



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General
18 September 2017

Original: English

Trade and Development Board
Working Party on the Strategic Framework and
the Programme Budget
Seventy-fifth session
Geneva, 4–6 September 2017

Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget on its seventy-fifth session

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 4 to 6 September 2017

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its seventy-fifth session	2
II. Chair's summary	2
III. Organizational matters	6
Annexes	
I. Draft decision for consideration by the Trade and Development Board	7
II. Provisional agenda for the seventy-sixth session of the Working Party	9
III. Attendance.....	10

GE.17-16297(E)



* 1 7 1 6 2 9 7 *

Please recycle 



I. Agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its seventy-fifth session

Evaluation of UNCTAD activities

(Agenda item 4)

The Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget

1. *Commends* the subprogramme 4 independent evaluation team for a useful and insightful report;
2. *Looks forward* to the implementation of the subprogramme 4 evaluation recommendations by the secretariat and the subsequent presentation of the evaluation follow-up during its seventy-seventh session in September 2018;
3. *Reaffirms* the importance of evaluations as a powerful tool for accountability and organizational learning and for further improving the results-based management function;
4. *Requests* the secretariat to conduct consultations with member States starting immediately after the sixty-fourth session of the Trade and Development Board, in order to present a draft evaluation plan for 2019–2021 prior to the sixty-sixth executive session of the Trade and Development Board.

II. Chair's summary

A. Proceedings

1. The seventy-fifth session of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget was held in Geneva from 4 to 6 September 2017.

B. Opening statements

2. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD made a statement. Statements were made by the representatives of the following delegations: the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; Brazil on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; the Sudan on behalf of the African Group; the European Union on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the United States of America on behalf of the JUSSCANNZ group; Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group; China; Kenya; Cambodia; and State of Palestine.

3. In her introductory statement, the Deputy Secretary-General stressed the importance of coordination among the three pillars of UNCTAD, and provided an overview of technical cooperation activities in 2016, highlighting the three key aspects of fund mobilization, delivery and management. With regard to fund mobilization, trust fund amounts were rising, yet unpredictability, fluctuations over the years and earmarking for specific activities continued to be the main features of UNCTAD extrabudgetary resources. It was crucial to ensure the availability of adequate voluntary funding for UNCTAD, as well as more predictable and flexible and less earmarked contributions to trust funds. The Deputy Secretary-General stressed the importance of delivery to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation in the United Nations system, including through public–private partnerships. Finally, with regard to management, the Deputy Secretary-General noted the progress made in implementing initiatives designed in 2015

and 2016 to enhance the transparency and efficiency of technical cooperation. She highlighted the database of formal requests for technical cooperation; the 10 minimum requirements for results-based management, which aimed to ensure a focus on results during project planning and implementation phases; and initiatives to better integrate the gender dimension into technical cooperation projects. The Deputy Secretary-General stressed that, in the context of the 2030 Agenda, there was a need for further inter-agency cooperation, for better coherence and impact at the national level, and that the United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity was well positioned to respond to the integrated and inclusive nature of the 2030 Agenda. Finally, the Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the potential of UNCTAD in the United Nations system, building on its renewed mandate in the Nairobi Maafikiano, to contribute in an effective manner to the 2030 Agenda.

4. The Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the continuing efforts of UNCTAD to strengthen its evaluation function. She emphasized the key role played by both monitoring and evaluation with regard to the 2030 Agenda. She stressed the importance of meaningful multisectoral approaches and partnerships in providing support to countries, and highlighted recent important contributions by UNCTAD in this area, such as the following: pilot training on statistics and evaluation in the United Republic of Tanzania in June and July 2017, to support the measurement of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals; and an evaluation practice exchange event during the High-level Political Forum in July 2017, with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

5. With regard to the evaluation of UNCTAD activities, the Deputy Secretary-General emphasized that, as the primary stakeholders, member States should engage in the continuous improvement of UNCTAD based on lessons learned provided in the overview of the evaluation of activities. She drew attention in particular to the evaluation plan for 2018–2020, as the forthcoming evaluation of subprogramme 5 on Africa, least developed countries and special programmes, at the seventy-seventh session of the Working Party, would mark the end of the trial cycle of subprogramme evaluations. She proposed a continuation of the subprogramme evaluation approach, starting in 2019 with subprogramme 1 on globalization, interdependence and development. Finally, the Deputy Secretary-General invited delegates to expand their support to UNCTAD, as this would in turn enable UNCTAD to expand its coverage of evaluations, strengthen the evaluation culture and respond to the 2030 Agenda, including at the national level.

6. Several delegates stressed the importance of coordination among the three pillars for better coherence and impact when providing technical assistance. Three main issues emerged from the discussion on the agenda item on technical cooperation, namely fundraising, the management of technical cooperation and UNCTAD positioning in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

7. With regard to fundraising, several delegates highlighted that, in 2016, for the second consecutive year, funds received from developing countries had amounted to half of the total, which was a positive trend that showed the engagement of developing countries. Many delegates expressed concern, however, about the relatively low level of contributions from developed countries, and encouraged all development partners in a position to do so to increase and sustain funding to UNCTAD through multi-year contributions, to increase predictability in the planning and implementation of UNCTAD technical assistance programmes, with a view to addressing the outcomes of the renewed mandate of UNCTAD. The representative of one regional group noted that the decline of resources was due to the fact that an agreement on the overall level of assistance to the United Nations through a renewed framework of cooperation had not yet been reached, and that levels were expected to increase in the coming years. Several delegates agreed on the need for UNCTAD to establish funding mechanisms that better positioned UNCTAD in the context of the reform

of the United Nations and meeting the challenges of the 2030 Agenda. Some delegates underscored the importance of developing a fundraising strategy to broaden the UNCTAD funding base and expand financial resources indispensable in meeting the rising level of demand for technical cooperation. Some delegates noted the efforts made and consultations by the secretariat in 2016 in the establishment of a new funding mechanism, and that further deliberations with member States to facilitate consensus-building on this issue would be welcome.

8. On the management of UNCTAD technical cooperation, several delegates highlighted the renewed mandate of UNCTAD, noted the efforts made by the secretariat to improve the online database of formal requests for technical cooperation and encouraged continued cooperation with member States to ensure the accuracy of information. The representative of one regional group noted the updates to the UNCTAD Toolbox and encouraged further streamlining; noted that the 10 minimum requirements for results-based management would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of technical cooperation; and acknowledged progress made in mainstreaming gender equality and women's economic empowerment in designing technical cooperation projects. Two delegates enquired as to whether the UNCTAD Toolbox already included emerging products, and the secretariat advised that new products had already gained in visibility and volume of activity. Some delegates referred to specific components of the Nairobi Maafikiano to highlight the need for timely implementation, such as issues related to trade facilitation in the context of the World Trade Organization, including non-tariff barriers; issues related to foreign direct investment and the need to better support the integration of developing countries into global value chains; the need for additional support with regard to trade facilitation, investment and science and technology; the need for assistance with regard to rules of origin and for enhanced cooperation between UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization in the context of aid for trade; and assistance to the Palestinian people. Several delegates encouraged UNCTAD to further develop a holistic approach that would establish linkages between UNCTAD policy recommendations and the building of productive capacity, to allow countries to better address development issues in a more comprehensive manner, and to provide integrated assistance that took into account all pertinent social and economic parameters. Finally, some delegates highlighted the need for increased South–South cooperation and projects aimed at boosting intraregional trade.

9. With regard to UNCTAD positioning in the context of the 2030 Agenda, several delegates emphasized the need for greater participation by UNCTAD in the United Nations system in achieving the Goals. Two delegates stressed that United Nations reform would have an impact on UNCTAD technical cooperation, that the secretariat should be proactive in ensuring UNCTAD participation in the “Delivering as One” process and that there was a need to strengthen technical cooperation to meet the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Finally one delegate stressed that UNCTAD had a critical role to play in achieving the Goals and that the organization should consider its delivery in the light of the 2030 Agenda.

10. With regard to the agenda item on evaluation, the leader of the evaluation team presented the report of the evaluation of subprogramme 4, outlining the methodology and evaluative steps undertaken; summarizing the findings under the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the cross-cutting issues of gender mainstreaming and equity; and discussing the best practices and lessons learned identified by the evaluation. The recommendations were accepted by the secretariat.

11. Several delegates welcomed the session as an opportunity to review the effectiveness of technical cooperation under subprogramme 4. Two delegates welcomed the fact that the evaluation had recognized the high level of efficiency and relevance of the activities implemented under subprogramme 4. Finally, several delegates stressed the importance of implementing lessons learned.

12. The representatives of two regional groups expressed interest in the upcoming process of implementing the lessons learned. The representative of one regional group noted that some of the lessons learned, such as those on communications, gender mainstreaming and the incorporation of the Goals, could be of interest to other divisions within UNCTAD. The representative of another regional group stressed the need to clearly prioritize the work of the subprogramme, strengthen regional approaches and partnerships, strengthen gender aspects and enhance results-based management throughout UNCTAD.

13. The representative of one regional group recommended that expenditures related to monitoring and evaluation be embedded at the start in the corresponding plans. In addition, the implementation of a meta-evaluation for UNCTAD was recommended, to consider lessons learned in previous evaluations and to assess their implementation.

14. The representatives of two regional groups proposed expanding the scope of evaluations by adding to the evaluation plan a sixth subprogramme on cross-cutting services. The representative of one regional group noted with concern that adding additional tasks might be detrimental, given current budgetary constraints. However, if member States contributed additional funding, this issue could be resolved.

15. The secretariat noted that UNCTAD was implementing a mandatory revised mechanism for the follow-up of evaluation recommendations, and that programme managers were required to submit a corresponding follow-up plan. In addition, the secretariat emphasized the importance of in-depth programme evaluations for complete coverage of the UNCTAD programme of work, given the recognition by the Joint Inspection Unit and Office of Internal Oversight Services of evaluations as an excellent practice. As part of the pilot results-based management phase, all projects were required to include a monitoring and evaluation plan, with a recommended evaluation budget of 2 to 3 per cent of a project's total budget. The Evaluation and Monitoring Unit was currently developing a meta-analysis of evaluations conducted over the past five years, and reviewing the evaluation policy of 2011.

C. Informal meetings

16. The Working Party pursued its deliberations in an informal setting.

D. Action by the Working Party

1. Draft decision for consideration by the Trade and Development Board: Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing (Agenda item 3)

17. The Working Party agreed upon a draft decision on the review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing, which would be presented to the sixty-fourth session of the Trade and Development Board, to be held from 11 to 22 September 2017 (see annex I).

2. Agreed conclusions: Evaluation of UNCTAD activities (Agenda item 4)

18. The Working Party prepared agreed conclusions (see chapter I) on the evaluation of UNCTAD activities.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

19. At the opening plenary meeting, on 4 September 2017, the Working Party elected Mr. Taavo Lumiste (Estonia) as its Chair and Mr. Sami Nagga (Tunisia) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

20. At the same meeting, the Working Party adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WP/284 and TD/B/WP/284/Corr.1). The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing
4. Evaluation of UNCTAD activities:
 - (a) Evaluation of UNCTAD activities: Overview
 - (b) External evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 4: Technology and logistics
5. Provisional agenda for the seventy-sixth session of the Working Party
6. Other business
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

C. Provisional agenda for the seventy-sixth session of the Working Party

(Agenda item 5)

21. At its closing plenary meeting, on 6 September 2017, the Working Party approved the provisional agenda for its seventy-sixth session (see annex II).

D. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

(Agenda item 7)

22. At the same meeting, the Working Party authorized the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur to finalize the report on its seventy-fifth session.

Annex I

Draft decision for consideration by the Trade and Development Board

Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing

(Agenda item 3)

The Trade and Development Board

1. *Reiterates* the relevance of the technical cooperation pillar of UNCTAD, as reaffirmed in the Nairobi Maafikiano, in contributing to inclusive development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing;
3. *Notes with appreciation* the tools provided by UNCTAD and recognizes the efforts made by the secretariat, such as the database of formal requests for technical assistance received from member States, while noting that more work needs to be done in order to render this an effective tool, in consultation with member States, especially regarding the inclusion of details of the proposals; and the UNCTAD Toolbox, which provides beneficiaries and donors with a comprehensive overview of the main products of UNCTAD;
4. *Appreciates* the implementation of results-based management by the secretariat in UNCTAD technical cooperation in line with United Nations guidelines;
5. *Encourages* the secretariat to continue its efforts to strengthen interdivisional and inter-agency cooperation for increased coherence and impact when delivering technical assistance;
6. *Also appreciates* the efforts to improve the quality of technical cooperation activities carried out by the secretariat in cooperation with beneficiaries, development partners and other international organizations, and encourages the secretariat to enhance the design, management and evaluation of technical cooperation activities in order to maximize the development impact;
7. *Encourages* UNCTAD to play a more significant role in the United Nations system in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, including through better participation in the “Delivering as One” process;
8. *Takes note* of the increased level of contributions from developing countries to UNCTAD trust funds, mainly to cover projects in their own countries;
9. *Expresses concern* about the low level of funding from some traditional sources to UNCTAD technical cooperation, resulting in a shortfall and unpredictability in the funding necessary to meet the increasing demand;
10. *Encourages* developed countries and development partners in a position to do so to make multi-year contributions to UNCTAD technical cooperation, in order to increase predictability in the planning and implementation of technical assistance programmes, and to enable the secretariat to meet demands for technical assistance;

11. *Takes note* that the allocation of non-earmarked funds for technical cooperation should encompass the totality of technical cooperation products offered by UNCTAD;
12. *Takes note* of the efforts made by the secretariat to address the funding gap, including by expediting work on the new funding mechanism in consultation with member States;
13. *Encourages* the secretariat to pursue its efforts to seek new funding partnerships, including through the pooled funding mechanisms in support of the UNCTAD-led United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity and other innovative mechanisms such as blended finance and public–private partnerships.

Annex II

Provisional agenda for the seventy-sixth session of the Working Party

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Status report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019
4. Review of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2020–2021
5. Provisional agenda for the seventy-seventh session of the Working Party
6. Other business
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

Annex III

Attendance¹

1. Representatives of the following States members of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget attended the session:

Austria	Iraq
Brazil	Japan
Canada	Kenya
China	Nepal
Estonia	Tunisia
Ethiopia	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	

2. Representatives of the following States members of UNCTAD but not members of the Working Party attended the session:

Algeria	Pakistan
Angola	Peru
Barbados	Philippines
Bhutan	Poland
Chile	Senegal
Colombia	Somalia
Djibouti	Spain
Finland	Sudan
Haiti	Uganda
India	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Jamaica	United Republic of Tanzania
Kuwait	Yemen
Netherlands	

3. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organization attended the session:

European Union

4. Representatives of the following United Nations organ, body or programme attended the session:

International Trade Centre

¹ This attendance list contains registered participants. For the list of participants, see TD/B/WP(75)/INF.1.