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Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars

Progress report on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to cross- divisional capacity-building

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Executive summary

This report provides information on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to the areas of work covered by paragraph 162 on cross-divisional capacity-building programmes. In particular, it focuses on UNCTAD work in training and building capacities for trade practitioners in trade, investment and development, and training for policymakers in the integrated treatment of trade, investment, finance, technology and development. The report places particular emphasis on the sharing of knowledge and the strengthening of local capacities. More detailed information can be found in the *DTL Activity Report 2011*.

Introduction

1. In 2011 the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch has been actively implementing two main cross-divisional programmes: the course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and TrainForTrade. The activities reported below cover cross-divisional capacity-building programmes in accordance with paragraph 162 of the Accra Accord, which states: “UNCTAD should enhance its assistance in cross-divisional capacity-building programmes, including training for policymakers on the integrated treatment of the trade, investment, finance, technology and development issues referred to in paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action, which must ensure wide and inclusive participation of developing countries. It should also continue to support the development of local teaching and research capacities in member countries’ academic institutions through the Virtual Institute, and foster training and capacity-building aimed at trade practitioners in order to assist member countries in developing a sustainable local capacity in trade, investment and development issues through TrainForTrade. UNCTAD should also continue to use these programmes to strengthen the synergies between its research and capacity-building activities.”

2. The course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda is a priority training activity for UNCTAD. It is delivered in two forms: three-week regional courses and short (half-day) courses for diplomats in Geneva. The course gives government officials a comprehensive overview of how economic factors are related to one another, how they can positively impact on the economic and social development of their countries, and how appropriate policies in these areas can bring gains from the globalized economy. The programme is designed and delivered by resource persons from UNCTAD, United Nations regional commissions and host countries.

3. The TrainForTrade programme focuses on developing and strengthening human resources and institutional capacities in developing countries and economies in transition, issues related to international trade, trade-related services, investment and port management. This is done by:

- (a) Implementing different training courses and activities;
- (b) Supporting training institutions on trade-related issues at national and international levels;
- (c) Promoting trade and investment policies for dynamic, equitable and sustainable development.

4. The TrainForTrade programme is continuously developing new learning tools by exploring new technological opportunities such as e-learning and mobile learning. In many developing countries handheld devices are more accessible than personal computers; hence mobile learning can provide more accessibility to e-learning courses compared to using a personal computer. The TrainForTrade programme combines face-to-face activities with distance-learning courses. Experience shows that the quality of face-to-face seminars increases (in terms of trainees’ participation and learning results) when trainees have first been introduced to the relevant subject matter through an e-learning course. Furthermore, using information and communication technology as a tool for knowledge-sharing can increase the number of beneficiaries while reducing the cost. The TrainForTrade programme that uses Moodle, a free and open-source learning management system, based on a Linux platform in order to facilitate the sharing of information and technology in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

5. The Virtual Institute has been transferred from subprogramme four to subprogramme one. Reporting on the Virtual Institute will not appear in this segment.

I. Activities of key issues on the international economic agenda

6. In 2011, the course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda was organized in Medellin, Colombia, for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (August 2011); in Singapore for Asia-Pacific countries (November–December 2011); and in Serbia for countries with economies in transition (July 2012), for a total of 70 participants from 42 countries. The course dealt with the developmental aspects of trading and financial systems, foreign direct investment and enterprise development, technology and the knowledge economy, international transport and trade facilitation, and multilateral and regional trade agreements. The regional course for Africa, scheduled for January–February 2011 in Cairo, had to be postponed due to events in Egypt. The course will be delivered in August/September 2012 in Rabat. Furthermore, a course will be organized in Oman in November 2012 for Arab countries.

7. In 2011, the Advisory Body approved as multi-year venues for the regional courses for African and Western Asia the offers of Mauritius (in 2013, 2015 and 2017) and Oman (2012, 2014 and 2016). The secretariat is making efforts to identify a multi-year venue for countries with economies in transition.

8. Six short courses for Geneva-based diplomats were offered in the autumn and spring sessions of 2011–2012, in cooperation with relevant UNCTAD divisions. Around 200 delegates from permanent missions of developing, transition and developed countries participated in the sessions in the autumn and spring of 2011–2012. A similar number of short courses are planned for 2012–2013.

II. Activities of TrainForTrade

9. In 2011, TrainForTrade delivered 16 courses and workshops (face-to-face and e-learning), benefiting 890 private and public sector employees (292 of whom were women) from 37 developing countries, including 10 least developed countries. It also conducted four Training of Trainers courses for 94 local instructors (including 14 women) from Africa, Asia and Latin America, who in turn delivered local courses. Two hundred and sixty-seven trainees (125 were women) were trained by local trainers around the world in 2011 in, for instance, Angola, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Maldives, Peru, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

10. In December 2011, TrainForTrade completed its project in Angola, which began in 2007. The overall goal of the programme was to facilitate adequate changes in the policy orientation related to international trade, investment and services, and to contribute to economic growth and sustainable development in Angola. Twenty-one workshops were implemented in six different trade-related fields: port management, sustainable tourism, climate change and the carbon market, consumer protection, international investment and productive capacities. As a result, more than 700 government officials and managers from the public and private sectors were trained. The TrainForTrade project also produced several United Nations publications in collaboration with international and national experts, including *The Legal Framework for Private Investment in Angola* and *Sustainable Tourism Perspectives in Angola: the Region of Benguela*. TrainForTrade facilitated the drafting of regulations for the Angola consumer protection law. Moreover, TrainForTrade assisted the

Government of Angola in developing a nationally owned training and capacity-building framework in the field of international trade and investment.

11. TrainForTrade successfully collaborated with the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) for the delivery of a distance-learning course, funded by Spain, on legal aspects of electronic commerce. In 2011, 192 participants from 17 members of SELA participated in the course. The course was highly successful and a follow-up face-to-face workshop at the regional level was organized in Paraguay in February 2012. The outcome of the discussions and exchanges of experiences strengthened knowledge of the topic in the region.

12. Furthermore, a distance-learning course on legal aspects of electronic commerce was delivered in Kenya and Rwanda. In order to expand the delivery of the course, and hence the number of beneficiaries, TrainForTrade organized a regional training of technical tutors in Kenya in 2012. The tutors were trained to manage e-learning delivery to take place later in 2012 in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

13. The Secretary General of SELA contributed as a panellist to the special event on information and communication technology for knowledge sharing at the thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIII) in Doha in April 2012. The special event encouraged UNCTAD to pursue activities aimed at enhancing the training capacities of developing and transition countries in the field of trade and development by using new technological solutions, such as e-learning, mobile learning and cloud learning.

14. The eighth Advisory Group on Strengthening Training Capacity and Human Resource Development was arranged in October 2011. The meeting focused on e-learning, best practices and field experience. Experts from UNCTAD, international organizations and universities participated in the meeting and stressed the importance of the use by UNCTAD of information and communication technology as a tool to make training materials more accessible. The experts advised the TrainForTrade programme to take advantage of social media for communication and knowledge sharing during the training process.

15. TrainForTrade is recognized as a key player in developing distance learning tools by Geneva-based international organizations. TrainForTrade pursued its cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in e-learning activities (five online courses) in order to share experiences and strengthen the skills of the two entities in this area. TrainForTrade has developed and services a dedicated platform for the Staff Development and Learning Section of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The platform is used by more than 1,000 students each trimester and efficiently provides access to course materials. TrainForTrade and the Staff Development and Learning Section are also collaborating on developing and implementing e-learning courses.

16. In 2011, the TrainForTrade programme continued its capacity-developing activities in the sustainable tourism sector. As part of the TrainForTrade programme in Angola, two workshops focused on developing national training capacity for tourism were held in 2011 in two provinces. Local instructors, who were former TrainForTrade students, delivered the workshops. This marked a definitive step towards transferring project ownership to the Angolan counterpart.

17. A national study on sustainable tourism was prepared in 2011 with a particular focus on the province of Benguela. The study, drafted by a national expert on tourism (a former TrainForTrade participant) in collaboration with an international consultant, provided four innovative ideas for sustainable tourism projects. Furthermore, a study tour was undertaken by an Angolan delegation to Mozambique which resulted in three project proposals on sustainably improving the organization of the tourism sector in Angola.

18. TrainForTrade continued to play an active role in the UNCTAD Task Force on Sustainable Tourism for Development. It participated in the first workshop of the United Nations Steering Committee on Tourism for Development, organized in October 2011 in Geneva. Several countries have expressed their interest in working with TrainForTrade and project proposals on sustainable tourism are now in discussion.

19. In 2011, the TrainForTrade Port Training Programme also had an active year. The Port Training Programme operates through four language-based networks (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish) in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It brings together public, private and international entities to share expertise, best practices and strengthen human resource development. The Modern Port Management course targets middle managers and consists of 240 hours of instruction which are divided into eight modules and delivered over a two-year period. Participants must successfully complete each module and defend a final thesis to qualify for the UNCTAD Certificate in Modern Port Management. The Port Training Programme trained 361 local participants and 75 trainers from 19 countries in 2011. The Port Training Programme is a solid example of capacity-building, with successful development of the capacities of local trainers to train their staff. In 2011, 1,680 hours of course delivery were completed by local instructors trained through TrainForTrade capacity development projects.

20. For the English-speaking network, in cooperation with the Dublin Port Company and Irish Aid, TrainForTrade launched the second cycle of the Port Training Programme in four pilot countries and in a new beneficiary country, Namibia. The first four modules of the Modern Port Management course were delivered in each of the pilot countries of the network, namely, Ghana, Indonesia, Maldives and the United Republic of Tanzania. For Namibia, the successful implementation of the programme started in January 2012. Irish Aid and UNCTAD also signed an agreement on 11 November 2011 reaffirming the commitment from Ireland to finance the programme for the second cycle of 2011–2013. Finally, the Training of Trainers workshop on modules four to eight was held in Cork, Ireland, in May 2012, resulting in a larger pool of experts in local port communities.

21. The French-speaking African ports members of the TrainForTrade Port Training Programme organized new training cycles of the course for the port communities of Benin, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon and Senegal. In addition, Training of Trainers workshops were held in France (Marseille in 2011 and Nantes in 2012) for the port members of the network and the new potential port members (the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti).

22. In the Portuguese-speaking network, TrainForTrade delivered modules seven and eight of the Modern Port Management course in Angola. This brought to an end the training instruction part of the course. The participants are expected to defend their theses in 2012.

23. In the Spanish-speaking network, the second cycle of the Port Training Programme was successfully launched and delivered in Guatemala and Peru in 2011. Participants from Peru and Guatemala will present their theses at the end of the programme cycle in 2012. National instructors from both countries, trained by TrainForTrade, were in charge of the delivery of the course, with support of experts from the Spanish Port Authorities of Valencia and Gijón. In 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding between UNCTAD and Puertos del Estado, a specialized agency that coordinates the port authorities in the Spanish port system, was signed. The Memorandum strengthens the spirit of previous Memorandums of Understanding signed in 2007 with the Port Authorities of Valencia and Gijón and represents a further step in cooperation between UNCTAD and Spanish port authorities.