

Country: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Background:

Official name: National Trade Facilitation Committee

Year of establishment: The National Trade Facilitation Task Force was established by Cabinet Memo N°20 in February 2011. As of April 2013, it is still needed to activate the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Trade Facilitation stakeholders to ensure the functioning of this Task Force.

Institutional Framework:

Permanent technical secretariat: There is no permanent technical secretariat because of the lack of political support.

Funding:

Budget: No. Because of the lack of domestic resources, and the lack of financial support of donors and development partners. Budget will be needed for: Office rental and equipment, Software tools, Training sessions, Public information sessions and media outreach

Objectives / Focus:

Working plan: Yes, one per year

Monitoring and evaluation: Monitoring tools: Baselines and Targets, Consultations with stakeholders. Evaluation tools: Focus groups. Familiar with the following tools to some extent: UNCTAD statistics (country and maritime profiles), UN Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation, World Bank Doing Business Trading Across Borders, World Bank Logistics Performance Index (LPI), OECD Trade Facilitation Indicators.

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies: Trade, Customs, Finance, Telecommunications/IT, Plant Quarantine, Animal Health, Public Health, Agriculture, Bureau of Standards, Port Authority, Invest SVG, economic Planning

Private associations or entities: Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Customs Brokers Association

Level of seniority of participants: Senior-20%, Middle-80%

Participation:

Meetings format: Yes, quarterly

Gender:

Percentage of female in the committee: 80%

Chairman / President / Vice-president is female: Yes

Committee did decide on gender mainstreaming TF in the past: No

If no, why not. (Example: It not considered a priority, not considered relevant at this stage, lack of awareness, etc): It was not considered relevant at this stage

Promotion / Communication:

Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings: Email, Administrative letters, Telephone

Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public: We don't do anything particular to address the general public

Benefits:

Concrete operational outcomes: Negotiation of trade or trade facilitation agreements, Improve transparency / dialogue, Developed an implementation plan for the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, Improved coordination, Ratification / notifications of the Trade Facilitation Agreement sent to the WTO, Raise awareness on the importance of trade facilitation.

Lessons learned:

Success factors: It is thought that to the extent of 47% the NTFC is sustainable in time. Crucial factors to the sustainability of the NTFC are as follows: Financial assistance / adequate resources, Capacity building, Political commitment / high level support, Involvement of the private sector, Awareness raising on trade facilitation

Lessons learned from your experience: Main obstacles to the sustainability of the NTFC are as follows: Lack of funding / resources, High level support / political buy-in, Lack of awareness of importance of NTFC / understanding of trade, Lack of permanent secretariat, Resistance to change

Future plans:

Plans for further development: Regional integration has been considered a lot within the work of the NTFC, and it is in contact with other National Trade Facilitation Committees in the region.