

# UN TECHNOLOGY BANK FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

As 2023 ends, I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to our partners and donors for their steadfast support and continued commitment to the core mandates of the UN Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). These are countries that are left behind in technological development and where the gap between them and other countries is widening. Narrowing or eliminating this gap is an essential requirement for the international community to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the principle of “leaving no one behind”. The UN Technology Bank was established by the General Assembly to assist the LDCs with their efforts to build and upgrade their technological and innovative capabilities. It became operational in November 2018 and has been implementing its important mandate in close collaboration with partners from within and outside the UN system.



**Taffere Tesfachew**  
Acting Managing  
Director

I wish to take this opportunity to wish all our partners a Happy New Year and all the best for 2024.

## Snapshot of our activities in 2023

2023 saw many important conferences taking place, the **5th UN Conference on the LDCs, UN ESCAP 79 Commission, the STI Forum, the 8th World Investment Forum** and the **UNIDO Ministerial Conference of the LDCs**, to name but a few. The UN Technology Bank joined the UN system in these occasions to advocate for the special needs of LDCs, showcased its work in the areas of **Technology Needs Assessments, technology transfer** and **capacity building** and built partnerships. In addition, the joint collaboration with the World Eco-Design Conference and Zhejiang University awarded full scholarships in industrial design education to **33 students from 9 LDCs**.



## 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The **Doha Programme of Action** identified “**leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the SDGs**” as priority area for implementation in the decade 2022 to 2031. In this context, the Programme of Action also identified the UN Technology Bank as a “**focal point for the Least Developed Countries**”, on science, technology and innovation-related issues.

## 'Hear, Listen and Speak' Programme for All Bhutanese Children

The goal of the 'Hear, Listen, and Speak' Programme is to help the Kingdom of Bhutan develop the continuum of care required to address hearing loss and ear disorders for children 0-14 years of age. To date, the programme has;

- ◆ screened over **76,000 school children** in nine districts
- ◆ treated over **2,000 children**
- ◆ trained **250 school health coordinators**
- ◆ trained **20 audiologists and ENT technicians**
- ◆ transferred over **100 screening devices & equipment**
- ◆ provided **600 hearing aids** donated by GN ReSound and Hear the World Foundation



## Technology Makers Lab

The Technology Makers Lab (TML) project aims to create awareness on the application and use of **digital and frontier technologies** to address development challenges; and prepare the youth for tomorrow's world of the future by raising a **tech savvy generation** in the LDC. To date, the Technology Bank has received requests for the implementation of this project from the Governments of Niger, Togo, and The Gambia. As shown in the photo, the UN Technology Bank has already begun providing **training for trainers** with the assistance of the Ministry of Industry and Technology.



## Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Inter-Agency Task Team

During 2023, the Technology Bank reengaged in this important process by actively participating in the **UN Interagency Task Team (IATT) on STI4SDGs**. As part of the work of the IATT, the Technology Bank contributed to the **OACPS Policy Support Facility** workshop in Ethiopia to build capacities of senior government officials in assessing technological needs for technology transfer. Through the IATT, the Technology Bank also supports the preparatory process of the **STI Forum**.



## UNTB's Eighth Session of the Council and Activities for 2024



The **members of the Governing Council** of the UN Technology Bank for LDCs were appointed by the UN Secretary General, António Guterres for the period of 2023 to 2026. The Eighth Session of the Council took place on the 18 to 19 December 2023, and the Chairperson, Vice Chairpersons and Rapporteur were elected during this session. Some of the **key decisions** of the Council include;

- ◆ Ensure that the transfer of technology is supported by **local capacity building in science, technology and innovation**.
- ◆ Strengthen the **project identification, design & selection mechanism**.
- ◆ Intensify **resource mobilization** efforts.
- ◆ Strengthen the **technology needs assessments**, including **expanding coverage** to all least developed countries.

In line with these decisions, the Technology Bank's activities for 2024 include;

- ◆ **Technology needs assessments**: to be initiated in Lao PDR, Tanzania, Nepal, Mauritania and Malawi, and validation and finalization in Djibouti.
- ◆ Expansion of the **Hear, Listen and Speak programme** in Bhutan to achieve national coverage.
- ◆ Initiate implementation of the **Technology Makers Lab** in Togo, and The Gambia.
- ◆ Initiate the construction of a disaster resilient housing prototype in Mozambique by transferring **Rammed Earth Dwellings** technology.
- ◆ Initiate the transfer of technology for the reduction of **post-harvest loss** of cashew nuts in The Gambia.



We wish to congratulate the Kingdom of Bhutan for graduating from the LDC category on the 13 December 2023. Bhutan serves as a role model for other LDCs, particularly small landlocked LDCs.

The support that the Technology Bank provides to the least developed countries is currently focused in four thematic areas derived from the 14 Technology Needs Assessments that the Technology Bank has completed to date. These include:

1. Agriculture and food systems
2. Environment, climate change and resilience
3. Health; and
4. Education and digital skills development



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