive Agenda for Trade Negotiations programme launched in 1997 by the secretariat, from the 250 proposals submitted to the WTO General Council in the preparatory process for the Seattle Ministerial Conference, over half were from developing countries, regaining the initiative at the WTO.<sup>1</sup> Developing countries' priority at Seattle was the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements. Their view was that any new round should address their development concerns.

4. The very success of the Positive Agenda programme paved the way for member States to reaffirm in Bangkok technical cooperation as one of the three main functions of UNCTAD.

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<sup>1</sup> Rubens Ricupero. "Preface: Nine Years at UNCTAD. A Personal Testimony". In: UNCTAD. *Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Development Policy: An Intellectual History of UNCTAD, 1964-2004*. New York and Geneva: United Nations, 2004.

5. There is a generally recognized “capacity gap” within the multilateral trading system between the more developed and less developed countries: developing countries have less capacity to negotiate trade agreements and to implement them.<sup>2</sup> Implementing the WTO Agreements has proved to be particularly burdensome for a number of developing countries, especially LDCs, where there are noticeable weaknesses in human and physical infrastructure and institutions related to international trade.

6. Developing country calls for capacity building respond to a range of challenges:<sup>3</sup>
- Limited ability to participate meaningfully in the WTO negotiations and decision-making;
  - The financial, institutional and human resource costs of compliance with WTO obligations and implementation of related regulatory reform;
  - Limited capacity to take advantage of market opportunities which negotiations yield, owing to significant resource, supply-side and competitiveness constraints;
  - Limited capacity to address non-tariff barrier constraints on market access (i.e. developed country sanitary and phytosanitary, packaging and environmental standards);
  - Limited capacity to withstand external shocks to domestic production and export opportunities;
  - The need to diversify economies and expand exports (50 WTO Members rely on just one to three export commodities);
  - Limited capacity of Members to exercise their rights within the WTO’s rule-based system.

7. Capacity constraints in many developing countries are a major issue which, the majority of technical assistance experts agree, needs to be resolved in order to yield about greater benefits of the WTO Agreements for a wider number of Members. In the Doha Declaration, capacity building was mentioned at least a dozen times. There is a broad consensus on technical assistance for trade-related policies among developing countries, important NGOs and individual experts, all of them urging donors to work more closely with all recipient countries and with civil society stakeholders to define programmes for capacity building that will strengthen the overall capacity of developing countries to identify and pursue their own trade objectives in the context of a broader development plan.<sup>4</sup> They argue that effective capacity building implies designing interventions to provide developing countries with the opportunity, the support and the operating space for exercising ownership.

8. In response to the paragraph 166 mandate, UNCTAD established the Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda. The essence of the paragraph 166

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<sup>2</sup> General assumption made in many studies on this theme. See: Lingling Ding. “Capacity Building for Trade: The Role of the WTO”. *Journal of Law and Economics in International Trade*, vol. 1 (1: 186-224), January 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Carolyn Deere. *Capacity Building and Policy Coherence. A Role for a Leaders’ Level G20? Conference on Agricultural Trade Reform and Development: A role for G20 Leaders*, hosted by CIGI and the Global Economic Governance Programme at Oxford University in June 2004.

<sup>4</sup> On technical assistance at the WTO, see also some developing countries’ viewpoints in: WTO Committee on Trade and Development. *Forty-second Session. WT/COMTD/M/42*, 12 Nov 2002. See also the NGOs statements in: *Civil Society Concerns on Trade Policy Capacity Building*, 11/03/2002.<http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library.cfm?RefID=25532>.

mandate was that an adequate understanding of the development dimensions of the ongoing international negotiations must be part of an effective capacity-building programme.

9. There have been nine editions of this course since the first at Geneva-Turin in 2001, the last seven being regional in geographical scope (table 1). At its forty-first session in September 2004, the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and Programme Budget of the Trade and Development Board decided to undertake an in-depth evaluation of this course for discussion at its session in 2005 dealing with technical cooperation activities. The terms of reference are set out in annex 1.

10. This report provides a systematic review of all commitments contained in the paragraph 166 mandate and assesses how the requirements set out in this specific mandate have been met, in accordance with the elements listed in the terms of reference. In the next sections, the methodology, results and recommendations of this in-depth evaluation are presented.

## RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Evaluation's methodology

11. There is no consensus on how to assess the effectiveness and impact at the macro level of trade-related capacity-building activities.<sup>5</sup> The emphasis on the relevant criteria sometimes differs. It is noteworthy that interpretations of the conventional assessment criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) vary among the multilateral agencies.

12. UNCTAD's strategy on capacity development follows the lead of UNDP.<sup>6</sup> Both institutions argue that developing countries must build their capacity for their own sake. Only then can they "own" the process of developing independent skills and institutions for trade negotiations and for the larger development effort itself. Moreover, capacity building should not be reduced to "human resource development". Developing individual skills is important. But it is also necessary to develop sustainable institutional structures and societal resources that sustain both the individuals and the institutions. In short, for UNCTAD capacity development should be:

*A process entailing human resource development combined with stronger institutions and three cross-linked layers of capacity: individual, institutional and societal.*<sup>7</sup>

13. Therefore, beyond evaluating the relevance, the efficiency and the effectiveness of the training course in a more conventional way, evidence was searched for to evaluate the impact

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<sup>5</sup> OECD. *Trade Capacity Building Results Monitoring/Assessment Framework*. Informal Expert's Meeting, 16 June 2004.

<sup>6</sup> For UNCTAD's approach, see *Technical Cooperation Activities: Review of Technical Cooperation Activities of Unctad. Decision 478(L)*, 19 October 2003. This decision took into account the document *Capacity Development. Note by the UNCTAD Secretariat*. TD/B/50/9 and TD/B/WP/168, 27 August 2003. For UNDP's, see S. Fukuda-Parr, C. Lopes and K. Malik, eds. *Capacity for Development*. New York, NY: UNDP, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> *Capacity Development. Note by the UNCTAD Secretariat*, p. 4.

and the sustainability of paragraph 166 activities with regard to the three layers of capacity mentioned above – individual, institutional and societal.

14. The evaluation was based on the following tools:

- Interviews with UNCTAD's secretariat, Advisory Body members and a few former participants. In some cases, when asked to do so by the evaluation team, the secretariat supplemented the interviews, submitting written statements on the impact of the courses.
- Analysis of the design and delivery of the substantive content of training courses (annex 2).
- In-depth evaluation of the Havana training course (February-March 2005) by the evaluation team. The evaluation team followed closely the implementation of this course to evaluate its relevance and effectiveness at delivery. The main evaluator was present at the last three Modules, the simulation exercise – where the participants are divided into groups – and the final oral evaluation of the course by the groups. The participants' evaluations for each Module were closely reviewed and an evaluator's evaluation was produced (annex 3).
- Analysis of the answers to the six-month evaluation questionnaires, sent to supervisors and participants in the first six courses – Geneva-Turin, 2001 and 2002, Bangkok, Santiago, Beirut and Mauritius – and the group evaluation made on the spot in Prague and Hanoi (annex 4).

15. The next sections present the results of the evaluation and the evaluators' recommendations concerning the following elements: relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability. In each section, the main results are shown at the beginning in bold letters, an explanation of these results follows and the recommendations are made at the end of each section. A short conclusion closes the evaluation.

## **B. The relevance of paragraph 166 activities**

### ***1. UNCTAD's expertise, project design and beneficiary countries***

- UNCTAD's paragraph 166 training courses have unique characteristics and a well-defined methodological approach that make them stand out compared with other WTO-oriented courses.
- The syllabuses of the courses were designed according to the mandate: to draw on UNCTAD's perspectives and expertise, and to disseminate and enhance the understanding of UNCTAD's analytical work as well as the lessons drawn from its technical cooperation activities.
- Highlighting the developing countries' perspective in international key issues with an integrated approach is a much-appreciated value-added element of paragraph 166 activities. This finding is coherent with UNCTAD's goals and strategy in capacity development.
- The participants and their supervisors found UNCTAD's approach directly relevant to their jobs.
- UNCTAD has an innovative product in the market for technical assistance in trade policy, and this product was asked for by the targeted public of paragraph 166 activities: policy-makers and negotiators of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as well as critical civil society sectors. But the latter were underrepresented in the evaluated courses.

- Offering a unique training course to the relevant public, UNCTAD proved to have the expertise and demand to play an important role in the market for technical assistance services in trade policy for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

16. Relevance refers to the appropriateness of a capacity-building programme for the beneficiaries.<sup>8</sup> The key issue in capacity building in trade-related issues lies in how to operationalize the commitments renewed at Doha. Trade negotiations go beyond the trade-related expertise provided by typical WTO technical assistance programmes. The process of transforming the WTO from a trade body to one that embraces virtually the totality of economic relations between States poses challenges that go well beyond technical issues, and, in practical terms, many experts, analysts and even WTO members see the scope and the impact of WTO technical assistance as essential but limited.<sup>9</sup>

17. UNCTAD's complementary contribution to the technical assistance and capacity-building programmes implemented by the WTO and other international organizations, helping the developing countries to negotiate effectively, was viewed as essential by many developing countries at UNCTAD X and XI.

18. The syllabuses of the courses included all main areas of work of UNCTAD's divisions: globalization and development; trade and development; infrastructures for trade development and investment and development. The analysis of the design and delivery of the substantive content of the training courses is presented in annex 2.

19. The contents of the courses were coherent with the strategy set out for technical cooperation at UNCTAD – to address the practical problems of trade and development in an era of globalization and liberalization – and UNCTAD's comparative advantage in capacity building – its comprehensive approach to trade and development policies that is reflected in the broad thematic scope of its work and in the variety of its modalities for supporting capacity development.

20. UNCTAD's training courses combined development issues being discussed at the WTO, where UNCTAD can help developing countries identify their key interests and increase development gains from international trade and trade negotiations, with non-WTO trade-related issues, where new and emerging trade issues can be presented. A good example of this flexibility is the increasing classroom time given to the Module "ICT and electronic commerce for development", coinciding with the launching of negotiations for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

21. The analysis of the design of substantive content of training courses (annex 2) showed that the content of the training courses was not centred on trade and development issues per se, but oriented to gain a better understanding of the interrelated issues in the areas of trade, investment, finance and technology and of the negotiations on new issues at the WTO and in

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<sup>8</sup> The definition of the elements for assessing performance in capacity building can be found in *Evaluation of Capacity Building in UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Activities*. TDB/WP/155, 12 July 2002.

<sup>9</sup> For the experts and analysts viewpoints, see Michel Kostecki. *Technical Assistance Services in Trade-Policy*. ICTSD Resource Paper No. 2, November 2001. See also the statements on WTO's Technical Cooperation and Training by some developing countries' delegates in WTO Committee on Trade and Development (see footnote 4).

other Geneva forums. They addressed the challenges posed by the ongoing processes of liberalization and globalization and the increasing integration of those countries into the global economic system, as well as increased awareness of the diverse policy and other conditions necessary for attaining competitiveness and participating effectively in the rapidly changing global economic environment.

22. The analysis of the evaluation questionnaires (annex 4) showed that all supervisors and all but three of the participants answered that the content and objectives of the training course organized by UNCTAD have direct relevance to their jobs. The supervisors, given the experience and knowledge gained by their staff at the training course, further answered that they would recommend almost unanimously that other staff participate in future sessions of this course.

23. The results of the Havana course evaluation (annex 3) also showed that the participants agreed that the course was relevant either to the current or to the future international issues affecting their countries. The affirmative answer to the question in the individual questionnaires was practically unanimous in all Modules.

24. The analysis of the design of substantive content of training courses, the results of the Havana edition evaluation, and the interviews with UNCTAD's secretariat, Advisory Body members and former participants, led to the conclusion that highlighting the developing countries' perspective in international key issues with an integrated approach is a much-appreciated value-added element of paragraph 166 activities and is seen as directly relevant to their duties by the participants and their supervisors.

25. Ensuring a wide diversity of markets for technical assistance services in trade policy, where the institutions must compete for customers offering innovative approaches, is suggested as the best way to make them respond to the needs of their beneficiaries.<sup>10</sup> Developing countries stated in many forums, particularly in the WTO, that they required technical assistance in three broad areas in order to negotiate effectively.<sup>11</sup> First, developing countries needed to develop appropriate trade policies and strategies so that their negotiating strategy was part of a broader set of development and economic policies. Second, they needed to develop appropriate trade and market access strategies and think about how their bilateral and regional strategies were synchronized with their multilateral strategies. Third, they needed to build appropriate institutions to develop intra-Government cohesion and consultations and consensus building with other stakeholders, including the private sector and NGOs.

26. UNCTAD's training courses addressed the first two broad areas where developing countries require technical assistance. The evidence collected about their substantive content (design and delivery) supported the conclusion that UNCTAD has an innovative product on the market for technical assistance services in trade policy, showing that it has relevant

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<sup>10</sup> *To put resources in the beneficiaries' hands and let them choose (technical assistance services)* was the suggestion advanced by the Kostecki report (p. 19), based on his interviews with analysts and experts. See footnote 9.

<sup>11</sup> Technical assistance on these terms was requested by the South African representative at the WTO, who chaired an informal group of Members seized with the need to improve the efficiency and quality of technical assistance and capacity building programmes that had been implemented and were being implemented at the WTO (See WTO Committee on Trade and Development in footnote 9).

expertise – UNCTAD’s contribution emphasizes the perspective of development and focuses on the interactions of trade, investment, technology and finance – to offer services requested by developing countries.

27. There were 334 applications for the training courses and 226 (68 per cent of the candidates) were selected. The total number of participants who attended the courses was 196 (86 per cent of the selected candidates), coming from 84 countries. By type of country, 43 participants were from LDCs, 31 from countries with economies in transition, 46 from countries that were going through the accession process at WTO, and a good number of others from developing countries considered to be “structurally weak and small, vulnerable economies” by the multilateral institutions (see table 2).

28. If in the future there is a smaller gap between the number of participants selected and those who attend, the course will further increase its efficiency and effectiveness. The secretariat argued that covering travel expenses just for candidates from LDCs in the original mandate proved to be unduly restrictive for candidates from some non-LDC developing countries: some selected candidates gave up at the last moment, allegedly because they had no funds for travel.

29. A closer look at the 179 listed participants from Geneva-Turin (2002) to Havana (2005) by their departments in their home countries showed that 49 of them were attached to trade ministries, 47 to foreign affairs ministries, 39 to commerce and/or industry ministries, and 30 to other ministries and central government agencies, 10 were academics, and 4 came from the private sector. Beneficiaries essentially included Governments, the critical civil society sectors being underrepresented.

30. As a rule, the participants were senior officers (chiefs, directors, supervisors, advisors, senior negotiators and analysts) involved in the national decision-making process. They were therefore the targeted audience for strengthening the human resource and institutional capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This allowed them to participate as effectively as possible in discussions and negotiations on key issues on the international economic agenda.

31. Concerning the selection of participants, the staff interviewed agreed that the targeted participants' background, previous knowledge, participation and absorption level were appropriate and high as a rule, but even so some suggested that the selection process should be improved to broaden the diversity of their insertion in the international agenda (enlarging the number of candidates from ministries other than foreign affairs and trade ministries) and to attract those candidates who can derive the maximum possible advantage from the courses, taking into account the conditions and incentives offered by the other multilateral agencies in the market of technical assistance services in trade policy.

32. It should be noted that during the interviews advertising of the training courses has been often mentioned as deserving a new strategy to increase its attractiveness to a wider audience.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> This institutional weakness was also spotted in a previous evaluation: *Regardless of the quality of its offering, it is sometimes admitted that UNCTAD does not promote itself as forcefully as some other sister organizations nor as well as it deserves. Evaluation of Capacity Building in UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Activities* (See footnote 8).

33. Statistics collected on individual training of the participants showed that 12 attended other courses at UNCTAD and 7 attended WTO Trade Policy Courses. For the vast majority of participants, UNCTAD's training was reported to be the main tool for capacity building available from international organizations in the last four years.

## ***2. Role sharing with regional commissions and other relevant academic institutions in the delivery of the courses***

- The implementation of role sharing with regional UN commissions and local academic institutions in the region was uneven. In particular, the role sharing with UN regional commissions in the Hanoi and Havana editions was unsatisfactory. The partnerships with the local academic institutions were zero or weak in all editions.

34. Experts on technical assistance programme design recommend increasing partnerships with regional institutions and a greater involvement of their experts in the programme delivery. Enhancing networks and cooperative inter-organizational partnerships on capacity-building issues were also two outstanding UNCTAD capacity-building objectives when preparing the implementation of paragraph 166 activities.<sup>13</sup>

35. All secretariat members interviewed by the evaluation team supported a more substantive involvement by local and regional institutions. But they acknowledged that the courses' experience with regional and local partnerships had so far mixed results. They pointed out Mauritius' delivery as having the most balanced and successful partnerships.

36. The analysis of the design and delivery of the substantive content of the training courses (annex 2) showed that the regional editions of Bangkok, Santiago and Mauritius were the most successful in sharing classroom time: between 22 per cent and 26 per cent of the total time was shared with local and regional institutions. In Bangkok, the cooperation was with ESCAP. In Santiago, experts from ECLAC and one lecturer specializing in Latin America from the University of Cambridge were presenters and in addition the regional content was enhanced because UNCTAD staff that delivered the modules on trade were composed of former members of the Latin America Trade Network. In Mauritius, experts were invited from the ECA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Mauritius Sugar Authority, the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council, and the University of Mauritius. Once more the regional content was further enhanced by UNCTAD staff's long-time familiarity with African countries.

37. The cases of the regional editions of Beirut, Prague and Havana were intermediate: between 15 per cent and 19 per cent of the total time was allocated to local and regional institutions. Regional experts from ESCWA were invited to Beirut. In Prague, local and regional experts – from the ECE, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic, the University of Economics in Prague and private sector members – were invited. In Havana, ECLAC staff were not present; only Cuban officials and academics made presentations on the Cuban experience.

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<sup>13</sup> UNCTAD. Trade and Development Board. Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget. Thirty-sixth session. *Implementation of Paragraph 166 of the Plan of Action of UNCTAD X* TD/B/WP/133, 4 September 2000.

38. Hanoi rated poorly. Just 8 per cent of the total time was allocated to regional and local institutions: there was an acknowledged participation of presenters from the Prime Minister's Research Commission, the Minister of Planning and Investment, and the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and a token participation of ESCAP staff.

39. The lack of adequate cooperation with regional and local providers poses a permanent co-ordination challenge to ensure that the "generic knowledge" provided by UNCTAD has a visible link with the "local knowledge" required by the participants.

**Recommendation 1** – The selection process and its marketing could be improved to broaden the diversity of the participants' insertion in the international agenda and to attract candidates who can derive the maximum possible advantage from the courses.

**Recommendation 2** – We endorse the suggestion – made by a member of the secretariat in a written submission – that closer coordination be established between UNCTAD trainers and the selected regional and local speakers during the preparation of the course by exchanging well in advance the training materials and other inputs, in order to ensure that UNCTAD's presentations are related to the regional and local speakers' presentations, and vice versa. Such a move would in turn increase the regional and local capacity in these issues.

**Recommendation 3** – Role sharing with regional UN commissions and local academic institutions should be substantially improved. The most effective ways of raising the long term quality and relevance of the participation of the developing countries in the international negotiations is through partnerships with the research and academic communities for capacity building activities.<sup>14</sup>

### C. The effectiveness of paragraph 166 activities

- The majority of the participants and their supervisors indicated that their knowledge of the international key issues improved substantively as a result of the course. This shows that its content was new for them and its delivery satisfactory.
- The conclusion which emerges from the participants' evaluations is that overall the courses met their expectations and were highly praised by them. UNCTAD's comparative advantage in trade-related training – its comprehensive approach to trade and development policies – was recognized and appreciated by the participants.
- The coordination among the Divisions regarding the content and delivery of the course is in general viewed by the secretariat and the particular staff involved as a valuable ongoing effort, benefiting from the greater interface among the Divisions and the participants' inputs.
- The distribution of the regional courses was geographically balanced: two in Latin America, one in Africa, one in the Middle East, two in Asia and one in Central Europe, specifically for countries with economies in transition. The focus of each edition changed upon the request of the beneficiary countries.

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<sup>14</sup> The WTO Training Institute also added this new element to the Institute's overall approach to technical assistance and capacity building. See WTO Training Institute. Partnerships for Training and Capacity Building: An Integrated Approach, [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org).

- There is a pressing need for the continuous production of high-quality training materials for the delivery of the courses.
- There were suggestions by staff and participants that distance learning techniques be used in order to homogenize the basic knowledge of the candidates and add value to the live seminars.
- The language problem (fluency in English was requested) was detected as a possible barrier to widening the reach of the course.
- The management of the course by the SITE staff was considered supportive.

40. Effectiveness means that the objectives defined prior to the implementation of a programme have indeed been achieved. The objectives of the paragraph 166 course on Key Issues of the International Economic Agenda were defined as follows:<sup>15</sup>

- Enhance the capacity of developing countries, particularly least developed countries (LDCs), and countries with economies in transition, to analyse the challenges posed by the ongoing processes of liberalization and globalization and the increasing integration of those countries into the global economic system, and to formulate appropriate national policies accordingly;
- Increase awareness of the diverse policy and other conditions necessary for attaining competitiveness and participating effectively in the rapidly changing global economic environment.

41. The analysis of the six-month evaluation questionnaires (annex 4) showed that the improvement of the participants' knowledge in international economic issues after attending the training course had been substantive for 59 per cent of the participants and 77 per cent of the supervisors. Just one participant answered that the improvement had been marginal.

42. In the Havana edition (annex 3), except for the WTO Module, the large majority of the participants indicated that their knowledge of the international key issues improved substantively in all the Modules; this shows that their content was new and their delivery satisfactory. One point that must be underlined, drawn from this evaluation, is that UNCTAD's senior presenters, as a rule, excelled in their presentations, as a result of their seniority, their experience of prior editions and the valuable work of the Focal Points in the Divisions to ensure a greater degree of integration among the presenters and their presentations.

43. The evaluation team concurs with these views on the Havana edition, but it would like to stress its concern about two visible shortcomings that impaired somewhat the overall results: the inadequate back-up arrangements for the WTO Module and the absence of ECLA staff from this course.

44. Effectiveness is also linked to support and skills that may be tapped by programmes at headquarters. From the interviews with UNCTAD's secretariat, it became clear that when designing the content of the course's modules, the key methodological question was how to link the issues of trade and development agenda in UNCTAD's perspective in a meaningful way for policy makers. The interviews showed that the course integration with the secretariat's

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<sup>15</sup> See the UNCTAD's objectives in *Detailed Costed Proposals Mandated by Paragraph 166 of the UNCTAD X Plan of Action*. TD/B/WP/137, 11 January 2001.

policy analysis – one of the key recommendations made at UNCTAD X to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of UNCTAD technical cooperation – is an ongoing effort, benefiting from interface among the Divisions through the Focal Points and inputs from participants. The interface between the Divisions also increased its coherence with the implementation and works of the Focal Points according to the interviews.

45. It should be emphasized that there is a pressing need for the continuous production of high-quality training materials for the delivery of the courses. The main problem is how to transform the complex set of trade and development issues originating from UNCTAD's research and policy advice into training-friendly materials, especially translating them into different languages and putting them into different formats or media. There is continuous updating of the key issues on the international agenda and the content of the modules is adapted to each regional edition as a rule. For the senior staff involved in the course, their interviews and the evaluation of the Havana course confirmed that the heavy load of their everyday work conspires against higher standards in preparing and formatting their materials.

46. Another technique suggested in the interviews to make the course more effective was that distance learning techniques be used in order to homogenize the basic knowledge of the candidates and add value to the live seminars. Macroeconomic and WTO-related issues were two themes quoted for prior distance learning training.

47. The language problem (fluency in English was requested) was identified as a possible barrier to widening the reach of the course. The interviews showed that this was mainly a constraint derived from limited funding to afford live interpretation.

48. Concerning the management of the Course by the SITE staff, the trainers noted that they were supportive, but some of them complained that travel and hotel arrangements were sometimes inadequate for a routine of long travel and short stays on the spot. This is a point that deserves constant managerial attention so as not to alienate the senior staff in charge of the course.

**Recommendation 4** – Additional support for the training activities – including production of high-quality training materials for the delivery of the courses – should be provided by granting of institutional incentives to the staff involved and the development of teaching materials by establishing appropriate in-house and external partnerships.

**Recommendation 5** – Since coordination efforts among Divisions are very demanding and not always rewarding in terms of recognition, some efforts are needed by the secretariat through the Focal Points with a view to ensuring full compliance with TDB directives, *inter alia* by way of motivating and creating incentives for the team, convincing those very few staff members who remain to be convinced on the value-added of this exercise and by ensuring smooth teamwork in the delivery of the course.

**Recommendation 6** – To improve cooperation and coherence among the Divisions, we suggest that the preparation and evaluation of the delivery of each course be conducted by the Focal Points explicitly aimed at: (i) improving the coherence among the Modules to ensure the greater effectiveness and impact of the training; and (ii) ensuring that the "generic knowledge" provided by UNCTAD makes a visible link with the "local knowledge" required by the participants.

**Recommendation 7** – The relationship between trade and poverty was not dealt with in some courses. For developing countries, this is an issue that deserves special attention and should be permanently included in the content.

**Recommendation 8** – Study the employment of distance learning techniques in order to homogenize the basic knowledge of the candidates.

**Recommendation 9** – Whenever possible and relevant, provide for live interpretation of the courses.

#### **D. Impact of the training course**

- Paragraph 166 training course has some characteristics of the “traditional approach” to technical assistance programmes: the service was essentially conceived by the provider with a low degree of diversification and responsiveness to the beneficiary’s particular needs (regionalization partially solved this problem); beneficiaries essentially included Governments; the course was mainly conceived as a single agency service, with limited scope for regional/local partnerships; and the follow-up was not adequately integrated into the programme.<sup>16</sup>
- At the same time, paragraph 166 activities developed some features which fit UNCTAD’s strategy on capacity development.

49. The knowledge acquired during the course is expected to allow participants to improve the effectiveness of their work in national Governments and to promote more active participation by their countries in intergovernmental institutions. To attain these objectives, the goals of UNCTAD’s capacity-building efforts are more ambitious than “human resource” development. Developing individual skills is important, but it is also necessary to develop sustainable institutional structures, and societal resources that sustain both the individuals and the institutions.

50. The impact of paragraph 166 activities was evaluated on the basis of the three levels of capacity mentioned above – individual, institutional and societal – on the basis of the qualitative data available: examination of the six-month evaluation questionnaires sent to supervisors and participants of prior courses, interviews with UNCTAD secretariat and former participants, and written statements on the impact of the courses submitted by the secretariat and Divisions. It should be noted that the six-month questionnaires were designed to measure the relevance and effectiveness of the training course, thus making it more difficult to assess longer-term impacts on the institutional and societal levels.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, there is no formal monitoring mechanism to remain in contact with former UNCTAD trainees to track their professional development.

**Recommendation 10** – Define some feasible impact indicators prior to the implementation of future courses.

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<sup>16</sup> The “traditional approach” is described in Kostecki, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> By and large, impact is difficult to assess not only because of the shortage of relevant data but also because impact indicators have not been specified prior to the implementation of the programme in beneficiary countries. This was one of the findings of the Evaluation of Capacity Building in UNCTAD’s Technical Cooperation Activities (p. 14).

**Recommendation 11** – A higher rate of response from the questionnaires should be considered as a key objective of the next editions in order to facilitate continuous evaluation.

**1. Impact at the individual level**

- The training course has had a positive impact on participants' professional disposition towards their job and they have been able to apply the information and knowledge gained at the training course at least to a satisfactory extent in their home departments. On the basis of this knowledge, their opinion has been sought (or they have been able to offer) at least occasionally on an approach to be taken or on a problem to be solved in their daily work.
- This improved performance has been recognized by their superiors at least to a satisfactory extent: half of them rated their integration into the organizational structure and political strategy of their home department since their attendance at the training course as very good.
- Many participants benefited from a change in their professional status – for example, a promotion – or have been granted new additional duties or responsibilities. More than two thirds of them reported that this change in their professional status was a result of their training at the course organized by UNCTAD.
- The training course created a network of exchange of information with trainers and other participants during the course and during a short period after the course, thus creating a unique opportunity for sharing knowledge and experiences. But there is not a lasting and ongoing interrelation among the participants and the secretariat following the end of the courses in spite of the fact that some more contacts have been reported as needs arise. A lasting follow-up is requested by many participants.
- On content, there were many suggestions that the course should train participants more extensively on negotiations at the WTO and other regional economic integration agreements.

51. The impact of the training course on participants' professional capacity was derived mainly from the analysis presented in annex 4 of the six-month evaluation questionnaires. The follow-up issue was raised in the interviews with staff and former trainees.

**Recommendation 12** – The duration of the course that seems to meet widespread consensus is three weeks.

**Recommendation 13** – WTO issues were underrepresented in the timetable of some regional courses. There was a general request for more time to be devoted to these issues in evaluations and interviews with former participants. The suggested three weeks' duration should allow this request to be accommodated.

**Recommendation 14** – Course delivery should gradually rely more on problem-based learning rather than lectures. Case studies, simulations and hands-on training should be used more extensively to keep a high degree of personal involvement and to further stimulate group discussion.

**Recommendation 15** – The courses should be more tailored to the needs/problems of the regions (including statistical data and case studies on smaller countries). The evaluation team recognizes that there were institutional and financial constraints with regard to attaining these objectives in these first editions, and they should be kept in mind for new editions.

**Recommendation 16** – Promote information exchange and other follow-up events to stimulate the networking of the trainees.

## 2. *The institutional level*

- The courses have had a tangible impact in least at the home Department level in terms of policy formulation: the participants and their supervisors expected increased participation by trained staff in the areas of policy formulation and advice and drafting of policy papers. Their answers showed that they increased their capacity to perform complex tasks in their departments as a result of such training. But only a significant minority was expected to influence directly the decision-making process for establishing national negotiating strategies.
- The courses increased awareness of the key issues in international negotiations: the participants have had an opportunity to disseminate the information and knowledge gained on this training course to colleagues in their department and/or other related departments.
- The prominent role of the Geneva-Turin (2001 and 2002) alumni in the promotion of regional courses in Mauritius, Hanoi and Havana resulted in increasing “ownership” of this capacity-building process at the higher levels of the national administration in these countries.
- Some host and beneficiary countries of the regional editions established or are in the process of establishing partnerships between some of their national research institutions and UNCTAD to create a global network of higher learning and research on trade and development issues in order to equip future generations of decision makers – in the public and private sectors – with the capacity to make informed choices about the economic development of their countries.
- The course facilitated technical cooperation activities between the beneficiaries and UNCTAD’s Divisions.
- UNCTAD itself was the direct beneficiary of some of the long-term spillovers of the training courses. In particular, the Division of Globalization and Development Strategies has greatly benefited from paragraph 166 activities.
- Some of the benefits of the accumulated knowledge gathered at UNCTAD from paragraph 166 activities were disseminated through the short-term Training Course on Selected Issues in International Trade, held for delegates in Geneva in September 2004.

52. As a rule, the long-term impact of any short training of this kind is extremely difficult to assess. Paragraph 166 courses trained 194 officials from 86 countries in 2002-2005. It is a relatively recent and small-scale project on capacity building in trade-related matters compared with the traditional WTO courses.<sup>18</sup> That having been said, it is important to verify whether the training courses had a lasting impact on those involved with the training activity.

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<sup>18</sup> The WTO organizes various general and specialized training courses geared towards assisting recipient countries in their understanding and implementation of international trade rules and contributing towards human resource development. Typical examples of this product are the twelve-week trade policy courses and the three-week introduction courses. Overall, 99 participants from developing countries and economies in transition attended these courses in 2004. WTO’s new training product, regional trade policy courses, has trained approximately 300 government officials since 2002. See WTO. *Annual Report on Training and Technical Cooperation*. WT/COMTD/W/139, 19 April 2005.

53. The answers given by participants and their supervisors in the annex 4 suggest that the course has a tangible impact at least at the department level in terms of policy formulation and that local dissemination of knowledge gained at the training course was done mainly by coaching colleagues at seminars or group meetings.

54. From the available evidence, the courses have enhanced not just participants' competence, but also their departments' capacity in formulating policies. There is evidence of some additional achievements contributing to institutional capacity development in some countries and in UNCTAD itself, in particular, as far as members' awareness (looking for specific programmes designed to develop customized institutional capacity) about possibilities for further technical cooperation with UNCTAD is concerned.

#### ***The prominent role of the Geneva-Turin (2001 and 2002) alumni in the promotion of regional courses***

55. Some of the strongest evidence for the perceived long-term value-added of paragraph 166 activities collected so far is the very active role of some former participants in the promotion of regional editions in their home countries. In the regional editions of Mauritius (2004), Hanoi (2004) and Havana (2005), alumni played an influential role in providing support and contacts in their Governments, universities and research institutions. This resulted in visible "ownership" of this capacity-building activity at the higher levels of the national administration, at least in these three host countries. They enrolled a large number of participants in the successive editions of the training course, including non-government participants in the regional editions: Mauritius and Cuba enrolled 10 participants, and Viet Nam 5.

56. These countries also established or are in the process of establishing partnerships between some of their national research institutions and UNCTAD to create a global network of higher learning and research on trade and development issues to give future generations of decision makers – in the public and private sectors – the capacity to make informed choices about the economic development of their countries. The most advanced partnership is with the University of Mauritius, which became a founding member of UNCTAD's Virtual Institute (see next item) and this partnership, according to the secretariat, can be considered a direct sub-product of the training course in Mauritius.

#### ***Facilitation of technical cooperation activities with the Divisions***

57. The secretariat stated that the MoU signed between China (Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation) and UNCTAD (Division on Globalization and Development Strategies) in 2003 was positively stimulated by the participation of Chinese officials in the Bangkok training course in 2002 and highlighted the relevance of this training course for publicizing UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities. Moreover, the paragraph 166 activities were regarded as extremely important for this Division in the dissemination of its research and in gathering country-specific experiences from the participants.

58. UNCTAD had one request from Viet Nam – from the National Committee for International Economic Cooperation (the local counterparts during paragraph 166 course in Hanoi in November 2004) – for a national-level training course, in an effort to streamline the policy direction of several departments with regard to the process of accession to the WTO

and within ASEAN. However, the timing for this event proved to be too challenging for UNCTAD and the project was shelved.

59. There were several requests to the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities for follow-ups to negotiations on accessions by Croatia, the Russian Federation, Republic of Moldova, and Serbia and Montenegro during the Prague edition. Similarly, Samoa was encouraged to consult with UNCTAD's team on accession following contacts made at the Hanoi edition.

60. The overall impact of the paragraph 166 courses on Latin America's participants is manifested in direct or indirect forms when they request UNCTAD's technical assistance. The specific cases of Peru, Uruguay and Argentina were quoted as examples.

61. The Division for Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency sent a statement to the evaluation team mentioning the impacts of the training courses on the activities of the e-commerce branch. These courses had both a direct and an indirect impact on the activities of the branch. The direct impact was mainly the fact that it has been possible, through intense interaction with participants, to validate and upgrade the branch's Module (structure and content). There are indirect positive impacts as well. Meeting participants from many countries gave the branch the possibility to offer a better exposure to UNCTAD's activities, and therefore increase participants' awareness about possibilities for further cooperation. In addition, these contacts may help UNCTAD broaden its network of partnerships. Last but not least, a clear indirect advantage comes from the fact that delivering and evaluating such a course give the staff the possibility to constantly improve it and enlarge UNCTAD's knowledge base.

### ***The overall impact at UNCTAD***

62. From interviews with the Secretariat and its staff, it became clear that UNCTAD itself was the direct beneficiary of some of the long-term spillovers of the training courses. Beyond the facilitation of technical cooperation, the secretariat pointed out other positive impacts from the training courses on UNCTAD's activities and internal management. First, there are the multiplying effects associated with the dissemination of institutional knowledge, which can be seen in developing country members' requests for more specialized and custom-designed technical assistance. Second, there is a dynamic learning process inside UNCTAD, resulting in a greater exchange of viewpoints and enhanced cooperation among divisions and better knowledge of regional/local conditions from participant's feedback and the sharing of their own country-specific experience with presenters. The training course itself greatly benefited from this process.<sup>19</sup> Third, policy coordination among Divisions – including the policy contents of UNCTAD's flagship reports – became a secretariat priority for ensuring effective dissemination of the institutional message.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> From the staff viewpoint, direct contact with members' policy-makers is pointed out in their interviews as being one of the biggest rewards of their efforts.

<sup>20</sup> The interviews with the staff and the delivery of the course at Havana confirmed that on the question of the role of foreign direct investment in the development process there was a greater convergence between the GDS and DITE Divisions presentations than in the first editions. The greater convergence on the content of the flagship reports was not addressed in this report, but one should note that many new themes introduced at UNCTAD XI (policy space, developing supply capacities, emphasis on dynamic sectors and ICT) seem to indicate increased policy coordination among Divisions.

63. The knowledge accumulated and disseminated by UNCTAD has the characteristics of a “public good” for all developing countries and countries with economies in transition.<sup>21</sup> Some of the benefits of this accumulated knowledge gathered from paragraph 166 activities have been disseminated through the short-term Training Course on Selected Issues in International Trade, held for delegates in Geneva in September 2004. They were divided into three groups with customized programmes. Group I was for ambassadors and senior staff of missions and registered 16 attendants (22 applied). Groups II and III received 56 (90 applied) staff members from the missions in charge of the technical issues at UNCTAD/WTO/ITU etc.

**Recommendation 17** – Paragraph 166 activities should raise participants' awareness of possibilities for further technical cooperation with multilateral institutions, particularly UNCTAD, which may offer specific programmes designed to develop customized institutional capacity.

**Recommendation 18** – The short-term training course on selected issues in international trade for delegates should be offered regularly upon request.

### 3. *The societal level*

- The launching of the Virtual Institute at UNCTAD XI to host a network of academic institutions committed to sharing material, expertise and experience in order to enhance their training and research activities.
- The support to the Economic Diplomacy Course at UNICAMP, Brazil. By backing these activities, UNCTAD reaffirmed training for trainers as a major ingredient in its institutional and societal capacity-building contributions.

64. All stakeholders – Governments, civil society, productive sectors and legislators – should participate in the formulation and implementation of trade and development policies. To ensure that all stakeholders involved in the decision-making process have the capacity to be proactive, individual training should be oriented to produce participation at societal levels. Paragraph 166 activities have generated few initiatives that have supported ownership and demand-driven operations at this level, which can only be country-based. The main initiatives were the launching of UNCTAD's Virtual Institute at UNCTAD XI and the support to the Economic Diplomacy Course at UNICAMP (Brazil).

#### *The Virtual Institute*

65. The mission of the Virtual Institute, launched at UNCTAD XI, is to create a global network of higher learning and research on trade and development issues to equip future generations of decision makers with the capacity to make informed choices about the economic development of their countries. The Virtual Institute aims to assist academic institutions around the world that wish to enhance their curricula, knowledge, training skills and research expertise in the areas of trade, investment and development. It provides open access to selected UNCTAD resources (readings and presentations) and pedagogical tools to help the interested institutions develop their own high-quality training materials.

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<sup>21</sup> In economics, a public good is an economic good which possesses two properties: (i) it is non-rivalrous, meaning that it does not exhibit scarcity, and that once it has been produced, everyone can benefit from it; and (ii) it is non-excludable, meaning that once it has been created, it is impossible to prevent people from gaining access to it.

66. It also hosts a network of academic institutions committed to sharing material, expertise and experience in order to enhance their training and research activities. The network allows its members to share information about their activities, to contribute to their own training and research materials to the network database, and to benefit from the contributions of UNCTAD and other members. The network aims to develop resources and activities that are relevant, practical and related to real-world policy. Among its founding universities is UNICAMP (see below) and the University of Mauritius, both closely associated with paragraph 166 activities. Some partnerships formed during the Virtual Institute's first year – with the School of International Trade and Economics, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China, and the University of the West Indies – were also reported as outcomes of paragraph 166 activities.<sup>22</sup>

67. The Foreign Trade University of Hanoi is now in the process of applying for membership of the Virtual Institute and the Foreign Trade Institute, Havana, Cuba, is consulting UNCTAD on trade and trade-related topics for support on training activities that they are planning to organize for all sorts of audiences, for example government officials, businessmen and academics. In Havana, the evaluation team was told by Cuban authorities that they intend to create incentives for one of the leading Cuban research institutions to apply for membership at the Virtual Institute.

***The economic diplomacy course at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Campinas, State of São Paulo, Brazil***

68. A MoU signed in August 2003 launched a joint partnership between UNCTAD and UNICAMP to offer an economic diplomacy course at the postgraduate level in the State of São Paulo, Brazil. The main objective of the course is to enable working executives of the private sector and officers of the public sector to understand the content, and to play an active role in the shaping of, bilateral, regional and multilateral negotiations in which Brazil is currently engaged.

69. The structure of the course was mainly based on UNCTAD's paragraph 166 course on Key Issues of the International Economic Agenda. UNCTAD offered training materials, internships and specific training for a few faculty members in 2002-2003.

70. The first edition of the course was offered from October 2003 until December 2004. It certificated 35 participants, mainly executives and consultants from private firms. Twenty-seven of them benefited from an extensive two-week study tour in Geneva in February 2005.

71. The joint venture of UNCTAD and UNICAMP clearly implemented a programme of capacity development at the institutional and societal levels: it was a concrete effort to increase ownership, demand-driven, durability and long-term effectiveness, bringing the effects of paragraph 166 activities to Brazil.

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<sup>22</sup> The partnership with the Chinese university follows the technical cooperation between UNCTAD and China which was referred to in the last item. The one-month study tour that the Virtual Institute organized for the Master's degree in international trade politics of the University of West Indies in May 2005 was directly inspired by the training courses syllabus and it was specifically requested by University authorities. Immediately after the study tour, the University of West Indies joined the Virtual Institute.

**Recommendation 19** – The impact at the societal level depends on the creation of networks to fosters interaction between partners and individuals involved at the national and international level in the trade policy process. There are two fields in which UNCTAD's paragraph 166 activities could associate themselves with a long-term commitment for supporting negotiating capacity and for building sustainable institutional and societal capacities:

1. Encouraging home-grown teaching and research, based on high-quality academic work and debate, responding to the needs of policy makers and other stakeholders, and helping to enhance understanding of country-level implications of WTO agreements and changes in the global environment.
2. Supporting coherent and coordinated strategies for building the statistical capacity needed for evidence-based research and policy making.

**Recommendation 20** – To support these long-term commitments, encourage the multiplication of partnerships between universities from developing countries and the Virtual Institute to improve information-sharing and access to UNCTAD's capacity-building outputs and tools, and enhance networks and cooperative inter-organizational partnerships on capacity-building issues.

#### **E. Cost-efficiency**

- On cost-efficiency, UNCTAD's efforts in attaining low costs in the regional editions of the courses – compared with benchmark courses – have to be commended. Furthermore, the courses reached a larger number of participants than envisaged in the original proposal.
- It is suggested that the secretariat submit a new detailed costed proposal to the Trade and Development Board, taking into account the experience of prior courses and including new key elements to enhance the impact of the courses at the three levels of capacity building.

72. The budget proposal submitted by the secretariat for the first paragraph 166 course (Geneva-Turin, 2001), with a duration of four weeks (six days spent in Geneva and the rest at the UN Staff College in Turin), totalled US\$ 218,000 and 21 senior government officers attended it. It cost approximately US\$ 10,000 per capita.<sup>23</sup>

73. Under this proposal, seven participants, exclusively from LDCs, would have their travel expenses to and from Geneva covered by UNCTAD. With regard to other participants, their home countries were requested to cover those expenses. All expenses related to the preparation and organization of the training course, including daily subsistence allowances (DSA) for participants and DSA and travel expenses for UNCTAD staff, were budgeted. Other relevant expenses budgeted were payments to training facilities, consultants and printing/equipment/miscellaneous expenses.

74. The Government of Italy supported the first training course, which had a total cost of US\$ 184,175,000 for 18 participants (see table 3a). The per capita cost was close to the announced US\$ 10,000.

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<sup>23</sup> *Detailed Costed Proposals Mandated by Paragraph 166 of the UNCTAD X Plan of Action*, p. 7.

75. The next eight editions of the course were supported by an allocation from the UN Development Account for the biennium 2002-2003. Thanks to the savings made in the first six editions, two extra editions (Hanoi and Havana) were implemented. Their costs are shown in table 3b.

76. The second edition (Geneva-Turin, 2002) followed the first in duration and location. It had a total cost of US\$ 203,345,000 and 39 participants, reducing the cost by participant to US\$ 5,250. This edition was not considered to be a total success, given the large number of participants and the great diversity of their experiences and backgrounds. From then on, the secretariat suggested, and the Advisory Body agreed, that the next editions be oriented to a regional public and shortened.

77. There were three editions (Bangkok, Santiago and Beirut) of 12 days each, with a total cost of US\$ 173,753,000, which were attended by 59 participants, with a per capita cost of approximately US\$ 3,000.

78. The next four editions (Mauritius, Prague, Hanoi and Havana) were a bit longer, 17 days each, with a total cost of US\$ 404,550,000 for 78 participants. The per capita cost was about US\$ 5,200.

79. We note that considerable savings were reached through the offering of training facilities by host countries in regional editions. There was a trade-off, with UNCTAD offering more places (five at maximum) to the host countries in these editions.

80. The benchmarks chosen to evaluate the efficiency cost of the courses were:

- The Practice of Trade Policy, an executive programme designed for senior trade officials responsible for international trade negotiations at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, which featured in prior editions with videoconferences from UNCTAD staff. It is a 13-day course and its fee includes tuition, lodging, most meals, and instructional materials. The fee is US\$ 8,650 per capita.
- The WTO announced its costs for its technical assistance activities (mainly training) in regional locations in 2003. WTO regional activities involved several WTO Members or observers and included also the financing, travelling and subsistence costs for the participants. The activities took place in a given country and required financing of WTO staff members' travel. The WTO's secretariat applied standard cost methodologies assigning different standard costs for a one-day activity for one person. The costs for regional activities were estimated at CHF 1,150 per day, to which must be added 13 per cent for overheads. For a 12-day training course this would amount to CHF 15,600 and for a 17-day course to CHF 22,100.<sup>24</sup>

81. The comparison of UNCTAD's costs with the costs from similar courses at first-class institutions is extremely favourable to UNCTAD.

82. It was suggested in the previous section that the strengthening of the human resources capacity of paragraph 166 activities should also be conducive to stronger capacities at the

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<sup>24</sup> Information contained in WT/COMTD/M/42, 12 November 2002.

institutional and societal levels. In fact, the Project Proposals of March 2004 by UNCTAD secretariat widened their scope:

*To strengthen the human resource and institutional capacity in developing countries and countries with economies in transition so as to enable these countries to (a) gain a better understanding of the interrelated issues in the areas of trade, investment, finance and technology; (b) enhance local and regional training capacity in these areas; (c) participate as effectively as possible in discussions and negotiations on these issues; (d) establish the basis for a continuous and systematic form of training and capacity-building at the international, regional and national levels and a network of expertise in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on these issues with special support to least developed countries.*<sup>25</sup>

83. The formulation and implementation of these wider objectives should be designed and costed in a new detailed proposal to be submitted to the approval of the Trade and Development Board, reflecting the accumulated experience and including new key elements to enhance the impact of the courses on the three levels of capacity mentioned in section D – individual, institutional and societal.<sup>26</sup>

#### **F. Sustainability of the training courses**

- There is no scheduled course for the second half of 2005 for lack of budgetary or extrabudgetary funds.

84. The two basic requirements for successful capacity building sustainability are a long-term perspective and institutional capacity building. These requirements were already dealt with in section D.

85. According to UNCTAD's documents, the new approach to the planning and execution of technical assistance and training activities emphasizes networking, partnership with beneficiaries, shared experiences and long-term involvement. The evaluation team endorsed this new approach and suggested the submission of a new and appropriate costed proposal to the Trade and Development Board in section E.

86. The biggest challenge to the sustainability goal is to ensure adequate and predictable financing for paragraph 166 activities under this new approach. It is regrettable that there is no scheduled course for the second half of 2005 for lack of regular budgetary or extrabudgetary funds.

**Recommendation 21** – Networking and partnering should become a key feature in the implementation of paragraph 166 activities, which are mainly geared towards building synergies in human and institutional capacity building.

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<sup>25</sup> Capacity Building on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda. Project Proposals for the Consideration by the Government of Sweden and by the Arab Monetary Fund.

<sup>26</sup> The evaluation of capacity building in UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities already pointed out that *UNCTAD's programmes appear to be more geared to building individual rather than institutional competence*. See *Evaluation of Capacity Building in UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Activities*, p. 19.

**Recommendation 22** – Financial and budgetary planning should be improved to make the courses more predictable, with a solid two-year plan with necessary budgetary provisions.

### CONCLUDING COMMENTS

87. All things considered, including the shortcomings that were identified, the training courses' record is very positive. UNCTAD developed an innovative product on the market for technical assistance services in trade policy. The delivery of the courses met their objectives concerning efficiency, effectiveness and relevance. There is some qualitative evidence indicating positive impacts on some members' institutional capacity building in public agencies, research institutions and universities associated with foreign trade matters. There were reported positive in-house spillovers for UNCTAD itself. The evaluation team stresses that paragraph 166 activities – given UNCTAD's well-known comparative advantages – should continue to aim at excelling in the delivery of the training courses and building sustainable institutional and societal capacities through initiatives aimed at having multiplier effects at these levels. The recommendations for improvements outlined in this report would strengthen the process in terms of both quality, including long-term impact, and quantity.

**Table 1. Implementation of UNCTAD training course from 2001 to 2005****Date of course**

<b>Course held at</b>	<b>Date of course</b>	<b>Number attended (LDC participants)</b>
Geneva (UNCTAD) – Turin (UN Staff College)	15 June-16 July 2001	18 (6)
Geneva (UNCTAD) – Turin (UN Staff College)	17 July-13 August 2002	39 (8)
Bangkok, International Institute for Trade and Development. Held with UN Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific	18-29 November 2002	25 (8)
Santiago de Chile. UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	31 March-11 April 2003	18
Beirut. UN Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia	16-27 June 2003	16 (4)
Mauritius. University of Mauritius/ECA	26 January- 1 February 2004	25 (12)
Prague. Economic University of Prague/ECE	12-28 July 2004	20
Hanoi, ESCAP	15 November- 1 December 2004	18 (5)
Havana	28 February- 16 March 2005	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>196 (43)</b>

**Table 2. List of participants by country/entity**

<b>Country</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
Angola	2	Malaysia	3
Argentina	1	Mali	1
Armenia	2	Mauritius	9
Azerbaijan	3	Mexico	1
Bahrain	2	Molova (Republic of)	1
Barbados	3	Mongolia	1
Bangladesh	4	Mozambique	2
Belarus	1	Nepal	2
Bhutan	2	Oman	4
Bolivia	2	Palestine	2
Brazil	2	Pakistan	1
Burundi	1	Panama	1
Cambodia	2	Paraguay	3
Cameroon	1	Peru	3
Chile	3	Romania	1
China	3	Russian Federation	2
Colombia	2	Saudi Arabia	1
Croatia	2	Samoa	2
Cuba	10	Serbia and Montenegro	2
Czech Republic	5	Singapore	1
Dominican Republic	1	Slovakia	1
Ecuador	3	Salomon Islands	1
Egypt	4	South Africa	1
Estonia	1	Sri Lanka	1
Ethiopia	2	Saint Lucia	1
Fiji	1	Sudan	1
Gabon	1	Syrian Arab Republic	2
Georgia	1	Swaziland	1
Ghana	1	Thailand	7
Guinea	2	Tonga	1
India	4	Trinidad and Tobago	3
Indonesia	3	Tunisia	1
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	2	Turkey	1
Kazakhstan	1	Uganda	2
Kenya	2	Ukraine	2
Korea (Republic of)	1	Uruguay	2
Kuwait	2	Uzbekistan	1
Lao PDR	3	Venezuela	1
Latvia	2	Viet Nam	6
Lebanon	5	Yemen	3
Lithuania	2	Zambia	3
Malawi	2	Zimbabwe	2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>

**Table 3a. Training costs of the first course, 2001 (in US\$)**

<b>Training costs</b>	<b>Turin, June 2001</b>
Participants' hotel accommodation, DSA and LDC travel costs	153 412
Renting of training facilities, PCs, video conference, Internet	8 220
Admin. costs (telephone, fax, stationery, group photos, transportation, technician's cost etc.)	2 018
UNCTAD staff hotel accommodation, DSA and travel costs	12 396
Consultants/experts costs	8 129
<b>Total training course:</b>	<b>184 175</b>
Course was held in Geneva-Turin in June 2001 with 18 participants: there were 6 LDC participants.	

**Table 3b. Training costs for the development account courses, 2002-2005 (in US\$)**

Training Costs	Turin 2002	Bangkok 2002	Santiago 2003	Beirut 2003	Mauritius 2004	Prague 2004	Hanoi 2004	Cuba 2005
Participants' hotel accommodation, DSA and LDC travel costs	157 221	26 116	22 650	25 139	74 615	27 095	38 950	23 460
Renting of training facilities, PCs, video conference, Internet	25 080	1 398	377	0	108	20 110	11 105	11 389
Interpretation services	0	0	0	0	9 128	0	0	7 475
Admin. costs (telephone, fax, stationery, group photos, transportation, technician's cost etc.)	5 083	1 407	1 626	413	1 261	714	162	906
Catering and refreshments	1 081	2 621	1 521	2 550	7 120	1 792	2 622	3 690
UNCTAD staff hotel accommodation, DSA and travel costs	14 970	21 610	42 990	23 335	46 065	22 561	47 520	46 702
<b>Total training costs</b>	<b>203 435</b>	<b>53 152</b>	<b>69 164</b>	<b>51 437</b>	<b>138 297</b>	<b>72 272</b>	<b>100 359</b>	<b>93 622</b>

**Notes:**

Turin **2002**: 4 week course: **39** participants, 8 LDCs. Held in Geneva-Turin. Repeat countries participants (5) did not receive DSA in Geneva/Turin.  
 Bangkok **2002**: 2 week course: **25** participants, 7 LDCs. Held at the ITD-Bangkok (hence training facilities costs are low).  
 Santiago **2003**: 2 week course, **18** participants. Held at ECLAC (hence training facilities costs are low).  
 Beirut **2003**: 2 week course, **16** participants, 4 LDCs. Held at ESCWA (hence training facilities costs are low).  
 Mauritius **2004**: 2.5 week course, **27** participants, 12 LDCs. Held at the University of Mauritius (hence training facilities costs are low).  
 Prague **2004**: 2.5 week course, **19** participants. Held at the local hotel.  
 Hanoi **2004**: 2.5 week course, **18** participants, 5 LDCs. Held at a local hotel.  
 Havana **2005**: 2.5 week course, **17** participants. Held at a local hotel.