



Committee for Development Policy

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Development Policy and Analysis Division

Capacity building experiences in LDCs - Building on existing mechanisms and harnessing innovative ideas

Wednesday, 6 April 2016, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Concept Note for Workshop II

The Committee for Development Policy (CDP) Secretariat of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) is organising a workshop on knowledge sharing for mutual learning, with a focus on its capacity development experiences in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The workshop is part of the DCF Belgium High-level Symposium on “Rethinking development cooperation for the SDGs: country- level perspectives and lessons”, to be held in Brussels from 6-8 April 2016.

Objective

To share knowledge acquired through the implementation of capacity building projects in LDCs by: (i) presenting an overview of approaches taken in building up multi-stakeholder partnerships for project implementation; (ii) presenting project outcomes and results and reviewing lessons learned in delivering concrete results; and (iii) providing recommendations for the future operational models for development cooperation in LDCs.

Background

The category of LDCs was introduced in 1971 to enable such countries to benefit from the special international support measures (ISMs) adopted by the international development community. These benefits fall into three main areas: (a) official development assistance (including development financing and technical cooperation); (b) preferential market access and other special treatment regarding World Trade Organization-related obligations; and (c) other forms of support.

Despite these special support measures, the list of LDCs remains long; only a few countries have graduated from the category. The lack of success in development is due to a multitude of factors, including countries' inability to take sufficient advantage of the specific benefits associated with LDC status. This inability exists mostly because LDCs lack knowledge about the availability of such measures and, when aware of the measures, they face a series of constraints in accessing and making use of those measures.

In this context, since 2008 the CDP Secretariat in UNDESA has undertaken a wide range of activities to strengthen the capacity of LDCs in gaining access to and making effective use of the advantages associated with LDC status. Activities have focussed on: i) assembling information available on LDC international support measures in one single, web-based platform - the LDC Portal (www.un.org/lcdportal); ii) improving these countries' capacity to access information on the

benefits, and iii) enabling LDCs to take advantage of such benefits by addressing institutional constraints. Among those, communication failures and poor coordination among and within the various stakeholders in the public and private sector are important barriers to effectively using international support measures, particularly those related to international trade.

One of the main recommendations emanating from the CDP Secretariat's recent capacity building activities is the need for a notification system to enhance communication between public and private sector stakeholders in LDCs on changes in technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures of current (and potential) trading partners. In response to this need, DESA is developing the so-called "ePing notification system" (see pilot version at www.epingalert.org). The system will contribute to having better informed stakeholders who can request assistance to address challenges related to product standards and trade. Recently, the reach of the e-Ping notification system has expanded past the four LDC pilot countries with which the CDP Secretariat has been working, with the system being tested and employed in a few other developing as well as developed countries.

The DCF Belgium High-level Symposium will look to demonstrate how development cooperation actors embrace the new reality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, with a particular focus on country-level perspectives. The Symposium will focus on: i) making development cooperation a better fit for implementing the 2030 Agenda in LDCs and vulnerable contexts; and ii) adapting development cooperation institutions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Accessing and making effective use of the special measures made available for LDCs can facilitate the implementation of those agendas and meeting sustainable development goals in these countries. Building up on existing expertise, knowledge and initiatives, as well as creating innovative approaches to common problems, development partners working together with LDCs can create and augment important synergies to make the achievement of those goals a reality.

Brief description of activities

In line with the Symposium themes, an overview of the rationale for capacity building activities in LDCs will be provided. The presentation will highlight approaches, results achieved and impediments encountered. It will also summarize the main lessons learned in project implementation, in particular in enhancing collaboration between and among development partners and pilot countries, as well as in engaging private sector actors in adding value to project outcomes. Discussions will be enriched with feedback from participants of some of the pilot countries participating in recent capacity building activities.

Moderator:

- **Mr. James Mackie**, Senior Advisor, European Centre for Development Policy Management

Presenter:

- **Ana Luiza Cortez**, Chief, Committee for Development Policy Secretariat, United Nations Department of International and Economic Affairs

Discussants:

- **Mr. Navaraj Dhakal**, Under Secretary Ministry of Commerce and Supplies, Nepal
- **Mr. Abdoulie Jammeh**, Director of Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, Banjul, The Gambia
- **Mr. George Opiyo**, Secretary National TBT/SPS Committee, Uganda National Bureau of Standards

Useful references:

UN DESA, CDP (2015); Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures, Second Edition, United Nations Sales publication No. E.15.II.A.1 (available at http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_ldcs_handbook.shtml)

Cortez, Ana Luiza; Ian Kinniburgh and Roland Mollerus (2014); Accelerating development in LDCs through international support measures: findings from case studies; CDP Background Paper Series No. 22 (available at http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_background_papers/bp2014_22.pdf)

CDP Secretariat (2012) Survey on International Support Measures specific to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) related to WTO Provision and Preferential Market Access Responses by LDCs. Summary and Analysis (available at <http://esango.un.org/ldcportal/documents/10179/15001/Summary%20%26%20Analysis%20LDCs.pdf?version=1.1&t=1349984705000>)

Contact:

CDP Secretariat, UNDESA, cdp@un.org.
DCF Team, UNDESA, dcf@un.org.