

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACTIVITIES

In 2019, the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (the Facility, or TFAF) organized or participated in **27 demand driven activities** contributing to the full implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (the Agreement, or TFA) in WTO Members. Training and presentations by WTO officials were delivered to **just under 2000 participants**.

OUTCOMES

Participant satisfaction at all events was high, with **90% of participants reporting that their learning expectations had been either met or exceeded**. TFAF activities assisted WTO developing and Least Developed Country (LDC) Members to submit a total of **96 notifications to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee within 12 weeks** of the activity itself. **Three WTO Members presented their instrument of acceptance, ratifying the TFA within 12 weeks** of attending a TFAF funded activity on the ratification process, or following a direct request to TFAF for guidance.

GRANT PROGRAM

In 2019, with support from the WTO Secretariat, **15 Members, including four LDCs, submitted an expression of interest** the first stage in a TFAF grant application. These expressions of interest were shared with donor representatives to identify any risk of duplication. By end 2019, nine Members were at the stage of completing applications for a project preparation grant.

BUDGET

In 2019, the TFAF spent **a total of 1,210,515.23 Swiss Francs (CHF)** from an opening balance of CHF 6,227,609.13. The closing balance on 31 December 2019 was therefore **CHF 5,112,415.96***

WEBSITE

The TFAF website had a total of **74,112 users** in 2019, generating 151,799 unique page views. Visitor numbers peaked in October, indicating a link to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee meeting held that month.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Activities are monitored in terms of gender balance (measured by women's participation in events) and support provided to LDCs. Where we have been able to track attendance, **women made up 44% of participants in TFAF activities in 2019¹. 17% of the notifications supported by TFAF in 2019 were submitted by LDC Members of the WTO²**. Where WTO officials were invited to speak at events organized by others, this level of monitoring was not always possible. Whenever activities were open to all WTO developing Members, LDCs were given first preference to participate.

PROGRESS

To further demonstrate the outcomes of its activities, the TFAF 2019 Workplan had prioritized the strengthening of project management tools.³ Throughout the course of the year, revisions and updates were made to documents and processes to integrate the lessons learned during the first years of the Facility's operations. These adaptations have strengthened the team's ability to plan, deliver, monitor, and evaluate activities and to report their contribution to the log frame⁴. These updates have been timely and have assisted us to track the significant increase in notifications from Members that received TFAF assistance. To support the Trade Facilitation Committee (TF Committee) and being mindful of the two notification deadlines that fell in 2019, the TFAF significantly increased the number of its activities in support of Members preparing their notifications. These efforts resulted in **a more than 450% increase in notifications** submitted with input from the TFAF on the 2018 figures.⁵ TFAF guidance on completion of the instrument of acceptance contributed to an **increase in ratifications of the TFA from 2 to 3** on 2018 figures.⁶

• France made a contribution of CHF108,500.00 in 2019

¹ 305 women, 384 men

² 17 notifications from a total of 96

³ <https://www.tfafacility.org/workplan-2019>

⁴ The TFAF uses a logical framework approach as a major element of its project management: https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/Toolkit-files/08-58296_tool_10-3.pdf

⁵ 95 notifications in 2019, compared to 17 in 2018, all submitted by a WTO Member within 12 weeks of receiving TFAF support.

⁶ Three notifications in 2019, compared to two in 2018.



INTRODUCTION

2019 was the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement's second full year of implementation. Two of the Agreement's deadlines by which Members had to submit their notifications to the WTO TF Committee fell due in 2019: 22 February 2019 was the date by which LDC Members were required to notify their technical assistance and capacity building needs to implement their category C designations; and 22 August was the date by which developing country WTO Members were required to provide their definitive implementation dates for category C designations, this being also the last in the series of notifications for developing countries to take advantage of the Agreement's implementation flexibilities.

In addition, during its meetings in 2019, the Committee strongly encouraged Members to submit their transparency notifications, in particular when the associated provisions had been designated category A, indicating immediate implementation. In light of this timeline, in 2019 the TFAF, concentrated on assisting WTO developing and LDC Members with the following goals:

- (1) To submit their required notifications to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee in a timely fashion; and
- (2) to establish and reinforce their National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs);
- (3) to ratify the Agreement, in the case of those Members still needing to do so; and
- (4) to seek technical assistance and capacity building.

These four goals were established in the TFAF Operational Guidelines that had been issued on 25 June 2015.⁷ To realize these goals, in 2019 the TFAF delivered coordinated activities under the following four workstreams.

WORKSTREAMS:

- A. Matchmaking and funding;**
- B. ratification and notifications;**
- C. implementation support and capacity-building; and**
- D. participation in external events.**

For the purposes of tracking progress, these workstreams are identical to those used in the annual work plans of the Facility and in the overall TFAF log frame. Stakeholders can therefore follow the logic of activities as they are outlined in the work plan, described in detail in the annual report, and track their contribution to the overall goals of the Facility with reference to the Facility log frame.⁸

While some activities cut across workstreams and contribute to multiple goals, individual sessions, such as a specific presentation or training session given at a larger event, are detailed below under the most appropriate workstream.

At the beginning of the year, 140 of the WTO's 164 Members, or just over 85% of the Membership, had successfully ratified the Agreement. Eight additional ratifications were received in 2019, bringing the total to 148. Over the course of the year, developing and LDC Members had submitted 169 notifications relating to TFA provisions on transparency, implementation, and donors. It is difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between the technical assistance activities organized by the TFAF and an action such as submitting a notification to a WTO committee, which requires input from more than one government department. At the same time, it is important to recognize the invaluable complementary work carried out by donor partners and organizations during this review period. Nevertheless, there was surely a significant causal link between the three ratifications (25% of the total received in 2019) and 96 notifications (57% of the total received in 2019) that WTO Members had made within a short timescale following their participation in a TFAF-funded activity. Details may be found below. Based on these results, the TFAF therefore made a tangible, positive response to calls made in the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee in 2019.

⁷ <http://www.tfafacility.org/operational-guidelines>

⁸ Annex 1



TFAF ACTIVITIES IN 2019

In 2019, TFAF priorities were driven by the needs of developing and LDC Members. Highest priority was given to assisting these Members to meet their commitments on notifications, in particular in relation to the two notification deadlines of the Agreement that fell in February and August of 2019. Accordingly, activities organized under workstream B (ratification and notifications) were the most numerous in 2019.

MATCHMAKING AND FUNDING

Matchmaking and funding are integrated in the TFAF's daily work

WTO developing and LDC Members regularly visit and communicate with WTO officials to pose informal questions and give updates on their TFA implementation needs. Ongoing communication and coordination with development partners, including international and regional organizations, and information received from donor responses to TFAF grant expression of interest requests, keeps WTO officials well informed on both the supply and demand of TFA implementation support. This coordination function is an important part of the TFAF's work under goal (4), namely to provide advice to Members seeking technical assistance and capacity building relating to TFA implementation.

Matchmaking support often takes the form of informal advice on which development partners and programs are active in specific regions or on specific topics. The Facility connects Members directly with partners that can provide them with the necessary implementation assistance and support.

At all TFAF events, information on the implementation support available is provided by development partners and TFAF.

The TFAF website provides individual pages for development partners with information on their activities and contacts. The website's CONTACT POINTS AND PROFILES pages provide information for each recipient country on implementation support received and contacts. This country-specific information is continuously expanding thanks to the regular provision of information from partner organizations.

In addition to this ongoing informal activity, dedicated, specific activities and sessions were organized on matchmaking and funding; descriptions follow.



Any WTO developing or LDC Member that is unable to find the assistance it needs to implement a provision of the Agreement designated under category C can, through an expression of interest, request that the Facility assist in identifying donor partners on its behalf. The expression of interest, which provides information on the Member's specific needs, is circulated to all development partners operating in the relevant geographical area with the expertise to meet the assistance need in question.

If the circulation of the expression of interest does not identify a suitable partner, applicants are then eligible to apply for the support available under the TFAF grant program, which includes the following:

- Project preparation grants, up to a maximum value of USD 30,000;
- Project implementation grants, up to a maximum value of USD 200,000.

WTO Observers may submit an expression of interest, which is then circulated to development partners to identify possible support; while they are ineligible to apply for a TFAF Grant, the expression of interest serves as a means to inform all development partners of their needs.

In October 2018, the TFAF Grant Programme was launched at the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee. However, the first half of 2019 saw only a few initial applications; this demonstrated that the Facility needed to support Members to engage with the program. One to one sessions to assist WTO developing and LDC Members to complete the expression of interest were integrated into the programme of activities for the TF Week⁹ that took place in October 2019, and this approach has been repeated at all other subsequent activities. At these sessions Members received individual attention from an official of the WTO Secretariat to better understand the grant program's rules and to complete an expression of interest request.

Outcome: 15 TFAF Grant Applications Received in 2019

In 2019, the TFAF supported 15 Members, including seven LDCs, to submit an expression of interest – the first stage of a TFAF grant application. At the end of the year, three of those expressions of interest were still being considered by donor representatives to determine if the requests could be fulfilled by ongoing or planned projects. Nine expressions of interest had been identified as having no risk of duplication with partners' projects; these were therefore applicable to move to the next stage and to complete an application for a project preparation grant. The remaining three expressions of interest were halted at the request of donors who required more time to consider if they could provide the assistance requested through their ongoing or planned assistance projects.

⁹ [HTTPS://WWW.TFAFACILITY.ORG/GRANT-PROGRAM](https://www.tfafacility.org/grant-program)

¹⁰ FOR A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE TF WEEK, PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 32

**TFAF ORGANIZED THREE
MATCHMAKING AND FUNDING-
SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES IN 2019,
REACHING OVER 150
PARTICIPANTS**

Main outcome: Members, including 29 LDCs, were given tailored information to help them to increase their understanding of the application processes and the programming for technical assistance. These activities directly contributed to two notifications to the WTO TF Committee being received from Members that had participated in these activities.



TFA Needs Assessment/Notification Workshop, 25-29 March, Nouakchott, Mauritania

At the request of Mauritania, TFAF organized a needs assessment to identify capacity constraints and the assistance required to implement the Agreement. WTO Secretariat staff and two regional World Customs Organization (WCO) accredited customs experts worked together with 45 government officials to review the articles of the TFA in the Mauritanian context and to identify where and what external support would be required to implement the Agreement.

Outcome: On 26 April 2019, Mauritania, an LDC, submitted its implementation notification to the WTO TF Committee, designating its commitments under categories B and C, as well as its technical assistance and support for capacity building needs. This was a necessary step to unlocking the assistance on TFA implementation available to Mauritania.

Donor support sessions, TF Week, 14-18 October, Geneva, Switzerland¹¹

In order to enhance the capacity of members of the NTFC, to strengthen cooperation between the NTFCs and Geneva delegates, and to strengthen experience sharing in TF Committee meetings, the TFAF supported 53 Members and five representatives of regional organizations to participate in the WTO TF Committee meeting and dedicated session on assistance and support for capacity building that took place in October 2019. Priority was given to LDC Members and to developing Members that had notified their category C provisions. To benefit from their expertise and to ensure value for money with regard to travel and accommodation costs, a programme of workshops was organized, with TFAF donors and partners given an opportunity to propose topics to be covered. Among other sessions, the TFAF organized structured discussions with donors and development partners on implementation support, with participants using a workbook prepared by TFAF that provided the current implementation situation for each participating Member (based on their notifications) to facilitate their conversations. In these working groups, participants discussed their experiences, challenges, concerns, and successes with technical assistance and support for capacity building (TACB) for TFA implementation.

These discussions prepared those Members that had specific issues to participate most effectively in the dedicated session held immediately following the TF Committee meeting of 16 October 2019. Representatives from Australia, the EU, the UK, the US, and the World Bank Group responded to the issues raised in the working group discussion session and described their relevant assistance programs. Representatives of the regional organizations, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the South African Development Community (SADC), and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), also made interventions on their experiences in seeking assistance at regional level and supporting their members nationally. This working group session was immediately followed by a reception that provided an opportunity for one on one discussions with donors.

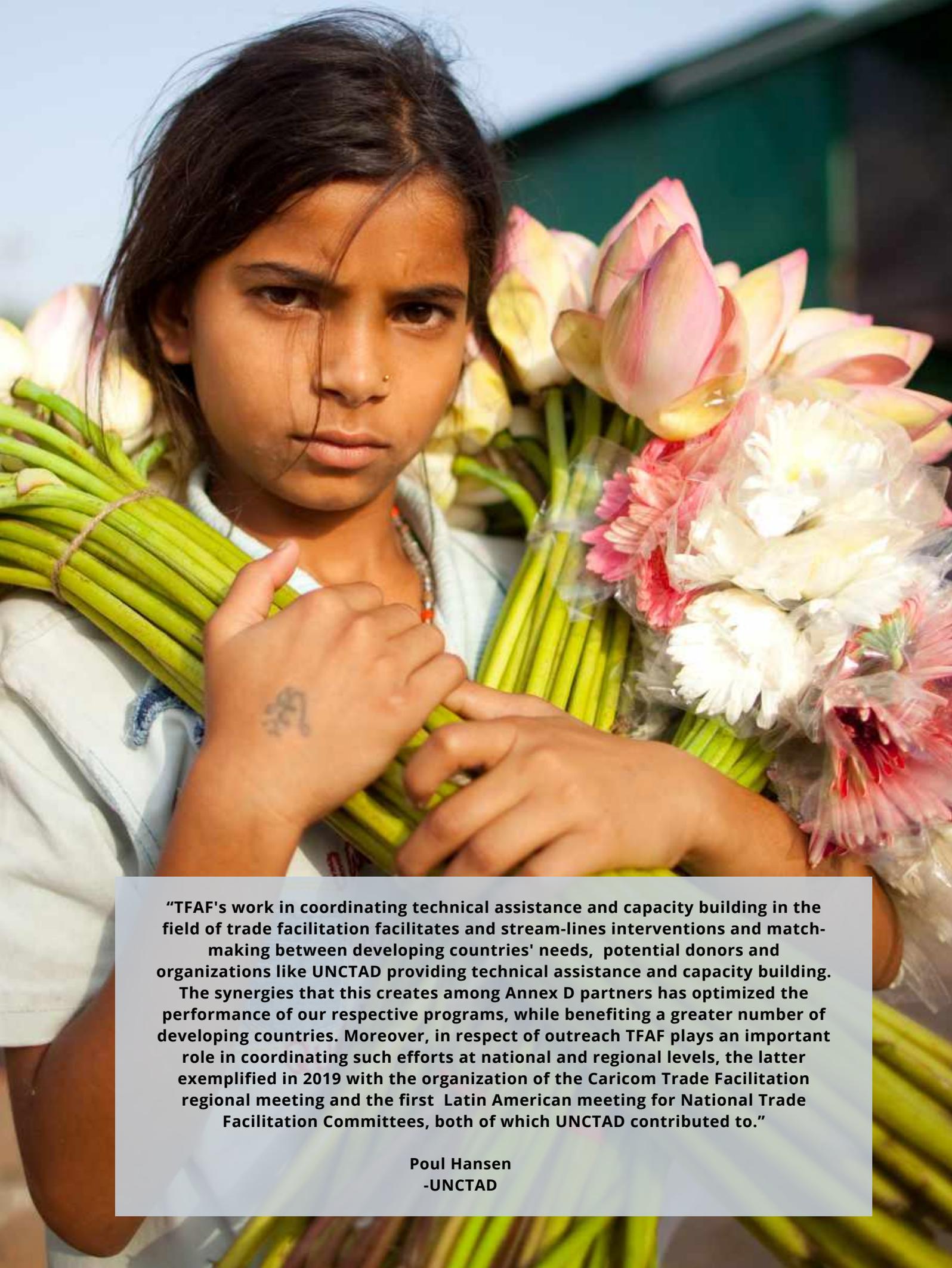
Outcome: 100% of those participants that gave feedback said that these sessions had met or exceeded their expectations with regard to learning outcomes, and 100% of these participants indicated that they would recommend such sessions to colleagues. Although time lags were inevitable, and cause and effect could be difficult to identify, TFAF maintained contact with participants and continues its attempts to identify any TFA implementation projects to emerge from these sessions.

TFA Needs Assessment/Notification Workshop, 6-9 December, Bangui, Central African Republic

At the request of the Central African Republic, WTO Secretariat staff and two regional WCO accredited customs experts worked together with government officials to review the articles of the TFA with a view to assisting the Central African Republic to complete its ABC notifications, including identifying where external support was most needed, and of what type.

Outcome: The Central African Republic, an LDC, submitted its implementation notification to the WTO Trade Facilitation (TF) Committee, designating its commitments under categories B and C, including its TACB needs and definitive dates for implementation of category B, within one week of this activity. This was a necessary step to unlock the assistance available on TFA implementation. During the workshop, with support from a WTO official, the Central African Republic also submitted an expression of interest as a first step towards making its application for a TFAF grant.

¹¹ IBID



“TFAF's work in coordinating technical assistance and capacity building in the field of trade facilitation facilitates and stream-lines interventions and match-making between developing countries' needs, potential donors and organizations like UNCTAD providing technical assistance and capacity building. The synergies that this creates among Annex D partners has optimized the performance of our respective programs, while benefiting a greater number of developing countries. Moreover, in respect of outreach TFAF plays an important role in coordinating such efforts at national and regional levels, the latter exemplified in 2019 with the organization of the Caricom Trade Facilitation regional meeting and the first Latin American meeting for National Trade Facilitation Committees, both of which UNCTAD contributed to.”

**Poul Hansen
-UNCTAD**



RATIFICATION & NOTIFICATIONS

This workstream comprises national and regional activities that support Members' ratification and completion of their instruments of acceptance, and to meet deadlines for submitting notifications to the WTO TF Committee. As 2019 marked the second full year of implementation of the TFA, with two associated notification deadlines, this workstream saw the bulk of activities organized by the TFAF in 2019. TFAF organized nine activities in this workstream in 2019, reaching over 350 participants.

Main outcome: Directly contributed to 59 notifications to the WTO TF Committee from Members participating in these activities.





National Workshop on TFA Implementation, 24-25 January, Saint Kitts and Nevis

At the request of Saint Kitts and Nevis, a WTO official conducted a workshop in cooperation with a regional representative of a large private sector organization on the TFA, issues and benefits of implementation, and notification requirements. Participants included 24 government officials and representatives of the private sector, most of whom were members of their NTFC.

Outcome: Within eight weeks, Saint Kitts and Nevis had submitted transparency and donor contact point notifications to the WTO TF Committee.

Notification Sessions at a CARICOM Regional Workshop, 28 January-1 February, Saint Lucia ¹²

At the request of Members, and coordinated by the CARICOM Secretariat and Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), WTO officials, in cooperation with representatives of international and regional partner organizations, conducted a one week workshop, for approximately 100 government officials and representatives of the private sector, on the National Trade Facilitation Committees of 14 states, including one LDC. The workshop included specific sessions on the state of play of TFA implementation regionally and on the notification process more generally.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, six of the WTO Members that had participated in the workshop had submitted a total of nine notifications to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee, as they had all committed to do in their feedback given in the workshop's concluding evaluation session.

National Workshop on TFA Implementation, 27-29 March, Kathmandu, Nepal

At the request of Nepal, WTO and World Bank Group officials developed and delivered a workshop on the TFA to 38 government officials, which included a detailed look at the Agreements' impact and benefits, its provisions, and the implementation status of the TFA, with a particular focus on notifications under Section II of the TFA for LDC WTO Members, and the role and functioning of NTFCs.

Outcome: As a result of the World Bank Group's follow up, Nepal submitted its implementation notification in mid October 2019, six months after the activity; for this reason, it is not included in the overall total.

LDC Retreat on TFA Notifications, 14-15 June, Lausanne, Switzerland ¹³

At the request of the WTO LDC Group, the WTO organized a retreat for the Group on the TFA, with a focus on notification requirements. It was carried out with the cooperation of several Annex D partners. To enhance the workshop, the WTO Secretariat prepared workbooks providing the current notification status of each participating Member.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, three participating Members had between them submitted a total of seven notifications to the WTO TF Committee.

¹² FOR A DETAILED SUMMARY OF THIS WORKSHOP, PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 30

¹³ FOR A DETAILED SUMMARY OF THE RETREAT, PLEASE REFER TO PAGE 31

**81 IMPLEMENTATION NOTIFICATIONS
RECEIVED IN 2019**





Identification of Category C Assistance Needs and NTFC Support Workshop, 17-21 June, Barbados

At the request of the National Trade Facilitation Committee of Barbados, the TFAF engaged a consultant¹⁴ to assist the 37 government officials and representatives of the private sector to prepare their notifications under Section II of the TFA for developing WTO Members, with a particular focus on the identification of the type of TACB needed for the implementation of the category C provisions.

Outcome: After eight weeks, Barbados had submitted its full implementation notification to the WTO TF Committee.

African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group Workshop on Notifications, 22 July, Geneva, Switzerland

Responding to Members' statements in the TF Committee emphasizing the importance of the 22 August deadline for notification of category C definitive dates, and at the request of the WTO ACP Group, TFAF organized a workshop on these notification requirements and prepared individual workbooks that detailed the current status of each ACP Member. 17 participants represented 13 Members and two groups (ACP and OECS) attended the Workshop. Detailed advice was given on the upcoming deadline and the process of notification, and detailed responses were also provided to questions from Members. The session was livestreamed and recorded so that Members could share it with their NTFCs in Capitals and so that it would remain accessible to those in different time zones. At the same time, access was limited to ACP Members only in order to encourage frank and open discussion.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, nine participating Members had submitted notifications to the WTO TF Committee. A further 30 notifications were subsequently submitted by ACP Group Members that had not attended, and these notifications are therefore not included in the overall tally. Nevertheless, these Members had clearly benefitted from the guidance shared with the ACP Secretariat in the context of the workshop, as well as the subsequent availability of the session online.

National Workshop on TFA Implementation, 17 July, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

At the request of the Dominican Republic's National Trade Facilitation Committee, hosted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) a WTO official participated in this workshop, delivering a presentation to 75 government officials and private sector representatives on the status of TFA implementation, and providing guidance on the notification process.

Outcome: Within six weeks, the Dominican Republic had submitted three notifications on definitive dates for implementation of its provisions designated under categories B and C, as well as a donor contact point and transparency notifications on four provisions. These notifications marked the fulfilment of the Dominican Republic's notification obligations under the TFA.

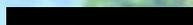
Drop In Sessions on TFA Notifications, 30 July, and 6 and 13 August, Geneva, Switzerland

Based on the timelines set out in the TFA, and responding to Members' statements in the TF Committee emphasizing the importance of the 22 August deadline for the notification of category C definitive dates, the TFAF scheduled one to one sessions for Members with questions relating to their TFA implementation status and the notification process. Tailored workbooks were prepared for each Member registering to attend and WTO officials met with a total of 16 Members over the course of the three days, providing specific guidance in response to the questions addressed to them.

Outcome: Of the 16 Members that had participated in these sessions, 15 subsequently submitted their definitive dates for provisions designated under Category C within the deadline; one Member had already done so.

¹⁴ Following consultation, TFAF was unable to identify a partner to provide this assistance and therefore hired a consultant to deliver it instead. The TFAF does not advise Members on how to implement individual provisions of the TFA

**49 TRANSPARENCY NOTIFICATIONS
RECEIVED IN 2019**





Notification Support during TF Week, Capital Based Officials, 14-18 October, Geneva, Switzerland

Please refer to the description of the overall event under Workstream A on page 32. Workshop sessions and bilateral guidance were also provided to Members on the status of TFA implementation and on the notification process.

Outcome: Within eight weeks, 12 Members that had participated in the workshops had submitted 13 notifications to the WTO TF Committee.





IN 2019:
8 RATIFICATIONS SUBMITTED





IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

This workstream comprises thematic activities organized on specific TFA implementation issues; it also gives details of the support provided on the establishment and development of NTFCs; and it covers the updating and maintenance of the TFAF website.

In 2019, TFAF organized seven activities in this workstream, reaching around 400 participants.

Main outcome: Activities in this workstream contributed to 14 notifications submitted to the WTO TF Committee from Members participating in these activities



National Trade Facilitation Committee sessions at a CARICOM Regional Workshop, 28 January 1 February, Saint Lucia

Please refer to the description under Workstream B on page 30. The majority of the programme focused on sessions designed to support border agency cooperation and the functioning of national and regional Trade Facilitation Committees.

Outcome: CARICOM held its first regional Trade Facilitation Committee meeting immediately following this workshop; it was attended by WTO officials and experts who provided further support and guidance on its development. 96% of participants considered that the workshop had exceeded (62%), or far exceeded (37%), their learning expectation

Experience sharing workshop on the implementation of TFA provisions to support the implementation of the Customs Valuation Agreement, 11-15 February, Geneva, Switzerland

At the request of Members of both Committees, a workshop was organised that allowed customs experts to give presentations at a workshop to discuss and explore synergies in the implementation of both Agreements and to support the submission of notifications to both committees¹⁵ as well as to attend the WTO TF Committee and Customs Valuation Committee. Priority for TFAF assistance to attend was given to LDC Members who represented four of the nine expert speakers supported to attend. Two regional organizations were supported to attend given their capacity to share best practices from and with their member states and to multiply the positive outcomes.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, two Members that had participated in the workshop had submitted three notifications to the TF Committee.

Peer to Peer Event at the WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade, 2 July, Geneva, Switzerland

At the request of partners in the World Bank Group Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP), the TFAF hosted this session as part of the biennial Global Review of Aid for Trade week (A4T). The TFSP sponsored the attendance of 50 participants from 16 Members, of which nine LDCs for this event and for the duration of the Aid-for-Trade (A4T) week.

Presentations by the World Bank Group and WTO officials focused on understanding legislative requirements, monitoring and evaluation of TFA related reforms, and the notification requirements and process.

Outcome: Within eight weeks, four Members that had participated in the workshop had submitted five notifications to the TF Committee.

Facilitation Feud at WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade, 4 July, Geneva, Switzerland

Following the success of a TF competition that was conducted by the WTO and the World Bank Group (WBG) at the 2017 A4T event, the TFAF was requested to organize a similar event in 2019. Trade facilitation is a significant element overall in Aid for Trade and this presented a good opportunity to take advantage of the large attendance at this event. An overview of the WTO TFA, including information on the benefits of its implementation, was presented to an audience with varying levels of existing knowledge through a competition between two teams that was based on the format of the popular television game show, "Family Feud".

Moreover, it was an important opportunity to demonstrate the strong connections necessary between international organizations, development partners, WTO developing Members, and the private sector, all of whom are essential to the implementation of the Agreement. All of these different stakeholder groups were represented in the two teams of five participants that competed to guess the correct answers to a TF survey that had been conducted in advance. The WTO and the WBG hosted this event, and participants were drawn from the OECS, UNCTAD, the Government of Montenegro, the UK Department for International Development, USAID, DHL, the Global Express Association, the International Standards Organization, the WCO, the World Economic Forum, and the Government of Zambia.

Outcome: The event took place in the WTO's atrium, with an audience part of approximately 100. Feedback from all participants was universally positive, with increased understanding of the Agreement and stronger links to key collaborators identified as specific outcomes.

¹⁵ A detailed programme for the workshop can be found here: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/cusval_e/workshop_programme_14022019_e.pdf

14 SUBMITTED NOTIFICATIONS DIRECTLY LINKED TO MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN TFAF-LED ACTIVITIES





Support to NTFCs during TF Week, Capital Based Officials, 14-18 October, Geneva, Switzerland

Please refer to the description of the overall event under Workstream A on page 32. Sessions and guidance were also provided to Members on the establishment and development of NTFCs.

Outcome: Formal and informal feedback on this activity was unanimously positive. Participants and committee delegates found that the inclusion of TF experts greatly added value to the technical discussions that took place in the Committee. 100% of participants indicated that the sessions met or exceeded their expectations of learning outcomes; 100% would recommend future iterations to a colleague.

National Workshop on TFA Implementation, 21-22 November, San Salvador, El Salvador

At the request of the government of El Salvador, a WTO official attended this workshop, hosted by USAID, and delivered a presentation to 66 government officials and private sector representatives on the establishment and reinforcement of El Salvador's NTFC.

Outcome: All participants indicated that the workshop had strengthened their understanding of the TFA and its implementation (40% agreed, 60% strongly agreed).

Regional Border Agency Cooperation Workshop with Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI), 25-29 November, Montevideo, Uruguay ¹⁶

At the request of Members and funded by TFAF in coordination with the ALADI Secretariat, WTO officials and representatives of international and regional partner organizations presented a one week workshop to 85 government officials and representatives of the private sector on the NTFCs of 18 Members. At the request of the Members, the programme for this activity was focused primarily on providing support to the further development of NTFCs. Guidance was also provided on the general state of play, the requirements and process for submitting notifications, and the provisions most notified in the region under Category C. The availability of donor support was also featured, including South South assistance.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, five Members that had participated in the workshop had submitted a combined total of six transparency notifications to the WTO TF Committee. 93% of participants had indicated that the sessions had met (63%) or had exceeded (30%) their learning expectations, and 97% would recommend a similar workshop to colleagues. In feedback provided at the WTO TF Committee meeting of February 2020, ALADI Members had highlighted the positive impact of the workshop and had expressed their interest in a further collaboration with the TFAF to establish a platform for communication and exchange of best practices among NTFCs in the region.

¹⁶ For a detailed summary of this workshop, please see page 34



THE TFAF WEBSITE

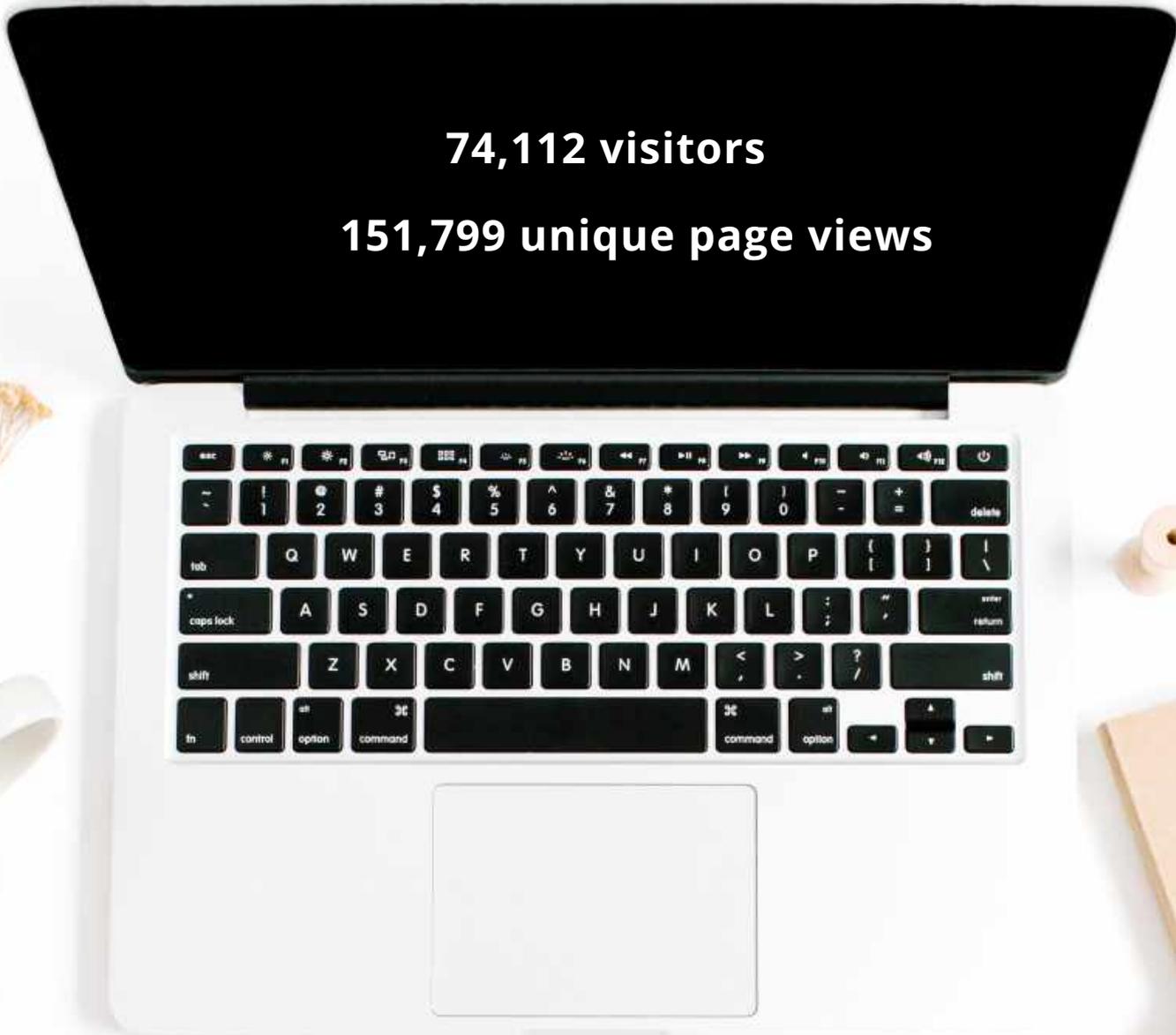
continued to remain the primary source of information about the Agreement as well as for news and resources relating to the Agreement.

Main outcome: In 2019, the website received 74,112 visitors, generating a total of 151,799 unique page views. This represented a 69% increase in visitors since 2018. A communication strategy was set in place with plans to further expand and improve upon the site.

In comparison to 2018's statistics, user numbers were significantly up, with an increase in numbers of 69%. Page views were also up, with an increase of 28% on 2018.

A Communication Strategy was initiated in 2019 with elements that will begin to be implemented in 2020 to make the website more accessible and useful to its visitors.

The main functions of the TFAF website continued to be to support the achievement of the four TFAF goals, primarily through the distribution of information and resources on the Agreement and support for implementation through information sharing and the coordination of technical assistance efforts.



74,112 visitors
151,799 unique page views

Top 10 most visited pages in 2019:

1. Spanish version of the International Airport Transport Association (IATA) page
2. The homepage
3. The TFA Agreement page
4. The notifications page
5. Spanish version of the Agreement page
6. The ratifications page
7. The article resources page
8. The Spanish version of the WCO page
9. The Spanish homepage
10. The English version of the IATA page

Top 10 visiting countries in 2019:

1. Mexico
2. United States
3. Colombia
4. Peru
5. Switzerland
6. India
7. Ecuador
8. Indonesia
9. France
10. Spain

PARTICIPATION IN EXTERNAL EVENTS

WTO officials are often invited to speak at events organized by other TF stakeholders, including national and regional events, thematic events, and events hosted by international organizations on the implementation of the TFA. Such events, grouped under Workstream D, can provide a cost effective way for the TFAF to deliver its message to large numbers of participants, without the larger impact on resources that would be necessary to organize and fund a full workshop or seminar. Many more requests and invitations to speak are received throughout the year than there are WTO officials to attend them. When more relevant to the mandate or functions of other organizations, or the WTO Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation, for example, then such requests are passed on accordingly. Invitations to events where there is no clear link to the WTO TFA mandate are declined.

Main outcome: In 2019, WTO officials participated in 11 events under this workstream, reaching over 1000 participants. These events contributed towards one ratification and 24 notifications to the WTO TF Committee.





World Customs Organization (WCO) TFA Working Group, 4-6 March, Brussels, Belgium

At the invitation of the host, a WTO official delivered a presentation on the implementation status of the TFA, focusing on notifications to over 100 participants, representing WCO Members, international organizations, and private sector associations.

Outcome: This activity directly contributed to one of the TFAF's primary tasks, which was to coordinate the support from international organizations for TFA implementation; at the same time, this activity helped to build the capacity of participants.

Promoting Economic Connectivity in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), TF Event, 26 March, Vienna, Austria

This event was devoted to exchanging best practices on the functioning of NTFCs, or similar-style bodies. Participants included representatives of government agencies and of business associations from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, as well as delegations of several other OSCE participating States. The WTO provided an overview of the TFA and an update on the state of play, including notification requirements. The WTO also moderated a panel of donor presentations on issues and recommendations for the region.

Workshop findings included the need for private sector participation on NTFCs; high level political will; a long term agenda for NTFCs; methodologies to measure impact; NTFC capacity building activities; and NTFC funding, trust, and transparency.

Outcome: Within 16 weeks, one participating Member had sent a ratification and another a notification to the WTO TF Committee.

National workshop on TF addressed to the private sector and members of the national trade facilitation committee, 29 April – 2 May, Guayaquil and Quito, Ecuador

At the invitation of Ecuador, a WTO official delivered presentations to two events to support the establishment and development of the national trade facilitation committee of a newly ratified¹⁷ Member.

Participants primarily represented the private sector in Guayaquil and the NTFC in Quito. The WTO provided an overview of the TFA, an update on the state of play, including notification requirements and issues and recommendations for NTFCs.

Outcome: Within 8 weeks, Ecuador submitted its transparency notification relating to Article 10.6.2 of the TFA.

World Bank Group Regional Trade Facilitation Event on Performance Measurement in Border Agencies, 22-23 May, Vienna, Austria

At the invitation of the hosts, a WTO official gave a presentation focused on enhancing understanding of the benefits of TFA implementation, and notification requirements of the Agreement including deadline, to members of NTFCs and the private sector and the state of play of TFA implementation, as well as the formal process of submitting notifications, to key TFA stakeholders of seven countries in a region that does not see many TFA related implementation events.

Outcome: Within 10 weeks, one participating Member had submitted two notifications to the WTO TF Committee.

WTO Rules and the new Trade Facilitation Agreement, 27 June, Mexico City, Mexico

At the invitation of Mexico, a WTO official gave a presentation on an overview of the TFA and an update on the state of play, including notification requirements to an audience of government officials and the private sector.

Outcome: This was an important, low-cost opportunity to engage with the private sector in a WTO Member which has significant trading links with many developing countries in the region.

Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2019, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), 17-18 September, New Delhi, India

The Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum is a leading regional platform for exchange of information, experiences, and practices on trade facilitation. At the invitation of the hosts, a WTO official delivered a presentation on the implementation status of the TFA, focusing on notifications to over 200 participants from over 30 countries, representing customs administrations, Ministries of Commerce, and trade and private sector organizations. Many Annex D organizations tasked with implementing the TFA regionally and globally were also represented. TFAF supported the attendance of six WTO Members, of which two were Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that could not otherwise have attended this event.

Outcome: This activity made a direct contribution to one of the TFAF's primary tasks, namely, to coordinate support from the Annex D organizations for TFA implementation. Within 12 weeks, seven participating Members had submitted nine notifications to the WTO TF Committee.

¹⁷ 15 January 2019



The Future of the Customs in the EU 2040, 13-14 May & 17-18 September, Brussels, Belgium

At the invitation of the European Commission, a TFAF donor, a WTO official attended two sessions considering the future of customs procedures in the European Union which is the biggest trading partner of LDCs and many developing country Members. Attending and giving updates on the activities of the Facility at both events, TFAF was able to coordinate with many development partners active in supporting the implementation of the TFA.

Outcome: Information gathered at these two events has been invaluable in ensuring that Members' queries on implementation support are met with up-to-date relevant responses. It was also an important opportunity to further strengthen the TFAF's coordinating function on TFA implementation support.

Alliance Africaine pour le Commerce Electronique - Single Window Conference, 17-19 September, Yaounde, Cameroon

At the invitation of the hosts, a WTO official gave a presentation focused on enhancing the state of play of TFA implementation and notifications to key TFA stakeholders, including 400 participants representing 20 African countries in a region that required substantial support in its TFA implementation in terms of the number of provisions designated under Category C in the Agreement.

Outcome: Within 12 weeks, nine participating Members had submitted 11 notifications to the WTO TF Committee.

(ICC) Committee session on Customs and Trade Facilitation, 29-30 October, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

At the invitation of the hosts, a WTO official provided an update on the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and highlighted the progress made and remaining work to be done, with particular attention to upcoming notification deadlines, related challenges and available technical assistance support. The meeting also included sessions on Special Customs/Free Trade Zones, the Revised Kyoto Convention, E-commerce (WCO Cross-Border E-Commerce Framework of Standards), Authorized Economic Operators, and Incoterms 2020 and its impact on Customs.

The TFAF also participated in the spotlight session event organized by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation on the Vietnam project to help the country reduce congestion in its ports. The Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation has been working with the government and the private sector to implement a modern customs bond system for the conditional release of goods.

Once fully implemented, the new system will allow traders to purchase bonds to guarantee their payment of duties and taxes as well as regulatory compliance, allowing customs to expedite release of their goods. The spotlight session brought together government and business representatives to present the customs bond system and discuss how it will benefit Vietnamese border agencies and traders.

Outcome: This activity directly contributed to one of the TFAF's primary tasks, namely to coordinate support from the international organizations for TFA implementation.

Empowerment course for National Transit Coordinators in the framework of the TFA, 5-7 November, Johannesburg, South Africa

The TFAF supported two expert participants from Zimbabwe to take part in a three-day course to empower current and future national transit coordinators in the framework of the TFA. The Empowerment course delivered training for expert participants to:

- 1) Help developing and least developed countries to better understand the role and functions of the national transit coordinator, especially in the context of the Article 11 of the WTO TFA.
- 2) Train the national transit coordinator to have a better knowledge of the international regimes guiding the concept of transit in international trade, to make sure that enquiries and proposals are evaluated and answered considering international law.
- 3) Encourage countries to notify their contact points for their national transit coordinators.
- 4) Discuss and foster the concept of freedom of transit.

Outcome: Due to TFAF support, two customs experts from a developing country with many LDC trading partners were able to participate in this training and contribute to regional capacity in this regard.



Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Week. Trade Policy Roundtable, Fourteenth Session of the United Nations, and SPECA Economic Forum Connectivity: Sustainable Transport and Trade Facilitation in the SPECA Region, 18–19 November, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, Organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

(SPECA countries are the following: Afghanistan; Azerbaijan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; and Uzbekistan.)

This SPECA week consisted of three different events with working level officials participating in all events and high level officials participating in the Working Group and the Forum.

1. The WTO, in partnership with UNECE and the Government of Turkmenistan, organized a Trade Policy Round Table on "Implementation of the TFA in the SPECA Region", which provided a platform for sharing achievements and challenges in the implementation of trade facilitation measures, with a special emphasis placed upon collaboration between countries facing these challenges, particularly at the level of practical implementation and cooperation among trade negotiators.

2. The SPECA Working Group on Trade supports cross border and regional cooperation in the context of implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Central Asia, with a particular focus on sustainable trade (notably, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets 17.10 and 17.11).

The session focused on strengthening this network of cooperation on trade policy and WTO issues; on a strategy for trade facilitation; on the development of principles for sustainable trade; and on draft recommendations for reducing non tariff barriers to trade in the SPECA region. The WTO delivered a presentation on the benefits of TFA implementation.

3. The Forum's objective was to enhance discussions with a view to achieving concrete results in terms of regional strategy. The WTO delivered a presentation on regional implementation of the TFA.

Outcome: These activities directly contributed to the TFAF's capacity building role in support of TFA implementation, including in terms of enhanced political will, enhanced cooperation, and more effective NTFCs. The activity fostered a clearer understanding of the benefits of strengthening regional cooperation, integration into the rules based trading system, implementation of measures contained in the TFA through national and regional strategies, and the development of cross border supply chains through the removal of trade barriers within the region to allow easier access to the significant markets of neighbouring countries.

2019

In addition to these activities, TFAF speakers also participated, on a no cost basis, in an additional 24 informal activities, as detailed in the 2019 Activity Tracker annexed to this report. These activities either supported speakers on a fully funded basis, were organized in Geneva, or else took place on the basis of unscheduled conversations with delegates. As no budget expenditure was attributed to these activities, no specific outcomes were measured for them, other than in terms of their overall contribution to the TFAF goals of supporting developing and LDC WTO Members to implement the TFA and to coordinate with international organizations active in TF implementation support.

FEBRUARY						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

TFAF ACTIVITIES: HIGHLIGHTS





Concluding a long period of planning with the CARICOM Secretariat and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) hosted a workshop on TFA Implementation in Saint Lucia from 28 January to 1 February 2019. This workshop built on lesson learned from a pilot workshop on Border Agency Cooperation held in South Africa in November 2018.

Participants representing the main border agencies (including trade, customs, SPS agencies and the private sector) were invited from 14 countries: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada,

Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition to the organizing agencies above, speakers also attended from Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA),

Summary of feedback based on an evaluation form completed by the participants:

- 73 of 83 participants completed feedback from (88%)

THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT: SUPPORTING STRATEGIC AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION IN CARICOM WORKSHOP. CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA 28 JANUARY – 1 FEBRUARY

- Of those, 96% found that the workshop far exceeded (37%) or exceeded (62%) their expectations. Only two participants did not consider their expectations met

- All individual sessions could be described as a success, with no session having more than two participants whose needs were not met. The average response to all sessions was that they exceeded expectations. This is particularly positive, given the various agencies and ministries which participants represented

- Concerning the logistical arrangements of the workshop, 88% of respondents found the arrangements far exceeded (34%) or exceeded (52%) their expectations. Only three participants did not consider their needs to have been met.

Outcomes

Since its conclusion, seven WTO Members (more than half of those) participating in the workshop have submitted a total of ten notifications with the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee. All seven Members had committed to notify in their feedback given in the workshop's concluding evaluation session and have subsequently followed through to send them in short order.

2ND ANNUAL RETREAT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT AND LDC ISSUES. LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND 14-15 JUNE

The second WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) retreat for least developed countries was held in Lausanne, Switzerland on 14-15 June 2019. This event, that was attended by 28 Geneva-based delegates from 26 countries, was organized at the request of the LDC Group and was co-organized by the focal point for the LDC Group, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) and Summit Alliance International (SAI); and funded by the TFAF, SAI/BKP by DFID/TAF2 and Australia Aid/DFAT.

The opening of the Retreat was conducted by His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Makaila, Ambassador of the Republic of Chad; with following presentations from the WTO Secretariat, WCO, UNCTAD, the World Bank Group, Zambia, Summit Alliance International and Mrs. Mina Aryal from the Mission of Nepal. Participants also actively shared their experiences.

The event focused on the TFA notification requirements and current notification status of LDC Members; as well as on the process to find donors. A workbook was created for this event by the TFAF that provided the current status of TFA notifications for each LDC WTO Member, and the LDC implementation status for each provision of the TFA. The international organizations also presented the type of support they can provide to assist LDCs in the notification and implementation processes

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- 23 of 28 participants (82%) completed the feedback form.
- The Retreat received positive reviews and requests to hold continuing workshops on the Trade Facilitation Agreement.
- 100% of participants said that they would recommend this type of event to WTO Members.
- "Excellent workshop and training programmes."
- "Thank you for maintaining this type of workshop that allows us to be up to date on the subject."



OUTCOMES

Since its conclusion, ten WTO Members (more than half of those) participating in the workshop have submitted a total of 16 notifications with the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee

TRADE FACILITATION WEEK. WTO- GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 14-18 OCTOBER

Trade Facilitation Week took place at the WTO from 14 to 18 October 2019. Events were centred around the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee on 15 October and the Committee's Annual Dedicated Session on Technical Assistance on 16 October. Building on the success of a similar initiative in 2018, TFAF funded government officials with trade facilitation expertise from more than 50 LDC and developing country WTO Members to attend the October TF Committee and annual dedicated session on technical assistance.

TFAF invited donors and partners to host sessions or to propose topics for workshops on either side of the Committee meeting. This approach allowed the Geneva-based TF community to benefit from the attendance of the capital-based experts and kept the travelling participants engaged and involved throughout the week. Topics covered by partners ranged from TFA and disaster response, legislative and policy considerations to a UNOHRRLLS experts group meeting on improving transit cooperation and trade facilitation. Pacific and island countries also had dedicated sessions covering TFA implementation issues specific to them, including automation and the facilitation of Food and Agriculture trade. The UK's Department for International Development and the EU each held sessions on monitoring and evaluation and the REX registered exporter system for LDCs respectively.

Sessions organized by TFAF reflected an increasing focus on implementation of the Agreement following a successful push to meet notification deadlines over the summer. A special emphasis was placed on sessions designed to bring together development partners and Members seeking assistance to implement provisions of the Agreement designated under Category C – requiring technical assistance to implement. In this regard, a cocktail reception allowing bilateral discussion of TACB needs rounded up Monday October 14.

Throughout the week, Members were encouraged to approach donors to discuss their needs on the basis of preparatory work facilitated by TFAF - worksheets were completed by participants in the lead up to the week outlining their TFA implementation needs and including a donor brochure with up-to-date information on donors' TF assistance programs. For those Members who were unable to identify the assistance needed, the TFAF team held one-on-one sessions throughout the week, walking members through the process of filling out an online expression of interest – the first step in applying for a TFAF Grant. This resulted in a record number of submissions.



PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- 55 participants (44% women) were in attendance, representing over 50 Members (23 LDCs).
- Survey results demonstrated that the sessions met or exceeded participants expectations.
- 100% of participants indicated that they would recommend colleagues attend future events .
- Members noted that assistance received from TFAF was critical in their ability to successfully submit notifications.

OUTCOMES

- Since its conclusion, 12 members have submitted a total of 13 notifications, including five notifications that were submitted or supported through TFAF team during TF week.
- 15 Members who had not been successful in identifying development partners were supported to submit a TFAF grant expression of interest.
- Members engaged with donors and successfully engaged in the initial steps for receiving assistance. Other expressed their desire to have their customs experts take part in future TA events.

"You always organize the best workshops"

"I thought our problems were unique, but I was surprised to learn that everyone has the same issues"

"Surpassed my expectations. Very fruitful and rich discussions. Excellent work."

"The workshop has helped me to better structure projects for donor support and has given me a better idea of where to look for funding."



HIGHLIGHT



**FIRST LATIN AMERICAN
MEETING OF THE NATIONAL
TRADE FACILITATION
COMMITTEES: BORDER
AGENCY COOPERATION.
MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY
25-29 NOVEMBER**

The TFAF, working in close cooperation with the Latin American Integration Association Secretariat, (Association latino-américaine d'intégration (ALADI)), organized a trade facilitation workshop in Montevideo, Uruguay from 25 to 29 November 2019. The objective of the workshop was to provide a platform for experience sharing in the establishment and operation of national trade facilitation committees (NTFC), border agency cooperation, and the TFA provisions most frequently notified in category C in the region. Participants included experts from the 13 ALADI member countries as well as countries in Central America and the Caribbean.



Participants representing the main border agencies (including trade, customs, SPS agencies and the private sector) were invited from 17 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Uruguay.

The First Latin-American Meeting of Trade Facilitation Committees featured speakers from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

OUTCOMES

Since its conclusion, six WTO Members participating in the workshop have submitted a total of eight notifications to the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee. ALADI has highlighted the positive impact of the workshop and has expressed interest in investigating ways to collaborate with the TFAF to potentially establish a platform for communication and the exchange of best practices amongst NTFCs in the region.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- 59 of 74 participants completed the feedback form (78%).
- Of those, 93% found that the sessions exceeded (30%) or met (63%) their expectations. Only two participants did not consider their expectations met.
- All individual sessions could be described as a success, with no session having more than only one participant whose needs were not met. This is particularly positive, given the various agencies and ministries which participants represented.
- 97% of respondents indicated that they would recommend this workshop to their colleagues.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES & RISKS



CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

At the request of development partners, the TFAF monitors its activities in terms of gender participation and impact on Least Developed Countries, as measured by the extent of participation in TFAF activities among LDC WTO Members. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to carry out these evaluations, in particular if the TFAF has not organized the event itself. In the 2019 Activity Tracker, annexed to this report, the number of women participants and participants representing LDCs have been noted, where possible, under each activity. When designing activities and inviting speakers, TFAF seeks gender balance and strong LDC representation wherever possible. Detailed figures are included in the Activity Tracker annexed to this report.

Outcome:

Where we have been able to track attendance by gender, 45% of participants supported by TFAF have been women.¹⁸ 17% of the notifications supported by TFAF in 2019 were submitted by LDC Members of the WTO.¹⁹ The TFAF organized four activities in 2019 specifically focused on the needs of LDCs relative to TFA implementation. Whenever participation in TFAF activities is open to all developing Members, LDCs are given priority.

¹⁸ 304 women, 377 men

¹⁹ 16 notifications from a total of 96



RISKS

A risk register was maintained for all activities in 2019 and a summary of the register may be found in the 2019 activity tracker annexed to this report. The main recurrent risk facing activities organized by TFAF is the potential disconnect between TFAF inputs and outcomes generated. To achieve the TFAF goals, WTO Members take actions that require inputs from numerous different agencies, ministries, and stakeholders. This is especially true of actions taken to implement the TFA that make demands on many different groups. Silos between and within organizations, political factions, and a lack of political capital, can all mean that, even if capacity is being increased overall, progress towards tangible outcomes may remain slow and may sometimes be blocked.

For all activities, the risks involved are identified at an early stage and actions are taken to manage and mitigate those risks wherever possible. With regard to the recurrent risk described above, the need for tangible outputs is built into the design of TFAF organized activities, and TFAF inputs include discussion points on the common barriers encountered as well as best practices to overcome them. During the evaluation of activities, participants are also encouraged to commit to delivering outcomes within a deadline. Progress and common barriers are reported to the WTO TF Committee during regular briefings given by the TFAF. This approach is a work in progress and will be further developed in the course of future activities. In addition to this systemic risk, in 2019 a number of activities were organized in LDCs, where financial transfers were slow and payments were sometimes returned. To mitigate these risks, the WTO has begun to explore different payment options.



2019 FUNDS

TFAF expenditure grew from CHF 690,588.82 in 2018 to CHF 1,210,515.23 in 2019. **This represents an annual increase of CHF 519,926.41, or just over 75%.** It reflects the fact that 2019 was the second full year of implementation, combined with an expansion of the TFAF team and a parallel growth in the demands from developing country and LDC Members. With the increase in the number of TFAF grant applications described in this report towards the end of 2019, expenditure in future years can be expected to grow as Members begin to successfully apply for grants, bearing in mind that, as a contingency measure for Members unable to access assistance elsewhere, TFAF grants are unlikely to be awarded in significant numbers. The remaining balance in favour of development partners reflects the need to maintain sufficient funds to cover such future grant awards.

The European Union remains an active contributor to the fund as they entered into a multiyear commitment, totalling CHF 600,000, which also covers 2019. However, the EU does not feature in the opening balance, nor the balance per donor, as the most recent payment relative to their pledged amount is pending a final report.

2019 FUNDS

ALL THE FIGURES IN THE FOLLOWING TABLES ARE IN SWISS FRANCS (CHF)

Opening Balance as at 1 January 2019	6,227,609.13 ²⁰
Australia <i>(contribution to TTFAF and transfer from TTFNA)</i>	664,074.16
Austria <i>(contribution to TTFAF)</i>	173,578.30
China <i>(contribution to TTFAF)</i>	839,205.93
Finland <i>(contribution to TTFAF)</i>	352,508.32
Norway <i>(contribution to TTFAF and transfers from TTFNG and TTFNA)</i>	3,669,045.10
United Kingdom <i>(contribution to TTFAF)</i>	294,739.36
Contributions Current Year	108,500.00
France	108,500.00

TOTAL FUNDS 2019	6,322,931.13
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,210,515.23
BALANCE IN FAVOUR OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS	5,112,415.96

BALANCE PER DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

Australia	535,806.99
Austria	140,051.33
China	677,111.72
Finland	284,420.68
France	171,438.19
Norway	2,960,362.14
United Kingdom	237,809.89

TTFAF: TRUST FUND FOR TRADE FACILITATION FACILITY

TTFNA: TRUST FUND FOR TRADE FACILITATION NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

TTFNG: TRUST FUND FOR PARTICIPATION OF CAPITAL BASED OFFICIALS IN NEGOTIATING GROUP MEETINGS

²⁰ Individual details on residual amounts transferred from legacy trust funds into the Trade Facilitation Facility Trust Fund totalling just over CHF 130,000 are not included in this table for the purposes of clarity. This support was provided to the TTFNA in previous years on behalf of Ireland, New Zealand, Chinese Taipei, Switzerland, and the United States.

²¹ Individual details on residual amounts transferred from legacy trust funds into the Trade Facilitation Facility Trust Fund totalling just over CHF 105,000 are not included in this table for the purposes of clarity. This support was provided to the TTFNA in previous years on behalf of Ireland, New Zealand, Chinese Taipei, and the United States.

TFAF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



AUSTRALIA



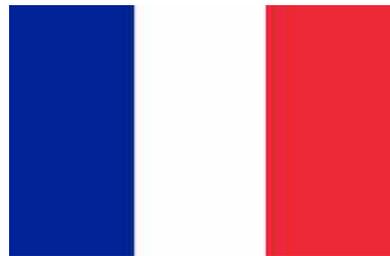
CHINA



EUROPEAN COMMISSION



FINLAND



FRANCE



NORWAY



UNITED KINGDOM

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