

UNIDO initiatives in technology transfer

UNIDO, IRC/QTI

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Introduction

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 to act as the central coordinating body for industrial activities within the UN system. In 1985, UNIDO became the sixteenth UN specialized agency. Its mission is to help developing countries and economies in transition to pursue sustainable industrial development by balancing concerns for competitive economy, productive employment and sound environment. These “3Es” – economy, employment and environment – are the guiding beacons for UNIDO’s approach to its markets, clients and customers.

Technology transfer programmes

For many years, UNIDO has undertaken a number of programmes and activities to facilitate technology transfer. In this paper, four UNIDO initiatives - a capacity building programme on technology transfer negotiation, the Asia-Africa Investment and Technology Promotion Centre (AAITPC or Hippalos Centre), the UNIDO Exchange and the Technology Bureau for International Industrial Partnerships (TBIIP) project - are introduced.

Capacity building

UNIDO has developed and implemented a training programme on technology transfer negotiation. The programme covers a range of issues pertaining to the transfer process: technology and innovation, the acquisition of technology and transfer negotiations. The programme sharpens the skills of technology negotiators and serves as a teaching tool. It is directed at government officials, entrepreneurs and practitioners in the field of technology transfer issues. It is offered and conducted by UNIDO itself. Alternatively, the whole training package is available under, for instance, a franchising arrangement for the right to use UNIDO materials and methodology. This programme has been conducted in Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda and Poland.

Programme outline

The modules of the training course are clustered (in accordance with the Manual on Technology Transfer Negotiation) to reflect the real-life stages a buyer goes through in acquiring a technology: *Technology transfer and development*: Role and inter-relationship between technology transfer and development, potential benefits and risks, impacts of technology transfer on factors such as domestic technological progress, local research and development, the labour base, income distributions and foreign trade, essential elements of host country policies and institutional framework for acquisition of foreign technology.

Access to technology for developing countries: Finding technology – sources of information, including potential suppliers, determinants of price for a technology and the market’s basic features, technology evaluation, procuring technology, technology transfer and the product life cycle, risk appraisals, the issue of technological complexity.

Success factors in the technology transfer process: Consideration of the various objectives and options available to licensors and licensees, conditions for effective transfer of technology and fulfilment of the parties’ expectations, legal, institutional and technological infrastructure for negotiating.

Structure and types of technology transfer agreements: Basic principles and general structure of a contract, contractual terms, rights and obligations, different types and main characteristics of technology transfer agreements (patent, know-how, hybrid, trademark, franchise), checklist of contractual clauses.

Analysis of contractual clauses: Study of the content and implication of different contractual clauses: preamble and definitions, granted rights and licensor’s obligations, improvements, licensee’s obligations, secrecy protection, compensation, guarantees, law of contract, litigation and resolution of disputes.