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Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars

Progress report on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to cross-divisional capacity-building

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Executive summary

This report provides information on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to the areas of work covered by paragraph 162 on cross-divisional capacity-building programmes. In particular, it focuses on UNCTAD's work in training policymakers in the integrated treatment of trade, investment, finance, technology and development, in supporting the development of local teaching and research capacities for academics in trade and development, and in training and building capacities for trade practitioners in trade, investment and development. This report places particular emphasis on the sharing of knowledge and the strengthening of local capacities through the three capacity-building programmes of the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch of the Division on Technology and Logistics: the course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, the Virtual Institute and TrainForTrade. The report is complemented by an annex presenting the list of outputs of these three programmes.

I. Introduction

1.   The activities reported below cover cross-divisional capacity-building programmes in accordance with Accra Accord paragraph 162 that are carried out by the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch of the Division on Technology and Logistics.

Accra Accord paragraph on cross-divisional capacity-building

162. UNCTAD should enhance its assistance in cross-divisional capacity-building programmes, including training for policymakers on the integrated treatment of the trade, investment, finance, technology and development issues referred to in paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action, which must ensure wide and inclusive participation of developing countries. It should also continue to support the development of local teaching and research capacities in member countries' academic institutions through the Virtual Institute, and foster training and capacity-building aimed at trade practitioners in order to assist member countries in developing a sustainable local capacity in trade, investment and development issues through TrainForTrade. UNCTAD should also continue to use these programmes to strengthen the synergies between its research and capacity-building activities.

II. Activities of TrainForTrade

2.   In 2009, TrainForTrade consolidated its strategy based on three components: (a) international trade, investment and finance; (b) sustainable tourism for development; and (c) port training. The programme develops four kinds of activities: support to individuals; support to training institutions; support to government institutions; and networking. It has a cross-divisional dimension, as it works with many of UNCTAD's research and analytical programmes to design teaching materials, deliver training courses and offer advisory services. As such, TrainForTrade combines the use of a wide range of UNCTAD substantive expertise with its pedagogical and networking capabilities in order to create comparative advantage and added value for beneficiary countries.

3.   As for the component on international trade, investment and finance, the activities in 2009 allowed the training of high-level officials in 26 developing and least developed countries (LDCs). A number of them were identified as potential trainers, and later trained as such, in order to foster the local appropriation of knowledge tools and techniques (including distance learning). For instance, 22 technical tutors in Angola and 21 in Guinea were trained to deliver distance learning courses on the TrainForTrade e-learning platform. They had the opportunity to use the skills thus acquired by organizing, in the following months, several distance learning courses in both countries. Such actions built the capacities of both individuals and training institutions, which can now rely on a larger pool of highly qualified trainers operating in the country.

4.   This component also developed its action in support of government institutions. Several advisory service activities on topics ranging from trade facilitation (Guinea, May) to trade policies (Angola, November) and the legal aspects of e-commerce (Central America, March), provided governments and specialized institutions with support and best practices. The subregional facet of several activities emphasized the networking component, among which the workshop on e-commerce in Central America, where 90 participants from Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama asked questions and shared views through the distance learning platform (January–February).

5.　　Now in its fourth year, in 2009 the component on sustainable tourism for development reached a peak in the number of its activities (four specialized seminars and various networking and partnership-building activities) as well as its geographical coverage (eight developing countries, including three LDCs). Seventy tourism officials from subregional, national and local authorities, the private sector and non-state actors were trained and a number of consensus-building activities were implemented, allowing the TrainForTrade programme to apply its two-pillar strategy that aims at streamlining tourism strategies and policies and decentralizing action plans and relevant resources at the local level. The partnership-building component of the programme sought to facilitate contacts between various entities interested in the development of the sustainable tourism sector, including local authorities and their partners in decentralized cooperation. The joint UNCTAD TrainForTrade/International Trade Centre (ITC) project on the "Promotion of Sustainable Tourism in Benin" generated innovative partnerships with regional authorities, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities, such as the one involving the city of Abomey, the French town of Albi and the Benin NGO Eco-Benin. As for the networking component, a subregional training course in Central America with participants from Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama was held in Guatemala (16–20 November 2009) and allowed for South–South exchange of best practices and expertise.

6.　　The port training programme is a long-standing, recognized capacity development programme that, in 2009, benefited from the active participation of international ports from four continents: Amboim, Cabinda, Callao, Conakry, Cotonou, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Douala, Djibouti, Dublin, Dunkirk, Ghent, Gijón, Kuantan, Leixões, Lobito, Lomé, Luanda, Marseille, Male', Mindelo, Namibe, Praia, Quetzal, Santo Tomás de Castilla, Soyo, Takoradi, Tema, Valencia and several ports in Indonesia. Seven newcomers joined the programme in 2009 with the first local training cycles being run in Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania. The programme is based on North–South and South–South cooperation: four language-based networks are currently operational (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) partnering developed and developing countries' ports. In terms of individual support, 502 operators in 13 countries were trained, out of whom 20 per cent were identified as potential trainers and later trained. Such activities allowed exchanges of expertise and best practices between ports in both developed and developing countries.

7.　　TrainForTrade received a number of expressions of interest in 2009, and several project proposals for each of the three programmes are in the pipeline. In 2010, the programme will aim at developing and implementing new projects for developing countries and LDCs, adapting and updating existing courses, developing their distance learning versions, promoting the development of existing courses in local languages and expanding North–South and South–South cooperation between network members.

III.　Activities of the Virtual Institute

8.　　The UNCTAD Virtual Institute works with academia in developing/transition countries to strengthen their teaching and research capacities in trade and development and facilitates cooperation and knowledge sharing between the members of its global university network. As illustrated below, the Virtual Institute cooperates with different UNCTAD divisions in capacity-building for academia on a broad range of UNCTAD research topics, thus strengthening synergies between the organization's research and capacity-building activities. The year 2009 marked the fifth anniversary of the Virtual Institute. At the end of 2009, the Virtual Institute university network consisted of 51 universities, including seven new members from Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mexico, Switzerland and Viet Nam.

9.   In the area of access to expertise, the Virtual Institute provided advisory and curriculum support to the universities in Benin and Uganda on the development of trade-related Masters programmes. In order to adapt generic Virtual Institute teaching materials to the context of countries in which they are used, the Virtual Institute provided grants and expertise for 11 "localizations" of its teaching materials (on regional trade agreements, trade data analysis, competitiveness and development, and transfer of technology) to member universities from Chile, Egypt, Jordan, Kenya, the Russian Federation, Uganda and the West Indies. Additionally, it organized 3 one- to two-week study tours with tailored training programmes, delivered in partnership with UNCTAD divisions, other international organizations (ITC, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, the South Centre, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization (WTO)) and permanent missions, for more than 90 students from the Caribbean, Colombia and the Russian Federation, and a shorter session for its member in Switzerland.

10.   In the area of professional development for academics, the Virtual Institute organized three national professional development workshops on trade data analysis for 83 participants from LDC universities (in Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania), sponsored by the Government of Finland and delivered in cooperation with UNCTAD's Division on International Trade. Virtual Institute members in Latin America benefited from two workshops on the World Integrated Trade Solution, co-funded by the Government of Spain and UNCTAD's Division on International Trade, which contributed resource persons. Two 1-day workshops on international trade logistics and on trade policy and negotiations were organized in Mauritius, in cooperation with the Trade Logistics Branch of the Division on Technology and Logistics, and the Division on Africa and the Least Developed Countries. Through its partners, the Virtual Institute facilitated the provision of workshops on market analysis tools (delivered by ITC) for Uganda, and on trade negotiations and policies (WTO) for Senegal. Ten academics – three from LDCs sponsored by the Government of Finland and seven from Latin America funded by the Government of Spain – participated in the Virtual Institute fellowship programme at UNCTAD, working on the development of new courses or the preparation of research papers. The fellows were supported by technical experts from UNCTAD's core research programmes.

11.   In the area of virtual services, the Virtual Institute website continued to provide access to teaching resources, including more than 600 papers and studies from UNCTAD and partner organizations, to 1,607 individuals from 138 countries, and served as a communication tool for UNCTAD expert group meetings. The "News" section of the site was kept active, with 48 news items published in 2009. Four quarterly Virtual Institute electronic newsletters were produced and distributed to nearly 3,500 recipients on its e-mail list. In 2009, the Virtual Institute website surpassed its first one million hits, an increase of more than 60 per cent from the previous year. The Virtual Institute developed 10 new multimedia teaching resources for its members, in addition to presentations from short courses for Geneva-based diplomats organized by an associated UNCTAD programme, as well as a documentary video about its work. It continued its videoconference services by offering seven presentations of UNCTAD's flagship reports (*the Trade and Development Report, the World Investment Report* and *the Information Economy Report*) for its members in Brazil, Chile, Jordan, the Russian Federation and Uruguay.

12.   In the area of activities of the Virtual Institute university network, the first half of the year saw the organization of the fourth meeting of the network in Geneva in May, attended by 32 university representatives. The focus of the meeting was, in response to members' requests, the discussion of joint Virtual Institute research projects. The thrust of the second part of the year was on the finalization of two joint research projects funded by the Government of Spain in Latin America. The first one, implemented in cooperation with

the UNCTAD Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, focused on regional integration and cooperation and produced seven papers that were presented at two regional workshops in Peru and Uruguay. The second, conducted in cooperation with the UNCTAD Division on Investment and Enterprise, dealt with corporate social responsibility and its resulting five papers were discussed in a regional workshop in Colombia. The Virtual Institute also used its networking capacity to facilitate North–South cooperation projects among members, which were then granted donor funding. Among them were a project between members in Spain and Viet Nam relating to the strengthening of higher learning and research in Viet Nam, and a project between Germany and Belarus, Brazil, Chile, India, Jordan, Mauritius, South Africa, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania on teaching and research in finance, trade and development. Virtual Institute universities in Chile, the Russian Federation, Spain and Switzerland also offered preferential access to other members of the network to some of their training programmes.

13. An independent evaluation of Virtual Institute activities was undertaken in 2009 by an expert affiliated with the United Kingdom-based Overseas Development Institute. The expert concluded that customized Virtual Institute services, sustainable long-term support, responsiveness to members' needs and a proactive approach, as well as the global scope of the Virtual Institute network, make the Virtual Institute very relevant and highly valued by member universities – a statement supported by 79 per cent of them. It also serves UNCTAD as a tool for a two-way exchange with universities and a means to contribute to developmental thinking and the education of future decision makers in developing countries. According to the evaluator, the Virtual Institute has had a clear measurable impact on beneficiary universities in terms of: (a) enhancement of their trade-related teaching, with more than 15,000 students using Virtual Institute teaching materials; (b) strengthening of policy-relevant local research capacity through localizations and joint research projects; (c) establishment of international research collaborations between universities from different continents; (d) increased access to trade-related teaching through the website of the Virtual Institute; and (e) laying the grounds for the long-term sustainability of the Virtual Institute's activities by focusing on the development of local capacity, as opposed to relying on outside expertise, and supporting departments and institutionalized academic programmes, as opposed to individuals.

14. The project that constituted a major source of funding for the global Virtual Institute network – the United Nations Development Account – was successfully completed in 2009. The current Virtual Institute funding (from the Governments of Finland, Japan, Norway and Spain) is designated for specific groups of countries or specific activities, and efforts are being undertaken to raise complementary funds.

IV. Activities of Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda

15. The training course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, or the "paragraph 166 course" as it is also known, is delivered in two forms: three-week courses in regions and short (half-day) courses in Geneva. The participants in the regional courses are predominantly government officials who work on economic policy matters in trade ministries, investment agencies or central banks. To increase the multiplication effect of the course by subsequently integrating its content into university courses, academics are also invited to attend. The course, which largely draws on UNCTAD's research, gives participants a comprehensive overview of how economic factors such as international trade, finance, investment and technology are related to one another, how they can impact positively on the economic and social development of their countries and how appropriate policies in these areas can bring gains from the globalized economy.

16.   Three 3-week regional courses were organized in 2009 – one for Africa in Cairo (January–February 2009), one for Latin America and the Caribbean in Medellín, Colombia (August–September 2009) and one for Asia and the Pacific in Jakarta (November 2009). Sixty-six participants from 46 countries in the three regions attended the courses. Participants particularly appreciated the design and coherence of the programme, which treats development from the multiple perspectives of trade, finance and investment. They also valued the link between theory and practice provided by the course, the cross-fertilization of ideas with resource persons from UNCTAD, the United Nations regional commissions, the host country and other participants, and the enhanced understanding of how economic policies, as well as the internal and external economic factors that influence these policies, can affect all aspects of a country's economy.

17.   It is to be noted, however, that despite positive developments in the in-kind contributions of host countries, the funding under section 22 of the regular budget for technical cooperation currently used to fund the course remains unpredictable beyond the biennium 2010–1011.

18.   The short courses are aimed at diplomats in Geneva-based delegations. In 2009, a series of six short courses on topical issues addressed in UNCTAD's research was delivered, with an average of 43 diplomats from developing, transition and developed countries participating in each course and a peak attendance of 72 participants. The diplomats who attended short courses invariably stated that the courses had raised their awareness of trade topics. They all said that the training and debates, as well as the materials received, were directly useful for their work, for instance in WTO negotiations.

Annex

Progress report on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to cross-divisional capacity-building

Accra paragraph	Category	Delivered output
162. UNCTAD should enhance its assistance in cross-divisional capacity-building programmes, including training for policymakers on the integrated treatment of the trade, investment, finance, technology and development issues referred to in paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action, which must ensure wide and inclusive participation of developing countries. It should also continue to support the development of local teaching and research capacities in member countries' academic institutions through the Virtual Institute, and foster training and capacity-building aimed at trade practitioners in order to assist member countries in developing a sustainable local capacity in trade, investment and development issues through TrainForTrade. UNCTAD should also continue to use these programmes to strengthen the synergies between its research and capacity-building activities.	Parliamentary documentation	• Report of the Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Training Capacities and Human Resources Development on UNCTAD and e-Learning Initiatives – UNCTAD/DTL/KTCD/MISC/2009/5; • Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Training Capacities and Human Resources Development on building knowledge and skills on trade-related policies through training courses for developing country officials – UNCTAD/DTL/KTCD/MISC/2009/7.
	Publications	• Study on the perspectives of harmonizing cyberlaw in Latin America – UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2009/1 (in cooperation with the DTL/STICT Branch); • Study on cyberlaw for Central America and the Caribbean – UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2009/3 (in cooperation with the DTL/STICT Branch); • Study on capacity-building for academia: the contributions to the development of human resources and policy support in developing countries – UNCTAD/DTL/KTCD/2009/3 (forthcoming).
	Meetings	• Fourth Meeting of the Virtual Institute Network of Academia organized in Geneva (April); • Sixth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Training Capacities and Human Resources Development on UNCTAD and e-Learning Initiatives organized in Geneva (June); • Seventh Meeting of the Advisory Group on Strengthening Training Capacities and Human Resources Development on building knowledge and skills on trade-related policies through training courses for developing country officials organized in Geneva (October).
	Training	• TrainForTrade Training of Instructors organized in Lao People's Democratic Republic (April), and of Port Instructors organized in Ireland (June–July), Senegal (August) and Spain (September); • TrainForTrade Training of Technical Tutors organized in Angola (March), Lao People's Democratic Republic (June) and Guinea (August), and of Port Technical Tutors organized in Guatemala (June), Djibouti (October) and Malaysia (November);

Accra paragraph	Category	Delivered output
		• TrainForTrade Regional Training on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce organized for Caribbean and Central American countries through distance learning in February and face-to-face delivery in El Salvador, and training organized for Burundi in August;
		• TrainForTrade Training on Investment Issues organized in Lao People's Democratic Republic (January), and through distance learning for participants from Guinea (August) and Caribbean countries and Latin American (November);
		• TrainForTrade Training on Trade Facilitation organized in Guinea (May);
		• TrainForTrade Training on Consumer Protection organized in Lao People's Democratic Republic (October);
		• The TrainForTrade/Port Training Programme continued in Benin, Cameroon, Guinea, Senegal and Togo, and new cycles were launched in Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Peru, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania;
		• TrainForTrade Training on Productive Capacities, Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction in LDCs organized in Angola (November);
		• TrainForTrade Training on Sustainable Tourism organized in Benin (September), Angola (November) and Guatemala for Central American countries (November);
		• Virtual Institute Professional Development Workshop on International Trade Logistics organized in Mauritius (April);
		• Virtual Institute Professional Development Workshop on Trade Policy and Negotiations organized in Mauritius (April);
		• Virtual Institute workshops on Empirics of Trade organized in Senegal (April), Uganda (June–July) and the United Republic of Tanzania (September);
		• Virtual Institute workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility organized in Colombia (November);
		• Virtual Institute workshop on the World Integrated Trade Solution organized in Colombia (December);
		• Virtual Institute workshops on Regional Integration and Cooperation in Latin America organized in Peru (December) and Uruguay (December);
		• Regional Courses on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda organized in Egypt (January–February), Colombia (August–September) and Indonesia (November);

Accra paragraph	Category	Delivered output
		• Short courses on Key International Economic Issues for Geneva diplomats organized at UNCTAD headquarters in April (2), June, September, October and December; • Study tours to Geneva organized for Russian Virtual Institute member universities (March), the University of the West Indies (May) and Colombian Virtual Institute member universities (October).
	Advisory services	• Advisory services on the development of teaching resources and tools for the Virtual Institute academic network provided to Virtual Institute member universities in Chile, Egypt, Jordan, Kenya, the Russian Federation, Uganda and the West Indies; • Advisory services on the development of university curricula on UNCTAD issues provided by the Virtual Institute to universities in Benin, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Senegal and Viet Nam; • Advisory services on the implementation of TrainForTrade training and capacity development activities provided to partner institutions in Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Nicaragua, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam.