

Purpose: Develop a technology-gap analysis for Afghanistan as a part of 7 SPECA countries project to inform the first Action Plan for the SPECA Innovation Strategy.

United Nations ESCAP seeks to promote innovation policies that support inclusive growth and development among its member States. To realize this objective, ESCAP in partnership with UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) will be conducting the **Strengthening innovation policies for SPECA countries in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (SPECA participating countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). The following activities are planned for 2020-2023:

OP1.1: Develop a sub-regional gap analysis covering the 7 SPECA countries to inform the first Action Plan for the SPECA Innovation Strategy.

OP1.2: Organize a sub-regional workshop to present and validate the gap analysis.

OP1.3: Organize a sub-regional workshop to develop an Action Plan and its performance indicators and develop joint activities between countries on innovation for sustainable development.

OP1.4: Produce a final draft of the SPECA Innovation Strategy Action Plan and secure its formal approval by the SPECA Governing Council, with attendance of the national focal points and experts (a session within the framework of the SPECA Economic Forum and the SPECA Governing Council).

OP1.5: Organize a sub-regional workshop to measure the implementation progress of the Action Plan based on its key performance indicators.

The main purpose of this consultancy is to develop a country-level technology-gap analysis for Afghanistan to inform the first Action Plan for the SPECA Innovation Strategy. Under the guidance of a lead-regional-consultant for all 7 SPECA countries, the country-level consultant will be involved in the following activities:

1. Research and analysis of the current state of technology advancement in particular sectors of the economy. The research and data may be collected through interviews, official government data analysis, publicly available literature, research papers, etc.
2. Analysis of the current legislative and institutional environment enabling technological progress and innovation among SMEs, technology-oriented investment (both national and FDI), and STEM education.
3. Describe short- and long-term action plan for closing of the technology-gap:
 - a. **Short-term view:** Identify most promising areas where technology advancement can be achieved at low cost with high impact on socio-economic development;
 - b. **Long-term view:** with respect to economic profile of the country and most promising growth sectors, provide long-term proposals for technology-gap closing.
4. Presentation of the findings at a regional workshop organised in one of the SPECA countries (end of 2019).