

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOW-UP

Evaluation of the ITC Participation and Performance in the UN Delivering as One System

Management Response, Action Plan, Results, and Means of Verification

Date of submission of final evaluation report: June 2019
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Date of finalization of management response: February 2020

Recommendation No. 1:

ITC should develop a pragmatic vision and clear strategy on how it proposes to position itself to systematically engage in and derive benefits from ongoing systemic initiatives (like DaO) and from new reform initiatives of UNDS.

Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes (DCP)

Management Response and Justification:

The recommendation is:

Accepted:

Partially accepted:

Rejected:

DCP has a particularly important role to play in developing a clear strategy and practical vision to position ITC's engagement in ongoing UN reform initiatives like DaO (currently United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework or UNSDCF). DCP has designated sections on regional and country levels along with country managers with the task of providing regional and country intelligence, which consists of understanding the trade and development landscape in the country. DCP can use this information to better position ITC in countries that could benefit from ITCs expertise. Furthermore, DCP will coordinate with other divisions.

Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
<p>1.1 Communication with DCP country managers (CMs) about ITC's engagement in the new reform initiatives of the UN. Communication will involve purpose of engagement, steps and strategies to engage. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #1.)</p>	<p>DCP CMs have clarity on the necessary actions to take to engage with CF.</p> <p>Count the number of countries with whom CF was signed.</p>	DCP		03/2020	
<p>1.2 Communication with all divisions of ITC and explaining how they</p>	<p>Divisions have clarity about their roles. Division heads inform project managers (PMs) about their roles in the engagement.</p>	DCP		03/2020	

can contribute in the engagement process. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #1.)					
1.3 Prepare a strategy document with associated action plans.	Document will be distributed to all divisions participating in the engagement process.	DCP		05/2020	
1.4 Launch Country Intelligence Portal (CIP) linked to the NPP on the intranet. (See Strategy Document Table 2, #1.)	All information regarding ITC projects – project mission dates, number of projects in the past/ ongoing etc. will be available on this portal by country.	DCP		12/2020	
Recommendation No. 2:					
At the Headquarters level, clear responsibilities should be assigned to staff and operational units relating to strategic engagement with UNDS governance system, and consequently with DaO, UNDS reforms, and the UNDAFs (SDGs).					
Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes					
Management Response and Justification:					
The recommendation is: Accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted: <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected: <input type="checkbox"/>	This recommendation follows the previous one. Individuals responsible for engagement will be given clear instructions on how to execute the engagement process with UNDS governance system, UNDS reforms and the Cooperation Framework.				
Action Plan and Responsibilities:					
Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
2.1					

DCP will assign overall responsibilities to relevant individuals, stating the purpose and strategy of the respective division's engagement in the Cooperation Framework.	Responsibility will be assigned in writing to each individual.	DCP		05/2020	
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Recommendation No. 3:

Building on the content, processes and definitions of the 2016 “Rules of engagement for ONE ITC”, DCP regional offices should manage the UNDAF requirements, for the countries of ITC interest, to produce the following end outputs:

- Produce formal “country intelligence reports” on a regular basis;
- Ensure ITC is an official signatory of the UNDAF;
- Make sure these UNDAFs contain an economic / trade pillar to whose outcome(s) ITC officially contributes; and
- Operationalize an effective monitoring system within DCP to inform and report on all ITC activities in the country linking their contribution to UNDAF outcome(s) to which ITC contributes.

Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes

Management Response and Justification:

<p>The recommendation is:</p> <p>Accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Partially accepted: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Rejected: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted. As recommended, ITC will strive to better position themselves in the UNSDCF for the countries of its interest. It should be noted that ITC engagement depends on the country and its political, economic, social, geographic conditions. Some countries are beneficiaries, while some are partners/donors, especially developed countries. In some countries, political conflict does not allow ITC to implement projects. In other countries, for example in Angola, the country is interested in projects related to security, education, HIV/AIDS and malaria, and infrastructure and is not interested in SME competitiveness. Hence, it may not be useful to invest in such countries. Therefore, the level of ITC's involvement in each country will be decided based on the criteria explicated in the UNSDCF Engagement Strategy. It is important to use country intelligence to carefully assess and prioritize the countries to proactively engage in, for example, where ITC already has projects, and where the benefits are clear for the country. At this moment, DCP has no plan to produce formal “country intelligence reports”. However, country intelligence will be provided through the Country Intelligence Portal (CIP), which will be developed and designed in the coming weeks. CIP is expected to serve as the “country intelligence reports”.</p>
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Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
<p>3.1 CMs will prioritize countries that are starting new CF implementation and engage in the development of the CF using suggested criteria in the strategy document. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #4.)</p>	<p>Number of countries where ITC is a signatory to the CF.</p>	<p>DCP</p>		<p>03/2020</p>	
<p>3.2 CMs in their regular communication with the RCs/UNCTs highlight how ITCs work is linked to achieving many SDGs and emphasize the importance of including economic and trade pillar within the Cooperation Framework of the country. CMs are encouraged to visit the RCO during missions. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #5 & #10.)</p>	<p>The country includes trade related issues in their CF as one of the ingredients necessary for achieving SDGs for their country. This leads to opportunities for ITC operations in the country.</p>	<p>DCP</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>3.3 ITC will sensitize relevant individuals to the use of UN INFO. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #9.)</p>	<p>Numbers of projects listed on UN INFO.</p>	<p>DCP</p>	<p>IT</p>	<p>Q3/2020</p>	

Recommendation No. 4:

In order for the ITC to play its designated role in implementing DaO, UNDAFs and aligning itself to SDGs, staff members at all levels of ITC should be explicitly identified and required to play substantive roles in implementing DaO/UNDAF. Hence, ITC should ensure that the job descriptions, work plans, deliverables, and performance appraisals of relevant staff members reflect their participation, contribution, and accountability in enhancing participation in this area and aligning programming to SDGs.

Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes in coordination with Section of Human Resources Section

Management Response and Justification:

The recommendation is:	<p>This recommendation is partially accepted. We do not think HR's involvement is necessary here because the job descriptions, work plans, deliverables, and performance appraisals of relevant staff members are in principle developed by their supervisors, not by HR. DCP will explicitly mention in official documents (e.g. contracts) the responsibilities to any relevant individual that they need to play substantive roles in engaging with UNSDCF, which will consequently require their performance appraisals to focus on their UNSDCF-related achievements as well.</p>
Accepted: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Partially accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Rejected: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
<p>4.1 DCP will mention required roles and responsibilities related to engagement in the UNSDCF in the job descriptions of relevant staff (existing and new). (See Strategy Document Table 3, #2.)</p>	DCP will add the necessary information regarding relevant staff's engagement in the UNSDCF in their job descriptions.	DCP		06/2020	

Recommendation No. 5:

ITC should engage with UN development partners to design collaborative solutions strategies. Where the potential for global partnerships is identified, more detailed discussions should be held between headquarters in order to highlight and enhance complementarities between UN partners in mandate, programming approach, reporting, and business practices.

- ITC should take advantage of its new full membership within the UNSDG to define and present initiatives that bring together UN agencies in championing trade and entrepreneurship-related SDGs. It should also use this membership to defend its interests as an NRA. As much as possible, ITC should discuss and agree common positions with partner UN Agencies, including within the UN Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity platform.
- A collective and consistent advocacy drive by trade-related NRAs in UNDG platform can ensure positioning of trade and export sector in strategic discussions of UNDAF and help TRTA agencies secure their rightful role in UNDAF programmes. The GA Resolution of 31 May 2018 provided clear directives to RCs to ensure that the collective strength and multiple skill sets of UN system agencies be brought to bear in implementing UNDAFs. ITC along with other trade-related NRAs should collectively follow up and push for uniform advocacy by RCs for utilization of the competencies and global experiences of the NRAs. As experience demonstrates, through well-informed coordination and rapport with RCs, the ITC could better, and more systematically, disseminate and showcase its areas of specialization and support at the country level, and access opportunities for more programme participation and partnerships.

Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes in coordination with New York Office

Management Response and Justification:

The recommendation is:

Accepted:

Partially accepted:

Rejected:

ITC Headquarters, led by DCP, has an opportunity to more systematically collaborate and strategize with the other entities of the Trade and Productive Capacity Cluster, which is largely Geneva-based, as well as fellow NRAs, which are also headquartered in Europe. ITC NY office has the advantage to engage with other complementary UN development agencies, and DCO, due to its physical presence. This is particularly important in terms of collaborating on the implementation of UNDS reform and development of new system to support NRA country engagement.

Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
5.1 DCP in collaboration with the New York Office will engage with	ITC is in regular communication with other agencies in the cluster.	DCP	New York Office	03 – 04/2020	

other agencies in the Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity. (See Strategy Document Table 1, #5.)					
5.2 New York Office in collaboration with DCP will identify agencies for ITC to collaborate with. (See Strategy Document Table 1, #5.)	ITC is in regular communication with other NRAs, learning from each other's experiences and collaborating on joint programs and events.	New York Office	DCP	03 – 04/2020	

Recommendation No. 6:

DCP regional sections should regularly engage with the UNRC, relevant members of the UNRCO and the UNCT to enhance ITC role, its areas of specialty and competence within DaO / UNDAF. They should identify and utilize opportunities of securing ITC's role and participation in UNDAF design processes, including the Common Country Analysis (CCA), and ensure that all ITC operations (funded from all sources) in a given country are weighted up within the appropriate pillar/ component of the UNDAF/UNDAP. Simultaneously, they should maintain close relationships with the government and national counterparts, to explain how ITC role can be enhanced by synergies with other UN agencies within the DaO mechanisms.

- ITC should develop a set of tailored advocacy messages to be used in promoting solutions at the country-level – and within UNDAF context. This can be facilitated by compilation and synthesis of an evidence-based portfolio of good practices used in developing solutions strategies in the context of the CCA and UNDAFs. Management should support the creation of mechanisms for regular sharing of information and experience and their use by relevant ITC staff.
- As an NRA, it is important for the ITC to explain its role and its areas of specialty and competence to the UN Resident Coordinator, relevant members of the RC Office and the UN Country Team. It should also maintain close relationships with its constituency in the trade ministries and other relevant government agencies. When interacting with national counterparts, ITC should explain how its role can be enhanced by synergies with other UN entities within the DaO mechanisms

Assigned to: Division of Country Programmes

Management Response and Justification:

The recommendation is:

Accepted:

Partially accepted:

Rejected:

DCP regional offices and the CMs assigned to them are already regularly engaging with the UNCT, UNRC, UNRCO, UNDP and its relevant members. However, there is room for improvement. ITC's relevant units and staff members need to take more proactive steps to reaches out to UNCT, RCO and other relevant parties to explain its areas of expertise and the benefits it can provide to the country. Such engagements can help ITC by linking it to relevant stakeholders, and improving ITC's visibility. It can also help ITC in project designs and implementation and to avoid duplicate work.

However, what needs to be emphasized is that the relationship is a two-way street. Not all UNCTs and RCOs are responsive to ITC. Many country managers have also mentioned that in times of operational support while on missions, UNCTs and RCOs have not been responsive or helpful and that UNDP assisted them with the needs on the ground. Many CMs therefore are in closer relationship with UNDP than the respective UNCT or the RCO.

Another issue to be noted is that although ITC seeks ways to enhance synergies with other UN entities, the decision of the whether the project will take place is donor driven. At the same time, one needs to consider that ITC works on a particular area, thus, establishing synergies may not always be realistic in terms of implementing project.

Action Plan and Responsibilities:

Actions	Expected result and means of verification	Responsible office or partner	Contributing section(s)	Implementation deadline	Remarks
<p>6.1</p> <p>DCP CMs will take proactive steps to build close relationships (emails/visits during missions/attending skype calls) with UNCT, UNRC, governments and national counterparts. Additionally, DCP CM and other relevant sections will actively participate in the Common Country Analysis for the countries of ITC's interest. (See Strategy Document Table 3, #5, 6, 7 & 8.)</p>	<p>UNCTs and RCs will be aware of all ITC projects in the respective countries. ITC will gain visibility with wider donor network.</p>	<p>DCP</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>6.2</p>					

<p>Management will take part in promoting ITC's work at the country level by connecting bi-annually with UNCT, UNRCO, and governments within the UNSDCF framework. (See Strategy Document Table 1, #1.)</p> <p>DCP will work closely with CE to prepare brochures to be used by Management. (See Strategy Document Table 1, #3.)</p>	<p>Brochures developed by DCP in collaboration with CE.</p>	<p>DCP</p>	<p>OED and OED/CE</p>	<p>06/2020</p>	
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