



Final report - Project GLO/01G33

Developing Human and Institutional Capacity to Address Climate Change Issues in LDCs: **Preparing for NAPAs**



Internet training in LAO DRP

“There is no doubt that this project was one of the GEF funded projects that managed to bring tangible results within a short period of time. It has also demonstrated how a relatively small amount of funds, combined with the use of local expertise, can lead to substantial outputs.”

*H.E. Khieu Muth and Tin Ponlok,
Ministry of Environment, Cambodia*

Acknowledgments

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CCP	Climate Change Programme
COP	Conference of the Parties
FP	Focal Points
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAM	International Affairs Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
LDC	Least-Developed Country
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
OFF	Operational Focal Points
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation (UNFCCC)
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (UNFCCC)
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

GEF/UNDP Project title:	HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES IN LDCs
Project number:	GLO/01/G33
Starting date:	September 2001
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Location:	<i>Local:</i> National UNFCCC Focal Points in 45 LDC countries. <i>Global:</i> UNITAR New York/Geneva
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Introduction

This document is a shorter version of the final report of the project. It covers all activities undertaken from mid-September 2001 until December 2002. It is composed of the following four sections:

- Section 1 provides a brief background on the project history, rationale and objectives;
- Section 2 presents a summary of the major activities carried out and results achieved under the project;
- Section 3 contains an evaluation of the results compared to the specific and broader objectives defined in the project document. It also summarizes problems encountered and lessons learned;
- Section 4 provides a broader assessment of the project's impact and recommendations for follow-up action in the context of future capacity building efforts within the UNFCCC.

Two annexes provide the list of UNFCCC Focal Points with contact details and a paper produced to contribute to the capacity development of the negotiators of the LDC Group in the context of this project. The full version of the UNITAR Internet training manual is available on-line at: www.unitar.org/ccp.

Daniel von Moltke, consultant, produced this report with inputs from Annie Roncerel, Senior Programme Coordinator and project manager, Juan Caicedo Restrepo and Sueli Giorgetta, UNITAR Fellows. The full report, including all project documents (questionnaires, memorandum of understanding and terms of reference, calendar of the grants disbursement and certified financial report) is available at the UNITAR Climate Change programme. Brandon Turner produced the layout. Pictures: Government of the Maldives and LDC UNFCCC Focal Points.

1. Background

1.1 Project Rationale and History

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) represent the poorest segment of the international community. A variety of vulnerabilities and constraints, related to human, institutional and productive capacities, prevent economic and social development in these countries. They are specially characterised, among others, by their susceptibility to international economic crisis, by their limited access to education, health and social services and by a lack of access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). Moreover, LDCs also face a multitude of constraints related to the lack of adequate human and institutional capacities, and of enough resources, to effectively participate in international policy making and in the negotiation of international agreements, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Hence, it was agreed that appropriate human capacity and access to ICTs is an essential tool and a prerequisite for successful participation in the formulation and subsequent implementation of international agreements.

In order to address LDCs needs, the Sixth Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC in cooperation with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), provided an urgent technical assistance to cope with their capacity building constraints and their lack of access to ICTs.

To respond to this decision the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) developed for UNDP an “*Enabling Activity*” project proposal, to be funded by GEF, to build human and institutional capacity for the Climate Change Focal Points (FPs) in the 46 LDCs that have ratified the UNFCCC. The project was based on specific needs identified by the LDCs through an initial questionnaire produced by the UNFCCC Secretariat in 2001 (Estimation of Specific Needs Related to Strengthening National Climate Change Secretariats and/or Focal Points, and Training in Negotiating Skills). It was designed to strengthen capacity by immediately providing wider access to information and communication technologies.

The UNITAR project was technically initiated and funded prior to the formal establishment of the Least Developed Countries Fund. It is however an early contribution to the LDCs work programme, subsequently established by COP7 Decision finally agreed upon in Marrakech¹. UNITAR *Enabling Activity Project* is in line with the framework for capacity building for developing countries, adopted at COP7, with the objective to guide capacity-building activities related to the implementation of the UNFCCC and to promote effective participation in the Kyoto Protocol process.

1.2 Enabling Activity Project Objectives

The UNDP/GEF project overall development objectives were formulated as follows:

a) General objectives:

- i. To develop and strengthen capacity of the national UNFCCC Focal Points from eligible LDCs, and
- ii. To allow LDCs to better follow and contribute to the UNFCCC process at national and global levels.

¹ Decisions 5/CP.7

b) Specific objectives:

- i. To enable LDC Focal Points to utilize ICTs;
- ii. To access Climate Change related information with ICTs, including information provided by the UNFCCC Secretariat website; and
- iii. To improve general communication between the UNFCCC Secretariat, the LDCs Focal Points and National Climate Change Committees.

1.3 Project Funding and Approval Process

The project was designed to provide effective and fast response to the specific needs of the LDCs Focal Points, which were identified at COP6, thus funding was requested under the GEF expedited procedures for enabling activities.

The time frame between the project proposal and its approval by GEF was extremely short. This was possible because of the close and effective cooperation between all partners involved in the process, UNFCCC Focal Points, GEF, UNDP and UNITAR.

1.4 Project Management Team

UNDP was the GEF Implementing Agency and UNITAR the Executing Agency. Ms. Annie Roncerel, Senior Programme Coordinator of the UNITAR Climate Change Programme (CCP) was in charge of overall project management. With a view to provide a comprehensive solution to LDCs constraints and needs, other UNITAR programmes were directly involved in its execution. Pascal Renaud (with Odile Ambry), Christophe Nuttall, Jocelyn Fenard (Information and Communication Technology Programmes) and Brook Boyer (Senior Programme Officer, Multilateral Diplomacy and International Affairs Management Programme), Ruth Hogland (Finances) and Ron Valerio (Network Technician) have all contributed in various phases of the project.

UNITAR worked closely with eligible LDCs Focal Points listed in Annex V to carry out project management and substantive activities. UNDP, GEF, and most importantly the UNFCCC Secretariat, were also involved during the implementation process. Finally, the UNDP country offices were responsible for providing support in the disbursement of funds to the LDC Focal Points.

2. Project Implementation and Results

The project consisted of two main activities, a workshop and consultation seminar on institutional strengthening for LDCs, followed by the provision of a grant for the acquisition of information and communications equipment, and local training on information technology.

2.1 Workshop on Institutional Strengthening for LDCs (Bandos, Maldives)

The consultation seminar on Institutional Strengthening for LDCs was held on the 1st of October 2001 in Bandos, Maldives and was followed by a meeting for GEF Focal Points representatives on National Capacity Self Assessment (2 – 4 October 2001). The seminar was organized to coincide with a three-day workshop organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat on LDC issues, namely the formulation of National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs).

The purpose of the GEF funded seminar was to discuss capacity building, information and communication technologies and negotiation skills development. This meeting was also a way of creating an opportunity to bring together UNFCCC FPs and GEF FPs for increased coordination at the national levels. The UNITAR Climate Change Programme Coordinator was responsible for the organization of the one-day consultation on ICT capacity building needs and played a facilitating role in the workshop organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat.



Representatives of 45 UNFCCC and GEF Focal Points from LDCs attended this workshop and consultation seminar. Travel costs for GEF FPs participants and additional DSAs for all UNFCCC Focal Points were covered with this project. This budget also covered simultaneous translation in French.



- *ICT Capacity Building Needs and Project Design*

In the Maldives, LDC FPs were asked to answer a questionnaire aimed at identifying their ICT equipment and training needs within the scope of the project. The majority of participants completed and returned the questionnaires to UNITAR. The Maldives consultation seminar allowed obtaining valuable and constructive feedback on the project

design from the beneficiaries. Inputs received were adequately considered by CCP Coordinator in order to adapt the project design and its implementation in the following areas:

- Country-driven delivery of technical resources and training through local procurement and locally contracted trainers, instead of the originally envisioned uniform training programme delivered by UNV Volunteers;
- Provision of terms of reference for contracting local trainers, and additional technical support by UNITAR for identification and selection of local ICT trainers, where desired; and
- Combining the budget for equipment purchase and delivery of in-country training into one larger sub-grant for each FP.

The objective of the modifications was to adapt the training curriculum, format, and the delivery timing in a way to better accommodate local priorities and needs, as well as the spin-off effect of building local IT capacity through local procurement and the use of local trainers only.



At the consultation process that took place at the Maldives workshop, the CCP Coordinator submitted a revised project design to the LDC FPs representatives, for discussion and feedback.

Participants welcomed the initiative and inquired actively on the project ability to respond to various ICT priorities and needs tailored for each country. Other issues raised were related to the need of flexibility for the use of the available resources. LDCs

representatives demonstrated concerns with the timing and procedures for disbursement of available funds to FPs. An agreement was reached and it was decided that the LDCs Chairman, Mama Konate, UNFCCC Focal Point and LDG Chairman, from Mali, would serve as an adviser to the project.

The revised project was subsequently submitted to LDC delegates on the occasion of their meeting at COP7, by the end of October 2001, when they finally approved its practical implementation. This consultative process proved to be an ideal opportunity to adequate the project to the immediate needs of LDC FPs, making it easier to obtain their agreement before its implementation phases. This approach has made the ICT provision and training activities more flexible and effective, reflecting the concrete needs of FPs partners.



- *Capacity Building for the Development of Negotiating and Language Skills*

On the occasion of the Maldives workshop, UNITAR also presented a background paper² on long-term planning for the development of negotiating and language skills training. Two UNITAR programmes (Climate Change and Multilateral Diplomacy and International Affairs Management) were involved in the preparation of the document. It analyses LDC constraints and needs that compromise their effective participation in the climate change negotiation process. It also includes an evaluation of institutional and human capacity presently available in LDCs. The paper reviews three important possible tools to build and strengthen LDCs capacity: intensive skills training workshops, certificate course programmes by regional institutions and distance learning. As a conclusion, the document states that in order to improve the performance and to promote integration of LDCs in the UNFCCC process, a systematic needs analysis and cost estimate for training options should lead to the development of a more comprehensive and relevant work programme.

The paper provided a good basis for a fruitful discussion between LDC FP representatives attending the workshop. Generally, participants echoed the conclusions and recommendations presented in the paper. With slight modifications, the final version was made available at COP7 presenting a useful input

² Negotiating Skills Training for LDC Delegates Involved in the Climate Change Negotiations, UNITAR (see Annex II)



into the discussion of the LDC fund and work programme. Its conclusions are also reflected in the decision³ made at COP8 encouraging Parties to address the needs of LDCs with regard to training in negotiating skills and language, through bilateral and other sources of funding. The provision of funding for the participation of the LDC GEF Focal Point (who in several countries are different from the UNFCCC Focal Points) has proved to be a useful opportunity for direct contact among Focal Points, the GEF Secretariat, and GEF Implementing Agencies, and for the discussion of programming issues and funding mechanisms.

2.2 Technical Assistance and Training on ICT to UNFCCC Focal Points

The major activity of the project included provision for Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) equipment as well as relevant training to LDC FPs. To cover financial needs an amount of USD 13.000 was provided to each one of the 44 participating LDC FPs. Finally two eligible countries - Cape Verde and Equatorial Guinea – could not be project beneficiary due to the fact that appropriate national UNFCCC Focal Points had not been properly established. Following the revised project approach, LDC FPs could spend the grant in a flexible manner, according to their respective ICT equipment and training needs.

- *Project Management and Grant Administration*

On the basis of pro forma invoices received from the countries, UNITAR signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with each of the participating LDCs FPs to deal with project management and grant administration. The MoA required each partner to report to UNITAR on the various phases of project implementation, to present detailed expenditure statements, and to produce a final report at the conclusion of the project. Grants were allocated and transferred in one lump sum payable through the UNDP country offices.

A country-by-country tracking table was used to monitor the progress on a weekly basis between the signature of the MoA, the grant authorisation and the effective disbursement to each Focal Point. To ensure proper compatibility and procurement, grant expenditures were approved by UNITAR only after revision of cost estimation for each ICT equipment, Internet connection, and IT training services. In order to monitor fund disbursement and allow proper evaluation of the project impacts and results, a final questionnaire (Annex iv) was distributed to all partners in the project. The evaluation was returned by 27 of the 44 participating FPs.

- *UNITAR Support*

During the implementation of the project, UNITAR made available internal ICT technical specialists to act as resource persons, reviewing pro-forma invoices, advising on procurement issues and equipment

³ UNFCCC CP.8/Decision 8/CP8, 2002.

selection. UNITAR provided each FP with draft of Terms of Reference for a training programme and further advised on the recruitment and selection of local trainers. A support for training design and delivery was also provided, when requested.

UNITAR produced, in cooperation with the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNDP, GEF, World Bank and UNEP, an Internet Training Manual entitled “*Climate Change and the Internet – Local Access to Global Issues*”. The manual, in electronic version and in hardcopy, also translated into French with the title: *Les changements climatiques et l’Internet: Accès local pour un problème global,* was made available to all participating LDC FPs as a basis for designing locally adapted ICT training programmes. It covers Internet history and structure, presents basic Internet connection and software programmes, and provides information on search engines and relevant climate change websites (Figure 1). Copies of these manuals are available at the UNITAR CCP, in Geneva. Electronic versions in French and English are also available on the UNITAR website (www.unitar.org/ccp).

Figure 1: Climate Change and the Internet Local Access to Global Issues Table of Contents	
▪	What is the Internet?
▪	The World Wide Web
▪	Climate Change Related Websites – UNFCCC, GEF, UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO, The World Bank, Annex I and Non Annex I, Research networks, NGOs and Scientific glossaries.
▪	UNFCCC LDC Focal Points email addresses

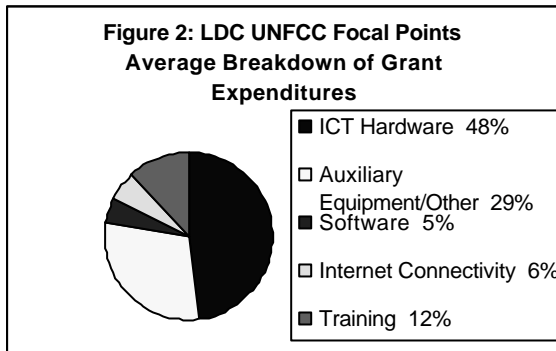
• *ICT Equipment and Internet Connectivity*



The grant concession has benefited all 44 participating Focal Point offices, either providing the first acquisition of ICT hardware or upgrading existing outdated equipments. Figure 2 shows the typical breakdown of expenditures for the USD 13.000 grant, based on the expenditure reports provided by partners and averaged for all participating Focal Points.

As demonstrated, the largest portion of each grant, an average of approximately 48%, was used for basic computer equipment and basic software packages. A typical equipment package consisted of a desktop PC, including modem and standard software packages and a printer with consumable supplies. Many FPs also used the available funds to purchase additional equipment such as laptop computers, LCD projector or scanners.

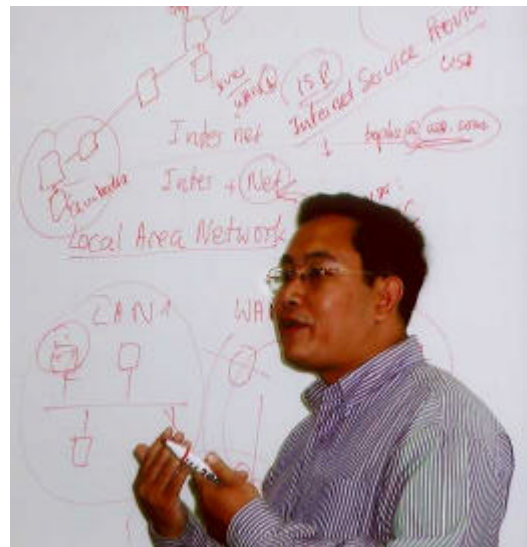
An average of 29% of the resources was spent with auxiliary equipment such as UPS, air conditioning unit, and computer desks or with associated administrative costs. An average of 5% was spent on other software packages, such as database or GIS programmes.



The majority of participating Focal Points earmarked a portion of the grant for Internet connection fees, generally covering a one-year period. Telephone and service provider costs often represented a significant recurring cost item, which to date is not easily covered by limited budgetary resources available for most LDC FPs. While these charges add up to approximately 6% of overall grant funds disbursed, they varied greatly from country to country and could sometimes even exceed 10% of the individual grant available.

- *Provision of ICT Training*

As noted earlier, a consultation with LDC FPs at the outset of the project led to a change of approach that emphasized the need for flexibility, and for locally adapted training, transferring to participating FPs the responsibility of arranging ICT training. Approximately two thirds of FPs organized local ICT training sessions, using an average of 19% of their grants for these activities, what corresponded to about 12% of the total funds disbursed (Figure 2). In-country training programmes usually lasted several days involving 10 to 20 participants. Approximately 420 participants from UNFCCC LDC FPs and related partner agencies were trained in ICT through the project.



Although training programmes varied, they generally covered the range of topics corresponding to UNITAR Internet Training Manual, with significant emphasis on practical exercises on-line. Handout materials included UNITAR Training Manual and further adapted local specific materials.

The evaluation questionnaires revealed that participants generally highly noted local trainers and handout materials and appreciated the training courses. The opportunity to familiarize themselves with Internet search engines, and with the access to specific climate change information and related web-sites was also very much appreciated.

In certain circumstances, the training programme also covered an introduction to web site design tools. It was noted that a growing number of LDC FPs were interested and had intentions to create their own web sites as an information tool for national climate change programmes.



A number of FPs, including for example the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), indicated that they did not require ICT training. Reflecting the flexible approach of the project, these partners were able to use the corresponding funds for other purposes, such as additional hardware equipment, organisation of local climate change workshops and outreach activities, English training courses in a neighbouring country, or a one-year salary for the FP (one case), after prior UNDP clearance.

2.3 Workshop on Capacity-Building for NAPA Preparation in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Project funding originally included as a third activity, the production of a video news release to feature LDCs needs and project achievements. These funds, as well as the grant originally planned for Equatorial Guinea (that could not be disbursed for practical reasons) were reallocated towards partial support of a LEG workshop on capacity building for the preparation of National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs). This workshop took place in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in September 2002, co-funded by Canada, the UK, France and the GEF. These funds allowed the organizers to open participation in the workshop to a wider audience than originally planned.

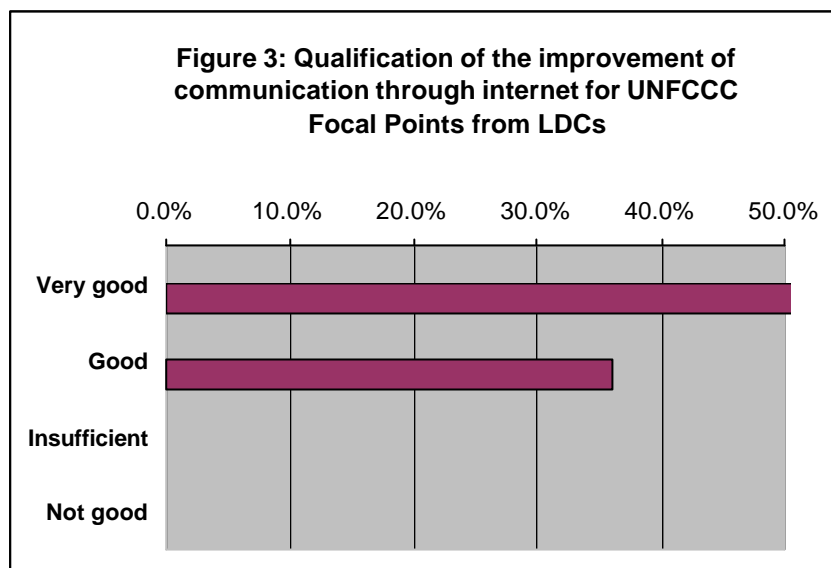
3. Evaluation

3.1 Evaluation of Objectives

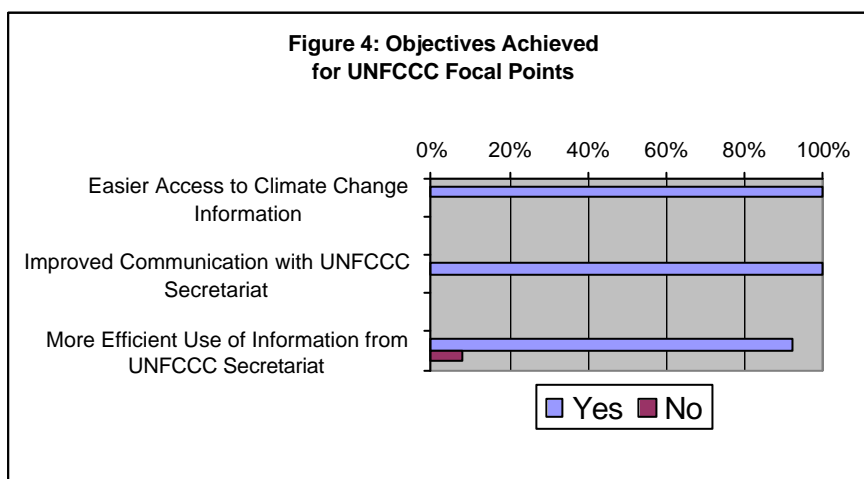
In order to evaluate the results of the project and the extent to which the objectives were met, all participating Focal Points were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the project. Results presented here are based on 27 responses, accounting for 61% of participating FPs.

Whereas in October 2001, before provision of the ICT grant, two thirds of participating Focal Points indicated that they still did not have internet access in their own office, results from the final evaluation of the project revealed that all UNFCCC LDC FPs qualified the improvement or provision of internet communication provided by the project as very good or good (Figure 3).

In analysing the value of the project for their LDC UNFCCC FPs 80% of the participants considered it as “very useful”, while 20% considered it as “useful”. Asked whether they considered the objectives of the project met, all participants (100%) agreed that the use of communication technologies provided by the project had generally resulted in easier access to climate change related information (Figure 4). Similarly, all participants (100%) agreed that the project had allowed them to improve communication with the UNFCCC Secretariat and other LDCs Group members. Finally, about 92% agreed that the project had resulted in a more efficient use of the information provided by the UNFCCC Secretariat on its website.



While there are no specific quantitative indicators to measure improvement of communication, the perception of participants is confirmed by the UNFCCC Secretariat. As noted by Youssef Nassef (UNFCCC Secretariat Sustainable Development Programme), the Secretariat has *received direct feedback from many LDCs delegates, indicating that the support received from UNITAR to enhance their IT infrastructure has been very successful and effective. Better access to documents and information presented in the UNFCCC Secretariat website has been facilitated to the LDCs delegates, and their communication with the international climate change community at large has been significantly enhanced. LDCs Parties further commented that ongoing support in the longer term, particularly in relation to the costs of Internet connectivity, might be necessary to maintain their current level of access*".



The responses provided by participating FPs (see Figure 4) show that virtually all of the most immediate and specific objectives formulated at the outset of the project had been attained. Undoubtedly, the provision of ICT equipment and training provided through this project will also support the overall objectives of developing and strengthening the capacity of the eligible LDCs national UNFCCC Focal Points, allowing LDCs to better follow and contribute to the UNFCCC process at national and global levels.

Selection of quotes from national final reports and questionnaires

Jeanne Josette Acacha Akoha, Benin : “...Très bon projet qui nous a permis de nous équiper, de communiquer entre nous au niveau national et régional. Il a nettement amélioré la communication entre les PMA et énormément facilité la communication avec le secrétariat de la convention. La formation en anglais nous facilitera la communication et l'accès à un plus grand nombre d'information”.

He Khieu Muth and Tin Ponlok, Cambodia: “The ...project ... has provided an excellent opportunity for the Cambodia Climate Change Focal Point to better access and use efficiently information on climate change available from Internet. Homepage design and update lesson will also help Cambodia improve climate change information dissemination via Internet in the future...The equipment provided by the project will facilitate better awareness raising and information dissemination activities on climate change in the country...However, due to the limited timeframe the project can support ...it is quite uncertain whether the momentum the project initiated can be sustained as in most LDC countries Internet connection is still expensive comparing with their financial resources availability. Therefore, it is important that Climate Change Focal Points in LDC countries continue to receive financial, technical and advisory support so that they can improve their IT knowledge and maintain a good access to Internet.”

Bubu Pateh Jallow, Gambia: “In general, the project has really enhanced the capacity of the Focal Point and beyond, as both human and institutional capacities have been built. The main issue of concern is sustainability in the near future and beyond, particularly, with regard to the equipment and meeting the costs for the various services (Internet access and connection time)... Climate change per se does not at this moment attract any allocations from the Government budget, and may not do so for many years to come, given the prevailing unfavorable economic climate...The level of collaboration between UNDP country office and UNITAR staff on the one hand and the Focal Point on the other hand has been exceptionally very good. Requests for information and services were provided at the required times...”

Malam da Silva, Guinea Bissau : “Le projet a facilité l'accès et l'exploitation des informations disponibles dans le site web du Secrétariat de la Convention Cadre sur les Changements Climatiques. Il a amélioré l'utilisation des informations et la communication entre les intervenants dans la matière du changement climatique, à savoir: le Point Focal, le Comité National du Changement Climatique, le project Changement Climatique et le Secrétariat de la Convention.”

Moise Jean-Pierre, Haiti : “En résumé, on peut dire que ce projet est une véritable réussite. Une réussite à 100%. Ce projet a dépassé toutes nos espérances.”

Fatima Dia Toure and Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla, Sénégal: “Nous avons pu faire connaître les différents sites traitant des changements climatiques aux différents agents de l'environnement et quelques membres du comité changement climatique et surtout nous équiper en logistique informatique et connexion, ce qui facilite l'accès à l'information sur le climat et le partage de l'information avec les autres représentants des PMA.”

3.2 Evaluation of Project Management

In general, participating Focal Points were satisfied with project management during the implementation process. Communication and understanding amongst project partners were characterised as “very good” (45%) and “good” (55%) by the participants. All participating FPs evaluated the practical support provided by the executing agency (UNITAR) as either “very good” (88%) or “good” (12%). UNDP, the GEF implementing agency, has also received significant high marks. Over 80% of participants have considered UNDP practical support either as “good” or “very good.” However, nearly 20% of participants characterized UNDP support as insufficient. This was basically related to the delay of UNDP local offices to effectuate the disbursement of funds, after the grant had been approved. Examples where disbursement was particularly slow or complicated for the Focal Points include Guinea, Haiti, Lesotho, Mauritania and Uganda.

3.3 Problems Encountered

There were a number of problems encountered during project implementation, mainly regarding the timing for implementation of project activities. A summary of the problems found is provided below.

- **Memorandum of Agreements:** Signature of MoAs with each of the 45 individual participating FPs required substantially longer time than originally anticipated. This was to a large extent due to the gap between the moment the MoAs were sent and the signature received from project partners. One explanation is the language barriers that were also verified at latter stage during the project implementation.
- **Timing of Training Sessions:** Delivery of the local in-country training sessions, organized by the participating FPs, was often postponed to the second or third quarter of 2002, due to the heavy workload and travel schedule of FPs representatives.
- **Publication of Training Manual:** The finalisation of the Internet Training Manual developed by UNITAR also took much longer than anticipated, but in almost all cases the manual was made available prior to the delivery of in-country training programmes. The need of coordination with other agencies providing input into the training manual, and the decision to include the updated information on the UNFCCC Secretariat’s revised website design, which only became available in April 2002, have been time consuming.
- **Longer Programme Management:** Extension of the overall project time from the originally envisioned six months to a total of fourteen months meant a substantial increase in the amount of coordination and management provided by UNITAR. The additional time required of UNITAR’s Programme Coordinator was made possible through core funding of UNITAR’s Climate Change Programme provided by the Swiss Agency for Environment and Landscape.
- **Disbursement of Funds:** As noted, a number of participating FPs mentioned the delays in the disbursement of funds via local UNDP country offices, which in some instances took several months after approval of the grant by UNITAR. In at least one case, this delay seriously impacted the Focal Point’s ability to deliver the grant activities in a timely and adequate manner.

3.4 Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned during the project implementation, which can be summarized as follows:

About implementation effectiveness:

- **Interagency Workshop/Coordination:** Holding the one-day UNITAR consultation seminar in conjunction with the UNFCCC Secretariat LDCs NAPAs workshop resulted in a relatively high participation rate and proved to be cost-effective, regarding travel and DSA costs. Such interagency coordination should be actively pursued whenever possible.
- **Consultation with Project Partners:** In depth consultation with participating partners, and fine-tuning the project approach prior to the start-up of implementation will result in more effective, needs-driven assistance, as evidenced by this project.
- **Implementation of Global Project:** Developing sub-contracts, disbursing funds, and coordinating and overseeing reporting with a large number of partners world-wide required substantially more time than originally envisioned.
- **GEF Expedited Procedures:** The GEF expedited procedures for enabling activities can be very workable and effective when proper interagency coordination, and timely contributions by all partners involved in the process, is provided right at the initial design phases of a project. Through the fast-track process this project has been able to quickly respond to important capacity-building needs identified in the Climate Change negotiations process.
- **Decentralizing Project Activities:** Decentralizing responsibility for organizing ICT training activities to the local level allowed partners to optimally adapt the training programmes to their respective local needs. On the other hand, decentralizing to the partner level naturally resulted in a greater variability in training quality and delivery times.

About LDC Country situation and project impact:

- **Funding Equipment Purchases:** Prior to this project, many FPs had real ICT equipment needs, making it impossible for them to gain basic Internet connectivity. As equipment purchases are often not eligible under other funding criteria, this project was able to effectively address this gap.
- **Basic Telephone Access in LDCs:** As indicated by a number of participating partners, basic electricity and telephone utility services still form a real barrier to reliable and effective internet-based communication.
- **Internet Connectivity Charges:** In addition, in several countries, ongoing Internet connectivity charges can be relatively high, and are not always easily covered by existing LDCs FPs budgets. This will remain an issue for the coming years.
- **Language barrier:** As soon as messages or documents were sent in French to French speaking countries, channels of communication improved quickly. Lusophone and Arabic countries often had the same problem with English too. It is obvious that the gap in foreign language skills remains one of the key barriers to the active participation of LDCs in the international process.

4. Assessments and Conclusions

This section briefly assesses the overall results achieved with this GEF UNDP *Global Enabling Activity Project*. It points out a few possibilities for follow-up action in the area of ICT within the context of the UNFCCC LDCs capacity building work programme and fund. The immediate objective of the project was to assist participating LDC Focal Points in order to enable them to utilize information and communications technologies, increasing their engagement in the Climate Change negotiations process, but as was emphasized by the Chair of the LEG, Bubu Jallow, during a GEF Side Event in June 2002, the improvement on access to information and communication technologies is also a prerequisite for Focal Points to effectively carry-out their tasks in a variety of areas, and most importantly the formation of their NAPAs. The next challenge for many LDC Focal Points is to start coordinating commitments under the convention. That would comprise preparing vulnerability and adaptation assessments and National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs); and formulating and implementing national climate change programmes. Appropriate ICTs can contribute substantially to the effective development of all these tasks.

Clearly, further assistance is needed, as stated in the UNFCCC Secretariat progress report on the status of activities to implement the UNFCCC Decisions 2/CP.7 and 3/CP.7, submitted to SBI 17, "...in strengthening the national climate change secretariats or national focal points to enable them to respond to the growing tasks related to the Convention." (FCCC/SBI/2002/INF.15). For the LDC work programme and fund, obviously specific capacity-building activities must be prioritised'.

The project has contributed to a significant improvement in ICT capacities, but not all needs in this area have been met. Some specific needs in ICT still need follow-up action.

Firstly, as evidenced by this project, in some countries, on-going Internet connectivity charges can require substantial funds that are not always covered by regular FPs budgets, after the one-year period funded by the project. In order to be effective and develop their activities on a national level, in line with the commitments under the Convention, LDCs governments will generally need to provide Focal Points with adequate institutional integration into the national policy making framework and on basic operating budgets to carry out their activities. In some cases, where budgets remain limited, additional financial support for covering recurring FPs operating costs, such as Internet connectivity charges, may be desirable, otherwise, the effort carried out under this project may not produce an optimal performance in a near future.

Secondly, considering that most Focal Points are now equipped with basic ICT and have established or improved their Internet connectivity, there is a growing interest by a number of FPs to develop and maintain their own web sites. By decentralizing ICT procurement and training to the local level, this project has allowed many FPs to establish working contacts with local ICT trainers and companies. For Focal Points who have considered the launch of a web site as a priority and that have the capacity to do so, it should be relatively easy to organize follow-up training in web-site design and management.

Thirdly, as the responsibilities of the Focal Points grow with increasing commitments under the Convention, it is also possible that additional ICT hardware or software will be needed, as indicated by a number of LDC FPs participating in the project. As already recognized by the UNFCCC Secretariat in its Progress report for SBI 17, access to information technology and databases must remain a priority. Wherever ICT equipment had not yet been provided, even though it is vital to the effective operation of FPs, and cannot be covered by in-country resources, requests for further assistance will need to be examined on a case by case basis.

Last but not least, the overview of relevant climate change related web sites and links included in UNITAR's Internet Training Manual has proven to be a useful tool not only for LDC participants, but also for other delegates and participants in the UNFCCC process. Consequently, following a request made by the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNITAR will update this overview so that it can be posted as a guide on the UNFCCC Secretariat website.

In the area of negotiations skills, the project has contributed to the discussion and elaboration of concepts in the area of negotiations skills development of LDC delegates. In the spirit of COP7 decisions, concrete training activities either in negotiating skills training workshops, in-country certificate course programmes, or interactive distance learning could be developed and funded in the future to give a more certain chance of success of supporting LDC climate change policies.

LIST OF UNFCCC LDC FOCAL POINTS

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Negotiating Skills Training for LDC Delegates Involved in the Climate Change Negotiations

Executive Summary

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have experienced a lot of difficulty in fully integrating into the climate change negotiation process. Widespread structural problems have contributed to a lack of human and institutional capacity for LDC negotiators to engage and participate effectively. As the UNFCCC negotiations advance and enter into more complex and critical phases, there is a great risk that LDCs will be left behind and important decisions may fail to address their development and environmental concerns.

This background paper examines the widening gap between the needs for effective participation, on one hand, and the institutional and human capacity presently available in LDCs, on the other. The present situation prevents LDC negotiators from preparing sufficiently, negotiating effectively, and following-up on UNFCCC decisions and commitments.

The paper then reviews different options for building and strengthening LDC negotiating capacity in the climate change process and looks particularly at several options:

1. Short, intensive negotiating skills training workshops;
2. In-country certificate course programmes;
3. Interactive distance learning, and
4. UNFCCC Focal Points Twinning.

The paper provides some examples of past and present skills training activities, proposes some key components of negotiation training curricula, and suggests some the organizational modalities of possible training options.

Discussion at the recent GEF Workshop on Institutional Strengthening in LDCs held in Bandos (Maldives) revealed that a mixture of these options are needed, beginning on a short term basis with intensive training workshops and gradually evolving, with the support of the LDC fund, into certificate course programmes and interactive distance learning tools.

Background paper prepared by
 The UNITAR Climate Change Programme and
 The International Affairs Management Programme
 Project UNDP/UNITAR GLO/01/G33

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Developing countries, and the least developed countries (LDCs) in particular, have experienced much difficulty over the past ten years to integrate into the climate change negotiations in an effective way. Widespread structural impediments, poverty, weak and often inexperienced human resources, low levels of infrastructure, and institutional deficiencies have contributed to the LDCs' lack of capacity and low level of performance. In most LDCs these conditions have worsened, and they are sure to continue to inhibit the governments' ability to prepare sufficiently for intergovernmental negotiations, maneuver and negotiate effectively during the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) and subsidiary body meetings, and follow up at the national level by implementing decisions and preparing initial communications.

2. At the Sixth Session of the Conference of Parties (part two), draft decision -/CP.6 called for the establishment of a least developed countries fund to support the work programme of the LDCs, including activities designed to strengthen national climate change secretariats or focal points, training in negotiating skills and language, and support for the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action.

3. This background paper addresses an important challenge that LDCs face in the UNFCCC process. In particular, the paper looks at the widening gap between the needs for effective participation, on the one hand, and the institutional and human capacity presently available in LDCs, on the other. The paper then reviews different options for negotiating skills training, provides some examples of past and present activities, and suggests key elements to address in training workshops. Before concluding, the paper examines the concept of a climate change certificate course and looks at the merits of other training tools such as distant learning.

II. Effective Participation and the Challenges Facing LDCs

4. Effective participation begins at home with thorough preparation and coordination well in advance of intergovernmental meetings. Focal points and lead agencies must coordinate inter-ministerial input, provide an enabling environment for decision-making, and forge national negotiation positions that address a range of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues and interests. Countries must also work to build likeminded coalitions and promote their issue specific interests early in the preparatory process. And they must know how to draft, format and submit their views and provide technical input to the Secretariat in a timely and proper manner.

5. Effective participation also requires the ability to put to use negotiating skills and techniques to anticipate and react to proposals as well as counter proposals once intergovernmental conferences begin. This includes raising confidence to deliver interventions and communicating and arguing in a constructive and persuasive manner. Negotiators also need to be familiar with the governance guidelines--the rules of procedure--and know what is expected of them and what they can expect from the rules. Moreover, it is essential that negotiators know how to manage coalitions and maintain a positive group dynamic in order to safeguard their negotiating strength and capacity without putting at risk a productive negotiation process and outcome.

6. It is important to realize that effective participation does not stop when intergovernmental conferences and subsidiary body meetings come to a close. Negotiators return to their capitals with conference reports to write, information to circulate and disseminate, decisions to implement and follow-up inter-ministerial preparation to coordinate. Negotiation is thus a cyclical and forward-moving process, and participation must be effective at each and every stage.

Challenges

7. Full and active participation of all countries in multilateral negotiations is an absolute necessity to address environmental problems of a global scale. To meet this objective, environmental secretariats, with the support of donor institutions, international organizations and individual governments, have provided funds to enable one or two delegates from each LDC Party to attend the COPs and the meetings of the subsidiary bodies. This practice applies to most multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including the UNFCCC.

8. The characteristics of participation are changing, however. While foreign ministries have traditionally overseen all diplomatic encounters, including MEAs, this practice began to change in the mid-1980s with the involvement of functional ministries or specialized agencies assuming either a lead or supporting role in national delegations. Although industrialized and some developing countries can cover much ground with large and experienced delegations, LDCs do not have the financial and, frequently, the institutional capacity to field more than one or two officials from their home government. In fact, given the multitude of meetings taking place annually, it occasionally arises that LDCs can only send representatives from missions or embassies located in or closest to the country where the COP or other meeting is taking place. As a result, LDCs rarely have the process skills coupled with technical expertise and knowledge upon which to draw during the negotiations.

9. While continued funding to secure full participation is necessary, it is clearly not sufficient. In the past, funding which has enabled LDCs to field small delegations to COPs and other meetings has not always had the desired effect. In far too many instances, the negotiators' presence has not been felt or their voices heard. Although the nature of some issues may limit the extent to which LDCs take part in meetings, the observation that LDC delegates participate in the shadows of other countries results largely from capacity constraints. Given their extremely limited amount of human, institutional and financial resources, LDCs face intense challenges to prepare sufficiently for intergovernmental meetings, focal points are often weak and lack the needed technical support staff, and national coordination through climate change committees and other mechanisms is either absent or underdeveloped. Inadequate preparation and consultation at the national level contribute to the negotiators' difficulty to participate effectively at the intergovernmental level. These capacity constraints also prevent LDCs from implementing decisions and fulfilling commitments at the national level.

10. At the first part of its sixth session, the COP requested LDC Parties to submit information on their institutional needs for strengthening capacity to effectively participate in the climate change negotiation process. Questionnaires returned to the UNFCCC Secretariat from 29 of the 46 LDC Parties indicate that only one to two professionals were involved in the actual UNFCCC negotiation process, even though many of the LDCs had climate change units staffed with more than three persons (FCCC/SBI/2001/6). To complicate matters, developing countries, and LDCs in particular, are highly susceptible to a frequent turnover of professional staff involved in the climate negotiations. This reality, together with their inability to field large and specialized delegations, leaves a capacity gap that contributes to their failure to integrate fully into the process.

The Present Situation of LDCs

11. Given this background, LDCs find themselves confronted with one of the following scenarios:

- ***Understanding technical issues, but experiencing little involvement in the process***

The first scenario arises when LDCs field one or several representatives from the meteorological service or another department of a functional ministry. In this case, negotiators generally have technical knowledge on some of the issues subject to discussion and debate, but lack a sufficient understanding of the interacting components and dynamics that govern intergovernmental negotiations, including the skills and techniques needed to integrate and participate effectively.

- ***Understanding the process, but lacking sufficient knowledge of the technical issues***

A second scenario results when LDC negotiators have acquired experience in conference diplomacy and negotiations by participating in meetings over time, but lack the scientific and technical knowledge of the issues at stake. This scenario typically arises when negotiators are sent from embassies and missions closest to the venue of the intergovernmental meetings.

- ***Insufficient understanding of the process and of technical issues***

The third and final scenario occurs when negotiators lack a combination of the negotiating skills and substantive knowledge on the issues to integrate into the process and contribute to shaping the outcome.

12. In sum, the structural weaknesses and constraints facing LDCs can severely limit their ability to prepare adequately, participate effectively, and follow-up and respond to the commitments under the Convention. Given their limited financial and institutional capacity to field specialized and experienced delegations, it is essential that the negotiators who attend intergovernmental meetings are equipped with the knowledge, skills and know-how to actively and constructively engage in the process.

III. OPTIONS FOR TRAINING IN NEGOTIATING SKILLS

13. For many industrialized countries, professional training in negotiation and conference diplomacy is part of the overall preparation for a career in the Foreign Service. While technical and scientific experts from these countries may be unaware of the negotiation dynamics, they usually have the support of diplomats from the foreign ministries or the divisions of environment ministries specializing in international affairs. LDC negotiators, on the other hand, often lack this backup support and are for the most part constrained to learn on the spot by attending conferences and gradually accumulating practical experience.

14. While years of experience may produce outstanding negotiators, the demands and complexity of contemporary multilateral environmental policymaking require state delegates to arrive at conferences with an understanding of the issues and processes so that they can quickly integrate into the process, actively contribute to deliberations and assist in shaping decisions and agreements.

15. Skills training workshops, in-country certificate courses and interactive distance learning programmes are important and valuable vehicles that can provide inexperienced negotiators with a general orientation on what is going on and the skills and know-how to integrate into the process and participate more effectively.

Skills Training Workshops

16. To respond to the growing need to enhance human capacity of developing and least developed countries, governments, donor institutions, international organizations and NGOs have organized and/or sponsored training workshops that aim to build and/or strengthen skills in negotiation. Many different types of workshops have taken place, and those particularly relevant to the needs of developing country and LDC negotiators can be organized into three general categories.

Types of Negotiating Skills Training Workshops

- The first includes workshops and courses offered by diplomacy training institutes in industrialized countries for participants from developing countries and LDCs. These workshops and courses vary in duration from several weeks to six months or more, depending on the curriculum and funding available. Negotiating skills training is a component common to most programmes.

- The second category includes short, intensive workshops designed to transfer skills, techniques and know-how in multilateral negotiation and conference diplomacy to diplomats accredited to various UN offices and organizations.⁴ On request, these workshops can be tailored to the needs of individual countries or group of countries (e.g. G77). These workshops generally last between two to five days.
- The third type consists of negotiating skills workshops designed to meet the capacity needs of a particular region for a specific negotiation. To date, only two such workshops are known to have taken place in the area of climate change and are highlighted in Box 1.⁵

BOX 1

ENHANCING THE NEGOTIATION CAPACITY OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: PREPARING FOR COP6

In July 2000, several members of the Climate Change Knowledge Network (CCKN) organized two training workshops to enhance the negotiating capacity of developing countries in climate change. The first workshop took place in Dakar primarily for African LDCs, and the second was held in Miami for negotiators from Latin America and Caribbean countries. Although both events aimed to strengthen negotiating skills, the two workshops were designed somewhat differently in order to respond to the specific needs of the participants.

The Dakar Workshop, organized by *Environnement et développement du tiers-monde* (ENDA) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), lasted a week and included sessions on skills training, key substantive issues and sessions devoted to developing an African position in preparation for COP 6. The Dakar Workshop represents a best practice example of South-South cooperation since it involved African and other developing country experts as resource persons, in addition to the African LDC participants. The Miami Workshop, organized by the Centre for Sustainable Development in the Americas (CSDA) with collaboration from the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM), the Netherlands, lasted three days and focused on transferring negotiating skills and techniques, including the dynamics of negotiating within and between the G77 and other negotiating blocs. The workshop also included sessions on practical issues, such as understanding the draft UNFCCC rules of procedure, consensus decision-making, the nomenclature of UNFCCC documents, and how to properly draft and submit views and input to the Climate Change Secretariat. As a result of both projects, the CCKN and the CSDA published a survival guide for developing country climate negotiators.

For additional information on both projects, see <http://www.cckn.net>

⁴ UNITAR's Programme in International Affairs Management, for example, conducts conference diplomacy and multilateral negotiation training workshops on a regular basis for diplomats accredited to the UN Offices in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. UNITAR's New York Office also organizes similar courses for delegates of Member States accredited to the UN Headquarters in New York. In the past, sessions on environmental negotiations, including the UNFCCC process, have been incorporated in the Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi-based courses. On a more limited basis, UNITAR also organizes *à la carte* or tailor-made negotiating skills workshops at the request of individual countries. In September 2001, UNITAR, in partnership with the UNDP and the Government of Malawi, implemented an intensive, four-day workshop on chairing, participating, and negotiating in bilateral and multilateral meetings for officials from various government ministries and departments.

⁵ Academic institutes and knowledge networks have also organized programmes on climate change where negotiation has been one of the many different topics addressed. The Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID) June 2000 Program on Climate change and Development is one such example.

General Appreciation of Negotiating Skills Training Workshops

17. The interactive and participatory nature of most workshops, combined with an application of concepts to real world problems and challenges, are the most noteworthy features of skills training workshops. The use of a variety of pedagogical instruments such as visual presentations, role play exercises and simulations, case studies, video analyses and working groups fosters a joint learning environment where participants learn not only from the workshop trainer(s), but also from the views and accounts of their own professional experience.

18. Skills training workshops are for the most part highly appreciated by the participants, especially those who have little or no practical experience in negotiations and intergovernmental conferences. The workshops increase the participants' confidence and enable those who would normally remain silent to speak up and interact. Workshops have also benefited experienced negotiators, particularly those who have been reassigned from bilateral to multilateral negotiations.

19. For maximum effect, workshops need to be demand driven and respond to the specific needs, conditions and circumstances of LDCs. Workshops should also be conceived with the dual objective of strengthening individual and institutional capacity, and should therefore be developed and implemented with the involvement of local partners and institutions.

Modalities for the Organization of Workshops

20. Since negotiation training is highly interactive in nature, workshops should be limited to a maximum number of 30 participants. Given the number of LDC negotiators in need of training, a series of workshops could be organized at the regional or sub-regional levels, which would enable two or more participants to take part from each individual LDC. For example, a training workshop could be organized for the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) of Kiribati, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, and easily accommodate the total number of negotiators in need of training from this region (see Table 1, FCCC/SBI/2001/6). Likewise, a regional workshop could be held in Asia and accommodate South and Southeast Asian LDCs, and two to three workshops could be organized in Africa (e.g. south, east and west). Organizing workshops at the regional or sub-regional levels would not only reduce travel expenses, but also enable participants to address specific issues and concerns as well as give the participants the opportunity to prepare for up-coming negotiation sessions.

Cost Estimates

21. Organizing workshops at the regional or sub-regional level would likely be the most cost-effective approach since it would enable a larger number of individual LDC participants to take part and would reduce travel expenses considerably. For example, using the figure of US\$ 4,000 per participant as a basis and indicated in paragraph 13 of document FCCC/SBI/2001/6, a training workshop for 15 PIC participants would cost US\$ 60,000.

Certificate Course Programme

22. Building climate change negotiating capacity can also be accomplished through certificate course programmes that are designed and implemented by institutions in developing countries and LDCs.⁶ Experts from these countries must also learn from each other, and international organizations play an important and catalytic

⁶ UNITAR's experience in implementing CC:Train Certificate Courses in non-Annex I countries has uncovered a wealth of human resources, and lessons point to the need to continue to draw upon and build regional partners for successful training programmes. As an example, the PICCAP/UNITAR V&A assessment training course was held at International Global Change Institute (IGCI) from June to December 1998 over a six-month period. The course trained 20 participants from 10 Pacific Island countries participating in PICCAP and produced 10 preliminary assessments for those countries. With the agreement of the PICCAP countries, and the financial support from the Government of New Zealand, the V&A training course has now been transferred to the University of the South Pacific (USP).

role in enhancing this opportunity. Certificate course programmes would enable selected universities or research centers located in non-Annex I countries to conduct internationally recognized climate change negotiating skills training courses.

The objectives of a certificate course programme would be to:

- Maximize the use of local and regional expertise, thereby enhancing capacity building and development in LDCs;
- Provide a cost-effective option for the use of funds allocated for negotiating skills training under existing multilateral and bilateral projects for capacity-building in the area of climate change; and
- Prepare the longer-term sustainability of such training programmes by developing a demand-driven approach. Course programmes would only be launched in partner universities and training institutions if a minimum number of “paying students” enrolled.

23. Experts in negotiating skills from national institutions would contribute to the development and design of courses to address environmental and socio-economic circumstances in the region. The content should reflect the national initiatives and development goals of the participating countries. The modules and contents proposed in Annex 1 could be delivered individually or as a package. The pedagogical approach should include the following components:

- Oral presentations by trainers/facilitators,
- Negotiation exercises and simulations,
- Working group assignments of practical problems and challenges faced by the negotiator,
- Case studies and illustrations of best practices,
- Exercises on drafting resolutions and decisions, and
- Video-based performance analysis and evaluation.

24. Following the trainer’s session, the regional partner would manage these programmes in collaboration with other interested and competent partners. This would include developing course material, identifying prospective participants and trainers, assuming logistical arrangements, and promoting the course in the countries of the region. The regional partner would then confer a certificate of proficiency to successful participants.

25. In order to build a solid foundation for the certificate course programmes, the first three-year period of training could be financed through external support, such as the proposed LDC fund. In the medium term, it is expected that the programmes would be self-financing. LDC representatives or trainees would pay regular training fees using existing national resources or allocating bilateral cooperation and/or multilateral support for this purpose.

BOX 2

Elements to Address in Negotiating Skills Workshops on Climate Change

Training workshops aiming to build and/or strengthen LDC negotiation capacity should include a series of topics.

- First, participants should be briefed on the history and structure of the UNFCCC negotiations. In addition to a review of all of the institutions and actors involved in the process, a description of the relationship between coordination and policy formulation processes at the national level and the intergovernmental negotiations should be addressed. Particular reference should be made to the needs and experiences of LDCs.
- Second, training workshops need to convey practical information that can be of immediate use for the negotiator, such as explaining the nomenclature of documents and how and where to access documents prior to and during conferences, the structure and contents of the draft rules of procedure, and the guidelines for drafting and submitting proposals and documents to the Secretariat prior to the meetings.
- Third, workshops should include a package of skills, techniques and know-how to increase the effectiveness of delegates' negotiation skills during conferences. Specific topics under this heading would include moving from destructive to constructive negotiation strategies and tactics, the use of diplomatic language and discourse, how to anticipate and react to proposals and counter proposals, drafting resolutions and decisions, cross-cultural communication, understanding the role of formal and informal groups as well as managing group dynamics and coalitions. Skills such as chairing meetings and effective leadership could also be addressed.
- Fourth, it is extremely important that workshops familiarize participants with the substantive issues on the agenda or those likely to arise during the negotiations. Participants must also be given the opportunity to apply their newly acquired negotiating skills to these issues.
- Fifth and finally, workshops must include skills and information for effective follow-up at the national level. This includes understanding how to write post-conference reports and ensuring that the message adopted at the global level is transmitted to those concerned at the national and sub-national levels. This may include training on how to craft public-private partnership arrangements so that government can draw on the capacity of civil society and the private sector in implementing decisions and commitments.

From a pedagogical perspective, workshops should be highly interactive and participatory in nature. Training should include short presentations with visual aides, negotiation exercises and simulations with video-based performance analysis, case studies and working group discussions, and examples of best practices that can be replicated elsewhere. The objective of this pedagogical mixture is to draw on various interactive devices and apply conceptual analysis to practice, thereby providing participants with the needed skills and confidence to participate effectively.

Interactive Distance Learning

26. Although on-site training workshops may produce many benefits, they tend to be resource intensive from a financial perspective and only reach out to a limited number of participants. Interactive distance learning (IDL) represents an attractive training option for various reasons.

27. First, IDL complements on-site workshops and certificate course programmes by using the Internet as a virtual training environment. IDL training packages could introduce negotiating skills to new and inexperienced delegates as well as enable former participants already exposed to negotiating skills training to refine skills and techniques or assist in preparing delegations for subsequent climate negotiation sessions. Interactive distance learning would also complement efforts to equip LDCs with new information and communication technologies. In fact, the technical requirements (a Pentium processor with Internet connection, Netscape 4.5 or Internet Explorer 5 or later, sound card and speakers, Real Player software) needed to access IDL training would be met in the first phase of the information technology package.

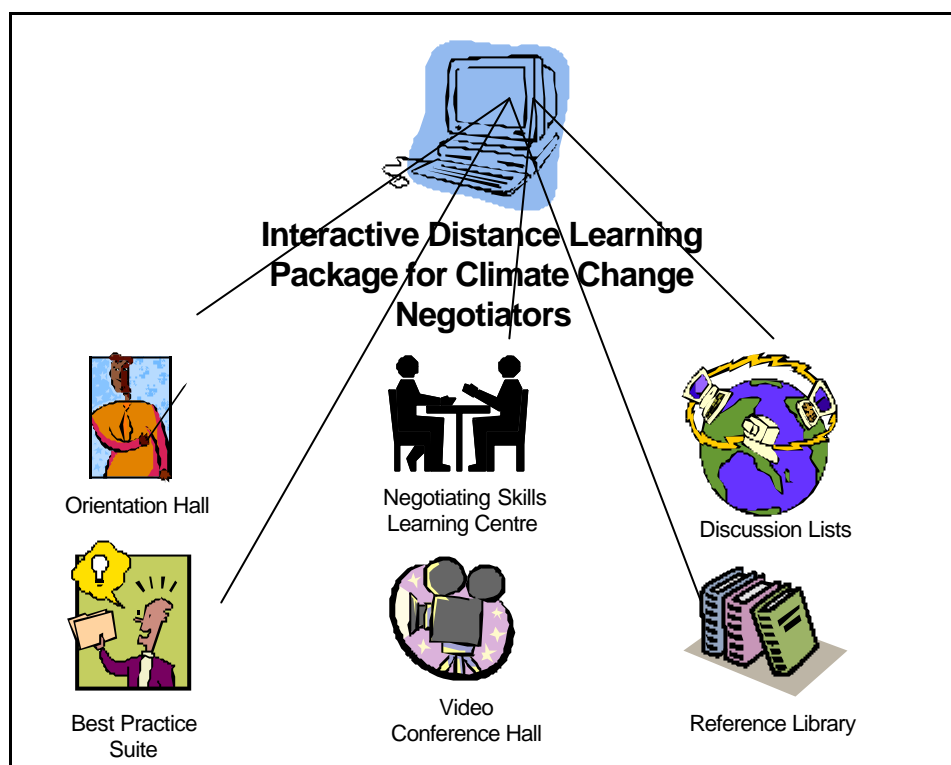
28. Second, although the participatory nature of on-site workshops and courses may appear to be more difficult to replicate in an Internet setting, true collaborative learning occurs through IDL. Exercise simulations and on-line tutorials can foster communication between and among on-line trainers and participants, and live chat discussion sessions can enhance learning and promote international debate on policy options for the climate change process.

29. Third, DL training is sustainable and can easily be updated to keep pace with the rapidly changing dynamics and new issues shaping the climate change negotiations. Distance learning is also flexible since it can offer both real-time training and the opportunity for participants to access training at their desired time and pace.

30. Finally, DL training is cost-effective since it increases the range of training to a much wider and non-exclusive audience. While the target group would be LDCs, negotiators from other countries, including both developing and industrialized countries, some of which may have negotiators new to the FCCC process, could benefit as well. DL would also reduce costs since the training would not involve travel and accommodation expenses or per diem allowances of the participants. Moreover, the start-up costs for the organization responsible for hosting and managing the training would be exorbitant.

31. While the exact structure and content of an IDL would be developed in consultation with LDCs, the UNFCCC Secretariat and donors, the virtual training package could include several components, including an orientation hall, a negotiating skills laboratory, a best practice suite, discussion lists, a video conference hall, and a reference library. Figure 1 illustrates a possible home page for an IDL climate change training package.

Figure 1



- **Orientation Hall**

The orientation hall would present comprehensive background information on the climate change negotiations, including the history and structure of the negotiations, key actors and institutions involved in the process, and background information on past, and emerging policies and issues shaping the negotiations. The objective would be to provide LDC negotiators with additional background information (on vulnerability and adaptation for example and the intergovernmental negotiation process that is currently available on the UNFCCC Secretariat website).

- **Negotiating Skills Learning Centre**

The negotiating skills learning center would be designed as a multi-purpose tool that would review essential negotiating skills and techniques for effective participation in intergovernmental conferences. The learning centre would be structured around various thematic tutorial sessions with case study illustrations and links to best practice examples.

The learning centre could also assist LDC delegates to prepare for up-coming climate negotiation sessions. The learning center could provide, in particular, framework for delegates to structure and prioritize issues as well as formulate and define positions on the agenda items.

- **Discussion Lists**

Discussion lists would enable LDC negotiators to log on to chat sessions and participate either actively or passively. The discussion lists could either be public or private (restricted to specific groups and requiring a password), depending on the political sensitivity of the issues. Groups such as the G77 (www.G77.org), AOSIS (www.SIDSnet.org), etc. could also create closed chat sessions to discuss policy options and positions for up-coming negotiation sessions. A link could be established with the LDC Group website currently being developed with the support of the GEF LDC project.

- **Best Practice Suite**

This suite would present short, descriptive examples of best practices in LDCs (or success stories in other countries which can then be replicated in LDCs). The examples would be organized so that negotiators can quickly identify a best practice example in a particular area (e.g. preparing for negotiators, submitting proposals, reacting to proposals, organizing and managing national climate committees, preparing initial communications, etc.). The suite could be designed so that negotiators and observers could submit their own examples.

- **Video Conference Hall**

The videoconference hall would serve as a public forum to disseminate and view presentations by scientists, policy makers, development aid agencies, and NGOs and academic knowledge networks on issues of concern to climate change policymakers and negotiators.

The videoconference hall could also expand on climate secretariat's practice of broadcasting live web-casts of COP sessions. This could include open inter-session workshops and other meetings, especially those to which LDC delegates lack financial means to field delegations.

- **Reference Library**

The reference library would have a comprehensive list of relevant on-line links (LDC Group Web page, UNFCCC, related MEA secretariats, IPCC, other national relevant institutions etc.), reference material on climate change, further readings on negotiation, etc.

32. Although IDL is relatively young, it is rapidly becoming an attractive training medium used by intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, universities and academic institutions, and private training organizations and foundations. LDC climate change negotiators would certainly benefit from an IDL negotiating skills training package. A prerequisite for this option is however relying on good Internet connectivity. Most of LDCs countries, and UNFCCC Focal Points in particular are currently facing extreme difficulties in this regard. The first component of the newly adopted GEF Global Enabling Activities "*Building the Human and Institutional Capacities to Address Climate Change issues in Least-Developed Countries*" is entirely dedicated to the IT equipment and training. This element will be fully implemented early 2002. A preparatory phase for formulating an IDL programme can therefore be initiated as of now.

IV The linguistic barrier

33. In addition to weak skills in negotiation, language barriers for non-English speaking delegates are a second obstacle preventing the effective participation of LDCs in the UNFCCC process. Because English has emerged as the primary vehicle used at intergovernmental level in the early stages of any discussions (and well before working papers are officially translated), delegates lacking a command this language (most of the French-speaking West African delegates) are therefore left out of this crucial phase of the negotiations. With international assistance, the UNFCCC Secretariat has set up a francophone portal on the official website that provides important documents in French. Although this initiative has proven to be very useful and appreciated widely, delegates also need training in the English language to be able to integrate more effectively into the negotiations. As for any capacity building process, such training should be provided in the most efficient and cost effective manner. In the case of the needs expressed by the UNFCCC focal points, two options could be envisaged:

- Funding could be provided to attend regular English courses organized at the country level. This option would not interrupt regular professional activities and are likely to be moderately expensive. The LDC Fund and/or other bilateral agencies could provide financial support for such *intensive linguistic training*.

- A second option could include language courses organized in a foreign country where English is the official or working language and combined with substantive networking among UNFCCC focal points, either from the South or from an industrialized country. This could lead to the establishment of a "*UNFCCC focal points twinning programme*" that would offer both climate change and language training. Bilateral aid agencies would likely consider supporting this option that would also allow exploring broader climate change cooperation in an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

34. Effective participation in intergovernmental conferences requires substantial knowledge of the scientific, technical and legal issues at stake, a thorough understanding of the mechanics of conference diplomacy, skills, techniques and know-how in negotiation to maneuver effectively and contribute to shaping the process and outcome of agreements. Given the many structural constraints affecting the LDCs, negotiators have experienced a lot of difficulty in fully integrating into the climate change process.

35. **Skills training workshops, certificate course programmes, interactive distance learning and UNFCCC Focal Points Twinning programme** represent a menu of training options that can help build and strengthen the capacity of LDCs in the climate change negotiations. In order to improve the performance and integration of LDCs in the UNFCCC process, there is a need to approach training in a systematic way and carefully evaluate how the various instruments can be used most effectively in the present UNFCCC context.

36. Discussions at the recent GEF Workshop on Institutional Strengthening in LDCs in Bandos (Maldives) confirmed that a mixture of these three options are needed, beginning on a short term basis with intensive training workshops and gradually evolving, with the support of the LDC Fund, into certificate course programmes and interactive distance learning tools.



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- To carry out result-oriented research, in particular, research on and for training and to develop pedagogical materials including distance learning training packages, work books, as well as software and video training packs.
- To establish and strengthen cooperation with faculties and academic institutions, in particular for the development of research on and for training.

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