

Implementation of the Doha Programme of Action
for the Least Developed Countries:

Progress Report

(Prepared by OHRLLS for the CEB High-level Committee on Programmes at its fiftieth session)

I. Background

1. The General Assembly endorsed the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) for the decade 2022–2031 on 1 April 2022 (resolution [76/258](#)). In paragraph 301 Member States “welcome the work of the Inter-agency Consultative Group for Least Developed Countries, led by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, invite CEB and the High-level Committee on Programmes to support the coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action on a system-wide basis, and also invite the Secretary-General, in his capacity as CEB Chair, to include the implementation of the Programme of Action in the agenda of the Board.”

II. Actions to date

2. Building upon the [Roadmap](#) for the accelerated implementation of the Programme of Action, which draws on commitments made at the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the Office developed comprehensive guidelines for mainstreaming and monitoring. The guidelines provide the LDC policymakers and national focal points with practical approaches and tools to align national development strategies with the Programme of Action priorities and establish robust monitoring mechanisms, incorporating country-level experiences and lessons learned from successful interventions, in close consultation with the UN Resident Coordinator and Country Team. Nearly half of all LDCs have now either fully integrated the Programme of Action into their national development plans or are actively reviewing existing mechanisms to mainstream its implementation.
3. In the Roadmap specific actions are identified across the six key action areas of the Programme of Action, for relevant stakeholders with a view to ensuring commitments in favour of LDCs are pursued effectively, thereby accelerating progress on SDG targets. The Roadmap also includes milestones for the midterm and the period leading up to 2031 to enable effective monitoring of the Programme’s implementation and to promote shared responsibility across LDCs, the UN system, development partners, and other stakeholders. The Roadmap is a living document and will be reviewed and updated before the comprehensive midterm review of the Programme of Action, which is expected to take place in early 2027 in Doha, Qatar.
4. ECOSOC in June 2025 reiterated that wider recognition of LDC status could stimulate and facilitate better integration of the Doha Programme of Action into development policies, and requests the UN development system to prioritize allocations to the LDCs by developing operational guidelines with clear budget targets, as appropriate ([E/RES/2025/23](#), para. 30). The Council also requested the Secretary-General to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the UN system to facilitate coordinated implementation and coherence in the follow-up to and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, keeping the Inter-Agency Consultative Group (IACG) for Least Developed Countries active in this regard (para. 16).
5. The latest meeting of the [IACG on LDCs](#) was held in May 2025 and heard a progress report on the DPoA Monitoring Framework, a comprehensive and systematic analytical platform comprising indicators and targets that are also aligned with the SDGs. The meeting also heard updates on the DPoA deliverables and reports from UN system entities on implementation of the DPoA.
6. The five key deliverables of the DPoA warrant specific attention by HLCP and CEB as they receive high priority by the Group of LDCs. These are: a Resilience Building Mechanism to safeguard development gains from various shocks; a Food Stockholding Mechanism to enhance resilience against shocks and food insecurity; an International Investment Support Centre to boost foreign direct investment (FDI) and accelerate structural transformation; an online university for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to foster online post-graduation degrees in STEM education; and a Sustainable Graduation Support Facility to support graduating and graduated countries. OHRLLS has undertaken extensive mapping exercises on available

support and existing initiatives in these areas to identify gaps and provide options for establishing related mechanisms and systems, in full coordination with the UN system, as contained in several Secretary-General reports. OHRLLS has also mobilized more than USD 30 million for the implementation of these deliverables. The latest developments on the five deliverables are as follows:

- i. **Resilience Building:** The DPoA deliverable on Resilience Building for the LDCs is an important means of supporting the implementation of the commitments agreed under focus area five of the DPoA on building resilience, addressing climate change and disaster risk reduction. Planned activities include three initial workstreams on: a) strengthening adaptation capacity in LDCs including support for the preparation of National Adaptation Plans and related bankable projects on adaptation; b) strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems in LDCs; and c) better understanding of exposure to economic and other shocks in LDCs and means of building resilience to them. As a first step, OHRLLS, together with UNDRR and WMO, prepared the first-ever report on the Status of Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in the LDCs,¹ identifying gaps and recommendations for addressing them. The report finds that while LDCs made important progress in recent years through various initiatives underway at the national, regional and international levels, the LDCs have the most acute needs and are the farthest behind. The report invites all stakeholders to prioritize and accelerate their efforts in support of the LDCs. It also reiterates that regular monitoring of progress remains critical to assess the Secretary-General's goal of ensuring that by 2027 everyone on Earth is protected from hazardous weather, water, or climate events through effective multi-hazard early warning systems that save lives and livelihoods. To begin implementing these recommendations, OHRLLS will organize a first workshop in the fourth quarter of 2025 on Early Warning and Early Action in Fragile, Conflict and Violent Settings in African Least Developed Countries.
- ii. **Food Stockholding Mechanism:** The DPoA and the UN Food Systems Summit+2 Call to Action identified the operationalization of the LDC Food Stockholding Mechanism as a key deliverable to enhance food security and build resilience against food crises in the world's most vulnerable countries. The report of the Secretary-General on the Food Stockholding Mechanism for LDCs ([A/79/540](#)) analysed two potential modes of operation: the first is aimed at countries which are close to self-sufficient but periodically suffer from poor harvests and would use a mix of physical and virtual food stocks; the second is for countries which are grain importers and are vulnerable to spikes in world food prices and would primarily use virtual stocks. The Secretary-General's report further called for urgent action to be taken to prepare a detailed feasibility study in consultation with relevant organizations, which should include, among others, a road map for the operationalization of the Food Stockholding Mechanism, detailed plans for a pilot scheme for a limited group of LDCs and a resource mobilization strategy. To guide the preparation of a comprehensive feasibility study for the operationalization of the Mechanism, OHRLLS, together with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, has established a UN system-wide Task Force. OHRLLS has also secured USD 10 million in seed funding to initiate project activities, and to lay the groundwork for effective design and pilot implementation.
- iii. **International Investment Support Centre:** Member States in the Sevilla Commitment, adopted at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), held in Sevilla, Spain, from 30 June to 3 July 2025, supported the establishment and operationalization of an International Investment Support Centre for the LDCs, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report [A/79/505](#). The report suggested that a transformative International Investment Support Centre (IISC) should engage individual countries, in partnership with their technical assistance providers, in long-term planning, coordination, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of a country's tailored strategic FDI plan, comprising measures for direct pursuit of FDI and government capacity-building for better, more effective cultivation

¹ https://www.un.org/ohrlls/sites/www.un.org.ohrlls/files/mhews_in_ldcs.pdf

of FDI and its benefits toward SDG achievement. It recommended that other functions of such a centre could include establishing matchmaking networks for LDCs and leading investors in the countries' priority economic sectors, establishing strong links with providers of finance and guarantees, and supporting LDC investment officials in developing a competitiveness database containing sector- and product-specific location benchmarking information to facilitate project evaluations and attract potential investors. Finally, the Secretary-General recommended that the proposed centre's national-level FDI management services tailored to individual least developed countries could be piloted, based on demand by LDC governments and in close collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator system and country offices.

- iv. **Online University:** In response to the DPoA's mandate to expand higher education opportunities in LDCs and to undertake a feasibility study on establishing an Online University or an equivalent platform for LDCs, OHRLLS has conducted extensive consultations, including a high-level expert group meeting, and a comprehensive review of ongoing initiatives. These efforts have culminated in a clear recommendation to establish an Online University for LDCs (OUL) or equivalent digital platform. The OUL seeks to bridge persistent gaps in access, quality, and equity in tertiary STEM education by leveraging cost-effective digital technologies and fostering strategic partnerships. The initiative will build on existing networks and resources and will draw on the expertise of UN system organizations such as UNU, UNESCO, the Technology Bank for LDCs, and ITU to ensure strategic alignment and operational sustainability. A report of the Secretary-General on the OUL is under preparation for the General Assembly's 80th session. Recognizing the importance of an OUL, the Outcome document of the FFD4 recalls the commitment to undertake feasibility studies to explore the possibility of establishing an Online University or other equivalent platform for LDCs. UN system entities are encouraged to support ongoing system-wide consultations to define and advance the OUL's operational model, governance, resourcing, and partnerships, ensuring its successful establishment as a transformative platform for equitable higher education in LDCs.
 - v. **Sustainable Graduation Support Facility:** The DPoA welcomes the establishment of a Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (iGRAD) jointly developed by OHRLLS, as Chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force on LDC Graduation Support (IATF), and DESA, as the Secretariat for the Committee for Development Policy, as a concrete, country-led solution of dedicated capacity development support to graduating and graduated countries. A report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation, effectiveness and added value of smooth transition measures and graduation support ([A/79/504](#)) recommends that iGRAD coordinate the provision of country-specific technical support and advisory services related to the establishment of consultative mechanisms and the preparation of smooth transition strategies. OHRLLS will continue to rally the UN system in support of each graduating LDC, ensuring better coordination in the delivery of joint initiatives that facilitate a smooth transition from the LDC category. This includes continuing the coordination of joint UN system activities and facilitating peer learning, enabling graduating countries to draw on the experience of countries that have already graduated or are further advanced in the process. The IATF will continue to organize, upon country demand, joint UN country workshops on graduation support, in close collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams, and other key stakeholders, including key development partners, international and regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector.
7. The DPoA also sets ambitious targets on LDC graduation and some progress is being made in this area. At the end of 2024, Sao Tome and Principe graduated from the LDC category, bringing the number of LDCs to 44. Furthermore, in December 2024, the General Assembly decided that Cambodia and Senegal will graduate from the LDC category, to take effect following a five-year preparatory period.

8. The DPoA highlights the vital link between peace, security, and sustainable development. The DPoA notes that three out of four LDCs are affected by conflict or post-conflict conditions, requiring integrated approaches to poverty, insecurity, and governance, and underscores that peace is both a prerequisite for and enabler of sustainable progress. Addressing these complex challenges calls for a coherent, system-wide UN response. To this end, paragraph 301 of the DPoA invites UN entities, under the IACG, to develop operational guidelines for support to LDCs in conflict and post-conflict situations. OHRLLS plans to fulfil this mandate through a consultative, evidence-based process that maps current UN support, identifies gaps, and recommends practical steps to strengthen coordination, capacity, and coherence. The focus will be on how such support can drive peace, sustainable development, and irreversible graduation from LDC status. OHRLLS has already presented a workplan and a concrete way forward to the IACG for LDCs for preparing these guidelines and is actively advancing this process.
9. General Assembly [resolution 79/218](#) recognizes the critical importance of the work of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries as a focal point for enabling LDCs to strengthen their science, technology and innovation capacities, with a view to building sustainable productive capacities and promoting structural economic transformation. In the first year of its implementation of the Strategic Plan 2025–2027,² which is closely aligned with the DPoA, the Global Digital Compact, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Technology Bank focused its activities on agribusiness and food system innovation to enhance productivity, food security, and value addition; digital transformation and inclusive digital skills to bridge digital divides and prepare populations for the frontier technology era; and climate adaptation and access to green technologies to strengthen resilience and foster sustainable growth. A report of the Secretary-General (forthcoming) will provide further details on the work of the Technology Bank over the past one year and outline the way forward.
10. To support the effective and timely implementation of the DPoA, OHRLLS is organizing an annual LDC Future Forum³ to contribute to a comprehensive and analytical assessment of the progress achieved by LDCs. The Forum also focuses on sharing innovative solutions to the development challenges of LDCs, especially in the areas of innovation, digitalization, technology, investment, education and learning, and climate change. In 2025, the Forum was organized in Lusaka, Zambia, and it gathered over 300 participants, including global leaders, experts, and stakeholders to advance resilience in LDCs amid intensifying climate, economic, and geopolitical challenges.
11. Preparations for the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, as mandated by paragraph 309 of the DPoA, have started. The midterm review will serve to assess progress, identify constraints in the implementation of the DPoA by LDCs and their development partners, and reaffirm the global commitment to the development of LDCs. ECOSOC resolution [E/RES/2025/23](#) welcomes the offer of the Government of Qatar to host the midterm review. The intergovernmental process will involve preparations at the national, regional and global levels. National reports of the LDCs will be prepared in a broad-based and inclusive manner with the support of the Resident Coordinators and UN Country Team. Furthermore, two regional reviews, one for Africa and one for Asia, will be held in preparation for the midterm review. These are expected to highlight key achievements and identify critical constraints in delivering on the targets and commitments of the DPoA. Special emphasis will be placed on highlighting progress in the implementation of the deliverables and on meeting the graduation criteria. The regional reviews, scheduled to be held in 2026, will require thematic and regional inputs from UN system entities.

² https://www.un.org/technologybank/sites/www.un.org.technologybank/files/strategic_plan_02_sidepages.pdf

³ <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/ldc-future-forum>

III. Recommendations

12. As recommended by the Secretary-General, the entities of the UN system are encouraged to scale up substantive and technical assistance to the LDCs in a timely, long-term, predictable and flexible manner, and should also play an active and catalytic role in representing those countries at the forums in which they are not represented, ([A/77/984](#), para. 101).
13. As noted above, ECOSOC (in [E/RES/2025/23](#) (para. 16)) requested the Secretary-General to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the UN system to facilitate coordinated implementation and coherence in the follow-up to and monitoring of the DPoA, broadly utilizing the coordination mechanisms available such as the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the UN Sustainable Development Group. Furthermore, in resolution [76/258](#) (para. 291) the General Assembly called upon entities of the UN development system to actively support the implementation of the DPoA at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, in close cooperation and partnership with the World Bank Group and the international financial and development institutions, and to integrate the Programme of Action into their strategic plans and annual work programmes and reporting at all levels, as mandated by the DPoA. In this regard, the UN development system is invited to consider the existing good models, such as the UNIDO's Ministerial Conference of the LDCs or ESCAP's annual dedication session on vulnerable countries.
14. UN entities are requested to provide full support for ongoing feasibility studies, pilot projects and other implementation activities, as described above related to the five key deliverables of the DPoA, and the operationalization of the respective mechanisms and systems in line with the entities' mandates.
15. Furthermore, ECOSOC requested the UN development system to provide assistance to graduating countries in the formulation and implementation of their national transition strategies and to consider country-specific support for graduated countries for a fixed period of time and in a predictable manner, and calls for providing special consideration to the challenges and priorities of LDCs ([E/RES/2024/18](#), para. 28).
16. With regard to the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, OHRLLS invites all relevant UN development system entities, and especially ECA and ESCAP, to provide inputs to the regional reviews scheduled to take place in 2026. The UN system is further invited to participate in and contribute to the preparatory process of the midterm review including through the existing IACG for LDCs. Entities are also invited to prepare sectoral appraisals and organize pre-conference events in their respective fields of competence, providing further input to the comprehensive high-level midterm review. All stakeholders of the DPoA are invited to effectively participate in and contribute to the preparatory process as well as the review itself.
17. Finally, in line with para 301 of the DPoA, OHRLLS would like to propose that HLCP dedicate a specific agenda item in 2026 to elevate the quality and impact of the UN system's contribution to the midterm review of the DPoA and reinforce the scale and scope of its collective support to the world's most vulnerable countries and the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Such a dedicated discussion would leverage HLCP's unique convening power and extensive networks, drawing on the sectoral appraisals, regional reviews for Africa and Asia, plans for pre-conference events that demonstrate tangible progress on the priority areas of the DPoA (particularly the five key deliverables that have already mobilized over USD 30 million in implementation funding), and other preparatory activities pursued by the IACG. This is well-aligned with the Committee's mandate to foster system-wide programme coherence, promote best practices, and catalyse robust inter-agency collaboration, and would ensure that the UN system presents a unified, comprehensive, and strategically coordinated contribution to this critical assessment of progress toward LDC development goals.