



Independent project evaluation of the

**United Nations Development Account Project 1213K  
Capacity-building for the Formulation and Implementation  
of MDGs-oriented Trade Policies**

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May 2017

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CFTA	Continental Free Trade Area
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DITC	Division of International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Study
EA	Expected Accomplishment
EAC	East African Community
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EIF	Enhanced Integration Framework
EMU	Evaluation and Monitoring Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IA	Indicator of Achievement
ICBT	Informal Cross-Border Trade
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IICA	Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITA	Information Technology Agreement
LDC	Least Developed Country
MCTI	Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (Zambia)
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MITI	Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (Botswana)
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
N	Number (of observations)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTP	National Trade Policy
PD	Project Document
RBM	Results-Based Management
REC	Regional Economic Community

RTA	Regional Trade Agreement
SACU	Southern Africa Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPR	Services Policy Review
STR	Simplified Trading Regime
TFTA	Tripartite Free Trade Agreement
TNCDB	Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPF	Trade Policy Framework
TPR	Trade Policy Review
TPSD	Trade Policy and Sustainable Development
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background and Context

This Report has been prepared for UNCTAD in connection with the final independent evaluation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded Project 1213K titled “Capacity-building for the formulation and implementation of MDG-oriented trade policies in developing countries contributing to accelerating achievement of MDGs in the context of multiple and interrelated development challenges.”

The project’s total budget was US\$694,000. Implementation was carried out by UNCTAD’s Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch (TNCDB) of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC). Implementation commenced in early 2013 and ended in November 2016.

The Project’s objective is evident from its title, although changing circumstances in global trade and development led the project team to adapt its work to the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and a surge of interest in regional trade integration among African countries. The main activities consisted of preparation of trade policy framework (TPF) studies, inter-regional workshops, national multi-stakeholder consultations, and advisory services and training. Nine countries benefited directly from the project. These are Panama, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Algeria, Tunisia, Angola, Namibia, Botswana and Zambia.

The evaluation was performed between December 2016 and February 2017. It follows the requirements of Terms of Reference (TOR) issued by UNCTAD’s Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU) and observes Norms and Standards and other guidance published by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

The assessment is based on detailed examination of six evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, gender equality and human rights, and partnerships and synergies) and 19 evaluation questions (presented in a separate Inception Report). Key data collection tools were project documentation, discussions with responsible UNCTAD staff, key informant interviews conducted by phone/Skype, and an online survey.

## Key Findings

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that while the Project has been modestly funded, it has been a highly relevant and largely very effective initiative with a reach that has extended to more than nine developing countries. Aspects of the project design and management factors have posed challenges along the way, however the project team has demonstrated a determination to adjust and press forward. While it is too early to identify impact, there are indications of outcomes and there is an expectation that with appropriate follow-up support the initiative will lead to long-term change with societal implications. In terms of the six evaluation criteria:

## Relevance

There is overwhelming evidence that the Project was highly relevant and the project team took appropriate steps to adapt the project design during the life span of the Project to match changing global trade and development contexts. Project activities showed a clear relationship with the objective and expected accomplishments in the logic model; however, the intervention logic – and the project team’s planning of activities – could have been better attuned to capacity development.

## Effectiveness

All of the main activities were completed as planned, and with some of them the project team exceeded expectations for project reach both geographically (more countries) and time-wise (assistance available and supplied over longer time periods). Both the participant feedback sheets completed after inter-regional and national workshops, and ratings provided during key informant interviews, revealed assessments of effectiveness which were uniformly between good and excellent for all major project activities. Evidence of improved knowledge, understanding and capacity with respect to development-oriented trade policies and intra-African trade was tempered by the remarks of many interviewees who expressed scepticism that trade ministry staff were better equipped post-project. Positive scoring on improved institutional capacity was accompanied by a full range of comments, including several suggesting that capacity building is a lengthy, perhaps continuous process.

## Efficiency

The Project was delivered on time and within budget in spite of being modestly funded and complicated by time delays and a variety of underlying constraints. The project team was successful in utilizing resources from in-house and external partners, and it benefited from some flexibility in the use of allocated funding between spending envelopes. Project implementation was adversely affected by administrative delays - notably the year-long delay in project approval and funding allotment - and other internal and external constraints.

## Sustainability

Indications are available that recommendations from completed TPFs are in the process of being incorporated into trade regimes in four target countries; furthermore, UNCTAD has already received four requests for follow-up assistance. Interviewees generally indicated satisfaction with the level of national ‘ownership’ over the work accomplished by the Project and confidence that some TPF recommendations would be implemented in their country’s trade regime. Regarding performance measurement and knowledge management, the evaluation identified a number of items worthy of consideration in the design of future projects of a similar nature.

## Gender equality and human rights

Gender equality, and its mainstreaming in trade policy, was not designated as a project objective or addressed by any specific activities, but the project team took into account female representation in the selection of beneficiaries. A review of TPF documents prepared under the Project found no recommendations explicitly addressing gender empowerment or

mainstreaming. Human rights was not mentioned in the project design, however its treatment on equity issues facing vulnerable populations was clearly evident in some TPF documents.

#### Partnerships and synergies

The Project served to strengthen partnerships of different kinds, notably through opportunities provided in workshops for dialogue between the public and private sectors, and for the building of relationships between officials in different ministries as well as with regional entities. There was a very close fit between the Project and the directions adopted by the UNCTAD<sup>13</sup> and UNCTAD<sup>14</sup> conferences, as well as the objective of UNCTAD's subprogramme 3 on International Trade.

#### Recommendations

The evaluation concludes with seven recommendations, each tied in to the main body of the report, and five lessons learned. The recommendations (in condensed form) are:

- (a) UNCTAD should allocate more resources to background scoping work in a target country, especially with respect to existing capacity gaps and the means through which these might be filled.
- (b) UNCTAD should ensure that project design is accompanied by a results framework which meets current UN requirements, especially with respect to indicators of achievement and utilization of RBM terminology.
- (c) UNCTAD should give specific attention to ensuring that each project is provided with adequate staff and budgetary resources to properly conduct monitoring and evaluation and that higher-level issues are properly addressed in program evaluation.
- (d) UNCTAD should commission a post-project evaluation to determine the impacts of its development-oriented trade policy initiatives and their contribution to progress in the attainment of MDGs/SDGs.
- (e) UNCTAD should build into future project designs a communication strategy that is specific to the project's objectives and supportive of wider UNCTAD needs.
- (f) UNCTAD should be more specific in the wording of key enabling documents such as the Project Document and Terms of Reference for national consultants regarding agency-wide expectations on cross-cutting issues.
- (g) UNCTAD should consider a comprehensive approach for a follow-up project of a similar nature in developing countries, including analysis of a range of design features.

The lessons learned (in condensed form) are as follows:

- (a) Implementation of a multi-year technical cooperation project in a large number of countries with a small budget necessarily requires a project team and an institutional setting which encourages adaptive management.
- (b) Course corrections and even partial redesign of a trade policy project during its life span are to be expected at a time when UN standards and practices are evolving and the context is changing rapidly. However, adequate attention and funding directed to monitoring and evaluation is critical for monitoring and evaluation to fulfil its most important functions.
- (c) Capacity building is complex, time consuming and situation dependent. A trade policy project intended to deliver capacity development has to be designed with expertise contributions from several areas including both trade policy and capacity development.



- (d) Learnings from higher level evaluations such as the external evaluation of UNCTAD Subprogramme 3 (International Trade) may (and probably should) have broad implications for the way a small capacity building project in trade policy is designed and implemented.
- (e) Lastly, no matter how much careful planning, effort and creativity goes into a project such as the one currently being evaluated, it would seem that systemic factors within UNCTAD and the UN system will continue to act as internal constraints on project performance until they are resolved at higher levels.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background and Context

This Evaluation Report has been prepared for UNCTAD in connection with the final independent evaluation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded Project 1213K titled “Capacity-building for the formulation and implementation of MDG-oriented trade policies in developing countries contributing to accelerating achievement of MDGs in the context of multiple and interrelated development challenges.”

The evaluation will provide accountability and learning to UNCTAD management, the Capacity Development Office of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and project stakeholders.

Project 1213K (referred to in this report as the “Project”) was funded by the UNDA and implemented by UNCTAD during the period 2013 to 2016. The total budget for the Project was US\$694,000. Fifty-seven percent of this amount was allocated to the elaboration and validation of national-level comprehensive trade policy frameworks (TPFs). The remainder was earmarked for advisory services, training and inter-regional workshops.

UNDA-funded projects are implemented by UN Secretariat entities, such as specialized programmes and regional commissions, and designed to enhance the capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the UN Development Agenda, including trade, economics and finance. Projects are programmed in tranches, which represent the Account’s programming cycle. Active UNDA projects are currently in Tranche 9 (14XX series) and Tranche 8 (12XX series). Tranche 8 is for supporting Member States to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in the context of multiple and interrelated development challenges, including the global financial crisis of 2007-2009.

The Project was aimed at contributing to two of the eight MDGs -- Goal 1 “Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty” and Goal 8 “Develop a Global Partnership for Development” . In September 2015, world leaders agreed to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UNCTAD staff have made a concerted effort to reorient the Project to this new and expanded set of goals.

Preparation of the evaluation has been guided by the Terms of Reference (TOR), an abridged version of which is presented in Annex I, and a work plan agreed upon with staff of UNCTAD’s Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU) and UNCTAD’s project manager and staff in the Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch (TNCDB) of the Division of International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC). The TOR required the evaluation to be conducted in accordance with UNCTAD’s Evaluation Policy (December 2011) and the Norms and Standards and other guidance published by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

The evaluation is a final or end-of-project assessment. A number of evaluation criteria and key questions were specified in the TOR. The evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, gender equality and human rights, and partnerships and synergies. The time period to be addressed begins with project approval in December 2012 and ends with project closure in November 2016.

Nine countries, all of them of interest to UNCTAD's sub-programme 3 on International Trade benefited directly from the project. These are:

- Panama (Central America)
- Jamaica, Dominican Republic (Caribbean)
- Algeria, Tunisia (North Africa)
- Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia (Sub-Saharan Africa)

Additionally, African countries engaged in CFTA negotiations including Kenya, and Bhutan, benefited from the Project to a lesser degree.

## Project design and implementation

### Project Design

The intervention logic is presented in the Project Document (PD) in terms of a “problem tree” and an “objective tree.” The problem tree indicates a problem analysis, which links low capacity of national governments (to analyze the relationship between trade, MDGs, productive capacity and employment, assess policy options, formulate adequate national trade policy framework, and participate in the international trading system) to low degree of progress in the MDGs, especially Goals 1 and 8. The objective tree specifies a number of means for enhancing capacity of national governments in the above-noted areas so that a higher degree of progress occurs in the MDGs, especially Goals 1 and 8.

The project design is summarized in the Simplified Logical Framework or logic model. The logic model shows the Project's objective to be: to enhance coherence, inclusiveness and MDG-orientation in trade policy frameworks that are best-fit to national economic needs and are more resilient and adaptable to a multiple crisis environment. The Project aims to achieve the objective by addressing key human, institutional, regulatory and policy-making capacity bottlenecks at all phases of trade policy making, before, at and after the policy formulation stage. The logic model also shows the Project's three expected accomplishments (numbered EA 1, EA 2 and EA 3), five main activities (A 1.1, A 1.2, A 2.1, A 3.1 and A 3.2) and three indicators of achievement (IA1, IA2, IA3).

A more refined logic model for the Project<sup>1</sup>, which was accessed by the evaluator late in the evaluation process, shows some rewording and relabelling of the indicators of achievement

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<sup>1</sup> This is a one-page chart dated June 2016 titled “Trade Policy Framework Reviews: Harnessing the Potential of Trade for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development.”

originally presented in the PD. Of special note is the separation of indicators of progress for project activities, outputs, outcomes and impact.

Although the project team undertook a number of practical adjustments during the four-year project life (for which see *Evaluation Findings*), there were no formal changes to the project design contained in the PD. The UNDA provides the flexibility to make practical design adjustments (especially to stretch funds further or to have deeper impact) without additional approvals so long as there are no changes to the project budget.

## Project Implementation

Implementation of the Project commenced in January 2013 and concluded in November 2016, following the granting of three extensions which enabled the project team to complete what had originally been designed as a four-year intervention. The work was undertaken by approximately seven of UNCTAD's TNCDB staff assisted by international and national consultants. The team worked in conjunction with a series of national partners, other groups within UNCTAD and other UN and international bodies (e.g., AUC, ECLAC and ILO).

Budgeted funds for the Project remained unchanged during its life span. A list of budgeted project expenditures by main activity is provided in Annex V. The total implementation rate of the overall project as of December 2016 was 94 per cent, and the implementation rate for individual budget items ranged between 88 and 109 per cent with the exception of a small budget item ("General Operating Expenses"). The project team indicated that data by beneficiary country and by type of activities could not be obtained from the new Umoja reporting system.

A tabulation of planned and implemented project activities and outputs is presented in Annex VI. In spite of a few instances of documents still requiring final editing and formatting, all of the main activities were completed.

Work on Activities 1.1 (advisory services) and 2.1 (training) occurred in substantially more than the eight targeted countries. Much of this activity was conducted at national and inter-regional workshops, during bilateral discussions and via written analytical support. There were also at least four instances of formal technical contributions that were not strictly speaking part of national trade policy frameworks: a note prepared for Kenya on trade performance and trade policy; a technical paper on market access negotiations on tariffs related to the CFTA; a follow-up study completed for Jamaica concerning value addition and value chains intended to support Jamaica's implementation of its trade policy framework as the country's TPF is presented for Cabinet approval; and technical advice provided to Bhutan on a key piece of trade-related legislation.

The two inter-regional workshops (also referred to as Trade Policy and Sustainable Development or TPSD meetings) planned for Activity 1.2 were completed. The much bigger Geneva event focused on exchange of experiences and lessons learned as part of strategy to disseminate information and capacity-building, whereas the smaller Nairobi meeting (held at the occasion of the broader conference known as UNCTAD 14) concentrated more on discussion of experiences and lessons learned about best-fit practices in TPF preparation among the key stakeholders. Both meetings addressed substantive topics related to the role of trade and trade policy in achieving

SDGs, and ongoing changes in the multilateral trading system and Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs). The Nairobi meeting also included participation in the UNCTAD14 Ministerial Round Table on the multilateral trading system. An important activity linked to the workshops was the elaboration of a paper on best practices in development-oriented trade policies (referred to as the “Best Practices paper”).

Work on Activity 3.1, the drafting of trade policy frameworks, took place in nine countries versus the expected number of eight. Completed work on Activity 3.2 (national workshops/multi-stakeholder consultations) involved no less than 18 national workshops in nine different countries versus the originally planned total of eight workshops in eight countries.

## Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation approach was utilization-focused, evidence-based, and in accordance with Results Based Management (RBM) principles.

The evaluator gathered relevant data RTA from a variety of sources and used a mix of methods. Key data sources were:

- (a) review of project documents (mission reports, self-assessments, reports of the inter-regional meetings, progress reports, financial reports, publications, etc.) as supplied by the EMU and the project team;
- (b) review of documents relating to the Project and to the work of UNCTAD and which are accessible on the internet;
- (c) telephone/Skype interviews with the project manager, project coordinator and other UNCTAD staff and consultants involved in the Project;
- (d) semi-structured telephone/Skype interviews with project beneficiaries and representatives from partner organizations; and
- (e) an online survey of beneficiaries of the Project and other stakeholders, which was translated into French and Spanish.

Evaluation tools used in the semi-structured interviews and the online survey are presented in Annex II. It should be noted that the evaluator included specific questions in these instruments about the incorporation of gender equality and human rights themes.

A bibliography of documents which were consulted is given in Annex III. A wealth of documentation has been produced in connection with the Project, almost all of it authored by UNCTAD staff and consultants.

The project team has indicated that there are a few items which are in the final stages of reviewing and editing. Overall, the coverage of the documentation by country is evenly distributed, i.e., there is material pertaining to the main project activities in each country. The evaluator did not encounter any written third-party reviews or assessments of the Project.

Discussion with the project team enabled the evaluator to identify four broad stakeholder groups:

- (a) Group A - Representatives of national governments (trade)

- (b) Group B - Representatives of national governments (non-trade)
- (c) Group C - Individuals in non-governmental entities such as research institutions, business associations or the private sector
- (d) Group D - Individuals in international or regional development agencies or independent consultants/experts who collaborated with UNCTAD on this project

A sampling strategy was then designed to recognize the diversity of the stakeholder groups in the conduct of the semi-structured interviews and the choice of case study country. The agreed-upon sampling combined the potential for both depth (via a country case study) and breadth (via the country coverage in the interviews).

A list of individuals who were contacted during the evaluation is provided in Annex IV. Included are 17 persons who were interviewed by telephone/Skype and two whose responses were submitted in writing; of the 19, 9 were female and 10 male. The telephone/Skype interviews were undertaken between January 18 and February 2, 2017.

Of 57 individuals who were invited to respond to the online survey of beneficiaries and other stakeholders, 30 entered the Survey Monkey website and only 18 provided useable information. Of the ten respondents who answered the gender question, four were female and six were male.

A total of 19 interviews were conducted with key informants (Annex IV). These individuals included focal points in trade ministries, national consultants, partners and an international consultant. The interviews covered project operations in Panama, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Algeria, Tunisia, Namibia, Botswana and Zambia, as well as work undertaken by the project in support of CFTA negotiations and other initiatives designed to boost intra-African trade.

Use of a four-point scalar permitted a quantitative reading of interviewees' assessments of the Project (corresponding to the first nine questions in Annex II). With all responses by national consultants regarding the quality of TPF documents removed from the analysis (since these individuals were largely responsible for preparing these documents), the salient features of the scores are as shown in Tables 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The extremely small number of responses (as indicated by the N for each grouping of interviewees) and the fact that some interviewees were unable to answer some questions suggests the need for caution in interpreting the average scores.

#### Limitations of the Evaluation

As is usual with development cooperation projects, especially smaller projects, it often takes time for an initiative to demonstrate results at the societal or impact level. This means that end-of-project evaluations may necessarily be restricted to reporting on developmental outputs and early indications of outcomes rather than achievements of a broader scale or longer term nature.

It should be noted that the Project by its design, consistent with UNCTAD's mandate and comparative advantage, addresses policy-making at the national level. Hence, producing economic and societal impact should not be seen as its expected accomplishment but rather a longer-term development goal that could be supported by the adoption of MDG/SDG-oriented trade policy that could result from the TPF studies. Therefore, the Project should be judged on the extent to which it has induced favourable policy changes and policy coherence in support of SDGs

at a national level together with associated capacity building, rather than the extent to which it has produced societal or economic impact.

## II. EVALUATION FINDINGS

### Relevance

(a) Fit of project design with target country statements of need and UNCTAD and UNDA mandates

The PD demonstrated an acute awareness of the broader context of trade policy and development, as well as expanding multilateralism as seen in the WTO and regional trends such as the growth of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa<sup>2</sup>. Further, the project design placed heavy importance on tailoring deliverables to country circumstances and priorities. It showed, especially in the wording of IA3, that the Project’s principal achievement would be the utilization by national governments in their trade policy regimes of recommendations proceeding from TPFs.

As indicated in the scoring of key informants (Table 1), the Project has achieved a high level of relevance to the needs of the target countries. This was the case when the Project was designed in 2011 with reference to meeting country-level MDGs (discussed briefly in *Project Summary*). It also fitted well with initiatives such as the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action of 2011<sup>3</sup>.

Table 1: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants for Project Relevance

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: How well did the project activities that you are familiar with “fit” with country specific needs.				
Relevance of the Project	2.8	2.4	2.7	2.6

Source: Author’s notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

Project documentation reveals that UNCTAD has made a concerted effort to promote awareness of its mandate and capabilities in trade and development policies befitting the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The March 2015 session of the Trade and Development Board

<sup>2</sup> Prominent examples of RECs are COMESA, EAC and SADC.

<sup>3</sup> An agreement setting out the international community’s vision and strategy for the sustainable development of LDCs over the next decade. Among the key deliverables was doubling of the share of LDC exports in international trade by 2020 and the commitment to ensure timely implementation of duty-free, quota-free market access, on a lasting basis, for all LDCs.

released a note which addressed this topic with specific reference to the formulation of SDG-relevant national trade policies<sup>4</sup>. A key point made by the authors of this note was that in a post-MDG world individual countries would have to find an effective and integrated policy mix at the national level to achieve their sustainable development goals. The note provided a diagram detailing an illustrative policy mix for delivering on key elements of the SDGs, including trade policy.

Since late 2015, the project team has sought to reorient the Project to the new and expanded set of goals which replaced the MDGs, i.e., the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Evidence includes references to the inter-regional workshops as “Trade Policy and Sustainable Development Meetings” and multiple mentions of TPFs and SDGs in presentations at the Nairobi inter-regional workshop in July 2016. The latter included highlights of major developments in global trade and development contexts, prominent among them being the adoption of the SDGs. A PowerPoint presentation by the project team reproduced the Trade and Development Board diagram (described above) in its explanation of how trade policy is an integral component of the broader vision underlying the SDGs.

The substantial Best Practices paper drafted by UNCTAD’s international consultant, which will be the last project deliverable to be completed, explained that “trade policy does not exist solely to achieve some abstract concept, but should instead be aimed at promoting the development of countries and their people”<sup>5</sup>. The author then described, with country examples, the relevance of the TPF process to specific targets attached to four of the SDG goals:

- (i) Sustainable Development Goal 8 “Promote Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Employment and Decent Work for All”
- (ii) Sustainable Development Goal 9 “Build Resilient Infrastructure, Promote Sustainable Industrialization and Foster Innovation”
- (iii) Sustainable Development Goal 16 “Promote Just, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies”
- (iv) Sustainable Development Goal 17 “Revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development” concerning which three targets deal explicitly with trade <sup>6</sup>

The draft Best Practices paper<sup>7</sup> contrasts the TPF study with other trade policy exercises: the Trade Policy Review (TPR) of the WTO; the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) conducted by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF); and the WTO accession process. Of them all, the TPF is the most flexible and most easily customized to country circumstances. Unlike the TPR and DTIS, the TPF does not have to proceed through a detailed template. This flexibility, combined with UNCTAD’s strong sense that the process of TPF preparation has to be customized to a country’s specific circumstances, accounts for the substantial variability in the completed TPF documents.

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<sup>4</sup> Titled “Trade development policies and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, and formulation of national policies in the context of existing regional trade agreements.”

<sup>5</sup> Best Practices paper “Trade Policy Frameworks for Developing Countries: A Draft Manual of Best Practices”, p.1.

<sup>6</sup> Links between trade and other SDG goals were noted in the PowerPoint presentation by UNCTAD DTIC staff at the Geneva inter-regional workshop.

<sup>7</sup> “Trade Policy Frameworks for Developing Countries: A Draft Manual of Best Practices” p. 69.



UNCTAD has longstanding relationships with the countries featured in the Project. In all or in many of them, UNCTAD has delivered other types of assistance, notably Services Policy Reviews (SPRs), Investment Policy Reviews, WTO accession support, and compilation of national trade statistics. (The project team demonstrated flexibility in supporting countries which wished to establish frameworks dealing with trade and services policies, even though the latter are generally associated with SPR studies.) UNCTAD also had a track record of completed TPF interventions prior to the Project, i.e., in Papua New Guinea (2006), Rwanda (2010) and Mexico (2012).

The fit with the overall UNCTAD strategy towards trade policy is discussed in *Section Evaluation Findings-Partnerships and Synergies*; the Project's design appears to be fully consistent with the mandate of the UNDA, outlined above in *Background and Context*.

(b) Fit of project activities and outputs with objective and EAs as stated in the logic model

During project implementation the project team made five practical adjustments to the original project design (briefly described in *Introduction-Background and Context*):

- (i) incorporating SDG dimensions since they were approved in September 2015;
- (ii) conducting if deemed necessary more than one national workshop per country;
- (iii) offering assistance to target countries with preparation of an implementation plan or matrix to accompany the TPF;
- (iv) supporting countries which wished to establish frameworks dealing with both trade policies and services policies; and
- (v) being receptive to requests (both from the target countries and others) for technical contributions to trade-related work not directly related to national TPFs.

In the evaluator's view, these adjustments were appropriate, timely and conducive to achieving progress on expected accomplishments.

The intervention logic presented in the PD features a problem tree (linking low capacity of national governments to low degree of progress in the MDGs) and an objective tree. The latter specifies a number of means for enhancing capacity of national governments so that a higher degree of progress occurs in the MDGs, especially Goals 1 and 8.

Project preparation for each country involved a series of intensive consultations and discussions with the government both in Geneva and in the capital, as well as consultants, to define the scope and focus of TPF preparation and related activities. Once implementation started, such background scoping work took place at a national multi-stakeholder consultation at the inception of the TPF process. It is possible that the PD could have included more detail about the necessary ingredients of capacity development<sup>8</sup>. In particular, it could have provided for a step in the project design, which would allow for exploration with counterparts of the capacity building needs of target countries and the means by which these might be filled. Project activities in target countries could have begun with a workshop at which ministries and UNCTAD staff work together on these issues as a way of emphasizing national ownership of the process and stressing the importance of sustained improvements in capacity by project completion. The project team has indicated that

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<sup>8</sup> Described in publications such as the UNDP's "Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer."

the first of the national workshops in each of the target countries was intended to address this step.

The overall extent to which the intervention logic was reflected in discussions or letters of agreement between UNCTAD and the national counterpart and between UNCTAD and national consultants could not be assessed by the evaluator. UNCTAD did include ample mentions of MDGs and phrases such as “inclusive and sustainable development” and “poverty reduction” in the TOR prepared for the Zambia national consultants for preparation of the TPF study; however, there were no references to the intricacies of capacity building or the cross-cutting themes of gender and human rights.

It would appear that the project team made some choices in planning their activities which gave higher priority to the preparation, validation and eventual follow-through of TPF recommendations than capacity development. The project team has confirmed that the TOR issued to national consultants focused on TPF preparation and did not address capacity building. Capacity development is explored in more detail in *Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness paragraphs d and e*.

(c) UNCTAD’s comparative advantage and mentions of the Project in news items and the broader literature

Several interviewees noted that many developing countries do not have the necessary capacity within their national institutions to handle trade policy formulation and prepare for and negotiate entry into multilateral or regional trading agreements. These individuals recognize UNCTAD’s background and expertise in the trade and development area, and the agency’s track record of readily collaborating with partners interested in trade policy.

News items regarding the Project which were accessed by the evaluator were all produced by UNCTAD. These items were informative and well positioned on the UNCTAD website.

The evaluator is not aware of any published assessments of the Project by third parties, although it is possible such assessments may become available with the passage of time and dissemination of news about the Project. No independent evaluation was conducted of the Papua New Guinea, Rwanda and Mexico TPF experiences. However, the experience of the Rwanda TPF exercise, completed in 2010, served as important information for the Project’s Best Practices paper<sup>9</sup>.

Evidence from the Project -- particularly the lack of visible external recognition of the value of the Project’s achievements -- suggests the need for a project-specific communications strategy and purposeful approaches to selected senior stakeholders requesting testimonials. It is noteworthy that the external evaluation of UNCTAD’s subprogramme 3<sup>10</sup> indicated that DITC should articulate its comparative advantage, offerings and results more effectively.

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<sup>9</sup> A video testimonial is available on UNCTAD’s TPF work in Rwanda. It shows an interview with Mr. Emmanuel Hategeka, Permanent Secretary of Rwanda’s Ministry of Trade and Industry.

<sup>10</sup> UNCTAD Trade and Development Board “Report of external evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 3: International trade” 2015, p. 15.

## Effectiveness

(a) Achievement of the planned objective and outcomes as enunciated in the Project Document

As described in *Introduction-Project Implementation*, each of the Project's main activities was completed, with the exception of a few documents still requiring final editing and formatting. More TPFs were prepared and many more national workshops were conducted than anticipated. There were also important deliverables in advisory services which were not spelled out in the project design.

The project team reported the following data for the three indicators of achievement (IA1, IA2, and IA3) as of closure at the end of November 2016:

- (i) IA1: The first indicator specified "the number of national trade policymakers and negotiators as well as academics and private sector representatives who have improved their understanding on the contribution of trade to economic recovery, growth and sustainable development, including the importance of assessing and formulating comprehensive trade policies." Based on completed participant assessments, the project team reported the total for 2015 and 2016 to be 273, of which 36 percent were female and 64 percent were male<sup>11</sup>.
- (ii) IA2: This indicator featured "the number of policymakers who have improved their analytical and policymaking capacities for trade policy formulation, implementation and assessment, and for mainstreaming trade into development strategies." Again, based on completed participant assessments, the project team reported the total for 2015 and 2016 to be 283, of which 36 percent were female and 64 percent were male<sup>12</sup>.
- (iii) IA3: The third indicator referred to: "at least eight comprehensive trade policy frameworks prepared and steps taken at least in three countries to reflect them in the review, formulation and implementation of national trade policy regimes." The Project was successful in preparing TPF documents in nine countries. Among those, the project team were able identify four countries -- Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and Tunisia -- in which certain TPF recommendations are in the process of being incorporated into trade policy regimes.

The situation described above for Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and Tunisia corresponds to the second portion of IA3, the indicator of achievement which most clearly pertains to outcomes.

The progress being made in Zambia and Botswana is described in Annex VII and Boxes 4 and 5, respectively. Interviewees reported that in Namibia the final draft of the TPF is ready for presentation to Cabinet as the basis for revised trade policy. The TPF argues that recent moves towards an import substitution approach should be carefully calibrated, and that the emphasis in framing Namibia's external economic integration should lie in encouraging multinational companies to invest in Namibia and to include Namibian companies in their value chains. As with

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<sup>11</sup> It is likely that actual numbers were greater. There were several national workshops at which participants were not asked to completed assessments or following which accurate records of responses were not compiled.

<sup>12</sup> As for the previous footnote.

Botswana, discussion of the TPF recommendations will have to take into account existing obligations under the Southern African Customs Union (SACU).

Additionally, interviews and an UNCTAD mission report indicated progress on a topic of interest to the Tunisian Government. Based on the partial TPF study, a key department of the Ministry of Finance lifted its objection to the country joining the WTO's Information Technology Agreement (ITA), thereby moving the government closer to a decision on ITA participation.

(b) Level of satisfaction reported by beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners

Satisfaction expressed by key informants on the effectiveness of three main groupings of activities (the TPFs, the inter-regional workshops and the national workshops) was between good and excellent (Table 2). Specifically, the quality of the assistance provided by UNCTAD on the preparation of TPFs received an overall rating of 2.1 (with a maximum of 3.0). Both the benefit obtained from the inter-regional workshops for TPF preparation and the usefulness of the national workshops and associated advisory services for assessing, validating and planning follow-up to TPFs, received overall scores of 2.3. Key informants were in broad agreement that the various activities complemented each other.

Table 2: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants for Project Effectiveness <sup>a</sup>.

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: How would you rate the quality of the assistance provided by UNCTAD on the preparation of a trade policy framework?				
Effectiveness of Trade Policy Framework	2.0	N/A	2.5	2.1
Question: How would you rate the benefit obtained from the inter-regional workshops?				
Effectiveness of Inter-Regional Workshops	1.9	2.3	3.0	2.3
Question: How would you rate the usefulness of the national workshops and associated advisory services in assessing, formulating and validating a national trade policy framework?				
Effectiveness of National Workshop(s)	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.3

Source: Author's notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

<sup>a</sup>Note for figure: N/A denotes not applicable. Any ratings provided by consultants for TPFs, a deliverable for which they were largely responsible, were excluded from the analysis.

The following paragraphs assess the effectiveness of each main activity, with advisory services and training dealt with separately.

*Trade Policy Frameworks* - As discussed, the Project completed TPFs in nine countries using a process which highly valued customization of the work program to country-specific circumstances. This approach, which was strongly supported by UNCTAD's international consultant, necessarily led to marked variations in the content, level of detail and style of the TPF documents.

Assessment of the quality of the produced TPFs is best left to UNCTAD's own experts and international consultant. To the evaluator, who is not a trade economist, it appears several of the TPFs are substantial pieces of work, covering off the main elements normally associated with the exercise (see Annex VII for a listing of key elements in the Zambia TPF) and leading to clear, actionable recommendations. Other TPFs completed by the Project have a more limited scope. The Namibia TPF leans toward brevity but this appears fitting given the policy choices available and the counterpart's focus. The recommendations in the Panama TPF are difficult to isolate but reactions to the document were favourable, especially with respect to the strong sectoral analysis covering agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, agribusiness and logistics services. In one country, Tunisia, UNCTAD assisted with TPF work that was specific to a single topic, i.e., the feasibility of participation by the country in the WTO's ITA.

Namibia, Botswana and the Dominican Republic have produced implementation matrices (for detail on the Dominican Republic, see BOX 1). In many countries effort is still being directed to preparing implementation matrices and early planning on monitoring of TPF implementation.

*Inter-Regional Workshops* - The two inter-regional workshops (Geneva in October 2015 and Nairobi in July 2016) were noted for their ability to bring together experts and key actors from target countries to discuss TPFs in the context of global trends and events such as the adoption of SDGs, as well as for serving capacity building of trade policy makers. Many interviewees who attended one or both of these meetings found the discussion of TPFs and the sharing of country experiences to be useful. A small number of those interviewed by the evaluator did not feel they received enough guidance on TPF preparation, likely due to their inability to attend the inter-regional workshops and inadequate sharing of information by colleagues upon their return from the events.

UNCTAD's international consultant shared his theoretical understanding of TPFs and his views on available country experiences at the two workshops (and in a limited number of national meetings) but his mandate was to prepare the Best Practices paper at the close of the Project. A synthesis of the key best practices which were identified during the course of the project and in the draft of the Best Practices paper is presented in BOX 2. All of the items upon which this listing is based (for which, see Annex VIII), appear reasonable to the evaluator and worthy of consideration in future interventions geared to formulation of development-oriented national trade policy.

**BOX 1: Dominican Republic, Building an Implementation Matrix inside a TPF**

The draft TPF for the Dominican Republic prepared in 2015 contains three sets of recommendations grouped according to issues in production and competitiveness, enabling environment for business, and linkages between productive sectors oriented to domestic and external markets. These recommendations are supported by two detailed annexes, one of which is an implementation matrix titled "Matrix summarizing weaknesses, goals, objectives and lines of action, progress indicators and responsible institutions."

The annex is an attempt to infuse discussion of the TPF with the idea that policy changes will most likely only flow from the identification of concrete actions taken on board by specific players, including government ministries and sectoral agencies, private sector bodies, and academic and research institutions.

The Project's activities in the Dominican Republic have proceeded more slowly than was anticipated, particularly around the TPF's validation with national stakeholders. Nonetheless, interviewees reported that circumstances have become more favourable and the process of validation and adoption by government has resumed. It is clear that the comprehensiveness of the document and its focus on the importance of implementation planning have been helpful.

## **BOX 2: Best-Practice Principles for Creating Best-Fit Trade Policy Frameworks**

Several documents consulted during the evaluation listed best practices in the formulation and implementation of development-oriented national trade policy. This box presents a synopsis of best practices from these sources.

Although the terminology tends to differ, several principles stand out as being of central importance. They are:

- (i) careful preparation that focuses on responsiveness to a government's request, adequate scoping with country representatives (including discussion of trade as an instrument for growth and development), and assessment of a country's existing trade strategy situation and trade ministry's capacity;
- (ii) hosting of inter-regional meetings to enable country representatives to discuss trade policy experiences and evolving trends in global and regional development, benefit from expert advice, and network among themselves;
- (iii) attention throughout the intervention to building national ownership through consultation with the trade ministry and other key stakeholder groups, including the private sector;
- (iv) extension of TPF preparation to include consultation with stakeholder groups around the draft TPF document, detailing of an implementation plan or roadmap, and planning for eventual monitoring of trade policy enhancements;
- (v) customization of TPF materials to recognize a country's trade strategy situation, unique set of characteristics (including both internal and external constraints) and expressed national priorities;
- (vi) coherence with a country's overall efforts to attain its own SDGs, including initiatives designed to upgrade non-trade policies and tackle institutional and regulatory weaknesses, shortcomings in governance and inadequate infrastructure;
- (vii) explicit recognition of the ways in which trade policy formulation can take into account gender and human rights issues, particularly with respect to equitable treatment of medium, small and micro-enterprise owners, and temporary and vulnerable workers.

Summaries of participant evaluations of the inter-regional workshops showed high levels of satisfaction with meeting outcomes, although the reliability of this finding for the Geneva meeting was diminished by the low response rate<sup>13</sup>. The percentage of respondents who scored the meeting outcomes<sup>14</sup> for Geneva as either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" ranged from 77 to 88 percent (Table 3). Similar respondent ratings on meeting content and arrangements<sup>15</sup> for Geneva ranged from

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<sup>13</sup> Of the 100 participants at the Geneva meeting, only 17 completed self-assessments. At the Nairobi meeting, where attendance was 35, 16 self-assessments were completed.

<sup>14</sup> The questions posed at Geneva dealt with: understanding of the contribution of trade and trade policy to sustainable development; understanding of key issues arising in formulating best-fit trade policy frameworks; appreciation of concerns and approaches of different countries in formulating and implementing national trade policy frameworks; appreciation of perspectives on the implications of the international trading system for sustainable development; and appreciation of the interlinkages between trade, employment and sustainable development. The questions posed at Nairobi were somewhat different. They dealt with: understanding of the contribution of trade to economic growth and sustainable development; understanding of key trade and development challenges and opportunities and possible policy approaches to address them; appreciation of different country experiences in formulating development-oriented trade policy frameworks; and understanding of different methodological aspects of trade policy formulation and implementation.

<sup>15</sup> The questions on meeting content and arrangements dealt with: technical level of the discussion; length of the meeting; presentations and discussions by resource persons; exchange of experiences with other participants; and meeting documentation (this last item was missing for the Nairobi meeting).

71 to 82 percent. All participants at the Nairobi meeting uniformly rated meeting outcomes and meeting content and arrangements as either “very satisfied” or “satisfied.”

Table 3: Summary of Participant Assessments after Inter-Regional Workshops

<i>Event</i>	<i>Meeting Outcomes</i>		<i>Meeting Content and Arrangements</i>	
	Percentage very satisfied or satisfied			
	Lowest score	Highest score	Lowest score	Highest score
Geneva inter-regional workshop Oct 2015 (N=17 out of 100 participants)	77	88	71	82
Nairobi inter-regional workshop Jul 2016 (N=16 out of 35 participants)	100	100	100	100

Source: Author based on available summaries of participant assessments provided by UNCTAD.

*National Workshops* - Many interviewees suggested that perhaps the single most important project activity was the national workshop/stakeholder consultation. They saw this activity as useful for assessing, validating and planning follow-up to TPFs, as well as for building bridges of communication and strengthening partnerships between national actors. In all the countries where multiple workshops were held, there was agreement that these were beneficial.

Table 4: Summary of Participant Assessments after National Workshops

<i>Event</i>	<i>Meeting Outcomes</i>		<i>Meeting Content and Arrangements</i>	
	Percentage very satisfied or satisfied			
	Lowest score	Highest score	Lowest score	Highest score
Zambia workshop Sep 2016 (N=17 out of 37 participants)	88	100	59	77
Dominican Republic workshop Sep 2015 (N=18 out of 36 participants)	89	100	78	100
Algeria workshop Sep 2015 (N=15 out of 20 participants)	67	86	33	80
Algeria workshop Sep 2016 (N=23 out of 29 participants)	81	99	56	86
Bhutan workshop Aug 2015 (N=29 out of 30 participants)	100	100	93	100
Bhutan workshop Apr 2016 (N=32 out of 40 participants)	94	100	91	94

Source: Author based on available summaries of participant assessments provided by UNCTAD.

The greater variability in the scores for the national workshops (i.e., those workshops for which data is available and of comparable quality) is related to inter-country differences (Table 4). As with the Geneva and Nairobi workshops, participants at national workshops expressed generally high levels of satisfaction with meeting outcomes and meeting content and arrangements. An unusually low score (33 percent for very satisfied and satisfied) was reported for satisfaction with the meeting documentation presented at the first Algeria workshop<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> The meeting documentation does not explain what gave rise to this low score. Whether it was related to French translation of materials or not, the score recovered somewhat for the second Algeria workshop.



Data which are available on the representation of stakeholder groups at a few project-related national events suggest that attempts to broadly consult with stakeholders were in many cases successful (Table 5). Based on two key informant interviews, it appears Botswana was an example of a national consultation process which did not adequately encompass the private sector (see *Evaluation Findings-Partnerships and synergies*).

Table 5: Representation of Stakeholder Groups at Project-Related National Events

	<i>Gov't Trade Ministries</i>	<i>Gov't Non-Trade Ministries</i>	<i>Private Sector</i>	<i>NGOs</i>	<i>Academics &amp; Researchers</i>	<i>Other</i>
	Percentage of attendees					
Zambia workshop Sep 2016	35	24	6	18	6	12
Dominican Republic workshop Sep 2015	61	6	17	11	6	0
Algeria workshop Sep 2015	27	40	7	0	13	13
Algeria workshop Sep 2016	91	0	9	0	0	0
Bhutan workshop Aug 2015	59	31	7	3	0	0
Bhutan workshop Apr 2016	44	34	6	13	0	3

Source: Author based on available summaries of participant assessments provided by UNCTAD.

*Advisory Services and Training* - Advisory services and capacity building support were largely conducted during national multi-stakeholder workshops and inter-regional meetings. While there were no formal training courses, all of these workshops had some of the characteristics of training sessions, aiming to produce higher levels of skills/understanding in topics such as trade in particular sectors, trade policy experience or multilateral negotiations.

Advisory services were typically provided on an informal basis at the time of bilateral meetings, at national workshops and in connection with the two regional workshops. Often, side meetings (e.g., regarding statistical data on trade performance) took place in which UNCTAD staff responded to questions or when UNCTAD staff sought to provide advice in the face of perceptions voiced by country delegations. Project staff provided some advice by email and phone calls, especially within the 9-12 month period of TPF preparation.

The evaluator received very little specific feedback from interviewees on either the advisory services or training described above. Many interviewees seemed unaware that advisory services and training were envisioned as formal project activities.

The project team also allocated effort to a number of advisory services deliverables (listed in *Introduction-Project Implementation*). Flexibility in the project design enabled the project team to respond to requests for advisory services in the trade policy area (Kenya, AUC, Bhutan and Jamaica) which could not have been anticipated<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> It is likely that some of these deliverables were useful in the conduct of other UNCTAD projects (e.g., Development Account Project M under the 8th tranche “Strengthening of capacities of trade and planning ministries of selected least developed countries to develop and implement trade strategies that are conducive to poverty reduction”).

The project team's involvement in Kenya followed from a government request related to substantive updating being undertaken on the trade policy previously drafted in 2009. The project team prepared a note for Kenya on its trade performance and trade policy to assist with the policy updating process.

The initiative in Bhutan followed a request to UNCTAD for advice on a proposed legislative framework. The project team provided support to legal officers, trade policy officials and parliamentarians preparing the Bhutan draft Trade Development Act, 2015. This forward looking and robust document will serve to assist Bhutan's negotiating process with respect to WTO membership.

Another of the Project's deliverables, a technical paper on market access negotiations on tariffs related to the CFTA, was designed to be of utility to the representatives of more than 50 member states of the AU seeking to establish a continental free trade agreement (BOX 3).

**BOX 3: The "Modalities Paper" and its Effectiveness in Aiding African Countries**

For interviewees whose concern was primarily regional or continental in scope, the Project's most important product was the technical paper "Elements of Modalities for the CFTA Market Access Negotiations..." completed in 2015.

Requested by the African Union Commission (AUC), the "Modalities Paper" was designed to promote informed policy discussion in AU member states and assist with building capacity in readiness for Pan-African negotiations for a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). The paper has served as the basis for market access negotiations on tariffs. It has been presented twice at meetings of negotiators which were geared to explaining the nature of upcoming CFTA negotiations and covering certain technical issues.

The preparation of the "Modalities Paper" takes its place among other UNCTAD publications and initiatives aimed at boosting intra-Africa trade. Examples are: a four-page UNCTAD Policy Brief titled "The Continental Free Trade Area: Making it Work for Africa"; advisory support for the Mechanism for Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Non-Tariff Barriers; and participation in the AUC-UNECA Africa Trade Week 2016.

(c) Evidence of improved levels of knowledge, understanding and capacity with respect to MDG-oriented trade policies as well as CFTA and intra-African trade

Scores from the key informant interviews (Table 6) for the effectiveness of the Project's capacity building at the level of individuals were satisfactory, but the average rating was the lowest (1.9 out of 3.0) of those reported in the interviews. The relatively low average scores were registered by both the focal points and the national consultants.

Table 6: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants of Individual Capacity Building

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: At the level of individuals, how would you rate the project's performance in leading to improved knowledge, understanding and capacity to develop MDG/SDG-oriented trade policies?				
Capacity Building at Individual Level	1.9	1.6	2.8	1.9

Source: Author's notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

Improved levels of knowledge about trade policy were mentioned as a likely outcome in several countries, through individuals reading TPFs and hearing them discussed in meetings and workshops. In workshops, the project team noticed that participants' understanding of the subject matter being presented improved; these same individuals then utilized their enhanced understanding in ensuing discussions. In post-event assessments, participants stated that they benefited from their interactions with other stakeholders.

Many interviewees, especially national consultants, expressed the view that public officials could have taken fuller advantage of opportunities to follow closely the various steps being taken in TPF preparation. In several instances, mention was made of different individuals being present at successive workshops (reducing continuity of understanding among national representatives) and the presence of less senior staff in working sessions with the national consultants (hindering transfer of skills in the more demanding aspects of TPF preparation). References were also made to internal constraints within the public service which hamper the chances of effective skills enhancement (for a description of internal constraints, see *Evaluation Findings-Efficiency*). The evaluator did not encounter any critical comments from public officials about the project team's decision to not offer formal training courses suggesting that individual learning may not have been seen as a priority.

In two countries, interviewees reported difficult interactions with trade ministries regarding divergent expectations over consultants' deliverables. One focal point expressed disappointment that the national consultant had not moved on from TPF drafting to inserting track changes in the country's national trade policy document -- clearly not a task that was consistent within the consultant's understanding of his assignment. In another country, a national consultant commented that his services were more akin to outsourcing of report preparation than a transfer of skills to trade officers who might one day be called on to prepare a fresh TPF for their country.

(d) Evidence of improved institutional capacity in entities responsible for trade policy

Scores from the key informant interviews (Table 7) also provided evidence of the extent of improved institutional capacity. The average rating was slightly better than good (2.1 out of 3.0). As with the rating on individual capacity building (*Section Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness subparagraph c*), the average scores reported by both the focal points and the national consultants were below those of interviewees in the partner/other category. This finding suggests that in many cases consultants may have been more involved in day-to-day activities and had a better sense than senior trade ministry officials and other stakeholders of how much capacity building actually occurred.

Table 7: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants of Institutional Capacity Building

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: How well have the different project activities complemented each other and led to capacity building at the institutional level?				
Capacity Building at Institutional Level	2.1	2.0	2.5	2.1

Source: Author's notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

Interview comments varied from very positive to the critical. Typically, the more positive comments referred to target countries where the trade ministry had grasped the significance of the work and substantively contributed to the TPF, its design, and validation with stakeholders. The experience conducting multi-stakeholder consultation was noted by some focal points as a valued institutional learning.

In the case of Jamaica, where the TPF was performed as a desk study by UNCTAD officers in Geneva in cooperation with the country team, the TPF elaborated for the country has found its way into the policymaking process and is currently awaiting approval by Cabinet for implementation. Geneva-based trade experts and government officials participated in two inter-regional meetings to share the country's experience in TPFs. Moreover, Jamaica and Geneva-based officials were invited to regular expert meetings of UNCTAD, which encompassed important elements of capacity building and exchange of experiences and lessons learned.

In a country where the process ran its full course, a consultant reported that the national consultants were not required to build the capacity of the trade ministry officers. One national consultant in another country flatly said he could not point to any capacity building occurring at the institutional level.

Several interviewees expressed the view that institutional capacity building is a lengthy, perhaps continuous, process requiring far greater resources and effort, and expecting this type of result from a time-bound series of UNCTAD-sponsored interactions is unrealistic. There was broad agreement that release of the Project's Best Practices paper will serve as a capture of lessons and best practices which can be utilized within institutions to guide post-TPF discussions.

(e) Lessons learned that are specific to effectiveness and adaptive management

The three indicators of achievement specified in the approved PD (set out above in *Section Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness subparagraph a*) are easy to comprehend and perhaps suitable for a modestly budgeted intervention in multiple countries where the project design placed priority on customization in the face of differing national circumstances<sup>18</sup>.

It is likely that there have been changes with regard to incorporation of RBM principles in project design and indicator selection at UNCTAD (and among UNDA administrators who attend to UNDA-funded projects) since the Project was designed.

<sup>18</sup> For example, uptake of guidance contained in UNDG "Results-Based Management Handbook" 2011.

More generally, one would expect that achievement indicators would be spelled out in greater detail. In the case of indicators hinging on self-reported improvement in understanding or capacity, the design document (or an accompanying Results Framework or Matrix<sup>19</sup>) should specify how improvement is to be measured, the criterion for success and target numbers for attainment. This expectation is consistent with the observation contained in the external evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 3 (SP3) with respect to observance of best practice in results based management (RBM). The authors of the evaluation noted: “the results indicators for SP3 (and the entire programme of UNCTAD) are elementary and, given the numerous touch points with countries, too easy to attain. They merely report the number of countries benefited as the indicators, without detailed evidence of specific development results linked to programmatic interventions. Reporting is more action-language rather than change-language oriented, which is fundamental to a results-based management framework<sup>20</sup>.”

In any event, the evaluator noted shortcomings in the definition of the indicators of achievement specified in the PD. This design issue contributed to suboptimal reporting on the Project’s indicators of achievement.

The intervention logic could have been more detailed in the way a country’s institutional capacity to engage in trade policy formulation and implementation was assessed at the outset of an intervention. Though this purpose might have been served informally through initial discussions with government representatives and during the first of the national workshops in each target country, this exercise was not programmed and budgeted.

An explicit component of project design could have brought together UNCTAD representatives, key actors from the trade ministry and the national consultants to identify jointly existing capacity gaps (if necessary utilizing checklists of attributes) and means these might be filled.

The project team chose to disseminate materials on TPF preparation during experience sharing and formal presentations at the inter-regional meetings, in national workshops and through posting of final TPFs and news items on the UNCTAD website. A number of best practice elements or pointers were highlighted in presentations made at the inter-regional meetings in Geneva and Nairobi (see Annex VII); however, many actors engaged in the Project’s activities in the target countries were not physically present at those meetings. Looking forward, the Project’s Best Practices paper will be an important reference work for those involved in future TPF initiatives in developing countries.

The project design could have recognized the value of drawing on and widely sharing among stakeholders the body of literature describing TPFs and the process by which they are prepared, validated and ultimately used for changing trade policy (and capacity building for such a process). Access to instructional materials, including case studies and thought-leadership pieces, via a project bulletin or through postings on the UNCTAD website could have been of assistance to individuals who wished to deepen their understanding of trade policy.

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<sup>19</sup> Described in UNDG “ Results-Based Management Handbook” 2011, Section 2.5.

<sup>20</sup> UNCTAD 2015 External evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 3: International trade, p.18.

## Efficiency

### (a) Rate of budget utilization and reported adequacy of funding

As discussed in *Introduction-Project Design*, the Project budget was \$694,000. The budget total, which was approved in 2011, remained unchanged during the four-year implementation period – undoubtedly a period of rising costs. For a multi-country, multi-year project operated by a UN agency, the resources allocated by UNCTAD for this initiative were decidedly modest, even considering the exclusion from the total budget of all UNCTAD staff salaries and in-kind contributions utilized on the Project.

As mentioned in *Introduction-Project Design*, the total implementation rate of the overall project as of December 2016 (yet to be confirmed) was 94 per cent, and the implementation rate for individual budget items ranged between 88 and 109 per cent with the exception of a small budget item ("General Operating Expenses"). It is not possible at this time to determine how actual expenditures compared to budgeted amounts by main activity or by target country. Difficulties in producing timely end-of-project financial information clearly impedes an assessment of the Project's efficiency.

Nonetheless, scoring obtained during the key informant interviews (Table 8) showed a very good level of satisfaction (an average of 2.4 out of 3.0) about the degree of efficiency with which project activities were implemented.

Table 8: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants for Project Efficiency

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: How would you rate the extent to which this project was efficient in implementing its activities?				
Efficiency of the Project	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4

Source: Author's notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

### (b) Extent to which resources have been utilized from in-house and from external partners

There was no leveraging of additional funds from other sources, although several international and national bodies made in-kind contributions, e.g., with peer reviews and workshop inputs. The project team also demonstrated its ability to draw on resources from other branches/divisions in UNCTAD with respect to investment and services reviews.

Much to the credit of UNCTAD, the project team had the ability to shift funds around between budget envelopes during implementation. This was especially important for a project which paid great attention to responsiveness and customization of activities to meet country-specific needs. The project team reported a saving on the costs (versus budget) associated with the first inter-regional workshop in Geneva, especially in terms of meeting rooms and translators (UNCTAD's

own facilities and staff were utilized). These funds were then utilized for further national workshops. The project design envisaged a single mission to each country linked to the national workshop; as it happened, there were also second and third national workshops in several countries<sup>21</sup>.

The project team took the position that beneficiaries in many countries would appreciate UNCTAD's support for separate workshops for TPF validation and discussion of implementation issues. The team viewed the additional workshops and the implementation matrix as means of "diving deeper" and operationalizing knowledge contained in the TPFs, as well as a way of increasing the likelihood that governments would move ahead with implementing TPF recommendations. In the evaluator's opinion, such adjustments to the design were appropriate and aided the Project's effectiveness and efficiency. Zambia (see Annex VII) was one of the countries where three national workshops were organized to great advantage.

On the other hand, Jamaica was an example of a project intervention in which the request for assistance was for a desk study and national workshops were not felt to be necessary for preparation and validation of a TPF. The project team was confident that existing capacity within Jamaica's trade ministry, coupled with active participation in the Geneva and Nairobi inter-regional meetings and high-level support provided by Jamaica's ambassador to Geneva, was sufficient to deliver the required support.

The evaluator encountered many examples of TPF authors utilizing statistics and other materials produced by UNCTAD (such as UNCTADStat), the World Economic Forum (Global Competitiveness Index, Enabling Trade Index) and the World Bank (Ease of Doing Business Reports). Additional comments on the Project team's utilization of resources from other entities are offered in *Evaluation Findings-Partnerships and synergies paragraph a*.

(c) Attribution of implementation issues to time delays and other underlying constraints

The project team's annual progress reports noted that internal, i.e., UNCTAD or UN-system wide, constraints affected project implementation. The approximately year-long delay in project approval and fund allotment was particularly serious. The excessive administrative burden under Inspira, and the administrative system blackout coincident with the introduction of the Umoja reporting system, were also noteworthy. With Inspira in place, tasks such as the selection and hiring of consultants became lengthy procedures which slowed progress in many countries. It appears the Umoja system may be an underlying factor in UNCTAD's inability to produce comprehensive financial data on the Project at the time of closure. Inspira and Umoja represent serious internal system constraints that cannot be addressed easily or quickly.

An additional internal issue, arising from the Project's limited budget and ongoing UNCTAD human resources practices, was the payment of below-market fee rates for consultant services.

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<sup>21</sup> Typically, the first workshop served for initial TPF scoping exercise, fact-finding and information gathering, stakeholder consultations, advisory and capacity-building support. Bilateral meetings with ministers and capital-based focal points were conducted to clarify all these issues also prior to the start of the project. The second workshop essentially aimed at the review and validation of TPF studies and recommendations. The third workshops were dedicated on implementation plan and matrix.

The effects of delays occasioned by internal factors were a slow start to project implementation, bunching of many key activities in the last 18 months of the Project, and the need to apply for three separate extensions<sup>22</sup> to the project closure date. The three extensions, totaling 11 months, were not sufficient to recover fully the Project's original four-year mandated duration.

The elapsed time required for the completion of project activities in the target countries varied from under six months to almost two years. The considerable variation is reflective of the importance attached by UNCTAD to customization in the face of country needs and circumstances, including constraints that were both predictable and unforeseen.

The project team also encountered perennial constraints within developing countries such as the small numbers of trade officials in key ministries, heavy workloads and staff turnover. (Trade policy work has become more complex and demanding, especially with some developing countries being involved in simultaneous negotiations with the multilateral WTO framework and more than one regional trade agreement or RTA.) Interviewees in trade ministries reported that employment in public service is all too often seen as a stepping stone to better paying jobs in the private sector. To enhance national ownership, the project team allocated extra effort to maintaining close and regular contact with national focal points and seeking early involvement of senior officials (e.g., Permanent Secretary) who would be central to successful validation of the TPF.

## Sustainability

(a) Indications of national trade policy implementation and number of requests for continuing UNCTAD assistance

The steps following TPF completion, which are the responsibility of the country governments, are most relevant for considering sustainability. Such steps would typically include drafting of the implementation matrix, seeking approval from Cabinet, sending decisions to Parliament for enactment, and establishing of monitoring arrangements.

As described in the last paragraphs of *Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness Paragraph a*, there are indications of progress being made toward impact. The project team was able to identify four countries -- Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and Tunisia--in which certain TPF recommendations are in the process of being incorporated into trade policy regimes.

BOX 4 describing the Botswana experience is a fitting reminder that the TPFs reviewed by the evaluator are the UNCTAD versions of what has been produced. They tend to follow a pattern and style of presentation which UNCTAD feels will make them more amenable for publication and sharing of experiences between countries. The project team has pointed out that every country also has--or is working on--its own (and often larger) document which carries a national government or trade ministry banner and over which national ownership is fully expressed.

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<sup>22</sup> One for a six-month period (Dec 2015 – June 2016), another for a three-month period (July - Sep 2016) and the other for Oct-Nov 2016.



#### **BOX 4: Botswana – a Country Focused on Post-TPF Activities**

The TPF for Botswana offers a glimpse of the sequence of activities following TPF completion. The TPF's Executive Summary refers to the country's existing 2009 National Trade Policy for Botswana (NTP) and lists objectives reached, partially reached and not reached. The TPF (p. xi) indicates the Government of Botswana's intention to utilize the TPF developed with UNCTAD support as "a zero draft of the NTP for the period 2016-2020" and makes explicit mention (p.37) of an implementation matrix. The latter was subsequently drafted by the Botswana Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) under the title "Trade Policy Draft Implementation Matrix 2017 to 2022."

Two further documents were issued: a MITI publication in November 2016 called "National Trade Policy: Implementation of the Botswana Trade Policy Framework" and a December 2016 MITI draft document titled "Revised National Trade Policy for Botswana." A follow-up study could be structured to review this latter document, when it is finalized, to determine the extent to which it adopts recommendations contained in the TPF or reverts back to the National Trade Policy of 2009.

Up to January 2017, UNCTAD has received requests for follow-up to the Project from Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Panama. It is possible additional requests will be received within the next few months; likely one will come from the Dominican Republic where changes in the trade ministry and government have renewed interest in the completed TPF and driven preparation of an implementation plan. It is noteworthy that several key informant interviews led to a variety of suggestions on how UNCTAD might design a follow-up project of a similar nature in developing countries.

(b) Extent to which selected project outcomes are likely to continue and degree to which entities responsible for trade policy felt ownership over TPF process

Scoring obtained during the key informant interviews (Table 9) showed a good level of satisfaction (an average of 2.1 out of 3.0) with the level of national ownership over the work accomplished by the Project and similar - and impressive - scoring (an average of 7.3 out of 10.0) on the likelihood of some TPF recommendations being implemented in the country's trade regime. The evaluator noted that the ratings by national consultants of the sustainability/degree of national ownership of the Project's activities was lower than that of both focal points and partners, who voiced a more optimistic assessment of the Project's sustainability. As with the scoring reported in *Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness Paragraph d*, this finding suggests a divergence in understanding between consultants and trade ministry officials and other stakeholders of the Project's sustainability and degree of national ownership.

Table 9: Summary of Scoring by Key Informants for Project Sustainability

	<i>Beneficiary Focal Point Responses (N=8)</i>	<i>National Consultant Responses (N=7)</i>	<i>Partners/ Others (N=4)</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Maximum score 3.0 (Excellent)</i>				
Question: To what extent did your country's government (or national governments) have a sense of ownership over the work accomplished by this project?				
Sustainability/National Ownership	2.2	1.7	2.7	2.1
<i>Maximum score 10.0 (Very Likely)</i>				
Question: What is the likelihood that your government (or national governments) will implement some of the policy recommendations that emerged from the trade policy framework (or trade policy frameworks)?				
Likelihood of Some TPF Recommendations Being Implemented	7.4	7.0	7.8	7.3

Source: Author's notes taken during key informant interviews and submitted written questionnaires.

Some interviewees, notably focal points, listed actions which they viewed as confirmation of their country's ownership: the issuance of a request to UNCTAD for assistance; preparation of the concept note or other contributions to scoping of the TPF study; participation in the search for and selection of national consultants; and organization of national consultative workshops. Other interviewees, including several consultants, pointed to missed opportunities for ownership and sustainability or spoke of national governments being alert to these possibilities only towards the end of the Project.

In several cases, national governments asked the project team for follow-up beyond completion of the TPF document, often in connection with preparation of an implementation plan or matrix and additional multi-stakeholder consultation.

One interviewee suggested that, for the country itself, proceeding with a TPF was an opportunity to pause and take stock of its trade situation, its existing institutions and policies, current commitments, compliance status, etc. This individual is convinced the result can be positive for a country which recognizes it is facing challenges and where a decision has been made to enter into the TPF process with a desire to change.

Overall, interviewees felt that there is a good to very good likelihood that some of the recommendations contained in the TPF will find expression in national trade regimes. Senior public officials in two countries felt changes were already occurring; one of these individuals commented "some things are already known, already changing." Generally, scoring was higher in countries where an implementation plan or matrix had been prepared or was still being worked on. More measured assessments came from public sector officials in other countries, with several listing necessary steps in policy approval and/or political scrutiny. A common response was that it was likely some of the TPF recommendations would be followed recognizing UNCTAD's contribution as "one of the tools" and "part of the consultative process."

(c) Lessons identified with respect to knowledge management/intellectual property of the project and project management/records management

There was no formal project monitoring either by the project team or by an external party. Informal project monitoring largely occurred during inter-regional meetings and field missions,

both in connection with national multi-stakeholder workshops as well as advisory services missions. Typically, the project team prepared mission reports which included elements of project monitoring. Additionally, some informal monitoring of the Project was undertaken by UNCTAD's international consultant as he sought to keep track of several TPF exercises and identify best practices.

Project team reporting in the annual progress reports (available to the end of 2015) was systematic and informative. However, there was a lack of specificity as to how the three indicators of achievement laid out in the PD were operationalized, and some data in some progress reports were reported without gender disaggregation.

Summaries of participant assessments were completed following the two inter-regional meetings and for approximately two-thirds of the national workshops. Unfortunately, several opportunities to seek participant feedback were missed and in many cases where assessments were collected the response rate was low. In a few instances, alternative formats were utilized which made it difficult to draw project-wide comparisons. With implications for later follow-up (see the reference to the online survey in *Introduction-Evaluation Methodology*), contact details of participants were not compiled systematically.

As mentioned in *Evaluation Findings-Relevance*, the evaluator did not encounter any instances of written third-party assessments of the Project, though of course these may become available over time. The project team reported that some communications received from beneficiaries contained testimonials regarding the value of certain project activities, but these were not viewed by the evaluator. It is usually worthwhile following completion of an assignment for a project team to approach a national counterpart to request a brief written testimonial on the value of the completed work.

Stepping back from specific issues around monitoring and the compilation of self-assessment data from participants in specific project activities, there is a more general lack of comprehensiveness in the way the monitoring and evaluation function has supported UNCTAD management in its supervision of the Project. Not only was there an absence of formal monitoring, there were no prior project evaluations to draw on (e.g., of the Rwanda TPF experience) and there was no comprehensive higher level (e.g., program) evaluation. Regarding the latter, the report of the external SP3 evaluation did not refer to UNDA-funded projects and, because of length restrictions, contained very little detail of immediate relevance to the Project (i.e. Project 1213K). Additionally, there has been no provision for the commissioning of a post-evaluation which might be capable of determining the impacts of UNCTAD's development-oriented trade policy initiatives and their contribution to progress in the attainment of MDGs/SDGs. In brief, the feedback loop to management, so critical to the incorporation of RBM principles in agency operations, has been incomplete.

## Gender Equality and Human Rights

(a) Activity related to gender equality which was included in project design/ implementation

Although concern with gender equality, and its mainstreaming in trade policy, was expressed in the PD, the PD foresaw no specific activities on gender equality. It would appear that in 2011, when the Project was being designed, there was little awareness of the linkages between trade,

gender and development, and few illustrations of successful mainstreaming of gender equality in trade policy projects. Little had changed by the time the project team issued TOR for national consultants in advance of preparing TPFs<sup>23</sup>; it seems likely there was no specific mention of gender equality.

The project team has pointed to its efforts to have gender considered during the selection of direct beneficiaries. However, while greater participation of women was encouraged, the selection of participants in national and inter-regional workshops, for instance, was largely determined by government and respective government agencies and entities.

Most interviewees were unaware that UNCTAD considered gender a cross-cutting theme in the project, although this may have occurred because the details of project design were not shared with stakeholders and their main focus would have been on major components of the project, especially the TPF preparation and national consultative processes.

There are indications, from summaries of participant assessments for certain events, of the percentage of project beneficiaries who are women. These evaluations (which were not completed by all attendees) show that 30 percent of participants at the inter-regional meetings were female (Table 10). Similarly, the participant evaluations completed for eight of the 18 national workshops revealed that women accounted for 36 percent of all participants.

Several interviewees commented that invitations to national workshops were issued to heads of departments and private sector entities and these individuals were responsible for selection of workshop participants. As one would expect, given the different cultural backgrounds represented among the target countries, attitudes about the appropriateness of a concern for gender varied greatly. In one country, an interviewee indicated gender was viewed as a national issue and should not be a topic of concern for a project such as this. At the other extreme, interviewees in several countries suggested that women already occupy positions of responsibility and are as visible, or even more visible, than men as attendees at meetings of this nature.

Table 10: Summary of Gender Representation at Project-Related Workshops<sup>a</sup>

<i>Workshop</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Men</i>
Geneva Inter-Regional Workshop	Oct 2015	5	12
Nairobi Inter-Regional Workshop	Jul 2016	5	11
Total and % of total		10 (30%)	23 (70%)
Panama National Workshop	Oct 2015	16	20
Panama National Workshop	Sep 2016	11	13
Dominican Republic National Workshop	Sep 2015	10	8
Algeria National Workshop	Sep 2015	4	11
Algeria National Workshop	Sep 2016	3	20
Zambia National Workshop	Sep 2016	7	10
Bhutan National Workshop	Aug 2015	11	18
Bhutan National Workshop	Apr 2016	8	24
Total and % of total		70 (36%)	124 (64%)

Source: Author based on available summaries of participant assessments provided by UNCTAD.

<sup>23</sup> The key UNCTAD guidance on the topic was issued in October 2016. See UNCTAD “Trade, Gender and Development: Advocating Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Economic Development on a Global Level” (2016).

<sup>a</sup>Note: Numbers reported in this table are for participants who completed assessments and where gender representation was noted in event summaries.

(b) Evidence of the Project leading to gender sensitization or changes at the policy level

As described in *Evaluation Findings-Gender and Human Rights paragraph a*, although concern with gender equality and its mainstreaming in trade policy was expressed in the PD, the PD foresaw no specific activities on gender equality. Incorporation of gender dimensions in TPF documents occurred with Botswana, Zambia, Angola, Panama, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. However, in each instance treatment of the issue was brief and there were no recommendations related to gender issues. The single substantive mention occurred in the Dominican Republic TPF<sup>24</sup>, where the state and political actors were described as having a weak commitment towards advancing gender equality. The evaluator was unable to find any recommendations in TPF documents which explicitly addressed gender empowerment or mainstreaming.

(c) Consistency with UNCTAD's efforts to promote equitable trade and sustainable development

The evaluator suspects that enabling documents - written agreements between UNCTAD and counterparts in the target countries or in the TOR which UNCTAD used for the contracting of national consultants - tended to refer to MDGs and sustainable development rather than include specific mentions of gender equality and human rights.

The PD made reference to gender equality but was mute on the theme of human rights. The evaluator's review of the TOR which UNCTAD used for the selection of national consultants in Zambia showed multiple mentions of "inclusive and sustainable development" but no references to cross-cutting themes or gender or human rights. A number of consultants who were interviewed spoke of these topics not being included in their work programs and only later being considered when mentioned by reviewers of the draft TPFs.

One brief but explicit mention was found of human rights in a TPF document, that of the Dominican Republic. However, there were indications in several other TPFs of concern for vulnerable populations, which is in essence a human rights issue from an equity and poverty alleviation lens. Treatment of the concern was especially apparent in terms of employment, labour issues and opportunities for owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). A couple of interviewees described how critical all of these aspects are for youth in Africa and initiatives that are aiming to slow migration.

An example of a specific recommendation that is linked to human rights, and implicitly to empowerment of women, is described in the discussion of Zambia's TPF in Annex VII. An intriguing example of cross-cutting issues achieving prominence in a key post-TPF trade policy document is presented in BOX 5.

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<sup>24</sup> TPF for the Dominican Republic "Marco de Política Comercial de la República Dominicana" p. 12.

#### **BOX 5: Evidence of Gender Equality and Human Rights Issues in a Draft Revised National Trade Policy**

A crucial post-TPF document in Botswana (the draft Revised National Trade Policy) has two thoughtfully prepared sections on Informal Cross-Border Trade (ICBT) and Cross Cutting Issues. ICBT, an issue which has attracted the attention of COMESA, refers to trade in legitimately produced goods and services that is unrecorded in official statistics and is carried out by small businesses in the region. By various means, traders seek to evade taxes or fees imposed by governments and/or avoid administrative formalities in areas such as health, agriculture, security and immigration.

The majority of the informal sector is comprised of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and it is estimated that in Southern Africa between 70 and 80 percent of traders in this sector are women. While the consequences of ICBT for the economy are substantial and deleterious, this activity is resorted to by a large proportion of the population seeking to escape poverty. Following the example of COMESA's Simplified Trading Regime (STR), the Government of Botswana is set to enact a similar package of measures aimed at encouraging trade among women and SMSEs and promoting the formalization of ICBT.

The draft Revised National Trade Policy of Botswana describes no less than nine cross-cutting issues which are of fundamental importance to trade and have to be addressed if the policy is to deliver on its objectives. These issues are: environment, infrastructural development, gender and youth, health, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), capacity development, labour, government procurement, and intellectual property rights protection.

Under the heading of gender and youth, there is an intention to make opportunities arising from trading activities gender neutral and available to individuals on an equal basis. There is also wording about a government commitment to collaborate with relevant stakeholders in mainstreaming into trade policy consideration of gender, people with disabilities and youth. Under the heading of labour, there is a commitment to foster human rights and worker safety, and strive to adopt labour policies which support Botswana's export-led growth strategy.

## Partnerships and Synergies

### (a) Extent to which partnerships have been advanced by the project

There was clear evidence that the Project served to strengthen partnerships of different kinds and take advantage of synergies. One interviewee noted that partnerships are critical to making any progress at all with Africa's development challenges.

Some interviewees mentioned that meetings which strengthened relationships between officials in different ministries were helpful in that they supported efforts to infuse an awareness of the growing importance of trade in other sectors of the economy. A further reason given was that institutions would subsequently communicate better among themselves and be less prone to duplication of effort.

Probably the best example of strengthened partnerships and synergies was the way national workshops provided for dialogue between the public and private sectors. In some countries such opportunities for productive dialogue are not common. The positive effect of these national multi-stakeholder consultations was clear in Zambia (see Annex VII) and in several other countries.

In Zambia, important contributions were made by the Zambia Association of Manufacturers, the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Zambia National Farmers Union and by non-governmental organizations (notably the Centre for Trade Policy and Development and CUTS International). The lack of private sector representation at the Botswana national workshops was mentioned by interviewees and in the project team's mission reports as a notable weakness of that country's TPF process.

The project team were successful in seeking collaboration from two other UN bodies, ECLAC (a regional commission) and ILO (a specialized agency), and the AUC. ECLAC provided reviews of draft TPFs for Panama and to a lesser extent the Dominican Republic. ILO participated in the Project as a partner, primarily through active participation in the Geneva inter-regional workshop and through efforts to raise awareness about the employment impacts of trade and the relevance of these impacts to the inclusiveness that is inherent in SDGs.

The AUC has been supportive of UNCTAD's work – by way of the Project and other initiatives – to assist with CFTA negotiations and issues related to boosting intra-African trade. The project team interacted directly with the AUC on the technical note it prepared in 2015 on CFTA tariff negotiations (BOX 3). Helpful interactions were also reported during project activities with other regional bodies, including COMESA in Zambia and IICA in Panama.

One UNCTAD news item describing the Geneva inter-regional workshop stated that “the meeting facilitated the creation of a network of trade directors on trade policy formulation and implementation.” The project team believes that the Project led to an informal network of national trade directors which has the potential to continue given future opportunities for joint participation in activities such as TPSD meetings. The network is considered to be especially valuable in encouraging trade directors to be more helpful and candid in their interactions with each other.

### (b) Fit with the overall UNCTAD strategy towards trade policy

Held every four years, the UNCTAD conferences renew the UNCTAD mandate, keeping it fit for purpose.

At the UNCTAD 13 conference, in April 2012, the Doha Mandate presented the underlying policy analysis and roles for UNCTAD under the main theme (Development-centred globalization – Towards inclusive and sustainable growth and development) and four sub-themes. There is wording under the main theme and each sub-theme which supports the work of the Project:

- (i) Main theme – para 18(e) which mentions the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and Aid for Trade
- (ii) Sub-theme 1 – para 31(h) which mentions technical assistance, 31(i) which mentions support on policy reviews
- (iii) Sub-theme 2 – paras 36 which mentions EIF and Aid for Trade, 41 (i) which mentions Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, and 41(j) which mentions Aid for Trade
- (iv) Sub-theme 3 – paras 56(a) which mentions WTO, 56(n) which mentions gender, 56(o) which mentions employment, and 56(s) which mentions capacity-building on the links among trade, environment and sustainable development
- (v) Sub-theme 4 – para 65(f) which mentions trade capacity-building

At the UNCTAD 14 conference, in Nairobi in July 2016, negotiators agreed on a new mandate known as the Nairobi Maafikiano. UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi, expressed delight that UNCTAD’s 194 member states had finally reached consensus, giving a central role to UNCTAD in delivering the sustainable development goals. “With this document, we can get on with the business of cutting edge analysis, building political consensus, and providing the necessary technical assistance that will make globalization and trade work for billions of people in the global south,” he said<sup>25</sup>.

Nairobi Maafikiano presented the underlying policy analysis and roles for UNCTAD under the main theme (From decision to action – moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development) and four sub-themes. There is wording under the main theme and each sub-theme which supports the work of Project 1213K:

- (i) Main theme – paras 3 and 9 which mention the central importance of trade and development, with more specifics in article 10 (a to d), and gender and human rights mentions in 14 (a & b)
- (ii) Sub-theme 1 – paras 27, 31 and 32 mention relevant policy frameworks, WTO, Aid for Trade/ Enhanced Integrated Framework; there are many references to UNCTAD roles that are of interest, see 38(b), 38(k), 38(x), 38(z) and 38 (aa) (note that 38z specifically mentions trade policy frameworks)
- (iii) Sub-theme 2 – paras 55(c) which specifically mentions trade policy frameworks, and 55(z)
- (iv) Sub-theme 3 – paras 65 about each country adopting measures tailored to its own particular circumstances, and 76(j) about the special needs and concerns of Africa
- (v) Sub-theme 4 – paras 78, 85, 86, 88 and 89 which refer to UNCTAD’s established mandate in the provision of technical assistance on trade and development and interrelated issues,

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<sup>25</sup> UNCTAD news item “Negotiators at UNCTAD14 reach consensus, strengthen UNCTAD work programme” 22 July 2016.



and 100(a) 100(e) and 100(k) which refer to work on trade and development and interrelated issues<sup>26</sup>

The PD for the Project describes its alignment with the objective of UNCTAD’s subprogramme 3 on International Trade, wording which duly reflects the direction set at the UNCTAD conferences. The subprogramme 3 objective is “to ensure the effective, qualitative and beneficial participation of all countries, in particular developing countries (...) in international trade and the trading system in order to make trade a positive force for all. Work of the subprogramme in respect of (the) expected accomplishment is geared towards strengthening their capacity to integrate beneficially into the global economy and the international trading system, including services development and trade, by designing and implementing trade policies and participating effectively and coherently in bilateral, regional (including south-south) and multilateral trade negotiations<sup>27</sup>.”

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<sup>26</sup> Wording based on UNCTAD Fourteenth session “Nairobi Maafikiano” 2016

<sup>27</sup> Development Account Eighth Tranche Project Document Project K, p.5.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that while the Project has been modestly funded, it has been a highly relevant and largely very effective initiative with a reach that has extended to more than nine developing countries. Aspects of the project design and management factors have posed challenges along the way, however the project team has demonstrated a determination to adjust and press forward. While it is too early to identify impact, there are indications of outcomes and there is an expectation that with appropriate follow-up support the initiative will lead to long-term change with societal implications.

The key informant interviews carried out during the evaluation provided a crucial source of quantitative data on several of the evaluation criteria. The interviewees scored the Project between 'excellent' and 'good', with the highest rating being given to relevance, i.e., the degree of fit between the Project and country needs. Relatively strong ratings were given for the effectiveness of two of the three main project activities (the inter-regional workshops and the national workshops) and the efficiency with which project activities were implemented. With respect to the question requesting informants to assess the likelihood that some of the recommendations which emerged from the TPF would find expression in changes to a country's trade policy regime, there was a high average score. In terms of the six evaluation criteria:

#### Relevance

There is overwhelming evidence that the Project was highly relevant and the project team took appropriate steps to adapt the project design during the life span of the Project to match changing global trade and development contexts. Project activities showed a clear relationship with the objective and expected accomplishments in the logic model; however, the intervention logic – and the project team's planning of activities – could have been better attuned to capacity development. While there is broad recognition of UNCTAD's background and expertise in the trade and development area, and the agency's track record of readily collaborating with partners interested in trade policy, there appears to be less of a comparative advantage in capacity development.

#### Effectiveness

All of the main activities were completed as planned, and with some of them the project team exceeded expectations for project reach both geographically (more countries) and timewise (assistance available and supplied over longer time periods). Both the participant feedback sheets completed after inter-regional and national workshops, and ratings provided during key informant interviews, revealed assessments of effectiveness which were uniformly between good and excellent for all major project activities. Evidence of improved knowledge, understanding and capacity with respect to development-oriented trade policies and intra-African trade was tempered by the remarks of many interviewees, especially national consultants, who expressed skepticism that trade ministry staff were better equipped post-project. Positive scoring on improved institutional capacity was accompanied by a full range of comments, including several

suggesting that capacity building is a lengthy, perhaps continuous process. Several shortcomings in the project design noted by the evaluator, including issues around indicators of achievement, scoping at the outset of an intervention and the adoption of a communications strategy, produced pointers which merit consideration in connection with future projects of a similar nature.

### Efficiency

The Project was delivered on time and within budget in spite of being modestly funded and complicated by time delays and a variety of underlying constraints. The project team was successful in utilizing resources from in-house and external partners, and it benefited from some flexibility in the use of allocated funding between spending envelopes. Project implementation was adversely affected by administrative delays - notably the year-long delay in project approval and funding allotment - and other internal and external constraints.

### Sustainability

Indications are available that recommendations from completed TPFs are in the process of being incorporated into trade regimes in four target countries; furthermore, UNCTAD has already received four requests for follow-up assistance. Interviewees generally indicated satisfaction with the level of national 'ownership' over the work accomplished by the Project and confidence that some of the TPF recommendations would be implemented in their country's trade regime. With respect to project monitoring, performance measurement and knowledge management, the evaluation identified a number of items worthy of consideration in the design of future projects of a similar nature.

### Gender equality and human rights

Gender equality, and its mainstreaming in trade policy, was not designated as a project objective or addressed by any specific activities, but the project team took into account female representation in the selection of beneficiaries. A review of TPF documents prepared under the Project found no recommendations explicitly addressing gender empowerment or mainstreaming. Human rights was not mentioned in the project design, however its treatment on equity issues facing vulnerable populations was clearly evident in some TPF documents.

### Partnerships and synergies

The Project served to strengthen partnerships of different kinds, notably through opportunities provided in national and regional workshops for dialogue between the public and private sectors, and for the building of relationships between officials in different ministries as well as with regional entities. There was a very close fit between the Project and the directions and priorities adopted by the UNCTAD<sup>13</sup> and UNCTAD<sup>14</sup> conferences, as set out in the Doha Mandate and the Nairobi Maafikiano, as well as the objective of UNCTAD's subprogramme 3 on International Trade.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation led to seven recommendations for UNCTAD's consideration in the conduct of future projects of a similar nature. Links to key related findings are provided in Table 11.

Recommendation #1: UNCTAD should allocate more resources to background scoping work in a target country; in particular, an explicit component should be incorporated in the design of future projects that brings together UNCTAD representatives, key actors from the trade ministry and the national consultants to identify jointly existing capacity gaps and the means through which these might be filled.

Recommendation #2: UNCTAD should ensure that a results framework or matrix accompanies the project design document and that this framework meets standards and practices currently observed in the UN system<sup>28</sup>. The results framework, including the indicators of achievement should be detailed enough for operationalization by project teams, including details on how change is to be measured, baseline conditions, and what might constitute target numbers for attainment. Proper utilization of RBM terminology would be essential in the project document and results framework, including adequate differentiation of indicators for outputs, outcomes and impact.

Recommendation #3: UNCTAD should give specific attention to ensuring that each project is provided with adequate staff and budgetary resources to properly conduct monitoring and evaluation and, further, that each project team is fully briefed on the applicable results framework, its expected involvement in monitoring exercises and preparation for external evaluations. In the area of knowledge management, preparation for external evaluations would include compilation of project documentation and gathering of written testimonials. Additionally, regular review and updating of the results framework should be undertaken to ensure performance monitoring is being carried out and findings are available to project management for learning and adjustment. Finally, UNCTAD should ensure that higher-level issues are properly addressed in the applicable program evaluation.

Recommendation #4: UNCTAD should commission a post-project evaluation to determine the impacts of its development-oriented trade policy initiatives, including Project 1213K and previous work in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Rwanda and Mexico. Recognizing that long-term societal change takes time to flow from project implementation, it would be instructive to examine the hypothesis (contained in the problem tree and objective tree of the 1213K Project Document) that the realization of development-oriented changes in national trade policy regimes would contribute to progress in the attainment of MDGs/SDGs.

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<sup>28</sup> A likely source of guidance is UNDG, Results-Based Management Handbook (2011).

Recommendation #5: UNCTAD should build into future project designs a communication strategy that is specific to the project’s objectives and supportive of wider UNCTAD needs. Such a strategy would demonstrate the value of work completed to date, improve ease of access to the relevant literature, and better articulate UNCTAD’s comparative advantage. Included among relevant items of literature would be articles and papers related to capacity-building for trade policy formulation, case studies of successful Trade Policy Framework exercises, and presentations on best practices.

Recommendation #6: UNCTAD should be more specific in the wording of key enabling documents such as the Project Document and Terms of Reference for national consultants regarding agency-wide expectations on cross-cutting issues; further, UNCTAD should provide illustrations of trade policy work in which attention to gender and human rights has been supportive of development goals.

Recommendation #7: In the interests of continuing relevance and effectiveness, UNCTAD should consider a comprehensive approach for a follow-up project of a similar nature in developing countries.

The approach should include analysis of design features which:

- are attuned to the changing global trade and development context;
- incorporate a quick response mechanism capable of providing national governments previously served by UNCTAD with analytical products and advisory and training services;
- include development-oriented trade policy initiatives at the regional level (i.e., including analytical products and advisory and training services geared to supporting groupings of countries); and
- lead to trade policy formulation studies and subsequent follow-up implementation in national trade policy regimes which have broad demonstration value.

Table 11: Summary of Recommendations and Links to Key Related Findings

<i>Recommendation (abbreviated wording)</i>	<i>Cross-Reference to Related Findings</i>
#1: UNCTAD should allocate more resources to background scoping work in a target country, especially with respect to existing capacity gaps and the means through which these might be filled	Evaluation Findings-Relevance Paragraph b and Effectiveness Paragraph e
#2 UNCTAD should ensure that project design is accompanied by a results framework which meets current UN requirements, especially with respect to indicators of achievement and utilization of RBM terminology	Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness Paragraph e
#3 UNCTAD should give specific attention to ensuring that each project is provided with adequate staff and budgetary resources to properly conduct monitoring and evaluation and that higher-level issues are properly addressed in program evaluation.	Evaluation Findings-Sustainability Paragraph c
#4 UNCTAD should commission a post-project evaluation to determine the impacts of its development-oriented trade policy initiatives and their contribution to progress in the attainment of MDGs/SDGs.	Introduction-Evaluation Methodology and Evaluation Findings-Sustainability Paragraph c
#5 UNCTAD should build into future project designs a communication strategy that is specific to the project’s objectives and supportive of wider UNCTAD needs	Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness Paragraph e

<p>#6 UNCTAD should be more specific in the wording of key enabling documents such as the Project Document and Terms of Reference for national consultants regarding agency-wide expectations on cross-cutting issues</p>	<p>Evaluation Findings-Gender and human rights Paragraphs a, b, and c</p>
<p>#7 UNCTAD should consider a comprehensive approach for a follow-up project of a similar nature in developing countries, including analysis of a range of design features.</p>	<p>Evaluation Findings-Sustainability Paragraph a</p>

## V. LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluator acknowledges that effort has been allocated by both the project team and UNCTAD's international consultant to the identification of best practices and lessons learned, especially during the last 18 months of the Project's life span. Following the evaluation workplan, best practices have been addressed in Section *Evaluation Findings-Effectiveness paragraph e* and Section *Evaluation Findings-Sustainability c*. At the conclusion of this final evaluation, there would appear to be five overarching lessons learned, i.e., big-picture observations derived from the conduct of the current evaluation which could be actively taken into account in future projects of a similar nature or in initiatives aimed at improving internal agency processes. The lessons learned are as follows:

- (a) Implementation of a multi-year technical cooperation project in a large number of countries with a small budget necessarily requires a project team and an institutional setting which encourages adaptive management. This is an eminently sensible approach to dealing with purposeful customization of a project to meet the trade policy capacity-building needs of widely differing countries, the dynamism of trade and development, the complexities of development cooperation, and a variety of internal and external constraints on the project.
- (b) Course corrections and even partial redesign of a trade policy project during its life span are to be expected at a time when UN standards and practices are evolving and in a rapidly changing global trade and development context. However, adequate attention and funding directed to monitoring and evaluation is critical for monitoring and evaluation to fulfil its most important functions, particularly provision of a feedback loop to project management. A very heavy reliance on a final project evaluation is not sufficient.
- (c) Capacity building is complex, time consuming and situation dependent. A trade policy project intended to deliver capacity development has to be designed with expertise contributions from several areas including both trade policy and capacity development. The necessary customization of a project to accommodate target country characteristics should feature adequate scoping of issues such as a trade ministry's capacity and available means of addressing capacity gaps. Furthermore, offerings of advisory services and training have to be properly resourced and creatively delivered to fully build capacity and support development-oriented trade policy reform.
- (d) Learnings from higher level evaluations such as the external evaluation of UNCTAD Subprogramme 3 (International Trade) and any evaluations undertaken by UNDA may (and probably should) have broad implications for the way a small capacity building project in trade policy is designed and implemented and the management approach taken to monitoring and evaluation of such a project.

**(e)** Lastly, no matter how much careful planning, effort and creativity goes into a project such as the one currently being evaluated, it would seem that systemic factors within UNCTAD and the UN system will continue act as internal constraints on project performance until they are resolved at higher levels. Examples of such constraints are the Inspira and Umoja systems and UNCTAD's practice of allocating budgets for consultant services which are set at well below market fee rates.



# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I. TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **External Evaluation of Development Account Project 1213K - Capacity-building for the formulation and implementation of MDG-oriented trade policies in developing countries contributing to accelerating achievement of MDGs in the context of multiple and interrelated development challenges**

#### 1. Introduction and Purpose

*This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the final independent project evaluation for the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded project titled “Capacity-building for the formulation and implementation of MDG-oriented trade policies in developing countries contributing to accelerating achievement of MDGs in the context of multiple and interrelated development challenges”.*

The UNCTAD Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU), in close collaboration with the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC), will undertake this evaluation.

This evaluation exercise is meant to ensure ownership, result-based orientation, cost-effectiveness and quality of UNCTAD assistance. By carrying out this evaluation, UNCTAD plans to assess its work, to learn lessons, to receive feedback, appraisal and recognition, as well as to mobilize resources by showing the possible attribution of achievements to the programme.

The evaluation will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, and project performance. The evaluation will provide assessments that are credible and useful, and also include practical and constructive recommendations, in order to enhance the work of UNCTAD in this area.

The evaluation will provide accountability to UNCTAD management, the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.

#### 2. Project Background

Following the global crisis, many developing countries are reexamining their own best-fit and integrated trade policy frameworks, institutions and regulations at the national levels that can be tailored to their specific development situation and productive capacities, aligning with national development goals and the Millennium Development Goals.

The overall objective of the project is to enhance coherence, inclusiveness and Millennium

Development Goal-orientation in trade policy frameworks that are best-fit to national economic needs and more resilient and adaptable to multiple crisis environment.

The expected accomplishments of the project are as follows:

**EA 1:** Increased levels of understanding of the trade policy community in the targeted countries of the contribution of trade to economic recovery, growth and sustainable development in a post-crisis period;

**EA 2:** Increased capacities of policymakers in analyzing the impact of trade on economic recovery and development, including the potential contribution of key products and services sectors;

**EA 3:** A selected number of developing countries having elaborated and validated, including through multi-stakeholder consultative process, a comprehensive trade policy framework that ensures policy coherence with other measures that support inclusive and sustainable development.

Main activities of the project include: (a). Prepare 8 comprehensive trade policy frameworks in selected countries; (b). Conduct 8 national workshops to discuss and validate the 8 trade policy frameworks; (c). Conduct two interregional workshops to share lessons learned and the findings and recommendations of the trade policies, and exchange experience on best practices in development-centered trade policies; (d). Provide advisory services to build capacities of policy makers in trade policy analysis and development; (e). Conduct training on development-oriented trade policy formulation and implementation in 8 developing countries for policymakers, trade negotiators, the business community, academia and civil society.

The project started in 2013 and is expected to be completed by the end of September 2016. Jamaica, Tunisia, Zambia, Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Dominican Republic, and Panama are the eight countries that benefited directly from UNCTAD's technical assistance. Several other countries have also benefited from the project.

### 3. Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from 2013 to 2016. The evaluation is expected to deal with the following questions under the below criteria:

#### **a) Relevance**

- Did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflect and address the primary development needs of the developing countries, taking into account UNCTAD's mandates, and alignment with the objectives of the UNDA?
- Were the actual activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goals and intended outcomes?
- What is UNCTAD's comparative advantage in this area and to what extent did this project maximize it?

#### **b) Effectiveness**

- Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document?
- To what extent are project beneficiaries satisfied with the activities organized by the project and the quality of the outputs?

- How have the different activities complemented each other in the capacity building of the project beneficiaries?
- Were there initial evidences that the beneficiaries' awareness, understanding and skills to develop MDGs-oriented trade policies have been improved or enhanced?
- What are the lessons learned or best practices for similar future interventions?

**c) *Efficiency***

- Have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control been adequate in ensuring the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?
- Has the project leveraged in-house expertise, previous research and technical cooperation outcomes, existing databases, and other internal resources of UNCTAD and/or external collaboration from international development partners and mechanisms?
- Has the project timeline been affected by possible constraints/ problems?? If so, how have these affected project objectives and have they been addressed in an appropriate manner?

**d) *Sustainability***

- Is there evidence that national counterparts are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project? To what extent have project beneficiaries' institutional capacities been enhanced?
- Have the activities and outputs have been designed and implemented in such a way to ensure maximum sustainability of the project's impact? For instance, to what extent did the beneficiary country stakeholders have strong sense of ownership?
- Have efforts been made to sustain the knowledge and capacity gained in the project for future similar interventions to be carried out by UNCTAD?

**e) *Mainstreaming of Gender***

- To what extent the design and implementation of the project incorporated gender equality, and can evidence be identified in this regard?
- How have the beneficiaries been sensitized on the gender dimension of trade policies and their impact on gender equality?

**f) *Partnerships and synergies***

- How has the project advanced partnerships with national and regional counterparts, the civil society and/or the private sector?
- How does the project fit into the overall UNCTAD strategy towards trade policy?

**4. Deliverables and Expected Output**

The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the project.

More specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the project while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;
- Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how UNCTAD's work in this area can be strengthened in order to deliver better results in addressing beneficiaries' needs and create synergies through collaboration with other UNCTAD divisions, international organizations

- and development partners, and other international forums;
- Draw lessons of wider application for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects/countries;
- Conduct a country case study to provide in-depth assessment of the project's performance in a particular country.

Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation:

- 1) An inception report;
- 2) A draft evaluation report; and
- 3) The final evaluation report

The inception report should outline the evaluator's understanding of the issues under evaluation captured in an evaluation framework, and a detailed work plan with the timeframe. The evaluation framework should include an evaluation matrix relating evaluation issues and questions to evaluation criteria, indicators, sources of information and methods of data collection.

The first draft report should be presented to the EMU and relevant stakeholders for quality assurance and factual corrections at least 3 weeks before the deadline for the submission of the final report.

The final output of the evaluation is a report that must compose the following key elements:

- 1) Executive summary (maximum 3 pages);
- 2) Introduction of the evaluation, a brief description of the projects, the scope of the evaluation and a clear description of the methodology used;
- 3) Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section 3 of this ToR, with a comparison table of planned and implemented project activities and outputs;
- 4) Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.

In the evaluation report, all the assessments made must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and well-substantiated logic. It follows that all the recommendations made should be supported by the assessments made. Relevant, specific, practical, actionable, and time-bound recommendations are highly appreciated.

## 5. Methodology

The evaluation will be undertaken through a triangulation exercise of all available data to draw conclusions and findings. The evaluation methodology includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Desk review of project documents and relevant materials;
- Face-to-face interview and/ or telephone interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff;
- Online surveys of beneficiaries of the project, and other stakeholders, as may be required\*; conduct follow-up interviews as may be necessary;
- Telephone/skype interviews with a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders.

## 6. Description of Duties

The evaluator reports to the Chief of EMU. He or she will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of the EMU and in coordination with the project manager. The evaluator will be responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, assessment and reporting as provided in this TOR. The evaluator must take full responsibility for the contents of the report generated and

ensure its independence and accuracy. The evaluator shall act independently, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and in her/his capacities and not as a representative of any government or organisation that may present a conflict of interest. S/he will have no previous experience of working with the project or of working in any capacity linked with it.

## ANNEX II. EVALUATION TOOLS

### Key Elements of Online Survey Questionnaire

1. What kind of organization do you represent?
2. What is your gender?
3. How would you describe your level of participation in this project?
4. Please identify your country from among the following:
5. How do you rate the project on...  
it meeting the capacity-building needs of policy makers in your country?  
its alignment with your country's need for a trade policy framework?
6. Did you participate in actual preparation of a trade policy framework supported by UNCTAD (e.g., drafting, validation)?
7. How do you rate the quality of the trade policy framework developed with UNCTAD support for your country?
8. Did you participate in either of the two inter-regional workshops (UNCTAD's Trade Policy and Sustainable Development meetings) held in Geneva 6-8 October 2015 and in Nairobi 18-19 July 2016?
9. Which inter-regional workshop(s) did you attend?  
Geneva meeting 6-8 October 2015  
Nairobi meeting 18-19 July 2016
10. How do you rate the benefit obtained from the inter-regional workshops (e.g., briefed management/colleagues, did further study, used knowledge in daily work)?
11. Did you participate in any national workshops (i.e., multi-stakeholder consultations on your country's trade policy framework organized with UNCTAD's support) or other associated advisory services?
12. How many national workshops (i.e., multi-stakeholder consultations) did you attend?

13. How do you rate the usefulness of the national workshops/multi-stakeholder consultations and other associated advisory services in formulating and validating a national trade policy framework?
14. How do you rate the quality of collaboration between your government and UNCTAD in delivering this project?
15. How do you rate the project's consideration of gender in the selection of beneficiaries for project activities (e.g., national workshops/multi-stakeholder consultations)?
16. How do you rate the extent to which the project built institutional capacity to develop MDG/SDG-oriented trade policies?
17. What is the likelihood that your government will implement some of the policy recommendations that emerged from the trade policy framework developed with UNCTAD's assistance?
18. What would you most like UNCTAD to know about this project?

#### Protocol for Key Informant Interviews

This project focused on capacity-building and formulation of MDG-oriented trade policy. The project's main activities were preparation of trade policy frameworks, inter-regional workshops (also called UNCTAD Trade Policy and Sustainable Development meetings), and national workshops/multi-stakeholder consultations and other associated advisory services.

1. How well did the project activities that you are familiar with "fit" with your country's specific needs?
2. How would you rate the quality of the assistance provided by UNCTAD on the preparation of a trade policy framework?
3. How would you rate the benefit obtained from the inter-regional workshops (the Geneva meeting on 6-8 October 2015 and the Nairobi meeting on 18-19 July 2016)?
4. How would you rate the usefulness obtained from the national workshops and associated advisory services in assessing, formulating and validating a national trade policy framework?
5. At the level of individuals, please rate the project's performance in leading to improved knowledge, understanding and capacity to develop MDG/SDG-oriented trade policies?
6. How well have the different project activities (such as trade policy framework preparation, validation and workshops) complemented each other and led to capacity building at the institutional level?

7. From your viewpoint, please rate the extent to which this project was efficient in implementing its activities (i.e., preparation of a trade policy framework, workshops, advisory services/training)?
8. To what extent did your country's government have a sense of ownership over the work accomplished by this project? For example, do you think the government was actively collaborating with UNCTAD in preparation and validation of the trade policy framework and organization of the workshops?
9. What is the likelihood that your government will implement some of the policy recommendations that emerged from the trade policy framework?
10. What have you noticed about the presence of gender equality and human rights as cross-cutting themes in this project? For instance, in the promotion of equitable trade opportunities and economic benefit for vulnerable groups such as women or those in a disadvantaged position along the value chain.
11. How has the project considered gender in the selection of direct beneficiaries for project activities?
12. To the best of your knowledge, has the project served to advance partnerships with national and regional counterparts, civil society and/or the private sector?
13. What are the most important lessons learned or best practices that UNCTAD should consider in planning future projects of this nature in developing countries?
14. Do you have any other comments about the project which could be helpful to the evaluation?



# ANNEX III. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

## UNCTAD PROJECT 1213K PUBLICATIONS

- Development Account Eighth Tranche Project Document Project K Undated
- Project 1213K Annual Progress Report 2013
- Project 1213K Annual Progress Report 2014
- Project 1213K Annual Progress Report 2015
- Trade Policy Framework for Panama 2016
- Trade Policy Framework for Jamaica 2015
- Trade Policy Framework for the Dominican Republic “Marco de Política Comercial de la República Dominicana” 2016
- Trade Policy Framework for Algeria “Politiques commerciales et diversification” 2016
- Trade Policy Framework for Tunisia “Implications of participation in the Information Technology Agreement of the World Trade Organization” 2015
- Trade Policy Framework for Angola 2015
- Trade Policy Framework for Namibia 2016
- Trade Policy Framework for Botswana 2016
- Trade Policy Framework for Zambia “Harnessing the Potential for Trade and Sustainable Growth in Zambia” 2015
- Trade Policy and Sustainable Development Meeting Geneva “Report of the Meeting” 2015
- Trade Policy and Sustainable Development Meeting Geneva – PowerPoint “Lessons Learnt from UNCTAD’s Work on Trade Policy Frameworks” 2015
- Trade Policy and Sustainable Development Meeting Nairobi “Report of the Meeting” 2016
- Best Practices Paper “Trade Policy Frameworks for Developing Countries: A Draft Manual of Best Practices” 2017
- Technical Note “Kenya’s participation in international trade: Patterns, evolutions and policy implications” 2014
- Technical Note “Elements of Modalities for the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Market Access Negotiations on Tariffs: Some Key Issues for Consideration” 2015
- Technical Note “Value Chains and Jamaica: Current Role and Future Potential” 2016
- National Workshop Panama Oct 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Panama Sept 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Dom. Rep. Sept 2015 Mission Report

- National Workshop Algeria Sept 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Algeria Sept 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Tunisia May 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Angola Sept 2014 Mission Report
- National Workshop Namibia Apr 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Namibia May 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Namibia Sept 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Botswana Sep 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Botswana Feb 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Botswana Sep 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Zambia Jul 2014 Mission Report
- National Workshop Zambia Apr 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Zambia Sep 2016 Mission Report
- National Workshop Bhutan Aug 2015 Mission Report
- National Workshop Bhutan Apr 2016 Mission Report

#### OTHER UNCTAD AND UNEG PUBLICATIONS

- UNCTAD Thirteenth session “The Doha Mandate” 2012
- UNCTAD Trade and Development Board “Trade development policies and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, and formulation of national policies in the context of existing regional trade agreements” 2015
- UNCTAD “Annual Report 2015 Delivering on a Sustainable Agenda” 2015
- UNCTAD Trade and Development Board “Report of external evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 3: International trade” 2015
- UNCTAD “The Continental Free Trade Area: Making it Work for Africa” Policy Brief No. 44, December 2015
- UNCTAD Fourteenth session “Nairobi Maafikiano” 2016
- UNCTAD “Trade, Gender and Development: Advocating Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Economic Development on a Global Level” 2016

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- United Nations Development Group (UNDG) “Results-Based Management Handbook” (2011)
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP) “Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer” 2009
- United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) “The Role of Evaluation in Results-Based Management” (2007)
- United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) “Norms and Standards for Evaluation” 2016



## ANNEX IV. LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED DURING THE EVALUATION

Name	Position	Institution
Ms. Aparicio, Leyda	General Director of Trade Promotion	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Government of Panama, Panama City (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Panama TPF)
Mr. Baker, Paul	Chief Economist	International Economics Ltd., Grand Baie, Mauritius (Consultant to UNCTAD on Botswana TPF)
Mr. Benabdallah, Youcef	Consultant	Algiers (Consultant to UNCTAD on Algeria TPF) interview responses provided in writing
Ms. Brahim, Fatma	Director in charge of relations with WTO	Ministry of Trade, Government of Tunisia, Tunis (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Tunisia TPF)
Ms. Bwalya, Lillian	Acting Director	Department of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Government of Zambia, Lusaka (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Zambia TPF)
Ms. Céspedes, Patricia	Encargada, Departamento de Fortalecimiento de las Capacidades Comerciales	Dirección de Comercio Exterior, Government of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Dominican Republic TPF)
Mr. Caesar, Cheelo	Economist	University of Zambia, Lusaka (Consultant to UNCTAD on Zambia TPF)
Mr. Chisanga, Edward	Economic Affairs Officer	TNCDB, DITC (UNCTAD Staff)
Mr. Draper, Peter	Managing Director	Tutwa Consulting Group, Pretoria, South Africa (Consultant to UNCTAD on Namibia TPF)
Mr. Ito, Taisuke	Project Coordinator and Economic Affairs Officer	TNCDB, DITC (UNCTAD Staff)
Ms. Kategekwa, Joy	Head	UNCTAD Regional Office for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Partner to UNCTAD DITC)
Mr. Katjipuka, Benjamin	Director of Trade	, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and SME Development, Government of Namibia, Windhoek (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Namibia TPF)
Ms. Lekaukau, Kelebogile	Chief Economist	Ministry of Trade and Industry, Government of Botswana, Gaborone (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Botswana TPF)
Mr. Martínez-Piva, Jorge Mario	Chief of the International Trade and Industry Unit	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Subregional Headquarters, Mexico City (Partner to UNCTAD)
Mr. Melili, Abdelouahab	Ministry of Commerce	Algiers (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Algeria TPF) interview responses provided in writing
Mr. Ndulo, Manenga	Associate Professor in Economics	University of Zambia, Lusaka (Consultant to UNCTAD on Zambia TPF)
Ms. Scheker, Elka	Consultora Legal y Empresarial	Scheker & Associates, Red INTEGRA de Consultores en Comercio Exterior, Santo

		Domingo, Dominican Republic (Consultant to UNCTAD on Dominican Republic TPF)
Mr. Sebahizi, Prudence	Chief Technical Advisor	African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Partner to UNCTAD)
Ms. Thomas, Marcia	Under Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Government of Jamaica, Kingston (Focal Point to UNCTAD on Jamaica TPF)
Ms. Turolla, Luisa	Datacentersuite Partner/BA Energy Solutions Partner	Proyectos Inteligentes (Smartbiz, Inc.), Panama City (Consultant to UNCTAD on Panama TPF)
Mr. VanGrasstek, Craig	Lecturer in Public Policy	John F. Kennedy School, Harvard University, Washington, DC (International Consultant to UNCTAD)

## ANNEX V. BUDGETED VS ACTUAL PROJECT EXPENDITURES BY MAIN ACTIVITY

<i>Planned Activities</i>	<i>Budgeted (USD) and % of Total</i>	<i>Actual</i>
<b>A 1.1.</b> Provide advisory services on building capacities and imparting skills to policymakers and analysts on trade policy elaboration and related institutional and regulatory capacity-building	\$40,000 (5.8%)	Not Known
<b>A 1.2.</b> Conduct two interregional workshops to share lessons learned and the findings and recommendations of the trade policies, and exchange experiences on best practices in trade policies. The outcome of the workshops would be the elaboration of a booklet on best practices in development-oriented trade policies	\$195,000 (28.1%)	Not Known
<b>A 2.1.</b> Conduct training on development-oriented trade policy formulation and implementation in 8 developing countries for policymakers, trade negotiators, the business community, academia and civil society	\$50,000 (7.2%)	Not Known
<b>A 3.1.</b> Prepare 8 comprehensive trade policy frameworks in 8 selected countries in Africa, the Asia and the Pacific region, and in Latin America and the Caribbean region that focus on developing productive capacities in resilient economic sectors that also foster poverty reduction	\$212,000 (30.5%)	Not Known
<b>A 3.2.</b> Conduct 8 national workshops to discuss and validate the 8 comprehensive trade policy frameworks	\$187,000 (26.9%)	Not Known

Source: Author based on the 1213K Project Document and information from the project team.

## ANNEX VI. COMPARISON OF PLANNED AND IMPLEMENTED PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

<i>Planned Activities</i>	<i>Implemented Activities</i>	<i>Comment (at December 2016)</i>
<b>EA 1 Increased levels of understanding of the trade policy community in the targeted countries of the contribution of trade to economic recovery, growth and sustainable development in a post-crisis period</b>		
<b>A 1.1.</b> Provide advisory services on building capacities and imparting skills to policymakers and analysts on trade policy elaboration and related institutional and regulatory capacity-building	Completed for Zambia, Angola, Kenya, Tunisia, Algeria, Namibia, Botswana, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Jamaica and Bhutan as well as African countries engaged in CFTA negotiations	Activity completed
<b>A 1.2.</b> Conduct two interregional workshops to share lessons learned and the findings and recommendations of the trade policies, and exchange experiences on best practices in trade policies. The outcome of the workshops would be the elaboration of a booklet on best practices in development-oriented trade policies	One inter-regional workshop on trade policy and sustainable development was conducted in Geneva on 6-8 October 2015; a second was held in Nairobi on 18-19 July 2016  Best practices paper drafted	Activity completed  Best practices paper to be finalized
<b>EA 2 Increased capacities of policymakers in analysing the impact of trade on economic recovery and development, including the potential contribution of key products and services sectors</b>		
<b>A 2.1.</b> Conduct training on development-oriented trade policy formulation and implementation in 8 developing countries for policymakers, trade negotiators, the business community, academia and civil society	Completed for Zambia, Angola, Algeria, Namibia, Botswana, Tunisia, the Dominican Republic Panama and Bhutan, as well as African countries engaged in CFTA negotiations	Activity completed
<b>EA 3 A selected number of developing countries having elaborated and validated, including through multi-stakeholder consultative process, a comprehensive trade policy framework that ensures policy coherence with other measures that support inclusive and sustainable development</b>		
<b>A 3.1.</b> Prepare 8 comprehensive trade policy frameworks in 8 selected countries in Africa, the Asia and the Pacific region, and in Latin America and the Caribbean region that focus on developing productive capacities in resilient economic sectors that also foster poverty reduction	Completed in Jamaica (2013), Tunisia (2014), Zambia and Angola (in 2015), and Algeria, Namibia, Botswana, Panama, Dominican Republic and Jamaica (draft) (in 2016)	Activity completed
<b>A 3.2.</b> Conduct 8 national workshops to discuss and validate the 8 comprehensive trade policy frameworks	Completed in Panama, Dominican Republic, Algeria, Tunisia, Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Bhutan (at least 17 workshops in total)	Activity completed

Source: Author based on the 1213K Project Document and information from the project team.

# ANNEX VII. COUNTRY CASE STUDY

## **Background on the UNCTAD Project in Zambia**

The purpose of this country case study is to examine how the project functioned and performed in a single target country. Information is drawn from UNCTAD source documents, including mission reports written following inter-regional and national workshops, the Zambia TPF document, and key informant interviews.

Zambia is a landlocked state in Southern Africa with a population of 16 million and GDP per capita of US\$1,350. It is among the 48 countries listed by the UN as Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Since independence in 1964, Zambia has depended on exports of copper for its economic development, which has left it exposed to price fluctuations on the international market. Successive efforts to diversify the economy away from reliance on a single commodity have not been effective. The latest edition of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index ranked Zambia 118<sup>th</sup> out of 138 countries.

In November 2013, UNCTAD was asked by the Government of Zambia to assist with the updating and improvement of its existing trade policy to take into account global and regional economic changes including the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. By way of an exchange of letters, UNCTAD agreed to provide the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) with assistance which would result in a TPF, a tool used elsewhere to analyze a country's foreign trade characteristics and identify opportunities for strengthening its trade policy regime. (Zambia had already completed three TPRs, a periodic exercise mandated in WTO Agreements in which member countries' trade and trade related policies are examined and evaluated.) Along with assistance in preparing a TPF, UNCTAD committed to help upgrade the country's capacity to prepare such documents, and assist with multi-stakeholder consultations on trade policy reform.

## **Launch of the UNCTAD Project in Zambia**

In July 2014, UNCTAD and MCTI representatives consulted on the project design and then together held an initial national multi-stakeholder workshop with 42 participants. The objective was to start the preparation of the Zambia TPF by way of a consultation that involved representatives from a wide range of public sector and private sector stakeholders. UNCTAD's international consultant was present to share his understanding of the TPF process and what might be achieved.

As evidenced in the presentation by a MCTI representative at UNCTAD's inter-regional workshop in Geneva in October 2015, the Ministry had some very clear ideas about how the study would proceed. The MCTI official spoke about a series of challenges facing Zambia, among them overall economic stability, diversification, increasing value addition, regional trade integration, effective participation in the WTO, and expansion of the services sector. In addition, she identified a number of aspects her government wished to see incorporated in the TPF study design:



inclusiveness; ownership; context at national, regional, continental and global levels; and linking of trade policy objectives to other goals, including sustainable development. For MCTI, key elements of ownership would involve taking an active role in the preparatory and consultative processes, including selection of the local consultants to prepare the study and outlining the content of the study. With regard to regional integration, the Ministry expressed interest in better positioning the country to benefit from the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (TFTA) and, eventually, the CFTA.

Two consultants based in Lusaka, one from the University of Zambia and one from the private sector, proceeded with the drafting of the TPF study. Interactions with UNCTAD staff and MCTI officials helped to keep expectations aligned. At completion, the draft document was forwarded to UNCTAD for review and following receipt of comments the consultants made revisions.

### **The Zambia TPF and Validation with Stakeholders**

A second national multi-stakeholder workshop took place in April 2015 to discuss and validate the analysis and policy recommendations contained in the TPF. Over 50 participants representing different government ministries, the private sector and civil society organizations, including women's associations, validated and adopted the document. The main elements of the 56-page study are:

- a macro-economic review;
- institutional framework and policy context;
- the trade policy framework itself referred to as “options for enhancing Zambia’s trade policies and strategies”; and
- 26 recommendations to improve national trade policies and strategies.

The TPF study sets out the country’s existing trade policy framework and identifies areas of possible reform and options for maximizing the contribution of trade to inclusive growth and sustainable development. The 26 recommendations on trade policy are well tied to empirical evidence, and follow-up actions are clear. They focus on options for maximizing the contribution of trade to inclusive growth and sustainable development, while taking into account lessons learned and emerging challenges.

In particular, the authors suggest regional trade integration should be harnessed for real economic growth, diversification and value addition. They indicate constraints to increased trade have to be addressed, including the cost of doing business and the competitiveness of domestic service sectors. Further, they underscore the need to involve the private sector in order to resolve factors that hinder competitiveness and export growth.

One of the recommendations is geared to promoting the services agenda through pursuit of the “4 plus 5 strategy.” This refers to (i) unilateral liberalization at the WTO in its four key services sectors that are adversely affecting domestic costs (financial services, telecommunications, transport, and energy services), and (ii) liberalization of five key services sectors that are inhibiting the growth of regional trade (business and professional services, communications services, financial services, transport services and labour mobility in respect of the entry of business persons).

Another recommendation would see Zambia binding the de facto opening of key services sectors at the WTO. These are sectors of import interest – telecommunications and commercial banking.

Binding at the WTO would allow the country to attach conditions for development purposes, with the effect of increasing the participation of Zambia's private sector in the services industry.

Another recommendation dealt with the promotion of exports of agro-processed products and services to the regional market – a topic of special relevance to vulnerable populations and women in the country's remote rural areas. Specific mention was made of assisting the competitiveness of new exporters, especially small ones, through provision of information about export markets and supply chains, assistance with the rental cost of retail outlets or warehouses in regional markets, and access to subsidized credit.

### **Follow-up to Zambian TPF Completion**

UNCTAD's inter-regional workshop in Geneva in October 2015, an event which dealt with the basics of TPF design and exchanges of country experiences, was followed by a second such event in Nairobi (during the UNCTAD 14 Conference) in July 2016. While both inter-regional workshops sought to increase participants' awareness concerning the adoption (at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development 2015) of SDGs, the smaller Nairobi gathering concentrated on focused discussion on the sharing of experiences and lessons learned in trade policy formulation and implementation, as well as on the conduct of TPFs.

At the Nairobi workshop, one of the Zambian national consultants recounted the steps taken to prepare the TPF. He described the country's macro-economic and socio-economic contexts and key features of Zambia's production and trade performance. He then explained how the Zambian consultants had identified clusters of trade policy relevant issues (at the border, behind the border, and beyond the border) and how they had sought to frame practical and effective recommendations for each issue.

A third national multi-stakeholder consultation took place in September-October 2016 with 37 participants. Its objective was to formulate an implementation plan for Zambia's TPF, i.e., to identify concrete measures and actions to implement major TPF recommendations over the period 2017-2021. Participants contributed to the discussion on implementation and underscored the need for coherence and compatibility with existing policy frameworks. However, timing of the third workshop coincided with hotly contested national elections which acted as a distraction and slowed progress with finalizing the implementation plan with stakeholders.

It is envisaged that Zambia's TPF and the implementation matrix will find expression through the modification of existing policy. Most likely, a National Development Policy for 2017-2021 will replace the national trade policy (prepared in 1994 and updated in 2009) and a draft national trade strategy paper (prepared in 2013).

# ANNEX VIII. COMPILED BEST-PRACTICE PRINCIPLES FOR CREATING BEST-FIT TRADE POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Best practices identified during the Trade Policy and Sustainable Development meeting held in Geneva in October 2015:

- recommendations on concrete policy actions -- TPFs should recommend concrete policy actions that have clear objectives and can be shown on a matrix or roadmap that facilitates implementation and monitoring (Report of Meeting, para 52)
- link to capacity building – TPFs should be accompanied by capacity building so that after TPFs have been undertaken, countries have the capacity to develop their policies, implement them, develop benchmarks and monitor policy impacts (Report of Meeting, para 52)
- to maximize trade linkage to employment and development – in general a set of other policies are needed to harvest potential employment benefits from trade, including adequate institutional and regulatory frameworks for the labour market and specific policies for sectors which boost the capabilities of small and medium enterprises and enhance the protection of temporary and vulnerable workers (Report of Meeting, para 50)
- Policy coherence and coordination – the importance of designing and implementing an integrated policy mix in a continual and inclusive process that achieves sustainable development (Cross-cutting lessons highlighted in PowerPoint presentation by TNCDB; Trade and Development Board Paper “Trade development policies and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda ...”, p.12)
- Evidence-based policy-making (Cross-cutting lessons highlighted in PowerPoint presentation by TNCDB)
- Effective institutions and governance (Cross-cutting lessons highlighted in PowerPoint presentation by TNCDB)
- Enabling productive, technology and business environment (Cross-cutting lessons highlighted in PowerPoint presentation by TNCDB)
- Labour skills development (Cross-cutting lessons highlighted in PowerPoint presentation by TNCDB)

Best practices identified during the Trade Policy and Sustainable Development meeting held in Nairobi in July 2016:

- ownership -- the TPF process starts with the request by government, then preparation of studies and recommendations involves different stakeholders, including teams that conduct the studies (including national and international consultants), national lead ministries, other government agencies and non-governmental actors (Report of Meeting, paras 15 and 51)
- timing and coordination -- TPFs have proven to be particularly useful and conducive to creating synergy when the work on them either precedes or follows other processes, such

as Trade Policy Reviews of the WTO and negotiations with RTAs and plurilaterals (Report of Meeting, para 52; additionally, this is referred to in para 11 as “vertical linkage” among trade policy frameworks)

- importance of balanced and context-specific analysis -- TPF studies have highlighted quantitative and qualitative data which speak directly to the argument and can be marshalled to make recommendations that are specific to the needs of the country (Report of Meeting, para 53)
- paying attention to both internal and external constraints -- the TPF process has to recognize both internal (e.g., inadequate infrastructure, lack of capacity) and external (e.g., high tariffs and restrictive quotas) constraints to produce a coherent and integrated policy approach (Report of Meeting, para 53)
- importance of coordination and consultation -- these are needed to secure coherence in trade and other development policy approaches in the broader context of meeting SDG goals (Report of Meeting, para 54; additionally, this is referred to in para 11 as “horizontal linkage” among policy areas)
- institutional mechanisms for stakeholder consultations -- if not properly resourced and opened to the private sector and a large array of other relevant stakeholders, these mechanisms can pose bottlenecks for an effective national consultative process and inclusive policymaking (Report of Meeting, paras 55-59; additionally, there have been suggestions that a well-known and knowledgeable national champion be designated at the start of a TPF exercise to encourage participation, continuity and post-TPF follow-through)
- inclusiveness in TPF preparation -- the formulation and implementation of trade policy impact all segments of society and cannot remain the exclusive domain of experts and bureaucrats; a good TPF has to be inclusive, appropriately involving all relevant stakeholders (e.g., of producers, traders, entrepreneurs farmers, consumers and labour) in its development and implementation (Report of Meeting, para 11)
- need for updating to adapt to changing context -- no matter how thoroughly and inclusively developed, a good TPF should have built-in review mechanisms to evolve and adapt in line with the changing context (Report of Meeting, para 12)
- benefit of TPFs encompassing comparative and historical analysis – individual TPFs , as well as the collection of TPFs as a whole, benefit when the analysis explicitly examines a country’s comparative position vis a vis regional or other peers and when an historical review indicates phases in strategic orientation, achievements of those phases and reasons for transition (Report of Meeting, para 16)
- awareness that trade is a key instrument for growth and development – trade is an important instrument for growth and development and as a means of overcoming small domestic markets, while providing access to larger markets, skills, technology and capital (Report of Meeting, para 26)

Best practices identified in the Project’s Best Practices paper (January 2017 draft):

- a TPF must be backed by the necessary institutional commitment to ensure that its goals are pursued, monitored, and if necessary adjusted to account for new developments (p. 63)
- a TPF has to be based on an overall vision for the place which trade policy occupies in the country’s development strategy – this includes the objectives behind preparing the TPF

and a reasonably specific set of proposals by which the larger goals can be accomplished (p.63)

- the preparation of a TPF can best be broken down into seven major steps – the request, scheduling and selection, basic research and document collection, in-country research, initial draft and circulation, revision and validation, execution and monitoring (p. 64)