



WORLD TRADE  
ORGANIZATION



Trade Facilitation  
Agreement Facility

**INFORMATION NOTE  
TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT FACILITY (TFAF)  
REPORT OF ACTIVITIES  
OCTOBER 12, 2015**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1. This note will explain the activities undertaken by the WTO Trade Facilitation Facility ("the Facility" or "TFAF") since the last Information Note (dated June 5, 2015) that was distributed at the June meeting of the Trade Facilitation Prepcom.

## **2 THE FACILITY WEBSITE - WWW.TFAFACILITY.ORG**

2.1. As evidenced by the statistics in the chart below, use of the TFAF website is steadily growing. Initially most of the users were located in developed countries, however, use in developing countries increased rapidly. For example, use of the website in Cambodia expanded from one hit in May to 44 in June.

2.2. The Facility website was promoted in the Prepcom meeting, at outreach activities, through a brochure, and a booth in the atrium during both the Global Review and the Public Forum. We also appreciate our Members' efforts to increase awareness of the site.

<b>Time period</b>	<b>Number of Hits or Sessions</b>	<b>Number of New Users</b>
May 6 – June 9	2802	1867
June 10-July 14	3266	1999
July 1- October 5	5106	1889

## **3 SUPPORT/ASSISTANCE**

### **3.1 One on One Meetings**

- a. On July 21, 2015 letters were sent to Ambassadors of developing and LDC countries inviting them to meet with the staff of the Facility. The purpose of these meetings is to, inter alia, help identify the support each Member needs in order to reap the full benefits of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Meetings began after the summer break and will continue until MC10 (of course we will be happy to meet with Members at any time after).

- b. During these meetings the WTO staff have, in addition, answered questions to explain how Members can benefit from the Facility. Discussions have taken place on whether the Member's national committee is fully functioning and able to prepare the category ABC notifications or if support is needed; whether the government is having success in finding the necessary implementation support from donors, or knows how to access information on donor projects when it is ready. Finally, exchanges have also identified some Member's short-term and long-term needs.
- c. To date meetings have been held with 11 Members. We feel the meetings have generated very positive results. For example, we have been able to help a new delegate have a better understanding of the TFA and, in particular, the special and differential treatment provisions and notification requirements, and helped him to identify the next steps to determine the support needed by his country. One Member had a list of several TFA articles for which her country needs technical assistance. As a result of this meeting the Facility made arrangements for the World Bank to deliver the assistance requested.
- d. We will continue to call missions to offer to set up meetings. If you want to meet immediately please contact the Facility staff. In order to have a successful meeting it is extremely important that the mission is in contact with the national committee before the meeting takes place.

#### 4 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

4.1. Since the last Information Note, the Facility supported two regional conferences for Parliamentarians and three national workshops and needs assessments. Please note that many other trade facilitation activities were conducted by the WTO under funding from the Global Trust Fund (GTF) that are not listed here.

DATE	NAME OF EVENT	TYPE OF EVENT	LOCATION
June 10-12	WTO Trade Facilitation for Parliamentarians from Latin American WTO Members	Regional Conference	Panama
July 22-23	WTO TFA and Role of National TF Committee Partner: World Bank Group	National workshop	Montenegro
August 20-22	Comprehensive Meeting on Trade For Parliamentarians, Private Sector and Civil Society  Partners: Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and World Bank Group	Regional Conference for Pacific Islands	Fiji

#### 5 NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

DATE	NAME OF EVENT	TYPE OF EVENT	LOCATION
August 5-6	WTO needs assessment update for Zimbabwe	National	Zimbabwe
August 24-28	WTO needs assessment for Guinea	National	Guinea

**6 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

6.1. In order to help ensure more widespread knowledge about the Trade Facilitation Agreement, the SDT notification requirements, and the role of the Facility, WTO officials have participated in a variety of events, some at the WTO and others organized by different organizations. Please note that WTO staff have also participated in additional outreach events funded by the GTF that are not listed here.

DATE	NAME OF EVENT	TYPE OF EVENT	LOCATION
June 18-19	WCO Knowledge Academy Course on WTO Trade Facilitation	Annual training course for customs officials from WCO member countries	WCO Brussels
July 2	World Bank Group/WTO Event on WTO and WBG support for TFA implementation and Findings from Country Self Assessments and Validation Missions	Aid 4 Trade Global Review side event	WTO
June 30 July 2	Facility Booth to provide information and answer questions during the Global Review	Information stand	WTO
July 3	World Bank Group/WTO Workshop on Ratification and entry into force and Challenges in Reform Implementation" and Building Political Leadership for TFA Reforms – National Trade Facilitation Committees.	Workshop for Countries with relevant WB projects	WTO
July 8	CODEX Alimentarius Commission Side Event on the TFA	Codex Alimentarius annual conference	Geneva Conference Center
Sept. 30- Oct. 2	Facility Booth to provide information and answer questions during the Public Forum	Information stand	WTO
October 5-7	African Alliance for E-Commerce Conference International Single Window Conference & Exhibition	International event	Brazzaville
October 11	WCO Trade Facilitation Agreement Working Group. Presentation on the role of the Facility and update on WTO TF notifications and ratifications.	Meeting for WCO Members and Observers	WCO Brussels

**7 PROMOTING COHERENCE**

**7.1 Donors and Annex D+ organizations**

- a. In order to encourage coherence among assistance providers, the Secretariat continued to conduct meetings with the Annex D + organizations both as a group and on a bi-lateral basis.
- b. The Facility has coordinated with several of the Annex D organizations in conducting events, such as the joint WTO/World Bank group sessions and teaching a course in the WCO Knowledge Academy, as listed in the chart above. In addition, the Facility

distributed information at the Public Forum on support programs provided by several Annex D organizations and a donor Member.

- c. The Facility has connected donors that are working in the same region which has led to increased co-operation and joint projects. It has provided information to donors beginning new projects, or expanding existing projects, on the assistance that has already been provided (e.g. a needs assessment) and advised on further assistance that might be needed.
- d. More importantly, Annex D organizations and several donor Members have responded quickly and positively when the Facility has requested implementation support on behalf of a Member.

## **8 FACILITY ACTIVITIES AT MC10**

8.1. The Facility will conduct a session on trade facilitation at MC10. Information about this event will be distributed in due course. The Facility will have a table at the ICTSD event that will be held in the Hilton Hotel where we will distribute information and answer questions.

8.2. WTO staff will also be available to hold bi-lateral or small group meetings with delegations to answer TFA-related questions or explain how the Facility can provide support for implementation. We would also be happy to arrange meetings with donors and Annex D organizations that will have representatives in Nairobi during the Ministerial. If possible, we would appreciate a request for a meeting in Nairobi in advance, but we are also available for last minute requests.

## **9 FINANCIAL SITUATION**

9.1. WTO officials have worked with donor Members to draft Operational Guidelines for the Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility Trust Fund. These Guidelines are the basis for which donors provide funding and set out the annual reporting requirements on how the funding was used. The Guidelines will be made available on the website.

9.2. Since the last Information Note was distributed the Facility trust fund received 104,000 CHF from Austria. The UK, through the Department for International Development (DFID) has pledged 370,000 CHF and Norway has pledged 2,500,000 CHF. The trust fund currently contains approximately 800,000 CHF.

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