

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

WT/COMTD/W/26/Rev.2/Suppl.1

12 November 1997

(97-4963)

**Committee on Trade and Development
Eighteenth Session
17 November 1997**

Original: English

MANUAL ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING

Attached is a supplement to the Manual on Technical Cooperation and Training, WT/COMTD/W/26/Rev.2, updating information contained in Box 3 of that document relating to Specific Activities for Least-Developed Countries. It takes into account the outcome of the High-Level Meeting for Least-Developed Countries, which took place 27-28 October 1997.

Box 3**Specific Activities for Least-Developed Countries****Singapore Ministerial Conference:**

In order to facilitate the full participation of least-developed countries in the first Ministerial Conference, held in Singapore in December 1996, a number of technical cooperation activities were organized including:

- a *briefing session* on the WTO Multilateral Trading System for Europe-based ambassadors of least-developed countries at WTO headquarters in September 1996;
- a *Meeting of the Ministers* and senior officials from 29 least-developed countries in November, also at the WTO headquarters in Geneva. These events were made possible through special voluntary contributions by developed country Members.

High-Level Meeting

On recommendation of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) through the General Council, WTO Ministers at Singapore agreed to "organize a meeting with UNCTAD and the ITC as soon as possible in 1997, with the participation of aid agencies, multilateral financial institutions and least-developed countries to foster an integrated approach to assisting these countries in enhancing their trading opportunities".

This High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least-Developed Countries' Trade Development took place in Geneva 27-28 October 1997 and included the active participation of other international organizations (UNCTAD, ITC, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and UNDP). Invitations were extended to all 48 least-developed countries, whether WTO Members or not. In addition to providing an opportunity to improve market access, the meeting focused on technical assistance to support Least-Developed Countries in their trade and trade-related activities. Roundtable presentations were held for 12 countries (Bangladesh, Chad, Djibouti, Haiti, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia).

These roundtables were pilot cases and represented the start of a process where the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance will be applied on a country specific basis to other least-developed countries that express an interest in participating in this exercise. This framework was endorsed by the High Level Meeting and builds upon the experience of related programmes currently being undertaken by the six institutions involved.

Integrated WTO/UNCTAD/ITC Technical Assistance Programme

Prior to the High-Level Meeting an Integrated WTO/UNCTAD/ITC Technical Assistance Programme for Selected Least-Developed and Other African Countries was adopted in May 1996. It responds to the urgent need of least-developed and other African countries to be assisted in the expansion and diversification of their trade and in the process of their integration into the multilateral trading system, and to demands by the membership for improved coordination and cooperation among the three organizations, in order to both maximize the effectiveness of the overall results and to improve the utilization of available resources. This programme currently covers eight developing countries, of which four are least-developed. The countries selected are: Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda. The programme will be directly subsumed by the Integrated Framework approach adopted at the High-Level Meeting for Least-Developed Countries.