

Country: Cameroon

Background:

Official name: National Trade Facilitation Committee

Year of establishment: Decree No. 2016/0381 / PM of 1 March 2016 concerning the establishment, organization and functioning of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Motivation for its establishment:

The bottlenecks in the control and inspection of ground vessels in the ports of Cameroon creating long delays and additional costs for ship-owners

Complexity and bottlenecks in import, export and transit procedures, extending port transit times and increasing transaction costs;

Ratification by Cameroon of important texts related to trade and transport facilitation, including: the Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO), the revised Kyoto Convention (World Customs Organization) and the Convention FAL (International Maritime Organization);

The evolution of the maritime and port sector of Cameroon marked by the construction of the Port in deep water of Kribi.

Other national bodies dealing with WTO issues and/or with Trade Facilitation: Yes, but most of these structures are also members of the Trade Facilitation National Committee.

Ministry of Trade,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Permanent Mission of Cameroon in Geneva

General Directorate of Customs,

National Shippers' Council of Cameroon and

Single Window for Foreign Trade Operations.

Former multi-agency group/committee: Yes, the National Trade Facilitation Committee replaces the National Committee of Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Committee) previously created and governed by the following texts:

Decree N ° 97/715 / PM of 29 December 1997 establishing the National Committee for the Facilitation of International Maritime Transport

Decree N ° 2009/1719 / PM of 1 September 2009 on the reorganization of the National Committee for Facilitation of International Maritime Transport.

Current status of the working group (running, pilot phase, not functioning, etc): Beginning of operational phase

Institutional Framework:

Degree of institutionalisation: The National Committee was created by a decree of the Prime

Minister, Head of Government.

Type of organisation (ad hoc group, legal entity/organisation, etc): The National Trade Facilitation Committee is a permanent body with its own legal and institutional existence.

Coordinating agency: The Committee is under the Prime Minister, Head of Government and chaired by the Secretary General of the Prime Minister's Office.

Scope/mandate: The National Committee's Mandate covers all activities related to the import, export and transit of goods. It also covers the international transport of goods by all modes of transport (maritime, air, road, rail). It is an advisory body that makes simple recommendations and proposals.

Also, the Committee has taken actions to facilitate cross-border e-commerce: Recommendation on paperless trade and e-payment.

Terms of reference: Yes, the Committee's mandate is clearly defined by its constitutional decree.

Working structure of the group: The National Committee is structured as follows: Videos

A Strategic Orientation Committee, and strategic decision-making body headed by a Chairman and two Vice-Presidents,

A Technical Secretariat headed by a Coordinator responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Committee's action plan and the recommendations of the Strategic Orientation Council,

A Permanent Secretariat, headed by a Permanent Secretary, the Committee's backbone, an operational body responsible for coordinating the Committee's activities on a daily basis,

Three specialized committees each having at its head a President and a Vice President, who sit daily and permanently to examine the basic issues arising from the actions of the program,

Sub-committees and working groups working according to their mandates.

Permanent technical secretariat: Yes.

The Cameroon National Shippers' Council hosts the permanent secretariat.

It is financed by domestic resources.

Eight people compose the permanent secretariat.

Funding:

Budget: Yes, a budget is voted on each year for the operation of the Committee.

Sources of funding: The resources of the Committee come from the contributions of the following organizations

Cameroon National Council of Chargers

Autonomous Port Organizations

Single Window for Exterior Trade Operations

Private Sector

Development Partners

Items covered by the budget: The main expenditure items are:

The acquisition costs of equipment and materials (computers, photocopier, office furniture, office equipment, computer consumables ...),

The costs of organizing meetings and seminars (working papers, cocktails and refreshments, accommodation, transportation and losing members),

Mission expenses for monitoring certain activities,

Monthly allocations from the Permanent Secretariat's Operational Team

Objectives / Focus:

Objectives: The Committee's objectives are to promote Trade Facilitation and international transport in order to reduce delays and transaction costs and to ensure the effectiveness of international trade.

Working plan: Yes, quarterly

Monitoring and evaluation: It is thought that to the extent of 98% the NTFC fulfils its role of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Monitoring tools: Monitoring plan with indicators, Action plan and Roadmap on trade facilitation.

Evaluation tools: Internal meetings.

Familiar with the indicator of the World Bank Doing Business Trading Across Borders.

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

Reporting form and supervisory authority: The progress reports are presented quarterly at meetings of the Committees and the Technical Secretariat, and each semester during the meeting of the Strategic Orientation Committee.

Membership / Composition:

Public or quasi-public agencies: Prime Minister's Services; the Ministry of Transport; the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry in charge of the economy; the Ministry of Industry; the Ministry of Agriculture; the Ministry of Public Health; the Ministry responsible for livestock, fisheries and animal industries; the Ministry of Defense; the Ministry of Forests; Ministry of the Environment the Minister in charge of public works; the General Delegation to the National Security; the General Directorate of Customs; the National Port Authority; each Autonomous Port Authority; the National Council of Loaders of Cameroon; Cameroon Airports; the Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority; the Agency of Standards and Quality.

Private associations or entities: The Single Window of Foreign Trade Operations; the Société

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Générale de Surveillance; the rail transport company; the Chamber of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts; the employers' organizations (GICAM, MECAM, ECAM); the Union of Industrialists of Cameroon; the Export Association of Cameroon; the Group of Importers of Cameroon; each Union of Authorized Commissionaires in Customs; the Acconiers Professional Group of Cameroon; the Union of Consignees and Shipowners of Cameroon; the Association of Insurance Companies; the Professional Association of Credit Institutions of Cameroon; the Banana Association of Cameroon; three representatives of the designated motor carrier unions of their peers - the body responsible for land freight management.

Level of seniority of participants: Senior-50%, Middle-30%, Junior-20%

Participation:

Frequency of meetings: Yes, depending on the level/type of meeting : monthly, quarterly, twice per year

Meetings format: Yes: specialized committees, subcommittees, ad hoc work, and correspondence group.

Gender:

Percentage of female in the committee: 30%

Comittee did decide on gender mainstreaming TF in the past: Yes

If yes, explain briefly (example: recommendations on gender, special trade procedures for women, etc): Chairing one of the a technical specialized commissions.

Promotion / Communication:

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

Interface with other working groups/committees on similar issues: The Committee is generally invited to meetings of other committees or bodies dealing with similar issues. Similarly, in meetings of the Committee representatives of these other bodies are invited to harmonize positions on issues of common interest.

Undertake information sessions to stakeholders or general public: Publication of articles in the Press,Meetings,TV and radio (interviews, participation in talk shows, etc),emails

Benefits:

Impact: A positive impact. For foreign trade actors, this is the main forum where they can freely and effectively express their concerns. It is also the body that helps to effectively remove bottlenecks in foreign trade procedures.



Benefits for the country's responsiveness to the WTO negotiation process: The Committee shall include in its action plan the subjects submitted to the WTO negotiating process and make proposals to the public authorities.

Some members of the Committee are regular members of the national delegations participating in the WTO negotiations.

Concrete operational outcomes: Negotiation of trade or trade facilitation agreements, Implementation of concrete trade facilitation measures, 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, Improve business environment for traders, 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 95% the NTFC is sustainable in time. Crucial factors to the sustainability of the NTFC are as follows: Regularity of meetings / communications to NTFC members, Commitment from members, Financial assistance / adequate resources, Capacity building, Political commitment / high level support

Greatest obstacles: Maintain engagement / motivation of participants / absenteeism, Incorrect representation of members / frequent replacement of members, Resistance to change

Lessons learned from your experience: The Committee is an important tool for the effectiveness of external trade through dialogue and coordination of actions between the main actors.

Future plans:

Plans for further development: Develop a relevant three-year strategic action plan; Enhance communication around the actions of the Committee (website, news letter, various brochures);

Strengthen monitoring the Committee's recommendations to ensure their effective implementation; Strengthen the capacity of the Committee;

Also, the regional integration has been considered to some extent within the work of the NTFC, and it is in contact with other National Trade Facilitation Committees in the region.

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