Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference

Report
Least Developed Countries’ structural transformation and UNIDO’s support in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)

LDC Ministerial Conference
Vienna, November 2011

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The 2011 Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference, entitled “LDCs’ structural transformation and UNIDO’s support in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)”, was held in Vienna on 24 and 25 November 2011.

The conference introduced the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for 2012-2020 and allowed for structured deliberations on topics essential to the sustainable development of LDCs. Building on the momentum of the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV), the Ministerial Conference contributed to a roadmap for UNIDO programmes and initiatives in favor of LDCs and, in turn, to an effective implementation of the IPoA.

Thirty-eight LDCs (including South Sudan) were represented by their Ministers in charge of industry or a senior official. The conference was also attended by representatives of United Nations agencies; representatives of regional economic commissions (Africa, Asia and Pacific); representatives of financial institutions and regional development banks; representatives of the donor community; representatives of emerging countries; and representatives of the private sector operating in LDCs.

The conference was organized in three sessions over two days, each involving substantive presentations, panel discussions and Q&A sessions:

- Session 1: LDCs and the UN System Agenda—The Way Forward
- Session 2: UNIDO’s support to LDCs in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action
- Session 3: Mobilizing efficient partnerships and resources along the implementation of the IPoA
- Panel 1: Industrial Skills
- Panel 2: South-South and Triangular Cooperation
- Panel 3: Agribusiness in LDCs: realizing synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance

In concluding, the conference issued the 2011 LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action, which were subsequently endorsed by the 14th Session of UNIDO’s General Conference, held in Vienna from 28 November to 2 December 2011.

This report contains an Executive Summary, the LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action as well as a comprehensive summary of each of the sessions. The annexes provide the detailed final agenda and the list of conference participants.
Background to the 2011 LDC Ministerial Conference

The 2011 LDC Ministerial Conference was the fourth in a series of conferences organized by UNIDO. In 2007, the first conference was held in Vienna and focused on the Aid for Trade (AfT) Agenda. The 2008 conference, entitled “Aid for trade: an industrial agenda for LDCs”, was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and reaffirmed the international community’s priority to address the trade and productive capacity needs of LDCs. Then, the 2009 conference, which was held in Vienna, discussed the impact of the global economic crisis on LDCs’ productive capacities and trade prospects. It also served as the first preparatory meeting for the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV).

In May 2011, LDC-IV convened over 7,000 participants – Heads of State and government, representatives from international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector – in Istanbul, Turkey. The objectives of the conference were to assess the Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) adopted in 2001 at the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-III), and to agree on new measures and strategies for the sustainable development of LDCs into the next decade. LDC-IV resulted in the adoption of a Political Declaration and of a comprehensive, action-oriented Istanbul Programme of Action for 2011-2020 (IPoA).

The Istanbul Declaration recognizes that not all objectives and goals set in the BPoA have been fully achieved. Moreover, LDCs remain marginalized in the world economy and continue to suffer from extreme poverty, inequality and structural weaknesses. Indeed, in the past three decades, only three countries have graduated out of the least developed category: Botswana, Cape Verde and the Maldives.

The IPoA provides a UN roadmap in support of LDCs’ sustainable development and places a strong focus on their structural transformation through increased productive capacity. It aims to enable half of the countries to graduate out of their LDC status by 2020; concurrently, it also served as a basis for the 2011 LDC Ministerial Conference.
Executive Summary

The LDC Ministerial Conference
took place in Vienna on 24 and 25 November 2011

This was the fourth in a series of conferences organized by UNIDO and the first since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA).

The fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) was held from 9 to 13 May 2011, in Istanbul, Turkey, and was crucial for the advancement of LDCs. The IPoA, which arose from LDC-IV, provides a comprehensive roadmap in support of LDCs’ economic development. It sets the contours of the priority needs for LDCs to guide the structural transformation of their economies for the next decade, ultimately aiming for half of the LDCs to graduate from their current status by 2020. It lists eight development priorities and emphasizes the strengthening of LDCs’ productive capacities, agribusiness and agro-industries, private sector initiatives, trade, investment, technology, energy and South-South cooperation. These development areas also constitute the core elements of UNIDO interventions in LDCs.

The theme of the 2011 Ministerial Conference was “LDCs’ structural transformation and UNIDO’s support in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)”. The conference introduced the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for 2012-2020 – a holistic approach to the development efforts of LDCs and to the effective implementation of the IPoA, with a strong focus on improving industrial productive capacities – and allowed for valuable deliberations amongst the panels of experts and with the participants.

The conference opened with welcoming statements, followed by three sessions, each comprised of expert presentations, panel discussions and Q&A sessions with the floor. In Session 1, the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) presented the roadmap for the implementation of the IPoA and discussed the central measures required from the various UN agencies to further advance the IPoA objectives. Session 2 discussed UNIDO’s LDC Operational Strategy for 2012-2020. Ministers, experts and other stakeholders were invited to review and provide comments on the Strategy. Session 3 explored the partnerships and resources needed for an effective implementation of the IPoA through three separate panels: i) Industrial skills; ii) South-South and Triangular Cooperation; and iii) Agribusiness in LDCs: Realizing synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance. The conference ended with the adoption of the 2011 LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action.

The main body of this report contains comprehensive details of the individual sessions. The following is a summary of the main issues raised during each session.

UN-OHRLLS Roadmap for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the IPoA

To facilitate the sustained commitment and involvement of all international partners towards the IPoA goals, the UN-OHRLLS presented an integrated multi-level approach: a roadmap for the implementation, follow-up, monitoring and review of the IPoA at the national, regional and global levels, which also
includes issue-specific working groups and task forces. Particular emphasis was placed on the national ownership and leadership by LDCs of their own development process. In keeping with the principle of mutual accountability, effective implementation requires the mainstreaming of IPoA provisions into LDCs’ national development policies and strategies, as well as into the aid, trade, and development strategies of development partners. The active engagement of civil society, private sector and parliaments in the implementation and follow-up process is also essential.

LDCs’ structural transformation: Productive capacity and diversification

Increasing productive capacity is at the core of both the IPoA and the UNIDO Operational Strategy for LDCs. A weak productive sector and lack of economic diversification have led to a reliance on static engines of growth, constraints to efficient production and increased vulnerability to economic shocks. LDCs need to focus on dynamic value-added sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and services, while diversifying their local productive and export capabilities.

LDCs are faced with significant challenges relating to infrastructure, science, technology and innovation, energy and private sector development. A lack of adequate physical infrastructure impedes productive capacity, particularly in areas of transport, institutional capacity, information and communication technology (ICT), water and electricity. LDCs also lag behind in science, technology and innovation, which represent key drivers of their structural transformation. Facilitating the availability of, and access to energy for productive use, including renewable energy, is equally important to enhancing LDCs’ productive capacities. Furthermore, the private sector – a valuable avenue for increased investment, trade, employment and innovation – could serve as an engine of growth but remains largely underdeveloped in LDCs.

Trade is fundamental for the sustainable economic development and growth of LDCs. However, the share of manufacturing, which has been the driving force of economic development in many middle-income countries, has scarcely increased in LDCs. A shift from primary commodities production to an increased manufacturing of products will generate employment and improve LDCs’ competitiveness and integration into the global economy. Nonetheless, development partners need to work together towards creating favorable market access conditions, namely through the timely implementation of duty-free quota-free (DFQF) market access for products originating in LDCs.

The UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for 2012-2020

The LDC Strategy and Operational Plan reflect, within the priorities of the IPoA, UNIDO’s sustainable industrial development agenda for LDCs into the next decade. UNIDO’s overarching goal is to enable LDCs to promote sustainable sources of income and employment through productive capacities – leading to inclusive growth, development and graduation from their current status. The strategy contains three main objectives: converting commodities into products, empowering rural communities in the development process, and thinking globally and acting regionally for value chain development across borders.

LDCs struggle with commodity dependence, with a significant number of countries relying primarily on agriculture or on the extraction of a few natural resources and primary products for export. The UNIDO Strategy aims to convert LDCs’ resource-based comparative advantages into competitiveness through value-addition to primary commodities. It is equally important to focus on enhancing the competitiveness of promising internationally and regionally tradable products.

Manufacturing is a dynamic force for employment and wealth generation. Rapid economic growth tends to be reflected in burgeoning manufacturing sectors. LDCs have a vast human capital potential and can therefore prosper from exporting labor-intensive products.

While encouraging economic growth, it is imperative to empower vulnerable communities in the development process, particularly in rural areas. In view of the significance of agribusiness and agro-industries for LDCs, the UNIDO Strategy puts emphasis on
enhancing agricultural productivity as well as on using modern methods and tools to reduce post-harvest losses.

LDC integration with more developed countries in their respective regions is vital for industrial upgrading and capacity development; hence, the need to think globally and act regionally. Accordingly, the UNIDO Strategy encompasses interventions aimed at strengthening the regional industrial complementarities of LDCs.

Skills development

Technical and vocational training is essential for the economic and industrial development of LDCs. In order to become competitive and to successfully integrate global value chains, LDCs need a higher-skilled workforce.

Greater symbiosis between education and industry sectors is required. Skills development strategies need to be adapted to current industry needs and to provide demand-driven training for employability and productivity. Industry-led skills development should be mainstreamed into LDCs’ national education systems, alongside the establishment of national qualification frameworks (NQFs). Ensuring access to and quality of education and training for populations in rural areas, especially for youth and women, deserves particular attention.

The quality of skills training in LDCs remains restrained by inadequate basic infrastructure as well as outdated teaching materials and techniques. Securing additional financial resources for skills development is crucial. LDCs need to diversify their funding sources, for instance through public-private partnerships (PPPs) for capacity-building.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

South-South and triangular cooperation contributes to the implementation of the IPoA in areas such as human and productive capacity-building, technical assistance and exchange of best practices. By promoting economic and technical collaboration among developing countries, it presents southern solutions to southern challenges and acts as an important complement to North-South cooperation.

When systematically mobilized and shared, the wealth of knowledge and capacity in the South can play a fundamental role in the sustainable development of LDCs. UNDP’s Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU/SSC) provides a multilateral support architecture to promote, coordinate and support South-South and triangular cooperation, including the development of LDCs.

UNIDO has established South-South Industrial Cooperation Centers (UCSSIC) in China and India to facilitate the transfer and diffusion of appropriate technologies and the replication of best practices; to promote training and skills development in areas of industrial development, trade and investment; and to help design practical and innovative projects in areas such as youth entrepreneurship development.

Increases in the volume of South-South trade, investment, transfer of technology and enterprise-level interactions reveal a new dynamism in the South. China and Turkey have also made notable contributions to the South-South and triangular cooperation framework in terms of economic and technical assistance to LDCs. Nevertheless, LDCs require a more formalized framework for cooperation among themselves.

Agribusiness and agro-industries

The promotion of the agricultural sector in LDCs is a key driver for economic diversification and structural change. However, resource mobilization for agribusiness development remains challenging, leading to a “missing middle” and a “rural finance gap” in LDCs. In order to better utilize investment and improve production factors – such as land, labor and technology – a coordinated mobilization of resources is required. A Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) was recommended as a way to materialize synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance. Its role, scope, management and impact possibilities were discussed by representatives of government, the business community, development finance institutions (DFIs), financial intermediaries from the private sector and technical assistance providers.
By converging resources at the public, private and multilateral levels and by aligning the actions and priorities of its different partners, the Accelerated Agribusiness and Agro-Industries Development Initiative (3ADI) aims to enhance the capacity, profitability and competitiveness of agribusiness and agro-industries in Africa through product value-addition.

Furthermore, partnerships with the private sector play an important role in promoting entrepreneurship, generating employment and investment, developing new technologies and enabling sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth in LDCs. In 2008, private fixed investment amounted to over three times the volume of official development assistance (ODA). A dynamic, well functioning and socially responsible private sector is vital for LDC development.

Finally, various development banks, equity and private funds were presented, namely the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Phatisia, the Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO), Hardman & Co., and Craven House Capital. They outlined their existing and potential investment opportunities for LDCs and provided an overview of their respective contributions to Africa’s agricultural sector.

LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action

The conference ended with the adoption of the UNIDO 2011 LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action, which reiterated the requirements for wealth generation, economic development and thereby structural transformation of LDCs. These include increases in productive capacity-building, employment generation, economic diversification and regional integration.

The LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action further endorsed the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for 2012-2020 and called for LDCs and their development partners to work jointly towards a timely and effective implementation of the IPoA.
The Conference opened with welcoming remarks and proceeded with the election of Officers as follows:

**Chairperson:** H.E. Mr. Lekh Raj Bhatta, Minister of Commerce and Supplies, Nepal

**Vice Chairperson/Rapporteur:** Deputy of H.E. Mr. Awad Ahmed Eljaz, Minister of Industry of Sudan, as well as the adoption of the draft agenda (see annex 1).

**Panelists:** H.E. Mr. Lekh Raj Bhatta, Minister of Commerce and Supplies, Nepal; H.E. Mr. Helmut Böck, Ambassador, Austria; H.E. Mr. Ali Aqbar Soltanineh, Chair of G77 Group, Ambassador Iran; H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, USG and High Representative, UN-OHRLLS; Mr. Yoshiteru Uramoto, Deputy to the Director-General, UNIDO

The economic, financial, food and energy crises have particularly threatened the livelihoods of the world’s most vulnerable countries. Despite their enormous human and natural resources potential, most LDCs are still far from reaching internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and remain at the bottom of the Human Development Index (HDI) rankings. The structural, economic and social transformation of the 48 LDCs - accounting for 880 million people - thus remains of significant international concern.

Fostering sustainable industrial development and enhancing the productive, technological and trading capacities of LDCs, together with providing reliable and affordable energy, are essential for the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of livelihoods. Economic growth must be combined with sustainable and inclusive development to enable LDCs to graduate to a higher development ranking among the world's countries.

**Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)**

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for LDCs, which was agreed upon during the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) that took place in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, provides a roadmap for the decade of 2011-2020 and outlines eight priority areas in support of LDCs: productive capacity; agriculture, food security and rural development; trade; commodities; human and social development; multiple crisis and emerging challenges; mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity building; and good governance at all levels. The IPoA also aims at generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, especially the youth.

**IPoA: Global partnerships**

The IPoA also calls for a renewal and strengthening of global partnerships, between donor countries, developing countries, parliaments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system, and international and regional financial institutions. As a result, the UN-OHRLLS (United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States) was mandated to mobilize and coordinate all United Nations
system organizations, along with other development partners and some member states, to ensure the sustained commitment and involvement of all international partners towards the IPoA goals. A roadmap was developed for the implementation, follow-up, monitoring and review of the IPoA at the national, regional and global levels, aiming for the graduation of at least half the number of LDCs from their current status by 2020.

IPoA: LDC ownership and leadership

Effective implementation requires the mainstreaming of IPoA provisions in LDCs’ national policies, as well as in the programmes of development partners. It remains, however, LDCs’ primary responsibility to integrate the IPoA into their national and sectoral development frameworks in order to maintain ownership and leadership of their own development.

UNIDO’s LDC Strategy and Operational Plan, 2012-2020

Against this backdrop, UNIDO devised the LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for 2012-2020, building on the organization’s current activities in support of the industrial sustainable development of LDCs. The UNIDO Strategy also contributes to the implementation of the IPoA and highlights the importance of converting commodities into products, empowering rural communities in the development process and strengthening new regional industrial complementarities.

UNIDO will play a fundamental role in providing technical assistance to LDCs; in helping them develop industrial productive capacities in line with their priorities, and in moving up the value chain and becoming more competitive in international markets.

The session closed with a video illustrating UNIDO activity in two of its Operational Strategy pillars, commodities conversion and empowerment of vulnerable communities, by means of a value-chain development project: the case of Mali’s shea butter.

“At the start of the new Millennium, we have witnessed major progress and achievements: technological innovations, high economic growth rates over years, progress in research, better education – yet the number of LDCs has almost doubled over the past 40 years, while only three have graduated.”

H.E. Mr. Helmut Böck, Ambassador, Austria

UNIDO ASSISTANCE: Mali shea butter

Mali has vast untapped potential of shea butter production. Women collecting and processing fruits of the shea (or “karité” tree) have traditionally faced many challenges: transportation, poor machinery and access/distance to water. While an annual 80,000 tonnes of shea butter are currently being produced, the potential can reach up to 250,000 tonnes per year, consequently improving the lives of many rural families.

UNIDO, together with the governments of Mali and of Luxemburg, has set up three pilot centers in the regions of Dioila, Sikasso and Segou to assist and enhance the productive capacities of women involved in shea butter production. As of February 2011, the centre in Dioila employs 20 women to process shea fruits, gathered by 2,500 women across 32 villages.

The project introduced new technology and training, significantly increasing both the quantity and quality of the product. Production has multiplied by six since the project began, each centre producing 600kg of shea butter soap per day. Women’s livelihoods have subsequently improved and wages have increased, providing additional revenue for children’s education, health and family support.

The project also helped establish producers’ associations and certification systems in order to expand shea butter products to regional and international markets. Through a joint venture between the Dioila-based cooperative and a French partner, shea butter soaps are now exported to Europe at a price up to ten times higher than on the national market. The project’s success serves as a model for value chain development and women’s entrepreneurship, which can be replicated in other regions of Mali as well as in other countries of Africa.
Session One
LDCs and the UN System Agenda—The Way Forward

An overview of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA), with a focus on productive capacity

Chairperson: H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Presentation: Ms. Susanna Wolf, Senior Programme Officer, UN-OHRLLS

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Dinesh Bhattachary, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Nepal, Geneva; Ms. Fatou Haidara, Director, Policy Making Organs, UNIDO; Ms. Aicha Pouye Agne, Director of Business and Institutional Support, ITC; Mr. Syed Nuruzzaman, Chief, Countries with Special needs, Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division, ESCAP; Ms. Annet Blank, Head of LDC Unit, Development Division, WTO

The UN-OHRLLS Roadmap towards the implementation phase for 2011-2020 was presented. This offered an opportunity for discussion on the central measures needed to be undertaken by the various actors within the United Nations system for an effective and timely implementation of the IPoA.

The UN-OHRLLS presentation also reiterated the overarching goal of the IPoA: to overcome the structural challenges faced by LDCs in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally-agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category. Eight priority areas for action were outlined:

- Productive capacity;
- Agriculture, food security and rural development;
- Trade;
- Commodities;
- Human and social development;
- Multiple crisis and other emerging challenges;
- Mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity building; and
- Good governance at all levels.

The importance of productive capacity and manufacturing

Increasing LDCs’ productive capacity – infrastructure; energy; science, technology and innovation; and private sector development – is essential to both the IPoA and UNIDO’s Operational Strategy for LDCs. As a matter of fact, productive capacity is not only the first priority area of the IPoA but also a cross-cutting issue in all other priority areas. A weak productive sector and lack of economic diversification have led to a reliance on static engines of growth, constraints to efficient production and increased vulnerability to economic shocks.

Trade was recognized as a fundamental component for the economic growth and development of LDCs. The share of manufacturing in global trade averages 75 per cent, while LDCs account for only about 1 per cent of global trade. These two figures clearly indicate
that, in order to be active in global trade, LDCs need to shift their focus from primary commodities production to increased manufacturing of products. Such a shift would entail an emphasis on value-added, high quality exports and increased linkages of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to regional and global value chains.

WTO: achievements and future challenges

The World Trade Organization (WTO) reported on its contribution to the implementation of the IPoA, highlighting the role of LDCs in the WTO. The timely implementation of duty-free quota-free market (DFQF) access for all LDCs is on the right track. All developed countries but one are already providing close to 100 per cent DFQF access to LDCs. The WTO reaffirmed the growing importance of south-south cooperation, noting that India and China are also providing preferential DFQF access to LDCs. The organization continues to counter protectionist measures; however, its scope and reach are limited by its Members’ willingness to commit.

Other priority areas of action include facilitating and accelerating negotiations for LDCs’ accession to the WTO; addressing non-tariff barriers; and promoting and encouraging technology transfer. In addition, a proposal is being developed with respect to tourism that aims to provide special concessions in the area of trade in services to LDCs and LDCs service suppliers.

Reflecting on future challenge, the WTO recognized that the Doha Round of Trade Negotiations is at an impasse. While WTO Members remain committed to delivering the Doha mandate, new approaches must be explored, such as reaching agreements on specific issues relevant to LDCs, seen as small pieces of progress.

Panelists noted that LDCs’ domestic capacities require external assistance in terms of skills training and strengthening of local institutions. The International Trade Centre (ITC) focuses on building knowledge and skills, soft trade and technical assistance, namely for export promotion and export development in LDCs.

The organization provides support to the private sector and trade decision-makers, in conjunction with national coordination bodies, such as the National Implementation Units (NIUs) established under the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF).

Besides strengthening operational ties with LDCs and the NIUs at the country level, development partners also need to seek coherence at the global level. Strategic partnerships are needed to synergize and optimize the capacities of the United Nations system agencies, while building on each others’ comparative advantages.

UN -OHRLLS approach for IPoA

An integrated multi-level approach was presented by the UN-OHRLLS for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the IPoA. Recommendations were provided for measures at the national, regional and global levels. At the national level, each LDC government should integrate the provisions of the IPoA into its national policies and development frameworks, and carry out regular reviews involving key stakeholders. At the regional level, the relevant United Nations regional commissions and agencies should undertake biennial reviews of the implementation of the IPoA in close coordination with the global-level and country-level follow-up processes. At the global level, the implementation and monitoring mechanisms of the previous Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) should be strengthened and improved, including through regular reviews by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and General Assembly.

The need for regional support to IPoA

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) underlined the importance of regional support to the IPoA. ESCAP’s strategy focuses on cooperation with global organizations towards a coherent comprehensive strategy in assisting LDCs; helping LDCs to develop a coordinated regional voice on global forums; promoting capacity development activities (such as knowledge products centered around the eight priority areas of the IPoA and providing advisory services); advocacy
of LDC concerns and ensuring that development partners honor the commitments outlined in the IPoA; and providing sub-regional support for a better customized approach to LDCs assistance.

IPoA: Issue-specific working groups and task forces

In order to translate the commitments of the IPoA into operational proposals for actions, the UN-OHRLLS Roadmap has established working groups and task forces on specific issues. These include: resource mobilization; transfer of technology; crisis mitigation and resilience building; agriculture, food security and rural development; and the establishment of indicators for the monitoring, follow-up and review of the IPoA.

Development and employment

Ensuing questions and comments focused on the relation between employment creation and structural transformation, finance mobilization and issues specific to rural areas and the informal sector.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) highlighted that not all economic growth in LDCs has been accompanied by a growth in employment. Moreover, the ILO suggested that the relationship between employment, productive capacities and structural transformation should be examined through an institutionalized framework, such as UN-OHRLLS working groups. In response, panelists accentuated that employment is the direct consequence of an increased industrial base in countries. Therefore, manufacturing holds better potential for job creation and sustainable growth in LDCs than the current reliance on primary commodity sales.

Country ownership

Principles of country ownership and leadership by LDCs of their own development process were emphasized. The UN-OHRLLS noted a qualitative shift in strategy towards a more active role of the state in the development process.

Concerns relating to the mobilization of resources were raised by LDCs. Panelists underscored the importance of country ownership, along with clear and structured country planning, a division of labour and transparent governance structures. LDCs were encouraged to increase private sector involvement, as well as public-private partnerships (PPPs) for additional financial resources. The WTO pointed to the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) as an assistance mechanism for LDCs, to help generate Aid for Trade funds along each country’s self-identified priorities.

“The programmes to be developed for LDCs should be multi-stakeholder programmes, meaning that not only the agencies but all stakeholders, including the private sector, should play a key role.”

Ms. Fatou Haidara, Director, Policy Making Organs, UNIDO
Session Two
UNIDO’s support to LDCs in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action

The Second Session presented UNIDO’s Operational Strategy in support of LDCs within the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for 2011-2020

Chairperson: Ms. Amita Misra, Director, Bureau for Regional Programmes and Deputy to the Managing Director, Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division, UNIDO

Presentation: Mr. Akmel Akpa, Senior Advisor to the Director-General, UNIDO

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Suy Sem, Minister of Industry, Mines and Energy, Kingdom of Cambodia; H.E. Mr. Kia La Ngone Gabriel, Secretary of State for Industry, Angola; H.E. Mr. Ali Hussain Didi, Ambassador Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the European Union; Ms. Dorothy Tembo, Executive Director, EIF Secretariat; Mr. Papa Demba Thiam, Finance and Private Sector Development & Africa Regional Integration, World Bank

A diverse panel of Ministers, experts and policy makers, as well as speakers from various institutions, was invited to discuss the Strategy and to provide recommendations for the way forward.

UNIDO’s commitment to LDCs was reaffirmed from the outset. The Chairman of the session, Ms. Amita Misra, noted the UNIDO Director-General’s statement at the 2009 LDC Ministerial Conference: “More than ever, UNIDO is willing to assist LDCs in their efforts to develop; helping them come out of the clutches of structural constraints is a top priority for the organization.”

UNIDO and the IPoA: three pillars of intervention

The organization’s mandate relates to the following development priorities of the IPoA: productive capacity; agriculture (agribusiness), food security and rural development; trade; commodities; mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity building; and governance at all levels. UNIDO’s Operational Strategy for the support of LDCs is centered on three pillars:

Pillar I: Converting commodities into products

The first pillar relates directly to industry development: the transformation of raw materials, value addition and diversification as a means for wealth creation, employment generation and poverty alleviation in LDCs.

National and regional industrial policy should be based on a “competitive performance analysis” and support the development of niche markets in which countries have a comparative advantage.

Programmes aimed at building the technological capabilities and institutions of LDCs are vital. UNIDO is able to assist LDCs in strengthening their national innovation systems; establishing demonstration centers for identified products; putting in place effective entrepreneurship development programmes; and developing national vocational training institutes. The UNIDO Strategy also promotes public-private partnerships (PPPs) and encourages the institutional organization of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in LDCs, namely SME consortia for inter-firm technical collaboration and upgrading.
The agricultural sector is especially important to LDCs. In response, UNIDO programmes aim to facilitate capital flow to the agro-industrial sector by introducing credit guarantee funds and reinforcing financial institutions which support SMEs.

The UNIDO Strategy emphasizes South-South and triangular cooperation as a framework for the identification of technologies and methodologies that can be replicated with minimal costs.

Pillar II: Targeting vulnerable communities

The second pillar focuses on populations in rural areas, women, youth and urban communities yet to be integrated into the mainstream of the economy. It supports efforts to attract greater foreign direct investment (FDI) in LDCs, in particular by targeting diaspora as a source of funding and technology.

The success of such projects also depends largely on energy availability. UNIDO endorses using energy primarily for productive use, with a special emphasis on renewable energies. Mini-hydro power plants and solar energy projects in off-grid communities provide two examples.

Pillar III: Regional industrial infrastructure

The third pillar supports thinking globally and acting regionally for value chain development across borders. UNIDO advocates creating an inventory of promising products at the national and the regional level, then building trade capacity through actions targeting specific products. Toward this end, UNIDO developed the “3 Cs” Trade Capacity Building Approach, focusing on the areas of: Competitiveness, Conformity to international quality standards and Connectivity to the market.

As a final point, UNIDO stressed that although the Operational Strategy centers on the above three pillars, its programmes and projects remain tailor-made depending on the country or the region and address development issues specific to each situation.

Response to UNIDO’s Strategy from panelists and LDCs

The panelists expressed overall support for UNIDO’s Operational Strategy while highlighting selected issues. Panelists discussed the hurdles faced by their respective countries and voiced their support for UNIDO cooperation and assistance.

LDCs accentuated the need to couple growth with development, together with greater employment, equity and efficiency (the “3 Es”). Active private sector participation is essential for the growth and development of industrial infrastructure in their countries.

The challenge of market access was also emphasized, particularly with regard to the capacity of LDC domestic producers to generate competitive products that conform to standards of foreign markets.

The concept of national ownership remains crucial to LDC development. However, it was noted that LDCs often have limited technical capacity to determine what the specific need is; to come up with a tangible plan; and to define priorities for development partners.

Thus, capacity building must be anchored in LDCs’ national frameworks. These frameworks must be a result of consultations amongst various stakeholders, recognized and endorsed by national authorities, and have political support. Sound national governance is therefore an essential development driver. Moreover, when seeking the support of development partners, LDCs need to ensure that capacity building remains a key component of the assistance received, allowing them, over time, to take the lead in the implementation of the programme.

The Maldives, which graduated from LDC status in January 2011, commented on the difficulties faced during their transition from least developed status. While there are many programmes and steps towards graduation outlined in the IPoA, sustaining the status of graduation, they felt, was an even greater task with no ongoing support. Graduation was skewed in their case: at the time of graduation, 34 per cent of the population was still hovering around the poverty line. Similarly, Zambia remarked...
that the measurement criterion, GDP growth, is seldom reflective of the entire economy.

A clear need for support beyond the graduating threshold was acknowledged. The Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) assists LDCs and recently graduated countries through the transition process for up to five years. For a period of three years following graduation, countries will have automatic access to EIF resources and, depending on justifications provided, will be eligible to receive aid and assistance for an additional two years.

Concerns were raised regarding the coordination of donor and development partner support to LDCs, referring to the IPoA pillar “Governance at all levels”. Panelists noted that support was present, yet it did not always achieve the intended results.

The World Bank recommended value chain development as a means for partnerships amongst United Nations agencies. It proposed a methodology with a structural division of labor, with interventions based on each agency’s comparative advantage, consequently closing development and technical gaps along selected value chains.

Nonetheless, the IPoA was recognized as significantly different from its predecessor, the Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA). The IPoA Roadmap was designed as part of a holistic global framework, incorporating deliverables and commitments from the different United Nations agencies and development partners, including commitments from LDCs themselves. Guided by a demand principle, the Roadmap prescribes requests for assistance from governments, in order to deter duplication and incoherence of programmes in support of LDCs.

“LDCs must have a sound strategy that creates a strong and lasting industrial infrastructure, and link it with the private sector, civil society and the public sector.”

H.E. Mr. Suy Sem,
Minister of Industry, Mines and Energy,
Kingdom of Cambodia
The first panel of Session 3 of the Conference discussed world trends and their effect on the evolution of industrial skills; described the industries’ current skills needs; and identified a base of strategies for the future.

Chairperson: H.E. Mr. Robert K.K. Sichinga, Minister for Commerce, Trade and Industry, Zambia

Panelists: H.E. Mr. Arthur Kafando, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Private Sector promotion, Burkina Faso; Ms. Elfi Klumpp, WorldSkills International; Mr. Carl-Fredrik Zachrisson, Scania International; Mr. Tom Van Visser, UNIDO expert; Mr. Nader Imani, Festo Didactic GMBH & Co. KG

World trends, namely increasing competition, resource scarcity, growing energy demand, greater urbanization and mobility, and increased production needs present real challenges to society. However, they also provide important opportunities for development, offer prospects for the creation of new markets and for the adoption of novel approaches.

While crises have led to a rise in global unemployment, the unemployed can be a driving force for the manufacturing and industrial sectors. Engaging the unemployed – youth especially – in vocational training is critical for sustainable development. Doing so could help LDCs break out of the vicious circle of weak productivity, low income, poor school enrolment, illiteracy, an inadequately trained workforce and health problems.

Skills development acts as an accelerator for industrial and sustainable development by means of increased employability and value addition. In order to become competitive and to successfully integrate into global value chains, LDCs need an adequately skilled workforce, together with strong national qualification frameworks (NQFs), incorporating technical, basic and entrepreneurial competences.

Sector specific technical skills: Technical skills must correspond to the changing needs of industry. Continuous and state-of-the-art training is essential in keeping up with the pace of today’s technology.

Basic skills: Basic skills relate to various work methods and modes of organization. The following basic skills are considered of global value: teamwork; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); language and communication; literacy and numeracy; and problem-solving skills.

Entrepreneurial skills: Entrepreneurial skills development refers to the training of business creation and management skills, marketing and sales skills as well as financial management skills.

The role of the government

While educational institutes are crucial in creating a pool of qualified employees, who are essential for LDCs’ development and competitiveness, LDCs tend to be restrained by under-financed, outdated and fragmented technical and vocational skills development (TVSD) systems.

National developments plans of many LDCs are increasingly aware of the mismatch between education levels and industry requirements. Government decision-makers must work collectively with industry and education, in concert with donors and development agencies, towards a greater symbiosis between industry
and education. This requires adapting education to the needs of industry and providing demand driven training for employability and productivity.

In order to be successful, technical and vocational skills development strategies need to be based on a clear vision, fully integrated into economic development and poverty reduction strategies and action plans, and focused on sectors with promising employment prospects.

Public-private partnerships

Currently, the average proportion of funds allocated to skills development stands at a mere six percent of the national education budget. LDCs must diversify their funding sources and engage in cost-sharing activities. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are increasingly seen as essential for securing additional resources. Developing a financial framework involving the government, local communities, industry and beneficiary trainees with equitable contributions from each, remains a challenge.

Without increased financing, LDCs will not succeed in modernizing their TVSD infrastructures, facilities, materials or teaching techniques, which are necessary to raise the quality of skills training. Improving the pedagogical skills of teachers, along with the establishment of common evaluation techniques, can help standardize skill levels of graduates.

Scania International illustrated the value of public-private partnerships in skills development through a presentation of its training project in Erbil, Iraq, the Scania Transport Academy, developed in collaboration with UNIDO, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA). The centre will become operational in 2012 and will offer valuable training in the fields of mechanics, driving, language, computer, as well as marketing and management.

National Qualification Frameworks

LDCs lack national qualification frameworks (NQFs). A NQF is a comprehensive system of occupational profiles and qualifications at various levels, as a basis for the design of national curricula and courses. A NQF must be developed in close cooperation with industry, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, and based on an analysis of relevant economic sectors and their needs in terms of manpower, with a particular emphasis on qualitative needs (skills, competences). A NQF presents a structure for the comparison of different qualifications, allows stakeholders to make informed decisions, provides a platform through which industry can give feedback and, in turn, offers the opportunity for eventual review and adjustment of qualification levels.

The development of technical institutes in Burkina Faso provides an important example for LDCs. Three technical training centers are currently operational and the ultimate goal is to have a training institute in each of the country’s thirteen regions. However, important challenges such as the lack of certification for qualified professionals, insufficient financial resources and the need to include more women still remain.

Finally, WorldSkills International presented its unique WorldSkills Competition approach to skills development. The non-profit organization works with 58 countries across the world, together with governments, institutions and private initiatives, focusing on youth and skills as foundations for a sustainable future. LDCs were invited to join WorldSkills International and participate in the next WorldSkills Competition in 2013, in Leipzig, Germany.

Discussion

The ensuing panel debate and comments from the floor reflected a clear recognition that technical and vocational training was essential for LDC economic and industrial development and competitiveness, especially through greater youth engagement. LDCs voiced their concerns with regard to financial and technical support and expressed the need for external assistance from international development partners such as UNIDO. Panelists acknowledged the need for LDCs to incorporate various funding models through PPPs and Chambers of Industry. They further highlighted the importance of networking through regional skills development programmes.

“We must move toward professional technical training while incorporating the youth and women working in the informal sectors. For example, craftsmen account for about one million people in Burkina Faso.”

H.E. Mr. Arthur Kafando,
Minister of Industry, Commerce and Private Sector Promotion,
Burkina Faso
The second panel of Session 3 discussed the relevance of South-South and triangular cooperation for the development of LDCs through and in contribution to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

Chairperson: H.E. Ms. Hadja Rahamatoulaye Bah, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, Guinea

Presentations: Mr. Yu, Jian Hua, China’s Assistant Minister for Commerce, China; Mr. Lamine Dhaoui, Director, Business, Investment and Technology Branch, UNIDO

Panelists: Mr. Rogel Nuguid, Chief of Staff South-South Cooperation, New-York; Mr. Omer Kocaman, Representative of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Turkey

Various initiatives by multilateral and development institutions were presented, as well as contributions from developing countries.

In recent years, substantial changes have taken place at the global level in the control and distribution of resources and in the capabilities and needs of nations. The rapid growth of emerging economies has led to a shift in overall economic power. A number of developing countries are now playing a major role in global economic growth through trade, investment and technical cooperation.

South-South Cooperation (SSC) – a complement to North-South cooperation – is a broad framework initiated, organized and managed by the developing countries themselves; guided by principles of mutually beneficial partnerships; and driven by common goals of economic growth, industrial development and poverty reduction. More specifically, SSC focuses on:

- Exchange of expertise and experiences in industrial policy orientation, formulation and implementation;
- Institutional and enterprise networking for enhanced productive capacities in trade, technology and investment flows;
- Replication of best practices for poverty reduction through industrial development and grass root innovations serving as rural growth impulses;
- Strengthening of national and local innovation systems for using modern technology and enhancing domestic capacity building and adaptive capabilities to commercialize new knowledge; and,
- Promotion of regional trade, investments, and regional integration.

When systematically mobilized and shared, the wealth of knowledge and capacity in the South can facilitate the effective participation of developing countries, including LDCs, in the global economy. LDCs can benefit significantly from the experiences of successful strategy and policy choices, institutional arrangements and best technological and managerial practices of the more developed countries. Emerging economies of the South – India, China, South Africa and Brazil – are encouraged to lead growth in their respective regions.

Current trends point to increased South-South flows of finance, technology and trade and regional integration. Forty percent of global trade involves Southern countries. Moreover, intra-South FDI flows reached a record of US$ 300 billion in 2008,
of which 40 per cent were aimed at LDCs. Despite this dynamism, the potential for gains remains untapped. LDCs are still confronted with challenges related to institutional capacity development and limited financial mechanisms.

The international community supports South-South initiatives through triangular cooperation. Nevertheless, new institutions and systems are needed to combine the capacities, know-how and resources from the North and the South and to facilitate synergies between partner countries and traditional donors. It is in this context that UNIDO has developed its approach.

UNIDO and South-South Cooperation

UNIDO’s holistic approach in support of South-South cooperation includes actions at macro, meso and micro levels. The approach focuses on poverty reduction through productive activities. More specifically, it endorses youth entrepreneurship development – particularly in LDCs – and the establishment of South-South Cooperation Centers.

In order to leverage the resources needed for the achievement of these objectives, UNIDO engages in strategic partnerships with national, regional and international organizations, development institutions and multinational corporations.

Youth Entrepreneurship Development

There are 80.7 million youth unemployed worldwide. Ninety percent of the world’s youth (15-24) live in developing countries. In addition, 60 per cent of the population of LDCs is under the age of 25, compared with 46 per cent in other developing countries. Accordingly, one of UNIDO’s priority actions is assisting LDCs in the development and implementation of projects in the field of youth employment. UNIDO projects promote skills development for enhanced employability – in cooperation with the private sector – and offer a combination of non-financial and financial services to favor youth-led enterprise development and growth.

Non-financial services focus on capacity-building initiatives: the development of networks; assistance in the identification of innovative and growth-oriented business ideas; monitoring and coaching; and peer-peer support, namely through youth-led associations.

Financial services concentrate on innovative funding mechanisms: the promotion of tailor-made solutions for young entrepreneurs, in partnership with national and international financial institutions; the creation of dedicated equity or guarantee funding schemes; and direct funding for youth-led innovative projects to promote youth entrepreneurship in post-crisis environments.

South-South Cooperation Centers

As a response to challenges in trade, investment promotion and industrial development, UNIDO launched South-South Cooperation Centers in some of the more advanced developing countries, specifically China and India. The latter – the UNIDO...
Centre for South-South Industrial Cooperation (UCSSIC) in New Delhi – was established in 2007 with financial support from the government of India. Its mandate is to facilitate the transfer of technology between developing countries and to promote the replication of best industrial practices, training and skill development, together with trade and investment. The Center has several ongoing projects in Africa and Asia, including in LDCs.

The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation

Hosted within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU/SSC) was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1978. A multilateral support architecture was designed in order to promote, coordinate and support South-South and triangular cooperation, globally and within the United Nations system.

This architecture includes: a policy division to set policy directions; the Global South-South Development Academy (GSSD Academy) to identify, document and disseminate development solutions; the Global South-South Development Expo (GSSD Expo) to market and showcase successful solutions in an annual, multi-agency setting; and the South-South Global Asset and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE) to facilitate the transfer of solutions by means of virtual and physical venues through which different stakeholders can interact, obtain needed technology and access potential financiers. Based in China, the latter is an important avenue for LDCs’ access to advanced technical assistance and solutions. The multilateral support architecture is designed to enable LDCs to move from being recipients of solutions to being contributors to solutions.

China and South-South Cooperation

The Chinese government’s commitment to the IPoA was reaffirmed and its contributions to the South-South cooperation framework were highlighted. By the end of 2010, China provided economic and technical assistance to a large number of LDCs, supported nearly 1,000 projects of various types and trained 26,000 LDC officials, managers and technicians. In addition, China was actively involved in global Aid for Trade projects and the promotion of preferential duty-free quota-free (DFQF) market access for LDCs. From 2007 to 2010, China’s imports from LDCs rose from US$ 23.8 billion to US$ 43.2 billion. Furthermore, since 2008, China is the largest export market for LDCs: approximately 23 per cent of LDCs’ total exports are to China.

China will build on existing arrangements to support the implementation of the IPoA. It aims to give greater priority to LDCs in its foreign trade; focus on livelihood-related projects; strengthen cooperation with LDCs in agricultural development by providing food aid and by building centres of expertise; increase training in human resources; and encourage the establishment of trade and economic zones by Chinese entrepreneurs in LDCs. Moreover, China will maintain cooperation with UNIDO in support of LDCs in areas such as private sector development, investment promotion, industrial energy saving and emission reduction.

Example: Youth entrepreneurship in the MRU

The Multi-Stakeholder Programme for Productive and Decent Work for Youth in the Manu River Union (MRU) countries – Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d’Ivoire – serves to illustrate an LDC-specific project. An initiative in youth entrepreneurship skills development, the programme was developed in conjunction with the UCSSIC in India, funded by Japan and the Gulf countries, and implemented by several UN agencies.

Notable outcomes of the MRU Competitive Grant Scheme include the following: 85 percent of all beneficiaries had a job by the end of the project; 75 per cent still had a job one year after the end of the project; and 61 youth-led micro-enterprises were created, of which the majority have proved sustainable, continuing beyond the first year of funding.

“The South should always be in a position to define its own needs, rather than those needs being defined by somebody else.”

H.E. Ms. Hadja Rahamatoulaye Bah
Minister of Commerce, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises, Guinea
Turkey and South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Turkey assists LDCs by means of triangular – along with bilateral and multilateral – and South-South cooperation. Starting in 2012, the Turkish government intends to allocate US$ 200 million annually towards LDC projects and programmes in support of the IPoA.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) focuses on principles of local ownership, inclusive growth, poverty reduction, capacity building support and the improvement of LDCs’ domestic economies. TIKA is involved in triangular cooperation in areas such as food security, transfer of technology, renewable technology, sustainable textile production and SME development in LDCs. It works with a variety of multilateral and bilateral development partners.

During the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV), TIKA – together with UNIDO – hosted a panel entitled “Enhancing the role of SMEs in agribusiness global value chains”. In Afghanistan, capacity building programmes, particularly the training for hospital staff, are being carried out by TIKA in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). In Central Asia, TIKA is working with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on agriculture and energy efficiency. Finally, the agency’s future plans include the opening of new offices in Latin America and the Pacific Region as well as the development of vocational training centers in selected LDCs.

Discussion

LDCs expressed support for China’s and Turkey’s cooperation within the SSC framework; however, they voiced the need for further expansion of trade-related activities. The issue of inadequate legislation was addressed, noting the necessity to develop legislation which would allow for greater interaction between Southern countries. LDCs were encouraged to organize themselves at the national level and define their own needs before reaching out to other countries. A formalized framework for South-South cooperation between the LDCs is needed, but has yet to be developed.
The third panel of Session 3 focused on the role of agribusiness in LDCs

*Chairperson:* Ambassador Mansour Cama, Chairman of Confédération Nationale des Employeurs du Sénégal (CNES), Dakar

*Presentation:* Mr. Philippe Scholtes, Director, Agribusiness Development Branch, UNIDO

*Panelists:* H.E. Ms. Marlyn Mouliom Roosalem, Minister of Trade and Industry of Central African Republic; Mr. Gavin Wall, Director, Rural Infrastructure and Agribusiness, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO); Mr. Ulrich Boysen, Public Finance, African Development Bank (AfDB); Mr. Jean Luc François, Chief Agriculture, Rural Development and Biodiversity, Agence Française de Développement (AFD); Ms. Beatrice Gakuba, CEO, Rwanda Flora

*Resource persons:* Mr. Colin Watson, Partner, Phatisa; Mr. Douglas Hawkins, Corporate Research, Hardman & Co.; Mr. Paul Goossens, Senior Investment Officer, Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO); Mr. Mark Pajak, Director, Craven House Capital Plc

The third panel of Session 3 focused on the role of agribusiness in LDCs; explored the constraints faced by the agricultural sector; and discussed the role, scope, management and impact possibilities of a technical assistance facility in support of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA).

**Agribusiness: financial challenges**

Agribusiness and agro-industries underpin economic growth, food security, value addition and the overall development of LDCs. Nevertheless, resource mobilization for agribusiness development remains inadequate. Not only is the sector perceived as risky and yielding unattractive returns, but investment is underutilized due to lack of coordination amongst initiatives.

Funding for agribusiness and agro-industry development stems from a number of sources and can either be in the form of equity or debt, or a blend of both. Public investment comes from governments; multilateral and bilateral organizations; foundations; and development finance institutions (DFIs).

Recent trends highlight an increasing role of private investment financing in LDCs compared to official development assistance (ODA). Private investment comprises commercial banks, investment, loan guarantee and private equity funds. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is increasing, but remains low in agribusiness. It should also be noted that, presently, out of approximately 50 equity funds targeting the Africa region, 20 funds – totaling three billion dollars – are aimed explicitly at supporting agribusiness.

However, despite this pool of resources, a significant financial gap remains. The term “missing middle” refers to midsized enterprises – requiring investment amounts of US$ 10,000 to US$ 1 million – which are too small to access the resources of large firms (banks, equity funds, etc.) and too large to qualify for microfinance. Similarly, the term “rural finance
“With climbing energy costs and increased resource competition, Africa’s underutilized land could offer real security to 70 percent of its population that are already dependent on agriculture for employment.”

Mr. Colin Watson,
Partner, Phatisa

The AfDB, FAO, AFD and Phatisa then presented their respective contributions to Africa’s agriculture sector and provided recommendations for the functions of a TAF.

**AfDB**

As a key stakeholder of the 3ADI, the AfDB has designed the AgVance Africa Fund of Funds (FOF), a mechanism to support the implementation of the 3ADI framework. The FOF, expected to be launched in 2012, will have a target size of US$ 500 million, a term of 10-12 years and an investment period of 3-5 years. It will also have a TAF to provide services to public and private actors along the value chain. Other areas that the TAF plans to support include coordination between private and public stakeholders; promotion of good governance; adequate financing for SMEs; and dissemination of lessons learned in private investment.

**FAO**

As a central technical assistance provider, FAO’s agriculture investment strategy relies on two pillars: building national capacities and working with financing institutions. The former takes the form of investment planning, programme design, sector analysis and technical support activities. The latter assists beneficiaries in their enabling environment, sector development strategies and innovation activities. In its presentation, FAO underscored the comparative advantages of technical assistance agencies: the ability to provide sector wide support; an enabling environment for government collaboration; facilitate multiple stakeholder coordination; and support pro-poor impact activities. Technical assistance facilities were cautioned against single investments, investment monitoring, acting as direct investors and representing investors.

**AFD**

The AFD has made substantial contributions to agricultural value chain development. Its commitments in rural and agricultural development amounted to €545 million for the year 2010 and reached beneficiaries.
from smallholder framers to public institutions. They are disbursed through public and private investments, as well as grants, loans, guarantees and equities.

The AFD highlighted the responsibility of the state to create an enabling environment for agribusiness development and emphasized the capacity building of national banks. The AFD further recommended that a TAF be developed specific to each sector and context. Agro-processors and farmer organizations specifically need support in local human capacity building and management; establishment of quality systems; intercommunion in the value chain; donor-beneficiary agribusiness priority alignment; and access to finance.

Phatisa
Phatisa is a private equity firm and the fund manager of the African Agricultural Fund (AAF). The fund – with a target size of US$300 million – supports private sector companies involved in food production and distribution in Africa. It focuses on investments of over US$1 million dollars (with an exit policy of 10 years) and concentrates on established companies with track records and expansion plans. Established as part of the AAF, the TAF is funded out of a grant of €11 million, mostly from the European Commission (EC), and aims to strengthen SMEs and support larger business development schemes in Africa.

BIO
The Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO) is a development finance institution involved in financial and technical assistance for LDCs. BIO focuses on private sector investment and utilizes different financing instruments (debt, equity and grants) in support of infrastructure, enterprises and financial institutions. It generally targets companies with good track records and offering positive returns in terms of social and environmental development impact. BIO also provides technical assistance services to a large number of African countries, particularly in market access, technology transfer and skills development.

Hardman & Co.
Hardman & Co. is a corporate research firm providing agri-sector capital markets advisory services. The firm’s director recommended a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches in view of the Abuja and Istanbul Declarations. The responsibility of government to design achievable national agri-sector policies was emphasized. It was also stated that agribusiness itself, including large-scale foreign direct investors and local investors, should be seen as a partner in realizing policy objectives.

The director concluded that a TAF could play a vital role in the following areas: assessment of project viability; formation of enabling partnerships; facilitating of the participation of the local private sector; development of the technical proficiency of the local population; support to governments in the development of achievable policy objectives; and support to the development of productivity and profitability of the agri-sector.

Craven House Capital
Craven House Capital is a market investment company and a "merchant bank" investing in SMEs with established management and business methods in the agricultural sector amongst others. Craven House Capital presented their latest investment amounting to US$ 1 million: Farm Lands of Guinea Inc. (FLGI). A public-private partnership model was adopted to ensure compatibility of interests between the company, the Guinean government and the local tribal leaders.

Guinea served to illustrate a paradoxical case: agriculture plays a substantial role in the economy, yet only three per cent of arable land is cultivated due to lack of capital and technical knowledge. By introducing modern farming technology and quality management practices, FLGI is hoping to increasing rice, maize and soybeans output and productivity along the value chain.

Rwanda Flora
Rwanda Flora – a flower company employing over 200 rural women – provided the perspective of a successful
private business in an LDC. Its CEO underscored the gap between large investment efforts, as presented along this session, and the situation at ground level. Investment and financing possibilities are often unknown, inaccessible and overly costly for the private sector in LDCs. For example, bank interest rates of an average of 18 to 20 per cent make even the available funds too expensive for the average farmer.

While the private sector has an immense potential to drive economic growth in Africa, the latter is true only if the right conditions exist: the lack of basic infrastructure and fundamental skills impedes progress in agribusiness.

The need for partnerships amongst the public and private sector was reiterated, noting that a technical assistance facility would be valuable in developing policies, strategies and incentives for agribusinesses; finance and investment solutions for the rural poor; and human resources and technical skills.

**CAR**

A presentation by the Central African Republic (CAR) representative on the case of sesame production illustrated how technical assistance together with public and private actors – supported by the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) – contributed to the development of a competitive small-scale sesame industry in the country. Production of sesame quadrupled within two years of the pilot project. The latter is currently in its second implementation phase and is planning to expand agricultural areas and diversify production crops. The CAR representative emphasized the necessary involvement of the private sector in LDC development strategies and, in this particular case, the primary need to build basic infrastructure.

**Discussion**

The ensuing discussion highlighted the central role of public-private partnerships in development and reaffirmed the need for country specific approaches to technical assistance initiatives.

LDCs expressed concern whether the types and stages of businesses targeted for private sector investment would coincide with their respective national strategies. Private investment, they stated, needed to finance SMEs and start-up capital, rather than track record companies with costly expansion plans.

Moreover, LDCs questioned the current smallholder farmer model and suggested moving towards a new cooperative institutional framework – one that would better integrate all the actors of a value chain.
The Ministerial Conference concluded by reaffirming UNIDO’s commitment to LDCs, and the importance of global partnerships.

**Rapporteur:** Deputy of H.E. Mr. Awad Ahmed Eljaz, Minister of Industry of Sudan

**Chairperson:** H.E. Mr. Lekh Raj Bhatta, Minister of Commerce and Supplies, Nepal

**Closing remarks:** Mr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, Director-General, UNIDO

In the final session of the conference, the Rapporteur of the conference presented the drafts of the LDC Ministerial Declaration and Plan of Action, which were subsequently adopted following minor modifications proposed from the floor.

The LDC Ministerial Conference was recognized as providing momentum for the sustainable industrial development of the least developed countries. The Chair of the conference remarked on the valuable deliberations of the sessions, each of which reflected upon issues critical to LDCs. The UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan 2012-2020 were further endorsed.

The UNIDO Director-General emphasized the enhancement of LDCs’ productive capacity as essential for their sustainable development, structural transformation and graduation from the least developed status. A shift from the reliance on primary commodities production to increased manufacturing is vital for LDCs to be active in global markets. LDCs need to convert their resource-based comparative advantages into competitiveness and strengthen regional industrial complementarities across borders.

Governments play a fundamental role in providing leadership and vision for development, and in creating an enabling environment for the private sector to flourish – particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are an important means for promoting entrepreneurship and generating employment and investment in LDCs. Cross-cutting issues such as youth employment and energy access are critical as well in the current development context.

The Ministerial Conference concluded by reaffirming UNIDO’s commitment to LDCs. In addition, the Chair drew attention to the importance of global partnerships for the implementation of the IPoA; but also stated that the ownership, leadership and primary responsibility for development lies within the LDCs themselves. LDCs and their development partners were urged to work jointly – in concert with the UN-OHRLLS roadmap – towards the timely and effective implementation of the IPoA.
Annexes
Annex 1: Agenda

Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference
“LDCs structural transformation and UNIDO’s support in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action”
Vienna, 24 November-25 November 2011
Venue: Board Room A, M-Building,
Vienna International Centre (VIC)

Provisional agenda

Opening session

Session 1: LDCs and the UN System Agenda—The Way forward
Session 2: UNIDO’s support to LDCs in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action

Programme of Action

Session 3: Mobilizing efficient partnerships and resources along the implementation of the IPoA

Panel 1: Industrial Skills
Panel 2: South-South and Triangular Cooperation
Panel 3: Agribusiness in LDCs: realizing synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance

Discussion and adoption of the Ministerial Declaration
Closing Session
Annotated provisional agenda

Opening session

After a brief introduction by the UNIDO LDC-Coordinator welcoming delegations on behalf of the Director-General of UNIDO, the meeting will elect the Bureau of the Conference comprising of a Chair and a Rapporteur. Due consultations will be organized by UNIDO in cooperation with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (UN-OHRLLS) prior to the Conference. The meeting will be invited to adopt its Agenda and Programme of Work. A short video (4”) will be presented on the UNIDO’s support to LDCs. Then the meeting will be officially opened by the Director-General of UNIDO after opening statements of the Minister elected Chair and the Under Secretary-General, High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDSs.
Session 1: LDCs and the UN System Agenda – The Way forward

The UN-OHRLLS will introduce the subject. The Fourth United Nations Conference on LDCs adopted the Istanbul Declaration and the Istanbul Programme of Action for the decade 2011-2020 (IPoA). The IPoA takes the form of a mutually agreed compact between LDCs and their development partners and contains eight priority areas of action, each supported by concrete deliverables and commitments from partners including UN agencies. These eight development priorities include productive capacity, agriculture, food security and rural development, trade, commodities, human and social development, multiple crises and other emerging challenges, mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building, and governance at all levels. An emphasis is placed on equity at all levels through empowering the poor, and inclusive and equitable economic growth. UN-OHRLLS’s report will highlight major achievements since the LDC IV Summit including presentation of the Roadmap developed to ensure a swift move towards the IPoA implementation phase. The meeting will take note of the presentation and make appropriate recommendations on the way forward.

Session 2: UNIDO’s support to LDCs in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action

The meeting will discuss the new UNIDO’s Strategy towards the LDCs. This strategy will be presented by the senior management of UNIDO. Following the LDC IV Summit, as all the United Nations agencies, UNIDO has taken commitments in favour of LDCs leading to concrete deliverables and actions. In this regard, UNIDO’s management decided to expand the geographical focus of its technical cooperation with specific attention on LDCs. The development of such a strategy, approach and operational plan upon which UNIDO’s technical branches will act, has been decided among other management priorities for 2011. Ministers, Experts and other stakeholders will be invited to review and provide comments on the following Strategy for further adoption through the Declaration of the Conference.

Session 3: Mobilizing efficient partnerships and resources along the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA).

The meeting will consider the conclusions of the session held on the Strategy and discuss on the partnerships and resources required for its implementation. This session will be organized around 3 panels: (i) industrial skills, (ii) South-South and Triangular cooperation, and (iii) Agribusiness in LDCs: realizing synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance. Regarding the relevance of the first panel, one can confirm that industry-led skills development remains a major part of LDCs’ strategies for improving their economies. The second panel will focus on south-south and triangular cooperation. Indeed during the Istanbul Summit, the donor community has expressly renewed its interest for a logic based on solidarity and respect for national priorities; and to promote south-south and triangular cooperation within LDCs’ capacities in order to give value to the Istanbul Programme of Action. The third and last panel will emphasize the financial synergies to be developed in order to ensure the promotion of the agribusiness sector in LDCs as a key driver of their economic diversification and structural change.

Closing Session

After the presentation of the report by the Minister Rapporteur of the Conference, the Chairperson will summarize the key outcomes and conclusions of the Conference. The Director-General will then officially close the LDC ministerial Conference.
UNIDO - Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference 2011  
Vienna, 24 November-25 November 2011  
Board Room A, M-Building, VIC

Provisional agenda  
Thursday, 24 November 2011

08:00-09:00  Registration at the Vienna International Centre - Checkpoint 1

09:30-10:30  Opening Session

- Introduction by Mr. Mahammed Dionne, LDC coordinator, UNIDO
- Election of the Bureau (Chair and Vice-Chair Rapporteur)
- Adoption of the Agenda.

- Opening remarks and Statements by:
  - H.E. Mr. Helmut Böck, Ambassador of Austria
  - H.E. Mr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Chair of G77 Group, Ambassador Iran
  - H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, USG and High Representative
  - Mr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, Director-General, UNIDO
- Projection of a video on UNIDO’s activities in reducing poverty through productive activities and women empowerment (the case of Mali’s shea butter production). Duration: 4 min.

10:30-11:00  Coffee break

11:00-12:30  Session 1:  LDCs and the UN System Agenda - the Way forward

- Chair: H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, USG and High Representative Under-Secretary General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- Presentation by Ms. Susanna Wolf, Senior Programme Officer, UN-OHRLLS.
- H.E. Mr. Dinesh Bhattacharai Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Nepal, Geneva

- Panelists:
  - Ms. Fatou Haidara, Director, Policy Making Organs, UNIDO
  - Ms. Aicha Pouye Agne, Director of Business and Institutional Support, ITC
  - Mr. Syed Nuruzzaman, Chief, Countries with Special needs, Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division, ESCAP
  - Ms. Annet Blank, Head of LDC Unit, Development Division, WTO

13:00-14.30  Lunch

14:30-17:30  Session 2:  UNIDO’s support to LDCs in the context of the Istanbul Programme of Action

- Chair: Ms. Amita Misra, Director, Bureau for Regional Programmes and Deputy to the Managing Director, Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division, UNIDO
- Presentation by Mr. Akmel Akpa, Senior Advisor to the Director-General, UNIDO

- Panelists:
  - H.E. Mr. Suy Sem, Minister of Industry, Mines and Energy, Kingdom of Cambodia
  - H.E. Mr. Kiala Ngone Gabriel, Secretary of State for Industry, Angola.
H.E. Mr. Ali Hussain Didi, Ambassador Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the European Union
Ms. Dorothy Tembo, Executive Director, EIF Secretariat
Mr. Papa Demba Thiam, Finance and Private Sector Development & Africa Regional Integration, World Bank

16:00-16:30 Coffee Break
16:30-17:30 Session 2 (continued) General Debate

Chairman summary

18:00-20:00 Reception hosted by the UNIDO DG at the VIC Restaurant

Friday, 25 November 2011

09:00-17:45 Session 3: Mobilizing efficient partnerships and resources along the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action
09:00-10.30 Panel 1: Industrial Skills

Chair: H.E. Mr. Robert K.K. Sichinga Minister for Commerce, Trade and Industry, Zambia

Panelists:
H.E. Mr. Arthur Kafando, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Private Sector promotion, Burkina Faso
Ms. Elfi Klumpp, WorldSkills International
Mr. Carl-Fredrik Zachrisson, Scania International
Mr. Tom Van Visser, UNIDO expert
Mr. Nader Imani, Festo Didactic GMBH & Co.KG

10:30-11:15 Coffee break and Technological exhibition on Industrial skills organized by Agro-Industries Technology Unit and the World Skills Foundation
11:15-12:45 Panel 2: South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Chair: H.E. Ms. Hadja Rahamatoulaye Bah, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises of Guinea

Presentations:
Mr. Yu, Jian Hua, China’s Assistant Minister for Commerce of China,
Mr. Lamine Dhaouii, Director, Business, Investment and Technology Branch, UNIDO

Panelists:
Mr. Rogel Nuguid, Chief of Staff South-South Cooperation New-York
Mr. Omer Kocaman, Representative of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency TİKA, Turkey
12:45-14:15 Lunch
14:30-16:30 Panel 3: Agribusiness in LDCs: realizing synergies between private finance, public investment and technical assistance
Chair: Ambassador Mansour Cama, Chairman of Confederation Nationale des Employeurs du Senegal (CNES), Dakar

Presentation by Mr. Philippe Scholtes, Director, Agribusiness development Branch, UNIDO

Panelists:
Mr. Gavin Wall, Director, Rural Infrastructure and Agribusiness, FAO
Mr. Ulrich Boysen, Public Finance, African Development Bank, AfDB
Mr. Jean Luc François, Chief Agriculture, Rural development and Biodiversity, Agence Française de Développement, AFD
Ms. Beatrice Gakuba, CEO, Rwanda Flora
H.E. Ms. Marlyn Mouliom Roosalem Minister of Trade and Industry of Central African Republic

Resource persons:
Mr. Colin Watson, Partner, Phatisa
Mr. Douglas Hawkins, Corporate Research, Hardman & Co.
Mr. Paul Goossens, Senior Investment Officer, Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries, BIO
Mr. Mark Pajak, Director, Craven House Capital Plc

16:30-16:45 Coffee break
16:45-17:30 Discussion and adoption of the Ministerial Declaration
17:30-18:00 Closing Session

Remarks from the Minister Rapporteur of the LDC Conference.
Adoption of the LDC ministerial Declaration.
Remarks by the Minister Chair of the Conference.
Closing remarks of the UNIDO Director-General.
Item 17

Vienna Ministerial Declaration for the Least Developed Countries

The General Conference,

Taking note of the Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries convened in Vienna on 24 and 25 November 2011,

Also taking note of the Vienna Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Action of the Least Developed Countries adopted by the Ministerial Conference and contained in the annex to the present resolution,

1. Invites the Director-General, in implementing the medium-term programme framework, 2010-2013, to take special account of the provisions for a structural transformation of the least developed countries and provide UNIDO support for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1), as set out in the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Ministers in Vienna on 25 November 2011;

2. Urges UNIDO and all development partners to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Plan of Action;

3. Requests the Director-General to report on related UNIDO activities to the General Conference at its fifteenth session.
2011 Least Developed Countries
Ministerial Plan of Action

Structural transformation of LDCs and UNIDO support for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (IPoA)

Introduction

1. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 adopted in Brussels (BPoA) in 2001 was based on seven commitments aimed at improving the living conditions of the citizens of least developed countries (LDCs) through providing a framework for a strong global partnership. Its overarching goal was to make substantial progress towards halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and suffering from hunger by 2015 and promote sustainable development in the least developed countries. Nevertheless, these countries - consisting of 48 countries throughout the world, with 33 of them located in Africa - have been unable to overcome their economic vulnerability and structurally transform their economies. Only three countries have graduated out of this category in the past three decades: Botswana, Cape Verde and Maldives (in January 2011).

2. An assessment of the implementation of the BPoA suggested that a more strategic, comprehensive and sustained approach be undertaken to bring about structural transformation of the LDC economies. In this regard, the entire United Nations system, Member States and relevant international and regional organizations worked closely together and adopted the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011 to 2020 during the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UN-LDC IV), which took place in May 2011 in Istanbul. The adopted Istanbul Plan of Action (IPoA) comprises eight development priorities and stresses the importance of building productive capacities, private sector initiative, energy, technology, and the complementary role of South-South cooperation. These key development priorities constitute the core elements of UNIDO operations in the LDCs.

3. The overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) is to overcome the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, generate employment, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category. The Programme provides a comprehensive road map in support of LDC economies and further underscores the need for a structural transformation of their socio-economic environment within the next decade.

I. Objectives of the UNIDO LDC Ministerial Conference

4. The fourth UNIDO meeting of the LDC Ministers of Industry, entitled “LDC structural transformation and UNIDO support for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action”, reflects the continuous will of the organization to place support to least developed countries at the top of its sustainable industrial development agenda. It will serve to present the LDC Strategy and Operational Plan, 2012-2020, and will provide a comprehensive road map for UNIDO programmes and thematic initiatives in favour of LDCs, thereby contributing towards an effective implementation of the IPoA.

II. Summary of the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan, 2012-2020

5. The UNIDO Strategy enumerates practical interventions in the sphere of enhanced economic
efficiency, ecological compliance and social inclusion. It further presents UNIDO’s vision and action towards implementing the industrial agenda of the Istanbul Programme of Action within the next decade. The three dimensions contained in the Strategy are: (a) converting commodities into products; (b) empowering rural communities in the development process; (c) strengthening the new regional industrial complementarities.

III. Converting commodities into products

6. Value addition to primary commodities is critical to climbing the ladder of development. It is a matter of converting resource-based comparative advantages into competitiveness. In doing so, LDCs should be selective in promoting internationally and regionally tradable products, and the development of those products should make an indelible impact on poverty reduction.

7. The set of operational interventions that are needed relate to: (a) the establishment of an inventory of the modern industrial applications of promising products. The idea is to unveil viable avenues of replicating product-specific best practices, thereby reducing the distance to technological, processing, design and marketing frontiers; (b) enhancing institutional capacity-building for assessing competitive performance analysis. The aim is to build a module to strengthen the capacity of support institutions to design, implement and monitor industrial policies, and thereby support the policy process rather than a specific outcome. The advantage is that UNIDO enhances the Government’s ownership and management capacity by training civil servants, building a centralized information system and setting up teams using the existing institutional structure; and (c) creating industrial growth poles and clusters as pockets of industrial dynamism.

IV. Empowering rural communities in the development process

8. As indicated at LDC IV, more than 75 per cent of the least developed countries’ population still live in poverty. Growth essentially entails empowering the vulnerable segments of the people in the development process. Failing this, there will be growth without development. The success of related projects depends largely on proper sensitization of a set of low-hanging fruits: (a) enhanced agricultural productivity, and (b) the use of modern methods and tools for reducing post-harvest losses.

9. To achieve this, a set of interventions will need to be operationalized: appointing rural industrial development officers; promoting an integrated approach to field-level interventions which facilitate basic agricultural extension services, foster enterprise start-ups in the agro-processing segment and catalyze local value chain development; conducting result-oriented entrepreneurship development programmes; implementing value chain development programmes; establishing agribusiness support service centres; and building the capacities and capabilities of rural communities.

V. Strengthening the new industrial regional complementarities

10. In the past, initiatives towards strengthening regional industrial complementarities failed to produce the expected results because of similar resource endowments. Today, the process of industrial development is not driven by a given country’s resource endowment alone. Rather, the process is driven by technology, knowledge, skills, information and networking across borders. LDCs should endeavour to strengthen those new regional industrial complementarities across borders. Knowledge, technology
and investment flows across borders can contribute significantly to withstand collectively competitive pressures for efficiency gains.

11. An operational strategy towards regional industrial dynamism could encompass: thinking globally and acting regionally for strengthening regional value chains; making an inventory of promising products for regional integration; promoting the geographical expansion of selected commodity belts through value addition; enhancing regional institutional capacity-building; and using the North-South corridor as a test case of new regional industrial dynamism and innovation systems.

VI. Special focus on South-South cooperation

12. UNIDO accords priority to the promotion of South-South cooperation as an effective means of creating a win-win situation from which all participating countries benefit and to complement North-South cooperation. UNIDO South-South Centres were established with a mandate to design practical and innovative projects to facilitate the transfer and diffusion of appropriate technologies, the replication of best practices and to promote training, skills development and capacity enhancement in entrepreneurship, trade and investment in the fields of social and economic development potential of developing countries in general and LDCs in particular.

VII. UNIDO road ahead

13. In UNIDO, the LDC road ahead is paved to lead all stakeholders to the creation and strengthening of industrial infrastructure in terms of information dissemination, technology upgrading, investment facilitation, technical skills enhancement, promotion of innovation, public and private sector capacity-building, facilitating the availability of and access to energy for productive use and greater market access through productive capacity-building. All related interventions converge to sustainable income, employment and wealth creation.

VIII. Follow-up actions

14. In delivering on the present Operational Strategy, UNIDO will continue to ensure that its development results targets are achieved. Management for development results, inter-agency coherence, along with the UN-OHRLLS roadmap, monitoring results and ensuring impact, and increasing efficiency in resource use, will be a critical part of the process.

15. In cooperation with development partners, including regional economic commissions, UNIDO will also develop regional and national programmes and projects in LDCs, aligned with the strategy.

16. The UNIDO LDC Strategy contains a set of actions and interventions in order for the LDCs to graduate from their current status. Determined efforts are needed for translating the practical suggestions into deeds as part of the IPoA.
Ministerial Declaration

Structural transformation of LDCs and UNIDO support for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (IPoA)

We, the Ministers participating in the UNIDO Ministerial Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

Gathered here in Vienna from 24 to 25 November 2011 in order to reiterate our commitment to the sustainable industrial development of the economies of the LDCs;

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations and the principles set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Istanbul Programme of Action and their recognition of the shared responsibility to uphold dignity and a decent standard of living for all humanity;

Emphasizing the importance of the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the three previous UNIDO LDC Ministerial conferences, and the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

Underscoring the fact that all least developed countries share much in common and that limited productive capacity, financial resources, and lack of energy for productive use continue to pose serious obstacles to the development efforts of the least developed countries, thereby reiterating productive capacity-building, employment generation, the need for economic diversification and regional integration as top priorities for LDCs' wealth generation and economic development;

Underlining that least developed countries represent an enormous untapped human and natural resource potential, in particular their young populations, to contribute to national development, poverty eradication, and job creation, as well as to global economic growth and welfare;

Determined to reinvigorate national, regional and international partnerships and efforts in support of balanced and sustainable economic development within a stable and objective policy space;

Stating that partnerships with the private sector play an important role for promoting entrepreneurship, generating employment and investment, increasing the revenue potential, developing new technologies and enabling high, sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth in least developed countries;

Expressing our full support for the efforts of least developed countries to achieve people-centred sustainable development;

Having adopted the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan for the Least Developed Countries, 2012-2020, in anticipation of the UNIDO General Conference,

Declare that:

1. We are convinced that the LDC Ministerial Conference on the Least Developed Countries provides positive momentum for the sustainable industrial development of the Least Developed Countries;

2. We welcome the preparation of the UNIDO LDC Strategy and Operational Plan, 2012-2020, integrating the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 for its implementation in a timely and comprehensive manner;

3. We underscore that the ownership, leadership and primary responsibility for development in the least developed countries rest with the LDCs themselves, good governance at all levels, inclusiveness and transparency, as well as domestic resource mobilization, are central to the development process of the least developed countries.
4. We understand that the roadmap designed for the implementation of the Istanbul Plan of Action (IPoA) further encourages the LDCs and their development partners to work on a path of a coordinated, coherent and effective manner.

5. We note that the overarching goal of the UNIDO Operational Plan is to enable the LDCs to promote sustainable sources of income and employment through productive capacities leading to inclusive growth, development and graduation from their current status. The three strategic objectives are: (a) converting commodities into products; (b) targeting communities based on their resource endowment; and (c) regional and global focus on value chain development, a special focus on gender and social inclusion, especially of youth populations, will be addressed as cross-cutting issues.

6. We stress that the implementation process should be based also on a well-functioning and socially responsible private sector under the close supervision of our Governments, as well as better coordination of aid by the cooperating partners. Small- and medium-sized enterprises in particular, and an appropriate legal framework are crucial in promoting entrepreneurship, investment, agribusiness development and economic diversification as well as achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all.

7. We acknowledge the great potential of regional economic integration and cooperation in creating new opportunities for trade, investment, technology transfer, supply chains and markets through improved infrastructure and connectivity. We underscore that we need to fully harness the opportunities offered by South-South, triangular cooperation as well as the complementary role of North-South cooperation. We are convinced that Least Developed Countries should benefit from enhanced triangular cooperation.

8. We express our full support to the proposal of a dedicated “LDC Trust Fund” through voluntary contributions to promote, support and implement the objectives of the current strategy. In addition we are willing to encourage domestic fund mobilization undertakings;

9. We reaffirm the critical importance of effective and efficient follow-up and monitoring mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels to assess the mainstreaming of the LDC Strategy and Operational Plan commitments and actions in the overall UNIDO interventions within the countries into the next decade and invite the Director-General of UNIDO to ensure that the LDC Strategy and Operational Plan, 2012-2020, is followed up in an effective, efficient and visible manner.

Adopted in Vienna on 25 November 2011
(Signed): 25 November 2011

Mohammed Abdel Gader Hassan
Director-General of International Affairs
Ministry of Industry of Sudan

On behalf of,
H.E. Mr. Awad Ahmed Eljaz
Minister of Industry of Sudan
Rapporteur of the 2011 LDC Ministerial Conference
Annex 3: List of Participants

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<tr>
<th>GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Mr. Sebastiao Cassule Francisco</td>
<td>Coordinator of National Commission for UNIDO, Ministry of Geology and Mines and Industry</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Ms. Efiginia Perpetua dos Prazeres Jorge</td>
<td>Second Secretary, Advisor to the Perm. Rep. of Angola, Vienna</td>
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<td>Assistant to the Office of Secretary of State</td>
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<td>BANGLADESH</td>
<td>H.E. Mr. Dilip Barua Minister of Industries</td>
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<td>H.E. Mr. Md. Abdul Hannan</td>
<td>Ambassador and Permanent Representative</td>
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<td>Mr. Khorshed Alam</td>
<td>Additional Secretary Ministry of Industries</td>
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<td>BHUTAN</td>
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<td>Director of Service Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>Ms. Keeena Mosheshe</td>
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<td>Reisnerstrasse 29, 1030 Vienna, Austria</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>Ms. Limyaa Elnur Mohamed Saeed</td>
<td>Director of International Organizations Ministry of Industry</td>
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<td>Reisnerstrasse 29, 1030 Vienna, Austria</td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>Mr. Tagrig Khalafallah</td>
<td>Director, Ministerial Executive Office, Ministry of Industry</td>
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<td>Reisnerstrasse 29, 1030 Vienna, Austria</td>
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<td>94</td>
<td>Ms. Aaza Albadri</td>
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<td>95</td>
<td>Ms. Elli Ndeoya Pallangyo</td>
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<td>96</td>
<td>S.E. Mr. Bakalawa Fofana</td>
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<td>97</td>
<td>Mr. Anani Gozo</td>
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<td>Mr. Biava Kokou Attitso</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>Mr. Outouloum A. Sambo</td>
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<td>Mr. Atsouvi Sikpa</td>
<td>Director-General of SAZOF</td>
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<td>101</td>
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<td>102</td>
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<td>UGANDA</td>
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38 Countries and 24 Ministers attended
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<tr>
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<td>PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND TO UNIDO</td>
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<td>PERMANENT MISSION OF NICARAGUA TO UNIDO</td>
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<td>PERMANENT MISSION OF SPAIN TO UNIDO</td>
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<td>PERMANENT MISSION OF POLAND TO UNIDO</td>
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<td>Ms. Olga Rataj Assistant</td>
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<td>Mr. Maciej Bialowas Trainee</td>
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<td>United Arab Emirates to UNIDO</td>
<td>H.E. Mr. Mohammed Hamad Al-Shams</td>
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<td>Mr. Ali Mohammed Al Marzooqi</td>
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<td>H.E. Ambassador Khaled Shamaa</td>
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<td>Ms. Hana Kovacova</td>
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<td>Mr. Karel Pažourek</td>
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<td>Luxembourg to UNIDO</td>
<td>Mr. Robert Lauer</td>
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<td>Ms. Michele Wagner</td>
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<td>AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION (AUC)</td>
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<td>INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)</td>
<td>Mr. Moazam Mahmood Economic and Labour Market Analysis Department</td>
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<td>172</td>
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<td>Ms. Lucie Servos Sectoral Activities Department</td>
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<td>173</td>
<td>UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (UNECA)</td>
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<td>Mr. Anthony de Sa Director UCSSIC, India</td>
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<td>175</td>
<td>FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)</td>
<td>Mr. Gavin Wall Director Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Erik Busch-Petersen Consultant, Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>177</td>
<td>GROUP OF 77 (UN)</td>
<td>H.E. Mr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Iran</td>
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<tr>
<td>178</td>
<td>UN-OHRLLS</td>
<td>H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra Under Secretary General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS</td>
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**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS/DONORS & TRADE ORGANIZATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Page 182 | AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (AFDB)  
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Phone: + 90 312 508 11 01  
E-mail: o.kocaman@tika.gov.tr |
<p>| Page 193 | Ms. Fusun GUR | ??? |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td>194</td>
<td>Confederation Nationale des Employeurs du Senegal (CNES) Chairman</td>
<td>Mr. Mansour Cama</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5, avenue Carde (Rez-de-Chaussée)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P.O. Box 3819</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dakar, Senegal</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Phone: (+221) 33 823 09 74 FAX: (+221) 33 822 96 58</td>
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<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:cnes@sentoo.sn">cnes@sentoo.sn</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>Altash Corporation</td>
<td>Mr. Ibrahim Camara</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chef d'entreprise</td>
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<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:ibrahimcamara4@hotmail.com">ibrahimcamara4@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>196</td>
<td>WORLD SKILLS</td>
<td>Ms. Elfi Klumpp</td>
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<td>Managing Board Member</td>
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<td>Rechbergstraße 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>73770 Denkendorf, Germany</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Phone: +49 (0) 711 3467-1406</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>197</td>
<td>CINOP</td>
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<td>Managing Consultant</td>
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<td>5200 BP’s-Hertogenbosch</td>
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<td>FESTO DIDACTIC</td>
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<td>SCANIA</td>
<td>Mr. Carl Frederik Zachrisson</td>
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<td>Regional Sales Director Africa and Middle East</td>
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<td>204</td>
<td>BIO</td>
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### Press

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<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td>PRESS</td>
<td>Mr. Francois Katendi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Journalist</td>
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<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:fkatendi@hotmail.com">fkatendi@hotmail.com</a></td>
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Annex 4: Fact sheets
In recent years, Mozambique has enjoyed impressive growth rates, albeit with an over-reliance on coal and aluminum exports. Still, the domestic small and medium-sized enterprises are lagging far behind and require human resources with the capacity to leverage this growth, especially in rural areas where 62% of the population live. To address this situation, the Government of Mozambique embarked on an ambitious education plan to better prepare young people for entrepreneurial activities and trigger a nationwide bottom-up economic growth process to reduce poverty.

In 2007, with technical assistance from UNIDO and funding from the Government of Norway, the Ministry of Education and Culture introduced the Entrepreneurship Curriculum Programme (ECP) in secondary and vocational schools throughout the country. The programme aims at encouraging the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and skills.

UNIDO assisted the Government in developing an entrepreneurship curriculum with syllabus, teacher’s guides, textbooks, monitoring and evaluation tools, as well as assessment guidelines. Once in school, the students learn to identify businesses opportunities with growth potential in their community and assess resources that can be mobilized within their environments. Students also learn in theory and practice how to set up and manage a business and make savings. UNIDO further conducted a training of pre-service and in-service teachers to facilitate the nationwide rollout of the curriculum.

Entrepreneurship education plays an important role in developing attitudes, skills and knowledge that will enable young boys and girls to generate their own income, create jobs for others, as well as contribute to the economic growth of the country. Due to ECP’s very positive impact, the Ministry of Education and Culture has integrated the programme into the formal national education strategy and will implement it nationwide.

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For more information about UNIDO: communications@unido.org

At a glance:

- Goal: Entrepreneurship development for youth
- MDG: 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
- Thematic area: Poverty Reduction through Productive Activities
- Donor: Government of Norway
- Partner: Ministry of Education and Culture of Mozambique
- Budget: USD 2,300,000
- Status: ongoing
- Duration: 2007-2012
Context

One-third of the world’s population lacks access to electricity to cover even the most basic needs. In Rwanda, poverty levels are very high, with more than 60 per cent of the population living below the poverty line. As in many other developing countries, Rwanda’s efforts to reduce poverty and achieve greater economic growth are thwarted by the absence of electricity. And, although the country has the potential to produce energy using hydro, geothermal, solar and methane gas resources, many barriers need to be overcome, such as weak technical capabilities, lack of financial institutions in rural areas and weak private sector entrepreneurship.

Strategy

In response to the request of the Government of Rwanda for quick and coordinated interventions, UNIDO and the Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) implemented a project to promote renewable-based energy development for productive uses, by providing access to affordable modern energy in rural areas through the establishment of mini-hydropower stations.

On the basis of their development potential, four pilot sites, namely Nyamyotsi I, Nyamyotsi II, Mutobo and Gatobwe in the Districts of Nyabihu, Musanze and Nyarugura, were selected as sites for the mini-hydropower stations. Throughout the implementation process, which covered the construction, operation, maintenance and management of the facilities, UNIDO fostered the development of technical capacities and skills. At the same time, the project reviewed existing policies and proposed new solutions.

Current results

- 4 mini-hydropower pilot plants established
- 2,000 households, small businesses, cottage industries, schools and health centres served with locally produced clean energy
- Local technical capacities created

Impact/Outlook

UNIDO’s initiative in Rwanda has led to a breakthrough in mini-hydropower development. Based on the initial results of the project, the Government of Rwanda has decided to establish another 17 mini- and small-hydro sites, of which some are already completed or in the process of being completed. The mini-hydropower stations are an affordable approach to rural energy development. If replicated throughout the country, the additional stations would greatly contribute to employment creation and poverty reduction.

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At a glance:

- Goal: Energy access for rural communities
- MDG: 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger, 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- Thematic area: Environment and Energy
- Donors: Government of Rwanda, UNIDO
- Partner: Rwanda Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)
- Budget: USD 1,400,000
- Status: ongoing
- Duration: 2006 – 2011
Bangladesh has strived to attract Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) and business links since the early 1990s as a means to induce industrial development and job creation in the country. While the country’s location in Asia and attractive labor conditions always gave way to high expectations to mobilize Japanese FDI to the country, in actuality this task was a bigger challenge than originally anticipated, especially during the highly competitive FDI environment in the 1990s where many southeastern Asian nations were simultaneously competing for the same source of FDI. Simply said, Bangladesh, and its opportunities for FDI, was not yet well known in Japan.

UNIDO, through its Investment and Technology Promotion Office in Tokyo (ITPO Tokyo), started cooperation in the early 1990s with the Bangladeshi investment board (BOI), for what was to be a long-lasting and recurrent programme to promote Bangladesh as a destination for Japanese FDI.

The programme invited a delegate from BOI to visit Japan on several extended stays, for the purpose of holding country promotion seminars, bilateral business meetings with Japanese investors, and also to cooperate with Japanese government institutions to enable a cooperative environment to promote Japanese FDI to the country.

16 FDI Projects were concluded in Bangladesh between 2008-2010, with leading Japanese textile and logistics related companies, resulting in investments worth of USD 139.1 million and the creation of 14,344 jobs

The investment and technology promotion delegate programme for Bangladesh successfully accelerated the promotion of Japanese FDI into Bangladesh, and thus contributed to the efforts of the Government to promote further industrialization in the country. The contribution of the programme towards job creation, especially labor-intensive industries in the textile sector, is significant. Thus, obligations towards poverty alleviation, as well as realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), are met simultaneously. It is expected that due to the favorable business climate offered by Bangladesh for existing and newly incoming foreign investors, FDI will see further growth in the country, and eventually proceed to enter sectors with value addition. With such a direction, UNIDO’s services will continue to assist Bangladesh in its efforts to reach sustainable and equitable development.

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For more information about UNIDO: communications@unido.org

At a glance:
- Attracting Japanese FDI for industry and job creation in Bangladesh
- MDG: 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
  8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development
- Thematic area: Poverty Reduction through Productive Activities
- Donor: Government of Japan
- Partner: Board of Investment of Bangladesh
- Budget: USD 60,000
- Status: ongoing
- Duration: 1994 – 2012

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Context

The very diverse Ethiopian landscape enables for the cultivation of a wide range of oilseeds, for which Ethiopia has a long-standing tradition. After coffee, oilseeds are the country’s second largest export earner, accounting for about 18% of the total foreign exchange earnings at a value of USD 382 million in 2010. In total, the oilseed producing sector supports the livelihoods of about three million Ethiopian farmers, as well as traders, transporters and oil millers. In spite of its potential, chronic shortages in supply have been known to beset the operations of both the edible oil industry and the requirements of oilseeds exporters. The edible oil processing industry in Ethiopia remains, to a large extent, underdeveloped and cheap imported palm oil has put the local edible oil industry under additional pressure.

Strategy

Funded by the Government of Spain’s MDG Achievement Fund, UNIDO, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), is working to enhance the performance of the entire edible oil value chain, including production, processing and marketing. By improving the raw material supply system, promoting efficient processing capacities and improving access to finance and markets, the project aims to strengthen the sector. The direct target groups include poor smallholder farmers, farming cooperatives and unions, and small-scale edible oil processors.

Focus is on ensuring the participation of the private sector in all aspects of the value chain, from production and processing of oilseeds, to marketing, finance and business support services. In addition to working directly with the farmers and processors, the project has started and will continue implementing various capacity-building activities targeting federal and local government institutions, associations of processors, public and private sector Business Development Services providers, financial institutions and private marketing agents.

Current results

- Farmers assisted with improved seeds and credit
- Farmers unions equipped with seed-cleaning and grading machinery
- 71 small-scale processors organized into clusters which became registered as business associations
- Linkages between farmer unions and the clusters have been developed ensuring a market outlet for the farmers and raw material supply for the processors
- The processors have participated in technical training to improve their overall performance and quality
- The processors are moving their equipment to industrial zones where they will be able to share common facilities. This will have financial, social and environmental benefits

Impact/Outlook

The benefits of a strengthened edible oil value chain are being noticed among farming communities and processing clusters, but also by the public at large. So far, finance institutions and banks are positive towards providing credit for further investments to the edible oil clusters. The project is expected to serve as a model on how to transform small-scale edible oil processors into competitive businesses that would supply the market with high quality edible oil.

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At a glance:

- **Goal:** A competitive edible oil value chain
- **MDG:** 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
- **Thematic area:** Poverty Reduction through Productive Activities
- **Donor:** Government of Spain through the MDG Achievement Fund
- **Partner:** Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Ministries of Industry, Agriculture, Labour and Social Affairs
- **Budget:** USD 3,000,000 (USD 1,160,000 for UNIDO)
- **Status:** ongoing
- **Duration:** 2010 – 2012
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<td>AAF</td>
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<td>3ADI</td>
<td>Accelerated Agribusiness and Agro-Industries Development Initiative</td>
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<td>AFD</td>
<td>Agence Française de Développement</td>
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<td>AfDB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<td>AfT</td>
<td>Aid for Trade</td>
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<td>BIO</td>
<td>Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries</td>
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<td>BPoA</td>
<td>The Brussels Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries</td>
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<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>Enhanced Integrated Framework</td>
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<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FLGI</td>
<td>Farm Lands of Guinea Inc.</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
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<td>GSSD Academy</td>
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<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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