

UN 'Tech Bank' opens in Turkey, to help poor nations 'leapfrog development challenges'

The United Nations on Monday welcomed a new member of the family, which will help address the development challenges of the world's poorest countries through science, technology and innovation, while also marking a significant milestone for the whole 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

"Technology has to diffuse to all communities to enable them to [leapfrog](#) traditional development challenges," said UN [Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed](#) at the launch of the new UN Technology Bank in the Turkish city of Gebze; about 30 miles southeast of Istanbul, the country's commercial hub.

The idea of establishing a capacity-building institution dedicated to the least developed countries (LDCs) came out of the LDC Istanbul Conference in 2011 and was included in the world's action plan to eliminate poverty when the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) was adopted by UN Member States in 2015.

The following year, the UN General Assembly approved the creation of the Technology Bank, which is listed among targets under Sustainable Development Goal 17 on partnership.

Monday's launch of the Technology Bank marks the first SDG target to have been officially reached, among the 169 targets that have been set as part of the 2030 Agenda.

"The creation of the Technology Bank responds to the proposition that science, technology and innovation are essential elements to transform the economies of the LDCs, promote economic growth and enable countries to address their technology gaps and support their economic diversification and productive capacity building strategies," said [Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu](#), Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

According to Acting Managing Director, Heidi Schroderus-Fox, the Bank is already starting its work in 16 LDCs, with STI reviews and technology needs assessments under way in Guinea, Haiti, Sudan, Timor Leste and Uganda.

Projects aimed at improving digital access to research are also underway in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, and Tanzania, she said.