

JITAP

Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme
Programme Intégré Conjoint d'Assistance Technique



UNCTAD XI EVENT ON JITAP:

CAPACITY BUILDING IN ASSURING DEVELOPMENTAL GAINS FROM THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM

SUMMARY OF THE DEBATE AND COLLECTION OF PAPERS SUBMITTED

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INTRODUCTION

The Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries (JITAP), executed jointly by the International Trade Centre (ITC), UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization (WTO), aims at building trade and trade-related capacities in African countries to help them integrate beneficially into the multilateral trade system (MTS) and participate effectively in trade negotiations.

The UNCTAD XI event on JITAP aimed at identifying best practices and approaches in MTS capacity building in ensuring development gains for African and other developing countries. It showcased JITAP as a practical and integrated response by UNCTAD, WTO and ITC and participating donor countries in building and/or strengthening, in partner African countries, human, institutional and entrepreneurial capacities for trade negotiations, implementation of WTO agreements, and related trade policy formulation and export strategy development through participatory and inclusive national stakeholder discussion and decision making. The deliberations highlighted a number of key lessons learned and best practices. A summary of these points reflected by the Chairman is provided in Section I.

The event was chaired by H. E. Prof. E. B. Rugumayo, Minister of Tourism, Trade and Industry of Uganda, and by Mr. Mohamed Ould Hitt, Director of Trade of Mauritania. Ministers and senior officials of JITAP beneficiary countries, JITAP donor countries, other countries and African regional economic communities participated in the event. The meeting was open to broad public participation. The agenda appears in Section V.

The event was opened by H. E. Prof. E. B. Rugumayo, followed with statements by Mrs. Lakshmi Puri, Director, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities (UNCTAD), Dr. Rana, Deputy Director General, WTO, and Mr. Smadja, Deputy Executive Secretary, ITC. These introductory statements appear in Section II.

ITC, UNCTAD, WTO and the JITAP Coordination Unit serviced the event. They jointly prepared for the event a background note titled "JITAP: Capacity Building in Assuring Development Gains from the Multilateral Trading System" (TD(XI)/BP/2). This is provided in Section III. Papers on national country experiences on trade-related capacity building under JITAP were submitted by Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. These are reflected in Section IV.

I. SUMMARY OF POINTS: BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The special JITAP event was chaired by H. E. Prof. E. B. Rugumayo, Minister of Tourism, Trade and Industry of Uganda, and by Mr. Mohamed Ould Hitt, Director of Trade of Mauritania. Several delegations from partner, donor and other countries participated in the meeting together with delegates from the regional economic communities. Also participating were the three executing agencies, ITC, UNCTAD and WTO. The following points were highlighted during the discussions:

1. As a partnership for trade development, JITAP can make an important contribution to UNCTAD XI's subtheme of assuring development gains from the international trading system and trade negotiations. This contribution is delivered through capacity building at the levels of institutions, human resources and enterprises.
2. As a self-implemented, tool-based technical assistance programme, JITAP helps countries develop and/or adjust national trade policies, engage in trade negotiations, develop sector strategies, and elaborate medium- and long-term visions on trade, investment and development.
3. The management approach of JITA, as a joint initiative of ITC, UNCTAD and WTO, with the valuable support of donor countries, facilitates coordination of technical assistance at the country level at a time when mostly limited national capacities are strained by numerous and overlapping negotiating processes. This approach helps countries take a more active role in the management of technical cooperation and better understand the policies of development partners in this field. The national management mechanisms of JITAP and other programmes should be further integrated in the countries, or even merged for better complementarity of capacity-building activities.
4. The capacity set up in JITAP countries assisted them in coordinating the preparatory processes of their negotiating positions and in ensuring more active participation, as well as adequate follow-up to trade negotiations. This model was found efficient in dealing with vast, complex and highly specialized issues of international trade.
5. The institutional framework set up by JITAP to organize national debate on multilateral trade issues proved efficient for involving all parties concerned by the negotiations. The Inter-Institutional Committees (IICs) consistently contributed to enhancing the participation of the private sector, civil society and other development partners in the countries. These committees are supported by a network of trained professionals and a network of specialized MTS information points, namely the Reference Centres and National Enquiry Points.
6. The MTS information infrastructure and the network of experts that were established in the eight initial African JITAP countries are being extended to eight new African member countries. The institutional and human capacities and the related network are of prime interest to trade experts as a model for helping developing countries and their enterprises to enhance their beneficial participation in the MTS.
7. The trilateral approach of training experts in the MTS, covering simultaneously MTS rules, policies and business aspects, helps national experts acquire a real knowledge of the agreements and establish a multi-disciplinary knowledge base. This also encourages the constitution of networks of trainers, experts and presenters on the MTS, with multiplier effects. This approach continues to be implemented in the new group of countries and could be applied by each country that so wishes.

8. The coaching approach provided by JITAP for the formulation of sector strategies ensures ownership of the outcomes by all concerned stakeholders participating in the exercise. This warrants implementation of the measures agreed on. It also reinforces reflection on national development strategies concerning goods, services and commodities. The methodology applied involves all national partners in sectors with high export potential, thus producing beneficial effects at the macro-economic and enterprise levels that take advantage of the coaching process to enhance their own ability to strategize on new and existing markets.
9. Sustainability of MTS capacity built is essential for increasing countries' autonomy in ensuring a satisfactory level of economic performance and for fighting poverty. Networking of such capacities in the various countries, which is a key element of JITAP, will be determinant in this context. Substantial support should be provided to encourage more cooperation among JITAP partner countries. Support and follow-up mechanisms should be defined to help the countries expected to leave the programme after the consolidation phase. In the same context, regional economic communities stressed the need to complement national capacities built in the countries with similar efforts at the regional level. The need for increased collaboration between JITAP and these organizations was acknowledged.
10. The capacity of JITAP to take country priorities into full consideration and its catalyst role in generating complementary initiatives for developing the supply capacity of the countries for increased trade flows were noted with great interest. The programme helped ensure better allocation of resources by countries to the work on the MTS. It also prepared them to better assume their responsibilities in negotiations. The other trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) programmes could be inspired by the JITAP approaches. In this context, the importance of ensuring synergies with other TRTA programmes was highlighted, including with the Integrated Framework through better integration of the aspects that contribute to poverty eradication and to the mainstreaming of trade into economic and social development strategies.
11. General satisfaction was expressed by partner countries with the assistance provided by the three agencies and donors. The extension of the JITAP model of technical assistance to other countries was recommended. It was proposed to institutionalize an annual ministerial meeting to review the programme's activities and to integrate its experiences at the political level.

II. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, UNCTAD, WTO AND ITC

A. Speaking points for H. E. Professor E. B. Rugumayo, Minister of Tourism, Trade and Industry of Uganda

1. Welcome, on behalf of the JITAP family, to all colleagues from donor and recipient countries and well-wishers present.
2. I would like to thank the three agencies for scheduling this event on the occasion of UNCTAD XI.
3. The purpose of the meeting is: to bring together those participating in the programme to share their experiences and views. This is important for ensuring that future JITAP activities are delivered effectively.
4. Let me introduce the representatives of the three agencies: Mrs. Lakshmi Puri from UNCTAD, Dr. Kipkorir Rana from the WTO and Mr. Joseph Smadja from ITC. Let me also introduce Mr. Ben Fadhl, the overall JITAP Programme Coordinator. Mr. Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and Mr. Denis Belisle, Executive Director of ITC, may be joining the meeting later.
5. Let me ask the representatives of the three agencies to give brief remarks on the Programme.
6. The Ministerial segment is now open. Please note that:
 - In the interest of time, the meeting and interventions of the Ministers should be limited to policy issues. The chair and the representatives of the three agencies will thereafter proceed to a press briefing while the meeting continues in this room. All are welcome to continue in the meeting.
 - This JITAP event is organized in connection with the UNCTAD conference *first* for historical reasons; during UNCTAD IX at Midrand, the concept of JITAP was approved; at UNCTAD X in Bangkok the extension of JITAP was agreed on; therefore it is consistent that UNCTAD XI pronounce itself on the same programme.

Second, JITAP is a unique programme in that the three agencies are delivering technical assistance jointly and in an integrated manner, with each leading in the area of its competence: the WTO on Rules; UNCTAD on policy and research, and ITC on enterprise and production. This uniqueness is part of what the conference aspires to achieve.

Third, the meeting theme of UNCTAD XI and the focus on trade development

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