

## **Management response to the Independent Cluster Evaluation of UNCTAD support to 'Capacity Building on Trade and Gender – Online Training'**

### ***Overall response to the evaluation***

In this section, Management presents its overall views on the evaluation, the report and its conclusions.

### ***Response by recommendation***

In this section, Management should address each recommendation that is addressed to UNCTAD, discussing them in the order presented in the evaluation report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below (see Box 1) and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if and what resources are required for implementing the recommendation.

**Box 1. Management response matrix<sup>1</sup>**

Management response to the Independent Cluster Evaluation of UNCTAD support to 'Capacity Building on Trade and Gender – Online Training'					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) <i>Accepted</i> , partially accepted or <i>rejected</i>	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Timeframe (e)	Resources required (Y or N) (f)
<p><i>On the intervention's general approach</i></p> <p>1. To begin with, considering the positive evaluation results and <i>persisting</i> economic inequalities, it is recommended that the training continues and that new teaching packages and iterations build upon the existing model and its defining features (online training modalities, research-based materials, combination of general and specialized modules). A new phase of the intervention could be planned with a longer-term perspective and with a greater</p>	<i>Accepted</i>	<p>The project team agrees with this recommendation, which fully aligns with long term plans for strengthening UNCTAD's capacity-building initiative on trade and gender. Nevertheless, a continuation of the training programme, the development of new teaching resources or the introduction of a new component that puts emphasis on the after-training, all require new financial resources. Fundraising efforts are already being carried out in this direction. With existing resources, the project team has also started to make important additions to the capacity-building programme. These include:</p> <p>(i) <i>Launch of a LinkedIn alumni network</i>. The group is aimed at</p>	TGD	4-5 years	Yes

<sup>1</sup> Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

<p>emphasis on the post-training activities, including the catching-up of failed trainees, the enrolment in several courses by the same trainees, the update and refreshment of knowledge and the use of knowledge at individual, organizational and country level.</p>		<p>creating a community space for successful participants of UNCTAD online courses on trade and gender. The group allows for an exchange of views, experiences and knowledge in the field of trade and gender, and provides a platform for networking and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>(ii) <i>Introduction of new elements to the online course</i> aimed to increase participants' engagement and favour learning and exchange. In addition to planned exchange through the Forum, a series of short sessions on different topics was organized with guest speakers working on projects /areas relevant to trade and gender. Course participants were also given access to some events (conferences, webinars) addressing trade and gender issues held during the period the courses were ongoing.</p>			
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<p><i>On module design and course planning</i></p> <p>2. Concerning the general modules, it is recommended to proceed with the update of the manual in order to capture recent progress in the trade and gender nexus, both in research and practice. This should include the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade as well as the proliferation of gender chapters in trade agreements, and related research. Since additional progress is needed and expected in the years to come, the manual should incorporate a system of addenda that allows for every course to update key developments that were not included in the previous manual.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The project team is in the process of finalizing the revised version of Volume 1 "Unfolding the Links". The new teaching manual will be translated in Spanish and French and will be used for the next iteration of the online course scheduled for the first trimester of 2022. Besides providing substantive updating of all its sections, the manual will indeed capture recent developments in the global debate on trade and gender, including reference to the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade as well as the gender chapters in trade agreements.</p> <p>The project team welcomes the recommendation to develop a system of addenda to facilitate the regular updating of the manual, and will explore ways to introduce it in the short-medium run following the publication of the updated manual.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Existing projects funds are financing the updating of the manual. Additional resources would be needed to ensure a regular updating of the manual through a system of addenda.</p>
<p>3. Suggestion to produce further geographically differentiated modules in partnership with UN regional commissions, which could cooperate with course planning and design, in addition to funding, outreach and recruitment, should</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The project team welcomes this recommendation and will consider joining forces with UN regional commissions for the development of additional modules with a regional focus. Collaborations with experts from regional economic commissions (namely UNECA, UNECLAC and UNESCAP) have already</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>1-2 years</p>	<p>Yes, possibility of co-financing with regional commissions could be explored</p>

be considered. As part of the geographic adaptation of the courses, involving experts from each region in tutoring and lecturing might add value to the courses.		proven fruitful. Besides the joint organization of events, the collaboration has also seen the involvement of experts in the tutoring of the online courses and in the peer reviews of teaching modules.			
4. Taking into account the number of applications received from donor countries, the possibility of designing a module specifically addressed to donors and cooperation agencies should be considered. Such a module could draw on UNCTAD's experience, tools and good practices. Additionally, inspired by the UNCTAD study on MNC and the dissemination of gender values and practices, the TGD should reflect on the relevance of a specific module dedicated to the private sector, which is currently absent in the alumni.	Partially accepted	To date, the online courses have targeted cohorts of participants from different backgrounds and affiliations, bringing together policy makers, representatives of the civil society and the academia, and to a lesser extent representatives of the private sector. Since the inception of the courses, participants have reported clear benefits in exchanging and sharing experiences with other participants from different backgrounds. UNCTAD still believes in the added value of making each course open to a broad range of stakeholders. However, the team agrees that there could be other benefits in tailoring the teaching modules and online courses to different groups of stakeholders such as donors and cooperation agencies, or the private sector. It would need to reflect on the best approach to implement this recommendation.	TGD	2-3 years	Y
5. Regarding the thematic modules, it is suggested that the TGD Programme explores partnerships with other UNCTAD units so that	Accepted	The project team accepts this recommendation and will seek to build synergies with other UNCTAD teams and divisions as appropriate, as it has already done in the framework of other	TGD	2-4 years	Y

<p>the training becomes more relevant to senior and highly specialized profiles. As in the case of the EMPRETEC-TGD collaboration, complementary activities can also be explored in order for the training to support UNCTAD technical assistance or policy dialogue activities specifically oriented to gender equality. Collaborations should be sought beyond the trade division and also consider international investment, entrepreneurship, or technical assistance in economic issues.</p>		<p>project activities, for example with the EMPRETEC team (DIAE) and the Trade Facilitation team (DTL) for capacity-building activities devoted to women cross-border traders.</p>			
<p>6. The possibility of designing differentiated training trajectories for CSOs, Government and Academia should also be considered.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>As mentioned for recommendation 4, UNCTAD believes in the added value of making each course open to a broad range of stakeholders, bringing together policy makers, representatives of the civil society and the academia, and to a lesser extent representatives of the private sector. However, the team also agrees that there could be benefits in tailoring the teaching modules and online courses to different groups of stakeholders such as CSO, Government and academia. It would thus need to reflect on the</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>2-3 years</p>	<p>Y</p>

		best approach to implement this recommendation.			
7. Consideration should be given to better highlighting HR issues in the training materials and, when elaborating new geographic modules, take into account how a differentiated analysis approach can be used to address relevant HR issues for each region.	Accepted	The project team acknowledges that attention to human rights issues may have been insufficient throughout the development and implementation of the various components of this capacity building initiative. This recommendation has already been taken onboard in the drafting of the revised version of the main teaching manual (Volume 1 - Unfolding the Links), where reference to the inclusion of a human rights perspective in the trade and gender debate has been included as appropriate. The team commits to pay more attention to human rights issues in the drafting of future modules, and to strengthen the outreach to representatives from vulnerable groups.	TGD	Ongoing	No, provided that resources are available for the continuation of the training programme and development of additional modules
<i>On training delivery</i> 8. Given that videoconference technologies have broadly spread during the pandemic, and following some requests, the courses could allow for more interaction through synchronous activities, such as webinars or tutoring meetings. These activities should not be mandatory, as the current mode of	Accepted	Important new elements along these lines have already been introduced in the latest online course delivered from May to July 2021. Specifically, to increase participants' engagement and favour learning and exchange, a series of short sessions on different topics was organized with guest speakers working on projects /areas relevant to trade and gender. These sessions were in	TGD	Ongoing	Y

<p>delivery has been praised by many participants for being easily adaptable to individual schedules.</p>		<p>addition to the planned interactions through the course forum and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “meet and greet” session to enable participants to meet each other and facilitators, to establish a closer connection among them and promote networking.</li> <li>- “meet and ask the experts” webinars of 45-60 minutes with experts working on projects /areas relevant to trade and gender globally. Experts included experienced project leaders, researchers, business interlocutors and representative of international organizations. These sessions exposed participants to some real-life projects, initiatives and research efforts around the issues relevant to the course.</li> <li>- Participants were also given the opportunity to attend the 2021 Global Conference of the Society of International Economic Law which included several events devoted to trade and gender, and an UNCTAD 15 pre-event that featured a high-level debate on the specific</li> </ul>			
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		<p>challenges faced by women in the LDCs.</p> <p>Given the positive feedback received from course participants on this new modality of learning and exchange, the project team plans to replicate the same experience in future courses.</p>			
<p>9. It is also recommended to develop learning materials that allow for a greater deal of engagement and experience sharing in order to allow participants to learn from each other but also to nourish the planned alumni network.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>As in the previous recommendation, important additions have already been introduced in the training programme to encourage engagement and experience sharing through "meet and greet" sessions and "meet and ask the experts" webinars. Likewise, the project team has recently launched the LinkedIn alumni network, a group aimed at creating a community space for successful participants of past online courses. The group allows for an exchange of views, experiences and knowledge in the field of trade and gender, and provides a platform for networking and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>Considering the positive feedback received, the project team plans to replicate the same experience in future courses.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Y</p>

<p>10. Consideration could be given to providing courses of varying time frames in order to ensure that participants with full-time positions can complete the course according to the plan.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The project team is currently exploring options to design shorter regional and thematic courses. For this purpose, it has been developing a condensed version of the introductory modules on the trade and gender nexus, which will constitute the basis of the regional and thematic modules. A shorter version of the course has already been piloted in 2020 with the thematic course "The gender impact of technological upgrading in agriculture", which lasted 3 weeks. To date, participants have not expressed concerns about the duration of the course (currently at 7 weeks for the standard course, and 8 weeks for the course with optional regional module). However, the team agrees that shorter courses may better adapt to stakeholders with busy work schedules, or to participants who have already taken the course once and would like to pursue further specialized learning focusing on regional or thematic modules.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>2-3</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><i>On certifications</i></p> <p>11. Considering that success rates vary among stakeholders and courses, and that overall they follow a negative trend, it is recommended to differentiate different levels of</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>The project team will consider how to implement this recommendation in future iterations of the course, though it would like to share a concern about it. Participants value the certificate of completion they receive after fulfilling all course requirements and the "distinction letter" that the best performers</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>2-3</p>	<p>Y</p>

<p>certification, and facilitate a catch-up mechanism for those who fail. Different certifications could differentiate at least three levels: the first level would be based on the general manual and would entail a good understanding of trade and gender linkages; the second level would entail analytical performance, use of data, and formulation of evidence-based policy recommendations. The third level would acknowledge thematic or geographic specialization. When a trainee does not obtain the certification associated with the course in which they are enrolled, they could have a second opportunity in the following iteration of the same course.</p>		<p>obtain. This is reflected, for example, by participants posting the certificate on their LinkedIn profiles and including it in their CVs. Various levels of certification may involuntarily undermine the value of the certificates.</p>			
<p><i>On after training</i></p> <p>12.It is strongly encouraged that the establishment of the alumni network is accelerated. Exchange among alumni, tutors and TGD staff should also sustain and expand their knowledge on trade and gender and provide additional</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>As mentioned, the alumni network has been recently launched through the creation of a closed LinkedIn group. Only alumni were invited and so far about 200 of them joined. The group is aimed at creating a community space and favour an exchange of views, experiences and knowledge in the field of trade and gender. It is also expected to provide a platform for networking and</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Y</p>

<p>inspiration and motivation. The alumni network can also support the design of training trajectories that go beyond courses. Alumni activities should be a central component of new training projects and include financial and human resources for supporting activities, including community management and events.</p>		<p>knowledge sharing. The project team has launched and is managing the group within existing resources. Further resources will allow for the integration of additional components and for the expansion of the scope of this group.</p>			
<p><i>On M&amp;E</i></p> <p>13.The TGD Team could better develop its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to better support learning and to strengthen the implementation of the programme. For instance, the team should analyse and use the considerable amount of data provided by online activity and keep a single database structured around individuals with a unique username that would allow for tracer studies. This system could help UNCTAD to set up new targets based on HR considerations, seniority or capacity of influence. Further, as in this evaluation, the</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The framework and database developed in the context of this evaluation will be extremely useful for the project team to put in place a simplified monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Efforts are already being carried out in this direction.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>No, provided that resources are available for the continuation of the training programme</p>

<p>alumni network could systematically provide feedback to UNCTAD with information on how the alumni apply their knowledge and to what extent they impact on their organizations and broader contexts.</p>					
<p><i>On outreach and communication</i></p> <p>14. It is recommended that advertisements target CSO groups to encourage their participation in the courses. This information should also be collected in application forms.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>UNCTAD disseminates information about the online courses through communication campaigns on social media and email campaigns. The targets are typically the members of the work programme's mailinglist and Twitter accounts, the Permanent Missions in Geneva who are notified through official Notifications, the Permanent Missions in NY who are informed by the UNCTAD Liaison Office in NY, and lists of civil society organizations. Efforts will be put in place to strengthen the outreach to CSOs for future courses.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>No, provided that resources are available for the continuation of the training programme</p>
<p>15. A communication and outreach strategy should be developed for each course to provide information such as who the target groups are and what the expectations are in terms of time investment to complete the course.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>If the project team decides to diversify the target group of future courses, the communication and outreach strategy will be developed accordingly. The team will also consider adding a question in the final evaluation questionnaire to collect participants' views about the length of the course and time investment.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>1-2 years</p>	<p>No, provided that resources are available for the continuation of the training programme</p>

<p>16. In order to ensure compliance with a HRBA target groups should be defined and consideration should be given to how to target them. It is recommended that advertisements clearly aim to attract people of all age groups, genders sexual identities, nationalities and population groups to the courses and clearly mention that preference will be given to applicants representing minority groups. This information should also be clearly requested in application forms to allow for giving preference to such groups and organizations.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>This recommendation could be implemented for the next iterations of the course and the application form will be tailored accordingly. Nevertheless, in order for the course to be a meaningful and fulfilling learning experience, participants need to have a relevant background.</p>	<p>TGD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>No, provided that resources are available for the continuation of the training programme</p>
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