

## **Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries**

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR TRADE-RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

Report by the Director-General

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Integrated Framework (IF) was "endorsed" at the High Level Meeting (HLM) in October 1997 essentially as the institutional mechanism for the delivery of trade-related technical assistance to Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) by the six core participating Agencies - International Trade Center (ITC), International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The IF has been in operation since October 1997. However, between 1997 and November 1999, only modest accomplishments were attained for a variety of reasons. A review process of the IF, which was initiated in November 1999, culminated in the meeting of the Heads and representatives of the six core Agencies on 6 July 2000. At the Heads of Agencies meeting, a Joint Statement was adopted, which contained decisions for improving the functioning of the IF. These included the "mainstreaming" of trade into LDCs' development architecture, improved governance, enhanced coordination functions, and ensuring that the IF was converted into a funded mandate.

2. Following the decisions by the Heads of Agency, consultations amongst Members, and between Members and the core agencies, a Pilot Scheme was adopted by the Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries on 12 February 2001.<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to the decision on the Pilot Scheme, IF implementation will now proceed in a process led by the World Bank on the basis of which trade integration strategy chapters will be mainstreamed into country development plans and strategies for poverty reduction. The trade integration strategy will encompass analysis of both external and internal constraints to trade, and will include an elaborated programme of prioritised and sequenced trade-related technical assistance projects to be considered for funding at World Bank Consultative Groups (CGs) and/or UNDP Round Tables.

3. The IF Pilot Scheme will be managed by an IF Steering Committee, which held its first meeting on 15 March 2001. Its value is its tripartite configuration of donors, LDCs and agencies. This new governance structure has improved transparency, ensured ownership amongst the key stakeholders, and solved the problem in which other core agencies were concerned that decisions affecting their agencies were taken by the members of one agency – the WTO – and on the basis of WTO rules of procedure. Donors, LDCs and agencies now agree that the IF has been re-designed as a viable model for the delivery of trade-related technical assistance to LDCs and as a mechanism for the mainstreaming of trade priority areas of action into LDCs' development plans and strategies for poverty reduction.

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<sup>1</sup> The proposal for the IF Pilot Scheme is contained in WTO document WT/LDC/SWG/IF/13.

## II. BACKGROUND

4. Pursuant to the mandate contained in the WTO Singapore Ministerial Declaration,<sup>2</sup> the High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least-Developed Countries' Trade Development (HLM) was organised by the WTO with the support of other agencies on 27-28 October 1997. This meeting aimed to boost efforts to further the integration of Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) in the global economy and included specific measures to improve market access, to support human and institutional capacity building, and to improve participation of LDCs in the multilateral trading system.<sup>3</sup>

5. The High Level Meeting endorsed the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, Including for Human and Institutional Capacity-Building, to support Least-Developed Countries in Their Trade and Trade-Related Activities (IF).<sup>4</sup> The IF was then "endorsed" by the respective Governing Bodies of the core Agencies.<sup>5</sup>

## III. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

6. As "endorsed" in October 1997, the Integrated Framework "seeks to increase the benefits that least-developed countries derive from the trade-related technical assistance available to them from the six Agencies involved in designing this Framework, as well as from other multilateral, regional and bilateral sources, with a view to assisting them to enhance their trade opportunities, to respond to market demands and to integrate into the multilateral trading system".<sup>6</sup>

7. As defined in the Integrated Framework document, the IF aims to:

- (a) Ensure that trade-related technical assistance activities are demand-driven by the least-developed countries and meet their individual needs effectively. Account can thereby be taken of differences in levels of development and economic structure, and physical characteristics such as location (e.g. land-locked, island) and other factors which influence the supply response to market signals and policy initiatives. The individual country level will normally be the locus of activities conducted under the Integrated Framework, although if considered appropriate the locus can be established at the regional or sub-regional level;
- (b) Enhance ownership by each least-developed country over the trade-related technical assistance activities being provided. This is a key feature of the Framework. Responsibility for the coordination of implementation and monitoring of activities under the Integrated Framework at the country level will lie primarily with the least-developed country concerned;

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<sup>2</sup> WTO Members adopted the Comprehensive and Integrated WTO Plan of Action for LDCs (WT/MIN(96)/14).

<sup>3</sup> The Report of the High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least-Developed Countries' Trade Development is contained in document WT/LDC/HL/23. Notes on the proceedings of the High-Level Meeting are contained in documents WT/LDC/HL/M/1 and Add.1. On the follow-up to the High-Level Meeting, the progress report by the Director-General at the WTO Ministerial Session in 1999 is contained in WT/MIN(99)/7.

<sup>4</sup> WT/LDC/HL/1/Rev.1.

<sup>5</sup> The Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA endorsed the IF at its session held from 19-26 January 1998. The Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD endorsed the IF at its session on 16 February 1998. ITC's participation in the programme is ensured ipso facto since it is a joint subsidiary organ of WTO and the UN, the latter acting through UNCTAD. Staff of the IMF informed their Executive Board of the results of the High-Level Meeting and of their intention to participate in the application of the IF. The World Bank Executive Board endorsed the framework on 12 May 1998.

<sup>6</sup> WT/LDC/HL/1/Rev.1.

- (c) Enable each agency involved to increase its efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of trade-related technical assistance activities. The Framework will permit each agency to design and tailor its individual efforts to meet the needs of least-developed countries in the light of full information about the specific needs of each country and about current and projected activities being undertaken by other agencies in the area of trade-related technical assistance. It will allow the trade-related technical assistance activities of all the agencies to be properly co-ordinated, sequenced and synchronised;
- (d) Keep under review trade-related technical assistance activities in individual least-developed countries, evaluate periodically their success in meeting the country's needs, review how those needs change, and adapt the programme of activities accordingly; and
- (e) Provide comprehensive information about the specific needs of each least-developed country and about the trade-related technical assistance activities of the six Agencies involved to other relevant multilateral and regional intergovernmental organisations, to bilateral development partners and to the private sector.

8. The above points were borne in mind at the meeting of the Heads and representatives of the six core Agencies in New York on 6 July 2000. It was also recognised at the meeting that the role of the IF needed to be expanded make the IF an instrument for mainstreaming trade into country development strategies, in order to ensure that the benefits of trade-related technical assistance are optimised by delivering such technical assistance within a coherent policy context.

9. The review also made evident the value of the IF as an indispensable platform for inter-agency coordination and cooperation, and to assist the LDCs to meet the challenges of managing globalisation, and poverty alleviation in particular. The increasing realisation of the value of the IF in inter-agency, donor and LDC relations, has been matched by increasing support for it in many multilateral fora, as well as requests that it should be extended to include low income developing countries.

#### **IV. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK PRIOR TO THE REVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK**

10. Prior to the review which began in November 1999, the IF was structured on the basis of eight steps,<sup>7</sup> although in practice five main steps were involved. These were:

- (a) Country needs assessments prepared by individual LDCs;
- (b) Integrated responses by the six core Agencies: IMF, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, World Bank, and WTO;
- (c) Preparation of a multi-year country programme and the holding of a Round Table meeting;
- (d) Implementation and monitoring of trade-related technical assistance activities; and
- (e) Regular evaluation by the staff of the six core Agencies and officials of the least-developed countries.

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<sup>7</sup> These eight steps are: (i) Needs assessment by individual LDCs; (ii) Integrated responses by the six core Agencies; (iii) Country Specific Round Table Meetings; (iv) Coordination amongst the six Agencies involved; (v) Financing; (vi) Implementation and Monitoring; (vii) Review and Evaluation of Country Programmes; and, (viii) Maintenance and publication of a core inventory. (WT/LDC/HL/1/Rev.1, paragraph5).

11. Under the “old” IF, out of forty-eight LDCs (and now forty-nine LDCs with the inclusion of Senegal), forty had completed their needs-assessment and thirty-seven had designated national focal points to coordinate IF implementation. The needs assessments typically covered areas ranging from compliance with WTO rules and obligations and trade policy to supply side constraints, such as lack of human and institutional capacity, needs of the private sector, market information, product development, trade-related infrastructure. The six agencies formulated Integrated Responses to all the needs assessments prepared. The formulation of the Integrated Responses were intended to ensure that the agencies delivered trade-related technical assistance within their competence and mandate, and that technical assistance activities did not overlap and that duplication was avoided.

12. There were modest achievements on the IF as it functioned between October 1997 and the review process. An illustrative listing of the activities that were carried out either individually or jointly by the six agencies, on the basis of the Integrated Responses, typically included the following:

- (a) specialized assistance to review and update customs legislation and rationalize import tariffs by IMF;
- (b) focus on trade information support and assistance to enterprises in product and market development by ITC;
- (c) policy dialogue with LDCs and national or regional programmes and activities by UNDP;
- (d) UNCTAD studies and policy dialogue and assistance in trade and development;
- (e) credit and advisory services, trade-related infrastructure and institutional building projects by the World Bank;
- (f) human and institutional capacity building assistance by WTO including national/regional seminars and workshops, special three week trade policy courses for LDCs and technical missions to assist in implementation of WTO agreements; and,
- (g) Joint activities under the Integrated Responses included, work on modernization-computerization of customs systems by IMF, UNCTAD and UNDP; World Bank-WTO Joint Regional Seminars on the multilateral trading system and how to use trade as a tool for development; the design and implementation of projects by ITC, UNCTAD, and the WTO under the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) in four African LDCs.

13. Five Round Tables were held in Bangladesh, The Gambia, Haiti, Tanzania and Uganda. The results of the Round Tables were disappointing, except in the case of Uganda, where resources were generated, principally because Uganda had been able to “mainstream” trade into its overall national development plan.<sup>8</sup> The reasons for the disappointing results from the IF Rounds were thoroughly reviewed in the Report on the IF Review. The reasons included, *inter alia*, the need to enhance ownership, mainstream trade into development architecture and resource difficulties for the priorities identified. Furthermore, governance and management were amongst some of the main elements in the improvements suggested under the IF review.

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<sup>8</sup> See Annex 6 of the Report of the Review of the IF, as contained in WTO document WT/LDC/SWG/IF/1.

## V. THE REVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK

14. The review of the Integrated Framework, pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Framework document that emerged from the High Level Meeting, was initiated in November 1999 by the six core Agencies, in consultation with LDCs and their development partners. To precede consideration by the Agencies, an independent review team was appointed to make its own assessment. The objective of the exercise was to review the three-year operation of the IF in the light of experience that urgently required the agencies to respond to a number of issues and to improve the IF as a vehicle for delivering trade-related technical assistance.<sup>9</sup>

15. The report of the independent review of the IF<sup>10</sup> raised issues, most of which were incorporated in the re-design of the IF, and other issues which still remain relevant in multilateral efforts to improve the delivery of trade-related technical assistance. Recommendations by the report for the improvement of the IF were as follows:

- (a) Clarify Policy Objectives: Clarify the objectives of the IF by restricting it to technical assistance for trade-related development, to support, inter alia, policy reforms, manpower and human resources development, customs reforms, institutional change and legal environment reforms. Infrastructure investment and other hardware development, as well as technical assistance solely related to equipment and bricks and mortar, would be handled in the context of Consultative Groups (CGs) supported by the World Bank and the UNDP-supported Country Round Tables (as distinguished from the round tables presently held for the IF).
- (b) Prioritize and Link to Overall Development Assistance Architecture: In the future most development assistance strategy issues are likely to be developed through participatory processes, in the context of such exercises as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) and the United Nations Development Strategy Frameworks (UNDAF). These efforts will be prepared by LDCs in consultation with the World Bank, the IMF, UNDP and other UN agencies, donors and stakeholders. In all such endeavours, country strategy will define the role of trade development and related technical assistance. The IF will then be linked to the priorities established through the formulation of country development strategies.
- (c) Give Ownership to the LDCs: Make the IF process more demand driven and country-owned by requiring LDCs to prioritise their specific needs from the list of trade-related technical assistance activities listed in the Needs Assessments. Once a particular trade-related technical assistance project or program is identified as a priority by an LDC, that particular project or program would be submitted to the agency responsible for managing and coordinating such technical assistance.
- (d) Strengthen Governance and Administration: The review considered two options: (i) strengthening the Administrative Unit to the point that it can manage the IF while continuing to be located at the ITC in Geneva, and (ii) moving the responsibility for managing the IF to WTO (where the Administrative Unit would be integrated). On balance, the review concluded that the superior option is to make the WTO responsible for IF management. This is because the IF requires leadership in the trade field. This leadership in trade resides in WTO, following the Uruguay Round. Given the specific capacities required for managing the IF (within the sharper focused

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<sup>9</sup> Problems and challenges facing the IF are well documented. See for example, WT/MIN(99)/7, WT/COMTD/LDC/W/18, WT/LDC/SWG/IF/1.

<sup>10</sup> WTO/SWG/LDC/IF/1.

objectives as per (a) above), WTO will need to strengthen its ability to handle trade-related technical assistance. The Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) would continue as an advisory group, meeting not more than twice a year, and help WTO in its coordination with the other IAWG agencies.

- (e) Coordination Issues: Once governance is strengthened along the lines of the foregoing recommendation, coordination can be better assured, as WTO will be the designated clearinghouse for inter-agency coordination issues. After completion of all Needs Assessments, the IF process can be simplified. There is also no need to hold round table meetings for the IF, if no trade-related technical assistance funding is expected. As to coordination within LDCs, the lead ministry in the country (whether it be Finance or Planning) that now discusses and presents infrastructure projects to the donors in the context of World Bank-supported CGs and UNDP-supported Round Tables, should bring the Trade or Commerce Ministers to support their requests for trade-related investment assistance at these forums. A special session for trade development may be considered in these forums.
- (f) Funding the IF: First, the IAWG agencies and donors will need to ensure that they budget their administrative costs related to the IF while providing whatever other incentives are needed for a better recognition of the responsibilities which they undertook when the IF was created. Second, when it comes to the financing of trade-related technical assistance projects, one approach would be for WTO, as the managing agency for the IF to set up and manage a Trust Fund to finance such technical assistance projects. All donors, including multilateral agencies, would contribute (on a voluntary basis) to the Trust Fund as an expression of their commitment to the IF. The Trust Fund could be replenished every three years, depending on the demand for such funds. The LDCs would access the funds according to well-established criteria and use them within the priorities established under the IF process. The LDCs should be able to draw from the Trust Fund to procure technical assistance from any source, including the private sector. This would not only make technical assistance truly demand-driven but will also create incentives for the agencies to tailor-make their assistance to specific country needs. The use of funds would be subject to standard rules utilised by donors for their projects as to commitments and disbursements. The technical assistance provided by the six agencies and the private sector would be subject to international competitive bidding norms. The alternative to the Trust Fund option would be that the WTO would play the role of a clearing-house for trade-related technical assistance - an option that is less likely to achieve the objectives of a revised IF.
- (g) Monitor Trade-Related Technical Assistance Performance: As trade development activities are brought into the mainstream by including them in the overall assistance process, they will be monitored and evaluated along with the progress of other programs in the countries. This can be done through the World Bank's Economic and Sector Work and through the WTO's Trade Policy Reviews. WTO trade policy reviews should specifically monitor and evaluate the progress achieved towards integration of LDCs into the multilateral trading system. However, these reviews should go beyond the review of consistency with trade rules to assess how well trade regimes and trade-related technical assistance are contributing to the integration of LDCs into the global trading environment.
- (h) Enlarging the IF to Other Countries and Agencies: This review recommends that the question of enlarging the IF be revisited in the future, after the new recommended arrangements are in place for about three years. At that time a review could be

undertaken to see what progress had been made since 1997 to advance the objectives established for the IF.

16. The above recommendations were discussed, along with other inputs to the review, at the IAWG meeting on 21-22 June 2000. At this meeting of agency officials, representatives of the six agencies considered recommendations to the Heads of Agency on the improvements to be made on the IF. The heads and representatives of the Agencies met on 6 July 2001 in New York<sup>11</sup> and issued a Joint Statement<sup>12</sup> containing decisions to make more effective the implementation of the Integrated Framework.

17. The Joint Statements essentially contained the following four major decisions for the improvement of the functioning of the IF:

- (a) First, the Agencies agreed to assist the efforts of LDCs to mainstream trade and trade-related technical assistance into national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. It was also agreed that the World Bank would be responsible for mainstreaming;
- (b) Second, the decision was taken to expand the meeting of the Heads of core Agencies to include representatives of donor countries in a new governance body – an IF Steering Committee – which would provide policy oversight;
- (c) Third, the Administrative Unit, formerly located at ITC, would be folded into the WTO, which would continue to chair the IAWG; and,
- (d) Fourth, the Agencies proposed the establishment of an IF Trust Fund and contributions to it, with an initial funding objective of US\$20 million. The UNDP was assigned the responsibility for managing the proposed IF Trust Fund in cooperation with the core Agencies, on agreed terms.

18. Furthermore, the Agencies agreed that the Joint Statement would be presented to their respective Governing Bodies and/or Councils<sup>13</sup>.

## **VI. FOLLOW-UP TO THE JOINT STATEMENT BY THE HEADS OF AGENCY**

A. JOINT IF SEMINAR: "POLICY RELEVANCE OF MAINSTREAMING TRADE INTO COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES: PERSPECTIVE OF LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES", 29-30 JANUARY 2001

19. As the first step in implementing the new arrangements for the Integrated Framework, as contained in the Joint Statement by the Heads of the Agency, the six core Agencies jointly organised the seminar on the "Policy Relevance of Mainstreaming Trade into Country Development Strategies: Perspective of Least-Developed Countries" on 29-30 January 2001, in the WTO.<sup>14</sup> One of the reasons for holding the seminar was because trade priorities, including the implementation of WTO obligations and commitments, were frequently, neither integral to the overall development priorities and strategies of countries nor their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) process. Although openness to trade was strongly associated with economic growth and poverty reduction, trade as a growth strategy was yet to be mainstreamed into development plans and poverty reduction strategies

<sup>11</sup> WTO/SWG/LDC/IF/4.

<sup>12</sup> WT/LDC/SWG/IF/2.

<sup>13</sup> In case of the WTO, the Joint Statement was presented by the Director-General to the General Council on 17 and 19 July 2000, and by the WTO Secretariat to the Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries on 21 July 2000.

<sup>14</sup> The programme of the seminar is contained in WTO document WT/LDC/SWG/IF/9/Rev.2.

of many LDCs. Apart from the inherent challenge of mainstreaming, core trade priorities of trade ministries/departments were sometimes not taken into account by finance and planning ministries. The challenge of mainstreaming was urgent because it was a necessary and vital precondition for the implementation of policies that are required for economic growth and poverty alleviation.

20. The seminar was attended by some 200 participants, comprising representatives from the trade, finance and development communities, both capital and Geneva-based. At the end of the seminar, a 13-point summary of intensive discussions under five different panels was provided by Mr Jonathan Fried, Senior Assistant Deputy Finance Minister of Canada. The Chair's summary, as well as lead presentations, is contained in WTO document WT/LDC/SWG/IF/15. It was also agreed that the results of the seminar would be forwarded to the LDC-III, the UN Conference on Financing for Development, and bilateral, regional and multilateral donor agencies.

#### B. THE INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK PILOT SCHEME

21. The end result of the review process initiated in November 1999, was the proposal for an Integrated Framework Pilot Scheme. The proposal was adopted by the Sub-Committee of Least-Developed Countries at its 23<sup>rd</sup> Session on 12 February 2001.<sup>15</sup> The scheme essentially proposed to proceed with the implementation of the re-modelled IF on the basis of a pilot scheme. The objective in the current implementation of the IF is to implant it into LDCs' national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The pilot countries will be those who have demonstrated a clear choice and commitment to mainstream a trade integration strategy chapter as part of their development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The practical implementation will be led by the World Bank, based on a Pilot Phase Work Programme.

22. The IF Pilot Scheme also established an Integrated Framework Trust Fund, to which contributions would be sought from donors on a voluntary basis. Also established was an Integrated Framework Steering Committee (IFSC) which would be composed of representatives of the 6 core Agencies, 6 LDCs, and all donors, and would be chaired by a donor country, with an LDC, as Vice-Chair. To improve coordination and transparency amongst donors, LDCs, and agencies, it was also decided that 4 special representatives (2 donor countries and 2 LDCs) would be appointed to participate, in an advisory capacity, in meetings of the IAWG. The structure and composition were designed to ensure ownership, responsibility and involvement by all stakeholders.

23. The IF Pilot Scheme reiterated the need for enhanced coordination and collaboration amongst all development partners, including bilateral and multilateral, who are involved in trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building. Under the Pilot Scheme, a programme of trade-related technical assistance would be elaborated in the policy context for each LDC. This programme, including infrastructural requirements, would then be actively considered at World Bank Consultative Groups and UNDP Round Table meetings for financing.

24. Following the adoption of the IF Pilot Scheme, the inaugural meeting of the Integrated Framework Steering Committee was held on 15 March 2001. At the meeting, several donor Members, as well as the UNDP, pledged the sum of US\$4.55 million for the IF Trust Fund. Donors immediately contributing were Denmark, the EC, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the UNDP.<sup>16</sup> These pledges transformed the IF from an unfunded to a funded mandate, which was one of the problems of the IF prior to the review.

25. The IF Steering Committee also agreed to proceed with the implementation of the IF Pilot Scheme based on the Pilot Phase Work Programme prepared by the World Bank, on behalf of the

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<sup>15</sup> The proposal is contained in document WT/LDC/SWG/IF/13.

<sup>16</sup> The United Kingdom formally announced its pledge at the meeting of Development Ministers, in London, on 19 March 2001.



IAWG. The Work Programme sets out the stages for implementing the trade integration strategy chapters, and lists the cluster of the possible countries in the Pilot scheme on the basis of which the mainstreaming of trade integration analysis into PRSPs would proceed. The trade integration studies, as proposed in the Work Programme, would typically have five components:

- (a) A review and analysis of the country's economic and export performance in a historical and international perspective. Particular attention will be paid to indicators of per capita income, trade and integration performance vis-à-vis those of comparator countries;
- (b) A description and assessment of the macroeconomic environment and the country's investment climate. The objective is to assess the incentive regime that confronts (potential) investors, both in tradables and nontradables, in areas such as customs clearance, access to and cost of pre-shipment finance and working capital, as well as barriers to investment;
- (c) An assessment of the international policy environment and specific constraints that exports from each country face in international markets. This section will have three dimensions, namely, (i) identify trade restrictions that exist in industrial country markets for LDCs' existing and potential export products; (ii) determine the impact of membership in regional economic integration arrangements; and (iii) analyze the implications of greater market access for the existing and potential export commodities, including services, both regionally and globally;
- (d) An analysis of key labour-intensive sectors, including in agriculture, where the private sector perceives a potential to exist for a significant expansion in output and exports, and a good a priori case can be made that the poor stand to benefit either in terms of employment and/or lower prices. For each sector/product, the team will analyse the internal constraints (e.g. transaction costs, the regulatory environment, and global and regional rules) that entrepreneurs face in expanding production and exporting to the rest of the world;
- (e) A conclusion with a pro-poor trade integration strategy, which will comprise of a proposed set of policy reform priorities and several action plans at the sectoral level. These policy proposals will target the key bottlenecks and constraints that emerge from the analysis as priority areas for action, and corollary actions by donors and development partners. Each study will also include an assessment of technical assistance and capacity building priorities to support the trade strategy, as well as recommended actions that should be taken by high-income and regional partner countries to improve access to their markets.

26. The Pilot Phase Work Programme will be finalised by the Integrated Framework Steering Committee at its second meeting to be held on 3 May 2001. The initial three pilot countries will be identified and be agreed by the IAWG.

27. The IF Pilot Programme will be reviewed by donors, LDCs and agencies by the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference. At this time, if there is satisfaction amongst all the key parties that the IF has been re-designed into a viable model for the delivery of trade-related technical assistance and for integrating trade priority areas of action into LDCs' national development plans and strategies for poverty reduction, the approach in the pilot countries would be extended to other LDCs.