

## Country: Malawi

### Background:

**Official name:** National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC)

**Year of establishment:** 08.07.2015 00:00:00

**Motivation for its establishment:** Fulfilment of Malawi's obligation under the World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement, Article 23.2. However, a prior body was set up to discuss and resolve trade, transport, and transit matters.

**Other national bodies dealing with WTO issues and/or with Trade Facilitation:** Yes:

Public Private Dialogue Forum

Government Committee on Doing Business Reforms

National Working Group on Trade Policy (NWGTP)

National Customs Business Forum

**Former multi-agency group/committee:** The Malawi Trade Logistics Working Group.

**Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc):** Fully operational. Meeting quarterly.

### Institutional Framework:

**Degree of institutionalisation:**

The World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA)

The National Exports Strategy

The Non-Tariff Barriers Strategy

The Commonwealth Secretariat Trade Facilitation Study

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Trade Facilitation Study

The Diagnostic Trade and Industry Study (DTIS)

**Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc):** The National Trade Facilitation Committee is not a Legal entity but it is a Permanent Committee that was established to oversee trade facilitation matters.

**Coordinating agency:** Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism

**Scope/mandate:** To provide direction, coordination and implementation of the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan including the provisions of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation.

Also, the committee has taken some actions to facilitate cross-border e-commerce: the approval of a COMESA E-Trade Regional Regulation.

**Terms of reference:** Yes

Terms of Reference\_English

**Working structure of the group:** Chaired by Malawi Revenue Authority while Ministry of Industry,

Trade and Tourism serves as Secretariat.

**Permanent technical secretariat:** Yes, the Permanent Technical Committee is composed of 8 people and comprises:

Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism,  
Malawi Revenue Authority,  
Malawi Bureau of Standards,  
Malawi Investment and Trade Centre,  
Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry,  
Clearing and Forwarding Agents' Association of Malawi

## **Funding:**

**Budget:** Yes. Donors complemented the budget for the last 3 years until 2019, but domestic resource is inadequate.

Budget will be needed for: Reproduction and publications services, Telephones and internet, Meeting venues and catering, Training sessions, Public information sessions and media outreach.

**Items covered by the budget:** Secretarial operations and National Trade Facilitation Committee meetings.

## **Objectives / Focus:**

### **Objectives:**

To oversee all Trade Facilitation matters  
To serve a steering committee for the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan (NTF-AP)  
Further objectives refer to attached Terms of Reference

**Working plan:** Yes, there is the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** It is thought that to the extent of 73% the NTFC fulfils its role of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Monitoring tools: Baselines and Targets.

Evaluation tools: Surveys distributed by the NTFC among trade facilitation stakeholders.

Familiar with the following tools: UNCTAD statistics (country and maritime profiles), UN Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation, World Bank Doing Business Trading Across Borders, OECD Trade Facilitation Indicators, World Economic Forum Global Enabling Trade Report.

Familiar to some extent with the World Bank Logistics Performance Index (LPI).

**Reporting form and supervisory authority:** The National Trade Facilitation Committee reports to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism who reports to the Cabinet Committee on Doing Business.

## **Membership / Composition:**

**Public or quasi-public agencies:** Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism,

Malawi Tax Authority,

Reserve Bank of Malawi,

Malawi Bureau of Standards,

Malawi Investment and Trade Center,

Ministry of Immigration,

Malawi Police Service,

Ministry of Transport and Public Infrastructure,

Ministry of Finance,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation,

Ministry of Justice,

Ministry of Health and Population,

Department of Road Safety,

National Road Authority,

Association of Clearing and Transfer Agents of Malawi

**Private associations or entities:** Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malawi,

Association of Road Transport Operators,

Association of Clearing Agents and Freight Forwarders of Malawi,

Association of Cross Border Traders.

Bankers Association of Malawi,

National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises,

National Association of Small Farmers,

Manufacturers Association,

Malawi Economic Justice Network,

Civil society agriculture network,

Development Partners.

**Level of seniority of participants:** Senior-70%, Middle-20%, Junior-10%

## **Participation:**

**Frequency of meetings:** Quarterly basis but subject to availability of funding.

**Level of participation:** Medium

**Meetings format:** No

## Gender:

**Percentage of female in the committee:** Membership is by institution not individual persons as such this might be difficult to apply.

However, going by previous NTFC records of attendance, female representations ranges between 28 to 42%.

**Chairman / President / Vice-president is female:** The Chairperson is the Commissioner General of Malawi Revenue Authority. The current Commissioner General is a female.

**Committee did decide on gender mainstreaming TF in the past:** No. As mentioned above that membership is by institution it will be important to urge institutions to consider female representation in the NTFC meetings.

**If no, why not. (Example: It not considered a priority, not considered relevant at this stage, lack of awareness, etc):** It is because membership is by institution and it is the prerogative of the institution to send their preferred representation.

**If no, explain future plan in this area.:** Feasibility of the matter will be proposed on the agenda for discussion in the next NTFC meeting

## Promotion / Communication:

**Communication channels to keep stakeholders informed of TF meetings:** 1.Communication via emails and letters

2.NTFC Secretariat maintains a list of contact persons for all member institutions

**Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues:** 1.Some members of the NTFC also participate in meetings of working groups/committees on trade facilitation matters

2.Furthermore NTFC Secretariat makes presentations to other forums whenever demanded

**Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues:** Some members of the National Trade Facilitation Committee also participate in meetings of working groups/committees on trade facilitation matters. Furthermore, National Trade Facilitation Committee makes presentations to other forums whenever demanded (e.g. presentation done to Cabinet Committee on Doing Business last April, and the National Working Group on Trade Policy meeting in June, 2016).

**Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public:** Yes, through other discussion forums like National Working Group on Trade Policy which a private-public technical dialogue forum.

Also through the way of publication of articles in the Press, and TV and radio (ads, interviews, participation in talk shows, etc)

## Benefits:



**Impact:** The Malawi National Trade Facilitation Committee has managed to contribute to the development of the Malawi Trade Portal thereby enhancing transparency and predictability of trade transactions. It has coordinated the One Stop Border Posts project, the National Single Window Projects, and capacity building trainings. It has also coordinated some studies on export ban and on domestication of international agreements.

**Benefits for the country's responsiveness to the WTO negotiation process:** It is a forum where discussions on topical issues are discussed and recommendations made where national negotiating positions are developed.

**Concrete operational outcomes:** Launch of the Malawi Trade Portal in July 2016;

Launch of One Stop Border Post with Zambia and Tanzania;

Implementation of concrete trade facilitation measures;

Developed an implementation plan for the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement;

Improved coordination;

Ratification / notifications of the Trade Facilitation Agreement sent to the WTO;

Reduction of time and / or improvement of procedures at the border;

Raise awareness on the importance of trade facilitation;

Mainstreaming trade facilitation into other national policies.

## Lessons learned:

**Success factors:** It is thought that to the extent of 65% the NTFC is sustainable in time. Crucial factors to the sustainability of the NTFC are as follows: Clear responsibility of participants, Commitment from members, Financial assistance / adequate resources, Political commitment / high level support, and Involvement of the private sector.

**Greatest obstacles:** Lack of funding / resources, Incorrect representation of members / frequent replacement of members, and Lack of awareness of importance of NTFC / understanding of trade facilitation

**Lessons learned from your experience:** Coordination among members and presence of senior level members during meetings are crucial.

## Future plans:

**Plans for further development:** Regional integration has been considered to some extent within the work of the NTFC.

## Contact information:

**Contact Information: Ms. Christina Chatima**

Director of Trade, Secretariat



# UN REPOSITORY ON NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES

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Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism,

Tel: +265 1 770 337

Email: [christinachatima@yahoo.com](mailto:christinachatima@yahoo.com)

Chairperson:

Malawi Revenue Authority,

Tel: +265 1 822 588

Email: [mrahq@mra.mw](mailto:mrahq@mra.mw)