UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries
In a nutshell

Who we are

The call for a mechanism to close the science, technology and innovation (STI) gap between least developed countries (LDCs) and the rest of the world was first raised during the 4th UN Conference on LDCs held in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2011. The Conference outcome document, the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs for the decade 2011-2020, articulated the need for paying greater attention to the development of STI in LDCs, including through the transfer of technology and the strengthening of intellectual property rights. To reinforce this conference decision, the international community incorporated the establishment of a Technology Bank for LDCs as one of the targets (**Target 17.8**) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals agreed upon in 2015. A year later, the General Assembly established the **United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries** as a subsidiary organ of the Assembly. The establishment of the Technology Bank marked the first and only target of the 2030 Agenda to be fulfilled well before 2030. The Technology Bank became operational in 2018 and has been supporting the world's 46 LDCs, including graduated countries for up to five years after graduation from the LDC category. More recently, the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs for the decade 2021-2030 strengthened the mandate of the Technology Bank by assigning the Bank the role of a **focal point for LDCs on STI-related issues**.

Our guiding principles

Demand-driven and responsive to LDCs' STI needs
The activities of the UN Technology Bank are guided by the needs and priorities of the LDCs.

Act with the UN system
The Technology Bank closely collaborates with the UN Resident Coordinator system and various UN entities to leverage STI as a driver of LDCs' growth and structural transformation.

Leveraging partnerships for impact
The Technology Bank has a commitment to building and leveraging networks and partnerships in support of STI deployment and development in LDCs.

Agile and strategic
The UN Technology Bank is agile, adaptable, and responsive to new challenges and opportunities.

From transferring technology to setting the stage for implementation
The Technology Bank promotes an enabling environment needed for technology transfer and to sustain local technological capability building and the development of innovative capacities.

Commitment to promoting inclusive technological development
The Technology Bank ensures that its programmes are supportive of equal opportunities in STI, including the integration of women and youth.

Our three major programme lines

Research, Analysis & Technology Needs Assessments

Enable LDCs to identify technologies required to meet their development needs, while analysing barriers and challenges hindering the acquisition, deployment and implementation of prioritized technologies

Technology Transfer & STI capacity building

Support LDCs to bridge the current technology gaps by facilitating the transfer of appropriate & affordable technology, enhance STI policymaking and develop need based STI capacities

Strategic Partnerships & Advocacy

Place LDC's STI opportunities and needs at the forefront of development programme collaboration and advocacy dialogues

Our activities in numbers   *as of August2022

Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs)

24 LDCs have either completed or are in an advanced stage of completing their Technology Needs Assessments

Industrial design education

68 scholarships for Masters in industrial design engineering were awarded to LDC students
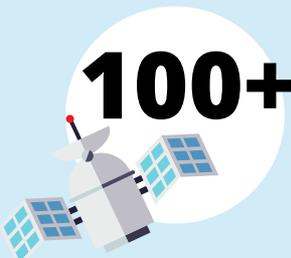
Academies of Sciences

4 Academies of Sciences were established & launched in Angola, DRC, Lesotho and Malawi & 8 other LDCs are in progress

Training on digital access to scientific & research tools

4400+ participants from LDCs accessed professional digital resources of health, agriculture, environment, innovation or global justice
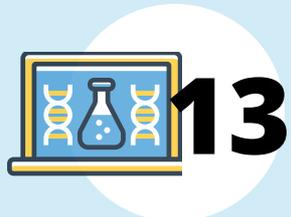
Satellite tech workshops

100+ LDC policymakers and experts attended the workshop on satellite data analysis for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management
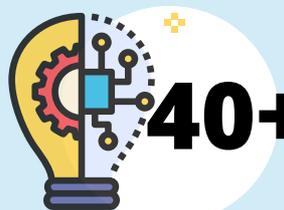
SDG impact accelerator

43 startups were supported in Bangladesh and Uganda and 5 start-ups are implementing their technologies

Biotechnology

13 fellowships awarded to LDC researchers

Knowledge products

40+ knowledge sharing pieces including reports, interviews, blogposts, campaigns and media coverage

Our programme examples

Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs)

The TNAs serve as the foundation for LDCs to:
- **identify** their specific technological needs in priority sectors
- **improve** national and regional policy and technological coordination
- **mobilize** support to enhance innovation capacities
- **mobilize** resources towards country-specific STI priorities

The TNA process results in a practical **Technology Implementation Plan** (TIP), which is tailored to each country and serves as a basis for the country's technological development initiatives in line with its national development goals and the SDGs. The TIPs are powerful tools aimed at supporting a demand-driven approach to innovation and technology transfer. To date, 10 TNAs have been completed: **Bhutan, Cambodia, Guinea, Lesotho, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Timor Leste and Uganda**. Six TNAs are ongoing: **Bangladesh, Benin, Djibouti, Kiribati, Lao PDR and Senegal**. The TNAs are conducted in collaboration with UN agencies, multilateral organizations, intergovernmental organizations and the private sector including **UNESCO, EIF and the Commonwealth Secretariat**.

Hear, Listen and Speak Programme: transfer of hearing care technology to Bhutan and Malawi

The Technology Bank partnered with the **Kingdom of Bhutan, Medtronic Labs and MED-EL on strengthening the ear and hearing care for all Bhutanese children**. This three-year project from 2021 to 2024 aligns with Bhutan's national policies and is centered around the needs of children aged 0–14, by supporting the interventions required to address hearing loss and preventive ear disorders across the whole continuum of care. The Technology Bank is leading the project coordination and management, as well as the technical activities related to technology, knowledge transfer and technical training. Learning from the Bhutan experience, particularly the effective private-public partnership model, the Technology Bank intends to expand the programme to Malawi.
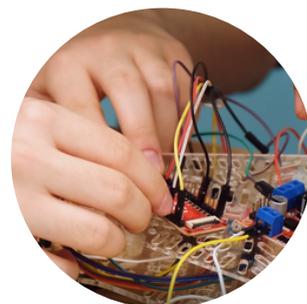
International Design Education Program: Providing scholarships for LDC students to study industrial design

In partnership with the **World Eco-Design Conference** (WEDC) and **International School of Design at Zhejiang University** in Ningbo, China, the Technology Bank is **supporting LDCs to enhance their industrial design capacity** over a six-year period. A total of 68 students from LDCs (36 in 2021 and 32 in 2022) were awarded scholarships to pursue industrial design engineering studies. The project will also organize dedicated training and workshops to foster technical exchanges between eco-design experts. The 2023 scholarship selection process will start in February 2023. The program will also extend to collaborations between academic institutions in China and in LDCs.

Technology Makers Lab: Enhancing STI skills for young people piloting in Niger

The Technology Bank, in collaboration with the **National Agency for the Information Society** (ANSI) of the Presidential Office of Niger, the **Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Türkiye**, **TUBITAK** and **TIKA**, is in the process of implementing the pilot Technology Makers Lab in Niger. The project is designed for **students at the high school level to gain core digital and other STI-related knowledge and skills, such as entrepreneurship, critical thinking and teamwork**. In addition to the mainstream education, students will acquire basic technological competencies, such as design & production, robotics, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, mobile application development and coding. The project will be launched in the last quarter of 2022 and aims to train approximately 230 students annually from the age of 13 to 18. The UNTB Technology Makers Lab will be an effective example of south-south cooperation in transferring know-how of the best practices to LDCs. The project will be expanded to 9 LDCs in the medium-term by replicating the model through partnerships with the UN entities, International Organizations and institutions active in the field of STI development.

Transfer of rammed earth dwellings technology for sustainable and affordable housing in Mozambique

Mozambique is a country periodically affected by extreme weather that caused the destruction of thousands of homes, in part due to the lack of sustainable, affordable and durable housing technologies. To address this critical issue, the **Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Water Resources of Mozambique**, **Sakarya University**, **TÜBİTAK** and **Technology Bank** joined hands to transfer rammed earth dwellings technology and build capacity for sustainable and durable housing technologies in Mozambique. The project will:

- **construct** more natural hazards-resistant dwellings by using locally available stabilized earthen as construction material
- **enhance** the scientific capacities of the relevant Governmental bodies of the Republic of Mozambique by transferring technology and know-how on building rammed earth dwellings
- **provide** the local community and volunteers with know-how and labour-skill capacity on building rammed earth dwellings
- **raise** awareness on the benefits of rammed earth for sustainable housing, including the ecological, cost-effectiveness, comfort, sustainability, durability and resistance features of the rammed earth technology

Transfer of post-harvest technology to The Gambia

Post-harvest loss is one of the key challenges faced by the market players during agricultural commodity handling, storage and management. The adoption of low-cost postharvest technologies will support small-scale farmers to reduce losses, improve the quality and quantity of their commodities through value addition, increase their supply to the market, and compete favourably on the local, regional, and global value chains, and ultimately improve their livelihoods. The Technology Bank, in collaboration with **TUBITAK,** will pilot a technology transfer project in The Gambia to **improve post-harvest management of cashew nuts** and its by-products to enable producers and other value chain actors to increase their income, expand their businesses and generate jobs for themselves and others in The Gambia.

Fostering strategic partnerships and advocacy for LDC's STI development

The Technology Bank partner with the Member States, UN system, research institutions, foundations and the private sector to mobilise the necessary resources and networks for LDCs to fulfil their STI potential and achieve sustainable development. Some of our partnerships and advocacy examples include a partnership with the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology Solve** (MIT Solve) to advocate and support LDC innovators' participation in the social entrepreneurship incubation; a partnership with The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers to provide brainpower and technology expertise to support computing needs in LDCs. In collaboration with **Thomson Reuters Foundation**, we contributed to journalism training for over 40 journalists from the LDCs to report development needs and opportunities from the STI lens, thus enhancing advocacy for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5). Similarly, through various international fora, such as contributing to the **World Economic Forum** agenda, the Africa STI Forum in partnership with **UNESCO** and **UNECA**, as well as the **UNIDO's Ministerial Conference on LDCs**, we place LDC's STI opportunities and needs at the forefront of development programme collaboration and advocacy dialogues.

Our contact

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