

**Trade and Development Board
Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget**

Eightieth session

Geneva, 30–31 March 2020

Item 3 - Technical cooperation strategy

UNCTAD's new Technical Cooperation Strategy – Points and areas to be considered when drafting the new Strategy

1. The last technical cooperation strategy dates back to 2003. The 2003 document contains a set of guidelines, principles and objectives on how UNCTAD technical cooperation should be implemented; the main forms of technical cooperation and the modalities of monitoring and evaluation.
2. Most of the elements of the 2003 strategy remain valid – albeit with some modifications and updates - and should be included in the new Technical Cooperation Strategy to be adopted after UNCTAD 15. Furthermore, the new Strategy will consider the following additional elements¹: 1) How to better use tools and mechanisms in place to ensure secretariat-level oversight over technical cooperation operations; 2) How to ensure that member States' requests for technical cooperation can be fully met; 3) How to mainstream the cross-cutting areas of Gender, Human Rights and Environment across UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities; 4) How to adapt technical cooperation operations in view of UN Development System Reform.
3. UNCTAD has succeeded in mainstreaming gender in its technical cooperation activities; however, more efforts need to be made in Human Rights and Environment. The revisiting of UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Strategy offers a good opportunity to incorporate these additional elements.
4. On UN Development System Reform, it should be noted that the repositioning of the UN development system will likely result in UN Country Teams (UNCTs) shifting increasingly towards greater policy work and therefore the new generation of UNCTs are expected to draw more extensively on specialized entities such as UNCTAD.
5. Under the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system, the UN System now has an independent and empowered Resident Coordinator with greater time available to understand, engage and promote the work of non-resident agencies. Significantly, each RC is also now buttressed by a well-endowed office comprised of a minimum of five experts - strategic planners, economists, data & M&E analysts, Financing & Partnerships experts and Communications advisors. This positions the RC to provide considerably stronger leadership and coordination of the UN development system at country level and for the coordination team to service much more proactively, UN entities which may not have an in-country presence.
6. At the time of writing², a task team composed of UNDCO, a group of Resident Coordinators identified by DCO and the UNCTAD secretariat is developing a simple package of measures and materials that will provide clear entry points and a mechanism for agile, effective and efficient engagement of the

¹ As highlighted in past reviews and assessments of UNCTAD's work

² Mid-February 2020

UNCTAD secretariat with the Resident Coordinator System at the country level. The outcomes of this task team will inform the new Technical Cooperation Strategy.

7. Furthermore, the Strategy will also set priorities in terms of: 1) categories of countries (e.g. Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States, Structurally Weak, Vulnerable and Small Economies); 2) type of technical cooperation programmes (e.g. prioritize those technical cooperation programmes with biggest demand from recipient countries at the detriment of smaller programmes with less demand).

8. As discussed during informal meetings with Coordinators of Regional Groups in December 2019, the UNCTAD secretariat will finalize the Technical Cooperation Strategy shortly after the UNCTAD 15 Conference in Barbados. The Strategy will be informed by discussions at the 80th session of the Working Party and the UNCTAD 15 outcome, as well as recent UNCTAD evaluations and assessments.

UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Strategy - proposed areas to be covered:

- Introduction and Rationale
- Guiding Principles and main goals for UNCTAD's technical cooperation
- UNCTAD's portfolio of technical cooperation products
- Priorities
- Types of technical cooperation activities
- Cooperation with development partners UN Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity [Re-enforcing the Cluster, taking it a step further]
- Alignment of UNCTAD's technical cooperation with the overall programme of work of the organization, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs
- UNCTAD TC and UN development system Reform efforts
- Cross-cutting issues: Gender, Climate change, Human Rights
- Programme and Project management
 - Approval process for new project proposals / Quality control / Project - Programme management system / Monitoring & evaluation / Result-based Management
- Funding / Fund-raising
- Support costs
- Role of the Working Party / TDB
- Role of UNCTAD secretariat
 - a. Office of the Secretary-General
 - b. Divisions
 - c. Regional focal points
 - d. Technical Cooperation Section
 - e. Project Review Committee
- Reporting, monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the strategy