

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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## **MANUAL ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING**

Attached is a draft of a Manual on Technical Cooperation and Training prepared by the Secretariat in response to the Committee's request (ref. WT/COMTD/M/14/Rev.1).

# **Manual**

## **on**

# **Technical Cooperation and Training**

**"Towards Full Integration into the Multilateral Trading System"**

This Manual provides a description of the technical cooperation and training activities available in the WTO, how Members can benefit from such assistance and how requests should be filed to participate in the activities.

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

- *The World Trade Organization, a framework for the multilateral trading system*

One of the main features of the multilateral trading system that emerged from the trade negotiations which took place between 1986 and 1994 (Uruguay Round), was the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO). It formally came into existence on 1 January 1995, is based in Geneva, and headed by a Director-General, Mr. Renato Ruggiero. The WTO Secretariat counts approximately 500 staff members. With already more than 130 Members (ref. Annex 1) and 28 other countries having requested to be admitted as Members, the WTO is set to become a truly global organization. Over 90 percent of world trade is now governed by the multilateral trade rules of the WTO.

The WTO is the successor of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which provided the multilateral rules for the conduct of international trade since 1947 on a provisional basis. The WTO now provides the legal and institutional foundation of the multilateral trading system, and the basis for the conduct of trade relations among its Members. It is expected to contribute to enhancing predictability and security in international trade. Also, it is a forum for future trade negotiations.

With the signing of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, Members have taken upon themselves a large number of obligations for the conduct of their trade policies. The WTO Agreement confers rights to Members to protect their interests. The new rights and obligations go much beyond those embedded in the GATT system. The multilateral trading system has been both broadened and deepened, thus providing more detailed rules in areas previously covered by the GATT, as well as extending rules to new areas, including trade in services and trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights.

While these instruments cover a very wide range of areas, a number of fundamental and common principles underlie them. The Agreements aim to establish conditions of trade without discrimination through the principles of Most Favoured Nation and national treatment, facilitate predictable and growing access to markets and promote fair competition, in view of "strengthen(ing) the world economy and lead to more trade, investment, employment and income growth throughout the world" (Marrakesh Declaration, 15 April 1994).

- *Developing countries in the WTO*

Developing countries have played a key role in shaping the new multilateral trading system and demonstrated a lively interest for their participation therein. More than three-quarters of the WTO's Members are developing countries (98 in total), of which 29 are least-developed (Annex 2). They have actively participated in the negotiations process of the Uruguay Round, thus ensuring that their interests are appropriately reflected in the WTO Agreements.

The Agreement establishing the WTO recognizes the need for efforts "to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least-developed among them, secure a share in the growth in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development" (Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO, preamble). The WTO Agreements thus include a number of provisions in favour of developing country Members in order to enable them to integrate into the multilateral trading system and to benefit fully from their participation therein. Part IV of the GATT 1994 contains principles, commitments and special provisions for joint action by Members towards the development of the economies of developing country Members. In addition, the Agreements include longer transition periods for implementation of some Agreements or obligations by developing country Members. These transition periods will need to be fully exploited to adjust national legislation, where required, and to ensure a smooth implementation of the Agreements following the conclusion of the transition periods.

- *Increased need for technical assistance for developing countries*

While technical assistance has traditionally been a service provided by the GATT Secretariat (a formal programme of technical assistance was first established in 1955 when training courses in trade policy were introduced for officials from developing countries), the requirements in terms of needs and delivery (modes of delivery and instruments of technical cooperation) have evolved rapidly.

It is widely recognized that the newly established multilateral trade rules are likely to require particular efforts by developing countries in terms of implementation, especially for those not having fully participated in the GATT system. Contrary to the GATT, in which various obligations were optional, the 'Single Undertaking' principle that was adopted in the negotiations, has made all WTO Agreements binding upon all Members.

In order to assist developing countries to benefit fully from the new trading opportunities resulting from the Uruguay Round Agreements, it is important that these countries can be assisted in building their human and institutional capacity and in preparing the adaptations of national legislation, where required. This is where technical assistance is particularly relevant, focusing on very specific needs of beneficiary countries in discharging their Uruguay Round obligations. The Agreements foresee technical assistance to be provided by the Secretariat or by developed Member countries on a bilateral basis.

Technical assistance is essentially demand-driven, meaning that activities are carried out on the basis of requests from Member countries. In some cases, based on an assessment of technical assistance needs, the WTO Secretariat initiates technical assistance programmes and organizes seminars, workshops and training activities in Geneva, or on a regional or sub-regional level.

The technical assistance activities are overseen by the Committee on Trade and Development. In October 1996, the Committee adopted Guidelines for Technical Cooperation, which provide the basis for the WTO's technical cooperation and training activities and in particular, define its objectives and principles.

**Box 1****Committee on Trade and Development**

The Committee on Trade and Development is the WTO Committee that deals with issues of particular interest to developing countries. It comprises all Members of the WTO and reports to the General Council (WTO Structure, Graph 1). Its chairman is elected for one year. In the summer 1996, the Committee established a **Sub-Committee on Least-Developed Countries**, specifically mandated to address issues of concern to these countries and make recommendations. The Sub-Committee reports to the Committee.

## ■ **PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING IN THE WTO**

The WTO's technical cooperation and training activities are guided by the fundamental objective of assisting recipient countries in their understanding and implementation of agreed international trade rules, achieving their fuller participation in the multilateral trading system and ensuring a lasting, structural impact, to enable them to derive full advantage from the new trading environment.

The objectives and principles of the WTO technical cooperation are to:

- assist in the full integration of beneficiaries into the multilateral trading system and contribute to the expansion of their trade;
- strengthen and enhance institutional and human capacities in the public sector for an appropriate participation in the multilateral trading system; whenever possible and in consultation with the government concerned, capacity building activities could include representatives of the private sector;
- be demand-driven and adapted to recipient needs, in particular with respect to the best suited modes of delivery;
- be complementary to and supportive of recipients' efforts to identify their own requirements;
- keep a geographical balance, while giving priority to least-developed countries, in particular African countries, and to low-income economies;
- cover subject matters within the competence and expertise of the WTO, in particular:
  - improvement of knowledge of multilateral trade rules and WTO working procedures and negotiations; and
  - assistance in the implementation of commitments in the multilateral trading system and full use of its provisions, including the effective use of the dispute settlement mechanism;
- be fully and closely coordinated with other assistance provided by multilateral and bilateral institutions;
- monitor and establish follow-up activities with a view to ensuring long-lasting relations with beneficiary countries and guaranteeing the effectiveness of technical cooperation activities;
- be administered by the Secretariat and reviewed by Members, in accordance with operational directives and implementation modalities by the Committee on Trade and Development.

## ■ THE BENEFICIARIES OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING

### ● *Government officials*

As the WTO is an organization among governments, the WTO's technical assistance is principally provided to government officials of beneficiary countries, who have specific responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the WTO Agreements. Officials can be trained and prepared for tasks ahead, both in Geneva, or on a national, regional or sub-regional basis.

The selection of the beneficiaries will typically depend on the type of activity carried out. While the selection of participants in national workshops or seminars will mostly be conducted at the national level and by officials from the host country, for seminars, workshops, training activities and other specialized activities to be carried out in Geneva, the selection criteria will mostly be established by the WTO Secretariat. These are drawn up for each event taking into account the specificity of the activity.

### ● *The private sector*

Associating the private sector to technical cooperation activities contribute to raising the business community's awareness of the multilateral trading system and enables it to identify the trading opportunities arising from the Agreements. Representatives of the private sector may be invited to attend national or regional seminars held in beneficiary countries.

The WTO and UNCTAD have a joint subsidiary, the International Trade Centre (ITC), whose mission is to support developing and transition economies, and particularly their business sectors, in their efforts to realize their full potential for developing exports and improving import operations. The WTO takes part in activities aimed at the private sector and carried out in association with the ITC, e.g. in seminars for the dissemination of a publication prepared jointly by the Commonwealth Secretariat and ITC, with inputs from the WTO: the "Business Guide to the Uruguay Round" (ref. Box 2).

#### **Box 2**

##### **The ITC/WTO Business Guide Seminars**

In 1995, the ITC jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat prepared a publication entitled "Business Guide to the Uruguay Round". This publication is intended to explain in simple terms the rules-based system which emerged from the Uruguay Round, to assist business communities in developing countries in identifying the implications of the Agreements and trading opportunities resulting from them for the private sector.

In order to disseminate the information contained in this publication, ITC has organized in cooperation with local chambers of commerce and/or trade associations a programme of activities, including seminars in developing countries. The WTO Secretariat has been actively participating in these dissemination efforts. Since the launching of these joint activities in late 1995, over 60 seminars have been held worldwide.

- *Special focus on developing and least-developed countries*

While assistance is available to all developing country Members of the WTO alike and the Secretariat aims at maintaining a geographical balance (Table 1), priority is given to least-developed countries, in particular African countries, and to low-income economies. Several specific initiatives have been or are in the process of being developed for least-developed countries. The most recent initiatives are described in Box 3.

- *Acceding countries*

While most WTO Members were GATT Contracting Parties and thus had the 'automatic right' to become a Member of the WTO, several have joined the new organization through accession negotiations. The membership of the WTO has thus been constantly increasing since its entry into force, with several new Members having successfully concluded their accession negotiations. The interest in WTO Membership continues to grow and at the beginning of 1997, there were 28 countries seeking accession to the WTO. These countries are economies in transition or developing countries often requesting the WTO to provide assistance in the course of their accession process. The assistance to be provided will differ according to the stages of the accession process, and can include inputs in the preparation of a memorandum on the acceding country's foreign trade regime, which has to be submitted to the WTO for discussion by WTO Members, and/or the preparation of the schedules of concessions and commitments which are required for Membership. The assistance can also include national seminars on the Multilateral Trading System, aimed at raising awareness in the country.

**Table 1**

**Technical Cooperation Activities Per Region<sup>1</sup>**

AREAS	1995	1996	TOTAL
AFRICA	20	43	63
ASIA	18	23	41
EUROPE	17	16	33
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	16	26	42
MIDDLE EAST	6	11	17
OCEANIA	2	5	7
TOTAL	79	124	203

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<sup>1</sup> In 1996, a total of 124 missions was held in over 60 countries



**Box 3****Specific Activities for Least-Developed Countries****Singapore Ministerial Conference:**

In order to facilitate the full participation of least-developed countries in the first Ministerial Conference, held in Singapore in December 1996, a number of technical cooperation activities were organized including:

- a *briefing session* on the WTO Multilateral Trading System for Europe-based ambassadors of least-developed countries at WTO headquarters in September 1996;
- a *Meeting of the Ministers* and senior officials from 29 least-developed countries in November, also at the WTO headquarters in Geneva. These events were made possible through special voluntary contributions by developed country Members.

**High-Level Meeting**

On recommendation of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) through the General Council, WTO Ministers at Singapore agreed to "organize a meeting with UNCTAD and the ITC as soon as possible in 1997, with the participation of aid agencies, multilateral financial institutions and least-developed countries to foster an integrated approach to assisting these countries in enhancing their trading opportunities".

This High-Level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least-Developed Countries' Trade Development (fall of 1997), includes the active participation of other international organizations (UNCTAD, ITC, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and UNDP). Invitations are to be extended to all 48 least-developed countries, whether WTO Members or not.

**Comprehensive and Integrated Plan of Action for Least-Developed Countries**

Closely related to this initiative is the Comprehensive and Integrated WTO Plan of Action for the Least-Developed Countries (WTO Plan of Action for LDCs), also adopted by Ministers in Singapore after thorough consideration at the CTD and the General Council. The WTO Plan of Action for LDCs includes measures in the areas of capacity building and market access, and envisages, in particular, closer cooperation between the WTO and other multilateral agencies assisting LDCs.

**Integrated Programme**

An Integrated WTO/UNCTAD/ITC Technical Assistance Programme for Selected Least-Developed and Other African Countries was adopted in May 1996. It responds to the urgent need of least-developed and other African countries to be assisted in the expansion and diversification of their trade and in the process of their integration into the multilateral trading system, and to demands by the membership for improved coordination and cooperation among the three organizations, in order to both maximize the effectiveness of the overall results and to improve the utilization of available resources. This programme currently covers eight developing countries, of which four are least-developed. The countries selected are: Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda.

## ■ THE SCOPE OF WTO TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES: MODES OF DELIVERY

Technical assistance is provided in all areas of the WTO's competence and within the limits of its mandate. This can include areas such as:

- institutional issues
- basic rules and principles of the multilateral trading system
- rules of the WTO (anti-dumping, subsidies and countervailing duties, safeguards)
- market access issues (tariffs, import licensing, customs valuation, preshipment inspection)
- agriculture and sanitary and phytosanitary measures
- technical regulations and standards
- international trade in services
- trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights
- dispute settlement procedures
- notifications requirements
- regional arrangements
- trade policy review

The activities carried out are very diverse in scope and nature, and are tailored to meet the needs of the individual country or countries involved. The WTO Secretariat proposes the mode of delivery, taking into account the recipient country or countries' level of development and the nature of the request made. The following are the main modes of delivery of technical assistance:

### (i) General Seminars for explanation and dissemination of the WTO

General Seminars are organized with a view to providing general explanations on the multilateral trading system and disseminating information on the work of the WTO. They cover a broad range of aspects including the functioning of the WTO and the Agreements, Understandings and Decisions which resulted from the Uruguay Round negotiations, as well as practical information on developments in the work of the various WTO bodies. They are organized in the capitals, on a national or regional basis.

#### Box 4

##### General Seminars

This is one of the most common ways of providing technical assistance whereby in a three to five day programme most WTO Agreements are covered. In 1996, almost half of all technical assistance activities consisted of national and regional seminars (55). The activity is mostly carried out by professional staff from the Technical Cooperation and Training Division, often in association with staff from functional divisions. While primarily focusing on government officials, and bringing together officials from several ministries, it often includes private sector representatives, through the local chamber of commerce or a business association.

**(ii) Seminars and workshops on specific issues**

Technical/specialized seminars focus on a narrowly defined subject, (e.g. customs matters, anti-dumping) and are addressed to experts in the areas covered.

Workshops generally focus on one particular area of trade policy and in addition to theoretical explanations have a practical orientation, i.e. through case studies and simulations. Seminars and workshops can be held either in Geneva or in the capitals, and generally have a duration of 4-5 days.

**Box 5**

**Example of Specialized Seminar**

Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT): Seminars are often organized jointly with the International Standards Organization (ISO), with the participation of government agencies, standardizing bodies and non-governmental agencies involved in standards related work. The goal of these seminars is to help participating countries to understand the details of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) so that the Agreement can be fully implemented and at the same time help build human and institutional resources in TBT related activities to help producers to benefit fully from the Agreement. The seminars also provide opportunities for communication and exchange of views among representatives from different government agencies and the private sector.

**Box 6****Examples of Workshops****■ Notifications:**

The Secretariat has organized specific workshops in Geneva on notification obligations, for trade policy officials. These workshops include practical and detailed presentations, and individual consultations by participants with Secretariat officials responsible for notifications under the various Agreements. In total, 155 participants from over 60 countries took part in the two workshops organized in 1995 and 1996.

**■ Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS):**

In 1996, a workshop on the TRIPS Agreement was organized for English speaking Sub-Sahara African Developing country Members. During this five day workshop, all aspects of intellectual property rights covered by the TRIPS Agreement were discussed, with the participation of WTO officials as well as representatives of other relevant bodies, such as a national patent office or the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and the private sector. A similar workshop is to be held in 1997. Participants are selected by the WTO Secretariat; they should have responsibility in discharging obligations under the TRIPS Agreement.

**■ Rules:**

National and/or regional workshops are organized on a regular basis in different parts of the world in the area of Anti-Dumping and Countervailing Duty Investigations to explain to the beneficiaries the operation of the relevant agreements and assist in preparing or adapting national legislation, where required.

**■ Other areas covered through workshops:**

Agriculture and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, International Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade and International Standardization (Standards). Some workshops are held at the national-level, others at the (sub-)regional level. Most of the workshops are organized on an ad hoc basis.

**(iii) Technical Missions**

Technical missions are organized in capitals to assist countries in specific tasks related to effective implementation of WTO commitments, such as preparing legislation, regulations, and notifications, as well as to facilitate understanding of specific issues.

**Box 7****Examples of Technical Missions**

Assisting countries in:

- reviewing draft legislation on and establishing an institutional framework for contingent trade remedies (such as anti-dumping);
- adapting customs tariffs to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System;
- adapting the institutional and legal framework in the area of intellectual property to the requirements of the Agreement on TRIPS;
- technical missions have been carried out at the end of the Uruguay Round negotiations to assist beneficiaries in the preparation of schedules of concessions and offers of specific commitments in the negotiations. Specific assistance is provided to countries in preparing their offers in services negotiations, as for basic telecommunications. Similar efforts will be undertaken to assist countries in making offers for financial services.

**(iv) Training courses, which are of two kinds:**

- The regular Trade Policy Course for developing countries and special training courses designed at the request of WTO members. These courses are generally held in Geneva.
- Short courses designed for particular groups of countries (for medium or high level officials) which cover, in depth, in a short period of time (2-6 weeks), issues relating to trade policy and the multilateral trading system. They can either be held in Geneva or in national capitals.

**Box 8****An example of special training course: the Republic of Singapore/WTO joint training programme for developing countries**

During the first Ministerial Conference of the WTO, held in Singapore in December 1996, the government of Singapore and the WTO, desiring to cooperate in extending trade-related technical assistance to developing countries for their economic and social development, signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning a joint training programme for developing countries.

The programme is to be jointly established and administered by the Government of Singapore and the WTO. Under this Training Programme, training courses will be organized usually in Singapore not exceeding four weeks, for selected participants in developing countries.



**Box 9****Specific Technical Assistance in the Area of Dispute Settlement**

Since the entry into force of the WTO, developing countries have been actively involved in the operation of the dispute settlement mechanism, both as complaining party and as a respondent to claims by other members. Appropriate access to this mechanism which is a corner stone of the new multilateral trading system, and proper understanding of it are crucial to a full participation in the system.

The Memorandum of Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU) contains provisions for specific technical assistance relating to the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO:

o Legal assistance to developing country Members

Article 27.2 of the DSU foresees additional legal advice and assistance in respect of dispute settlement to developing country Members, and provides that the Secretariat shall make available a qualified legal expert from the WTO technical cooperation services to any developing country Member which so requests.

o The special Training courses on the rules and procedures governing the settlement of disputes

In accordance with Article 27.3 of the DSU, the Secretariat organizes special training courses in Geneva to enable Members' experts to be better informed about the rules and practices of dispute settlement in the WTO. These four-day courses include a detailed presentation of the rules and procedures as well as practical simulation exercises.

(v) **Practical training programmes** for selected officials with specific responsibilities, including training of trainers, can be developed to prepare human resources in specific and concrete areas of work.

**Box 10****An Example of a Practical Training Programme**

A key part of the Integrated Programme for selected African and other Least-Developed Countries will consist of the 'training of trainers', i.e. preparing officials in beneficiary countries in a better and fuller understanding of the Uruguay Round Agreements, who will, following completion of the training programme, disseminate the information in-country. Trainers will be selected on criteria established by the three organizations (WTO, UNCTAD and ITC). The training programme is to be held in Geneva over three weeks.

(vi) **Information technology-based training material:**

A computer-based inter-active technical assistance/training package is being developed that will be used to introduce the WTO in the same manner as through a general seminar. The package includes all the concepts developed in a normal 4 to 5 day seminar organized by TCTD. It consists of a set of modules, each of which corresponds to a two-three hour seminar lecture, and includes a review section using the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) approach and incorporating a self-evaluation sub-section. Its main support is a CD-ROM, although it will also be produced in a set of diskettes, taking account of available hardware in the countries concerned. The package will be made available through the new Trade and Development Website that is a component of the WTO-World Bank Information Technologies of Development project.

**Box 11**

**The WTO-World Bank Information Technologies for Development Project**

The WTO has initiated a project that will use Information Technologies to better enable decision makers in developing countries to understand and to make use of the rules and mechanisms of the WTO for the benefit of their countries. The project will enable developing country decision-makers to:

- have permanent on-line access to electronic training and education tools conceived for them;
- maintain an on-going, electronic contact with the WTO so they can keep abreast of new developments and be informed specifically on their importance for their country or region.

The project is designed so that even those who do not have access to the most sophisticated technologies, such as the Internet, will still have access to the inter-active, electronic learning tools developed as part of the project.

The project is being developed jointly with the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank.

Funding for the project is being provided by the two principal partners as well as by the Governments of Norway and the Netherlands.

**Box 12**

**The WTO Website**

The WTO official website located on the internet at [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org) contains a wealth of information about the rules and mechanisms of the global trade system. There is a general overview of the Organization in **About WTO**. For more in-depth information on the various areas of the WTO, users should visit the pages under **WTO at Work**. This section contains material on **Dispute Settlement, Economic Research & Analysis, Trade Policy Review, Trade & the Environment, Technical Cooperation and Training** and a page on **Agriculture - Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**.

The **What's New** section contains the very latest on negotiations and happenings within the WTO. A section on **International Trade** gives the latest report from the Research Division. The **Uruguay Round** section gives a summary of the results of the negotiations which established the Agreements on which the new Organization is based. Other features of the website are a **Schedule of Meetings**, the **Media Newsroom** (for journalists), and more importantly, **Documents on-line**. Using this facility, anyone can now download unrestricted (i.e. public) WTO documents directly to their computers.

The website is reproduced in the other official languages of the WTO: French and Spanish.

**(vii) Supply of data on tariffs and trade**

Upon request, data on trade flows, tariffs and non-tariff measures are made available, and information can also be provided towards the assessment of other countries' offers in market access in goods of relevance to developing countries, or to help them assess the impact on their services trade of specific commitments on services made by developed countries.

Also, the WTO has prepared a CD-ROM with all information regarding the Agreements and tariffs and trade data (Box 13).

**Box 13**

**CD-ROM on the Uruguay Round Results**

This CD-ROM contains all WTO rules and commitments made by its Members. However, the vast bulk of the CD-ROM is occupied by the Schedules of Concessions on goods and on services. For each country which is a Member of the WTO there are product-by-product lists of bound tariff rates affecting market access for merchandise goods, including agricultural products. Many thousands of products and their rates are listed. The Schedules of Specific Commitments on services are more complex with each country identifying the services sectors to which it will apply the market access and national treatment obligations of the GATS and any exceptions from those obligations it wishes to maintain.

Every effort has been made to help manage efficiently the great volume of information covered in nearly 30,000 pages of undertakings which together make up the World Trade Organization Agreements. This CD-ROM can be obtained from the Publications Services, Centre William Rappard, Rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland; tel: 022-739 52 08/53 08 (Fax: 759.57.92) at the price of CHF 1000. A discount of 30% is granted to Members and of 50% to least-developed Members.

**(viii) Supply of documentation on the WTO**

As part of regular seminars etc. documents are widely made available to participants. The documentation can cover general information, as well as any specific material to assist in carrying out the obligations under the agreements (e.g. Handbook on Notifications).

**Box 14**

**Handbook on Notifications**

In order to assist Members in understanding and discharging more efficiently their notification obligations under the Agreements, the Secretariat has prepared a Technical Cooperation Handbook on Notification Requirements. This document provides Members in a single instrument with a complete view of the notification obligations contained in all the Agreements, as well as models of the format which should be used to prepare notifications.



**(ix) Participation in technical assistance and training activities organized by other regional and international institutions.**

To the extent possible, WTO staff members participate in activities organized by other international institutions to provide inputs on WTO Agreements.

More generally, the Technical Cooperation and Training Division is constantly available to Geneva-based delegates of developing country Members to provide them with guidance and information regarding the activities of the WTO and assist them in discharging their obligations in the WTO Agreements.

The Secretariat is also available to answer written requests for information from member governments regarding their rights and obligations under the WTO Agreements.

## ■ WTO TRADE POLICY COURSES HELD IN GENEVA

The WTO Secretariat finances and organizes two *Regular* Trade Policy Courses per year for officials from developing countries. The Courses, held in English and alternately in French and Spanish, take place in Geneva and last for fourteen weeks.

In addition, the WTO Secretariat has been organizing on an ad hoc basis two shorter *Special* Trade Policy Courses per year for officials from economies in transition: one eight-week course for officials from Eastern and Central European and Central Asian Countries financed by the Swiss government (since 1991) and one four-week course for a number of economies in transition funded by the United States government (since 1994).

### ● *Regular Courses for developing countries*

The Courses are intended for government officials from WTO Members as well as non-Members who are involved in the formulation and implementation of trade policy. Since 1955, when the Trade Policy Courses started under the GATT, over 1,500 officials<sup>2</sup> from 130 countries have participated in the Courses. The increased complexity of the legal and trade policy issues dealt with by the WTO as compared to the GATT has enhanced interest around the world in participating in WTO Trade Policy Courses.

### ● *Objectives and content of the Course*

The Course objective is to widen the participating officials' understanding of trade policy matters, the multilateral trading system, international trade law and the functioning of the WTO. The knowledge acquired in the Course is expected to allow participating officials to improve the effectiveness of their work in their own administrations and to promote a more active participation of their countries in the work of the WTO.

The Course programme is comprehensive and includes:

- Lectures, presentations and discussions on trade theory, the formulation and implementation of trade policy and its interaction with monetary policies, the provisions of WTO legal instruments and agreements emphasising the development dimension, trade policy issues such as regional economic integration and the interaction between trade and environmental policies as well as the structure, scope and functioning of the WTO system. Most of the lectures are given by WTO officials dealing directly with the respective subjects.
- The lectures are complemented by practical work including group discussions, round tables, and the preparation and presentation of seminar papers on WTO-related subjects. Officials also take part in a workshop on negotiating techniques, and simulation exercises on trade negotiations and dispute settlement, in which they put into practice the knowledge of trade policy issues acquired on the Course. The programme includes visits to international organizations based in Geneva and attendance at meetings of WTO bodies, so as to allow the participants to observe the functioning of the WTO on the spot.

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<sup>2</sup> This number includes almost 30 officials from the secretariats of intergovernmental regional economic organizations in developing countries.

- There are also two study tours: one in Switzerland and the other abroad, which serve the purpose of introducing the participants, via meetings with host government officials and business persons, to the trade and general economic policies of the host countries, and the organization, structure and activities of some of their leading industrial, financial and commercial enterprises.
- *Access to Regular Trade Policy Courses*

Several months before the start of each Course an invitation circular from the WTO is addressed to the relevant authorities in each developing country such as the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as to the local Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and to the Permanent Mission in Geneva.

Governments wishing to propose candidates for a Trade Policy Course should follow the procedures outlined in the invitation circular. All nominations which have been received are submitted to a WTO selection committee for consideration. Each selected candidate is awarded one of the 24 fellowships granted by the WTO for each Course. The fellowship grant covers travel expenses to and from Geneva, accommodation in Geneva, sickness and accident insurance and stipend to cover living expenses in Geneva. There are no course fees for participants.

- *Special Courses for economies in transition*

The Training programmes of the Special Trade Policy Courses aim to respond to the training needs of the economies in transition, several of which are in the process of acceding to the WTO. The Course programme is similar in many respects to the *Regular* Trade Policy Courses in that it is designed to familiarize the participating officials with the functioning of the multilateral trading system. However, special emphasis is laid on topics of particular interest to the participating countries such as the process of trade policy reform in economies in transition, the conditions for accession to the WTO, the WTO status of certain bilateral regional arrangements, agriculture and services. The Courses are conducted in English with, in some cases, simultaneous interpretation into Russian.

Participants who are most likely to benefit from the Special Courses are officials who have experience and responsibilities in the formulation and conduct of foreign trade policy in their countries and who are expected to continue to work in this area. Participating countries, and the number of officials from each, are designated by the donor countries. Officials nominated by their Government, usually numbering twenty-four per Course, benefit from a fellowship grant which covers travel, accommodation and *per diem* expenses for their stay in Geneva.

#### **Box 15**

##### **Further Information on Trade Policy Courses**

For the Regular Trade Policy Courses, the invitation circular contains detailed information on nomination criteria, procedures and closing dates for submission of nominations and other practical guidelines for applicants from developing countries. Further information can be provided by:

The Training Section  
Technical Cooperation and  
Training Division  
WTO Secretariat  
Centre William Rappard  
Rue de Lausanne 154  
CH-1211 Geneva 21

Tel. (+41.22) 739 51 90  
Fax. (+41.22) 739 57 81  
E.mail: [norma.herbst@wto.org](mailto:norma.herbst@wto.org)

## ■ COORDINATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITHIN THE WTO

Technical assistance programmes are executed mostly by staff members of the Secretariat, who provide their expertise in a specific area, but the Secretariat also draws on a roster of qualified outside experts for selected activities, and collaborates with other international organizations for optimal use of the resources available. The activities are carried out by the WTO Secretariat in the three official languages of the WTO (English, French and Spanish).

While technical assistance can be requested from and delivered by different functional divisions in the WTO, the Technical Cooperation and Training Division acts as focal point. Its coordination role basically comprises the following elements:

- The Technical Cooperation and Training Division, in close collaboration with other operational Divisions of the Secretariat, coordinates, the Secretariat's response to requests for technical cooperation.
- The Technical Cooperation and Training Division establishes a general and indicative three-year plan comprising annual programmes. This three year plan includes all the activities to be carried out by the WTO.
- The annual programme is based on specific requests from WTO Members benefiting from technical cooperation activities, presented in the year preceding the year when those activities are to be undertaken.
- The Secretariat coordinates with and reports to the Committee on Trade and Development on technical cooperation activities, in accordance with the Guidelines adopted by the Committee.
- The Committee on Trade and Development monitors technical assistance with a view to ensuring long-lasting relations with beneficiary countries.

## ■ COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

For enhancing effectiveness in providing technical cooperation and training, and making best use of scarce human and financial resources, close coordination is established with other international organizations, in particular with the International Trade Centre (ITC), UNCTAD and the World Bank. A dialogue between the heads of the organizations is established to exchange information on policies and programmes. Regular briefing is provided to bodies of other organizations on current developments in the area of trade policy, particularly in relation to technical assistance.

In addition, other specialized agencies, such as the World Intellectual Property Organization, the World Customs Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization, have also established contacts with relevant substantive divisions at the WTO Secretariat in relation to their trade-related technical cooperation activities. Some of the relations between specialized agencies and the WTO are formalized through the exchange of letters and in practice translate into very active and deep cooperation in areas of common interest.

## ■ FUNDING OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING

The technical cooperation and training activities of the WTO are financed through two sources: the regular budget of the WTO and voluntary contributions of Members to the WTO Trust Fund for Technical cooperation.

Generally, the WTO covers the expenses related to the participation of its staff members or of experts engaged by the Secretariat to execute its technical assistance activities. It can also, in some cases, pay for the travel expenses of officials from beneficiary countries, to enable them to take part in technical cooperation activities at WTO headquarters in Geneva or on a regional basis.

In addition, voluntary contributions from Members to the WTO Trust Fund For Technical Cooperation provide important additional funding to carry out technical cooperation activities. The grants provided by the Members are mostly earmarked for specific activities decided upon between the donor and the WTO Secretariat and to be carried out within a certain time frame.

### Box 16

#### WTO Trust Fund for Technical Cooperation

Since the creation of the WTO Trust Fund for Technical Cooperation, several Members have made contributions to it for specific activities. Two main contributions are:

- In 1995, Norway contributed US\$ 2,500,000 to the WTO Trust Fund, to be used mainly for activities in favour of Least-Developed countries. A programme of work is carried out covering technical missions, workshops and seminars organized in Africa and/or in Geneva.
- In 1997, the Netherlands made a contribution of NLG 4,000,000 (approx. US\$ 2,300,000) which is geared towards integrating developing countries and economies in transition into the multilateral trading system and contributing to the expansion of their foreign trade.

## ■ HOW TO REQUEST TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR TRAINING

A government which would like to obtain technical assistance from the WTO Secretariat should formulate a request in writing. This procedure applies to all requests other than applications to the Trade Policy Courses held in Geneva described in the section above.

The request should indicate as precisely as possible the nature and contents of assistance required.

**Requests for technical cooperation should normally be addressed in writing to:**

**The Director  
Technical Cooperation and Training Division,  
World Trade Organization  
154 rue de Lausanne  
1211 Geneva 21  
Switzerland  
tel: 739 52 37  
fax: 739 57 64**

Requests for assistance should normally be made before the beginning of the year in which the activity would be carried out, so as to allow for its incorporation into the annual programme of technical cooperation activities.

On receipt of the request, all aspects of the proposed activity, including its nature, contents, funding, and the anticipated time-frame within which it would take place are discussed and the most appropriate activity determined.

The sequence of steps to be followed when a government requests technical cooperation from the WTO Secretariat is summarized in the chart provided below.

**Sequence of Steps to be Taken when a Beneficiary Country Makes a Request to the WTO for Technical Assistance**

**Request**

Beneficiary sends request for technical assistance normally to the  
Technical Cooperation and Training Division;  
in principle requests should be filed before the end of the year for implementation  
in the next calendar year;  
the request will be integrated in WTO's planning

**Defining the Activity**

in consultation between the WTO Secretariat (TCTD and/or functional Divisions)  
and the recipient country;  
(mode of delivery, implementation modalities, contents of activities, logistics and funding)

**Coordination with Other International Organizations**

some activities call for coordinated action between international organizations

**Implementation**

of activities by the TCTD, other functional WTO  
Divisions and/or other executing agencies in accordance with the guidelines on technical cooperation  
and training,  
in principle the activity is carried out in the year following that in which the request is made

**Follow-up**

following the execution of the activity, continued contact will be pursued to enhance effectiveness of the  
technical cooperation;  
the beneficiary country can be requested to establish a contact point to ensure effective coordination  
between the WTO and the recipient in the follow-up process



# ANNEX 1

## WTO Members and Date on which Membership Became Effective (as of 1 May 1997)

Angola 1.12.96	Greece 1.1.95	Nigeria 1.1.95
Antigua and Barbuda 1.1.95	Grenada 22.2.96	Norway 1.1.95
Argentina 1.1.95	Guatemala 21.7.95	Pakistan 1.1.95
Australia 1.1.95	Guinea 25.10.95	Papua New Guinea 9.6.96
Austria 1.1.95	Guinea-Bissau 31.5.95	Paraguay 1.1.95
Bahrain 1.1.95	Guyana 1.1.95	Peru 1.1.95
Bangladesh 1.1.95	Haiti 30.1.96	Philippines 1.1.95
Barbados 1.1.95	Honduras 1.1.95	Poland 1.7.95
Belgium 1.1.95	Hong Kong 1.1.95	Portugal 1.1.95
Belize 1.1.95	Hungary 1.1.95	Qatar 13.1.95
Benin 22.2.96	Iceland 1.1.95	Romania 1.1.95
Bolivia 14.9.95	India 1.1.95	Rwanda 22.5.96
Botswana 31.5.95	Indonesia 1.1.95	Saint Kitts and Nevis 21.2.96
Brazil 1.1.95	Ireland 1.1.95	Saint Lucia 1.1.95
Brunei Darussalam 1.1.95	Israel 21.4.95	Saint Vincent & Gren. 1.1.95
Bulgaria 1.12.96	Italy 1.1.95	Senegal 1.1.95
Burkina Faso 3.6.95	Jamaica 9.3.95	Sierra Leone 23.7.95
Burundi 23.7.95	Japan 1.1.95	Singapore 1.1.95
Cameroon 13.12.95	Kenya 1.1.95	Slovak Republic 1.1.95
Canada 1.1.95	Korea 1.1.95	Slovenia 30.7.95
Central African Republic 31.5.95	Kuwait 1.1.95	Solomon Islands 26.7.96
Chad 19.10.96	Lesotho 31.5.95	South Africa 1.1.95
Chile 1.1.95	Liechtenstein 1.9.95	Spain 1.1.95
Colombia 30.4.95	Luxembourg 1.1.95	Sri Lanka 1.1.95
Congo 27.3.97	Macau 1.1.95	Suriname 1.1.95
Costa Rica 1.1.95	Madagascar 17.11.95	Swaziland 1.1.95
Côte d'Ivoire 1.1.95	Malawi 31.5.95	Sweden 1.1.95
Cuba 20.4.95	Malaysia 1.1.95	Switzerland 1.7.95
Cyprus 30.7.95	Maldives 31.5.95	Tanzania 1.1.95
Czech Republic 1.1.95	Mali 31.5.95	Thailand 1.1.95
Denmark 1.1.95	Malta 1.1.95	Togo 31.5.95
Djibouti 31.5.95	Mauritania 31.5.95	Trinidad and Tobago 1.3.95
Dominica 1.1.95	Mauritius 1.1.95	Tunisia 29.3.95
Dominican Republic 9.3.95	Mexico 1.1.95	Turkey 26.3.95
EC 1.1.95	Mongolia 29.1.97	Uganda 1.1.95
Ecuador 21.1.96	Morocco 1.1.95	United Arab Emirates 10.4.96
Egypt 30.6.95	Mozambique 26.8.95	United Kingdom 1.1.95
El Salvador 7.5.95	Myanmar 1.1.95	United States 1.1.95
Fiji 14.1.96	Namibia 1.1.95	Uruguay 1.1.95
Finland 1.1.95	Netherlands 1.1.95	Venezuela 1.1.95
France 1.1.95	New Zealand 1.1.95	Zaire 1.1.97
Gabon 1.1.95	Nicaragua 3.9.95	Zambia 1.1.95
Gambia 23.10.96	Niger 13.12.96	Zimbabwe 3.3.95
Germany 1.1.95		
Ghana 1.1.95		

## Observer Governments (29)

Albania	Georgia	Russian Federation
Algeria	Jordan	Saudi Arabia
Armenia	Kazakhstan	Seychelles
Belarus	Kyrgyz Rep.	Sudan
Cambodia	Latvia	Taipei, Chinese
China	Lithuania	Tonga
Croatia	Moldova	Ukraine
Estonia	Nepal	Uzbekistan
Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	Oman	Vanuatu
	Panama	Viet Nam

**ANNEX 2****Developing Country Members (98)****Africa (41)**

Angola	Ghana	Nigeria
Benin	Guinea	Rwanda
Botswana	Guinea- Bissau	Senegal
Burkina Faso	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Burundi	Lesotho	South Africa
Cameroon	Madagascar	Swaziland
Central African Republic	Malawi	Tanzania, United Republic of
Chad	Mali	Togo
Congo	Mauritania	Tunisia
Côte d'Ivoire	Mauritius	Uganda
Djibouti	Morocco	Zaire
Egypt	Mozambique	Zambia
Gabon	Namibia	Zimbabwe
Gambia	Niger	

**Asia and the Pacific (18)**

Bangladesh	Maldives
Brunei Darussalam	Myanmar
Fiji	Pakistan
Hong Kong	Papua New Guinea
India	Philippines
Indonesia	Singapore
Korea, Republic of	Solomon Islands
Macau	Sri Lanka
Malaysia	Thailand

**Europe and the Mediterranean (3)**

Cyprus  
Malta  
Romania

**Latin America and the Caribbean (30)**

Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana
Argentina	Haiti
Barbados	Honduras
Belize	Jamaica
Bolivia	Mexico
Brazil	Nicaragua
Chile	Paraguay
Colombia	Peru
Costa Rica	Saint Lucia
Cuba	Saint Kitts and Nevis
Dominica	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Dominican Republic	Suriname
El Salvador	Trinidad and Tobago
Grenada	Uruguay
Guatemala	Venezuela

**Middle East (6)**

Bahrain	Qatar
Israel	Turkey
Kuwait	United Arab Emirates

**Least-Developed Country Members (29)**

**Africa (24)**

Angola	Mali
Benin	Mauritania
Burkina Faso	Mozambique
Burundi	Madagascar
Central African Republic	Niger
Chad	Rwanda
Djibouti	Sierra Leone
Gambia	Tanzania, United Republic of
Guinea	Togo
Guinea-Bissau	Uganda
Lesotho	Zambia
Malawi	Zaire

**Asia and the Pacific (4)**

Bangladesh  
Maldives  
Myanmar  
Solomon Islands

**Latin America and the Caribbean (1)**

Haiti

**United Nations List of Least-Developed Countries (48)**

Angola	Gambia	Niger
Afghanistan	Guinea	Rwanda
Bangladesh	Guinea-Bissau	Samoa
Benin	Haiti	Sao Tome & Principe
Bhutan	Kiribati	Sierra Leone
Burkina Faso	Lao People's Dem. Rep.	Solomon Islands
Burundi	Lesotho	Somalia
Cambodia	Liberia	Sudan
Cape Verde	Madagascar	Tanzania, United Rep. of
Central African Rep.	Malawi	Togo
Chad	Maldives	Tuvalu
Comoros	Mali	Uganda
Djibouti	Mauritania	Vanuatu
Equatorial Guinea	Mozambique	Yemen
Eritrea	Myanmar	Zaire
Ethiopia	Nepal	Zambia

# WTO Structure

