

# **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ACADEMIA IN TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

A STUDY ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN  
RESOURCES AND TO POLICY SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



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## PREFACE

The current Aid for Trade initiative is focusing attention on helping countries build trade-related capacities in the fields of trade policy, trade development, development of productive capacities and trade-related adjustment measures. There are many supply-side constraints affecting a country's capacity to utilize the opportunities of trade for economic growth, development and poverty reduction. Lack of knowledge and skills is one such constraint: ensuring that trade policies are development-friendly and adapted to local conditions requires access to knowledge and information, and the availability of wide-ranging skills and capacities. Universities play an important role in this regard by educating qualified human resources through their graduate programmes, providing research inputs for policymaking, and contributing to policy dialogue on trade and development in their countries.

In a number of developing countries, universities are – to a varying extent – in need of support to strengthen their capacities to deliver relevant graduate programmes and research. Given the fast-changing nature and complexity of international economic issues, they also need to stay up-to-date with the most recent developments, and share knowledge, data and materials with their peers, and with other actors involved in the production and use of trade-related knowledge. To cater to these needs, a number of “academic capacity-building” initiatives have been put in place.

The present study aims to provide a contribution to the reflection on this phenomenon in terms of conceptualization of academic capacity building, its actors and forms. Based on the mapping of such initiatives and a more in-depth examination of objectives and achievements of two cases – the Latin American Trade Network and UNCTAD's own Virtual Institute – it then draws conclusions about new forms of capacity building in trade for development.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	NOTE	ii
	PREFACE	iii
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	v
	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
	<i>Introduction and objectives</i>	2
<b>1</b>	<i>Capacity building in trade for development: relevance and definitions</i>	3
	1.1 Defining capacity building in trade for development	3
	1.2 Types of capacity building in trade for development	5
	1.2.1 Actors	5
	1.2.2 Instruments	6
<b>2</b>	<i>Academia and capacity building in trade for development</i>	7
	2.1 Identifying and defining academic actors in capacity building	7
	2.2 Characterizing academic capacity building in trade for development	7
<b>3</b>	<i>Academic contributions to capacity building in trade for development – learning from experience</i>	11
	3.1 Mapping academic capacity-building initiatives in trade for development	11
	3.2 Case studies: the experiences of the UNCTAD Virtual Institute and the Latin American Trade Network	12
	3.2.1 The UNCTAD Virtual Institute	12
	3.2.2 The Latin American Trade Network	15
	3.2.3 The Vi and LATN: Shaping new forms of capacity building in trade for development	18
<b>4</b>	<i>Assessment, concluding remarks and reflections</i>	21
	4.1 Characterizing new forms of capacity building in trade for development	21
	4.2 Conceptual and empirical knowledge on capacity building in trade for development	22
	<i>References</i>	23
	ANNEX A: Technical reports and evaluations of the Vi and the LATN	25
	ANNEX B: Mapping academic capacity-building initiatives in trade for development	26

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AECI	AGENCIA ESPAÑOLA DE COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL
AERC	AFRICAN ECONOMIC RESEARCH CONSORTIUM
AFD	AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
ARTNET	ASIA-PACIFIC RESEARCH AND TRAINING NETWORK
AUSAID	AUSTRALIAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CEDDET	CENTRO DE EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA PARA EL DESARROLLO ECONÓMICO Y TECNOLÓGICO
CIDA	CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
COPLA	COMERCIO Y POBREZA EN LATINOAMÉRICA
CUTS	CONSUMER UNITY AND TRUST SOCIETY
DFID	DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (UNITED KINGDOM)
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
FAO	FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
FLACSO	FACULTAD LATINOAMERICANA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES
G-20	GROUP OF TWENTY FINANCE MINISTERS AND CENTRAL BANK GOVERNORS
G-24	INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF TWENTY-FOUR
GDN	GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
GTZ	GESELLSCHAFT FÜR TECHNISCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GERMANY)
IADB	INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
ICONE	INSTITUTO DE ESTUDOS DO COMÉRCIO E NEGOCIAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS
ICTSD	INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
IDRC	INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE (CANADA)
IF	INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR TRADE-RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LDCS
IICA	INSTITUTO INTERAMERICANO DE COOPERACIÓN PARA LA AGRICULTURA
INAI	INSTITUTO PARA LAS NEGOCIACIONES AGRÍCOLAS INTERNACIONALES
ITC	INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE UNCTAD/WTO
JICA	JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY
LATN	LATIN AMERICAN TRADE NETWORK
LDC	LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRY
MERCOSUR	MERCADO COMÚN DEL SUR
MIT	MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NORAD	NORWEGIAN AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION
NSI	NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTE
OAS	ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
ODI	OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
OECD	ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
RAPID	RESEARCH AND POLICY IN DEVELOPMENT
SECO	STATE SECRETARIAT FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (SWITZERLAND)
SIDA	SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
SME	SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISE
SSA	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
TCBDB	TRADE CAPACITY-BUILDING DATABASE
UNCTAD	UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
UNDP	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
UNECA	UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
UNECE	UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
UNESCAP	UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
UNIDO	UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
UNU-WIDER	UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY – WORLD INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS RESEARCH
UNU-IAS	UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY – INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES
USAID	UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
VI	UNCTAD VIRTUAL INSTITUTE
WIPO	WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
WTO	WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study provides an overview of academic capacity building in trade for development, fleshing out the types of actors involved and their relationships with the policy community. Chapter 1 traces traditional capacity building meant as technical assistance, and then looks at the emergence of new forms of capacity building. The second chapter explores the actors and main instruments used in academic-related initiatives, namely: (a) education and training; (b) research; (c) knowledge sharing; and (d) the building of partnerships.

The core of the study is Chapter 3, which offers an on-the-ground examination of capacity-building initiatives in the area of trade for development. While attempting to map and classify academic-related initiatives, it presents two different types of programmes: “integrated capacity-building services” that use a variety of instruments, and “specialized capacity-building services” that rely on a more limited number of instruments and activities.

Through the study of two cases – the UNCTAD Virtual Institute (Vi) and the Latin American Trade Network (LATN) – the chapter examines the results that they have achieved in relation to their main goals. Both cases contribute to building and entrenching new forms of capacity building. With regard to long-term goals, the Vi’s work on education and research is in line with its efforts to create sustainable human resources and institutional capacities in developing-country universities. In the case of LATN, the network has devoted most of its resources to supporting and promoting research that is relevant to the region’s problems and needs (both short- and long-term).

Both initiatives emphasize continuity and sustainability in the strengthening of academic skills and the building of expertise. Both also distinctly give a priority to domestic needs. The Vi

endeavours to customize its capacity-building work to address the priorities and requirements of its members; LATN’s regional and national priorities are discussed within different regional nodes of the network in order to identify interests, needs and concerns. Both initiatives have also broadened the range of actors targeted. The Vi has mainly been connecting with academics from universities, and to a lesser extent with academics from research institutes. LATN has been focusing on entrepreneurial researchers with policy connections who are affiliated with universities, think tanks and centres of policy analysis. Lastly, both initiatives have been trying to integrate a holistic development approach to trade issues, which includes poverty and the environment, as well as foreign policy.

The concluding Chapter 4 presents findings and some lessons from the case studies in two main areas: (a) the identification of new forms of capacity building in trade for development; and (b) conceptual and empirical knowledge related to capacity building in trade for development. With regard to the first area, the study identifies five characteristic features of new forms of capacity building. These include: (a) the relevance of localization and home-grown agendas; (b) the broadly-based character of the networks in terms of actors; (c) the participatory/ownership-driven models that appear to predominate; (d) the greater integration of agendas and programmes; and (e) the importance of knowledge construction and management in capacity-building initiatives in trade for development. For the second area, the study concludes that, given the scarcity of capacity-building studies and empirical literature, there is a need to expand conceptual and empirically informed work on capacity building in the area of trade for development. Such work and the ensuing discussion would allow a better identification of the opportunities and shortcomings that new forms of capacity building are generating.

## Introduction and objectives

The last decade has seen a significant increase in capacity-building activities in the area of trade. This development can be explained by a variety of factors, which stem from the increasing importance of trade not only in the international economy but also as a key component of any development strategy. These factors range from the expansion of international trade to the increased complexity of trade-related expertise.

The technical aspects of trade policymaking in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other fora are more complicated. New issues in trade negotiations, such as services, intellectual property, technical barriers to trade, and e-commerce, among others, present new challenges, and demand a constant evolution in skills and expertise (Solignac-Lecomte, 2003: 5). The last ten years have witnessed growing capacity-building demands from developing countries to reduce the current knowledge gap<sup>1</sup> in trade for development between them and the developed countries.<sup>2</sup> This was reflected in the Doha Round, where developed countries committed to increase the provision of capacity building to developing countries (Blouin, 2004: 3). The building of such expertise has become particularly urgent as the complexity of the issues and the speed of the changes in trade-related negotiations have augmented. These changes have also shown the need to gain improved knowledge about the impact of trade commitments on national policies. So far, the links between trade, development and poverty remain understudied. Additional work in these areas would also help to ensure that trade and

related activities such as finance, investment, and technology are not detrimental to development.

Capacity building for trade encompasses a broad range of activities such as seminars, training programmes on negotiating skills and trade rules, the development of teaching materials, support for domestic research, and the sharing of information and findings. This study aims to provide an overview of the main characteristics and forms of capacity building for academia which are intended to develop a community of practice on trade issues and to increase the extent to which these initiatives break into the policy. The study concentrates on identifying the main actors engaged in academic-related capacity building, their relationships, and the main forms of such capacity building. Through the analysis of two case studies – the UNCTAD Virtual Institute and the Latin American Trade Network – it provides insights into the results that these initiatives have achieved in relation to their main goals, and offers some conclusions about capacity building in the academic field.

By doing so, the study aims to contribute to an incipient debate on academic capacity building, its place within overall capacity building in trade for development, and the conceptualization of new forms of capacity building – an area where academic literature, so far, remains rather limited. The conclusions of the study are also underpinned by an analysis of empirical data derived from technical reports and existing evaluations of the two case studies (details of these documents can be found in Annex A).

<sup>1</sup> There are many types of knowledge, and consequently there are many types of knowledge gaps. The focus of this report is on the knowledge gap in trade for development between developing and developed countries. This gap relates to the knowledge that would allow developing countries to implement appropriate national policies, develop the necessary infrastructure and participate effectively in the processes that shape global economic rules, institutions and markets, and thus benefit from globalization and trade (OECD, 2008). The technology gap, or the gap in technological knowledge, which is addressed by UNCTAD's Science, Technology and ICT Branch (part of the Division on Technology and Logistics) differs from the knowledge gap in trade and development, and is defined as "the divergence between nations and communities to access, diffuse and use scientific and technical knowledge" (United Nations, 2006: 3).

<sup>2</sup> In this work, we refer to developing countries as a general category which also includes the least developed countries.

# 1 Capacity building in trade for development: relevance and definitions

## 1.1 Defining capacity building in trade for development

Capacity building is a term widely used by different actors such as donors and academics to designate the development of abilities, skills and knowledge in different sectors such as education, health and trade. The concept of capacity building is closely related to that of capacity development, and can be defined as a process through which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives (UNDP, 1997). In trade, the scope of capacity-building initiatives is broad, and includes policy frameworks for trade policy, as well as issues of finance, investment, technology and intellectual property, given their potential to affect processes of development.

According to WTO (2001), trade-related capacity building has mostly been closely related to technical assistance and cooperation, and has been directed at supporting developing countries to:

- Identify national policy objectives for beneficial integration into the trading system;
- Develop trade-policy capacity for participation and negotiation, adjust to WTO rules and disciplines; and
- Implement obligations.

Donor organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and WTO have adopted this perspective, and do not differentiate between technical assistance and capacity building (Blouin, 2002: 5). WTO/OECD define capacity building as those activities intended to enhance the ability of the recipient country to “formulate and implement a trade development strategy and create an enabling environment for increasing the volume and value-added of exports; diversifying export products and markets, and increasing foreign investment to generate jobs and trade; or stimulate trade by domestic firms and encourage investment in trade-oriented industries; or participate in and benefit from the institutions, negotiations and processes that shape national trade policy and the rules and practices of international commerce” (WTO/OECD, 2006: 7).

This understanding of capacity building that combines technical assistance with capacity building has also been used in the WTO/OECD

Trade Capacity-Building Database (TCBDB) that tracks donors’ efforts in capacity building in two main areas: (a) trade policy and regulations; and (b) trade development. However, this understanding is rather restrictive, since it emphasizes dimensions directed at supporting trade policy and regulations and at improving the know-how necessary to implement the commitments made under the multilateral trading system (Solignac-Lecomte, 2003: 8). It reflects what can be described as a more “traditional” form of capacity building concerned with technical knowledge rather than with long-term processes of building knowledge and human capabilities.

These traditional forms of capacity building have been repeatedly criticized for not supporting national trade strategies emanating from the development needs of the capacity-building recipients (Blouin, 2002: 6; Prowse, 2002: 1238). Following a gradual shift in academic and development circles with regard to this issue, capacity building is therefore now understood to include initiatives that support a country’s domestic trade agenda formulated within a country’s development process (Prowse, 2002: 1238; UNCTAD, 2004). Devlin and Vodusek (2005: 17) point out that this change brings about a more holistic approach towards capacity building. This approach seeks to progressively achieve greater coherence among different areas of capacity building, as well as greater coordination among parties, with a view to making capacity building socially sustainable in the longer term.

This change has also come hand in hand with demands from developing countries to build knowledge and skills that will allow them to foster trade activities which fit their domestic priorities and development strategies. This entails identifying key actions and actors conducive to the achievement of trade goals that are supportive of economic and social development. This study examines those initiatives where trade capacity building is intrinsically linked to a country’s development goals and thus to the creation of capacities and knowledge that will help to achieve them. For the purpose of this study, therefore, capacity building is referred to as “capacity building in trade for development” and is defined as “a coherent set of initiatives directed at improving the capacities of policymakers, academics, researchers and non-governmental actors in developing countries, so that the knowledge they produce can improve trade performance, and home-grown trade

policies directed at reinforcing a country's overall development goals.”

Based on this definition, the study looks at the activities directed at building and improving trade-related knowledge and skills for academics, both at individual and institutional levels, with the goal of supporting development policies and goals. Taking into account the more critical views of predominant forms of capacity building (Prowse, 2002; Solignac-Lecomte, 2003; UNCTAD, 2004; Matambalya, 2006), we can point to some important changes that are leading towards new forms of capacity building. These novel types of capacity building seem to be characterized by several distinct features:

**Short-term versus long-term reach:** They aim not just to produce an immediate result such as the implementation of a policy, but more importantly, to build capacities in the long term. Traditional forms of capacity building deliver programmes that tend to concentrate on short-duration training interventions, and that attempt to impart complicated knowledge and skills that are not easily grasped and understood (Matambalya, 2006: 7). Short-term training is technical and directed at the implementation of particular trade rules and mechanisms. Capacity building geared towards development takes into account not only, for instance, short-term implementation needs, but also long-term concerns to build cumulative and sustainable expertise. Programmes are of longer duration, and with regard to content, they cover a wider set of trade themes. This kind of capacity building aims to provide understanding and critical knowledge of trade policies, rather than at tackling specific technical issues.

**Domestic focus:** They prioritize domestic needs and strategies. This entails identifying trade interests, but in relation to an overall development strategy that places the emphasis on internal goals, rather than on adjustments to fit, for instance, WTO rules and disciplines. This shift constitutes a departure from the mainstream trade capacity building, which tends to be biased in favour of donors rather than recipients (Solignac-Lecomte, 2003: 6).

**Broad range of target groups:** Thirdly, they are oriented towards a broader set of actors where public officials are just one of the many groups. Hence, trade for development initiatives need to be distinguished from other programmes directed at trade-related capacity building, since the target audiences differ. For instance, capacity building in trade for development will target academic actors, researchers, and public officials from diverse tiers of the national

administration, as well as civil society groups and the private sector – all being part of the trade-policy process. The involvement of national actors makes capacity building empowerment-driven rather than compliance-driven, a bias that is most important for countries that remain at the fringes of negotiations, or that at most have become process drivers (Tussie, 2009b).<sup>3</sup>

**Links to other policy areas:** Lastly, their approach is more holistic and tends to link trade issues with a variety of key concerns and policy areas that are affected by trade policy, such as social development, the environment, and issues of sustainability. In short, it is an approach that is able to increase coherence between different areas related to development (Devlin and Vodusek, 2005: 17).

Taking into account the above characteristics, capacity building in trade for development attempts to make available ideas from different countries and adapt them to specific national contexts. Through this process, it intends to contribute to the development of endogenous knowledge and skills, and to assist local actors in developing countries to take informed and domestically appropriate decisions, rather than encourage a strict replication of experiences.

Box 1

#### Capacity building in trade for development geared towards...

- **Short- and long-term reach:** Accumulative and sustainable expertise
- **Domestic focus:** Trade interests integrated into a development strategy
- **Wider range of actors involved:** Academic actors among key target groups
- **Holistic approach:** Integration and coherence with other areas related to development

The lack of expertise and human resources in many developing countries, although widely acknowledged (Narlikar, 2003; Hoekman and Mavroidis, 2001: 136), has not been dealt with effectively. The training offered to public officials is just a partial solution to the problem. Moreover, the training of public officials without particular consideration for the institutional setting or for higher levels of policymaking has not rendered the expected results. In many cases, this type of capacity building has focused on individuals, has had little influence on the institutional level, and has led to a dispersion of the knowledge base, since many of the officials are tempted to leave for more lucrative positions (Solignac-Lecomte, 2003: 8).

<sup>3</sup>The term “process drivers” refers to countries that have established coalitions in the WTO and have therefore managed to pull some weight and make inroads into decision-making processes, but have not yet become fully-fledged agenda-setters or rule-makers.

Capacity-building initiatives in trade for development are directed at individuals, at institutions, and also at what may be termed the systems level. The initiatives usually engage either with individuals, by providing support to particular projects or researchers, or at the institutional level, through support to departments and centres. However, the systemic level of engagement is in its beginning stages. Under this kind of initiative, the emphasis is placed on developing coherent strategies and policies, and on effective coordination within and across sectors and among different policy actors. An example of such an approach is the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), which funded the trade and poverty project in Latin America named Comercio y Pobreza en Latinoamérica (Trade and Poverty in Latin America (COPLA)). This project was implemented by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The project has fostered linkages between diverse actors, such as representatives of civil society organizations (e.g. organizations of small and medium-sized enterprises, and of smallholder farmers); researchers in think tanks and academia; the media; local mayors; ministerial actors in the trade and social policy sectors; the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB); and the Organization of American States (OAS) (Gavrilovic *et al.*, forthcoming).

## 1.2 Types of capacity building in trade for development

To unravel the world of capacity-building activities in trade for development, it is important to establish: (a) who are the main actors involved in these activities, and what are their main forms of interaction; and (b) what types of capacity-building instruments are applied to this area.

### 1.2.1 Actors

With regard to the main actors involved in capacity building, it is useful to distinguish between: (a) providers of capacity-building initiatives; and (b) recipients targeted by such initiatives (see Box 2 for a detailed overview of these actors).

As far as the providers are concerned, international and bilateral development agencies are the leading actors involved in these activities. Development agencies and institutes within the United Nations such as UNCTAD, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have been active, as have international and regional trade and economic organizations such as the WTO and the European Union (EU). The World Bank and the regional development banks have also been allocating

increasing amounts of funding to capacity building, although a large part of these efforts has been directed at policy frameworks and at the implementation of agreements, rather than at the slow build-up of long-lasting capacities (WTO, 2009a; 2009b; 2009c). On the bilateral front, funding has been provided by donors/agencies from European Union countries, such as Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the United Kingdom's DFID, Germany's Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Switzerland's State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); and from outside Europe, by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (WTO, 2009d; WTO, 2009e; USAID, 2009). Universities, as well as academic networks – think tanks and research centres, from developed and developing countries alike – have become increasingly engaged in trade training and research.

The reach and focus of the capacity-building efforts differ quite widely between these actors, ranging from very short-term policy transfer initiatives directed at emulating technical policies, to longer-term efforts in support of the formulation of trade-related strategies encompassing developmental concerns.

On the recipients' side, as briefly mentioned earlier, public administration officials constitute the main target group. Researchers, academics and non-governmental groups have been included more recently, but they still appear to constitute a minority target audience. Lastly, private sector actors – such as private sector associations and interest groups – also seek to improve their knowledge and capacities in the areas of trade that affect them the most. Examples of this type of engagement in Latin America, for instance, are Brazil's Instituto de Estudos do Comércio e Negociações Internacionais (Institute for the Study of International Negotiations and Trade (ICONE)) and Argentina's Instituto para las Negociaciones Agrícolas Internacionales (Institute for International Agricultural Negotiations (INAI)).<sup>4</sup>

Academic actors engaged in capacity building in trade for development hold a dual role, since they can not only be local providers of capacity-building, but also recipients. Academics not only

<sup>4</sup>These research organizations are strongly linked to export chambers of grains and oleaginous crops. They produce statistics to underpin these businesses' positions and develop impact studies about key trade negotiations such as MERCOSUR and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (Botto, 2009: 62–68).

generate and systematize knowledge to build trade capabilities in the area, but they are also the recipients of international and regional capacity-building initiatives. In this role, academics produce, receive and transfer knowledge; they link different sectors and also help articulate interdisciplinary concerns. Their acquaintance with the local setting allows them to identify capacity-building needs and to select the appropriate means of fulfilling them.

Box 2

#### Actors involved in capacity-building activities

##### PROVIDERS

- International agencies
- Bilateral development agencies
- International and regional trade organizations
- International and regional NGOs (including private sector)
- Domestic academic groups

##### RECIPIENTS

- Public officials
- Researchers
- Academics
- Non-governmental groups

The degree of coordination and cooperation between these groups in terms of complementarity and non-duplication of activities remains unclear. Formal mechanisms that would optimize the use of resources to avoid overlapping are not widespread. Cooperation may also be constrained by vested interests in the provision of capacity-building. As concluded by Solignac-Lecomte, capacity-building programmes may tend to favour donors' priorities and interests over those of recipient countries (Solignac-Lecomte, 2003: 9). Capacity building may be compliance-driven and not address the interpretation of commitments undertaken, or the monitoring of the non-compliance of partners (Kostecki, 2001; CUTS, FLACSO, NSI, 2006). Greater cooperation amongst actors is therefore not only desirable at the providers' level, but also – and in particular – between providers and recipients, so that development needs and priorities can be properly identified and addressed.

## 1.2.2 Instruments

Capacity building in trade for development mainly uses four types of instruments, namely: (a) education and training; (b) research; (c) knowledge sharing; and (d) the building of partnerships. Each of these instruments involves different sets of actors and favours particular initiatives and activities. All of them are generally aimed at the creation and improvement of human resources in the long term, but there is another important aspect, which is that such initiatives are directed not only at strengthening particular individuals but also the institutions that they belong to. In this way, they aim to enhance the overall training and research capacities in developing countries that take into account local needs and expand the existing local knowledge.

In trade for development, capacity-building activities targeted at academia are of special significance. The importance of such capacity building stems primarily from the fact that generating skills and embedding knowledge within academia can lead to the multiplier effect of regularly "producing" qualified graduates knowledgeable in trade for development, and can contribute locally relevant research inputs that would help embed trade policy concerns into broader issues of economic and social development in developing countries.

The next chapter of this study provides a more detailed description of academic capacity building.

## 2 Academia and capacity building in trade for development

### 2.1 Identifying and defining academic actors in capacity building

The general working definition here is based on a broad concept of academia, rather than on the idea that academics belong to or are confined to a specific place of knowledge production such as a university. Academia, in this sense, comprises university lecturers and researchers; researchers from think tanks, research, management and advocacy centres; and consultants involved at local, regional and global levels in developing skills, ideas and capacities to influence policies and debates (Botto, 2009).

Traditionally, academia has been exclusively associated with universities and with the production of ideas and theoretical knowledge. Today, academic knowledge is dispersed across diverse people and institutions. The role of academics, particularly in the area of trade for development, is also to help articulate, legitimize and justify specific ideas to domestic constituencies and to the public in general. Thus, in order to grasp the concept of academia in this changing context, it is necessary to identify the main changes in its areas of action and in its activities.

As far as the area of action is concerned, and in the context of trade policies, academics can belong to either public or private institutions, such as universities, research centres, think tanks and consulting companies, and their work may be national, regional or global in scope. Each of these institutions is characterized by the production of a specific academic service: universities teach students and scholars and produce research; think tanks produce applied research to influence policymakers and/or private and social actors; and consultancies produce more technical and specific knowledge for policymakers. Despite this general distinction, researchers in any of these positions can provide knowledge in multiple forms. For instance, university professors do not exclusively work in education, but also increasingly provide services as research consultants to both the private and public sectors.

### 2.2 Characterizing academic capacity building in trade for development

We shall now explain the main instruments of capacity building and describe some of the activities that exemplify them. Capacity-building activities can work with varying time horizons, and can generate different kinds of knowledge.

It is important to point out that these forms of capacity building are quite ambitious, since their goals cannot be accomplished in a short time; we should therefore differentiate between capacity-building outcomes that can be achieved in the short term, and those that are of a longer-term nature. For instance, immediate and more measurable capacity-building outputs relate to support for specific research projects, the development of teaching materials, or the production of working papers or policy briefs. On the other hand, the impact on national negotiating positions and trade-related policies from educating local experts who will then accede to decision-making posts, or the integration of inputs from academics into such positions or policies, are examples of much longer-term efforts, usually percolating over a period of ten years (Tussie *et al.*, 2003).

In a similar vein, the nature of the knowledge generated and/or disseminated can also differ widely. Consulting and training involve activities related to the development and transmission of highly specific and technical knowledge. For instance, training courses are offered and provided to assist in the use of the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism. Research institutes and think tanks, by contrast, are more concerned with developing knowledge to influence policies and decision-makers. Teaching and research include more interdisciplinary knowledge linked to other areas, such as economics or the environment. The boundaries are not strict, and the production and use of knowledge among different academic actors can vary.

The following is a typology of the different instruments used by capacity-building initiatives in trade for development to reach their goals. Each instrument is described, and specific activities are mentioned as illustrative examples. Each of the instruments can be implemented through a variety of activities where academics can be either recipients or providers of capacity building. For instance, a university department or professor may receive support to develop a course on a specific trade-related subject, but subsequently that same course may be attended by postgraduate students and public officials to increase their knowledge.

#### (a) Education and training

The ever-growing demand for skills and the complex nature of trade-related activities have required a greater emphasis on different aspects of

education and training. Consequently, new courses and curricula have been developed to support an upcoming generation of professionals. Education activities therefore primarily engage universities, either by offering support to institutions and departments, or by supporting specific researchers or students. They include support for the development and sharing of teaching materials; exchanges between professors and specialists among universities; support for postgraduate students and researchers; support for the development of new research subjects and university-based research; and the provision of advice and information that can be used in trade-related teaching.

Training can be considered as a part of education, too, although it must be stressed that it has different objectives and often works with different time frames. Building capacity through training is directed primarily at professionals in public service, and it is usually tailored to their specific technical needs and as a complement to on-the-job instruction. In many cases, training does not only involve transfer of acquired knowledge but also ways of solving problems, implementing policies and building institutions based on experiences from elsewhere. A clear example of this kind of capacity building and public policy applied knowledge is the EU technical assistance delivered to negotiators and decision-makers of the Southern Common Market (Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR)). In this case, the EU considerably influenced the institutional design of the regional bloc, in particular some of the regional institutions, such as the parliamentary commission which is now known as the MERCOSUR Parliament, and the Social Economic Forum whose design mirrors its European counterpart (Botto, 2009).

The boundaries between strictly academic educational support and training for officials can be blurred. Technical assistance and training, although principally aimed at the public sector, may have spillover effects on academic groups. The technical assistance work with developing countries undertaken by the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four (G-24) providing information on forms of dialogue and engagement with the Bretton Woods institutions is a clear example. Scholars found that this group became a significant source of fresh ideas, not only for the policy community in these countries but also for the education of students and academics in universities and research institutes (Tussie, 2009a). Hence, such capacity building has a dual objective: on the one hand to provide training for engaging in policy, and on the other hand to create a community of scholars and academics dealing with development issues.

## (b) Research

Academic institutions are regarded as important producers of knowledge and ideas. Trade-related knowledge is important not only in order to understand the predominant paradigms, but also to inform negotiations and policies. Furthermore, it can provide a better understanding of how key issues of investment and finance may relate to and affect development. When looking at research as a key instrument of capacity building, several aspects need to be analyzed, such as: (a) support for domestic research, and how and if it is promoted; (b) how research helps increase the stock of knowledge about trade and development issues; (c) if and how research creates policy-relevant knowledge; and (d) how researchers are supported to strengthen collaboration with public officials and decision-makers.

Capacity-building activities directed at academics support both basic and applied research. Basic research refers to the production of new knowledge and ideas aiming to develop paradigms and advance long-term development strategies. Applied research can be defined as problem-driven: it addresses specific issues that can inform policy debates, positions for international negotiations, and the design of policies (Tussie, 2009b). In practice, the distinction is not clear-cut, as academics do not exclusively focus on basic research but increasingly engage in applied research as well. At the same time, the formulation and diffusion of theories and paradigms is not restricted to universities. For example, the role of neoliberal policies and trade liberalization was researched by international organizations such as the World Bank and UNCTAD in the 1980s and 1990s, from a variety of perspectives. This research and discussion have influenced the evolution of economic and developmental paradigms, and also the path of national trade policies.

Applied research is directed at informing policy-making, and the information produced is more specific and technical. Some of the main actors involved are think tanks and researchers in the public sector and research centres. Examples are the support from business and government to the G-20, and from the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) to the G-33.<sup>5</sup>

Two issues related to applied research have been particularly subject to debates: the establishment of the research agenda, and the ways in which research is best applied in order to inform policy. While there is extensive literature from various disciplines on the research-policy links in OECD countries, there has been much less emphasis

<sup>5</sup> For the differences between the research processes in the G-20 and the G-33, see Narlikar and Tussie (2009), Mably (2009), and Tussie (2009b).

on such links in developing countries. This subject has however been of increasing interest to the international development scholars, who in recent years have significantly expanded studies in this area. The ODI's cross-cutting Research and Policy in Development (RAPID) programme, and the attention given by the Global Development Network (GDN) to the links between policy and research are examples of this growing interest (Court and Young, 2005: 18).

### (c) Knowledge sharing

Understanding of processes of development and how they are affected by trade, finance and investment can be enhanced through the sharing of information and experiences. Individual and institutional support to academics and researchers can help expand their role not only as knowledge-producers but also as disseminators and facilitators of timely information. In this role, academics both form and inform current debates.

Academia in general and research centres in particular have become increasingly relevant as facilitators of the private-public dialogue. Academic institutions provide a venue where the public sector, the private sector and non-governmental actors can exchange views and find common ground. This role is partly the result of academia's mission to broaden horizons (Carden, 2006), and is based on the notion that academics are professionally closer to the development of "evidence-based" knowledge. Largely because of this, think tanks have been chosen by several donors and bilateral agencies as the principal vehicles for linking the worlds of policy and research. A paradigmatic example of this has been the creation of the GDN, with the aim of using research centres and think tanks as favoured channels to expand education and good global practices in developing countries (Stone, 2000).

Knowledge organizations are also useful in serving as information clearinghouses, initiating research and developing network infrastructure: starting newsletters, building databases, organizing conferences and moderating e-dialogues. These activities facilitate the distribution of information, and in some cases enable policy transfer agents to become aware of innovative policies adopted elsewhere. Networks in general represent a soft, informal and gradual mode for the international diffusion and dissemination of ideas and policy paradigms (Stone, 2000). Trade for development capacity-building networks in this context perform a very similar function in the area of trade.

The sharing of information takes place through a variety of activities and forms. In the area of

knowledge sharing, the study analyzes the role of dissemination of findings and materials; the allocation of funding for cooperation and the sharing of information; and the development of forums and venues for sharing. Making knowledge accessible has taken a variety of forms that range from the setting up of websites that allow the distribution, dissemination and access to information; to the production of trade-related materials, publications and newsletters; to the organization of workshops, conferences or courses. Target groups vary and include academic and public sector experts such as researchers, students, consultants, professors, and public sector officials.

### (d) Building partnerships

Opportunities to improve prospects for development are greatly enhanced by cooperation among regional/national/local actors. Support given to academics and their institutions can contribute to strengthening their capacity to develop partnerships and links between people and different institutions.

In this sense, a very important activity within capacity building initiatives is the creation and promotion of academic networks. Networks are increasingly important for development policy research, as they promote communication and collaboration between actors who might otherwise not be in touch (Mendizabal, 2008). In the policymaking and academic worlds, some of them have evolved into epistemic communities. This particular kind of community is defined as a network of professionals with recognized knowledge and skills in a particular issue/area that develop around causal beliefs or professional understandings of cause and effect relationships (Haas, 1992). Some of the features of these networks are the sharing of common interests, the exchange of information, debate, disagreement, persuasion, and a search for solutions and appropriate policy responses. In short, networks of this kind constitute a rather structured framework for policy-oriented learning (Knoepfel and Kissling-Näf, 1998: 347).

Networks, however, can be different and represent a way not only of sharing and discussing knowledge but also of building links and strategic relationships to increase their impact.<sup>6</sup> Advancing a culture of knowledge and learning is the major contribution made by network development. Networks can be considered as a cost-effective way of providing access to knowledge and capacities to a large membership. When they are member-driven, networks can support ownership of development research, practice and policy, making it more sustainable in the long run. They can also give their members and supporters the

<sup>6</sup> The information about the impact of networks is based on the authors' experience of work with networks.

credibility to allow their voice to be heard in the policy process. And, of course, networks can provide both direct and indirect access to financial support, which is key in initiatives that support long-term goals.

In capacity-building networks, knowledge institutions provide resources and facilitate the expansion of cross-levelled international, regional and national

partnerships. Networks bring together representatives from international organizations and state agencies with politicians, public officials, the media, business groups, trade unions, and sometimes with grassroots associations. Cooperation can be both informal and formal, and of long or short duration. It can be based on informal connections between academics, or be bound by specific contracts and agreements between institutions.

### 3 Academic contributions to capacity building in trade for development – learning from experience

This chapter examines on-the-ground capacity-building initiatives in trade. The first part provides an overview of academic-related trade initiatives by mapping and classifying them. It then moves on to take a closer look at two case studies, in order to draw lessons from their experiences. The final section concludes with some findings and lessons from the cases considered.

#### 3.1 Mapping academic capacity-building initiatives in trade for development

This section introduces a classification of the main initiatives identified, according to their goals, scope (regional or global), main actors engaged and targeted, and activities developed. The criteria for the mapping are not particularly specific or exclusionary in that they accommodate several capacity-building initiatives that may not reflect to the same extent the new direction of capacity building in trade for development. For specific information about particular initiatives, please see Annex B.

Capacity-building initiatives are essentially found at global and regional levels. National actors are engaged in such initiatives and are the main recipients, but the study has not come across systematic and organized efforts at the national level to undertake and implement this kind of work so far.

The main criterion for the classification of the initiatives is the capacity-building services that they

provide. A first examination shows two different types of programmes – one using a larger number of capacity-building instruments, and another one with a limited number of instruments and activities.

In the first case, we refer to the initiatives as “integrated capacity-building services”, since they cover, quite broadly, most – or at least three – of the capacity building instruments. For instance, the United Nations University – World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU–WIDER), as well as the Vi and LATN use research, education and knowledge-sharing instruments even though the degree of development of each of them may differ. The engagement with actors also appears to be wider, involving academia, and in cases such as the UNU–WIDER and LATN, civil society as well.

The second type of initiatives concentrates on one or two capacity-building instruments and tends to engage with a particular actor. In the case of the WTO, capacity building has mainly the form of training and targets policymakers. A similar case is UNIDO, which specializes in training for the private sector.

Further research and analysis would be useful to understand how the initiatives select particular instruments, activities and actors with whom they engage.

Box 3

#### Types of capacity building in trade for development at regional and global levels

TYPE	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLES
Integrated capacity-building services in trade for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide and promote a multiplicity of services (education, research, knowledge dissemination) considered relevant for the development of capacity building in the area of trade for development. Approaches are therefore complementary, even if equal emphasis is not placed on every instrument.</li> <li>• The trend is towards integration. This is also reflected in their engagement with a wider set of actors.</li> </ul>	LATN, Virtual Institute, UNU–WIDER, ARTNeT, UNU–IAS, FAO, World Bank Institute
Specialized capacity-building services in trade for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly focused initiatives that concentrate on providing one main type of service, sometimes with a second option.</li> <li>• Even if the activities are varied, they usually concentrate either on a particular capacity-building instrument or on a particular actor.</li> </ul>	WTO, UNIDO, AERC, GDN, ITC, DFID, IADB, CUTS

Within this universe of capacity-building initiatives, both the Vi and LATN have developed a more integrated approach by using several capacity-building instruments and engaging with academic actors.

### 3.2 Case studies: the experiences of the UNCTAD Virtual Institute and the Latin American Trade Network

The second section of this chapter provides a more detailed analysis of two examples of academic-related capacity building in trade for development: the UNCTAD Virtual Institute, and the Latin American Trade Network hosted and coordinated by FLACSO in Argentina. The study aims to explain and assess their work and to draw some conclusions about their contributions to and experiences in capacity building in trade for development.

The Vi and LATN are both similar and divergent examples of academic capacity building in the area of trade for development, as they offer two forms of engagement with broadly similar goals but with different dynamics. The goals of both networks are comparable, in that they are both directed at enhancing local knowledge and expertise in order to reduce the gaps and deficits of developing countries in trade and development issues. In both cases they target academics; LATN has additionally engaged with public officials, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Domestic needs and priorities are at the core of the issues identified for both the Vi activities, and for LATN's research agendas. However, each initiative has put emphasis on different instruments: education in the case of the Vi, and research in the case of LATN. Moreover, the Vi is global in its scope, whereas LATN remains regionally oriented.

With regard to funding, the Vi is part of UNCTAD and was initiated with temporary funds from the United Nations Development Account. Its continued development depends largely upon support from bilateral donors to fund capacity-building and networking activities that would benefit all the universities represented in the network, in addition to those in specific regions and groups of countries. In the case of LATN, the network has been relying largely on the entrepreneurial capacities of its members to obtain financial support. As building academic capacities in developing countries is a long-term process, predictable and sustainable financial support presents an important challenge for both initiatives, in terms of funding but also in terms of the need to rethink their main agendas and priorities – not only with their constituents but also with their donors.

Given the scope of the study, the information available, the relatively short time span of both initiatives, and the challenge of separating their impact from the impact of other factors influencing capacity building, it is not feasible to draw an authoritative conclusion about the overall impact of these initiatives on national trade policies. Conclusions can, however, be drawn based on the results that the initiatives have achieved in relation to their main goals.

#### 3.2.1 The UNCTAD Virtual Institute

The Vi was created in 2004 to respond to the training and research needs of developing countries' policymakers and other relevant stakeholders with regard to policies for trade for development<sup>7</sup> by strengthening universities, i.e. domestic providers of higher education and research. By doing so, it aims to help provide both locally relevant education to future decision-makers, and locally grounded research to inform national policymaking and international negotiations of developing countries.

##### 3.2.1.1 Main characteristics of the initiative

Firstly, the Vi provides its member universities with support and advice on developing and strengthening their trade-related courses and programmes, as well as updated expert information and resources that they can use in their teaching and research; it also offers professional development opportunities for academics. Secondly, in the framework of its networking activities, it facilitates collaboration between universities (North–South and South–South) to improve policy-oriented teaching and research in the area of trade and development, and supports a community of practice in trade teaching and research. Thirdly, it promotes dialogue between the trade policy community and academia, in order to enhance the practical impact of the academic work.

The initiative is global in scope, covering 40 universities from developing countries (including five least developed countries (LDCs)), 6 universities from developed countries, and 5 universities from countries with economies in transition. The actors engaged with the Vi include researchers based at universities in both developed and developing countries, as well as researchers from several international organizations involved in trade for development issues and to some extent researchers working at research institutes in developing countries. The Vi provides support that is oriented towards institutions – not just towards individual researchers – with the idea that institutional support will be lasting and more sustainable.

<sup>7</sup>“Trade for development” is understood here in broader terms as international trade, finance, investment, technology and their links with development.

### 3.2.1.2 Capacity-building instruments and outcomes

Following the conceptual outline set out in Chapter 1 of this study, the Vi has been involved in a variety of activities<sup>8</sup> in the area of capacity building in trade for development. One of the Vi's strongest components is the education of human resources: the goal is to develop knowledge and human capabilities that are relevant to a country's general economic and social development. Additionally, the initiative also uses the other capacity-building instruments: research; knowledge sharing; and the building of partnerships.

#### (a) Education

The Vi aims to strengthen local teaching and research capacities in developing-country universities, so that academics are able to deal with trade issues related to development. This is clearly reflected in the support that it provides to graduate teaching, the development of up-to-date teaching materials, and the strengthening of research capabilities on trade for development at developing-country universities. The Vi's activities in this regard are designed in consultation with participating universities, which are surveyed by a variety of means (questionnaires, phone and face-to-face interviews, online discussions, etc.). These consultations allow identification of the gaps in their curricula, both in terms of teaching materials and academic capacities. Teaching materials for use by developing-country universities are then developed (Stevens, 2009: 11) and professional development for academics offered in areas with the most pressing needs.

A key characteristic of the Vi's capacity-building activities directed at education is the attention paid to the "localization" of the teaching materials. The materials are adapted to the local context by Vi member universities by including data, case studies and exercises of relevance to the country in which they will be used, and, if necessary, by translating them into the local language. Twenty-two such localizations have been completed so far. The Vi supports, coordinates and facilitates this process, and provides relevant background documents, supervision and pedagogical orientation (Stevens, 2009: 11).

In this sense, the Vi's work stands apart, as other initiatives directed at the development and sharing of teaching materials do not rely on the use of local languages to the same extent. The localization process helps to reflect national/regional concerns; encourages local research, which largely supplies the information required for the adaptation phase; and makes customized teaching

materials readily available to the majority of the student population. Localizations also draw upon the research that the Vi supported at its member universities and that is used to adapt the courses to the countries' needs and priorities.

The Vi is also involved in providing support for course development and delivery. This includes curricular advice, for example for the design and launching of graduate programmes in international trade in Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania, and tailored training programmes at Geneva-based international organizations for groups of master's students (UNCTAD, 2008: 16-17).

The Vi began with five members in 2004, and in line with the increasing demand for its services it has expanded its membership to 51 universities from five different continents. The materials developed, the courses localized, the students trained, and the joint research projects completed are important achievements of the last five years (Stevens, 2009: 26-27). Developing-country members of the Vi, in particular, considered that the teaching materials developed (seven different materials,<sup>9</sup> so far) and localized with the Vi's support were a particularly valuable and relevant resource. The evaluation showed that for 82 per cent of respondents, they helped to enrich and build their courses and fill the gaps in their educational resources (Stevens, 2009: 26). Since the selection of topics is made by university members of the Vi within the areas of UNCTAD's remit, this seems to ensure agreement with project priorities.

Through its support to graduate teaching at member universities, the development of up-to-date teaching materials and their adaptation to the contexts of user countries, and the tailored training for students, the Vi has more than fulfilled its goals in the area of education.

#### (b) Knowledge sharing

Fostering knowledge sharing – not only the development of knowledge, but also its distribution and dissemination among members and institutions – is another goal of the Vi's capacity-building efforts. Among the most important means of sharing are: the dissemination of materials; professional development workshops; an online library; and an online facility for exchanges between members. As pointed out by the evaluation, knowledge sharing is also supported by introducing and exposing members to the expertise of UNCTAD officials and professionals from other organizations in the areas of trade and investment policy. This provides an additional window for knowledge sharing between UNCTAD and its member countries oriented specifically to

<sup>8</sup> This study covers the period between 2004, when the Virtual Institute was established, and 2009, and thus does not preclude changes in its future orientations.

<sup>9</sup> The materials are: Economic and Legal Aspects of International Investment Agreements; Economics of Commodities Production and Trade; Competitiveness and Development; Trade and Poverty; Regional Trade Agreements; Trade Data Analysis; and Transfer of Technology.

the university sector at the postgraduate and research level (UNCTAD, 2009: 13).

Professional development workshops also facilitate the use of knowledge generated by the Vi and its associates. The use and the impact of Vi-sponsored materials seem to increase significantly if supported by professional development workshops that allow the presentation and discussion of the material, as well as exploration of how and in which courses it could be used (UNCTAD, 2006: 10-11).

The knowledge-sharing process within the network is not confined to “finished” products. The instances of sharing also involve exchanges of advice among experts, in the form of feedback on work in progress. Thus, members can provide opinions on materials, for instance by using the online facility for communication among universities. The Vi website is a key element in facilitating the dissemination of knowledge, as it gives members easy access to relevant documents and information. The website also contains the Virtual Institute’s online library, which includes approximately 600 resources – articles, papers, reports and briefs related to trade and development. This access provides members with a valuable and in many developing countries scarce resource. A discussion forum and a quarterly newsletter are also available.

More recently, the Vi has engaged in facilitating knowledge sharing between academics from Vi universities and UNCTAD staff in order to help articulate and bring together international and domestic concerns. The exposure of UNCTAD professionals to relevant work undertaken in member universities (Stevens, 2009: 23) contributes to opening up new channels where different levels of knowledge can amalgamate and interrelate. Examples of this are the use of the analysis of the coffee sector drawn from a joint Vi research project in the World Investment Report, and the use of research on services offshoring in the Information Economy Report (Stevens, 2009: 23). The Vi has also begun encouraging knowledge sharing by providing opportunities for members to input their knowledge into multi-year expert groups through the use of the Vi forum facility (Stevens, 2009: 21-22).

The widely expressed view of members was that the Vi is highly proactive in facilitating the flow of information between members (South–South and South–North, as well as North–South) and in disseminating information from UNCTAD and other Geneva-based institutions to the members. In the last five years, the Vi has created different channels through which UNCTAD knowledge and experience is made available to universities that

would otherwise not have been reached. Many of the interviewees referred to the way in which the Vi is able to act as an intermediary, linking them to the relevant professionals in UNCTAD and other international organizations (Stevens, 2009: 23). The rating of the website by members showed that the quality of the information available was particularly well perceived (Stevens, 2009: 11; UNCTAD, 2009: 15). The evaluation also found that the use of the online library, accessible through the Vi’s website, was mentioned by members as a key resource enabling access to updated and timely information (Stevens, 2009).

Through its activities in the area of dissemination of materials, its professional development workshops, its online library, and the online facility for exchanges between members – as well as more recent activities aiming to link the research carried out in countries with UNCTAD’s work – the Vi has fully reached its goals in the area of knowledge sharing.

### (c) Research

The Vi’s objective in this area is to support the development of local research capacities in developing-country academic institutions while emphasizing the relevance of policy-oriented research that can help to shape policies and influence decision-makers in these countries.

The Vi’s involvement in research-related capacity-building efforts initially focused on the development of teaching materials for universities. Through the adaptation of these materials to local contexts, the Vi provides stimulus for domestic applied research by including data and analysis of relevance to the country, helps strengthen the links between curricula and research, and places the spotlight on subjects related to trade and development. In the same vein, the Vi later introduced – through funds granted by donors for this purpose – other services in this area, such as mentored research projects for junior lecturers, the Vi fellowship programme, and joint research projects among Vi member universities.

The Vi has had a measurable impact in the sense that research projects have been undertaken which would not otherwise have taken place (Stevens, 2009: 26). Six joint research projects have been completed, including two more extensive ones in Latin America – namely on corporate social responsibility, and on regional integration and cooperation in Latin America (UNCTAD, 2009: 24–25).

The goals of the Vi in terms of supporting the development of research in UNCTAD member states

have been attained too, despite the fact that the Vi engaged in this area of work later – its initial focus having been more on education.

#### (d) Building partnerships

The Vi holds a privileged position as an articulator of links and partnerships within the broad membership of universities. Its goal, therefore, is to help transfer knowledge, to introduce researchers and universities to one another, and to link universities to UNCTAD and other Geneva-based organizations such as the WTO. The funding provided to develop joint projects among member universities is a good example of fostering partnerships within the network. Such projects may take the form of a more advanced university (for instance, one that already has a graduate international trade programme) helping another university that is just beginning to develop such a programme, or a “partner” arrangement such as joint research (Stevens, 2009: 12). There are also agreements with international institutions that help expand and support many of the Vi’s activities.

The Vi is particularly active in partnering with international organizations and other institutions that make their studies, papers and documents available on the Vi website. Among these are the WTO, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) (in particular, their research network Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network (ARTNeT)), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the South Centre, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), the World Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (UNCTAD, 2009: 4-5).

In addition, a partnership with the WTO and the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) made it possible to organize a professional development workshop on tools and methods for trade and trade policy analysis in 2006. The Vi has also developed a joint manual on the subject with the WTO, and has arranged ITC training for some Vi member universities in Africa. Additionally, a pilot project in the form of a distance-learning course on legal aspects of regional and multilateral trade negotiations and agreements has been agreed with the Centro de Educación a Distancia para el Desarrollo Económico y Tecnológico (Centre for Distance Education for Economic and Technological Development (CEDDET)) in Spain.

The Vi has developed partnerships with organizations, including international organizations, and has facilitated and supported a number of instances of cooperation within its own university

network, and therefore has attained its goals in this area.

### 3.2.2 The Latin American Trade Network

The Latin American Trade Network is an independent and interdisciplinary research network founded in 1998 with the support of Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The Department of International Relations of FLACSO in Argentina is responsible for the administration of LATN, which is currently made up of more than 180 members and 70 linked institutions.

LATN was created at a time when it had become clear that there was an increasing need in the region for better information about multilateral trade and its impact on development. Although the multilateral trade negotiations during the Uruguay Round in the early 1990s had substantially modified the regional landscape, the generalized perception that trade policies could be set autonomously – like in the era of import substitution and central planning – was still widespread. One of the main purposes of LATN, therefore, was to contribute to the understanding of the new issues related to trade and how they would affect policies and development.

#### 3.2.2.1 Main characteristics of the initiative

The network was created to enhance research in the region in order to inform trade negotiators and decision-makers and support them through the provision of tools to change policies and courses of political action, with a view to improving country conditions. The network was originally created with the objective of producing knowledge in the area of trade and development. During its initial phase, this objective was refined, and the network became concerned with organizing and synthesizing existing research into a form more easily understood by trade negotiators and policymakers (Macadar, 2003: 17). The goals of the initiative include: (a) coordinating and conducting high-quality and relevant research; (b) supporting the process of agenda-building and policy formulation in Latin America; and (c) strengthening the existing research capacity in Latin American countries to engage in international trade negotiations and to contribute to human resources development (Macadar, 2003: 12).

LATN has engaged a variety of academic stakeholders involved in both the production and the dissemination of trade-related knowledge. The researchers and academics have different backgrounds and come from universities, think tanks, research centres and civil society organizations;

they may also be freelance consultants not affiliated to any particular institution. Since membership is open, the number of LATN members varies. The target audience is even broader, as LATN has directed its research not only at fellow academics but also at public officials – either negotiators or middle-ranking officials – as well as civil society organizations and private sector associations. Their scope is broad, although their research interests remain rooted in the regional context.

### 3.2.2.2 Capacity-building instruments and outcomes

LATN's capacity-building activities in trade for development mainly use three instruments: research; knowledge sharing; and the building of partnerships. Although the network has engaged in some training activities, its work and resources are largely concentrated on the three areas listed above. The section explains LATN's main instruments in capacity building, and looks at the outcomes that the network has produced.

#### (a) Training

Training and education activities per se are not part of LATN's core work or objectives. LATN has indeed supported several training initiatives, but these have not been expanded or continued systematically. Among the courses organized, there was a course in Guatemala in February 2002, and others that have been developed in collaboration with international institutions. World Bank Institute officials worked with LATN to customize their trade-policy training courses for the region. The two courses that were then offered in Buenos Aires and in Lima were attended by trade negotiators, policymakers, researchers, representatives of business associations and civil society organizations (Macadar, 2003: 13).

#### (b) Research

LATN's main goal, since its inception, has been to develop knowledge about leading trade issues and about the implications of trade commitments for the development needs and prospects of Latin American countries. Since then, the network has developed other important goals, and capacity building has become one of its core activities. In recent years, it has emphasized the development of independent, high-quality research and of indigenous capacities to promote a community of practice. The salience of the trade–development link was addressed early on, and is a key research concern. Also important to LATN's work is the need to strengthen capacities in order to identify national policy priorities and to entrench these

priorities in trade negotiations and policies (LATN, 2004: 3-4). LATN provides support to two different streams of research – one directed at the creation of essential knowledge related to new areas and topics, and another one for policy-oriented purposes. Similarly to the Vi, LATN plays an important role in developing new ideas and new information by supporting local research: themes related to trade for development are highlighted both at regional and national levels.

LATN's activities in research can be broadly divided into two main areas of work. While both of them tackle trade and development issues of particular relevance for the region, the outputs of the first area of work have a more academic character whereas the format of the second area of work is specifically tailored to reach decision-makers and influence policy (LATN, 2004: 22). The main research concerns in recent years have revolved around producing and assessing knowledge about trade, development and institutional settings, in order to trigger positive interactions leading to greater levels of equality and inclusion in Latin America. LATN's research is also aimed at influencing the scope and depth of trade debates, by challenging dominant perspectives and by localizing knowledge to particular national and regional needs. The rationale for this approach is that the production of alternative forms of knowledge will eventually lead to different forms of action and policy. The network accommodates new themes and changing priorities. Recent topics have concentrated on issues of inequality and the distribution of trade gains (LATN, 2009: 5-6). Research is promoted mainly through the support of projects, papers and articles related to the priority areas of the network. The research priorities of the network are set by matching up funding opportunities with the interests of active members of the steering committee. Support is also provided to the publication and dissemination of the knowledge produced.

With regard to policy influence, LATN has expanded its activities to produce policy-relevant knowledge to increase the project's reach and impact in policy circles. Efforts have been consistently made over the years to enhance the interaction with decision-makers, and also to improve members' skills at influencing policy through their involvement in the network's research work. Capacity building in this regard was achieved through practice, as well as exposure to new research criteria and techniques (LATN, 2004: 22).

In order to reduce the knowledge deficit present in the region, LATN has supported the production of working papers, policy briefs and books.

LATN's research production over the last 10 years includes a total of 13 books, more than 90 working papers and 39 briefing papers (LATN, 2008:10-12). This research has been largely directed at some of the most pressing problems in the area of trade and development in Latin America. The topics included trade liberalization and domestic distributive effects; trade and development policies; and reforms in global trade governance. In order to maintain a high level of research quality in its work, LATN has introduced a now well-established peer review process.<sup>10</sup> Conferences and seminars among peers also provide additional opportunities to expose LATN's research and researchers to open and critical views (Macadar, 2003).

Regarding policy influence, the network produces policy briefs directed at decision-makers. Network members have also approached both negotiators and middle-ranking public officials with a view to establishing long-term and interactive relationships. This increasing interaction has become evident at the national level, where the governments of various Latin American countries (Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru, as well as several Central American countries) have approached the network for assistance in trade negotiations. In addition, a number of regional organizations, such as the Andean Community, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, the Technical Committee of MERCOSUR, and Brazil's National Confederation of Industries, have contacted LATN for assistance at different times (Macadar, 2003: 13). Recently, the network's efforts to expand contacts with policymakers have, for the first time, reached subnational levels of government. As a result of these activities, more than 300 policymakers and negotiators from the region were approached and are currently interacting systematically with LATN (LATN, 2008: 20).

According to the 2003 study on policy influence, the activities of LATN had a significant impact on expanding policy capacity and broadening policy horizons. The same study also pointed to some influence on the content and design of policies (Macadar, 2003: 52-53). The orientation towards policy-friendly research has also produced outputs that are "digestible" and user-friendly, allowing the findings to be easily disseminated to those involved in trade negotiations and policy-making processes.

Through its activities fostering the development of independent, high-quality research and indigenous research capacities, and by promoting a community of practice in this area which has had a significant impact on expanding policy capacity and

broadening policy horizons in the region, LATN has more than fulfilled its goals in the area of research.

### (c) Knowledge sharing

The dissemination of research has been a priority objective since the network's inception. LATN's research outputs are working papers, policy briefs and books. These outputs are distributed throughout the Latin American region as well as in North America and Europe in printed and electronic formats. Lists of recipients are continuously updated and expanded to reach not only academics, but also negotiators and policymakers. Other target groups that have become part of LATN's outreach and dissemination efforts include key stakeholders outside the public policy arena, such as civil society organizations and the private sector (LATN, 2004: 14-17).

As part of the dissemination strategy, the role of the website has been enhanced to provide up-to-date information on trade matters. The site is a key vehicle for the dissemination of the outputs produced by the LATN members. It has been redesigned periodically, in order to improve the organization of information and to make the site a user-friendly instrument. The website provides (a) electronic access to all of the network's research outputs; (b) two online information tools, called "Monitoring Trade Conflicts" and "Policing Trade Barriers"; and (c) a source of information exchange for all its membership (LATN, 2004: 14-18).<sup>11</sup>

Workshops and conferences have been another important way for LATN to share the findings from the research it supports, and a way of facilitating exchanges with members and decision-makers. It is important to point out that in this process, LATN has recognized the fact that knowledge-sharing demands different inputs and different forms of communication depending on the target groups. The network has devoted time and resources to developing more policy-friendly information in order to capture the attention and interest of policymakers. The network has promoted short and focused "breakfast meetings" with decision-makers in several of its nodes, where the information that the network provides is tailored and presented in a way that is more easily accessible and more readily usable for policymakers. Regional meetings, with presentations of projects and findings, allow for regional exchanges where both common ground and different interests of the region are discussed.

LATN's working paper series and policy briefs series continue to be core dissemination activities of the network. In the first case, the target

<sup>10</sup> The peer review process is a now widely appreciated service; so much so that the network periodically receives requests to review papers that are not part of its core research programmes.

<sup>11</sup> The LATN services under (b) and (c) were discontinued due to resource constraints; the United Nations Regional Commission took up the idea.

audience is primarily academics, whereas the policy briefs series is aimed at policymakers. The way the content is presented and articulated in the policy briefs series differs, in order to be of use to the public policy community. Both of these series are disseminated through the network website (LATN, 2004: 14-17). Peer reviews also contain a knowledge-sharing component, as they have evolved into a channel for professional development. The sharing of papers and research findings provides professionals with a high-quality sounding board that contributes to their professional growth, and to building a community of practice.

Through tailoring the format of its research outputs to specific target audiences, the effective dissemination of research in the form of working papers, policy briefs and books, the LATN website, and the organization of workshops and conferences, LATN has fully met its goals in the area of knowledge sharing.

#### **(d) Building partnerships**

LATN's goal with regard to the partnerships that are at the heart of the network is to use them as a means of extending the reach and influence of the network in both the public and private sector. Meetings and conferences provide opportunities for researchers to interact more directly with relevant stakeholders in the area of trade for development, such as policymakers, and representatives of civil society. These events also provide opportunities to establish new forms of partnerships between the interested actors. LATN's conferences and meetings not only encourage face-to-face interactions between members, but also facilitate cooperation through common projects with like-minded institutions and agencies. In many cases, these have been followed by working agreements in areas of mutual interest and concern.

An example of the partnerships that have been developed is LATN's cooperation with the Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA). A framework agreement was signed in 2005 and IICA supported a session on agriculture at the 2005 annual meeting of the network. Discussions then expanded to develop short- and long-term research initiatives on issues of development and agricultural trade. A similar example is LATN's cooperation with the Ford Foundation in Brazil to support research on the distributive impact of trade liberalization agreements, through the commissioning of papers and the organization of a workshop held in April 2006 in Rio de Janeiro. The agreement with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation to carry out research on the political

economy of infrastructure and energy integration in Latin America (LATN, 2008: 20) is another such example. All these partnerships have been relevant for the expansion of LATN's reach.

LATN has developed a number of formal partnerships, some examples of which are listed above, and has fostered opportunities for interaction and cooperation through its workshops and conferences. It has, thus, met its goals related to extending its reach through the building of partnerships.

#### **3.2.3 The Vi and LATN: Shaping new forms of capacity building in trade for development**

This study started with the premise that capacity building in trade for development has moved away from more traditional forms to new ones that share some common characteristics. Among the most important of them are: (a) support for the development of both short- and long-term capacities in developing countries; (b) priority to national strategies and needs; (c) the inclusion of a broad set of actors in capacity building; and (d) a more holistic approach where trade is explicitly linked to other areas and policies, such as the economy, social development, or the environment. This section looks at both the Vi and LATN, and examines to what extent they reflect this paradigm shift in their goals and activities.

Reducing the knowledge and capacity deficit present in developing countries is a key goal shared by both the Vi and LATN. This concern is related primarily to enhancing long-term capacities and human resources in developing countries to face these challenges. Nevertheless, the capacity-building instruments used by each network to pursue this objective differ, and each initiative has concentrated efforts on different aspects of capacity building. As far as the Vi is concerned, education has so far been its main concern, along with its gradual expansion into other key areas. Its work relating to the development of teaching materials, advice for curriculum development, and its professional development activities, are in line with its efforts to create sustainable human resources and institutional capacities. The initiative ensures continuity and sustainability in the provision of education for professionals who will, in time, join the public or the private sector. In the case of LATN, short-term concerns were addressed to some extent by a few training courses provided by the network, but LATN devotes most of its resources to supporting and promoting research that is relevant to the region's problems and needs. The rationale here is that, in time, research, and more specifically, policy-oriented

research, can generate changes in policies and policy debates. The support for building such expertise will gradually help in putting together – for instance – coherent strategies in trade and development that are consistent with the countries' interests and long-term needs.

With regard to the priority attributed to domestic needs, the 2009 evaluation shows that the Vi makes clear efforts to customize its capacity-building work to fit the priorities and requirements of its members. The way that gaps in teaching material are initially identified, and the subsequent localization efforts, show a clear break with traditional forms of capacity building and a commitment to bringing domestic dimensions to the fore. LATN also places regional and national priorities at the heart of the network. Research themes and the development of research agendas are discussed within different regional nodes of the network in order to identify the main concerns and address them. The inclusion of policymakers and decision-makers in this problem-identification process (LATN, 2008) has a similar rationale, and aims to identify the challenges faced by countries and reflect them in the network's research agenda so as to provide knowledge that is sensitive to and responds to concrete demands.

The third characteristic relates to the presence of a wider set of actors that go beyond the public sphere of policy design and policy implementation. In the case of the Vi, the institute has mainly worked to build the capacities of academics and researchers based in universities, and, to a lesser extent, in research institutes. These actors are able not only to produce knowledge and transmit expertise, but can also – in time, and through their work – become embedded in wider private and public networks and thus serve as a long-term doorway to broader audiences. Continuity and sustainability are important dimensions too, since the Vi is not only directed at enhancing the capacities of individual academics, but also those of their institutions. To illustrate this point, the evaluation of the Vi underlined the fact that a member of the university network attributed the major capacity-building success of the Vi to the fact that it provided support to the department, whereas the (financially much larger) assignments offered by other external agencies were given to individuals within the university and therefore had a fragmenting rather than a capacity-building impact (Stevens, 2009: 27).

In the case of LATN, similar efforts are made to extend support to researchers' institutions. The network mostly focuses its efforts on entrepreneurial researchers with policy connections and with

affiliation to universities, think tanks and policy analysis centres. LATN also pursues the engagement of public sector decision-makers, working to bring together the research and policy community at large. LATN has also made headway in engaging with civil society organizations and with the private sector. Their inclusion and participation is based on the premise that an inclusive strategy for trade and development is better served and articulated by the participation of all major stakeholders. Integrating these stakeholders can, in time, create a community of practice that addresses similar challenges and searches for solutions that go in similar directions (LATN, 2008).

With regard to the development of more holistic approaches, the efforts of both initiatives to reach a wider set of actors and address domestic needs and agendas show a broader and better coordinated approach to the trade and development issues. A look through the teaching materials developed by the Vi shows a variety of topics which range from economic to trade policy and to some extent integrate trade with other areas. Examples are the teaching materials on foreign direct investment and development; on trade and the environment; and on trade and poverty. In the case of LATN, research themes have expanded over time and have come to reflect an approach that provides linkages with other areas that are relevant for trade and development. These themes range from foreign policy to poverty and the environment. LATN's recent production of working papers and policy briefs reflects this trend (LATN, 2008: 14-15).

These reflections and findings indicate, in both cases, a significant departure from traditional forms of capacity building. The two initiatives seem to have directed efforts and resources in a different manner than the traditional forms, clearly contributing to building and entrenching different forms of capacity building (see Box 4 for a comparison of the two forms).

The study also reveals salient areas where further research would be desirable. The first area is coordination between actors, and the second area relates to stronger linkages between different levels of capacity-building initiatives. The research shows an absence of explicit and systematic attempts to coordinate capacity-building initiatives. The fact that diverse international agencies and different national actors are involved in achieving similar results may lead to the conclusion that there is active competition among them. However, one must first address the fact that there is not enough knowledge about all the initiatives, and collaboration is not widespread. Secondly, effective

linkages among the different levels of capacity building seem to be lacking. Support and interventions at the individual/institutional/systemic levels are not necessarily connected. Initiatives can cover one or two of these levels – usually the first two – but complementarity remains rare.

Box 4

Traditional versus new forms of capacity building in trade for development			
	GOALS	ACTORS	APPROACH
TRADITIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration into the international trade system</li> <li>• Implementation of bilateral and multilateral trade commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public officials</li> </ul>	Focus on trade issues
NEW CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of trade-related knowledge and capabilities corresponding to priority national development needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public officials</li> <li>• Academics</li> <li>• Civil society</li> <li>• Private sector</li> </ul>	Focus on issues of trade in relation to economic and social development and the environment

## 4 Assessment, concluding remarks and reflections

The study found that the two initiatives, the Vi and the LATN, have developed towards new, distinct forms of capacity building and that their work has been contributing to re-shaping the forms in which capacity building is provided, including the priorities and reach of capacity-building provision. Both of them emphasize continuity and sustainability in the strengthening of academic skills and the building of expertise, prioritize domestic needs, engage with a broader set of actors, and apply an integrated approach to trade and development. An examination of the outcomes has shown that they have been successful in accomplishing their goals of enhancing long-term capabilities and improving knowledge.

Given their focus on national development needs and the development of long-term capacities, which is common to new forms of capacity building, they however face challenges in two areas: (a) maintaining and further increasing the relevance of their activities; and (b) securing long-term funding for their work, in particular the resource-intensive customized approach. With regard to the first challenge, knowledge demands and needs can change quite rapidly in the international system. Each network needs not only to satisfy the demands of its recipients, but also – and more importantly – to move its agenda along in a timely manner so that the relevance of its work can be maintained, and even improved, over time. Secondly, there are financial limitations with regard to long-term funding, which is not easy to secure. These financial limitations are sometimes exacerbated by the fact that customized approaches can be resource-intensive and difficult to maintain. At the same time, however, decentralized networks may be less resource-intensive: they are more flexible forms of association whose members have multiple allegiances, and can help provide direct and indirect access to financial support for projects with long-term goals.

The following conclusions aim to summarize some of the key findings that can be derived from these new approaches, and to point out some of the areas where additional work may be desirable.

### 4.1 Characterizing new forms of capacity building in trade for development

#### The relevance of localization and home-grown agendas

Domestic dimensions and home-grown priorities and agendas are key factors that can greatly

contribute to strengthening the linkages between domestic and regional needs and public policies. This is a critical advance, because it lessens the chances of witnessing transfer through pure emulation and, consequently, the chances of adopting ineffective solutions. Both initiatives aim at prioritizing internal/domestic dimensions, even if they have pursued this objective in different ways. Processes of dialogue are preferable to one-way transmission of information, in order to increase the possibilities of constructing knowledge in a more inclusive manner.

The role of local knowledge and its accessibility are also of great importance in the process of knowledge construction. Jakimow (2008: 9-10) reminds us that English is the *lingua franca* of development, and that greater sensitivity to communication constraints is needed. In the case of English-led initiatives, support in local languages constitutes a first step, but it is not enough. The initiatives should be encouraged to utilize non-English-language material and indigenous academic literature.

#### Broadly-based actor network

The networks studied in the two cases show that newer forms of capacity building seem to grow and expand their reach through the inclusion of a wider range of actors. In both cases, academics constitute the core participants in the networks, but additional actors are increasingly involved in their activities. The engagement with international organizations; policymakers at the international, regional and national levels; non-governmental actors; and, in the case of LATN, even the private sector, demonstrates a much more inclusive approach towards trade and development. These more complex and interdependent forms of interaction subsequently help broaden the scope of action and influence of the two initiatives. Such integrated manner of support provision contributes to the strengthening of internal capacities and knowledge among a much broader audience and increases the possible instances of spillover.

#### Participatory/ownership-driven models

Both networks develop their activities using the input from members and participants. Instead of the traditional top-down model that has characterized a large part of capacity building in trade, both networks attempt to develop their work and their strategies based on the needs and requirements of their membership and target audiences.

In this way, the Vi develops – jointly with the universities – the teaching materials that best suit their needs, while LATN meets members and practitioners to identify primary research concerns. These activities point towards a participatory model where capacity building is the direct product of targeted groups' opinions and interests and thus attempts to reflect particular knowledge-related deficits.

Both initiatives also recognize the importance of establishing a constructive and successful working relationship with policymakers. There is recognition of the fact that in order to increase impact – as well as the production of policy-relevant, high-quality knowledge addressing the developmental needs of different countries and regions – policymakers need to be part of the equation.

#### **Integrated agendas and programmes**

Despite the fact that both initiatives recognize that their work and strategies need to develop and apply integrated approaches and programmes, the Vi and LATN still face the challenge of doing so. Support for the development of integrated services and products remains one of the most important and complex challenges in their work. One of the difficulties stems from the fact that truly integrated work and approaches – and their application – are still under development.

#### **Knowledge construction and management underpin capacity-building initiatives in trade for development**

The evolution and future of capacity building in the area of trade for development is influenced by the knowledge strategies of the trade-related initiatives. Learning is an ongoing process that demands the reframing of initial understandings and a more systematic appreciation of the influences and contexts that shape knowledge so that capacity building will remain relevant and useful to its intended users.

## **4.2 Conceptual and empirical knowledge on capacity building in trade for development**

### **Capacity-building literature and studies in the areas of trade and trade for development remain limited**

Academic work on capacity building in the areas of trade and trade for development needs to be expanded. The sources of analysis remain largely limited to donor-related activities. A key area of discussion that remains almost completely absent is academics looking at themselves and their contributions. Wider discussion and conceptualization of these issues would be a welcome development, as it would allow for more constructive criticism, to improve the current endeavours and to spur the generation of new ideas and practices.

The information about the results of capacity building in trade for development remains very limited, and does not allow for discussions that would more clearly identify the opportunities and challenges that these new forms of capacity building are generating.

### **Empirical literature that tracks and accounts for the evolution and effects of specific capacity-building schemes in trade for development areas is very scarce**

In a similar vein, empirically-based studies that can capture the results of capacity-building initiatives and their impact on national and domestic policies are scarce too.

This is a complex question, as the measurement of influence and impact is controversial: whether or not influence can be measured, and how it can be measured, are questions that remain debatable. Even so, there is a need to generate some assessment on how capacity-building schemes may or may not have affected human resources and policies. These findings – even if they may not be wholly accurate or precise – may provide insights to guide capacity-building development where it matters the most.

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## Annex A: Technical reports and evaluations of the Vi and the LATN

	VIRTUAL INSTITUTE	LATIN AMERICAN TRADE NETWORK
<b>Technical reports</b>	Virtual Institute on Trade and Development (2006). Progress report. August 2005–September 2006.	The Latin American trade agenda: stakes and priorities. Final technical report (August 2004).
	Virtual Institute on Trade and Development (2008). Progress report. October 2006–January 2008.	Latin America and the world trading system: building knowledge for successful inclusion. Final technical report. October 2004–July 2008.
	Virtual Institute on Trade and Development (2009). Progress report. March 2008–April 2009.	Confronting new demands: inclusive growth, inclusive trade. First technical report. September 2008–September 2009.
<b>Evaluations</b>	Stevens, C. (2008). Evaluation of the UNCTAD Virtual Institute Development Account Project 2006–2009. External evaluation.	Macadar, L. (2003). Latin American Trade Network LATN. IDRC evaluation document.

## Annex B: Mapping academic capacity-building initiatives in trade for development

Initiative	Main goals	Scope of initiative	Main actors targeted/engaged	Main activities
<b>AERC African Economic Research Consortium</b>	Strengthen local capacity for conducting independent, rigorous inquiry into problems pertinent to the management of economies in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) 1. Enhancing the capacity of locally based researchers to conduct policy-relevant economic inquiry 2. Promoting retention of such capacity 3. Encouraging its application in the policy context	Regional (Sub-Saharan Africa)	1. Researchers in the region 2. Students at PhD and master's level, policy analysts and policymakers	1. Support for a postgraduate training programme for English-speaking Africa (except Nigeria and South Africa) in economics, in partnership with 21 universities in 17 SSA countries 2. Collaboration and support for master's programmes in Nigeria (Foundation for Economics Education), French-speaking Africa (Programme de troisième cycle interuniversitaire en économie) and some universities in South Africa 3. Collaborative PhD programme at four host universities: University of Cape Town, University of Dar-es-Salaam, University of Ibadan and University of Yaoundé II
<b>ARTNeT Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (hosted by UNESCAP)</b>	Increasing the amount of quality and topical trade research in the region by harnessing the research capacity already available, and developing additional capacity	Regional (Asia-Pacific)	Researchers and scholars based at research and academic institutions, junior researchers from LDCs, policymakers	1. Implementation of regional team-based research studies 2. Organization of technical training workshops 3. Visiting fellowships to non-LDC institutions 4. Research grants to junior researchers from LDCs
<b>CUTS, in cooperation with the Institute for Trade and Commercial Diplomacy "Strengthening Skills on Commercial Diplomacy"</b>	1. Training government officials at various levels involved in commercial diplomacy 2. Ensuring coherence between a country's domestic policy on trade and investment-related issues with international commitments 3. Enhancing skills by developing/strengthening capacity for taking effective part in trade and investment negotiations and implementation aspects of related international agreements	Focus on Africa and Asia	Business and government professionals	Series of short courses on: 1. Opportunities and challenges in an emerging global economy 2. Analytical framework for effective commercial diplomacy 3. Effective negotiations for commercial diplomacy 4. Simulations on trade and investment negotiation 5. Dispute settlement
<b>DFID Debt management capacity building</b>	Enabling governments to develop their own capacity to design and implement national debt strategies	Global (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries)	Governments	1. Training workshops 2. Missions to help with legal, institutional and technical issues 3. Distance learning programme 4. Interregional workshops 5. Information products
<b>FAO</b>	Strengthening the national capacities of its member states to achieve their goals in food security and agricultural development	Global	FAO's partners, member states, and other international, national and local development actors	1. Learning resources 2. (Online) learning services 3. Good practices case study series 4. Technical advice 5. Fellowships

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<b>GDN Global Development Network</b>	Promoting the generation, sharing and application to policy of multidisciplinary knowledge for the purpose of development 1. Building research excellence 2. Promoting networking 3. Expanding policy outreach 4. Shaping global policy debates	Global	Researchers based at research and policy institutes and undertaking policy-relevant social science research	1. Global Research Projects: to conduct studies in many countries simultaneously 2. GDN Awards and Medals: to promote research on development 3. Annual Conferences: to showcase and share research and to liaise with world-renowned academics and policymakers 4. Regional Research Competitions: to promote high-quality research in developing and transition countries 5. GDNNet: online tools and services to support researchers 6. Emerging activities that focus on: strategic research partnerships, research skills training, policy outreach, institutional capacity building
<b>IADB Inter-American Development Bank Knowledge and Learning Sector</b>	1. Combating poverty and promote social equity 2. Seeking to achieve sustainable economic growth, increase competitiveness, modernize public institutions, and foster free trade and regional integration	Regional (Latin America and the Caribbean)	Governments, private sector	Funding of the Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean focuses on capacity building and training for government officials and civil society representatives on trade and integration issues.
<b>ICTSD Aid for Trade programme</b>	Enabling poor countries to participate fully in the trading system, meet adjustment needs, and build the capacity to produce and trade competitively in global markets		Aid beneficiaries, private sector representatives, negotiators, donors, inter-governmental organizations, policymakers from the government, and business professionals	
<b>ITC</b>	1. Strengthening the international competitiveness of enterprises 2. Developing the capacity of trade service providers to support businesses 3. Supporting policymakers in integrating the business sector into the global economy	Global	Business community (esp. small and medium-sized enterprises – SMEs), policymakers, trade Support institutions	1. Courses in management competence 2. Courses in export competence 3. Courses in e-Trade competence 4. Courses in market research and analysis 5. Enterprise Diagnostics Programme 6. Customized programmes for managers, trainers and consultants
<b>LATN Latin American Trade Network</b>	1. Bridging the gap between research, decision-making and inclusive policy processes 2. Facilitating debate among senior practitioners, academics and civil society 3. Developing an internal critical mass of intellectual capacity to undertake and disseminate high-quality and policy-relevant research	Regional (Latin America)	Academics and representatives of civil society, negotiators, private sector	1. Support for local and regional research 2. Wide range of publications 3. Workshops and conferences 4. Building bridges between academia and policy

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<b>UNDP Capacity development support</b>	Focusing on empowering and strengthening endogenous capabilities	Global	National governments, subnational governments, sector agencies, single ministries or line departments, independent commissions, etc.	Support in terms of: 1. Public-private partnerships, etc. 2. Knowledge: education reform strategies, partnerships for investment, training and learning methodologies, knowledge networks
<b>UNIDO Trade capacity building</b>	1. Promoting and accelerating industrialization 2. Helping protect the environment 3. Mobilizing knowledge, skills, information and technology 4. Contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals 5. Helping the poorest nations and the most vulnerable members of their societies	Global	Enterprises	1. Competitiveness analysis and trade-related policies 2. Enterprise upgrading for trade enhancement 3. Innovation systems, technology management and foresight 4. Modernization of export-oriented agro-industries 5. SME export consortia 6. Corporate social responsibility for market integration 7. Standards, metrology, testing and conformity 8. Regional priorities, funds mobilization and partnerships
<b>UNU-IAS Capacity Development Programme</b>	Advancing knowledge and promoting learning for policymaking to meet the challenges of sustainable development	Global	Academics, young researchers, scholars and policymakers, particularly from developing countries; civil society organizations	1. Variety of postdoctoral, doctoral and professional programmes. Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme, PhD Fellowship Programme, JSPS-UNU Postdoctoral Fellowship Programme, and Junior Professional Fellowship Programme 2. Advanced training and courses/seminars 3. Workshops and roundtables
<b>UNU-WIDER United Nations University – World Institute for Development Economics Research</b>	1. Multidisciplinary research and policy analysis on structural changes affecting the world's poorest people 2. Providing a forum for professional interaction and the advocacy of policies leading to equitable and environmentally sustainable growth 3. Capacity strengthening and training for scholars and government officials in the field of economic and social policymaking	Global	Researchers and scholars based at universities and research institutes; also government officials and development communities	1. Encourage research 2. Forum for information-exchange and discussion of projects 3. Training for scholars and researchers 4. Support for PhD scholars

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<b>UNCTAD Virtual Institute</b>	Enhancing the capacities of developing-country knowledge institutions to conduct high-quality teaching and research on trade and development issues that respond to the needs of policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in their countries	Global	Lecturers and researchers based at universities; partly also other researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing updated expert information and resources</li> <li>2. Providing curriculum advice and support for course delivery to Vi university members</li> <li>3. Developing and sharing teaching materials tailored to the university context</li> <li>4. Conducting professional development workshops for academics</li> <li>5. Organizing tailor-made training programmes for postgraduate students (study tours)</li> <li>6. Facilitating exchanges and cooperation between universities</li> <li>7. Supporting a community of practice in trade teaching and research</li> <li>8. Promoting dialogue between the trade policy community and academia, in order to enhance the impact of academic work</li> </ol>
<b>World Bank Institute</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being a global facilitator of capacity development for poverty reduction</li> <li>2. Helping leaders, institutions and coalitions to address their capacity constraints with regard to achieving development results</li> </ol>	Global	Government officials, non-state actors (such as civil society organizations, the private sector, journalists and parliamentarians) in developing countries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowledge-exchange (sharing of information and experiences among development practitioners and policymakers)</li> <li>2. Structured learning (courses, workshops and conferences)</li> <li>3. Leadership development (support to decision-makers and emerging leaders)</li> <li>4. Innovation for Development (platforms for nurturing and sharing innovative practical solutions)</li> <li>5. Partnerships</li> <li>6. Scholarships (scholarship and fellowship programmes)</li> <li>7. Capacity development and results monitoring</li> </ol>

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<p><b>WTO</b>  <b>Trade-related technical assistance</b></p>	<p>1. Building long-lasting human and institutional trade capacity                  2. Enhancing ownership through training and technical cooperation</p>	<p>Global</p>	<p>Government officials from developing countries, LDCs and acceding countries                  The audience can also include representatives from civil society, academia and the private sector</p>	<p>1. General WTO-related technical assistance and training (courses)                  2. Specialized and advanced technical assistance and training (intensive courses and seminars)                  3. Academic support for training and capacity building: an integrated approach (courses, support programmes, and collaboration)                  4. Trainee programmes and internships                  5. E-learning (e-training, self-training, briefings)                  6. Houses the secretariat for the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to LDCs (IF)</p>



