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UNIDO activities related to the Vienna Ministerial Declaration for the Least Developed Countries

Update on the preparation process of the UNIDO Operational Strategy for the Least Developed Countries 2022–2031

Report by the Director General

In compliance with resolution GC.19/Res.3 on the Vienna Ministerial Declaration for the Least Developed Countries, the present report provides an update on the preparation process of the UNIDO Operational Strategy for the Least Developed Countries 2022–2031.

I. Background

1. In resolution GC.19/Res.3, Member States called upon UNIDO to develop an operational strategy and implementation plan for the least developed countries (LDCs) 2022–2031, ensuring that it aligns with the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) for the LDCs for 2022–2031 and relevant UNIDO strategic frameworks and policies and to mainstream the new strategy into the Organization's overall work.
2. The DPoA for the LDCs 2022–2031 manifests a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments between the LDCs and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society and governments at all levels. It was adopted during the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) on 17 March 2022 and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly on 1 April 2022 through resolution [76/258](#). The DPoA calls upon the United Nations development system entities to integrate the provisions of the Programme of Action into their strategic plans, annual work programmes and reporting at all levels.

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3. The new UNIDO Operational Strategy for the LDCs 2022–2031 was developed in alignment with the DPoA and its targets. It also seeks alignment with other UNIDO strategic frameworks, including the strategies for post-conflict/-crisis situations, for small island developing States, for gender equality and empowerment of women, as well as other regional and thematic strategies, and the South-South and triangular industrial cooperation approach. Noting that the majority of the LDCs are in Africa, UNIDO’s work in this framework is also guided by the Agenda 2063 of the Africa Union and the United Nations General Assembly resolution [70/293](#) related to the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III), 2016–2025, which UNIDO was tasked with leading the implementation.

4. The new Strategy also builds on the findings and recommendations of an internal review and assessment of the previous UNIDO Operational Strategy for the LDCs 2012–2021, developed in line with the Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs 2011–2021.

II. Formulation and consultation processes

5. Within the framework of UNIDO’s Ninth Ministerial Conference of the LDCs, held on 25 and 26 November 2021 prior to the nineteenth session of the General Conference, the Organization prepared a strategic position paper which served as the basis for the initial draft Operational Strategy. It set the context for the industrialization efforts of LDCs and proposed pathways to promote inclusive and industrial development in line with the six focus areas of the DPoA.

6. UNIDO conducted extensive internal consultations led by the Organization’s Regional Bureau for Africa, which is the focal point on LDC matters. In formulating the draft document, UNIDO also consulted with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS).

7. On 19 September 2022, UNIDO convened a Development Dialogue to engage with Member States for the development of the UNIDO Operational Strategy for Least Developed Countries 2022–2031. The event provided an opportunity to collect feedback on desired areas of work of UNIDO and the overall vision and structure of the Strategy. The event featured the participation of representatives from the Permanent Mission of Malawi to UNIDO on behalf of the LDC Chair, UN-OHRLS and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), who provided key insights for shaping the Strategy. Additional inputs and feedback from Member States and partners supported the revision of the draft Operational Strategy in line with relevant needs and priorities.

8. At LDC5, UNIDO organized a side event entitled “Paving the way for the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action: Strategizing the next decade through inclusive and sustainable industrialization”. The side event aimed to advance discussions with Member States, development partners and the private sector on concrete and targeted programmatic solutions to operationalize inclusive and sustainable industrialization in support of the implementation of the DPoA. The panel members included His Excellency Mr. Chhem Kieth Rethy, Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State of the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation of Cambodia, His Excellency Mr. Baboucarr Ousmaila Joof, Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of the Gambia, Mr. Albert Muchanga, African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, Mr. Escipión Joaquín Oliveira Gómez, Assistant Secretary-General, the Department of Structural Economic Transformation and Trade of the OACPS and Ms. Somachi Chris-Asoluka, Chief Executive Officer of the Tony Elumelu Foundation. The dialogue provided additional inputs to further strengthen the Operational Strategy. The feedback from the African Union Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals highlighted the need to develop the capacities of LDCs in the following

areas: (a) rural cooperative manufacturing and agroprocessing; (b) production of intermediate goods as part of the value chain development and restructuring; (c) research and innovation to increase competitiveness; and (d) partnership building, including through global forums, to de-risk investments in LDCs.

9. Following an extensive revision process, an updated draft UNIDO Operational Strategy for the LDCs 2022–2031 was circulated to Member States for additional feedback through information note No. 57 dated 27 July 2023. The received comments were incorporated into the updated Strategy.

10. The draft Operational Strategy will be presented to Member States for adoption at UNIDO's Tenth Ministerial Conference of the LDCs in November 2023. The Strategy will be further considered by Member States at the twentieth session of the UNIDO General Conference.

III. Implementation plan for the Operational Strategy for the LDCs 2022–2031

11. UNIDO will develop an implementation plan to expedite the execution of the Operational Strategy following the twentieth session of the General Conference.

12. The implementation plan will include a proposed coordination mechanism, outline the activities, propose a timeline and link the identified UNIDO action areas to potential partners that could support the execution of the Operational Strategy. UNIDO aims to implement the Strategy in collaboration with all Member States, fostering global solidarity and international cooperation, resonating with the sixth focus area of the DPoA. In doing so, it will work closely with the members of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group on LDCs, development cooperation agencies, Regional Economic Communities and relevant public and private sector partners to strengthen innovative partnership modalities and explore non-traditional funding avenues. UNIDO's field network and centres of excellence will be key in the implementation process.

13. A resource mobilization plan to target traditional and non-traditional donors and a communication plan to promote public-private partnerships will be developed. This is in line with UNIDO Member States' call urging the Organization and its development partners to collectively execute and implement the Strategy. This includes joint mobilization of adequate resources, engagement in the global and regional forums, technical cooperation programmes and projects aligned with the Strategy's priorities and capitalizing on lessons learned and good practices from the implementation of previous strategies.

14. The implementation plan will also include a monitoring, reporting and evaluation component, as well as targets and indicators in line with the DPoA and the UNIDO integrated results performance framework.

IV. Action required of the Conference

15. The Conference may wish to take note of the information contained in the present document.