



## Economic and Social Council

*Topic 2: The promotion of adequate and sustainable technological progress and innovation among LDCs*

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## 1. Definition of Key Terms

**LDCs:** Less Developed Countries

**UNFSTD:** United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Program

**CSTD:** United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development

**UNCTAD:** United Nations Conference on trade and Development

**ITU:** International Telecommunication Union

**WIPO:** World Intellectual Property Organization

**Landlocked country:** a country that is surrounded on all sides by land and therefore has no direct access to a coastline providing access to the ocean



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**UNOSAT:** United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Program

**UNFPA:** United Nations Fund for Population

**UNOCHA:** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

## 2. Introduction

Innovation is considered the process of using knowledge and technology in order to develop the services and processes that have value in terms of social benefit or commercial impact.

We live in a time of significant technological development, but unfortunately, not all countries have the possibility to benefit from it. Many countries are facing the risk of being left even further behind due to the economic and social consequences of rapidly enlarged inequality. The economic and social support remains concentrated, mainly in developed countries and in the meantime LDCs remain far behind if not excluded entirely. Many of them have no possibility beyond the use of disused technologies, such as those used in the agricultural sector.

We are following the results of the serious development challenges that these countries are constantly facing in order to achieve sustainable development. The main cause of these challenges is found in the considerable gaps between LDCs and other countries concerning science, technology and innovation. Since science, technology and innovation are fundamental elements for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, if these gaps will not be eliminated or at least reduced, LDCs will not achieve the goals set by the 2030 Agenda.

## 3. Background information

STI are indispensable elements in order to achieve sustainable development, but at the same time they can also cause inequality and exclusion. They cause exclusion, when least developed countries do not have the necessary competences to make full use of the potential that technology and innovation offer for reaching sustainable goals. In 2017, the International





science, technology and innovation systems. The starting point for the Reviews was that it is essential to exploit science, technology and innovation to approach sustainable development.

Regarding to the new millennium, in 2000 the UN set 8 Millenium Development Goals and ITU played an important role in reaching Goal 8 which was: Develop a global partnership for development. This made benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications, more available.

## 4. Major countries involved

The UN Development Program declares that today

- 2.6 billion people in developing countries do not have access to constant electricity.
- 90% of the 4 billion people who do not have access to the Internet are in the developing world.
- 16% of the global population does not have access to mobile broadband network

WIPO shows that since 2012, Sub-Saharan Africa in some regions has increased relatively well its innovation . This year these include Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, and Mozambique. Meanwhile in Tanzania 18% of electricity generated in 2012 circulated illegally among the population, it was also stolen or not equally distributed; In this country electric plants are undeveloped and this leads to frequent electricity cut-offs.

Uganda was able to pass from analogue TV to the digital one just in 2015 and in Burkina Faso technological advancements are limited due to the continuous water shortage.

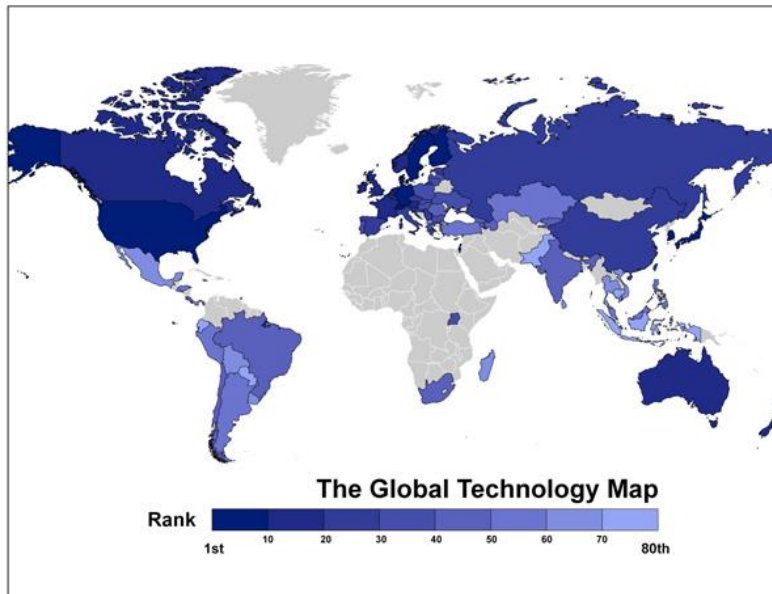
Technological innovation remains limited in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Caribbean island of Haiti was hit by an earthquake in 2010 and it is still recovering from it. In the past Haiti has constantly battled for freedom and this has drained out the country's economy, making it one of the least technologically advanced countries in the world. Haiti has a consistent lack of basic facilities such as educational system, telecommunication, electricity and power, internet, and research.

In Asia despite the top-ranked economies of Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong and China there are countries that seem to be completely lacking in lack of technology.

Even if Cambodia has borders with VietNam and Thailand the technology is quite primitive, the same situation has been recognized in Bhutan which is a landlocked country. Laos as a

landlocked country lacks in communication and cooperation with foreign investors and global corporations and this affects the country's technological growth.

Meanwhile between 2018 and 2019 VietNam and the Philippines have increased their technological innovation.



The reported map shows the concentration of technology as a whole, starting from the first countries to the last ones in terms of technological progress

## 5. UN involvement

UN is constantly working in order to guarantee technological innovation and progress where it is most needed, through UN's bodies mentioned in the previous paragraphs. After the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000 with a target achievement date of 2015, UN has affirmed that Science and technology are the pillars of the Means of Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

In order to eradicate poverty and reorient the unsustainable development between 2015 and 2030, UN will ensure that affordable technological solutions will be developed and widely diffused in the next years.



From 13 to 17 May 2019 ministerial representatives met at the UN's European headquarters in Geneva for the [22nd annual session of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development \(CSTD\)](#) to discuss about the necessary implementation of STI to combat climate change and achieve Sustainable Development goals.

Three of the most significant technological innovation projects in which the UN has been involved are:

Satellite imagery to track humanitarian crises projected by UNOSAT, that shows the migration of people in Syria and Somalia cause of the war.

Innovative virtual learning programme for midwives projected by UNFPA, it is a pilot program that provides multimedia resources in order to train learners in Ghana and Bangladesh. It is very adaptable because it doesn't require connectivity.

Humanitarian data exchange platform created by UNOCHA, it is a platform which provides the most efficient and precise data collection and it will help organizations to provide more required assistance and meet evolving needs.

## 6. Useful links

[https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/dtlstictinf2019d1\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/dtlstictinf2019d1_en.pdf)

<http://www.tipconsortium.net/on-development-sti-policy-and-knowledge-democratisation/>

<https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/content/science-technology-and-innovation-sti-and-culture-sustainable-development-and-mdgs>

<https://artnet.unescap.org/sti/policy/inclusive-technology-innovation>

[https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/tc2015d1rev1\\_S01\\_P04.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/tc2015d1rev1_S01_P04.pdf)

[https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2019/article\\_0008.html](https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2019/article_0008.html)

<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/intlcoop/mdg/default.aspx>

<https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/10-ways-the-un-is-innovating/>

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg9>



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