1 | Page

United Nations
Committee for Development Policy

Communique on a Framework for organizing the
Programme of Action for the least developed countries

The world is currently experiencing a global health crisis unprecedented in living memory. There is a
growing consensus that the COVID-19 pandemic will have a devastating impact on the global economy,
triggering a global recession and dragging both developed and developing countries into the sphere of
negative growth and debt distress. It is highly likely, therefore, that the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs, in
Doha, Qatar, in March 2021, will take place at a time when the world economy is addressing the impact
of the COVID-19 outbreak and adjusting to the changing dynamics of the global economy. An immediate
challenge facing most LDCs is the dire shortage of face masks, hand sanitizers, ventilators, test kits, surgical
gowns, surgical gloves, emergency stretchers, etc., that they need to fight the spread of coronavirus. In

2 | Page

The framework developed by the CDP identifies six policy areas (five of them domestic and one
international) that are critical for building productive capacities and for prioritizing and coordinating the
policy actions that need to be taken to boost domestic productive capabilities
2
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1. Building development governance capabilities to design and implement appropriate policies for
sustainable dynamic structural transformation.
2. Developing industrial and sectoral policies that promote technological upgrading and structural
transformation. For many LDCs, this includes a focus on a sustainable intensification of
agricultural sector.
3. Establishing conducive and macroeconomic and financial frameworks that promote equitable
long-term growth, ensure macroeconomic stability, contribute to environmental stability and
reduce within-country inequality.
4. Creating positive synergies between social outcomes and productive capacities. This includes
designing policies that end deprivation, reduce inequality and boost productivity as well policies
that mitigate negative feedbacks between productive capacity and social outcomes.
5. Designing environmental policies that reduce climate and other environmental risks and that
harness opportunities arising from decarbonization and other global policy shifts
6. Providing adequate international support to integrate LDCs into the global economy. This
includes not only specific measures in trade, concessional financing, technology and technical
assistance, but also ensuring an equitable and effective global economic governanc

3 | Page

Through its work on pathways to graduation from the LDC category, the CDP has also demonstrated that
the proposed framework is not only holistic but also flexible enough to capture the heterogeneity within
the LDCs, avoiding the fallacy of one-size-fits-all approach. This flexibility makes it also well suited to
reflect policy actions that are particularly relevant for certain LDCs. This includes actions to assist
graduating countries in ensuring a smooth transition from the LDC category.
3
 It also allows for including
measures to increase the resilience to economic and environmental vulnerabilities. High vulnerability is a
common feature of almost all LDCs, whether they relate to climate change, pandemics such as the current
COVID-19 or shocks to global economic and financial markets.
Moreover, the framework will enable LDCs to integrate, in a coherent manner, critical emerging issues
into their respective national development goals. It will facilitate, for example, the alignment of the PoA
with the 2030 Agenda due largely to the intrinsic linkages between expanding productive capacities and
achieving the SDGs. If implemented successfully, the expansion of productive capacity will contribute to
the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the SDGs, thereby ensuring that
no country is left behind. Furthermore, by emphasizing the importance of expanding productive capacity,
the framework will reflect the evolving needs of LDCs as the geographical composition of the group
changes. It is anticipated that as countries that are currently scheduled for graduation exit the category,
most of the remaining LDCs will be geographically located in Africa. Hence, the significance of focusing on
productive capacity building. Difficulties in expanding productive capacity, which limits the ability of LDCs
to benefit from international support measures, such as LDC-specific preferential market access, is the
main factor why most LDCs in Africa ha[
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