



Committee on Trade Facilitation

TFAF WORK PLAN 2025

The Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) was launched in 2014 and is housed within the WTO Secretariat. Its role is to support the Committee on Trade Facilitation's work in relation to assisting developing and LDC Members in implementing the TFA.

By September 2024, 65 of developing and 30 LDC Members that have ratified the TFA have submitted category C commitments and 63 developing and 28 LDC Members have notified definitive deadlines for the implementation of those commitments. 93% of those commitments are to be implemented in the coming five years.

Despite notable efforts by donor Members and other development partners, many developing and LDC Members still have not identified partners to build the implementation capacity for all the measures notified in category C.

Recognizing that more efforts are needed to align TFA implementation needs with available assistance, the TFAF supports Members to secure access to assistance which can be provided through development partners. It aims to:

- Strengthen Members' capacity to engage with development cooperation procedures;
- Increase Member's awareness of and learning from technical assistance projects;
- Provide funding for projects for Members when traditional support is not available;
- Strengthen coordination processes between partners to improve aid effectiveness.

1 WORK PLAN OVERVIEW

1.1. In line with the Framework for the Management and Operation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement Facilitation ([G/TFA/3](#)), this document sets out the work plan for the Facility for the year 2025.

1.2. Preparation of the plan was carried out with the Representative group of Members that consisted of representatives of Brazil, China, Ecuador, EU, Guatemala, Togo and US.

2 ACTIVITIES

2.1. In 2025, the following activities will be organized in line with the mode of delivery specified in the TFAF Framework:

TACB activities

Output 1: Strengthening Members' capacity (domestic and regional level) to plan, manage and implement TFA projects.

Output 2: Increase Members' awareness of assistance and capacity building options for implementing the TFA.

2.2. The TFAF technical assistance and capacity building (TACB) activities respond to requests from developing and LDC Members which relate to the following outcomes: i) identifying implementation assistance, ii) ratification of the Agreement, iii) notifications under the Agreement,

and iv) strengthening the operation of National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC). In 2025, the TFAF will prioritize outcomes i) and iv).

2.3. The activities are divided into a general track and a Member-focus track. The general track activities benefit all developing and LDC Members as they address common needs and are delivered through regional or Geneva-based activities. The Member-focus track addresses stand-alone capacity building needs at domestic level.

2.4. In 2025, the following TACB activities will be delivered:

TFAF Technical Assistance Lab

2.5. Developing and LDC Members often have limited internal capacity and guidance to conceptualize their TACB requests. They lack information and knowledge on implementation approaches and successes. The TFAF Technical Assistance Labs aim to offer a solution to this problem through collaborative Member-to-Member learning. The Labs will bring together Members with TACB implementation experiences with those that need to design and request such interventions. They will also provide methodological support for the project design. Proceedings and inventory of approaches shared in the Labs may help officials in developing their TFA implementation project requests.

2.6. In 2025, the TFAF will organize two thematic Labs. The thematic areas are to be defined by Members' needs. Potential thematic areas are Article 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 Publication of information and enquiry points, and Article 10.3 International Standards. Many Members reached out to TFAF to identify development partners to address their capacity needs in a sustainable manner.

Information sessions for GVA based delegations

2.7. The permanent missions to the WTO have an important function for the implementation of the TFA. They relay information between capitals, NTFCs and the WTO Committee, assist their capitals in their communication with development partners based in Geneva, and monitor implementation progress. An active engagement and flow of information between TFAF, partners and the permanent missions of developing and LDC Members will increase the capacity of Members to engage with development partners.

2.8. In 2025, the TFAF, jointly with partners, will organize a dialogue for GVA-based missions to discuss the mobilization of assistance and capacity building for the implementation of the TFA. It will allow for a discussion of challenges and solutions and invite partners providing assistance to present their resources and procedures.

Workshop on digital skills of NTFCs

2.9. Recognizing the increasing integration of digital technologies in trade facilitation, Members of the NTFC need to be at the forefront of the digital transformation to foster coordination, economies of scale and innovation. They require digital skills that enable them to understand the potential of digitalization applied to processes and services, to navigate in an informed manner through the proliferation of digital tools and solutions, to evaluate the impact and costs, and coordinate and manage implementation effectively. NTFCs with better understanding of digitalization in its legal, policy and technological dimensions will increase aid effectiveness in digitalization projects.

2.10. In 2025, TFAF will organize at least two regional workshops on this topic. These workshops will build on lessons learned from the ALADI workshop that will be conducted jointly with STDF in November 2024. They shall cover issues such as international standards for e-business and cross-border data exchanges, use cases for application of digital technologies for trade facilitation, and IT project management skills. The workshop's findings will be compiled into a non-IT practitioner guide on digital trade facilitation.

Member-track: NTFC workshops to manage development cooperation procedure

2.11. Members' ability to engage with development partners depends on their capacity to understand and manage development cooperation mechanisms and to strategically plan TACB

interventions. Experience has shown that many NTFCs in developing and LDC Members lack these capacities. Building these capacities will enable them to better integrate into the domestic development coordination governance and to engage with development partners on the basis of tangible and actionable requests.

2.12. In 2025, the TFAF will develop a stand-alone training approach and content on the management of development mechanisms for NTFCs. This training will be designed for hybrid delivery, online combined with in-person sessions, and aims to build practical guidance on where to collect information, how to develop clear vision, TACB plans, and monitoring systems. After the training participants, shall be able to draft a TACB mobilization plan, and coordinate with relevant domestic stakeholders in mainstreaming TFA needs into development plans and interventions. Developing and LDC Members can request to benefit from this training starting in April 2025.

Activity	Detail
<i>Global Track</i>	
TFAF Technical Assistance Lab	Two thematic Geneva-based TACB Labs for up to 14 Members and involving up to 4 Members as experts. Potential thematic areas are Articles 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 Publication of information and enquiry points, and Article 10.3 International Standards.
Information sessions for Geneva-based delegations	In 2025, the TFAF, jointly with partners, will organize an information session for GVA-based missions about TACB resources and their procedures and implementation challenges.
Regional workshops on digital skills for NTFCs	Two regional workshops (Africa, Asia). Issues covered include international standards for e-business and cross-border data exchanges, use cases for application of digital technologies for trade facilitation, and IT project management skills. The workshop's findings will be compiled into a non-IT practitioner guide on digital trade facilitation.
Capital-based officials' experience sharing in CTF (LLDCs and topic based)	Continuing the practice from 2024, TFAF will fund selected experts from LLDCs and non-LLDCs to participate in CTF meetings to share experiences.
<i>Member Track</i>	
NTFC workshops to manage development mechanisms	Development of training approach and content (hybrid format) on the management of development mechanisms for NTFCs. Developing and LDC Members can request to benefit from this training starting in March 2025.

Grant Programme

Output 3: Members' TACB needs are matched with TFAF funding when standard assistance is not available.

2.13. The TFAF supports Members in securing access to assistance and capacity building which can be provided through development partners. When no assistance is available, Members can apply for TFAF grant funding. This can be used to support Members in the project conception and proposal phase or to support targeted, short-term projects.

2.14. The TFAF Project Preparation Grants enable Members to conceptualise the intervention and seek adequate TACB responses. These grants can be very effective, when potential partners are involved from the beginning. In 2025, the TFAF aims to increase collaboration with potential funding partners in the PPG process.

2.15. The TFAF Project Implementation Grants are a complementary resource mechanism to enable Members to fill assistance gaps. With these grants, TFAF supports short-term targeted TACB projects to implement the TFA. They are not designed to cover longer-term systemic assistance needs. Where possible, TFAF grants will be implemented by partners. This is driven by cost effectiveness and increases efficiency of the interventions and strengthens harmonisation of donor efforts. It allows to leverage partners' presence on the ground and relationship built with members and their respective technical expertise.

2.16. In 2025, the TFAF will continue to work with Members to receive tangible applications. In doing so it will strengthen collaboration with partners at project level. Conversations with Members have shown three use cases for the effective use of TFAF grants: i) to augment and sustain impact from previous partner interventions, ii) to align TF interventions by partners to specific TFA needs at output level, iii) to fill assistance gaps in clearly demarcated technical areas.

2.17. Due to limited funds of the TFAF Trust Fund the number of grant approvals cannot exceed the total budget of USD 900,000.

Activity	Detail
Preparation Grants	Up to (3) approved new grants Daily Management of on-going PPGs Review of applications
Project Implementation Grants	Up to (5) approved grants Daily Management of on-going PGs Review of applications

Engagement with development partners

Output 4: Strengthening processes for coordination between development partners for the implementation of the TFA.

2.18. The TFAF operates in an environment which consists of multiple development partners which act in accordance with their comparative advantage. The Framework of the Facility stipulates that it will engage with Annex D and Development partners to share information and allow for coordination and non-duplication of efforts on trade facilitation.

2.19. In 2025, the TFAF will strengthen, diversify and expand the network of partners to broaden its technical expertise and implementation capacity. It will seek to establish arrangements with partners for the joint delivery of grants in line with their technical expertise.

2.20. The TFAF will jointly with partners conduct an NTFC survey. This survey aims to shed light on the qualitative performance of NTFCs with regards to mobilization of TACB, monitoring and evaluation of TACB and projects, and cross-government coordination, private sector participation, and strategic planning. The TFAF and partners will jointly design the survey methodology, compile and analyse the responses and draft case studies, where appropriate. The survey findings will be presented to the CTF to guide TFAF and partners in designing their TACB interventions.

2.21. The TFAF will participate in TFA-related events organized by partners, where these events are in line with the TFAF mandate.

3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.1. The TFAF activities will be monitored throughout the year using the updated logframe in Annex to this workplan. The TFAF Secretariat will report on progress made in its annual report. The TFAF Secretariat will collect data for the baseline assessment in December 2024.

4 RISKS

4.1. The TFAF faces a risk to the timely execution of the grant programme due to administrative processes and rules within the WTO. The negotiations and design of the partnership agreements and modalities for collaboration is particularly time consuming as no standard templates can be applied.

4.2. The TFAF also faces constraints on its funding. To address this risk the TFAF has prioritized expenditures and scaled down the proposed activities. Additional activities and opportunities of scaling up of the activities are identified but can only be undertaken if additional funds become available.

5 BUDGET 2025

5.1. The planned budget for the activities in 2025 is USD 1,890,139. The table below presents the expenditures by delivery modes and activities.

Activity	Number	US dollar
Grant Programme		920,000
Project preparation grants	3	100,000
Project implementation grants	4 ¹	800,000
TFAF travel costs (grant applications)	2	20,000
Technical Assistance and Capacity Building		446,000
<i>Overall track</i>		<i>396,000</i>
TACB Lab	2	160,000
Regional workshops on digital skills for NTFCs	2	180,000
Capital-based officials' experience sharing in CTF	10	50,000
Information session for GVA-based missions	1	6,000
<i>Tailor Made track</i>		<i>40,000</i>
NTFC workshops to manage development cooperation procedure	2	30,000
Notification workshop (upon request)	1	10,000
Engagement with Annex D and Development partners		43,000
TFAF staff travel to partners' events		20,000
Coordination meeting		3,000
NTFC survey		20,000
Operating costs²		481,139
Communication (TFAF/Members/partners participating in public fora (Aft review, Public Fora, etc.))	4	20,000
TFAF Website Maintenance costs	1	6,000
Short-term Expert (when required) at grade 7 position	1	80,000
Staff Member at grade 7 position	1	175,000
Staff Member at grade 9 position	1	200,139
TOTAL		1,890,139

Grant Programme: 63%

TACB: 14%

Operating Costs: 22 %

¹ Members that expressed interest and work is on-going to fill an application include Angola, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, Senegal.

² Includes expenses for project management for the grant programme.

Annex 1: Calendar of activities in 2025

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	November	December
Grant Programme												
Project preparation grants												
Project implementation grants			Approval							Approval		
TACB												
<i>Overall track</i>												
TACB Labs												
Capital-based officials' in CTF				CTF		CTF				CTF		
Information session GVA-based missions												
Regional workshops												
<i>Tailor-Made</i>												
Workshops strengthening NTFCs	Development											
Engagement with Annex D and partners												
Coordination meeting in Geneva												
NTFC survey Consultants cost	Design				Data collection					Publication		

Annex 2: Logframe

<p>Outcome: Enhanced capacity of the development cooperation system (consist of actors, instruments, approaches) to address Members' TFA assistance needs</p> <p>Indicators: Global data on TACB gaps for the TFA (TFAF TACB survey, data collected annually) Global data on TACB resources-number, beneficiaries, and volume (Article 21 notifications, partners report to CTF, data collected annually)</p>			
Outputs	Indicator(s)	Data collection	Assumptions
Output 1: Members' capacity to plan, manage and implement TFA projects at domestic and regional level is strengthened.	1.1 Adoption of TACB strategies (# members) 1.2 Stock taking of TACB arrangements (#arrangements)	TFAF survey of NTFCs Data collected 2025, 2028, 2031 Article 16 notifications Data collected annually	Members globally are interested in sharing TF implementation experiences with other Members. Members use the information provided to contact development partners and to conceptualize TACB requests. Donor Members continue to make available funding through the TFAF grant programme. Development Partners perceive harmonization as a means to improve aid efficiency for the TFA and participate in the processes.
Output 2: Members' awareness of assistance and capacity building options for implementing the TFA is increased.	2.1 Participation in TACB labs (# Members represented, # participants) 2.2 Guidance documents (# downloads) 2.3 Participation in Information sessions (# partners, # Members represented)	TFAF annual report Data collected annually	
Output 3: Members' TACB needs are matched with TFAF funding when standard funding is not available.	3.1 Number of direct beneficiaries 3.2 % of application approved for funding within year of application	TFAF annual report Data collected annually.	
Output 4: Processes for coordination between development partners for the implementation of the TFA at global level are functional.	4.1. Coordination at project level (# of TFAF grants implemented jointly with a partner) 4.2 Participation in dialogue platforms (# of partners)	TFAF annual report Data collected annually.	