



Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries

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Discussion and adoption of the report to the General Assembly on the work of the Technology Bank in 2020

Report on the work of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries in 2020

1. The General Assembly established the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and adopted the Charter of the Technology Bank (see [A/71/363](#)) on 23 December 2016, in its resolution [71/251](#). In that resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the importance of improving the least developed countries' scientific research and innovation base, promoting networking among researchers and research institutions and helping the least developed countries to access and utilize critical and appropriate technologies. The Bank is financed by voluntary contributions from Member States and other stakeholders, including the private sector and foundations.
2. Since 2018, the Technology Bank has been led by the Managing Director, supported by three programme officers and five administrative support staff.
3. The agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Turkey on financial and in-kind support for the Technology Bank will expire in 2021, and consultations on a possible extension of the agreement have begun, in accordance with the provisions of the current agreement.
4. The service-level agreement between the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Technology Bank on the provision of certain location and non-location services will end on 31 December 2020, and the Technology Bank is in consultations with other service providers for non-location services support, including payroll and procurement.
5. In line with its budget and programme of work for 2020 ([TBLDC/2020/3](#) and [TBLDC/2020/3/Corr.1](#)), the Technology Bank has focused on its core activities, including conducting technology needs assessments, strengthening national academies of science in the least developed countries in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and enhancing innovation and capacity-building. Owing to disruptions and restrictions related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Bank was unable to conduct a significant portion of its activities as planned.

* [TBLDC/2020/7](#).



6. The aim of the technology needs assessment programme is to undertake diagnostic work in order to validate the technology needs of each of the least developed countries. In 2020, reviews were completed in Bhutan, the Gambia, Guinea, Timor-Leste and Uganda. The validation of the five technology needs assessment reports by the respective Governments was also completed. In 2021, the technology needs assessment process will be initiated in 15 additional countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Cambodia, Djibouti, Haiti, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tonga and Zambia.

7. Under the technology transfer programme and as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Technology Bank, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Health Organization, launched the Technology Access Partnership initiative in May 2020. Through the Partnership, support is provided to developing countries and the least developed countries in enhancing their capacity to manufacture essential COVID-19-related medical equipment, including personal protective equipment, medical diagnostic kits and medical devices. Through technology transfer and capacity-building support, support has been provided to manufacturers in several countries, including Botswana, Costa Rica, Lesotho, South Africa and the Sudan. Furthermore, work on establishing a digital repository of technologies continued in 2020, as part of a broader technology transfer programme.

8. In 2020, the Technology Bank partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to deliver dedicated training to researchers from the least developed countries on the latest research tools and methodologies through a newly developed open online course. Through the course, the Technology Bank was able to reach participants in more than 39 of the least developed countries on a more cost-effective basis.

9. As part of its academies of science capacity-building programme, in 2020, the Technology Bank had planned to support four countries – Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Lesotho and Sierra Leone – to establish their academies of science, with the support of the Network of African Science Academies. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, online support is being provided through the programme to the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho and Malawi to establish academies of science. In 2021, the Bank will continue to engage with regional networks of academies through the programme and the following countries will receive support towards establishing new academies: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger and Sierra Leone.

10. The Technology Bank, in partnership with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, delivered training and capacity-building support to experts in the least developed countries on access to and the use of geospatial data and information technologies in support of decision-making for climate change adaptation, disaster risk management and natural resources management. The training was delivered in the three pilot countries, namely, the Gambia, Mozambique and Uganda.

11. In 2020, through the financial support of the Government of Turkey, the Technology Bank, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, launched the Sustainable Development Goal impact accelerator programme in Bangladesh and Uganda. The key objective of the programme is to boost innovation capacity in these countries, while also providing key innovative solutions to long-standing challenges.

12. The Technology Bank signed an agreement with Medtronic, a global medical technology company, for the development of training programmes for medical practitioners from the least developed countries to contribute towards strengthening

health systems and capacity-building. In addition, the Bank signed an agreement with the World Eco-Design Conference to establish the Eco-Design Promotion Centre in Conghua, China, to offer training in industrial design skills to professionals from the least developed countries to enhance their capacity.

13. Resource mobilization remained a key priority for the Technology Bank in 2020, and activities to mobilize and identify resource mobilization opportunities among private sector companies, philanthropic foundations and other non-State actors continued throughout the year. Despite its best efforts, 2020 proved to be a difficult year for resource mobilization as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
