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Technical assistance

Analysis of technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews and assistance delivered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in support of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In line with previous documents prepared by the Secretariat focusing on analysis of the technical assistance needs identified under the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the present document provides an updated analysis of the technical assistance needs identified during the two review cycles. It also presents the findings of 33 responses received by 16 September 2021 to a questionnaire prepared by the secretariat seeking feedback from States regarding their experiences in identifying and addressing the technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews. Lastly, the document provides an overview of the ways in which the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has responded to technical assistance needs and requests received since the eighth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019.

* [CAC/COSP/2021/1](#).



I. Introduction

1. With a chapter of the United Nations Convention against Corruption dedicated to technical assistance and information exchange, the delivery of technical assistance is recognized as a key prerequisite for achieving the implementation of the Convention globally. To that end, one of the goals of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption is to identify and substantiate specific needs for technical assistance and to promote and facilitate the provision of such assistance. In line with paragraph 44 of the terms of reference of the Implementation Review Mechanism, the Implementation Review Group is tasked with considering technical assistance requirements in order to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention.

2. In its resolution 4/1, the Conference recommended that all States parties, where applicable, in their responses to the comprehensive self-assessment checklists and in the country reports, should identify technical assistance requirements, preferably prioritized and related to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention examined during a given review cycle. The Conference also recommended that States parties continue to provide the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with information on ongoing technical assistance projects related to the implementation of the Convention.

3. In its resolution 7/3, the Conference welcomed the promotion of anti-corruption technical assistance as a component of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recognized the importance of coordination among donors, technical assistance providers and recipient countries in order to leverage resources, increase efficiencies and avoid duplication of effort while meeting the needs of recipient countries. States parties were encouraged to continue to voluntarily provide the Implementation Review Group, consistent with the agreed terms of reference of the Implementation Review Mechanism, with information on the current, anticipated and unmet technical assistance needs, including those needs identified through the review process. States parties were encouraged to use this information to inform technical assistance programmes.

4. Furthermore, in its resolution [S-32/1](#), the General Assembly, at its special session against corruption, adopted the political declaration entitled “Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation”, in which States, inter alia, pledged to continue sharing information on the provision of technical assistance and needs for such assistance, including those needs identified through the Implementation Review Mechanism.

5. The present document contains the following:

(a) An updated analysis of the technical assistance needs identified through the reviews carried out under the second cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism;¹

(b) The feedback from 33 States² received by 16 September 2021 in response to a questionnaire prepared by the secretariat seeking States’ experiences in identifying and addressing the technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews under both cycles, in line with the above-mentioned mandate contained in Conference resolution 7/3;

¹ To be read in conjunction with the note by the Secretariat entitled “Good practices and experiences of, and relevant measures taken by, States parties after the completion of the country reviews, including information related to technical assistance” ([CAC/COSP/2021/9](#)).

² Albania, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Ecuador, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Latvia, Madagascar, Morocco, Myanmar, North Macedonia, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Timor-Leste, United Arab Emirates and Zimbabwe.

(c) An overview of the technical assistance delivered by UNODC in response to technical assistance needs and requests covering both cycles since the eighth session of the Conference, held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 December 2019.

II. Analysis of technical assistance needs identified through the Implementation Review Mechanism

A. Needs identified during the first review cycle

6. By 16 September 2021, 173 States parties to the Convention had completed their country reviews under the first cycle, with only 13 reviews to be completed. Of the 173 States, 118 had identified a total of 3,680 individual technical assistance needs.

7. Since the preparation of the document entitled “Analysis of technical assistance needs emerging from the country reviews and assistance delivered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in support of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption” (CAC/COSP/2019/14), which was made available to the Conference at its eighth session, only four additional States completed their first cycle reviews, two of which identified a total of eight individual needs. The change in the substantive analysis of trends in technical assistance needs is therefore insignificant and does not warrant a new analysis.

B. Needs identified during the second review cycle

Overall assessment

8. In November 2020, the Secretariat prepared a note entitled “Analysis of technical assistance needs emerging from the second cycle country reviews” (CAC/COSP/IRG/2020/7) for the second resumed eleventh session of the Implementation Review Group. Since then, 13 additional States have completed the executive summaries of their country reviews, of which nine identified 60 technical assistance needs. With these additional reviews, a total of 39 out of 57 States have identified 455 individual technical assistance needs through the Implementation Review Mechanism.

Figure I
Number of technical assistance needs identified by chapter (August 2019, November 2020 and September 2021, second cycle)

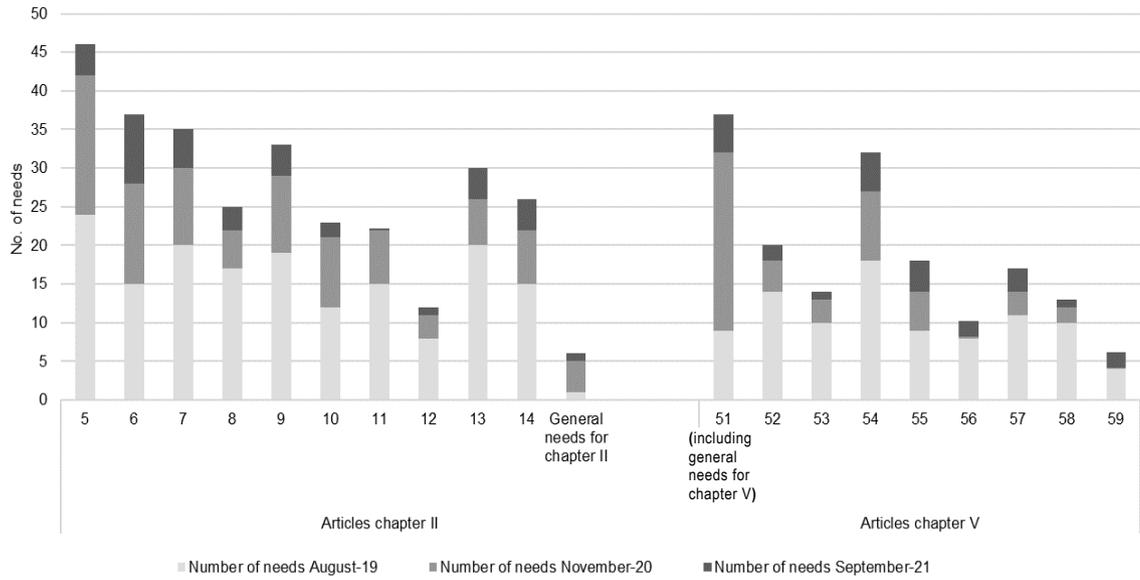
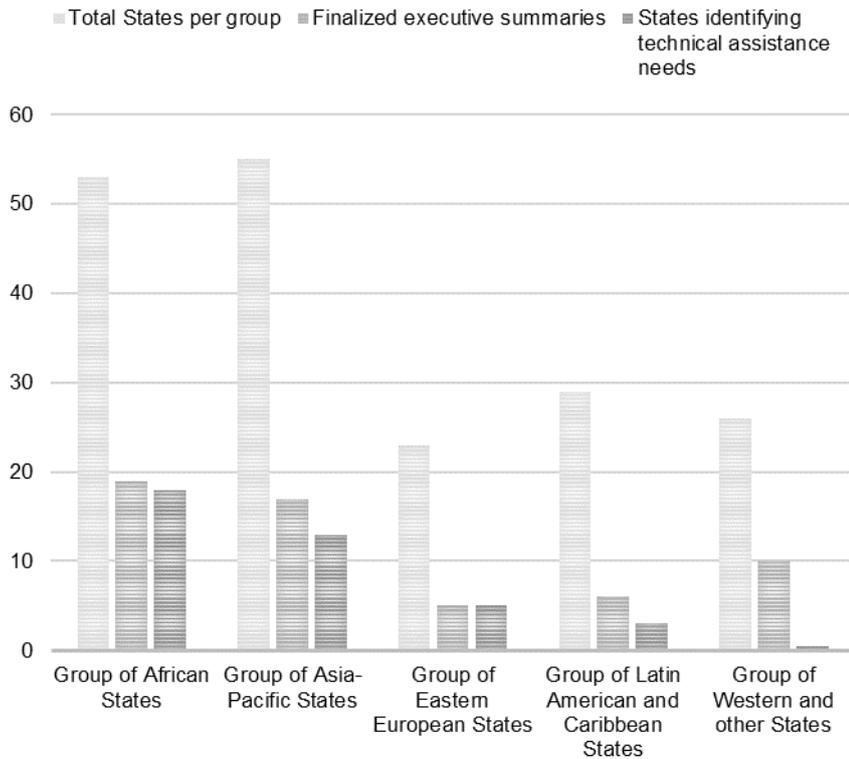


Figure II
Regional breakdown of number of States, States having completed their executive summaries and States with technical assistance needs (second cycle)



Capacity-building

9. In line with previous analyses, the broad category of “capacity-building” continued to be the most prevalent category of needs identified (37 States identified 223 such needs, amounting to some 49 per cent of the total needs identified). An overview of the numerous subcategories for which capacity-building assistance was

identified was presented to the Implementation Review Group in November 2020 (CAC/COSP/IRG/2020/7):

- (a) Non-conviction-based confiscation;
- (b) Mutual legal assistance;
- (c) Reporting persons;
- (d) Confiscation and asset management;
- (e) Investigations, asset tracing and anti-money-laundering measures;
- (f) Law enforcement and prosecution and case management;
- (g) Access to information, private sector, awareness-raising and participation of society;
- (h) Public procurement, accounting and auditing;
- (i) Research, data collection and technological assistance;
- (j) Asset declarations and conflicts of interest;
- (k) Preventive tools, action plan, training and evaluation.

10. Recently identified needs for capacity-building ranged from the general training of public officials to the development of e-government and open data policies, the design of public education programmes against corruption and the improvement of technological capacities with respect to the detection of proceeds of crime. The distribution of needs followed the general trend of more needs being identified for chapter II than for chapter V (130 and 93, respectively).

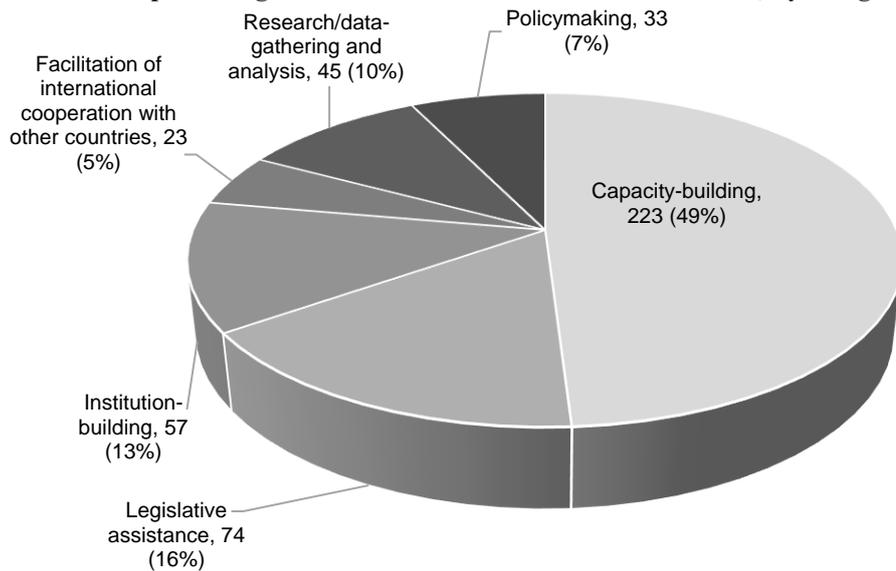
Legislative assistance

11. Twenty States identified 74 legislative assistance needs, representing 16 per cent of all needs identified. These included needs on a range of issues, such as assistance in drafting legislation on international cooperation to combat corruption and assistance in amending and supplementing legislation on the prevention of money-laundering. Contrary to the general trend, needs identified for this category were divided equally between the two chapters.

Institution-building

12. Nineteen States identified 57 institution-building needs, representing 13 per cent of all needs identified. Three quarters of those needs related to chapter II (43 needs). The creation and reinforcement of institutions that play a crucial role in the implementation of chapter II and the avoidance of overlapping mandates were identified as being at the heart of the successful implementation of the chapter. By contrast, in relation to chapter V, the successful recovery of assets both nationally and internationally relies to a greater extent on the development of legislation and specific procedures, as well as the capacity of all relevant authorities to implement those procedures.

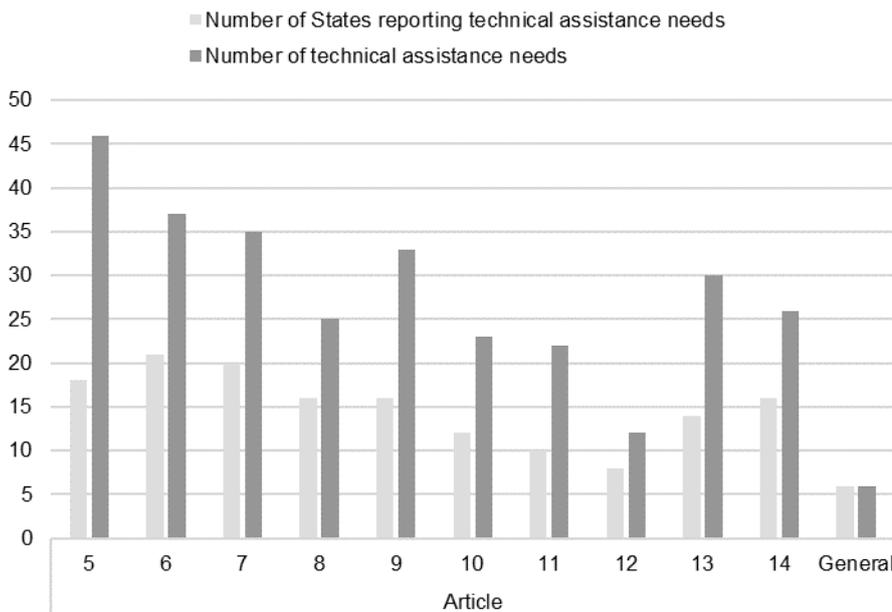
Figure III
Number and percentage of individual technical assistance needs, by category



Analysis of technical assistance needs identified in relation to chapter II of the Convention

13. Thirty-two States parties identified technical assistance needs in relation to chapter II, focusing on preventive measures.

Figure IV
Number of technical assistance needs and number of States identifying needs, by article (chapter II)



Preventive anti-corruption policies and practices (article 5); preventive anti-corruption body or bodies (article 6)

14. Over a third of all States indicating needs reported a total of 72 needs (or 16 per cent of all needs) for articles 5 and 6. In line with previous analysis, a quarter of all needs identified under chapter II related to those two provisions.

15. The need for capacity-building was also the largest category of technical assistance needs identified under articles 5 and 6, representing 40 per cent of needs identified by 18 States. The technical assistance sought was aimed at strengthening

the organizational and operational capacities of anti-corruption bodies, training in the conduct of risk assessments, awareness-raising and outreach activities, and the development, implementation and monitoring of anti-corruption strategies.

16. Another 21 per cent of needs under articles 5 and 6 (identified by nine States) related to institution-building needs, and ranged from assistance in establishing an anti-corruption body to strengthening the independence of that body through legislative support to define its scope and functions. Interestingly, two States identified the specific need for support to either re-establish or strengthen the integrity of the office of the ombudsperson through material or financial resources and training opportunities.

Public sector (article 7); codes of conduct for public officials (article 8)

17. Needs relating to articles 7 and 8 were reported by 23 States and amounted to 20 per cent of all needs for assistance under chapter II. Many of those needs continued to relate to the management of conflicts of interest, with recent examples including the need for technical support to review and update existing conflict of interest statements and awareness-raising in relation to how to declare conflicts of interest.

18. Many of the executive summaries finalized more recently identified training needs in relation to articles 7 and 8. However, this was also a cross-cutting need for both chapters II and V (see below).

Public reporting (article 10); participation of society (article 13)

19. Nineteen States identified needs in relation to articles 10 and 13, those articles accounting for a total of 53 needs. The needs varied, from the need for improved access to information through the simplification of procedures to the implementation of access to information laws and the sharing of best practices on how society could be more involved in decision-making processes.

20. Some States identified needs relating to awareness-raising activities, with one State indicating the need for corruption training for the media and another noting the need for assistance in the design of public education programmes against corruption.

Public procurement and management of public finances (article 9)

21. Sixteen States reported 33 technical assistance needs in relation to public procurement. Needs related to training requirements included the conduct of risk-based procurement audits, the prevention and detection of fraud in public procurement, the monitoring and evaluation of public procurement systems, the conduct of procurement investigations and the preparation of procurement investigation reports. One State identified the need to train civil servants in accounting and budget management, in addition to the need to enhance transparency in general with regard to public procurement.

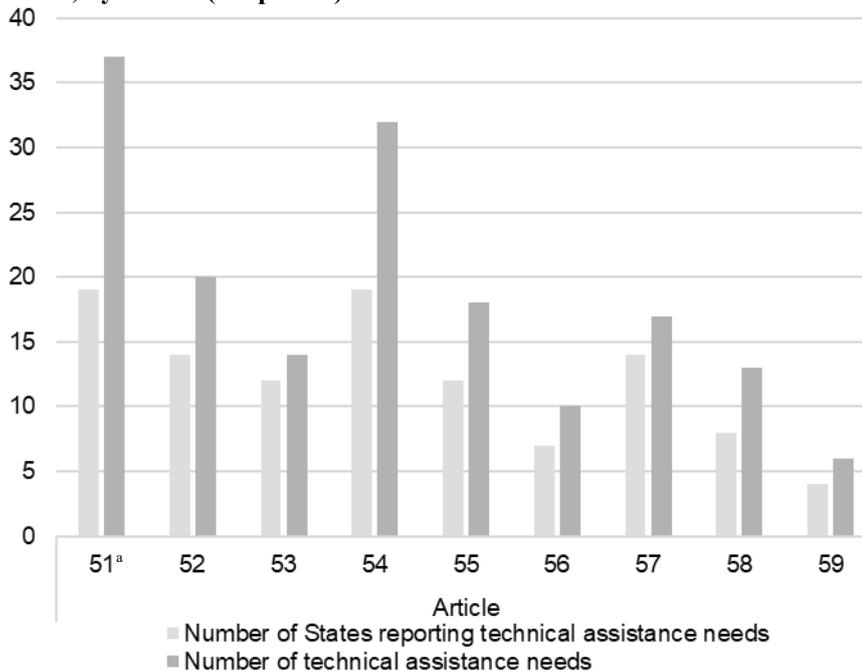
Need for corruption risk assessments: a cross-cutting need for chapter II

22. A third of all States identified risk management and, more specifically, the conduct of corruption risk assessments, as a technical assistance need. The development and use of tools to identify corruption vulnerabilities and develop targeted mitigation measures were most often identified in the context of articles 5 and 14. The institutions targeted by such risk assessments ranged from public sector institutions in general and “corruption-prone institutions” more specifically, to private sector entities. Such increased interest in risk assessments has also been witnessed by UNODC during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as reflected in section IV below.

Analysis of technical assistance needs in relation to chapter V of the Convention³

Figure V

Number of individual technical assistance needs and number of States identifying needs, by article (chapter V)



^a Including general needs for chapter V.

General provision (article 51)

23. Reflecting the significant variation in States' regulatory, institutional and operational frameworks for asset recovery,⁴ the needs identified under article 51 were equally varied and often expressed in broad and general terms. Of the 37 needs identified for article 51 or as a general need relating to chapter V, more than half concerned capacity-building needs (identified by 13 States). These needs included training for officials and prosecutors in the tracking and tracing of property abroad and the recovery and final disposal of property. Several technology-related and database-management needs, such as the need to develop software-based, real-time record-keeping procedures and the need to digitize records such as court records and asset disclosures, were also identified. Other general needs related to the development of legal, policy and governance instruments for underpinning coordination and cooperation mechanisms among law enforcement, investigative and prosecution authorities. Several States identified needs related to the drafting or review of asset recovery legislation and standard operating procedures. Institution-building needs included the creation of an institution to manage confiscated assets and proceeds of crime, and support to enable each law enforcement agency to set up an asset recovery, forfeiture and management unit.

Measures to prevent money-laundering (article 14); prevention and detection of transfers of proceeds of crime (article 52); financial intelligence unit (article 58)

24. The interconnected nature of articles 52, 58 and 14 lends itself to the needs identified being viewed as a whole. On that basis, a total of 55 technical assistance

³ For information on technical assistance delivered under the joint UNODC-World Bank Stolen Asset Recovery (StAR) Initiative, see the note by the Secretariat on the progress on the implementation of the activities of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery (CAC/COSP/2021/13).

⁴ See the thematic report prepared by the Secretariat on the implementation of chapter V (CAC/COSP/IRG/2021/7).

needs were identified by 19 States. This represented the biggest category of needs identified with regard to chapter V (one third of those needs), and accounted for 12 per cent of needs overall. Similarly, article 52 had the highest number of recommendations across all reviews.

25. Most of the needs related to capacity-building, such as the training of staff working in financial intelligence units and law enforcement agencies to enhance their skills in financial analysis and the use of technological tools for data-gathering and analysis. One State expressed the need for the training of civil society representatives on their obligations as designated non-financial businesses and professions.

Cross-cutting issues relating to the second review cycle

Technological needs

26. The development or use of technological tools⁵ was a cross-cutting need identified by 65 per cent of all States that expressed needs. Some States expressed those needs more abstractly, as the need to harness technologies in the fight against corruption or to minimize corruption opportunities. More specific needs related to record-keeping, data management and data analysis, such as the production of statistics. Detailed needs also included the implementation of e-government systems, the use of technologies for the management of conflicts of interest through online interest and asset declarations, and the conduct of financial investigations and forensic accounting.

27. Needs relating to the use of technologies for enhancing inter-agency and international cooperation were also identified. States indicated how a computerized system would help information exchange and coordination between institutions. One specific need involved access to global databases on foreign politically exposed persons.

28. Needs relating to information and communications technologies, such as the implementation of e-procurement systems and the digitization of national archives, mirror the trend identified in the thematic report presented to the Implementation Review Group at its twelfth session, held in Vienna from 14 to 18 June 2021 ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2021/3](#)).

Training needs

29. As a fundamental component of capacity-building activities, training needs were identified by more than half of all States that indicated that they had needs. Many States identified such needs in broad terms by referring to the subject matter or the article of the Convention in relation to which training was required. Commonly identified subjects related to ethics or integrity, the reporting of corruption incidents, the protection of reporting persons, public procurement, efforts to enhance transparency in the public administration and financial investigations and money-laundering.

30. The types of training identified were, therefore, also diverse and interdisciplinary, ranging from the need for technical skills relating to data analysis and the conduct of risk-based audits to general competencies including report-writing, negotiation skills and the embedding of ethical norms. Although in most cases, officials in government institutions were identified as being in need of training, such needs were also expressly aimed at supporting private sector entities, the media and civil society organizations.

⁵ General Assembly resolution [S-32/1](#), annex, para. 68.

III. Analysis of responses to the questionnaire regarding the provision of technical assistance and technical assistance needs deriving from the Implementation Review Mechanism

A. Approaches of States parties in addressing the technical assistance needs identified in their own country reviews

1. States' views on the new format of identifying needs in the country reviews

31. During the first cycle of the Implementation Review Mechanism, the comprehensive self-assessment checklist provided for predetermined categories within which States could identify their technical assistance needs (see [CAC/COSP/IRG/2010/6](#)). During the second cycle, the revised self-assessment checklist ([CAC/COSP/IRG/2016/4](#)) allowed States to identify their technical assistance requirements more freely.

32. There was broad agreement that the new open format added value to the exercise of identifying targeted yet comprehensive technical assistance needs. States indicated that it had allowed them to identify needs that reflected the real institutional and legal challenges they faced, which had, in turn, led to enhanced clarity as to how the challenges could be resolved.

33. Over a quarter of States noted that that format allowed reviewing experts to better assist in the formulation of the needs of the State party under review. This was exemplified by one country visit where the reviewing experts, the secretariat and the State party under review itself jointly formulated technical assistance needs.

2. South-South cooperation to address technical assistance needs

34. More than a third of States reported engaging in South-South or bilateral cooperation to address their technical assistance needs. Such cooperation was deemed important in view of the general negative impact of corruption on all societies, and the recognition that the success of one State party in the fight against corruption was dependent on the success of all the States in the region and beyond. Therefore, the sharing of experiences and best practices, in particular among anti-corruption agencies, remained important.

35. In sharing examples of such cooperation, two States referred to UNODC regional platforms as an important means of engaging in South-South cooperation aimed at fast-tracking the implementation of the Convention. Other forms of cooperation ranged from the training of judges to a trilateral project to promote integrity in private sector entities. Another State described having benefited from capacity-building and model legislation programmes offered by the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa.

36. One State expressed its willingness to engage in South-South cooperation in order to meet the technical assistance needs identified through its country reviews, and noted that it was in the process of implementing an action plan based on sharing its experience with other countries in the region within the framework of the UNODC-led project on accelerating implementation of the Convention in Africa.

3. Addressing technical assistance needs before the conclusion of reviews

37. Over a third of States indicated that they had addressed technical assistance needs before the conclusion of reviews; this had been witnessed by the secretariat on numerous occasions during country visits in the course of reviews. The ongoing process of addressing needs was considered independently of the Implementation Review Mechanism.

38. Several States shared measures that they had taken to address technical assistance needs arising prior to the conclusion of their second cycle reviews. For example, one State noted how issues that had emerged during its second cycle review

were already being addressed before the conclusion of the report. Another State described how new monitoring and evaluation mechanisms following the adoption of an anti-corruption strategy had, in turn, led to legislative and institutional changes, such as the establishment of a corruption-prevention commission. Highlighting the challenges inherent in country reviews, the ever-evolving nature of States' anti-corruption frameworks and environment was, in part, a result of the very process of the reviews, as they often triggered fundamental legislative, institutional and operational changes. One State noted that although capacity-building activities had been organized prior to the completion of the review, its need for such assistance were continuous and ongoing.

39. Another State indicated that, while no technical assistance needs had been addressed before the conclusion of the review, such measures had been discussed, planned or programmed, and technical assistance had been requested or its provision initiated to implement some of the recommendations arising during the review process.

4. Addressing additional technical assistance needs after the conclusion of reviews

40. Over a third of States indicated that they had addressed the needs and recommendations emerging from the country reviews with the financial and technical support of development partners. One State explained that, after the adoption of its second cycle executive summary and before the country report had been finalized, donor support had enabled some technical needs identified therein to be addressed. Another State explained that various measures relating to the second cycle review had been prioritized following inter-agency consultations, including regulatory impact assessments, and consultations with partners and donors, based on the availability of adequate expertise and resources.

41. One State noted that the technical assistance it had received through donor support led to greater diversity in feedback and criticism, which had, in turn, allowed for the formulation of a new integrity and anti-corruption strategy, reflecting successful international standards and experiences adapted to the domestic context.

5. Continued relevance of technical assistance needs after the completion of reviews

42. There continued to be broad agreement among States on the continued relevance of technical assistance needs after the completion of reviews, even in cases where additional needs had been identified since that time. Only one State indicated that the technical assistance needs identified in the self-assessment checklist were no longer relevant after the review process had been completed. That State explained that, as a significant amount of time had elapsed between the submission of the self-assessment checklist and the publication of the country review reports, needs had become obsolete owing to developments within the national anti-corruption framework. Another State recommended that the needs be used to formulate technical assistance requests, while being mindful of the requirement to adjust the requests in tandem with progress made in the area concerned.

6. Follow-up on the outcomes of the country reviews

43. Seventy per cent of States reported that they had integrated the outcomes of the country reviews into action plans and strategies, or other, less formal mechanisms. For example, one State had established a federal anti-corruption plan with 142 actions for different authorities to improve the mechanisms for preventing, detecting and establishing accountability for acts of corruption. The State noted that the plan also took into account the recommendations that had arisen from other anti-corruption reviews, including regional reviews.

44. Some States indicated that they had assigned certain institutions the role of coordinating with the relevant entities with regard to follow-up on the outcomes. For example, one State had assigned the supreme audit institution as the central authority

responsible for following up on the implementation of the recommendations emerging from its review.

45. Other States reported that follow-up on the outcomes of the reviews had been carried out in a less formal manner; competent institutions had been delegated responsibility for addressing the challenges identified and for implementing the recommendations emanating from reviews.

7. Bilateral or multilateral support to address the technical assistance needs identified in the country reviews

46. Bilateral or multilateral support was a common occurrence when addressing needs identified through the Implementation Review Mechanism. Good practices cited in the questionnaire included the additional involvement of national and international experts and civil society organizations. Another good practice related to the continued engagement of the officials involved in the country reviews in seeking bilateral or multilateral support. Similarly, it was highlighted that the public officials responsible for implementing the national anti-corruption strategy could convert technical assistance needs into projects or actions, which could, in turn, be used to attract development partner funding.

47. More than a third of States reported that they had made reference to the needs identified through the Implementation Review Mechanism in bilateral or multilateral donor discussions. One way in which this was achieved was by involving the relevant anti-corruption bodies in discussions with donors through the various mechanisms for coordinating external aid.

48. Some States also indicated that they had entered into bilateral or multilateral partnerships, including through technical assistance programmes, where the assistance provided did not match the needs identified during the review process. In such cases, States explained that reform efforts had sometimes been initiated before the review process had been launched. While States acknowledged that the needs identified through the reviews represented a strong foundation for receiving technical assistance, they also found that such needs required continuous updating.

B. Approaches of States parties in the provision of technical assistance to address needs identified in the country reviews of other States parties

1. Use of technical assistance needs identified in the country reviews in anti-corruption programmes

49. More than a third of States that responded to the questionnaire reported that they had taken note and made significant use of technical assistance needs identified by beneficiary States when designing anti-corruption programmes, initiatives and technical assistance delivery. Of those, less than a third had provided technical assistance to other States.

50. Almost half of States reported a lack of involvement in providing assistance to other States.

51. One State indicated that it had not used the needs identified when designing anti-corruption programmes as a result of some countries not publishing their full country reports or publishing them months or even years after the country visit, at which stage the needs identified might no longer be relevant.

2. Other criteria used when designing, prioritizing and deciding on technical assistance delivery

52. The use of criteria other than the findings of the Implementation Review Mechanism when designing, prioritizing and deciding on technical assistance delivery included scoping missions and sectorial risk assessments. States indicated

that, ultimately, this would depend on the individual programme designed in close cooperation with the partner country.

3. Additional observations

53. One State noted that the self-assessment checklist needed to be revised and the guiding documents updated in order to improve the overall quality of the responses and to facilitate and speed up the review process. The State also indicated that technical assistance needs should be discussed more specifically during the direct dialogue. Another State explained that establishing a procedure similar to that of the human rights treaty bodies would enable the parties involved to process relevant information more effectively.

54. Another State indicated the need for a regional anti-corruption information sharing centre to facilitate and promote the sharing of information and best practices among anti-corruption agencies of countries with similar technical assistance needs.

55. Finally, it was suggested that responses to and the implementation of technical assistance needs should be monitored, allowing for prioritization and coordination between the secretariat and donors. The needs of developing countries merited specific attention, as did a focus on collective and regional assistance, with the aim of uniting efforts, increasing efficiency, enhancing the use of resources and avoiding duplication.

IV. Delivery framework and resources

56. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to deliver a wide range of technical assistance activities with the objective of meeting the needs of States parties through its global, 6 regional⁷ and national programmes, notwithstanding the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

57. To respond to such challenges, UNODC increased its delivery of technical assistance remotely and enhanced its focus on the development of knowledge products and capacity-building tools. The Office also adapted its technical assistance activities to meet States parties' needs to uphold integrity standards while responding to and recovering from COVID-19.

58. UNODC consolidated and expanded its field presence in order to respond more effectively to the ever-increasing number of requests for technical assistance. During the reporting period, a global adviser was based in Vienna, while experts and advisers providing regional coverage were stationed in Fiji (for the Pacific), Kenya (for East Africa), Mexico (for Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean), Peru (for the Southern Cone of South America), Senegal (for West and Central Africa), Serbia (for South-Eastern Europe), South Africa (for Southern Africa) and Thailand (for South and South-East Asia). In addition, country advisers were located in Myanmar and Somalia and country experts were located in Indonesia, Paraguay and the Philippines. The recruitment of advisers for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Papua New Guinea and Uzbekistan and the recruitment of an expert for Mali commenced.

59. Those advisers and experts provided on-site professional expertise and advice at the regional and country levels to requesting States parties.

⁶ The UNODC global programmes for the reporting period are the Global Programme to Prevent and Combat Corruption through Effective Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in Support of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (the Programme on Safeguarding Sport from Corruption and Crime is an integral part of this Global Programme); the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration: Towards the Promotion of a Culture of Lawfulness; and the Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime.

⁷ Relevant programmes include the joint UNODC/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project and the global programme on strengthening criminal justice cooperation along trafficking routes (CRIMJUST).

A. Coordination and cooperation in the delivery of technical assistance

60. In order to avoid the duplication of effort, UNODC continued to strategically prioritize and deliver technical assistance in coordination with other assistance providers, development partners and international organizations.

61. UNODC participated in and actively contributed to meetings of the Group of 20 Anti-Corruption Working Group under the presidencies of Italy and Saudi Arabia. In that context, UNODC prepared the *Good Practices Compendium on Combating Corruption in the Response to COVID-19* and provided support in drafting and developing the high-level principles on corruption related to organized crime and on tackling corruption in sport. UNODC also participated in and contributed to meetings of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Working Group on Bribery in International Business Transactions, the Organization of American States Mechanism for Follow-Up on the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe.

62. UNODC continued to collaborate with entities within and outside the United Nations system. In this respect, UNODC strengthened its cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

63. In the context of strengthening transparency and the use of open data in public procurement, UNODC reinforced its cooperation with the non-profit organization Open Contracting Partnership through a framework agreement that is forthcoming.

64. UNODC also cooperated with and contributed to the work of a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the African Union, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Basel Institute on Governance, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Eastern Partnership, the Economic Community of West African States, the East African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation, the Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption, the Group of Seven, the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, the International Criminal Police Organization, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OECD and its Development Assistance Committee's Anti-Corruption Task Team, the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Supreme Audit Institutions, the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions, the Southern African Development Community, the global wildlife trade specialist TRAFFIC, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Global Compact, United Nations peacekeeping operations and the United Nations resident coordinator system.

B. Technical assistance provided to national authorities to prevent and combat corruption effectively

65. The present report provides an account of the technical assistance delivered from October 2019 to September 2021. Further information on technical assistance provided with respect to chapter II of the Convention is contained in the report of the Secretariat entitled "Status of implementation of Conference resolutions 8/7, 8/8, 8/11, 8/12 and 8/14, on the prevention of corruption" ([CAC/COSP/2021/12](#)).

Assistance provided to identify and address gaps in the implementation of the Convention

Knowledge tools facilitating the delivery of assistance

66. UNODC continued to develop and disseminate guides, handbooks and other tools that address the knowledge needs of anti-corruption practitioners by illustrating approaches, methodologies and good practices related to the implementation of the Convention.

67. In this regard, several tools were published during the reporting period, including:

(a) *Colombo Commentary on the Jakarta Statement on Principles for Anti-Corruption Agencies*;

(b) *State of Integrity: A Guide on Conducting Corruption Risk Assessments in Public Organizations*;

(c) *Reporting Mechanisms in Sport: A Practical Guide for Development and Implementation*;

(d) *The Time is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*;

(e) *Speak Up for Health! Guidelines to Enable Whistle-Blower Protection in the Health-Care Sector*;

(f) *Scaling Back Corruption: A Guide on Addressing Corruption for Wildlife Management Authorities*.⁸

Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and follow-up

68. In accordance with the terms of reference and the guidelines of the Implementation Review Mechanism, UNODC continued to provide training to focal points of the States parties under review and governmental experts of reviewing States in order to familiarize them with the Convention and the methodology of the review process.

69. In response to the restrictions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNODC developed and delivered e-learning and online training programmes on the Implementation Review Mechanism for focal points and governmental experts. More than 200 focal points and governmental experts participated in the online training sessions held in August and September 2021.

70. During the reporting period, UNODC supported numerous countries, including Angola, Belize, Chad, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Jamaica, Libya, Mauritania, Nicaragua, the Niger, Saint Lucia, Turkmenistan and Yemen, in preparing to participate in the Implementation Review Mechanism.

Regional platforms

71. UNODC continued to pursue a regional approach to accelerating the implementation of the Convention. Accordingly, regional platforms were established in Southern Africa (October 2019) and in the Western Balkans (June 2021). Regional platforms had already been established in East Africa, Mexico and South America and South-East Asia.

72. The platforms were created to fast-track the implementation of the Convention by focusing on challenges and technical assistance needs shared by multiple countries in the same region. Although the priorities identified varied for each platform, common priorities were the protection of reporting persons and the establishment of

⁸ Additional publications were developed in the area of corruption prevention. Greater detail is contained in the report of the Secretariat entitled “Status of implementation of Conference resolutions 8/7, 8/8, 8/11, 8/12 and 8/14, on the prevention of corruption” (CAC/COSP/2021/12).

systems of public procurement consistent with article 9 of the Convention, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

73. In Mexico and South America, UNODC also provided support to establish the liability of legal persons for corruption offences and strengthen integrity in the private sector. In Southern Africa, the Office provided assistance to enhance the transparency of beneficial ownership and coordination among national agencies with anti-corruption mandates.

74. In October 2020, UNODC launched a project entitled “COVID-19 anti-corruption response and recovery”. Implemented in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Indonesia, Paraguay, the Philippines, South Africa and Timor-Leste, the project was designed to strengthen transparency in public procurement, protect reporting persons and promote coordination among oversight institutions.

75. UNODC continued to implement the project to accelerate the implementation of the Convention in Africa, which encompasses Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana and Morocco. Under the project, UNODC supported Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia and Ghana in establishing systems to protect reporting persons and assess and mitigate risks of corruption, particularly in the health sector.

76. Consultations were held with States parties and prospective donors for the establishment of a regional platform in West Africa and the Sahel region.

Assistance in strengthening national institutional and policy frameworks and the capacity of national authorities to prevent and combat corruption effectively

Prevention of corruption

77. During the reporting period, UNODC continued to provide technical assistance to requesting States parties on a wide range of issues related to chapter II of the Convention. These included preventive anti-corruption policies and practices, the public sector, codes of conduct for public officials, public procurement and the management of public finances, public reporting, judicial integrity, the private sector and the participation of society.

Technical assistance provided to law enforcement bodies

78. UNODC continued working with States parties to build the capacity of law enforcement bodies to detect and investigate corruption offences.

79. At the global level, UNODC is developing a guide on the investigation and prosecution of corruption and an e-learning module on how to conduct financial investigations. Both tools are expected to be released at the end of 2021.

80. At the regional level, UNODC organized two workshops on the importance of standard operating procedures for financial investigations. Targeted at anti-corruption and investigative officers of the countries of the East African regional platform, the workshops were held in Uganda in November 2019 and online in June 2021. The workshops complemented the support provided to Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania relating to the revision of the standard operating procedures of their anti-corruption bodies. In April 2021, UNODC organized a regional workshop on inter-agency coordination and the establishment of national mechanisms to foster coordination between law enforcement bodies in Southern Africa. In South-East Asia, UNODC delivered a regional workshop on international cooperation in complex, cross-border corruption offences in November 2019 and a webinar on open-source information and innovative investigative techniques in March 2021.

81. As part of efforts to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement authorities to detect and investigate corruption offences, UNODC provided training at the national level to Cambodia, India, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Panama, Senegal, Thailand, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe. UNODC also supported the development of a training manual on the investigation of corruption for the Anti-Corruption Commission of Timor-Leste. In addition, it

facilitated cooperation and the exchange of expertise between the schools of prosecutors of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Panama and worked with the anti-corruption commissions of Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka to create a regional network of anti-corruption and anti-money-laundering investigators.

Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities

82. The Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities was launched in June 2021 at the special session of the General Assembly against corruption. The initiative is aimed at creating a Vienna-based global network, hosted by UNODC, for the purpose of establishing and enhancing direct contact between law enforcement authorities working to combat corruption and to provide technical assistance in the area of international cooperation. This would empower a wider range of countries to engage in informal international cooperation and to complement existing platforms for such cooperation.

Protection of reporting persons

83. At the national level, UNODC provided technical assistance to 18 States parties and delivered workshops to the national authorities of Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mexico, South Africa, South Sudan, Thailand, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Office provided advisory and drafting services on legislation to protect reporting person in Botswana, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire and Lebanon. UNODC organized an online workshop on the protection of reporting persons for the national authorities of Chile, Colombia and Paraguay in July 2021.

84. In September 2020, UNODC engaged with various stakeholders, including the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association, to provide guidance on the development and adoption of the Kenyan whistle-blower protection bill.

85. UNODC also organized workshops at the national and regional levels on reporting mechanisms in sport for more than 40 States parties. Moreover, it provided technical support for the development of reporting channels and systems to protect reporting persons in the health-care sector in Brazil, Kenya and South Africa. In addition, the Office supported the establishment of reporting channels and protective measures in the Kenya Wildlife Service.

Technical assistance provided to national authorities to prevent and combat corruption effectively in emerging areas

COVID-19 and corruption in the health sector

86. Since the beginning of the pandemic, UNODC has worked to ensure that the fight against corruption is seen as an integral component of COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. To that end, it has supported States parties through a series of policy papers, guidance notes and targeted technical assistance.

87. Since April 2020, UNODC has produced a total of six guidance and policy papers related to the prevention of corruption in the context of COVID-19, including corruption related to the allocation and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.⁹ UNODC has also conducted several regional studies on anti-corruption and oversight mechanisms for COVID-19 response packages. The Office led the development of a United Nations-wide policy paper that is expected to be published in October 2021

⁹ “Accountability and the prevention of corruption in the allocation and distribution of emergency economic rescue packages in the context and aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic” (April 2021); “Advisory note: COVID-19 and corruption in the Pacific” (May 2020); “Guidelines on prevention of corruption during the COVID-19 pandemic” (UNODC Country Office in Myanmar, May 2020); “COVID-19 fiscal response and the prevention of corruption” (July 2020); “Preventing corruption in sport and manipulation of competitions” (July 2020) **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**; and “COVID-19 vaccines and corruption risks: preventing corruption in the manufacture, allocation and distribution of vaccines” (December 2020).

and supported a United Nation-wide advocacy brief entitled “Recovering better: sport for development and peace – reopening, recovery and resilience post-COVID-19”.

88. UNODC facilitated meetings of experts to discuss topics related to corruption in the public health-care sector, with a view to developing two publications, entitled *A Prescription for Health: A Guide on how to Assess and Manage Corruption Risks in Public Health System Organizations*; and *Something’s Off: An Introduction to Corruption Risks Related to Food Safety*. Both publications are expected to be launched at the end of 2021. UNODC facilitated a corruption risk assessment in the health sector in Ghana in June and September 2021 and organized and contributed to several events on corruption risks in the deployment of the COVID-19 vaccine and in other aspects of Governments’ responses to the crisis. These included a special event during the special session of the General Assembly against corruption in June 2021, two webinars organized by the Asian Development Bank in August and September 2021 and a webinar organized by European Partners against Corruption and the European contact-point network against corruption in May 2021.

89. At the regional and national levels, UNODC provided support and training to States parties on preventing and countering corruption in Governments’ responses to COVID-19. These included Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, the Philippines, South Africa, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. In South-East Asia, UNODC is developing a study on corruption risks in the health sector in Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

Gender dimensions of corruption

90. In the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session against corruption on 2 June 2021, Member States acknowledged the importance of improving the understanding of the linkages between gender and corruption, including the ways in which corruption can affect women and men differently. Member States also committed to continuing to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

91. During the reporting period, UNODC explored and addressed the gender dimensions of corruption. *The Time is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption* was the first in-depth foray into the subject. UNODC also developed three national-level knowledge products¹⁰ and dedicated a chapter to gender and corruption in sport in its forthcoming *Global Report on Safeguarding Sport from Corruption*. Further, in February 2020, UNODC launched a paper on gender-related issues in the judiciary under the umbrella of the Global Judicial Integrity Network.

92. UNODC incorporated gender and inclusion perspectives into its technical assistance delivery, for instance, by emphasizing the need for gender sensitivity in mechanisms to report corruption offences and protect reporting persons. In February 2020, UNODC took part in the Symposium on Gender Mainstreaming and Women Empowerment to Fight Corruption organized by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Malaysia. In December 2020, UNODC conducted a training session on judicial integrity and gender for the judiciary in Mali and for members of the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime.

93. UNODC engaged with the recently established Women Development Organization, which is affiliated with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and shared its expertise on the role of women in the fight against corruption. In January 2020, the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch of UNODC supported the United Nations Office at Vienna/UNODC Global Programme on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women by contributing to guidance tools and briefs pertaining to gender mainstreaming in anti-corruption programming and delivery.

¹⁰ *Gender and Corruption in Nigeria* (December 2020); “Thematic brief on gender and corruption in Myanmar: initial insights from focus group discussions” (October 2020); and *Anti-Corruption Toolkit for Women-Owned Micro, Small and Medium Businesses in Fiji* (UNODC and UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji, August 2020).

Safeguarding sport from corruption

94. During the reporting period, under its Programme on Safeguarding Sport from Corruption and Crime, UNODC provided support to over 130 States parties, sports organizations and related stakeholders to implement the resolutions adopted by the Conference and the political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session against corruption on 2 June 2021.

95. At the global level, in partnership with the International Olympic Committee, UNODC organized, co-organized or supported multi-stakeholder workshops for law enforcement officials, criminal justice and anti-corruption authorities and sports organizations from over 50 countries. From May 2019 to April 2021, training was also provided to national and regional Olympic committees and sports organizations on reporting mechanisms and detecting corruption in sport.

96. In September 2019, UNODC signed a memorandum of understanding with the Fédération Internationale de Football Association to support the implementation of its Global Integrity Programme. Within that framework, UNODC has supported the delivery of 15 workshops for selected Governments and football associations affiliated with the Fédération Internationale de Football Association since March 2021.

97. At the national level, workshops on tackling corruption and crime in sport were organized in Egypt in December 2020 and in Mexico in February 2021. Technical assistance was also provided to Greece for the development of three specific training modules for athletes, referees and coaches.¹¹

Corruption as it relates to crimes that have an impact on the environment

98. At its eighth session, the Conference adopted resolution 8/12, entitled “Preventing and combating corruption as it relates to crimes that have an impact on the environment”.

99. During the reporting period, UNODC facilitated the assessment of corruption risks and the adoption of measures to mitigate such risks by various authorities responsible for wildlife, fishery and forest management and other organizations with environment-related mandates. Activities were carried out in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Ghana, Greece, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. UNODC also supported States parties to undertake financial investigations and prosecute corruption related to crimes in the wildlife, fishery and forest sectors in Colombia, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Peru and Uganda. It provided training on financial investigation techniques to approximately 800 public officials from Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines and Thailand. In addition, it supported the establishment of inter-agency cooperation arrangements in Kenya and Uganda to foster coordination when addressing wildlife and forest crimes. UNODC also facilitated international cooperation and mutual legal assistance between source and destination countries of illegal wildlife or wildlife products.

100. UNODC developed several knowledge products on corruption linked to wildlife and forest crime. It facilitated meetings of experts to advance the global discussion on corruption as a contributor to forest loss. The publication *Rooting out Corruption: An Introduction to Corruption that Fuels Forest Loss* is expected to be launched at the end of 2021.

¹¹ Additional publications were developed in the area of corruption prevention. Greater detail is contained in the report of the Secretariat entitled “Status of implementation of Conference resolutions 8/7, 8/8, 8/11, 8/12 and 8/14, on the prevention of corruption” (CAC/COSP/2021/12).

V. Technical assistance: issues for further consideration

101. Since the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, in December 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the daily work of Governments and at times also halted the delivery of technical assistance. Like most other technical assistance providers, UNODC has sought to adapt its technical assistance delivery to respond to new areas of risk by, for example, integrating anti-corruption measures into recovery efforts, most notably in the health sector. Simultaneously, the Office has also sought new ways of continuing to deliver ongoing programmes.

102. The COVID-19 pandemic also brought to the fore and deepened weaknesses in institutional and legal frameworks. Together with the new challenges arising from the emergency measures implemented in response to the pandemic, the need to mainstream integrity and corruption-prevention measures has been further underscored. The Conference may wish to urge States parties to ensure that their technical assistance delivery remains a priority throughout the period of crisis recovery, during which corruption-prevention measures go hand in hand with a stronger and more inclusive recovery.

103. During the resumed eleventh session of the Implementation Review Group, it was noted that the more reviews were finalized, the more recommendations and technical assistance needs indicated that States faced similar challenges in implementing the Convention. There was, therefore, a need to identify new solutions. One such area where States parties across regional groups had identified and sought assistance related to the use of technological solutions as a means of preventing opportunities for corruption while enhancing accountability. Such solutions in relation to asset declaration and verification systems, public procurement and other e-government systems should be harnessed by all States.

104. Furthermore, research and the delivery of technical assistance to prevent and combat corruption in emerging areas, such as increased understanding of the gender dimensions of corruption, how to safeguard sports from corruption, and ways of combating corruption related to wildlife and environmental crime, can have an important impact on addressing corruption in areas where it has previously been able to continue relatively unchecked. The Conference may wish to consider calling upon States parties to acknowledge the importance of further research and technical assistance in preventing and combating corruption in these emerging areas and to allocate funding to continue identifying innovative solutions.

105. The political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its special session against corruption reiterates the concept of the “widest measure” of cooperation found in the Convention. The idea that the scourge of corruption can be addressed only if States make joint efforts also echoes the fact that the Convention is now nearing universal adherence. Be it in relation to the provision of technical assistance, the sharing of good practices, the facilitation of international cooperation or the successful return of proceeds of corruption, the political declaration has further elevated the global commitment to adhere to the standards of the Convention beyond its current 188 parties. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be enhanced by translating this renewed commitment into action. The Conference may wish to call upon all States parties to the Convention to seek new and innovative avenues of cooperation, knowledge and information-sharing and integrate these when designing follow-up process for implementing the political declaration.