

REPORT OF THE SUMMATIVE EVALUATION
OF THE JOINT INTEGRATED TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (JITAP)
[ITC/UNCTAD/WTO]

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PART I: OVERALL EXPERIENCE AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) is a unique product of its time. The mid-1990s saw the evolution of the new multilateral trading system (MTS) and there was considerable apprehension in developing countries and more particularly in the least-developed and low-income countries and in civil society in developed and developing countries, regarding the implications of a new trade organisation and the rules which it would negotiate and apply. These concerns later led to the cataclysmic events of Seattle. JITAP pre-dates those events and was (and remains) a relevant response to those emerging concerns that were observed in the mid-1990s. As we have heard, the conceptual origins of the programme can be traced to interactions among the three heads of agencies - ITC, UNCTAD and WTO - who at that time undertook joint visits to many developing countries, which later became JITAP participating countries. It was the intention of these heads of agencies to approach the trade problems of these countries in a joint and integrated way, which set the ball rolling. Since that time, the MTS has emerged as an important factor in the conduct of international relations. The global and regional context in which JITAP was born has rapidly changed. There is now a greater appreciation of the urgency with which issues of trade and poverty should be addressed. Concerns with MTS issues have probably led to the global consensus that trade, poverty, development and capacity-building issues need to be addressed together.

2. JITAP is an ambitious and imaginative experiment in TRTA. It has a claim to be the most high-profile technical assistance programme in the world (mentioned in global Declarations). Its aim is to approach trade issues holistically, bringing together a broad spectrum of issues in trade negotiations, application of trading rules and new trade opportunities into one programme. It is principally intended to be a capacity building programme. It was to be jointly managed and implemented. While the programme was conceptually imaginative, there would undoubtedly be difficulties in implementing it across seven to eight countries. Experience clearly bears this out. The results and performance of JITAP can be variously interpreted and it is a question of whether the glass is half full or half empty. The Evaluators are clearly of the view that it is more than half full, as it has many achievements to its credit, while there is at the same time the realisation that its potential has not been fully realised and that it could have performed significantly better than it has done so far. JITAP, as a concept, was brilliant; its design was appropriate for the time; its implementation has been satisfactory; its management system has lacked dynamism; and its outcomes, while appreciated, could have been better. Learning from the past four years, JITAP has now to be radically altered, to adjust to new circumstances, while preserving what is valuable in its conception and design.

3. The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE), which was undertaken in the latter part of the year 2000, examined the JITAP experience positively and recommended many improvements. At the time of the MTE, nearly 60% of the total resources pledged had been spent and now probably about 75%-80% has been spent, with the balance to be spent before the end of 2002. Since the MTE, the activities that have been undertaken have not been extensive. MTE recommendations on funding were not realised and there has been a resultant adverse effect on implementation. Now, with eight months to go, funds have become available. To spend these resources effectively, the Evaluators as an interim recommendation proposed the extension of JITAP until the end of 2002. Workplans must be adjusted for these resources to be optimally utilised. This Report should be seen in the context of the MTE, as many observations made therein are still relevant.

4. Based on the current evaluation, the Evaluators have no hesitation in recommending another phase for JITAP, bringing in more countries. The concept of a joint and integrated approach is highly desirable and attractive for low-income and least developed countries at this stage of the evolution of the MTS. In extending JITAP to another phase, it is imperative that the lessons learned from the first phase are taken note of. The first phase was an experiment. It is essential that there is a radical overhaul, both in the substantive content of JITAP, its design and programming methodologies and in its management. JITAP is essentially a holistic programme and it needs to be maintained as such. A critical mass of activities needs to be implemented in a core group of countries. Therefore, a 'menu' approach will not be appropriate for funding through the CTF. JITAP should aim at being a catalyst for new and innovative methodologies in the burgeoning field of TRTA. A new mindset needs to be at work in shaping the next JITAP.

5. The two international Evaluators initially met in Geneva, along with eight national consultants who are undertaking individual country evaluations. These initial meetings in Geneva were mainly concerned with interactions with the national consultants. Other meetings with agencies were also held. The two international evaluators visited eight JITAP countries and also two other non-JITAP countries (Cameroon and Zambia). One Evaluator visited three JITAP countries (East Africa) and one non-JITAP country (Zambia) and the other visited five JITAP Countries (West Africa and Tunisia) and one other non-JITAP country (Cameroon). There should have been an opportunity for the two Evaluators to have visited at least one country together. The purpose of visiting two non-JITAP countries was to obtain insights as to the difference that JITAP has made. After the field visits, the two Evaluators met in Geneva and another round of consultations with agencies and donor and participating country representatives took place. An observer from one donor country, Mr David Brown from DFID UK, was associated with the evaluation mission in Uganda and Zambia. Agency officials and the Programme Co-ordinator also accompanied the Evaluators in most of the countries they visited.

6. The two international Evaluators met with over 200 people in the countries they visited and in Geneva. They met with the senior management of ITC UNCTAD and WTO. They also met with relevant staff members of the three agencies and representatives based in Geneva of donor and JITAP countries. At the field level, they met with JITAP management personnel, officials from the Ministries of Trade and other counterpart organisations, representatives of the private sector, universities, civil society organisations and with a few donor representatives. Both in Geneva and in the field, they met with the national consultants who are part of the Evaluation Team. Associating national consultants in the Evaluation has been an important and valuable innovation. This is particularly relevant when undertaking an Evaluation of a complex inter-country programme. There are lessons to be drawn from this experience, so that the mechanism of national consultants (recruitment and selection, timing, the types of interactions) can be improved. The international evaluation team has taken account of the reports of national consultants from the eight JITAP countries in their Report. These reports of national consultants are free-standing documents and are available separately.

7. Many persons have assisted us in the course of this Evaluation, in Geneva and in the field. They are too numerous to mention individually. We wish to thank all of them. There are a few whom we need to mention. We wish to thank Mr J-D Bélisle, Mr Ablassé Ouedraogo, Mr Carlos Fortin and Mr J Smadja for their assistance and support. We also wish to thank Mr Hendrik Roelofsen, Mr Anant Vijay and Mr J-C Piers de Raveschoot (ITC), Mr A Megzari, Mr Victor Busuttill, Mr Bonapas Onguglo, Mr Ame Murigande and Mr Marcel Namfua (UNCTAD), Mr Jean-Marc Fortin, Mr Paul Rolian and Mr Dickson Yeboah (WTO) and Mr Abdelkrim Ben Fadhl, the Programme Co-ordinator, for their assistance. Ms Adair Heuchan of the Canadian Mission in Geneva has been of considerable assistance and we wish to thank her.

8. The structure of the report might be briefly explained. It is in two parts - the first part being an analysis of the overall evolution of the programme, including a chapter looking at the future of JITAP; the second part of the report constitutes eight brief country chapters, drawing from our experiences at the country level. The structure of the first part of the report might be briefly explained. Following the Introduction, the first chapter deals with concept and design issues. The second chapter focuses on the substantive aspects of JITAP. The third chapter addresses key implementation issues. The fourth chapter looks at the future. Key findings and key recommendations are to be found in box format, immediately after the Introduction. The lessons learned are to be found in another box before Chapter 4., on The Future. The recommendations are largely about the future programme.

KEY FINDINGS

- JITAP has made an important contribution in the newly-emerging area of trade-related technical assistance (TRTA), in the context of the new multilateral trading system (MTS). It is viewed as a model for possible replication elsewhere and by others. JITAP is probably the most high-profile technical assistance programme in the world.
- JITAP has been an important instrument in familiarising and developing capacities on MTS issues in the eight countries in which it has been implemented. It has made a difference in these countries, when compared with the experience of those countries which have not participated in JITAP.
- JITAP has enabled MTS issues to be discussed not only within government, but also with the private sector and civil society. Many outreach programmes stimulated by JITAP and also inter-institutional committees (IICs), have enabled a broader participation, although more remains to be done.
- JITAP made an important contribution in enabling many of its participating countries to play an articulate role in multilateral trade negotiations, especially in Doha. JITAP can therefore be viewed as an important instrument in building a multilateral trading system.
- The joint and integrated approach to trade issues has raised the credibility and the profile of the three substantive multilateral trade organisations and has also contributed to developing a more holistic and comprehensive view of trade issues in participating countries. The MTS has been made more user-friendly through JITAP. The uniqueness of JITAP is the result of the three agencies working together.
- Building JITAP in the manner of a tripod, addressing three broad issue areas - negotiating capacities, enabling application of agreed rules and creating opportunities for export expansion - contributes to a holistic view at the country level. For optimal achievement, activities need to be implemented symmetrically in all three areas. This has not happened and therefore the holistic approach is adversely affected, to some extent.
- While the cluster approach can be justified as an experiment, it has also contributed to extensive fragmentation and the loss of a holistic perspective at the field level. The challenge is to develop an approach which is more integrated and cohesive.
- An important outcome of JITAP has been the effective blending of national and inter-country (sub-regional) arrangements to implement programme activities. Although not specifically intended, the potential for expanding inter-country and sub-regional scales of activities in TRTA has now been recognised. A future JITAP could build on this experience.
- The linkage between trade and poverty issues was not an explicit feature of JITAP. Many elements of JITAP (IICs, export-sector strategies) are conducive to exploring the linkage between trade and poverty. These need to be more intensively explored in a future phase.
- JITAP has successfully contributed to the development of human resource capacities and the cadres of personnel it has trained now constitute an important resource in these countries. This has been one of the key areas in which JITAP has made a significant difference.
- JITAP has stimulated a training culture on MTS issues. In several countries, local institutions have been stimulated to expand their training activities as a result. JITAP can expand its role through appropriate connections with local institutions.
- The human resource development (HRD) strategies and methodologies adopted by JITAP need to be reviewed, so that more effective systems can be put in place. Instead of focusing largely on government institutions, there is extensive scope for engaging local universities, business schools and similar bodies in building up HRD capacities.
- The establishment of IICs and their recent consolidation has been an innovative approach in institutionalising the MTS at the national level. In many countries, IICs have enabled the private sector and civil society organisations to be included in decision-making processes in an advisory capacity. The IIC can be an important part of the machinery of government.
- Creating expanded export opportunities is one of the three 'legs' of the JITAP tripod. In low-income countries, the major constraint to export expansion lies in the supply-side. However, JITAP's focus has been largely on market access and marketing issues. There needs to be greater attention to supply-side issues. Current methodologies to assist in the development of export-sector strategies require review.

- Technical inputs in the form of international and national consultants and resultant technical outcomes have not been assessed and this is largely due to the lack of mechanisms for this purpose. Consequently, the improvement of substantive processes and content of programming have lagged behind.
- Although a very small proportion of total resources (about 5%) has been spent on equipment, an important difference has been made to the functioning of institutions to which equipment has been supplied. There is an urgent need for trade-related institutions to be equipped appropriately, particularly in IT.
- An unintended outcome of JITAP is that it has evolved as a potentially valuable instrument in bridging the gap between trade negotiators in Geneva (from donor and recipient countries) and the field level. It can be a mechanism to transfer field-level experience into the negotiating process (for example, the difficulties involved in adopting MTS rules and the types of assistance required). This aspect needs to be further studied.
- Both conceptually and in practice, there is no conflict between JITAP and the Integrated Framework (IF). They are, indeed, complementary. A future JITAP has important opportunities for building close working relationships with IF processes.
- Donors are involved in JITAP at several levels - as sources of funding; as part of the management, through the Common Trust Fund (CTF) Steering Group; and potentially at the field level, through their local offices. Improved relationships with donors at the field level can contribute to a greater role by JITAP in TRTA and add more value to its operations. The donor role needs to be reviewed in this context.
- It is difficult to make a judgement on the cost-effectiveness of JITAP operations. Meaningful financial statistics are not always available. It is estimated that about 40% of resources have been allocated to international and national consultants and equipment. Management, overheads and operating costs are spread across many activities and clusters, so that no precise estimate is feasible. The extension of the programme from a three to a four year period (this was required in view of the slow release of funds) has increased management costs. There has to be greater attention to the issue of cost-effectiveness.
- Kenya is probably the country which has performed most effectively, out of eight JITAP countries. One important reason is the response of Government and another is the outstanding role played by the National Facilitator. Kenya had only half the resources available to other countries. Activities in Kenya are probably cost-effective. Kenya's performance is an illustration that more could have been achieved in other countries with the levels of expenditure incurred.
- JITAP has not been implemented as effectively as it should have been, partly due to financial constraints (the irregular flow of donor funding, which has affected workplans) and partly due to management problems, both in Geneva and at the country level. Part of the problem has been the lack of flexibility in adjusting workplans, the relatively inflexible resource allocation systems and the lack of decentralisation of authority. Although the sub-regional layer was removed after the Mid-term Evaluation (MTE), the gap in communication between Geneva and the country level has persisted in many countries.
- At the Geneva level, since the MTE, there appears to be a lack of clarity on the role that should be performed by agencies and that of the Programme Co-ordinator. It is an essential precondition of accountable management that the oversight role and scrutiny functions of the CTF Steering Group and of the co-ordinating mechanisms of the three agencies are kept distinct and separate from the tasks assigned to the Programme Co-ordinator. The servicing of these bodies is the task of ITC, as managing agency.
- At the country level, many problems have been encountered in the management functions undertaken by the National Focal Point (NFP) and the National Facilitator (NF). The National Steering Committees have failed to deliver in many countries. There are several reasons - the lack of resources in NFPs; the lack of incentives; and also the limited authority to influence workplans and strategies and methodologies. There is a perception at the country level that JITAP is largely a programme run from Geneva. Early action is required to change these perceptions.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- JITAP should be extended for a further period of three years, beginning in January 2003. The current phase of JITAP was an experiment. On balance, the experiment can be described as being successful, although there are significant shortcomings in the implementation of activities and in management. In making this recommendation, the Evaluators have taken note of the decisions of the policy-makers at Doha and Monterrey. The next phase would require a radical overhaul in terms of substance and in management systems.
- A future JITAP should focus on three substantive areas - developing capacities at the national level to discuss and elaborate on MTS issues, particularly through the establishment of Consultative Committees on Trade (CCTs), formerly described as IICs and other measures; on building HRD capacities, through extensive engagement of local institutions; and through assistance to the development of export-sector strategies, focusing on supply-side issues. Greater emphasis on trade and poverty issues is essential in these three areas. The current cluster approach will need to be replaced.
- Ten new countries should be taken up as JITAP-participating countries, largely selected from the COMESA, SADC and ECOWAS regions, with Cameroon being added.
- The current seven countries in East and West Africa should continue to be participating countries in JITAP for the next two to three years, but with their programmes on a smaller scale, undertaken with a view to consolidating work already undertaken and focusing on the new, substantive JITAP approach outlined above.
- The sub-regional and inter-country dimension of the next JITAP should be more pronounced than in the first phase. As many activities as feasible should be organised on a sub-regional and inter-country scale, thereby adding value to other TRTA, which are largely implemented exclusively at the country level.
- A selective or 'menu' approach to the provision of JITAP products will not be satisfactory within the framework of CTF funding. Such an approach can be pursued outside JITAP, through other types of funding. A critical mass of activities in a core group of countries is the essence of JITAP and should continue to be so.
- Close links should be established with the IF at the country level. The feasibility of the Steering Committee of JITAP being a sub-committee of the IF Steering Committee might be explored. The Secretariat function of the IF could also be undertaken within the JITAP framework.
- Each new participating country should be earmarked US\$1.2 million for the three-year period. The seven currently participating countries should be allocated US\$500,000 per country. The total cost of the JITAP programme for the years 2003-2005 should be US\$15.5 million. The time period should be strictly confined to three years.
- The CTF arrangement should be continued, with donors contributing equal amounts to Windows 1 and 2. The association of WTO in JITAP might be feasible, through a contribution from the GTF, if adequate resources are forthcoming for that channel. Otherwise, current arrangements should be maintained. Donors should consider arrangements to supply resources they have committed on a predictable basis.
- JITAP management structures need to be overhauled and streamlined. The role of the CTF Steering Group in Geneva should be reviewed, so that it can focus more on strategic and substantive issues. The function of servicing the CTF Steering Group and the inter-agency Working Group (that should be set up) should be undertaken by the managing agency, ITC, as distinct from the Programme Manager. The tasks of these oversight mechanisms should be clearly spelt out. It needs to be emphasised that oversight functions and programme management should be kept distinct and separate, to ensure accountable and transparent management.
- Programme management needs to be restructured, with the Programme Manager entrusted only with administrative and financial management tasks and part-time Technical Advisers brought in to manage substantive issues. (This is on the presumption that there will be 17 countries involved in the next JITAP.) Another option that might be considered is to have two JITAPs - one for the COMESA and the other for the ECOWAS regions, where there will be a Programme Manager for each of them.
- National level management structures should be strengthened, with only an NFP in most countries and it should be supplied with adequate resources. Members of Steering Committees should be paid an allowance.
- Subcontracting, as an implementation modality, should be extensively used in the next JITAP. Universities, business schools, Chambers of Commerce, TPOs and others in participating countries and at the regional and sub-regional levels and also appropriate institutions in donor countries, can be appropriately engaged in the delivery of services.
- A new mind-set should be at work, designing the future programme. To this end, the three agencies should jointly establish a Task Force. A light, cost-effective methodology to design the next programme should be adopted.
- Current workplans for the next six months should be adjusted, to focus on a fewer number of activities. The work on export-sector strategies should be reviewed to obtain optimal results, before the programme is wound up. The feasibility of supplying new tools developed by ITC (such as Trade Maps) to participating countries should be examined.

CHAPTER 1. CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS

9. JITAP is neither a clearly-defined inter-country programme, nor a collectivity of national programmes. It is not implemented in accordance with the provisions of one programme document. It is largely guided by national programme documents. In the four years of its implementation, the inter-country and regional factor has gradually evolved and has taken on an added significance, through the organisation of common activities and through common systems of management. It is clearly an imaginative and innovative approach. The Mid-Term Evaluation laid down the key features of JITAP in the following terms (these are paraphrased and updated) - a joint endeavour by the three multilateral trade agencies to address key MTS issues in eight developing countries; an integrated approach through 15 clusters combining a process-oriented and output-based approach; a hybrid approach (a blend of country and inter-country activities) to implement the programme, although funding was more country-specific; extensive donor participation in the funding of JITAP (US\$10 million over four years, by the end of 2002, from 13 donors); and a management model where in Geneva the three agencies and the donor community are involved (and lately representatives of participant developing countries); a sub-regional layer which has now been dispensed with, subsequent to the Mid-Term Evaluation; and co-ordinating mechanisms at the national level.

A Joint Approach

10. Probably the most unique and defining characteristic of JITAP is that it is a joint programme, implemented by the three substantive multilateral trade agencies. The UN system has encouraged and attempted joint programming processes among development agencies, with relatively little success. JITAP is an outstanding exception. Working jointly together can indeed be a formidable task, when the three agencies have their own governing Boards and their own priorities. From the point of view of the recipient countries and also from the side of donors, the joint approach is to be considered beneficial, as it is a more comprehensive effort to address a range of key emerging issues. While the concept of a joint approach is sound and eminently desirable, has it really worked in practice?

11. There is the Inter-agency Working Group, which facilitates the implementation of the joint approach. There is also a considerable amount of informal interaction among relevant personnel in the three agencies. There has been considerable discussion among the three agencies on the substantive and managerial aspects of JITAP and that continues to be so. Many missions are undertaken jointly. There have been several important outcomes as a result of such joint activities. There is a closer understanding, at least in the technical co-operation field, among the three agencies on field-level issues. There is a growing body of experience on implementing joint activities. The beneficiary countries themselves, especially their Ministries of Trade and related organisations, have developed a greater familiarity regarding the comparative roles of the three substantive trade agencies. The rules of the MTS are also better observed and less quasi-judicially and more in the context of a development relationship, as a result of the joint approach. The WTO is seen particularly in a more friendly light as a result of JITAP.

12. Each of the three agencies in JITAP have had their own mandates, responsibilities and comparative advantages. WTO is a quasi-judicial body and is seen by many as the epitome of globalisation. For a high-profile articulate constituency, it is not an institution which is friendly towards the poorer countries. Since the events in Seattle, efforts have been made to overcome that impression and JITAP's joint approach, albeit on a small scale, has been a valuable intervention, especially by bringing WTO alongside the more development-orientated agencies UNCTAD and ITC. UNCTAD and ITC offer opportunities for considering policy options for poor countries and also in enabling them to exploit practically the emerging

opportunities within a rules-based system. JITAP is therefore a blend which, taken as a whole, is more to the taste of developing countries. The joint approach has its political and economic attractions and is probably more user-friendly.

An Integrated Approach

13. The integrated approach is less in evidence than the joint approach. In implementing JITAP, through 15 clusters of activities, the integration of the actions of three agencies is clearly evident only in a few sectors, such as in Cluster 8 (Human Resources Development). Most clusters are viewed as either ITC, UNCTAD or WTO clusters, with little input from the other agencies. Many of these clusters could have benefited from a more active engagement of the three agencies together in each cluster. To illustrate, Cluster 2 on Inter-Institutional Committees (IICs) is eminently suited to a combined and integrated approach by the three agencies, especially when it evolves as it is now doing towards being a co-ordinating consultative mechanism on TRTA issues. Each of the three agencies has a distinctive contribution to make in developing this institution. Similarly, there are strong arguments for associating UNCTAD and WTO in the export sector strategy clusters (Clusters 9-12), as there are important policy and negotiating issues and regarding the application of MTS rules in the work relating to these clusters.

14. Operationalising an integrated approach has important transaction costs. If the integrated approach is to mean more than the organisation of training modules, bringing together the components of training materials prepared by each agency and undertaking training in commonly-organised workshops, a more conceptualised integration model needs to be developed. There is an opportunity here for the three agencies to develop training materials together and also to develop curricular and integrated training approaches. This calls for more than a pooling of material and manpower, as has been done so far in JITAP. The advantage of such a deepened integrated approach is that there is a greater opportunity for harmonising the process of rule-making and negotiations with the practical issues of trade, as experienced in poorer developing countries.

15. Another aspect of integration - and one which is particularly critical to the holistic strategy prescribed in dealing with trade issues and also to perceptions at the field level - is the tripod which JITAP was intended to be. JITAP was constituted of three 'legs' - knowledge of the MTS and ongoing negotiations; familiarisation with MTS rules and conformity with national legislation; and identifying new trade opportunities. It is vital that these three components of JITAP's anatomy are symmetrical. It is therefore problematic that the last of these, addressing trade opportunity issues, has lagged behind. For a future JITAP, there needs to be not only symmetry in design, but also a more convergent and symmetrical approach in implementation.

The Cluster Approach

16. The cluster approach, to begin with, was imaginative and appropriate. There has to be a methodology for implementing a joint and complex programme and as a first attempt, the cluster approach was certainly a feasible and practical methodology. It allowed for agencies to undertake activities jointly, without incurring large transaction costs, which are inherent in more co-ordinated approaches. It also enabled the linkages with the appropriate counterpart institutions in host countries. ITC, for example, could work with the trade promotion organisations (TPOs) with which it was familiar. It also enabled financial allocations to be made for discrete activities and also probably the monitoring of implementation. The cluster approach also helped ITC in particular to link JITAP, with its cross-cutting operations, to its functional divisions. It might even be true that the priorities of the functional divisions within ITC has to some extent shaped the cluster approach.

17. The 15 clusters differed one from another in terms of resources allocated, the breadth or narrowness of their scope, the relationship with counterpart agencies and in other ways. At least three clusters have taken up nearly 30%-40% of resources, while there are clusters (Clusters 13 and 14) which account individually for only about 2% of resources. Clusters 13 and 14 cannot logically be defined even as clusters. Another more important drawback in the cluster approach has been the fragmentation of activities, instead of being a stimulus to integration. The way the clusters have been managed has also led to fragmented perceptions at the field level. To illustrate, Clusters 13 (Trade Secrets) and 14 (Export Finance) activities are hardly known to some reference centres (Cluster 7). Similarly, the work undertaken in Clusters 9-12 on export-sector strategies is only remotely linked with Cluster 2 on IICs. Activities have been emphasised in place of the objectives which were sought to be achieved. While the cluster approach was appropriate for the current phase of JITAP, its continuation over the longer-term - if and when a new phase is considered - should be reviewed.

Blending Country and Inter-Country Activities

18. A fascinating feature of JITAP has been the blending of country and inter-country (largely sub-regional) activities, although most of the resources available have been specifically earmarked to individual recipient countries. The blending of the sub-regional approach was particularly evident in Cluster 8 (Human Resource Development), although recently it has been extended to other clusters, such as Cluster 2 (IICs). Africa in recent years has strongly emphasised sub-regional arrangements as building blocks for a pan-African approach and sub-regional institutions such as COMESA, SADC and the East African Community are being re-vitalised. In at least a small way, the sub-regional scale organisation of JITAP activities has made a modest contribution to regional collaboration and interchange of experience, as is evident in areas such as Customs and Standards.

19. The primary motivation for JITAP to undertake these inter-country activities was for reasons of economies of scale. The lesson to be drawn from the experience of the last three years is that there is more to be gained from placing more emphasis on sub-regional actions, apart from economies of scale. Such an approach could make an important contribution to capacity-building in individual countries and also in the establishment of sub-regional networks, which are vital to the development of trade. A considerable proportion of the trade of an individual JITAP country is regional and this aspect can best be addressed through the inter-country focus of JITAP activities. Moreover, trade negotiating positions can also be developed through sub-regional and regional convergence and while JITAP so far has contributed modestly to this process, it could do more in the future. At a time when TRTA is increasing, JITAP can add value, through a more focused inter-country approach, to all the national level TRTA which will be implemented. Adding a regional dimension will introduce a greater relevance and realism, as trade opportunities for many of these countries are to be found within the region itself.

20. Clearly, JITAP's activities were largely aimed at individual countries and the focus was on country-level actions. Over the last four years, JITAP, through various meetings and training activities, has enabled the exchange of experience between appropriate institutions within the sub-regions of East and West Africa. There was some degree of interchange of experience among National Focal Points and, although much less, among National Facilitators. In most areas of JITAP, there could have been benefits accruing from mechanisms more purposively established for regional interaction and the exchange of experience. There could also have been opportunities to tap in more optimally to the limited pool of high-quality expertise available within these sub-regions. These are aspects to be considered in future designs.

Human Resource Development

21. JITAP has invested probably about 25% of its resources in human resource development (HRD). Cluster 8 is dedicated to it and there are significant components of HRD in most other clusters. The methodology, quite rightly, has been to emphasise training and capacity-building, to generate a supply of local trainers who can be instrumental in stimulating a chain reaction in training. About 80-100 persons have been trained in each country, through three-week, two-week and one-week workshops and seminars. Several issues arise from this conceptual approach to training. First, are these types of training activities adequate to create a cadre of trainers? They are probably adequate to undertake some work in expanding the constituency of those who are familiar with MTS issues. To expect them then to train people in evolving trade negotiations will be somewhat far-fetched. Therefore, the whole role of training networks needs to be re-assessed. Second, if the intention is to convert those who are trained to be trainers in the longer-term, then a significant part of the training cohort of JITAP is probably not appropriate for the task. Officials in the Ministry of Trade, for example, have more relevant tasks to perform than undertaking training. Also, in export-sector strategy development (Cluster 12), the current methodology of 'coaching' persons and institutions in the trade might be reviewed, as it is probably not the optimal approach to building capacities for export-sector strategy development in participant countries. A sustainable and cost-effective capacity to develop export-sector strategies might be better placed in institutions such as business schools.

22. The more important aspect of the current methodology is the relative neglect of national institutions in the host countries, which have a dedicated commitment to training in trade-related areas. In most of the countries where JITAP has been implemented, there are local business schools and universities with important technical resources in fields such as economics, commerce and law. There has been little effort so far to engage these institutions in the task of HRD in relevant areas of trade. Even in instances where many of these institutions have been established through the support of the ITC, they have been virtually bypassed. The creation of sustainable capacities for HRD in trade therefore requires the closer engagement of these institutions, whether it be training on MTS issues or in developing export-sector strategies. It is not necessary to create parallel cadres of trainers through the approach adopted so far. What is critical is to upgrade and enhance the capacity of training institutions which are already functioning, but are in need of technical and financial resources.

Access to Markets and Supply-side Issues

23. The overall balance of JITAP is probably tilted more towards access to markets issues and less to supply-side issues. The whole range of issues that concern the MTS have more to do with market-access issues than with those on the supply-side. HRD components also largely stressed market access issues. Clusters 9-12, which addressed export sector strategies, are largely, although not exclusively, focusing on market-access issues. There is growing evidence at the field level that if these low-income countries are to compete in global markets, the problems are largely on the supply-side. The problems are to do primarily with generating surpluses for export of globally marketable products. This requires investment and infrastructure at the farm and enterprise levels and therefore, apart from technical assistance, what is required is capital investment. Technical assistance needs to be more strongly geared towards establishing the linkage with capital assistance. Instead of export-sector strategies which focus more on the market side, they should be adjusted to be more engaged on resolving supply-side issues and linking up with potential investors and financiers, whether they be local banks or multilateral financing institutions. The current JITAP has not adequately dealt with these issues, but if these technical interventions are to produce results, then the entire approach needs to be reviewed, to identify the scope for more emphasis to be placed on resolving supply-side constraints.

The Management Model

24. The key to effective implementation depends upon the management model. JITAP is complex and was also an experiment. Similarly, the management model also has to be viewed as an experiment. The model adopted and which has evolved over time, has two layers - the Geneva level (the CTF Steering Group, the so-called 'mechanism' at the inter-agency level, the Programme Co-ordinator); and the country level (National Steering Committee, National Focal Point, National Facilitator). The sub-regional layer has been done away with since the MTE. It also appears that there is no formal mechanism at the inter-agency level in Geneva, since the MTE and that inter-agency relationships are pursued informally and through ad-hoc meetings. It is evident that managers, both at the Geneva level and at the country level, have devoted most of their time and effort to administrative and financial management and have devoted much less time to managing the substantive aspects, such as quality control of technical outputs and technical outcomes. There appear to be significant gaps in the oversight and review mechanisms of the programme and these need to be reviewed, to facilitate accountable and transparent systems of management. Management systems are also crucial to a greater sense of ownership by the beneficiaries. Decentralisation of authority was not adequate to ensure that there is that sense of ownership at the country level. Four years experience with JITAP offers many new insights as to ways in which the management model can be improved. (Management issues are discussed more extensively in Chapter 3.)

Sustainability

25. JITAP was an urgent response to a set of emerging needs within the newly-evolving global trade system. There are many outcomes of JITAP which are probably sustainable - the IICs, which are establishing a place within the machinery of government; the Reference Centres; partly the cadres of trainers and trainees which have been produced; and also partly the methodologies of export-sector strategy development. There are other spin-offs from JITAP which are also sustainable in the longer term - its contribution to the greater understanding of MTS issues, both within and outside government; and also, too, the more comprehensive engagement of stakeholders on trade-related issues (an aspect which will continue to be sustained, particularly through bilateral donor action).

26. Ensuring sustainability of outcomes demands more dedicated attention than has been witnessed so far. Least-developed and low-income countries are what they are because they do not have the financial and technical resources to undertake activities that programmes like JITAP have undertaken. Donors and the international community have urged that their priorities are health, education and the social sectors. Recently, there is a new priority attached to TRTA. For JITAP and other TRTA activities to be sustainable, there is a clear imperative for continued donor support to those trade-related institutions which are increasingly engaged in these programmes. When an institution (a business school, a training centre or an IIC) has been created, they have to be continually commissioned for some period of time by the external development partners of a country to undertake work, so that their skills are adequately utilised and upgraded. They cannot be left in the lurch and expect government institutions, with scarce resources (in some of these countries, the Ministries of Trade cannot even pay their telephone bills!) to support them by themselves. The lesson to be learned, therefore, is that the institutions that are being created and the products that are being developed through programmes like JITAP need to be supported over the longer-term, not only by the programme which created them, but also through TRTA in general.

27. There are two other aspects of sustainability which need to be addressed by JITAP. It is considered that sustainability is ensured through counterpart funding. That is a legitimate expectation. The IICs, for example, are being established as a part of the machinery of

government, through legislation or other administrative measures (Kenya, Uganda, among others), so that they will obtain regular government budgetary allocations. That way, sustainability is ensured, at a minimal level of operation, although extra resources will be required for these IICs to function effectively. The issue here is the value of the government contribution. The personnel costs in the public services of these countries are significantly lower than the costs of the international and national consultants that TRTA programmes employ. The ratios are 1:50 in many instances, between public service employees involving JITAP and international consultants. The ratio is probably 1:10 between public service employees and national consultants. The government counterpart contribution is mainly in terms of personnel and this gap in terms of costs should be taken note of, as the input of government in terms of work-months might be much larger than the work-months of national and international consultants, although the money-value might be low. The other aspect is the costs of various activities. The costs of an activity have to be on a scale which the government can continue with. When costs are heavy, continuing assistance will be required. Therefore, it is vital that more cost-effective methodologies are developed, to ensure sustainability.

CHAPTER 2. BUILDING TRADE CAPACITY – PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

28. The ultimate aim of JITAP is to enhance capacities for trade in its broadest sense in participant countries. The MTE 18 months ago examined JITAP's contribution cluster by cluster. In this chapter, we have adopted a different approach and instead of looking at clusters we are focusing on five substantive areas where JITAP activities have attempted to make a contribution in terms of capacity building. For each of these areas, there are several clusters through which activities have been undertaken. Organising this chapter by issues, instead of clusters, offers a greater sense of the potential for inter-agency collaboration, within those broad-spectrum issues. When clusters are viewed within these issue areas, the opportunity for linkages, instead of the more fragmented approach, can also be observed. This is vital for the future orientation of JITAP.

Policy Development

29. This has been one of the key tasks of JITAP. LDCs and low-income countries generally have lacked the capacity to develop policies for trade negotiations and also policies at the national level to exploit the opportunities that are emerging in the MTS. Through several approaches, JITAP has implemented activities to bridge the policy gap, although there is more to be done. One important element of JITAP has been to develop human resource capacities which would enable these countries to engage more effectively in MTS issues. (This aspect will be dealt with later.) Similarly, there have been studies undertaken on the impact of the MTS on these countries. In enabling policy development, JITAP has also contributed to the development of negotiating positions on a wider, sub-regional scale.

30. An important contribution of JITAP in this field has been to enable many participating countries, especially those of East Africa, to be more articulately engaged in the preparation for and negotiating processes in Seattle and more particularly, in Doha. JITAP activities have enabled these countries to identify their priorities for negotiations, options and strategies for such negotiations and to enable interaction with neighbouring countries to develop common positions. The work undertaken has stimulated more extensive work in policy development. Most of this type of activity is being undertaken within the framework of the IIC, which is potentially an important institution within the machinery of government and at the broader national level, in managing trade issues. Therefore, we focus upon the operations of these IICs in the paragraphs that follow.

31. All JITAP countries now have IICs to discuss WTO issues. As outlined in the previous chapter, the IIC is intended to be an integrating mechanism – bringing together different government ministries and agencies as well as representatives of the private sector, to discuss trade issues and national priorities and to provide advice to the relevant official decision-making bodies. Most countries have also included some representatives of universities and civil society organisations in the membership of their IICs, though Tanzania has chosen to exclude CSOs.

32. In most cases, since the MTE there have been renewed efforts to energise these bodies. Such efforts have included:

- Expanding membership from other key ministries notably finance, as well as including greater representation of economic actors, civil society and academics
- Expanding the scope of the IIC's work to include non-WTO trade issues such as EU/ACP and sub-regional trade and
- The creation of sub-committees to pursue key issues in a more focused, detailed way.

33. The sub-committee structure has been particularly useful in countries where the IIC membership is large; in these cases most of the work is done by the sub-committees with few meetings of the full IIC. Subjects addressed by the sub-committees typically include: market access, customs, TRIPs, agriculture and services. Some sub-committees have been more active than others – reflecting the differing pace of WTO negotiations in some cases, or varying national priorities for bringing national legislation into conformity with the WTO. It is not always recognised that sub-committees may have a short lifespan and that their existence should reflect national trade priorities rather than what other JITAP countries are doing.

34. Many IIC participants have participated in JITAP training and as a result are able to discuss WTO agreements and some trade issues. (This contrasts with the IICs which exist in the non-JITAP countries visited in the course of the evaluation.) In all cases the IIC played a key role in the preparation of national positions for Doha. The work of the IICs has benefited also from a number of studies and training through workshops and videoconferences, under other clusters.

35. The IICs have attracted interest and support from other donors. For instance in Ghana, UK DFID has a US\$1 million two-year project working with the trade and industry ministry and the IIC to assist in the identification of Ghana's particular trade interests and negotiating positions for ECOWAS, the EU post-Cotonou agreement, as well as the WTO. This project is building on both the institutional framework and the human capacity developed under JITAP. In Côte d'Ivoire, UNDP supported a public meeting in early 2002 on the national position paper prepared for Doha with the support of the IIC/JITAP and discussion of Doha's outcomes. Further substantive UNDP involvement in JITAP is under discussion. There is also evidence that at least one or two NGOs have made modest contributions to facilitate action within the IIC framework (Kenya, Uganda).

36. In principle, UNCTAD has primary responsibility for the IICs, providing overall guidance, managing a series of national studies undertaken to inform the work of each IIC and planning a series of national retreats and sub-regional workshops. In practice ITC and the WTO have also had some involvement. The ITC has helped to backstop the planning and management of the IIC activities and has participated in all the retreats and workshops. The WTO has made more of a substantive contribution by its participation in the IIC national and subregional meetings (to explain substantive issues being discussed as necessary). The WTO and UNCTAD also contributed technical papers on the agriculture and services negotiations.

37. But a broader range of issues, including how to make IICs operate effectively as a part of the government machinery, remains to be addressed. Not all governments have centralised their trade policy discussions in the IIC. The NSC (or the NFP) needs to play a stronger role in suggesting priorities, monitoring progress and providing overall management of the IIC work program. Few IICs have established work programs that take into account the timetable of WTO or other trade negotiations in which their countries are to be involved. Nonetheless they seemed to be more aware than counterparts in non-JITAP countries of these timetables. The IIC could also become involved in discussions about TRTA – what type of assistance is needed and where and how might it be co-ordinated. The IF will also have implications for the IIC. Can it be an advisory body to the IF Steering Committee? There might be advantages in such a working relationship. It is clear that the IIC mechanism can be further Improved.

38. The level of representation from other ministries does still not reflect significant interest in the IIC. Connections with national representatives abroad notably in Geneva, but not exclusively are still weak, despite some JITAP activities such as the video-conferencing and some sub-regional meetings which brought them together. The private sector in some countries is impatient with the pace and poor organisation of the IIC meetings. They still find

it difficult for their own constituents to relate to the issues being addressed and thus to contribute to the identification of national priorities and to the development of national positions. Similarly, in many countries, NGOs and academics need time to become more fully engaged – they need to see that their involvement can make a difference to both their own thinking and to government policies. There is a perception that their participation is for representative purposes rather than to engage in discussions on a substantive basis.

Human Resource Development

39. A key element in JITAP has been the development of awareness, knowledge and expertise about the MTS. A wide range of techniques was employed from three-week seminars in Geneva to three-day national workshops, three-hour videoconferences and Qs and As in a handbook and on the Internet. These drew on the different skills of the three multilateral agencies involved and as such were considered by many participants to be unique. For instance on agriculture, not only would they learn from the WTO what their rights and responsibilities are under WTO rules, but also from UNCTAD how to negotiate for changes in those rules and from the ITC how to develop export strategies for their private sector to take advantage of new market openings.

40. A total of about 500 persons have been trained through one-week and three-week seminars and these trainees have then converted themselves as trainers and have in turn undertaken training and familiarisation activities in their own countries. JITAP appears to have stimulated a training culture on MTS issues (for example, training activities undertaken by the Customs authorities in Kenya and elaborated in the MTE Report). A further constituency has been familiarised through outreach events organised with Chambers of Commerce, journalists, parliamentarians etc.

41. Efforts have been made to build on this base of training, through the provision of documents and the CDF, as well as the opportunity for a few people to participate in more than one workshop or videoconference and for many to apply that knowledge through participation in the IIC regular meetings and retreats and in the development of the export sector strategies. These efforts have clearly had some positive effects, with many people now conversant on MTS issues, but they have not been sufficient to achieve the critical mass of expertise needed in government, let alone in the private sector and civil society, to respond to the many demands created by the constantly evolving trade agenda. There has been some turnover of officials and even outside government, people trained under JITAP have not all remained involved in the IICs or in trade issues more generally. In response, to consolidate the body of people trained under JITAP and to use this group to train others, JITAP has encouraged the formation of networks of trainers. By April 2002, a formal network of trainers had been established in at least three countries.

42. Two criticisms must be made. One is the expectation that many if not all of those who have received training can in turn themselves become trainers. While knowledge can be shared, it may not easily be taught to others. For this reason the efforts in nearly all JITAP countries to organise all trainees into a network of trainers seem misplaced. Instead it would have been more appropriate to aim for a modest pool of resource people, who might track an issue and be called upon to inform IIC discussions of related national priorities.

43. The second criticism is the failure in most countries still to bring academics and other groups with MTS/trade policy knowledge into the proposed networks of trainers. (The MTE strongly prescribed the broadening of these networks.) The former should surely be at the base of any training initiative. Some universities and other teaching organisations (eg customs schools) have expressed an interest in MTS issues. A few have received reference centres (equipment and documentation) under JITAP and participation in JITAP has prompted a few academics to develop trade-related curricula (as in Tunisia), but more

generally there has been little engagement under JITAP with national universities or colleges, whether as places where training in MTS issues is needed, or as sources themselves of such training, or as centres of expertise, to be drawn on by the government and private sector.

44. The use of new technologies to maintain and develop the network of trainers has only been partially successful. Videoconferences have proved a very cost-effective way of updating information about trade issues and encouraging some networking and debate between the trade agencies and trade representatives in Geneva, on the one hand and the IIC participants in the various JITAP countries, on the other. They cannot completely substitute for national or regional seminars and retreats, however.

45. The CDF remains highly ambitious, as noted in the MTE. At present it is used as a site to store documents about JITAP activities in each country and overall - although it does not contain the training documents. In this respect it can be useful as a dissemination tool about JITAP. But problems in some JITAP countries with access to a computer let alone the Internet limit the CDF's use as a primary source of communication for JITAP stakeholders. The two other components, the Q&As and the discussion facility, are not in use. The CDF does not have a dedicated manager, even on a part-time basis. As a result the site is not updated regularly and requests to subscribe are not responded to in a timely fashion. At the end of February 2002, there were 106 registered 'users'. Given the costs already incurred, it would seem sensible to maintain the CDF if a dedicated manager were to be found, probably based in a JITAP country. But it will likely be some time before it can fulfil its original expectations.

46. Finally, it is important to make a few comments about gender. Counting the number of women involved in a project is not an adequate indicator of gender impact. Nonetheless, engaging women in understanding the MTS and implications for national trade and economic policies is one step amongst many required to make trade policies and practices more gender-sensitive. In some JITAP countries very few women have been involved in JITAP, whether in the NFPs, NSCs and NFs, or as trainees/trainers' and national consultants. This likely reflects national practices (in university education and in employment). It is also an observation to be made about the three agencies involved in delivering JITAP. But it is important to continue to encourage more participation by qualified women in future.

Infrastructure of Trade

47. Efforts to strengthen the infrastructure of trade – the laws governing trade, customs and the reference centres and information points especially on industrial standards – have generally been quite successful. JITAP has provided narrowly focussed technical assistance and training, as well as equipment and documentation. In all cases this has been well appreciated and especially the equipment in those countries where government budgets are so constrained. Evenso, as elaborated further below, there is scope for further work in this area, whether under a JITAP consolidation phase or through other bilateral/multilateral aid.

48. Customs authorities in JITAP countries now all have the capacity to implement the new valuation system required by the WTO. This is the result of JITAP in addition to training provided directly by the WTO and the World Customs Organisation (WCO), sometimes with bilateral funding. In turn customs officials have been able to offer some public outreach, explaining to private sector companies how the new system works. Further training may be needed, as customs officials are routinely rotated, but this could be provided on a sub-regional basis, for instance by the customs school in Côte d'Ivoire.

49. There have been some spin-off benefits eg for regional customs unions which are moving to a similar transaction-based valuation systems. Another benefit is that customs officials now see themselves as more integrally involved in trade – not exercising a restraining function so much as facilitating trade and thus helping to generate revenue. This is reinforced by customs being integrated into the IICs in many countries.

50. In some cases, the WTO-compatible customs laws have been drafted, but have yet to be enacted by legislatures/parliaments. There are some other, infrastructure, needs that could be addressed e.g. many customs authorities would like access to price data and information about trademarks, in order to be able to assess imports; others do not have the laboratories for testing imports.

51. In terms of national legislation more generally, it seems that JITAP in combination with other bilateral initiatives (notably WTO, UNCTAD and bilateral aid) has helped countries understand and prepare some of the changes needed to bring their trade laws into conformity with the WTO. But this work is still not complete. In some countries, some laws have not been drafted/redrafted let alone passed. For instance most countries have no anti-dumping or safeguard legislation and if they do, there is a lack of capacity to implement it.

52. The reference centres also have an important role to play in JITAP - helping to inform discussions about WTO and other international trade issues/opportunities in government, the private sector and universities. The provision of documents and equipment (notably computers) to link to information on the Internet has been considered quite useful in most instances. The most successful reference centres have usually been those found in libraries/documentation centres primarily targeting the private sector, with some branching off into commercial services (Internet access). The extent to which these centres are used by businesses for market survey/promotion work, however, is unclear. In some cases they are known to be more frequented by students/professors than by companies. Not all the centres within government trade ministries are operating effectively ie they are not distributing WTO documentation as needed to other departments. This reflects problems with computers, photocopiers, internet hookup, space to catalogue documents, or managerial/staffing capacity. There are fewer centres in universities as yet, but those that exist are well used. In all cases the documents should be updated.

53. The National Enquiry Points are nearly all functioning well – with JITAP having contributed to staff training, as well as equipment (computer, scanner) and in most cases a database of national standards. Some are quite large institutions that have benefited from other sources of TRTA (as in the case of Kenya and Tunisia). Certainly the contrast with counterpart organisations in non-JITAP countries like Cameroon and Zambia is striking. Many JITAP standards bureaux have prepared brochures and websites promoting their services and organised outreach activities for their national private sector organisations. Even so, some observe that there is more use of their services by foreign companies enquiring about national standards than by national companies wanting to know more about standards in foreign markets. In addition, standards information points are not always able to solicit comments on changes in foreign standards in time for these to be channelled back to the foreign government proposing these changes.

54. These comments are perhaps more relevant in the area of sanitary and phytosanitary standards than for industrial standards (technical barriers to trade or TBT). Most of the emphasis to date has been on TBT. Yet SPS are critical for agricultural exporting countries. While JITAP has provided some training on SPS, assistance with the infrastructure in agriculture ministries and affiliated laboratories to promote SPS and to promote national interests with respect to other countries' SPS is still weak. There is some bilateral aid in this area, notably from the EU and the US, but there is also a need for multilateral (and disinterested) TRTA, at a national level, while options for greater regional co-operation on SPS should be explored.

Export Opportunities

55. A key aspect in JITAP was to enable participant countries to develop their capacities for exploiting export opportunities for products of interest to them. In an earlier chapter, the methodology and the concepts adopted in export-sector strategy development have been briefly examined. In this section, the focus is more on what has happened in JITAP, especially in Clusters 9-14.

56. While work on export-sector strategy development is under way, what is clearly evident is that even after three years, there is no completed export-sector strategy in any country yet. In Uganda, draft studies have been made available very recently. Partly, these delays can be attributed to resource constraints, but that is not the entire story. There are deficiencies in the methodology and the long, cumbersome process of identifying sectors and then implementing the process, through a 'coaching' method. Activities were dispersed over a long period of time, with priority sectors and comparative advantages being identified (Cluster 9) and diagnostic studies prepared by international consultants taking place in 2000-01. These sought to identify in a fairly generic way what sectors might be targeted for special export promotional efforts. The studies were then discussed at national meetings and one or more sectors identified for further work. There were delays in the delivery of these reports. Sector working groups were established, to begin developing surveys of export capacities, followed by export strategies and finally, export orientation tours. Meanwhile, other donors began to finance this type of work. (In Uganda and Tanzania, former IF funds have been allocated for export-sector strategy work.) The time-period from identifying sectors to the development of export-sector strategies should occur within a shorter space of time than the three years taken so far.

57. With the end of JITAP in a few months, the pace of work has been accelerated - a large amount of funding is being spent in a short time, notably on market tours. In the case of Ghana alone, there was little time to adequately design and implement the surveys, analyse the results and plan the tours for horticulture, fish and garments. Other donors/agencies are working on private sector development and in some cases on export promotion; it is important for JITAP to complement this work. It should be ensured that available resources are utilised to obtain optimal results.

58. Two activities - Trade Secrets handbook and on Export Finance - could have been of value if they had been implemented rapidly, so that interest was maintained among relevant partners. Apart from Kenya, the experience is that there have been considerable delays in implementing these activities and as a result, partner agencies have expressed a sense of disillusionment. (These issues are dealt with in a later section.)

Domesticating the MTS

59. JITAP appears to have made an important difference in participant countries, through raising awareness and increasing familiarity with MTS and WTO issues. The very nature of the programme, implemented by the three substantive multilateral trade agencies, provided it a natural high profile in TRTA. It is evident that it was well-known at the country level. The visits to Cameroon and Zambia by the Evaluators clearly established the difference JITAP has made in participant countries, in contrast to these two, especially in terms of familiarising a wide body of persons involved in trade issues. JITAP, although fragmented in its implementation, provided the flavour of a holistic approach to MTS issues.

60. The role played by WTO in this regard is particularly noteworthy. While the WTO's primary responsibility has been directed at one or two clusters, its role has been much broader. To elaborate, WTO has been involved in:

- training on WTO rules and issues;
- explaining how to bring national laws into conformity with the WTO norms;
- reference centres.

61. The training courses in Geneva have been critical in building up capacity in government circles and in a few private sector organisations and universities. This plus the other workshops and seminars has provided a base for more informed discussion within the IICs. In turn many agencies have organised seminars for local chambers of commerce in different regions of their countries, with parliamentarians, journalists and other groups. In this way JITAP has been critical for beginning to extend understanding of WTO outside government to the private sector, as well as to universities and civil society organisations. There is much more that can be done in this respect if JITAP is extended to a second phase.

Overall Impact

62. JITAP has clearly made an impact on and a difference to the countries participating in it. Particularly when compared with the two countries which acted as benchmarks for this Evaluation (Cameroon and Zambia), there are important achievements through JITAP, especially in enabling participating countries to be more actively involved on MTS issues. Human Resource capacities have been improved; there is a better trade infrastructure - Reference Centres, National Enquiry Points; export-sector strategy issues have been given a higher profile; there is a better appreciation of the value of the MTS at the country level; connections and linkages have been stimulated between Government, the private sector and civil society; the vision of a holistic approach to trade issues that could benefit the development process has emerged; and the new role of the Ministry of Trade is now better appreciated at the country level. While there are significant achievements, there are also shortcomings, in that many activities remain incomplete and also that the approach (and consequent results) has been relatively fragmented. The problems associated with the management system have affected the efficient delivery of services. There could have been better control of the technical inputs. Alternative modalities and methodologies, such as greater involvement of universities and private sector institutions, could have improved outcomes. JITAP was an experiment and as an experiment, its results are highly satisfactory. Improvements are required for the future.

CHAPTER 3. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

63. In the MTE a number of implementation issues were addressed, as a result of which changes were made. While it is clear that there were some improvements, there are still several issues which need discussion and which must be taken into account in remodelling JITAP for a second phase. The issues discussed here include:

- host country capacities;
- technical inputs;
- role of donors;
- agency responsibilities;
- workplan implementation;
- financial management;
- management at the country level;
- overall management.

Host Country Capacities

64. While JITAP aims to build national capacities in the area of international trade, its success has been dependent in large part on national capacities both to absorb JITAP and to co-manage the program's planning and implementation. In terms of absorption capacity, JITAP assumes that there is capacity amongst the intended beneficiaries – notably those involved in trade in the government ministries and agencies as well as the private sector – to absorb the assistance involved. This assistance has involved training, workshops, retreats, studies, documents and an internet communication and discussion facility. In many instances, people have made the time available to participate in these various ways. But some factors have constrained participation -- the heavy workload associated with competing areas of responsibility and inadequate financial resources and equipment (notably computer equipment). For instance, in the trade ministry itself, there are often only a handful of people dealing with external trade relations at a time when the negotiating agenda is expanding to include both strengthening sub-regional agreements and to remodelling the relationship with the EU-ACP. Similarly, in the private sector, many business people are absorbed in addressing supply-side constraints and have to rely on industry association representatives to participate in JITAP activities. As the numbers of TRTA projects multiply, these limiting factors need to be taken into account in the design and scope of projects.

65. Absorptive capacities have varied across countries and also across institutions within countries. Even in the same institution, capacities will change over time, particularly with changes in management and leadership. (Uganda's TPO is a good illustration, where management changes have brought about a significant transformation.) A programme such as JITAP has to take note of these differences and adjust its own workplans, so that more could be done with those institutions and countries where there is greater response and absorptive capacity. An approach of this kind has so far not been visualised and therefore needs to be an important element in a future JITAP. There has to be inbuilt flexibility in JITAP's workplans and methodologies and in the system to allocate funds. To illustrate the importance of both host country capacities and also the key role of national management, Kenya's experience is noteworthy. Although the expenditures incurred in Kenya are only about half of the resources allocated to other countries, the results and the performance here have been superior to others (the preparatory process in the IIC, the articulate involvement in Doha, the organisation of training networks, the use of Reference Centres, the preparation of the Trade Secrets handbook, Customs and Standards).

66. Another aspect of host country response is that of counterpart funds. In JITAP's initial design, national governments were expected to provide counterpart funds (significant amounts in the case of Côte d'Ivoire) to cover national costs. Once it was realised that these would not be forthcoming, funding was made available from Window 1 (NB not all the amounts needed in the case of Côte d'Ivoire). Nonetheless there is still an expectation that governments should allocate some national resources to JITAP – whether as an indicator of their commitment to JITAP or the value they place on JITAP, or to ensure that once JITAP funds end, that national resources will be available to sustain activities such as the IIC, the reference centres and some training on trade issues.

67. Steps have been taken in this direction. In many countries, the activities of the IIC have been formalised through official decrees and/or statutes as the necessary prerequisite to requesting funds from the national budget. But such requests have rarely been successful. This reflects the many competing priorities for scarce national resources rather than the failure of the finance ministries to appreciate the importance of supporting trade-related activities such as JITAP. There has been somewhat greater success with certain other activities. For example, in 2002/03 the trade and industry ministry in Tanzania plans to invest some of its own funds in three regional training seminars, as does the College of Business Education in the reference centre. It is important to recognise that all JITAP countries are committing resources to trade promotion in various ways – including the maintenance of representatives in Geneva (including Benin in the near future). Each country is also making a clear in-kind commitment to JITAP, through the participation of its officials, the use of its meeting rooms etc to JITAP.

68. There appears to have been sporadic discussion on the so-called question of 'incentives' for those involved in JITAP operations at the national level. The issue is whether the NFP and members of the Steering Committee should be paid some kind of allowance. The personnel involved are largely poorly-paid Government officials. In most cases, their salaries will be between US\$100-400 per month, depending upon their rank. Governments in these countries have their own systems of supplementary payments, whenever these officials undertake tasks such as sitting on the Boards of public corporations or on various committees. There is therefore no reason to deny members of Steering Committees and other relevant personnel a modest level of allowance, whenever they undertake work on JITAP activities. Even now, there are occasions when 'incentives' are provided to persons such as NFPs, through recruiting them as consultants to undertake various tasks. It is far better to be explicit and to have standing arrangements of compensation for work performed. Such an approach, at a very modest cost, should invigorate JITAP performance.

Technical Inputs

69. Sustainable results, the catalytic effect of activities and the value added largely depend upon the quality of technical inputs. These are largely of five kinds - international consultants, headquarters staff, national consultants, documents supplied and equipment. Generally, it is the impression obtained that the quality is satisfactory. This is impressionistic and needs to be emphasised. There has been no rigorous assessment of the quality of these inputs and there is no continuing mechanism to make judgements on their quality and appropriateness.

70. International consultants have taken up nearly 30% of JITAP resources (the statistics are only tentative, as the figures were not available even to management). The services of the same international consultant have been utilised for several countries. There is a similarity in their approaches and their prescriptions - for example in areas such as export finance or in the development of export-sector strategies. Identical global prescriptions and global statistics (for example, horticulture) are being supplied to many countries. There is no evidence that the quality of their outputs is measured. The headquarters staff who have

been involved with the programme have offered key services, especially in HRD and there is probably more satisfaction with their contribution. There are no statistics for the expenditures incurred in utilising the services of headquarters staff. Overall, the expenditures incurred on national consultants appear to be about 5%-6% of total resources. The quality of their outputs has varied and probably a greater effort to recruit consultants from institutions such as universities might have produced better results. The documents supplied from the agencies have been found to be highly useful and the quality of such documentation is appreciated. However, most of these documents have been prepared outside JITAP.

71. There are many problems in the use of consultants, both national and international. The positive aspect is that international and local consultants have been jointly associated in many activities. Many studies prepared by them - for example, the studies on the implications of the WTO for national economies, which were prepared by a partnership of international/national consultants - provided useful background information for discussion by the IICs. Nonetheless, there is room for improvement in the use of consultants.

72. In some instances (eg the 'Trade Secrets' and 'How to Approach Banks' handbooks) national consultants were hired to adapt ITC templates to national circumstances. The aim may have been to use experts familiar with the national context or to build up national capacity. In practise, many of these reports took a long time to complete, while some are still not finished. (One problem was that the national consultants are often chosen by the agency involved in managing JITAP - ie the NF and they may not have had the knowledge needed to do this. The ITC unit with experience in that area was not allowed to choose the national consultant for the piece of work in which they were involved.) The delays seriously limited the impact of the documents; many people consulted in the course of their writing had lost interest by the time they were finally printed. And the failure to have the documents ready at the same time in all countries within a region meant that regional events to discuss their findings and promote their use could not take place as originally planned. It might have been more efficient for ITC to do these national versions themselves.

73. In another instance, the ITC documents on 'Business and the Multilateral Trading System' produced in the World Tr@de Net programme were taken for use in training in JITAP countries. But the strategy for contextualising them, which is advocated by the Trade Support Services Division, is apparently not being followed. While World Tr@de Net proposes that the documents be used and adapted by a committee including university professors, trade lawyers and trade promotion centres, in JITAP, there is the risk that adaptation may be undertaken by people with a lesser degree of training, typically either people in export promotion agencies or in government. As the work is yet to be done, JITAP could take action to avoid such risks.

74. In other cases, however, national consultants were not used, when it would have been appropriate to do so. For instance, in the case of the national export-sector strategies, in one country where supply constraints were identified earlier in JITAP, an exporter was tasked with drafting a report which would have been better done by a private sector analyst/writer (in turn leaving the exporter to concentrate on addressing the supply constraints).

75. It can be difficult to find international consultants that are available at the times needed, particularly in a multi-country programme involving only one or two consultants for each region or language group. In some cases, the consultants were well appreciated - the quality of their technical inputs was good with effective results (eg advice on export opportunities and strategies for particular markets leading to increased exports). In others, however, the consultant was considered to have had the wrong mix of skills (eg production rather than marketing skills, inadequate sensitivities/knowledge of national needs, poor language), with the result that they did not make the contribution expected by the national stakeholders.

76. The equipment component needs to be highlighted. Only about 5% of total resources has been spent on equipment, which has been largely IT equipment. It has made a significant difference to the organisations which have obtained it (although at times some of the equipment has been deficient). The success of JITAP in Standards bureaux, particularly National Enquiry Points, has largely to do with the supply of equipment. Similarly, the Reference Centres are valued for the primary reason that equipment and documents were supplied. The NFPs have also benefited from equipment. The difference that equipment has made to country-level institutions, denied even basic tools (photocopiers, scanners, computers) is clearly evident. While JITAP cannot continue with more extensive supply of equipment, there is a lesson to be learned for TRTA in general and for diagnostic studies of the type undertaken through the IF. The supply of equipment to trade-related agencies, especially as they have to relate to other organisations and bodies abroad, should be viewed as a critical element within TRTA.

Agency Responsibilities

77. ITC, UNCTAD and WTO play a key role in JITAP's effective implementation - jointly and individually. There is a tri-agency working group which meets regularly in Geneva to plan activities and discuss finances. Implementation is often undertaken individually, with each agency being responsible for different clusters of activities, although in a few cases the other agencies may play a supportive role. Typically other agencies are copied on correspondence regarding JITAP activities. There is evidence that there is continuing interaction among the three agencies and working relationships overall appear to be satisfactory. Several issues need to be highlighted in this context.

78. The agencies do not appear to have brought JITAP into the mainstream of their technical co-operation functions. It is more often viewed as a marginal activity and is not placed in an integral relationship with other projects and programmes. A clearly visible consequence of this is to be observed at the field level. There is hardly any contact with other country projects of these agencies, especially ITC and UNCTAD. Important synergies at the country level have not been exploited, as a result. Even at the headquarters level, JITAP appears to be an activity conducted in isolation. Within ITC and UNCTAD, there are greater opportunities for greater interaction with functional divisions. The Evaluators learnt that there could be more contact, for example, with the unit in ITC developing a range of exciting tools (trade maps etc) or for that matter even with the unit which produced most of the documents on MTS issues, although they have been utilised within JITAP.

79. Within ITC, while many sections contribute to the delivery of particular clusters, they apparently have little discretion - they are not able to implement activities in the same way as in other countries. This is partly an issue of funding (other ITC sections may be involved at below their usual cost) and partly a management approach, for instance with implementation being centralised through the NFP in many countries, as discussed above. This may explain the indifferent performance (delays, qualitative shortcomings) of some clusters. But these other ITC unit managers might also be encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring more effective implementation of the clusters in which they are implicated. At present there is a tendency to see JITAP as an activity ancillary to the rest of their work, one which is managed by someone else and which therefore gets a lower order of priority.

80. UNCTAD's main involvement has been with the IICs (Cluster 2), as well as some trade information tools (Tradepoints), studies, training and the university-affiliated reference centres. The management approach has been more reactive, responding to requests for assistance, with less scrutiny of workplan implementation. As in ITC, follow-up can be a problem when key personnel are travelling amongst JITAP countries or are working on other UNCTAD activities. For the other UNCTAD units/divisions involved, JITAP is once again seen as involving ancillary activities, with the result that they do not receive the priority

that they need. Other units with insights into how IICs might function (in particular, those involved in trade negotiations) are not centrally involved in JITAP, thus limiting UNCTAD's contribution in this critical area.

81. The WTO's role (in training and reference centres) has also been much more reactive, responding to requests as it does with all requests for technical support. It is not proactive in JITAP management (ie its design and implementation). For instance, it could have been more creative about its role in JITAP, contributing more to the IICs, which could play an important part in building national understanding and support for WTO rights and obligations. The launch of its own major series of training seminars and workshops in all WTO countries, might be considered likely to JITAP being further marginalised in the WTO. But, with more resources available for training, the WTO might be able to become more engaged in JITAP.

82. Finally, a few comments should be made about UNDP. In most countries UNDP disburses funds to JITAP national partners once agreement has been reached with the PC. This function is usually well done. In two countries, Tunisia and Côte d'Ivoire, UNDP has been more involved, in one as a major JITAP funder (although this stopped abruptly, leaving a number of activities incomplete). In Kenya, too, there is a relatively marginal involvement in export-sector strategies. In other countries, there is scope for further involvement, where there seems to be complementarity between JITAP and UNDP's plans for assistance in private sector development and/or export promotion. In all countries UNDP could help to ensure a greater sharing of information about TRTA projects and to encourage greater co-ordination.

Relationships with Donors/Recipient Country Missions

83. The relationship with donors is a critical aspect of JITAP. The donors are more involved in JITAP than in most other technical programmes managed by multilateral organisations. The important issue is to make this relationship productive. There are several aspects in this relationship.

84. First, donors provide the funds. One of the significant problems encountered by JITAP management has been the slow and irregular release of funds, thereby contributing to the continuing disruption of workplans. Donors need to consider reforming current systems, so that funding can be assured. They can also contribute to a greater balance between contributions to Windows 1 and 2. There has to be greater predictability in donor contributions to the CTF, if programme activities are to be implemented on time.

85. Second, donors are part of the management of JITAP. They are members of the CTF Steering Group. From the Minutes of these SC meetings, it is clear that donors are actively engaged in monitoring JITAP. The question is, whether they are focusing on the key issues. Progress reports are provided for them, based on agency and field reports. Many of these progress reports can be improved, to focus upon key issues of substance at the field level. There can also be improvements in the supply of financial information, which is meaningful to monitoring outcomes and achievements. Donors themselves might consider focusing more on strategic issues, instead of largely administrative and financial control issues. This whole area needs to be reviewed.

86. Third, there is also room for improvement in the connection made by donors between JITAP and their bilateral programs in the same countries. At present such connections are quite limited, with the result that there is often little synergy between the two. (There are exceptions, such as the UK trade project in Ghana which is working with the IIC, as noted in Chapter 3.) As the amounts allocated to bilateral TRTA are increasing significantly, it is important to address this issue. One approach would for donor representatives to be invited to meet with the NSC on a regular basis.

87. A broader issue to address is that of policy coherence - whether other initiatives undermine what is being addressed in JITAP. An example concerns the EU's insistence on ACP countries undertaking negotiations on post-Cotonou trade arrangements at the very time that these countries are trying, with the support of JITAP and other TRTA, to become more engaged with the WTO and at the regional level. Despite training under JITAP and other programs, most countries lack the capacity to effectively engage in such detailed negotiations in many forums at once.

88. A word on the relationship with recipient country missions in Geneva. Recently, there has been more activity by these missions in engaging in JITAP processes. JITAP could be an important instrument in transmitting field-level concerns to their missions in Geneva. There appears to be a growing realisation of the outreach potential of JITAP to trade negotiators based in Geneva. This aspect needs to be further intensified.

Workplan Implementation

89. It is clear that much has been achieved under JITAP - in terms of activities and outputs, as outlined in Chapter 3. - but there has been a serious problem with the delays in implementation of many parts of the workplans in each JITAP country. This has undermined the value of the various outputs, led to more focus on process rather than product and more generally weakened JITAP's credibility. There is no single cause; rather delays are the result of the financial bottlenecks, management difficulties and limitation in host-country capacities.

90. One problem appears to have been that too many clusters/activities were involved - as underlined in the MTE, JITAP was an ambitious program and so it was recommended that the second part of the pilot phase concentrate on a few activities. This allowed more focus to be given to the critical areas of the IICs, HRD, the reference centres and the private sector. But even within this more limited group it appears to have been difficult for NSCs to establish priorities and for the NFs/NFPs to complete their workplans. In the case of the private sector components, as explained in Chapter 3., delays have persisted, with the development of export sector strategies only beginning in 2002, when there was less than six months before JITAP was due to end.

Financial Management

91. In JITAP, financial management has been a responsibility shared in varying ways and degrees by the three agencies, the eight national partners (principally through the NFs but sometimes through the national focal points), the UNDP offices in all countries and the 13 donor governments. Besides being cumbersome (leading to high transaction costs), this process has made financial transparency difficult. It has made evaluation, in terms of cost-effectiveness, very difficult. In future it is essential that this process be changed.

92. There are six issues that need to be distinguished:

- *Delays in donor funds* - Donors have made financial management and project implementation difficult by being slow in honouring their pledges. This has made it difficult to adhere to initial timetables and disillusioned stakeholders about JITAP's contribution. It has also condensed JITAP's effective implementation period (from four years to closer to two years according to our calculations). The problems are well-illustrated by nearly \$2 million being left to spend in the project's last eight months. It was this which led the evaluation team to recommend in March 2002 that the completion date be extended by six months, ie to the end of 2002.

- *Disbursements* - There have been delays in disbursements. As mentioned above, one problem is the need for activities to be authorised in Geneva. Even small amounts have to be approved from there. In the recipient countries, the NSC could have been more involved in resource allocation and overall financial management of JITAP activities. Greater information and transparency could enable more authority to be delegated to the field, with control being exercised through appropriate reporting systems.
- *Financial transparency* - The difficulties in obtaining information for the evaluation on basic financial data, suggests there is a need for measures to facilitate financial transparency. According to ITC, a new accounting system is being introduced which should make it easier to track spending by cluster, country and agency. This should be extended to include information on national vs international consultants and travel vs time and material costs. Additional changes are required to avoid some of the problems which have been reported in ITC, such as the difficulty in tracking inflows of funding from particular donors. Financial and administrative rules need to be reviewed, to facilitate the work of an innovative programme such as JITAP.
- *Financial planning* - It does not appear that there has been much use of financial planning in the course of JITAP. In other words, there has been no review of expenditures on a frequent basis to determine what has been cost-effective, where there have been problems and how resources might be reallocated. Without access to financial data as outlined above, national JITAP managers (ie the NSCs) are certainly not able to do this type of financial planning.
- *Financing staff time* - One issue raised by the three agencies is that they are not being adequately compensated under JITAP for their services. It would be useful to know how much more funding they need. They each receive a significant amount – both for overall management (through Cluster 1), as overheads and as 'operating costs' for specific activities under other clusters. Exactly how much is spent on agency staff time as opposed to travel and materials and why, is not clear; nor does it appear that there is any system in place for such decisions to be taken in a way that is transparent and accountable to recipient countries as much as to the agencies and donors. The perception in some recipient countries is that more resources should have reached the beneficiary countries.
- *Cost-effectiveness* - This is a major issue in all JITAP operations. Financial information that is available is not appropriately disaggregated to make even tentative judgements. What can be stated is that management, overheads and 'operating' costs, which are spread across all clusters, probably are on the high side. Whenever questions are raised, it is claimed that management also includes technical functions and that management costs cannot be attributed solely to administrative types of activities. Since the MTE, management costs as a share of total resources expended have probably increased, as there were resource constraints and activities planned could not be implemented. There is one clear example of cost-effectiveness, against which the overall programme can be judged. This is the experience in Kenya, where for half the level of expenditures incurred in other countries, more has been achieved. There has to be greater attention to this aspect of JITAP.

Management at the Geneva Level

93. The management structure in Geneva is as follows:

- The CTF Steering Group, with donor countries and recipient countries represented, along with agency representatives;

- Informal and ad-hoc inter-agency arrangements (since the MTE there does not appear to be a formal Working Group);
- The ITC, as managing agency;
- The Programme Co-ordinator (since after MTE, when the regional layer was abolished).

94. Mention was made earlier (in the section on Donor Relationships) of the role of the CTF Steering Group. Currently, it is not engaged to any significant extent on substantive JITAP issues. The informal and ad-hoc mechanisms among the three agencies appear to be satisfactory, although as oversight mechanisms, they are not adequate. The impression obtained is that these informal mechanisms are more concerned with administrative and management tasks, than with any monitoring of the substantive, overall evolution of JITAP. For example, there has hardly been any discussion on choices and options available for HRD, or for that matter on issues such as IICs or export-sector strategies. The critical function of technical backstopping could gain from more substantive interactions at the inter-agency Group level.

95. Since the Programme Co-ordinator has been based in Geneva (after the MTE), there appears to be some lack of clarity on his role and the tasks he should undertake. His task is to manage field-level activities, drawing support from the Geneva-based institutions. The CTF Steering Group and the mechanisms of the three agencies are expected to oversee his performance. It is not within his remit - and also it is not appropriate - that he should service these bodies. He is expected to report to them. He should not be the convenor of these bodies. At the time of the MTE, these were clearly tasks undertaken by the Directorate of Technical Co-operation at ITC. That practice should be reverted to. It is vital that the checks and balances which are crucial to effective management, should be in place.

Field Level Management

96. In terms of managing JITAP activities, in each country two-three groups are usually involved - a National Facilitator (NF), a National Focal Point (NFP) and a National Steering Committee (NSC). The NF is typically either a private sector operator or an export promotion agency. The extent to which the NF is effective varies considerably and it is not possible to say that one or other organisation has been more effective, though personal interest and expertise in trade issues can be critical (as illustrated by Kenya's experience). In some cases, the NFs have not been able to deliver reports/activities on a timely basis, nor to ensure timely delivery by others. This may reflect the complex nature of JITAP's design - with too many activities happening in parallel, even after the MTE, which recommended concentration on fewer activities. In the countries where there has been no national facilitator for some or all of JITAP's duration (notably Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin and Tanzania), the NFPs have found the additional responsibilities difficult to handle and as a result there have been delays in implementation at many levels.

97. The NFP is typically the multilateral trade section of the Trade Ministry; the NFP is the official interlocutor and central to ensuring that JITAP helps to meet official needs in the area of trade. (The NFP, in theory, is an institution and not a person, although there is one person responsible for the work in most countries.) The NFP is usually overworked and under-resourced - having to meet many other Trade Ministry objectives. While the NFP has access through JITAP to additional resources (the reference centre, training and the IIC) to enhance the quality, quantity and visibility of their work, they are seriously constrained in their capacity to direct let alone manage and to absorb JITAP. This may be one factor in the delays that have been experienced in the workplans of the IIC. Some interviewees suggested the creation of a Secretariat to work with the NFP, especially if the work of the IIC is to go beyond WTO/MTS to address EU/ACP and sub-regional trade, let alone the full scope of national trade needs, as defined in the IF. One approach in most countries might

be to direct JITAP resources to the NFP, instead of employing an NF and to fund an assistant (for instance, a university graduate in international trade) to work in the NFP office, handling MTS (and notably JITAP/IIC) issues.

98. The NSC varies in size – in some countries it is a large representative group, almost as large as the IIC, while in others it is quite small composed of the NFP, NF and two or three other key agencies (such as a Chamber of Commerce, Customs and a university representative). In general these bodies have met infrequently - and this may have contributed to the delays in project implementation and follow-up to those activities that have taken place. Communication between the core agencies needs to be improved through more regular meetings. If NSCs were given a greater role in the planning of activities, annual budget allocations and oversight of the NF, then they might be more engaged and active. In some countries, the NSC has included representatives of the donor community. This can be helpful in developing greater synergy between JITAP and bilateral TRTA or other projects.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Joint operations by the three substantive trade agencies offer one important way of making the MTS more acceptable to and more friendly in low-income developing countries. Joint operations not only provide greater credibility, but also give a higher profile to trade issues. They also enable a process of more effective engagement of private sector and civil society organisations
- Flexibility in design and adjustment of workplans is essential for efficient implementation of complex programmes. There has to be a regular review of operations and methodologies, so that changes are made and resources re-allocated from time to time, so that activities which are lagging behind do not hold up other more successful activities.
- A standardised approach to all countries and all situations is not conducive to productive outcomes. While an inter-country programme requires a core set of standardised activities, there is also ample scope for country-level differentiated approaches. This can be achieved especially through greater decentralisation of authority at the country level and obtaining continuing feedback from the field. This should be a lesson that should feed into the design of the next JITAP.
- Transparency in resource allocations and programme operations is vital to efficiency and commitment by stakeholders. Lack of transparency leads to perceptions that participating countries are denied the benefits that they should obtain. Also, lack of transparency leads to constraints on the flow of information and obtaining the gains from comparative experience across countries.
- A continuing review of operational strategies and methodologies needs to be undertaken by programme management and oversight bodies, if the programme is to address issues relevantly and cost-effectively. Traditional methodologies need to be constantly updated, to take account of changing circumstances. (This is a clear lesson to be drawn from the experience of Clusters 9-12.)
- Technical assistance programmes, if they are to be successful, require a strong and continuing emphasis on substantive performance. The quality of technical inputs and technical outcomes needs to be measured and judged. There have to be written records of reviewing these inputs and outcomes.
- There is a continuing need for training in and familiarisation with international trade rules. In most participating countries and at regional levels, there are institutions which, either through their own efforts or through other technical assistance programmes, are building capacities in addressing MTS issues. These need to be fully engaged in programme activities, so that country-level capacity building is optimally achieved on a sustainable basis.
- Equipment shortages are a key constraint in obtaining access to and dissemination of MTS information and the supply of equipment has been greatly appreciated. Equipment is an essential precondition for efficient operations and equipment suitable for these countries (where local repairs and spare parts can be obtained) needs to be supplied.
- Activities undertaken on a sub-regional and regional scale - in HRD, analysis of trade problems and opportunities, discussion of trade negotiations - can reinforce regional approaches to MTS and other regional and non-regional trade issues and can also be cost-effective.
- There are many opportunities in the rapidly-expanding field of TRTA to establish connections and linkages, so that programmes such as JITAP can add more value at the country level. More deliberation is required to develop strategies at the country level to liaise with other donor activities.
- Cost-effectiveness is a subject which requires greater attention, especially in complex technical assistance programmes. Clearly, there are many alternative ways of implementing tasks and it is essential that options are explored so that cost-effective methodologies are adopted.
- Complex programmes need streamlined management systems. They can be best managed through greater decentralisation of authority and through hiving-off blocks of work and activities to appropriate entities at the sub-regional and country level. To ensure transparency and accountability, appropriate oversight mechanisms are an important precondition.

CHAPTER 4. THE FUTURE

99. Many changes have occurred in the last four years with regard to the MTS and the issues surrounding it. There is greater familiarity in most countries with MTS issues. New insights are emerging through the operation of a rules-based system. The media has focused significantly on trade issues, particularly the events in Seattle and Doha. The private sector in most countries is learning rapidly to operate within the new MTS. Civil society organisations have been fully engaged with the emerging issues and have been active learners and educators. These features are evident in many of the JITAP countries and in others. Apart from these changes at the recipient country level, many other global developments are also relevant for the future orientation of JITAP.

- There has been a rapid escalation of interest in TRTA. Most donors are committing resources, especially since Doha. Bilateral donors are actively developing TRTA programmes and projects in many developing countries, including many of the JITAP countries. There is evidence that in developing these programmes, these donors have gained insights from the JITAP model and its operational experience, as can be seen from the draft documents that are now being developed (DFID and EU documents in East African countries make reference to JITAP). At least two donor agencies, the European Union and USAID, are developing their TRTA within the framework of specific commitments they have made (the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and Everything But Arms (EBA) and the Africa Growth Opportunities Act (AGO)). The growth of TRTA at the country level has large implications for the future of a programme such as JITAP. Do we still need a JITAP, if there is increasing TRTA? Are there niches which JITAP can more effectively address, in the context of enhanced interest by bilateral donors? Is there a role for JITAP as some kind of catalyst or linking element among these fragmented bilateral donor activities?
- Unlike in 1997, when JITAP was conceived, the linkage between trade and poverty has emerged as a key global issue, in the context of the broader debate on globalisation. Many bilateral donors and multilateral financing institutions, such as the World Bank, UNDP and regional banks, are placing greater emphasis on trade and poverty issues. TRTA resources are being utilised to deepen and enhance the poverty-reduction aspects of trade. JITAP did not directly address poverty issues, other than focusing on poor countries. Many JITAP activities had implications for trade and poverty linkages. The IICs in those countries where civil society organisations were represented (Kenya, Uganda) focused upon this aspect in their discussions. Export-sector strategies were critically relevant to poor people, although this was not explicitly addressed. Undoubtedly, the poverty dimension of trade has to be incorporated as a mainstream facet of JITAP's operations.
- The Doha Agenda has recently clarified TRTA issues. The explicit message of Doha is that least-developed and low-income countries should be enabled to participate actively in the MTS and for this purpose, TRTA should be given high priority. Developing country negotiators have particularly attached great importance to TRTA in this context. Similarly, there has been a commitment to TRTA and to JITAP in particular at the Monterrey Conference on Development Financing (Monterrey was more Finance than Trade Ministers). The Monterrey Declaration states: "*... we further invite bilateral donors and international and regional financial institutions, together with the relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to reinforce the support for trade-related training, capacity and institution building and trade supporting services. Special consideration should be given to least developed countries, land-locked developing countries, small island developing states, African development, transit developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including through the Integrated Framework for Trade Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries and*

its follow-up, the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme, the World Trade Organisation Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund, as well as the activities of the International Trade Centre." There is another paragraph in the Monterrey Declaration which needs to be highlighted: *"In particular, developing countries need assistance in order to participate effectively in the World Trade Organisation's work programme and negotiating process, through the enhanced co-operation of all relevant stakeholders, including UNCTAD, WTO and the World Bank. To those ends, we underscore the importance of effective, secure and predictable financing of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building."* In view of these agreed positions by the global development community, there is obviously a commitment to a future JITAP.

- The successful Pledging Conference for WTO's Global Trust Fund (GTF) is an important development and has major implications for JITAP's integrated approach and funding arrangements. If the pledges that have been made for the GTF are forthcoming, that would be a significant boost for multilaterally-channelled TRTA, enabling a programme of intensive activities on WTO issues to be implemented. It is expected that GTF resources would, as appropriate, be utilised in collaboration with ITC and UNCTAD. In that event, JITAP should be an important and high-priority channel.
- There is also a growing concern, as evidenced at least in a few JITAP countries and also from other discussions, that low income and LDCs will be confronted with a major challenge by the year 2006 - only four years away - through the phasing-out of at least some exemptions that have been negotiated in their interest. From 2006 onwards, unless exemptions continue, they will be buffeted by the winds of international trade, more intensively than they have experienced so far. Therefore, these countries require targeted support to address the critical issues they will face by the year 2006.

The Integrated Framework

100. The Integrated Framework for Trade Related Technical Assistance (IF) has changed the TRTA landscape. The IF process had run in parallel with JITAP since 1997, more in theory than in practice. Recently, the IF process has been revitalised. The Doha Declaration called for a 'rationalisation' of the relationship between the IF and JITAP. IFs are now being developed for several countries, with at least two or three either completed or nearing completion. As originally planned, the IFs are only for least developed countries, although the IF Steering Committee (28 February 2002) has called for its extension to non-LDCs, without detracting from the priority accorded to LDCs. The work undertaken through the IF process so far is in the form of a diagnostic study of country situations and defining the TRTA needs of an individual country. It goes into considerable detail, as evidenced from the studies in Cambodia and Mauritania and it has identified a large number of activities, in many instances identifying the appropriate institution/s which could deliver the services required. The IFs for Cambodia and Mauritania have identified for each country a matrix of needs for future TRTA.

101. There appears to be some confusion and misunderstanding regarding the role of the IF, especially in relation to JITAP. The IF, as it clearly states, is a 'framework', unlike JITAP which is a programme of activities. In implementing the IF, there would be many projects and programmes undertaken by many agencies and donors and there is no reason why JITAP could not be one within the IF. The needs that have been identified by the IF are so extensive that there will have to be programmes and projects for a considerable period of time, so that those capacity gaps which have been identified can be addressed. The IF is organised by six core agencies - IMF, World Bank and UNDP (funding agencies) and ITC, UNCTAD and WTO (substantive trade agencies) - and the latter three are the agencies responsible for JITAP. What can be clearly observed is that instead of the IF process and JITAP being in conflict or overlapping each other, they are mutually complementary and can

indeed be supportive of each other. However, a future JITAP has to take fully into account the results of any IF diagnostic study.

102. At the current rate of progress of the IF process, about 10 countries are expected to be taken up every year, so that for any future phase of JITAP, IF diagnostic studies might be available only in a few countries. It is not a rational response to the urgent needs of TRTA to hold up the operations of JITAP until the IF process is completed in a country, if it is decided that that country should be taken up by JITAP. In countries where the IF process is completed and if that country is a participant in JITAP, then it is an essential precondition that the results of the IF Diagnostic Study are fully absorbed by JITAP. There is no evident argument for any kind of rationalisation between the IF and JITAP at the global level, as each one of them addresses a different, although related and complementary, set of issues.

103. In each country where an IF Diagnostic Study has been made, an IF Steering Committee is expected to oversee its implementation. What should be the relationship of a future JITAP with the IF Steering Committee at the national level? The MTE suggested that the IF Steering Committee be merged with JITAP's National Steering Committee. This was largely based on the experience in Tanzania at the time, where the IF process was under way and where JITAP's performance was lack-lustre. Now that there is a revitalised and expanded IF process under way, the relationship between the IF and JITAP at the country level needs to be looked at afresh. One feasible approach might be to make the JITAP National Steering Committee a sub-committee of the IF Steering Committee, thus ensuring complementarity and convergence. The linkage between the IF process and JITAP should be at the country level, where the two processes are complementary in practical terms. JITAP in the future could even consider a role as the catalyst for stimulating bilateral donor TRTA, within the IF. It might also be feasible that, at least in some countries, JITAP could be the secretariat for the IF Steering Committee.

104. It is evident from the problems that are confronting low-income and least developed countries that the most intransigent ones are those to do with structural issues, which act as significant constraints on developing their export supplies. The problem is not so much on the demand side as on the supply side. The IF, in the two or three countries where diagnostic studies have been undertaken, appears to be fully alert to this aspect and there are many activities which have been identified for action, which are more in the field of capital, rather than technical assistance. Investment will be required at the farm and enterprise levels and in developing the infrastructure for trade. Multilateral financing institutions, bilateral donors and local financial institutions (apart from other forms of financing) will be the key actors in enabling these investments to be generated and in creating the export supplies for these countries. TRTA and capacity building are vital, but that alone will not be sufficient to enable these countries to be fully engaged in the MTS. A question that needs therefore to be posed is whether the IF should also be concerned with these supply-side issues and particularly of capital assistance, especially in view of the involvement of the multilateral financial institutions in the IF. Should the IF be concerned with issues beyond TRTA and also identify capital assistance needs?

Do we need a JITAP?

105. TRTA is expanding rapidly and in the next few years, there should be various channels of support for low-income developed countries with donors responding to the needs identified through the IF Diagnostic Study. However, operationalising programmes and projects will take time. With the expansion of TRTA, some of the needs that have been met by JITAP could probably be met through other sources of assistance. Even in such a situation, there appears to be a need for a JITAP, especially for the following reasons:

- JITAP has been relatively successful in addressing some of the urgent needs of its participating countries, especially at a time when these countries are struggling to be familiar with MTS issues and engaging with the WTO. There are many countries who yet require that kind of support over the next three to four years. The JITAP experience could be relevantly made available to these other countries, without the need to undertake a long and arduous preparatory process, which will be essential if other programmes are to take its place.
- The experience of working together in practical terms has increased the value and credibility of the three substantive trade agencies - ITC, UNCTAD, WTO - and has specially enabled WTO to establish an outreach which it otherwise would not have had. An important contribution of JITAP has been to highlight the evolving MTS agenda at the country level and encourage these countries to be more articulate in global negotiations. This work needs to be continued to increase the political credibility of the emerging MTS and to ensure its economic credibility for the poor.
- Many countries (over 20) are requesting that JITAP should be extended to them, based on their perceptions that JITAP has been a valuable programme. It is evident from the experience of at least two non-JITAP countries (Cameroon and Zambia) that JITAP made an important difference to participant countries, when compared with these two countries, especially in regard to the trade negotiating process and the familiarity with MTS issues.
- A positive feature of JITAP so far has been that it has enabled participating countries so far to establish a closer association between Ministries of Trade in particular and other country-level trade-related operations and Geneva-based trade agencies. The links between country-level activities and the work of permanent missions of the recipient and donor countries in Geneva, have also started to be improved, although there is more to be done. JITAP can be an important instrument in improving the perceptions in Geneva of the practical problems that are confronting these countries in relating positively to MTS processes. It can be an important learning instrument for Geneva-based trade negotiators.
- An important contribution of JITAP, although it was not originally envisaged, is that it has stimulated sub-regional and regional action with regard to MTS issues and in capacity-building. TRTA, through the IF process, will be largely at the country level and a future JITAP could add value by incorporating specifically and with greater emphasis, the sub-regional and regional dimension of TRTA, which should be of particular value at a time when the process of regional integration in Africa is being encouraged.

The Substantive Focus.

106. In the current phase of JITAP, a large number of activities were implemented across 15 clusters. Is it essential that the same approach should continue in the future? Institutional and other forms of inertia should not be allowed to restrain the fresh thinking that is required on this issue. The Mission has heard from several stakeholders that it might be appropriate to continue with the present model and apply it to a greater number of countries. Other stakeholders have expressed the view that countries should be allowed to select from the 15-cluster menu whatever they think is appropriate. Another suggestion has been that, while maintaining the current model of intensive activities for a limited number of countries, there should be another, narrower and more focused set of tools provided to a larger number of countries. There are merits in each and every one of these proposals. It is the view of the mission that there should be a more radical rethinking of the JITAP model, learning from the experience so far. What is now proposed is neither the current JITAP model nor a model which constitutes a menu from which selections can be made. It is a more radically different

and new approach, taking account of past experience and also the new climate for TRTA. Whatever is the future model, the vital precondition would be that it should be a joint and integrated approach, implemented by the three agencies together. It is also imperative that a critical mass of activities is implemented in a number of core countries, so that the holistic model can be maintained.

107. JITAP should consider a less fragmented and more cohesive approach for the next phase. It might consider concentrating on three areas of activity, each one of them enabling a joint approach by the three agencies. These three areas take account of the relatively successful experiences of JITAP and also the more urgent needs of participant countries. Many current activities, although not all, should find a place within the broader themes that are spelled out below:

- The first area should be the stimulation of a wider discussion at the national level of trade and development issues, taking special note of linkages between trade and poverty. These discussions will take place within the overall framework of the MTS negotiating process and the evolving domestic economic and social regimes which are consequent upon the trade liberalisation process. An important achievement of JITAP has been the engagement of the private sector and civil society, even in a limited way, on MTS issues. This process needs to be maintained. Within this overall context, JITAP should encourage the establishment of what are now referred to as inter-institutional committees, which might in the future be re-designated as the Consultative Committee on Trade (CCT). The CCT will be in the nature of an advisory body to policy-makers. Its mandate needs to be wide and include MTS and other regional and non-regional trade issues. Its agendas need to be expanded, to include both MTS external events and the key domestic issues, which emerge in relation to the MTS. It will be concerned, as an advisory body, in the negotiating process. It will work through committees and sub-committees. Many capacity-building tasks will need to be incorporated in establishing and building up the CCT. The CCT is not an isolated activity, but should be looked upon as a catalyst for research and other forms of practical engagement with private sector and civil society organisations. It is an area for joint action by all three agencies, alongside national partner institutions.
- The second area is HRD. JITAP has been successful in undertaking many training activities, organising several of them on a sub-regional scale, which has enriched the training process. More intensive work should be undertaken to build training capacities in participating countries. The objective should be to create in these countries an adequate level of teaching, training and consultancy capacities and expertise, in the broad areas of and in issues relating to the MTS. Instead of attempting to create parallel cadres of trainers, located mostly in government institutions, the focus should be to work with existing institutions dedicated to teaching and training in these areas (faculties and departments of economics, commerce, business and law in universities, business schools and other such organisations). In least developed and low income countries, these bodies lack the resources to build themselves up to engage more closely and actively in MTS issues. These bodies could be enabled to be service providers to governments in trade negotiations, to implement WTO rules and train the large cadres required in public and private sectors, in areas such as export sector strategy and business strategy development. They should be the consultants in trade-related issues. The programme to build these institutions has to be designed to bring the work of the three trade agencies together, in a mutually reinforcing effort. Apart from this aspect of HRD, JITAP also needs to organise training activities for key government, private sector and civil society personnel who are directly concerned, either broadly or in specialised areas such as Customs, Standards and other similar fields, with HRD. These trainees need not be expected to be trainers.

- The third area is enabling these countries to develop their export potential. Clusters 9-15 in particular of the current JITAP have addressed these issues. What is now required is to re-orient these activities, taking account of the priorities of these countries. Export sector strategies need to be developed, involving those bodies and organisations referred to in the paragraph above - university faculties and business schools and other consultancy firms (and TPOs). Instead of focusing on one or two sectors at a time, over a period of three to four years, the objective should be to enable government and the private sector to identify critical bottlenecks in each sector and to address them in what might be a sequential approach, one development leading to another. In the real world of least developed countries, this type of selective and strategic intervention might be more productive. Equally, the new approach should focus more on supply-side issues and less on the marketing side (to the extent that supply-side issues are within the mandate particularly of ITC). It would be appropriate for JITAP to proceed further than what it has done so far and to be more actively engaged in establishing the linkage with investment, whether it be through multilateral financing institutions, local development banks or from the internal resources of private entrepreneurs.

Participant Countries

108. The optimum number of countries for implementing an efficient programme would depend upon several factors - the programme model that has been designed, the availability of financial resources and management capacities, among others. Recommendations have been made above on the feasible model for a future JITAP and funding and managerial issues will be briefly examined later. As noted earlier, there is a 'demand' for JITAP from over 20 countries. That is another aspect that needs to be taken account of in determining country coverage of the programme. The IF is another factor of relevance. Taking all these into account, the following criteria can be set out as markers, to determine the geographical scope of JITAP in the next phase:

- JITAP should be confined to Africa. Most countries requesting JITAP are in this region and for funding and management reasons, it is essential that it is focused on Africa. Also, as a future JITAP should place more emphasis on inter-country and sub-regional scales of activities, the country coverage needs to be geographically contiguous. Countries outside the African region can obtain similar assistance through other sources of funding.
- The seven countries of the current phase of JITAP in East and West Africa should continue to benefit from JITAP for another period of two to three years. This is essential for ensuring greater sustainability. In most of these countries, JITAP activities were not implemented over the whole period and there were large time-gaps in implementation. Therefore, at least for a period of two years, JITAP needs to be continued, re-orienting activities in the next phase towards the type of model and substantive focus which has been spelled out above. While JITAP is recommended to be continued in these countries, it should be more the new model JITAP. Activities in Tunisia might be continued on the premise that funding would be forthcoming from outside the CTF.
- Another ten countries, largely LDCs and low-income countries from primarily the ECOWAS, COMESA and SADC regions, should be taken up as a core group of countries where JITAP is to be implemented. Cameroon (which was a benchmark country for the evaluation) might be included, as an exception. Confining countries to these sub-regions should enable JITAP to organise its activities on an inter-country and sub-regional scale. Countries within these sub-regions might be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Countries with a per capita income of less than US\$800 per annum (in other words, IDA-eligible countries). Given this criterion, the programme could include both LDCs and non-LDCs.
- Countries which have gone through an IF diagnostic study, so that there are identified needs and priorities from which JITAP can establish its own niche.
- Countries where IF diagnostic studies are not planned for the years 2003 or 2004. The intention is to include countries where there will be no significant multilateral TRTA in the next two to three years.
- Countries where there is political stability and law and order is not a deterrent to efficient implementation of programmes. Those countries where law and order and political stability are more important than addressing trade issues through technical assistance should not be included at this stage.
- Countries for which donor financing is available, as JITAP funding arrangements are highly dependent upon country-specific funding.
- Cameroun, which was one of the benchmarking countries for this evaluation and which is a low-income country and also a country which spans the cultural divide.

109. An important issue that has been raised in our discussions is whether there can be a more selective (menu) approach to the implementation of JITAP, so that it can take up a larger number of countries outside the core group of countries. The JITAP model requires a critical mass of jointly-implemented and integrated activities in each country. However, there is no reason why the 'menu' approach should not be feasible in countries which are not participating in JITAP. The 'menu' option could be made available to any recipient country or donor, provided financing is available from outside the CTF. Bilateral donors and multilateral agencies such as UNDP could be encouraged to buy-into any one of the three broad areas of activity which have been defined as the substantive focus of JITAP for the future. These countries for which such a selective approach is required might benefit from ongoing and future technical co-operation programmes outside JITAP and even outside the three JITAP agencies. JITAP could be a catalyst for other TRTA.

Funding Arrangements

110. Predicated on our recommendations for a new model JITAP and the coverage of countries, the optimal funding required for a three-year programme starting in January 2003 would be in the order of US\$15.5 million. For the seven countries which are currently included in JITAP and which will continue in the next phase, the requirement per country would be at least US\$500,000 making up a total of US\$3.5 million. For the new ten countries to be taken up, each individual country would require a sum of US\$1.2 million, making a total of US\$12 million.

111. The CTF arrangement is the most appropriate funding model for JITAP. However, it is important that in the next phase there should be a more balanced contribution in between Windows 1 and 2. Donor countries should consider allocating equal amounts to the two windows, so that there will be greater flexibility and predictability in planning the execution of the programme. ITC, too, should consider greater flexibility in its financial management and authority might be sought for a more flexible approach.

112. There is another new aspect to the future funding of JITAP. The establishment of the GTF in WTO and the promise of substantial funds to it raises the question as to how WTO's programmatic interventions in JITAP should be funded. It is entirely appropriate that WTO should consider making its own contribution to JITAP from the resources available in the GTF. Such a contribution could either be channelled through the CTF or could directly finance the agreed proportion of JITAP funding ascribed to WTO. In the event of a GTF contribution, the total amount required for the CTF from donors would have to be reduced by an amount equal to the WTO contribution.

Management

113. As noted earlier, the management system has not been static over the last four years and it has changed at all levels over this period. While the Evaluators cannot prescribe a precise management model, current arrangements need to be altered so that the deficiencies that have been observed can be overcome. On the basis of our recommendations, there will be 17 countries for the next phase of JITAP and that alone would require streamlining management arrangements. There are probably strong arguments, given the number of countries involved, to have not only one JITAP, but two, with two Programme Managers - one for the COMESA region and the other for the ECOWAS region - both based in the field. The burden of management can be vastly reduced, when activities and their implementation are appropriately organised through delegation and decentralisation and extensive use of sub-contracting modalities. Management capacity should not be an obstacle to extending JITAP to a larger number of countries. What is required is a new management model.

- The Geneva-based CTF Steering Group, which is at the apex of JITAP management, should consider critically its operation so far and focus in the future on strategic and substantive aspects. It should be a monitoring body, with clearly established procedures for obtaining regular reports on programme performance. The Steering Group should be more concerned with issues such as the quality of technical inputs, the methodologies adopted in designing specific activities (eg in HRD, export-sector strategies), relationships with TRTA at the field level and with the IF at the country level. It might even be appropriate to consider establishing a technical sub-committee to monitor the substantive aspects of JITAP.
- A formal Working Group of the three agencies, which meets regularly and which maintains records and Minutes of meetings, should be established. The primary task of the Working Group will be to oversee the substantive and operational evolution of the programme, to which the Programme Manager/s will be accountable. It should be the task of this Group to decide on allocation of resources among activities and to shift resources as and when required. The Group should be particularly concerned with issues of financial transparency.
- National Steering Committees, which should include donor representatives at the country level (and which might even be sub-committees of the IF Steering Committees at the country level, whenever that is appropriate), should be entrusted with greater authority to determine workplans and monitor and adjust them. National representatives on these committees should be paid appropriately to attend meetings. For the NSC to play a more articulate role, there will have to be greater decentralisation of all JITAP activities.
- In almost every country, with the possible exception of a few, there should be a National Focal Point only and the post of National Facilitator should be abolished. The NFP should be provided with adequate resources, both technical and financial, to undertake his tasks. Members of the National Steering Committee should be paid an allowance for their participation.
- Sub-contracting arrangements should be more prominent in implementation plans. Blocks of work can be sub-contracted to country-level and regional organisations (universities, research institutes, chambers of commerce and TPOs) and to similar institutions in donor countries. Central management should be largely confined to ensuring quality control.
- In a future JITAP, the sub-regional dimension should even be more pronounced than it is now. There should be two sub-regional hubs - preferably Abidjan and Nairobi - from where sub-regional activities can be organised (workshops, seminars). For convenient

management, it is necessary that sub-regional activities should take place in one location. (WTO has plans to launch its East Africa Training Programmes from Nairobi.) The appointment of local, sub-regional Facilitators in these two locations should be considered.

- There are many options for the post and role of Programme Co-ordinator, who might hereafter be referred to as Programme Manager. One option would be to have a Programme Manager based in Geneva, whose sole concern will be with administration and finance (if our recommendations are accepted, it will be a US\$15 million programme) and two or three part-time Technical Advisors, specially recruited for the purpose and operating from their home bases, who will focus on field-level substantive activities and report to the Inter-Agency Working Group in Geneva. The other option is to have two Programme Managers. The former option is feasible if there is a streamlined management model, as outlined in this section.
- The Programme Manager/s should not be entrusted with the tasks of servicing the CTF Steering Group or the Working Group of the three agencies. Those functions should be undertaken by the managing agency (which is ITC) and preferably by the Director of Technical Co-operation. It is their function to link up with donors on issues of fundraising. The CTF Steering Group and the Working Group of the three agencies are expected to oversee the performance of the Programme Manager/s. It is very important that checks and balances within JITAP are properly maintained.

Designing the Next JITAP

114. The traditional pattern is to assess needs and then design a programme. This has to be changed for the next JITAP. A lighter, more cost-effective approach is now feasible. The current JITAP itself went through a process of needs assessment and came up, surprisingly, with identical needs in all eight countries. All 15 clusters of activities were presumed to be required by all these countries - a marvellous symmetry of needs, if ever there was one. Probably, this entire exercise was more one of advice to countries, informing them of the tools and capacities the three agencies have, which might address their needs. There is nothing wrong with such an approach. It is better, in the next phase of JITAP, to inform the participating countries of what can be made available to them. (27 countries are supposed to be 'demanding' JITAP and so probably they know what it is.) Moreover, at least in some countries the IF might already have done a diagnostic study. Therefore, the whole process of needs assessment should be laid aside. What might be encouraged is for each country to organise a workshop on the basis of the common core of activities that JITAP can undertake and to suggest the types of country-specific approaches that might be adopted in each national programme.

115. The design of the next JITAP should be based on new approaches and new thinking. It is therefore critical that an entirely new mindset is brought to bear on its design and on its modalities and methodologies. For the design of the new JITAP, a Task Force appointed by the three agencies should be established. In designing the new programme, consideration should be given to the preparation of an overall programme document, which could then include the national programme documents as annexes. A workplan alone is neither sufficient nor satisfactory for an important programme of this kind.

The Current Phase

116. The Evaluation Team, at its meeting with donors in Geneva, made an early interim recommendation that the current phase of JITAP should be extended until end-2002. The rationale for this recommendation was that the work programme recommended by the

Mid-Term Evaluation has not been completed, primarily due to the slow release of funding that had been committed and the availability of resources at this late stage. It is estimated that around US\$2 million will be available for the next eight months. What is now important is to utilise these available resources in the most productive way. If there are workplans, then they need to be adjusted so that available resources are utilised to the greatest effect.

117. While not in a position to set out in detail what might be done, several activities need to be focused upon. An intensive effort in consolidating the work of the IICs needs to be undertaken. In that context, linkages might be established with relevant local research and teaching institutions, to enable IICs to tap their expertise. The Reference Centres might be further strengthened, at least selectively and the CDF should be made operational early. The work with regard to trade information has not been implemented in most countries and the new tools that are available in ITC (particularly trade maps, which are in great demand) might be provided to the relevant institutions. (The MTE recommended that no more work should be undertaken in this cluster; however, now that ITC has recently produced several important tools, which these countries are demanding, this might be an opportunity to provide them with these tools.) The work with regard to export-sector strategies needs to be reviewed, so that work is focused to bring about practical benefits at the country level. It might also be useful for JITAP to enable national institutions such as Bureaux of Standards and Customs to develop their own training capacities further, particularly in areas such as SPS. A modest allocation of resources should also be set aside for the design of the next phase of JITAP.