

Civil society interventions on Technology, Innovation and Capacity Building

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First, we question the inclusion of a chapter on technology, innovation and capacity-building in this draft, given there has been no equivalent chapter in previous FfD outcome documents. Given that the Rio process is mandated to consider issues of technology transfer and capacity-building, we believe that this issue should be considered within the post-2015 development process, which brings the relevant expertise and mandate, and would allow more time in this process to deliberate on core FfD concerns. Moreover, our efforts should be focused on operationalizing the Technology Facilitation Mechanism to help ensure that technology transfer serves the needs of developing countries and address inequality among countries.

That said, if we proceed with these issues in this forum, we make the following suggestions:

We question the title of the section. The conspicuous absence in the title of the phrase “Technology Transfer” casts doubts on the core objective of the Technology section of the document. If this section will be included in the FfD outcome document, it has to be clear in all respects that technology is a means to promote development in developing countries and in bridging the gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots”.

On the whole, the section does not acknowledge the critical importance of indigenous knowledge and practices, including indigenous agricultural knowledge, which are essential to attaining sustainable development and has been a proven foundation for promoting community resilience, adaptation to and mitigation of development challenges such as climate change.

Paragraph 103 puts forward many of the benefits that accrue from technology, innovation and capacity building. The potentials of technology to address inequality and bridge the gap between the rich and poor should be highlighted to clearly set the role of technology in attaining sustainable development. Connecting all people to the Internet would be beneficial to society. We suggest mentioning that the development of an Online Global Platform for the worldwide sharing of Low Tech Solutions, Information, Goods, Services, and Best Practices would enable all to contribute to the effort to finance sustainable development, implement the SDGs and fulfill all other international agreements on sustainable development.

We propose that Internet access be considered a human right, aiming toward universal access to the State-incentivized hardware backbone of the digital roadway, creating the possibility for further innovation, collaboration, and development in the dynamic software and information industries, stimulating higher value yield.

In relation to **Paragraph 104**: Policies and enabling framework should not be limited to supporting innovations from the formal sector but should equally recognize, nurture and promote indigenous and traditional technologies and knowledge systems that are developed, shared and exchanged by communities over generations. Technology transfer should likewise include indigenous and traditional technologies that are generated and adapted by communities to respond to local needs and conditions. International and national regulatory frameworks on innovations must require inclusive and transparent evaluation of potential social, economic, health and environmental consequences of new technologies, and ensure that technologies that endanger people and the planet are prohibited.

We suggest adding that the development and usage of geographical information systems for data collection and accurate planning at all levels of government, along with focusing on achieving universal access to the internet, could help us to spur sustainable and inclusive growth and increase access to basic services at reduced costs as called for in this paragraph.

Paragraph 105 is heavily prescriptive in favouring the role of the private sector and undermining domestic policy space and priorities. For example, removing “barriers to entrepreneurship” can be understood as requiring liberalization of investment, precisely the opposite of what may be needed to ensure foreign investors share technology. Likewise, references to “open, non-discriminatory and transparent” regulatory environments are not necessary to foster cooperation among different stakeholders in this context. Women, indigenous peoples and local communities as inventors and entrepreneurs must be equally recognized on par with other actors.

In **Paragraph 107**, we believe that it is necessary to explicitly refer to intellectual property rights (IPR) regimes that are appropriate, suitable to a country’s circumstances and development objectives, and genuinely promote technology transfer and domestic innovations. It should be explicitly stated that IPR should not become a barrier to a country’s achievement of technological and industrialization development objectives.

In **Paragraph 108**, we question the priority given to public-private partnerships without acknowledging its many existing challenges and known risks related to it. PPPs also do not have a clear track record in enhancing or facilitating technology development and diffusion. International cooperation and collaboration on innovation and scientific research should be explicitly geared towards promoting sustainable development and addressing inequality.

In **Paragraph 109**, we would prefer a reference to the World Health Organisation Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property, given the WHO is a universal agency, over GAVI, which does not have a primary focus of supporting R&D and innovation. Partnerships of the CGIAR must have farmers and rural communities at their core, not just as subjects of agricultural research but as active partners whose traditional knowledge systems, indigenous practices and immense agricultural genetic resources have served as the basis of researches and technologies developed by the formal sector.