



UNCTAD TRADE FACILITATION E-LEARNING PLATFORM

Created thanks to the financial support from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office via Her Majesty Revenue and Customs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

CREATING AN E-LEARNING PLATFORM TO DELIVER REMOTE CAPACITY BUILDING

In the summer of 2020, when it became evident that the travel restrictions implemented to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic would not be lifted in the short term, UNCTAD's Trade Facilitation Team studied alternatives for ensuring a qualitative remote delivery of its successful Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees.

BUILDING ON THE ONLINE VIDEOS CREATED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME 2018-2020, UNCTAD OPTED FOR SETTING UP AN E-LEARNING PLATFORM THAT WILL ENSURE A HOLISTIC VIRTUAL TRAINING JOURNEY TO MEMBERS OF NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES.

As a result, between August 2020 and January 2021, the UNCTAD team worked on the design of the platform, the adaptation of the existing content to a virtual environment, and liaised with Programme partner countries to identify potential participants for the course.

The course content as well as the platform has been translated into French, Portuguese, and Spanish, thanks to a combination of resources from different UNCTAD projects, including the HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD capacity building programme. This allows UNCTAD to open its training to partner countries across all continents.

The initial course entailed nine self-paced modules, 43 quizzes, nine exams and a final assignment and was delivered in approximately four to seven months – depending on the needs of each country. For each course, 11 webinars are organised allowing participants to dive deeper into the topic, raise any questions that they have about the specific lesson and adapt the key learning concepts to a country's reality.

Since its launch, several further courses have been developed and translated with the financial support of HMRC and other donors such as the African Development Bank, the European Union and the German Ministry of International Cooperation (BMZ).



MULTIPLYING TRAINING RESULTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROGRAMME

UNCTAD Trade Facilitation e-Learning platform was launched at the beginning of February 2021.

The platform has benefited, not only Programme partner countries (Bolivia, Botswana, Cambodia, Eswatini, Honduras, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Sao Tome e Principe, Timor Leste, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) but also other beneficiary countries that are being supported through the framework of other UNCTAD projects, namely:

- Ecuador, Mongolia, Peru, with support from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, with support from Trademark East Africa
- Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Republic of Congo, with support from the African Development Bank

It is also expected that the platform will be benefitting many more countries in the future, not only in the framework of the Phase IV of the Programme, but also in the scope of other UNCTAD delivered projects. By March 2025, it is already programmed that at least 25 further countries will undergo UNCTAD training using the Platform.

By the end of March 2022, **1,031 trade facilitation stakeholders had completed at least one UNCTAD course, with 388 being from Partner countries and 643 from other beneficiary countries outside the Programme.** Overall, over **18,000 hours of studying** were registered in the platform.

During the delivery of the courses in the partner countries, UNCTAD organised more than **180 webinars** which included the participation of non-Programme funded international experts who were mobilized at no cost to the Programme via UNCTAD's network of trade facilitation experts and practitioners. International experts, 49 of which were from developing countries, devoted over 200 hours to the Programme.

THIS LEVERAGE POWER CONSTITUTES HIGH VALUE FOR MONEY FOR THE PROGRAMME.

At the end of the course, participants are invited to fill in an evaluation form. The following results have been collected by 31 March 2022:

- 96% of participants affirm that the course has helped them **improve (very) significantly their knowledge** on trade facilitation.
- After the course, 97% of participants feel more comfortable to **apply trade facilitation principles and concepts in their daily job.**
- After the course, 88,77% of participants **feel in a better position to fulfil their roles as members of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.**

Validation of how trade facilitation stakeholders apply these learnings is gathered in their final assignments. To complete the course, members of the National Trade Facilitation Committees need to draft and present a final assignment, with an original reflection on the trade facilitation situation in their country, while applying the concepts and principles they have learned throughout the course.

THE ASSIGNMENTS ARE COLLECTED BY UNCTAD AND TRANSFORMED INTO INPUTS THAT ARE FED INTO THE RESPECTIVE WORK PLANS OF EACH NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE.

Remarkable assignments have been published in the blog of UNCTAD Trade Facilitation e-Learning platform¹. By the end of the Programme, 23 articles were published in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

¹ <https://tfelearning.unctad.org/blog>

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Trade Facilitation E-Learning Blog

The view from practitioner|

A BLOG WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES

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BY [ELZA MARIA DOS SANTOS AMARO VAZ](#) | JUNE 2, 2022

Género no comércio externo - Perspectiva das mulheres comerciantes em São Tomé e Príncipe

A igualdade de género tem sido um dos temas importantes nas agendas nacionais, regionais e internacionais, obrigando os Estados a assumirem compromissos e adotarem medidas para reduzir as desigualdades baseadas no género.

BY [LUSENDA ANDRIANA](#) | JUNE 2, 2022

Integração de políticas do Género no Comércio, um trabalho para 365 dias em STP

O tema igualdade e género no comércio tem sido bastante discutido, mencionado de profundas reflexões e impulsionador de grandes e bem-sucedidas reformas em países desenvolvidos, e de difícil materialização para países pouco desenvolvidos, como o caso de São Tomé e Príncipe.

BY [BOGIAMNA ANDRIANASOLO MANITRA](#) | APRIL 21, 2022

La redynamisation des groupes de travail techniques pour impulser la performance du CNFE de Madagascar

L'article suivant fait des propositions pour impulser la performance du Comité National de la Facilitation des Échanges (CNFE) de Madagascar qui peuvent être certainement valables pour d'autres CNFEs qui se retrouveraient dans une situation similaire à celle de Madagascar.

BY [KAREN OSORIO LÓPEZ](#) | MARCH 22, 2022

Retos y oportunidades para Honduras en la Facilitación del Comercio

Este artículo busca exponer los retos y oportunidades que tiene Honduras para lograr una efectiva y progresiva implementación del Acuerdo sobre Facilitación del Comercio (AFC) de la Organización Mundial del Comercio (OMC), abarcando con ello a que las instituciones, tanto del sector público como privado, utilicen mejores prácticas para la facilitación del comercio, desde el ámbito de sus competencias y que esa unión de fuerzas conveja para el buen funcionamiento y beneficio de los actores del comercio.

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BY [MANUEL CURIÑME](#) | MARCH 17, 2022

El salto de la Ventanilla Única de Comercio Exterior a la plataforma digital de comercio internacional (Single Submission Portal)

El presente artículo tiene como objetivo llamar la atención sobre cómo el Perú podría contribuir con su proyecto de Ventanilla Única de Comercio Exterior (VUCE) de segunda generación, y paralelamente, enfrentar el reto de realizar las reformas necesarias para diseñar y poner en marcha las plataformas únicas públicas y privadas de comercio internacional (Single Submission Portal - SSP), las cuales permitan un grado de digitalización absoluta en las transacciones B2G (gobierno - sector privado), B2B

TESTIMONIALS

UNCTAD collects testimonials from participants of the e-Learning courses through an evaluation process. . This is what they have to say:



Patricia Joubert

*Dean-Commerce at University of Swaziland,
Eswatini*

"[The course] will enable me to account and answer relevant questions from our stakeholders and make the dream of streamlined, efficient and effective trade practices in line with the TFA that we are party [to], globally, regionally, and nationally. Trade Processes are evolving at a dynamic pace and requires regular innovation and improvements or else as countries we will not reap maximum benefits of trade with our trading partners."



Gugu Treasure DLAMINI-ZWANE

*Customs Modernisation, Reform, and
International Relations, Eswatini*

"Generally, I was amazed at how UNCTAD came up with such a very useful and relevant yet practical course. As WCO MPA, I will definitely advise countries to sign up for the course. A course so relevant during these COVID trying times. The combination of Videos and Notes is very useful."



Emmanuel Malukutla

*Assistant Director - Enterprise Risk Management
Bank of Zambia*

"I intend to apply this information in my personal and professional work, being a member of the working group of the NTFC."



Andrew Kingstone Sandula

Director of Road Traffic and Safety Services, Malawi

"I enjoyed the course most because it helped to understand the provisions of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement much better than before. I stick to the end of the course because it was relevant to my job. I would recommend this course to my workmates. I wished to see the challenges African countries are facing in the implementation of trade facilitation reforms and possible solutions. Encouraging African countries to implement trade facilitation reforms."



Margareth N Lukileni

Customs & Excise Officer, Namibia

"It was indeed a good course with so much insight on daily trade facilitation. I have enjoyed more on trade barriers. I had to push myself to hold on until the end, not to disappoint the people who nominated me for the course (supervisors). I would recommend this course to all customs officials especially to beginners. However, juggling this course with work requires more determination and courage especially attending live webinars."



Bweupe Lombanya

Metrology Engineer (Zambia Metrology Agency)

"This course was one of the best online courses I have ever experienced. The material was well aligned and easy to follow."



Moeketsi Ranthake

Customs Inspector, Lesotho

"I enjoyed the flexibility of the course, that we could do it at our own leisure times without any exerted pressure, clear and nicely articulated voiced that narrated through the course, it was amazing. Big ups for that!"



Yassin Mwachande

Industrial Development Officer, Malawi

"This has been a very interesting and insightful experience as I have learnt a lot of new stuff. In future, we members of the Ministry of Industry should be given a greater role to play as we are there to provide our friends in Ministry of Trade the goods to trade. Currently, I feel the TFA is seen as a Ministry of Trade thing, while in essence it's for all of us, in order to see Malawi growing."



“ I enjoyed how the Trade Facilitation issues were unpacked and how the different organizations work together to ensure smooth trade across borders. ”

Bolpelo Gotlhe Baakanyang
Manager, Botswana Trade Portal at Botswana Investment and Trade Centre



“ One of the interesting components that I enjoy the most is the final assignment. Please keep this module as it is for next participants from Timor-Leste. ”

Decio Ribeiro Sarmento
Director Investment and Export Promotion Agency TradeInvest Timor-Leste



“ The videos are interactive and easy to follow. It is a self-pace program, it was easy for me to do the modules in my free time. ”

Dávida Crescência de Fátima Mesquita
Marketing and Branding Specialist
Coordinator at the office of the Vice-Minister of Commerce and Industry of Timor-Leste



“ You did a great job bringing in a good mix of experts to provide many great knowledge and practical insights. Overall, the course was very insightful. ”

SOK Kha
Cambodia Trade Facilitation Advisor of ARISE Plus



“ Every topic was unique in its own and I appreciated how the topics interconnected. ”

Mamolloa Raphuthing
Planning and Research Manager at the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC)



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