Defining an Institutional Framework: The Case of Jamaica’s Trade Facilitation Task Force (TF$^2$)

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Background

• The Trade Facilitation Task Force (TF²) was established in February 2015

• Catalyzed by the signature of the TFA and Jamaica’s simultaneous repositioning as a Global Logistics Hub and Logistics-Centred Economy

• TF² mandate is WTO-plus, and was created to:

  ✓ Map and drive the implementation of TF measures deemed critical to support economic growth, promote competitiveness and improve the overall trading environment

  ✓ Ensure a coordinated approach across MDAs in the development of the Single Electronic Window for Trade.

  ✓ Coordinate and implement the provisions of the TFA

• TF Roadmap and Project Plan developed - next step is to formulate appropriate projects to implement the relevant TF reform activities, and achieve the six (6) major outputs under the Project Plan, within the established timeframes.
The institutional arrangement for the establishment of the TF²

**Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries**
- No legislation passed. Instead MOU established between relevant MDAs.
- Decisions are approved by the Cabinet.

**National Competitiveness Council (NCC)**
- Receive reports and updates.
- Provide guidance and recommendations.

**Trade Facilitation Task Force (TF²)**
- Coordinate monthly operational meetings.
- Continuous engagement with IDPs and stakeholders.
Organizational structure (TF², Sub-committees and Secretariat)

TF² Chairman
Leadership and direction

TF² Secretariat
Operational and Admin.

MICAF
Outputs 4 & 5

MOFP
Outputs 2 & 3

Cabinet Office
Outputs 1 & 6

Deputy Chairman
Supports the Chair
Composition and Chairmanship of the TF²

- Line Ministries and Departments (11)
- Border Regulatory Agencies (6)
- Private Sector Support Agencies (Govt.) (4)
- Private Sector Associations (9)
- Autonomous Chair
What role should the private sector play?

Synergy/Cooperation

Challenges & concerns

Iterative Feedback

Mkt. Awareness & Execution
How should the interests of Small and Medium Size Enterprises be taken into account?

- Govt. should provide dedicated support services: SBDC/MSME Division of MICAF
- Facilitate access to computer enabled services: Customer Service Kiosks
- Include representatives from SME Alliances and SBAs in decision making
Provisions for financing of the Committee

- No financing provided/set aside for TF²
- Role of Chairman is unremunerated
- Secretariat is unremunerated
Provisions for financing of the Committee: Best practices?

PPP/IDP funded Committee and Secretariat, including a project manager, to oversee the implementation of Projects
Challenges and Best practices in the institutional design of the national TF committee

**Challenges**
- Lack of financing
- No dedicated staff/Secretariat comprised of public servants
- Difficulties in decision making
- Issues with mindset and resistance to change
- Moral Hazard: Task Force members employed to agencies affected by the reforms

**Best Practices**
- Autonomous NTFC supported by Secretariat
- Establish working groups reporting to a small Operations Committee/Board under the NTFC
- Quarterly NTFC and monthly Board meetings
- Define clear mandate, objectives and deliverables for the NCTF at conceptualization
- Ensure widest inclusion and buy-in in decision making
- Law may be passed to ensure continuity
**TF\(^2\) Relationship with CARICOM’s regional integration efforts**

**TF\(^2\)**
- Develop National TF Work Programme
- Formulate National TF Implementation Plan and Strategy
- Ratification of TFA
- Validation of Category B and C Commitments
- Identification of TF priorities, and TACB needs

**RTFC**
- Recommended by the Customs Committee & mandated by COTED
- Reps. from NTFCs
- Oversee, monitor and evaluate regional TFA implementation/initiatives
- Formulate Regional Implem. Plan and Strategy, based on MS’ TFA implementation and Region’s priorities
- Mobilize technical and financial resources for TF implementation

**Key Constraints**
- Funding required to set up RTFC
- RTFC needs to include regional private sector associations
- Regional coordination is difficult due to differing priorities, sensitivities with submitting NAs and slow reporting of Cat. B and C commitments
- Regional implementation may only be feasible in a few areas
Status of Jamaica’s TF Reform Agenda (TF Roadmap)

- **Axis 1:** TFA Implementation
- **Axis 2:** Improving Cross-Border Operations beyond TFA
- **Axis 3:** Improving Maritime Operations
- **Axis 4:** Improving Special Economic Zones
Status of Jamaica’s TF Reform Agenda (TF Project Plan)

**Output 1:** Reformed institutional and governance framework for international trade

**Output 2:** Improved efficiency of border regulatory agencies and simplification of cross-border formalities

**Output 3:** Establishment of an electronic Single Window for trade related transactions across all border regulatory agencies

**Output 4:** More transparent and predictable trading environment and better access to trade related information

**Output 5:** Enhanced efficiency of the country’s trade support services to support Jamaica’s logistics and transshipment hub

**Output 6:** Enhanced capacity of border regulatory officials to facilitate trade and of businesses to manage cross-border requirements
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