



PARAGRAPH 166

REGIONAL AND SHORT COURSES

ON KEY ISSUES ON THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AGENDA

UNCTAD

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Assessment by participants and their supervisors

Post-course evaluations of regional editions of the programme illustrate its broad, and positive, impact on participants. For example, participants have indicated an improved understanding of the complexities of international economic issues; enhanced skills for economic policymaking processes; and a strengthened ability to provide advisory services and draft position papers on economic negotiations at the bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels. The rigorous assessment methods utilized in evaluating the course, for both short- and long-term impact, are also highly appreciated.

The programme conducted a survey of its alumni on their careers and perspectives during the pandemic, and how Covid-19 impacted their professions. Of significance to report is that all survey respondents in early 2021 indicated that the knowledge they have gained from previous UNCTAD regional courses was useful to them in formulating policies in response to the global pandemic; such areas included, policies on trade in the post and during the pandemic era, improving analysis and statistics sources, trade negotiations, trade facilitation and logistics, among other related areas.



Module I

Development, development policies and the role of international trade and finance in a globalized world



Module II

Harnessing benefits from trade: Changing dynamics in the multilateral trading system, trade logistics, regional trade agreements and digital economy



Module III

Enhancing productive capacities through enterprise development, foreign direct investment and science, technology and innovation

The P166 programme enjoys a sound reputation and is recognized as an innovative capacity-building tool on economic development and trade-related technical assistance across the globe. It is a flagship programme.



Very useful course, offering opportunities to deepen my experience, knowledge, and understanding for development and development policies.

Ms. Razmena Durovikj

State Secretary, Ministry of Economy – North Macedonia.

The best development course I ever attended. It was the most intensive course that covers all aspects of development and dynamic economic advancement. Such courses should be conducted frequently for all officials in the Governments, to have the knowledge on global development and its issues.

Mr. Tshering Dhendup

Planning Officer, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Bhutan



It has been an excellent course with high professional level. It allowed me to obtain new knowledge that I will apply to my country in accordance with current economic trends in international trade, FDI and sustainable development.

Ms. Cinthya Rafaela Toca Sánchez

Economist, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment, Cuba

I can say without any hesitation that the UNCTAD P166 Programme is a thought-provoking initiative to the benefit of the member States in the area of development. I believe I am absolutely justified to say that UNCTAD through this programme is really helping the developing countries and least developed countries in their development.

Mr. Mmaman Laminou Mahaman Balarabe

Chef, Division des Etudes et Règlementations, Direction du Commerce Extérieur, Ministère du Commerce et de la Promotion du secteur Privé, Niger



It is one of the most comprehensive learning experiences. Besides peer-to-peer learning, the course provided wide knowledge on development policies of practice.

Ms. Linda Kassem

Senior Policy and Legal Advisor, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Lebanon

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Regional courses

These courses provide an opportunity for trade policy officials and academics to examine various approaches to economic development and assess external and internal factors that can slow down or speed up this process.

Regional courses are hosted and supported by member States in five regions. One regional course is delivered in a developing region every other year. For example, during the recent biennium and at the multi-year venues, the following institutions partnered with UNCTAD to deliver and host the programme: Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje (North Macedonia 2021-2025); the Institute for Diplomatic Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Egypt 2018-2023); University of Nairobi (Kenya 2019-2024); University of Buenos Aires (Argentina 2022-2026); and the Foreign Service Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Pakistan 2022-2026).

Since 2001, the UNCTAD secretariat has delivered dozens of regional courses for the least developed countries and developing economies in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa.

Regional courses contain three modules dealing with various aspects of economic development, including theories on the various themes, as well as on trade and trade agreements, foreign direct investment, and trade facilitation. With the global pandemic that struck the world, the programme further integrated the economic, environmental, and social consequences of COVID-19 global pandemic across its curricula, reflecting resilience and response.

The modules provide an overview of the various themes, discuss case studies and best practices, and analyze policy options, building the knowledge needed for participating in simulation exercises, which allow participants to take on roles in relevant negotiations and policy formulation. The curriculum uses the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals as a basis for designing national and international development policies and strategies. The programme is particularly attentive to gender balance.

Regional courses are held in:

- Africa
- Asia and the Pacific
- Eastern Europe
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Middle East and North Africa



The P166 platform is an example of good practice in terms of providing UNCTAD expertise and cutting-edge research on trade and development to policymakers across the world, as well as delegates who cover UNCTAD mandates in their various functions. Judging from the accolades received from its many clients, P166 seems to be doing an effective job in bridging the knowledge gap in trade and development.

Dr. Shamika N. Sirimanne
Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD



Short courses

These courses offer Geneva-based delegates a wide palette of topics, ranging from trade facilitation and lessons learned, to development, cutting-edge technology and the gender nexus. The programme aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of delegates so they can be better prepared to meet the challenges of economic development.

The UNCTAD secretariat has offered more than 120 short courses for Geneva-based diplomats. These are a series of regular three half-day courses per semester on the most recent research relevant to UNCTAD areas of work. The courses are held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

UNCTAD's member states have highlighted the P166 programme in the Bridgetown Covenant, noting that 'the activities under paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action have proven to be of great importance and utility and should be continued'. As the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, I am proud of this programme, its effective partnerships across developing regions and with various UN Economic Commissions, and UNCTAD Divisions. We are currently at the heart of capitals, working closely with public and governmental institutions, from Buenos Aires, Cairo, Islamabad, to Nairobi and Skopje. We deliver as one, with UN partners, and with our national and regional stakeholders.

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD



Enhancing the capacity of developing countries and the least developed countries to design trade and development policies aimed at achieving sustainable development and increased integration into the global economy

The Paragraph 166 (P166) programme addresses the challenges that developing countries and the least developed countries face in an increasingly globalized economy through regional and short courses on key issues on the international economic agenda.

This flagship programme focuses on the links between trade, finance, investment, technology and development, and assesses the approaches required to potentially generate gains from trade and investment that would benefit development. The curriculum is based on UNCTAD competence in development and includes the expertise of the United Nations economic regional commissions and national experts from the programme's host countries.

The programme originates from the Bangkok Plan of Action, adopted during the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD X) in 2000. The mandate of the programme has been reaffirmed in the outcomes of every UNCTAD conference since then. Most recently the Bridgetown Covenant: from inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all:

The activities under paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action have proven to be of great importance and utility and should be continued.