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Points and areas to be considered when drafting the new technical cooperation strategy

Points and areas to be considered during drafting

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 the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XV). Furthermore, the new strategy will consider the following additional elements (as highlighted in past reviews and assessments of UNCTAD work): (a) how to better use tools and mechanisms in place to ensure secretariat-level oversight over technical cooperation operations; (b) how to ensure that member State requests for technical cooperation can be fully met; (c) how to mainstream the cross-cutting areas of gender, human rights and the environment across UNCTAD technical cooperation activities; and (d) how to adapt technical cooperation operations in view of the reform of the United Nations development system.
3. UNCTAD has succeeded in mainstreaming gender in its technical cooperation activities. However, more efforts need to be made in human rights and the environment. Revisiting the UNCTAD technical cooperation strategy offers a good opportunity to incorporate these additional elements.
4. On the reform of the United Nations development system, it should be noted that the repositioning of the United Nations development system will likely result in United Nations country teams shifting increasingly towards greater policy work and therefore the new generation of United Nations country teams are expected to draw more extensively on specialized entities such as UNCTAD.
5. Under the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, the United Nations system now has an independent and empowered resident coordinator with greater time available to understand, engage with and promote the work of non-resident agencies. Significantly, each resident coordinator is also now buttressed by a well-endowed office comprised of a



minimum of five experts: strategic planners, economists, data and monitoring and evaluation analysts, financing and partnerships experts and communications advisers. This positions the resident coordinator to provide considerably stronger leadership and coordination for the United Nations development system at the country level and for the coordination team to service much more proactively United Nations entities that may not have an in-country presence.

6. At the time of writing (mid-February 2020), a task team composed of the United Nations Development Coordination Office, a group of resident coordinators identified by the Office 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 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: (a) categories of countries (e.g. the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies); and (b) types of technical cooperation programmes (e.g. prioritizing those technical cooperation programmes for which there is the greatest demand from recipient countries to the detriment of smaller programmes for which there is less demand).

8. As discussed during informal meetings with the coordinators of regional groups in December 2019, the UNCTAD secretariat will finalize the technical cooperation strategy shortly after UNCTAD XV in Barbados. The strategy will be informed by discussions at the eightieth session of the Working Party and the UNCTAD XV outcome, as well as recent UNCTAD evaluations and assessments.

Proposed areas to be covered

- (a) Introduction and rationale.
- (b) Guiding principles and main goals for UNCTAD technical cooperation.
- (c) UNCTAD portfolio of technical cooperation products.
- (d) Priorities.
- (e) Types of technical cooperation activities.
- (f) Cooperation with development partners, United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity (reinforcing the Cluster, taking it a step further).
- (g) Alignment of UNCTAD technical cooperation with the overall programme of work of the organization, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- (h) UNCTAD technical cooperation and United Nations development system reform efforts.
- (i) Cross-cutting issues: gender, climate change, human rights.
- (j) Programme and project management: Approval process for new project proposals / quality control / programme and project management system / monitoring and evaluation / results-based management.
- (k) Funding / fundraising.
- (l) Support costs.
- (m) Role of Working Party / Trade and Development Board.
- (n) Role of UNCTAD secretariat:
 - Office of the Secretary-General;
 - Divisions;

- Regional focal points;
 - Technical Cooperation Section;
 - Project review committee.
- (o) Reporting, monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the strategy.
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