Major Trends of National Trade Facilitation Committees

Source: National Trade Facilitation Committees as coordinators of trade facilitation reforms, 2020 - https://unctad.org/ntf

### Degree of Institutionalization and Mandate

#### National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC) are here to stay

*More countries are considering NTFCs as permanent platforms for coordinating trade facilitation efforts.*

*NTFCs over time are evolving to cover trade facilitation needs beyond those envisaged in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).*

#### NTFCs are legally established

*More committees have been legally set-up and have terms of references.*

- **69%** of NTFCs are institutionalized at governmental level
- **87%** of NTFCs have defined terms of reference

#### Multi-chairpersonship is becoming more frequent

*NTFCs started having two or more simultaneous chairpersons to efficiently address complex nature of trade facilitation. In 2017, the usual was only single chairpersonship.*

- **63%** Single chairpersonship
- **31%** Co-chaired by two public entities
- **2%** Co-chaired by a public and private entity
- **4%** Co-chaired by three entities

#### Permanent secretariats are still a luxury for many NTFCs

*There is a correlation between the number of people needed at the permanent secretariat and the level of development of a country.*

On average, 4 people work at a permanent secretariat of the NTFCs

The more developed a country is, the less people work in the permanent secretariat
**NTFCs are broadening their scope of action**

The core of NTFC competencies is the coordination of implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

### Three major scopes of action for NTFCs

- Monitor the implementation of the WTO TFA
- Search and maintain financing partnerships with donors and implementing agencies
- Advise government and make recommendations

**NTFCs' ability to monitor progress and report on compliance and deviations for policy intervention is critical but they do not seem well equipped for this task**

**75% of NTFCs have a work plan**

The probability of having a work plan is lower in Least Developing Countries.

**40% of NTFCs do not use any specific tools to evaluate their work**

**NTFCs are opting for inclusiveness**

Dialogue between public and private sectors are key to successful development and implementation of trade facilitation reforms.

- **The average number of members of an NTFC have increased since 2015**
- **The more developed a country is**
- **the higher the percentage of senior staff involved**

**83% of NTFCs has done not taken any action or decision to mainstream gender in trade facilitation**

**No progress in gender mainstreaming since 2017**

Around one third of NTFC consider gender mainstreaming as not relevant at this stage.

- **37% of NTFCs are female, on average**
- **No significant change from previous years**

**40% of NTFCs are chaired or co-chaired by women**

In LDCs and Developing countries, only one third of NTFCs are chaired or co-chaired by a woman.

**NTFCs are developing the necessary communication tools**

In coordinating concrete trade facilitation reforms, managing the expectations of all stakeholders becomes critical for the successful implementation of various project.

- **37% of NTFCs has communication strategy**
- **the majority of NTFCs communicate with stakeholders by email**

**Top 3 reasons for not having a communication strategy:**

- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of personnel
- Found it not necessary

**1 out of 5 NTFCs uses a website to communicate information about their work**

**NTFCs work is translating into concrete and positive outcomes**

Almost all NTFCs in the study can name concrete outcomes produced by the Committee since establishment.

**Most cited outcomes by NTFCs**

- Ratification and notification of WTO TFA
- Developed implementation plan

**17% Increase in NTFCs that reported concrete outcomes**

**Impact of the work of NTFCs:**

- Improvement in coordination, transparency and dialogue
- More support to raise awareness on importance of trade facilitation

**Most cited outcomes by NTFCs**

- Contributed to negotiation of trade and trade facilitation agreements
- Contributed to implementation of trade facilitation measures ex. Single window
Financing and Sustainability

11  Budget and financial resources are still scarce

Financial sustainability is essential for NTFCs to ensure efficient and regular operations

Only 27% of NTFCs have budget available for their activities

Budget of NTFCs

- In Least Developed Countries, come solely from donors or development agencies
- In Developing Countries, come mostly from domestic resources

12  Despite the concrete outcomes, the sustainability of NTFCs remains at stake

NTFCs existence and overall functioning is becoming increasingly relevant

The more developed a country is, the higher the level of sustainability of its NTFC

Greatest obstacles to sustainability

- Lack of funding and resources
- Lack of awareness of importance of NTFC and trade facilitation
- Resistance to change and lack of political buy-in