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UNCTAD Reform Tracker tool Implementation: Namibia Experience

Presentation by

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UNCTAD Reform Tracker tool Implementation: Namibia Experience

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NamRA
18 July 2023

PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

To present the Reform Tracker tool Implementation in Namibia and benefits thereon. Insights on what has been achieved, how has the process assisted in implementation, organization of the work and what challenges encountered

Acronomies used within the presentation

- NTFC (National Trade Facilitation Committee)
- UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development)
- WTO – TFA (World Trade Organisation – Trade Facilitation Agreement)
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Article 23.2 implies the formation of National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).
- Subsequently, Namibia established the NTFC in July 2019 constituting of various institutions from public and private sectors.
- On the 17 November 2020, Namibia requested to participate on the UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Assistance Programme including the Reform Tracker tool - https://reformtracker.org/

Namibia`s notifications under the WTO TFA

On 01 March 2023, Namibia notified all definitive deadlines for the implementation of Cat. B and C commitments under the WTO TFA (https://tfadatabase.org/members/namibia/article-22.3)


30 June 2024
Art. 7.4 Risk Management (Cat. C)
Art. 7.5 Post Clearance Audit (Cat. C)
Art. 7.8 Expedited Shipments (Cat. C)
Art. 8 Border Agency Cooperation (Cat. C)

30 December 2023
Art. 7.6 Average release times (Cat. C)
Art. 7.7 Authorized Operators (Cat. C)
Art. 10.4 Single Window (Cat. C)
Art. 11 Transit (Partially) (Cat. C)

Upcoming implementation deadlines
30 December 2024
Art. 1.1 Publication (Cat. B)
Art. 1.2 Information available through internet (Cat. C)
Art. 1.3 Enquiry points (Cat. C)
Art. 3 Advance Ruling (Cat C)
Art. 6.1 General disciplines on fees and charges (Cat. C)
Art. 10.6 Use of Customs Brokers (Cat. C)
Art. 11 Freedom of Transit (Cat. C)
Namibia`s notifications under the WTO TFA

Upcoming implementation deadlines ➔ Early Warning Mechanism

31 December 2023
Art. 7.6 Average release times (Cat. C)
Art. 7.7 Authorized Operators (Cat. C)
Art. 10.4 Single Window (Cat. C)
Art. 11 Transit (Partially) (Cat. C)

Namibia decided to use the Early Warning Mechanism

- Allows developing countries to request for additional implementation time.
- Developing country shall notify the WTO Committee on Trade Facilitation no later than 120 days before the expiration of the implementation date
- The notification shall indicate:
  - New implementation dates
  - Reasons for the expected delay in implementation (such as the need for assistance and support for capacity building not earlier anticipated or additional assistance and support to help build capacity)

“Commitment Shock” delayed to December 2024

Before 30 December 2024 (in 16 months)
Namibia will have to implement 44.5% of all TFA measures (!)
UNCTAD’s technical assistance to Namibia

December 2018 to September 2019
In-country capacity building
1. Empowerment Programme
2. Four (4) Workshops, including on Roadmap and Training of Trainers

February 2021 to June 2021
1. Online nine (9) modules, webinars with guest speakers and final dissertations
1.1 Empowerment Programme for NTFC
1.2 Gender Perspective on Trade Facilitation Reforms

June 2021 to Reform Tracker launched in Namibia on 10 June 2021 by UNCTAD
1. Country administrators appointed and trained
2. Presentation to NTFC members on 02 September 2021 and 10 May 2022 respectively
3. Training offered on 23 September 2022 and on 23 May 2023
4. More than 40 Reform Tracker Users are certified
5. Quarterly Reform Tracker meetings

November 2021 to July 2023
1. Situation and Gap analyses done in consultation with different stakeholders
2. Online Modules
   2.1 Effective Communication for NTFCs
      https://tfelearning.unctad.org/blog
   2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation for Trade Facilitation
   2.3 Draft a Resource mobilization Strategy
   2.4 Effectively run and Chair the NTFC
   2.5 Business Process Analysis

Namibia’s Achievements: Technical Assistance under Accelerate Trade Facilitation Programme (WCO-HMRC-UNCTAD)

Article 3 Advance Ruling
Launched on the 12 July 2022

Article 7.6 Time Release Study
Launched the Time Release Study on the 07 February 2023

Article 7.7 Authorized Economic Operators
Mutual Recognition Agreements signed by SACU on the 31 May 2023

Article 8 Border Agency Cooperation
Coordinated Border Management
Use of National Identities on Cross border on the 24 February 2023
24-hour border operations on the 01 April 2023
Envisaged OSBP between Tran-Kalahari and Mamuno Border Posts - early 2024

NamRA
NamRA launches Pilot Time Release Study on the 07 February 2023

In line with its strategic objective of providing customs and excise services that facilitate legitimate trade, the Namibia Revenue Agency (NamRA) yesterday, 7 February 2023 launched the Pilot Time Release Study (TRS) at the Port of Walvis Bay with technical and financial support from the World Customs Organization (WCO) and His Majesty Revenue & Customs.

The Time Release Study is a strategic and internationally recognized tool developed by WCO to measure the actual time required for the release and/or clearance of goods, from the time of arrival until the physical release of cargo.

The objective is to determine bottlenecks in the trade flow process and take necessary measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of border procedures.

Speaking at the launch, NamRA Commissioner Sem Siy.pull said the success of the TRS project will contribute greatly to the trade environment in Namibia, improve the country’s competitiveness to attract more investors, and ultimately contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

He further encouraged all stakeholders to participate in the project particularly regulatory bodies, to share the technology and avail data to the Technical Working Group (TWG) to be established for the project.

The Pilot TRS will be conducted this month at the Port of Walvis Bay while TRS at other ports will be conducted in the future.

NamRA and WCO Firms up relations

The Namibia Revenue Agency (NamRA) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) are set to consolidate relations in identified areas.

WCO Head of the Accelerated Trade Facilitation Programme Donia Hammami indicated that the global body was prepared to assist NamRA with the Coordinated Border Management Programme and the Electronic Advance Ruling.

She further pledged support in providing guidance on the enhancement of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Programme and the air cargo streamlining, as influenced by the growing e-commerce.

During an interaction at Walvis Bay yesterday (Tuesday), NamRA Commissioner Sem Siy.pull stressed that the entity was committed to the implementation of all interventions that would contribute to the vision of becoming a world-class revenue agency.

Reform Tracker Changes Tracked

454 Changes tracked on the Reform Tracker
Namibia NTFC sharing best practices on Sierra Leone NTFC on the 06 June 2023

What can Namibia do?

Using the Early Warning Mechanism again?
For those measures due on 30 December 2023:

Art. 7.6 Average release times (Cat. C)
Art. 7.7 Authorized Operators (Cat. C)
Art. 10.4 Single Window (Cat. C)
Art. 11 Transit (Partially) (Cat. C)

***To be considered only if those reforms cannot be implemented by 30 December 2023.

***Remember that the second request is not automatically accepted

Accelerating the implementation process!

- By revitalizing Namibia’s NTFC, with regular meetings and annual plan
- By using the Reform Tracker to its full potential – Online training has been offered by UNCTAD – more than 40 Users from Namibia are certified
- By intensifying fund raising efforts
- By strengthening coordination amongst NTFC members, especially for Art. 8

***NamRA will be the primary leading agency for implementing upcoming commitments (Art. 7.6, and 7.7)
THANKS!

Any questions?
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