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BIENNIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PLAN 2022 - 2023

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ACRONYMS

AIP	Accessions Internship Programme
ATPC	Advanced Trade Policy Course
GPA	Government Procurement Agreement
GTF	Global Trust Fund
GVC	Global Value Chain
ITTC	Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation
LDCs	Least developed countries
FIMIP	French & Irish Mission Internship Programme
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MTS	Multilateral Trading System
NTP	Netherlands Trainee Programme
PLS	Progressive Learning Strategy
RBM	Results-Based Management
RCI	Regional Coordinator Internship
RTPC	Regional Trade Policy Course
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
TA	Technical Assistance
TA Plan	Biennial Technical Assistance and Training Plan
TAME	Technical Assistance Monitoring & Evaluation Unit
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPR	Trade Policy Review
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
TRTA	Trade-Related Technical Assistance
WCP	WTO Chairs Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
YPP	Young Professionals Programme

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Trade-related Technical Assistance (TRTA) is a core function of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Its main purpose is to enhance the human and institutional capacities of beneficiaries, so that they may fully benefit from the rules-based Multilateral Trading System (MTS), meet their obligations and enforce their rights as Members, and deal with emerging trade-related challenges and opportunities.

2. This Biennial Technical Assistance and Training Plan (TA Plan) defines the strategy and priorities that will be followed by the Secretariat in this domain over 2022-23. The TA Plan is a policy framework that identifies priorities, anticipates results, as well as mechanisms for implementation and sources of funding for the activities. The TA Plan is designed to deliver technical assistance (TA) taking into account the provisions of paragraphs 38 to 41 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration¹ and other relevant decisions adopted by Members.

3. The TA Plan 2022-23 aims to give continuity to and build on the work carried out under previous TA Plans while adapting the TA offer to the evolving needs of the MTS and of TA beneficiaries. The overall design of this Plan is mainly guided by the WTO's managing for results and progressive learning strategies and is structured around the following four Key Results:

- Key Result 1 – Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations;
- Key Result 2 – Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations;
- Key Result 3 – Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers; and
- Key Result 4 – Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues.

4. The TA Plan explains how the above four Key Results will be pursued over the 2022-23 biennium, taking into consideration Members' needs and the outcome of the most recent Ministerial Conferences. The TA Plan has provided for sufficient flexibility to accommodate any specific outcomes from the 12th Ministerial Conference to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in November and December 2021. In keeping with the Results-Based Management (RBM) approach, and to ensure continuous improvement in the availability of comprehensive data, the Secretariat will continue working towards a fuller implementation of its monitoring and evaluation framework and tools where applicable. The TA Plan identifies the performance indicators and targets that will be used to measure the attainment of the Key Results.

5. During the 2022-23 biennium, the Secretariat will continue promoting TA activities that focus on the implementation of WTO Agreements and addressing the specific needs identified by TA beneficiaries, implementing its internal RBM tools, and consolidate the Progressive Learning Strategy (PLS) where applicable. The Secretariat will also continue developing and incorporating more effective pedagogical methods, maintain its use of value-adding partnerships, and commit to promoting fully inclusive activities that respond to the needs of the weakest and most vulnerable beneficiaries. Notably, the Secretariat will continue strengthening its pedagogical methods and its Training of Trainers (ToT) efforts, with the aim of improving knowledge transfer and retention, including through the use of new methods of training and technologies with increased interactivity and a more efficient use of resources.

6. The execution of the previous biennial TA Plan has been severely affected since March 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic.² On the supply side, travel restrictions, prohibitions or restrictions on meetings, lockdowns and other similar measures, have affected the Secretariat's ability to organize face-to-face TA activities, whether in Geneva or abroad. On the demand side, similar constraints, as well as limitations on access to computer equipment and reliable internet connection, especially for

¹ Doha Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paras. 38-41.

² See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 13, 17-18, and 21.

government officials forced to work from home, have affected the capacity of beneficiaries to request and to benefit from TA activities. These circumstances have negatively affected, not only face-to-face, but also eLearning, TA activities.³ The factors described have had an unequal impact on access to TRTA across beneficiaries. Access to adequate computer equipment or to reliable internet connection can be a challenge for government officials in many regions. Often, beneficiaries with a high need for TA also face comparatively higher challenges in this respect.

7. At the time of preparation of this biennial TA Plan, there is still considerable uncertainty over how the COVID-19 pandemic, and the related factors affecting the request and delivery of TA activities, will evolve over the years 2022 and 2023. The TA Plan will provide indicators, baselines, and targets to be used to measure the attainment of the Key Results assuming that the current conditions that negatively affect TA activities will be to a significant extent overcome at the beginning of the period 2022-23 or soon thereafter. While there are specific assumptions related to the current pandemic associated with several of the outcomes outlined in the logframe that may have an impact on the indicators, a general assumption of a progressive and gradual relaxation of restrictive measures is central to all the activities envisaged. Based on current trends, the scenario described is one with a high degree of likelihood, but it is far from certain. However, if the current conditions that negatively affect TA activities continue or worsen during all or most of the period 2022-23, this will have an impact on the indicators included in the logframe and the possibility of meeting the indicated targets. The extent to which results may be affected will depend on the circumstances that may arise and the measures that may be taken, at the global, regional or country level. Given the multiple alternative scenarios that could arise in such event, and the difficulty of presenting an alternative logframe that would capture all of these scenarios, a single detailed logframe is being presented with this caveat.

8. The TA Plan has been developed in the context of a WTO Regular Budget that has been static in nominal terms since 2009, and of generously provided though declining voluntary extra-budgetary resources. Taking this into account, the TA Plan assumes that TA resources will be stable during this biennium, thereby allowing approximately the same level of TA activity as in previous years. Towards this aim, the Secretariat will continue its efforts to improve the efficiency of the TA programme while enhancing its quality and benefits to recipients. These efforts will be guided by the lessons learnt, as well as by the priorities identified by beneficiaries for this biennium.

9. In parallel, the Secretariat will continue to engage with Members on other issues that might require action. These include examining the TA needs linked to new trade issues and assessing trainees' learning and their use of the skills gained through TA.

10. Under the guidance of Members, the Secretariat will continue to carry out those actions that still require attention as outlined in the Secretariat's response to the TRTA External Evaluation conducted in 2016. The Secretariat will take into account the outcome of its structural review, as appropriate, to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of TRTA.

2 INTRODUCTION

11. WTO's TRTA activities aim to help beneficiaries build their human and institutional capacities so that they can participate more effectively in the MTS. In this regard, Ministers declared at the WTO's 4th Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001, that:

The delivery of WTO technical assistance shall be designed to assist developing and least-developed countries and low-income countries in transition to adjust to WTO rules and disciplines, implement obligations and exercise the rights of membership, including drawing on the benefits of an open, rules-based multilateral trading system.⁴

12. The importance of TA was subsequently re-affirmed by Ministers at the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2015, when they stated that:

We also reiterate the importance of targeted and sustainable financial, technical, and capacity building assistance programmes to support the developing country Members,

³ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 38.

⁴ Doha Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, para. 38.

in particular LDCs, to implement their agreements, to adjust to the reform process, and to benefit from opportunities presented.⁵

13. In the preparation of this TA Plan 2022-23, the Secretariat worked with beneficiaries to identify needs and to ensure the relevance of the TRTA activities offered. Starting points for the preparation of the TA Plan were the information gathered through a questionnaire submitted by TA beneficiaries and consultations with Members and Observers. This information is complemented by the lessons drawn from the implementation of previous TA Plans.

14. The TA Plan 2022-23 maintains the overall strategy and approach adopted by previous TA Plans and continues to give priority to activities supporting Members' efforts to implement WTO Agreements, addressing their TRTA priorities and promoting better TA results. Furthermore, the activities included in the TA Plan 2022-23 have been designed to achieve similar overall results as those of the most recent biennial TA Plans. The results expected for 2022-23 are elaborated in section 6 and in the detailed logframe included in Annex 1. The Annex is an integral part of the TA Plan.

15. The TA Plan has been developed against a background of increased economic uncertainty, compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The majority of TA beneficiaries continue to face challenges as those that necessitated the development of the WTO TA programme over the years. Furthermore, a number of TA beneficiaries are seeking increased information about ongoing discussions on emerging trade issues such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Global Value Chains (GVCs), etc.

16. The TA Plan 2022-23 is designed to deliver TA taking into account the provisions of paragraphs 38 to 41 of the Doha Declaration and other relevant decisions adopted by Members.⁶ As in previous TA Plans, the TA activities to be delivered will depend on Members' identified needs particularly at the national level, with regional activities reflecting overall needs expressed in the various regions. The main TA activities and programmes associated with this TA Plan are listed in Annex 2.

17. The rest of this document comprises the following sections: a summary of the main lessons learnt from the implementation of past TA activities; the TA needs and priorities identified by Members; the strategies and actions to respond to Members' and Observers' needs and priorities; the overall results expected from the delivery of this TA Plan; and the funding requirements necessary to implement it.

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TA PLAN 2020-21

3.1 Key achievements of the TA Plan 2020-21

18. The lessons learned from the implementation of previous TA Plans have helped guide the preparation of this TA Plan 2022-23.

19. The WTO TA Annual Report for 2020 (2020 TA Annual Report) analysed in detail the TRTA provided by the WTO during the first year of implementation of the TA Plan 2020-21.⁷ The year 2020 started positively with 26 face-to-face TA activities taking place by mid-March. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19-related limitations such as travel restrictions, prohibitions or restrictions on meetings, lockdowns and other similar measures, all face-to-face TA activities subsequently came to an abrupt stop. For most of the second quarter of 2020, eLearning activities were by and large the only TA available. The Secretariat developed new TA activities in virtual format and reconverted activities originally designed for face-to-face delivery. The transition was progressive and partial, but to a large extent successful in addressing requests for TA. In any event, despite a 22% increase in the offer of eLearning activities and the rolling out of remote TA activities in the second half of the year, the number of TA activities in 2020 decreased by 22% compared to 2019.⁸

⁵ Nairobi Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(15)/DEC, para. 17.

⁶ Doha Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, paras. 38-41.

⁷ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259.

⁸ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 13. The increased offer of virtual TA activities and eLearning courses did not completely compensate the lack of face-to-face activities. As noted below, however, the number of TA participants remained broadly constant. See para. 23 below.

20. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected demand for TA activities. Understandably, the attention of beneficiaries was initially concentrated on public health concerns and the related effects of the pandemic, rather than on trade-related capacity building. There was a significant drop in requests for national TA activities, which are traditionally one of the most frequent forms of TA. The work of committees was temporarily suspended and resumed slowly. Trade Policy Reviews and their follow-ups also slowed down. It should also be noted that, for many beneficiaries, the different modes of TA delivery (face-to-face, virtual and online) cannot completely substitute each other. Accordingly, the Secretariat's efforts to develop an alternative offer of virtual TA activities met limited demand.

21. The cancellation of several face-to-face activities for generalists during 2020 resulted in a bigger proportion of specialized training. Most advanced activities proved hard to convert to virtual delivery, resulting in a significant drop in the number and proportion of advanced TA activities and in the size of their audience. Conversely, intermediate activities became dominant and constituted three quarters of the year's total number of TA activities. A portion of activities did not fit into the Progressive Learning Strategy and could not be assigned a specific level.

22. Online courses in the Secretariat's eLearning programme remained available uninterrupted through the year 2020. Overall, the number of participants in these activities remained stable. Proportionally, eLearning drew 43% of total participants in 2020. One challenge was encouraging participants to attend and complete the courses. The number of participants who completed eLearning courses declined by 7% in the year. In addition to the general difficulties stemming from the pandemic that affected participation in all TA activities, another fact may explain this decline, namely that, with no face-to-face activities, beneficiaries had less incentives to attend and complete eLearning courses which constitute prerequisites for these activities. To address these challenges, new types of courses were designed to respond to evolving needs, such as a demand for shorter courses, mobile learning, and multimedia-rich training material. This resulted in an expansion of the eLearning catalogue by 22% at the end of 2020.

23. By the second half of 2020, the Secretariat was able to partially replace suspended face-to-face TA activities with virtual activities. This development helped stabilise the number of TA participants for the year, as some virtual activities were able to accommodate larger audiences.

24. The year 2020 also witnessed a significant underreporting of TA activities. It is estimated that approximately one half of all virtual activities went unreported, as many of these activities did not require specific financial resources. Consequently, the TA data collected was incomplete and inconsistent, making results indicators, many of which were initially defined for face-to-face activities, less relevant and several of the targets assigned to TA unrealistic. The logical framework in the TA Plan defines the indicators and targets that are used to measure performance. Due to the particular circumstances during most of 2020, the standard logframe became an inadequate metric for measuring TA performance in that year.⁹

25. The Secretariat attempted to maintain strong participation of least-developed countries (LDCs) as a priority. It also remained committed to promoting gender parity in its activities. The delivery of TA activities in the different WTO working languages was an additional tool to promote inclusion.

26. As indicated above, overall demand for TA dropped significantly in 2020. The lower number of TA activities for the year, notably those at a national level, had a particularly severe effect on LDC participation. The number of LDCs benefitting from TA in 2020 was 14% below target. For many LDCs, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ability to participate in TA activities seem to have been compounded by connectivity challenges when trying to attend virtual events. On a positive note, the prevalence of virtual activities, many of which were global in reach, meant that approximately 80% of TA activities in 2020 were open to the participation of LDCs. TA activities in topics such as accessions, LDC graduation, technology transfer, and the impact of COVID-19, generated significant LDC participation. LDCs also increased their share of participation in eLearning activities to 30%, which was in line with historic rates over the past decade and an 11% increase over 2019.¹⁰

⁹ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 18.

¹⁰ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 56-57.

27. Due to the underreporting of TA activities, it was challenging to closely monitor female participation in TA activities. It does seem, however, that the consequences of the pandemic disproportionately affected the participation of women in TA activities. For those activities where information was available, women comprised 45% of participants, which remains close to the 47% average in 2017-19. In some regions, however, such as Asia Pacific and CEECAC, where women representation was already low, it fell further. Women participation also fell by 10% in eLearning activities, where it had previously remained stable. The number of women who signed up for courses but did not complete them increased by 17% compared to 2019. Among women who successfully completed courses, grades were 2% lower than for their male counterparts. That said, women more frequently completed courses with distinction than men.¹¹

28. The Secretariat continued to offer courses in the three WTO working languages. English remained the predominant language in TA activities in 2020, followed by French and Spanish. Considering both face-to-face and virtual courses, 50% of participants were trained in English, 13% in French, and 8% in Spanish. The remaining 29%, double the proportion in 2019, attended multilingual activities with interpretation. Language preferences for eLearning activities followed a broadly similar pattern as in 2019. The audience for English-language courses increased from 64% to 69%, while that of Spanish courses decreased from 20% to 19% and that of French courses from 16% to 12%. The Secretariat continued working on making all eLearning courses available in the three WTO working languages. However, in part due to the launch of 15 new eLearning courses, initially in English only, only 65% of the eLearning catalogue in 2020 was available in the three working languages.

29. Key Result 1, which promotes the implementation of WTO Agreements and the full realisation of Members' rights and obligations, continues to represent the bulk of TA activities, with some 86% of TA activities reported during 2020. Key Result 2, which supports the accession of new Members, was in second place with 12% of TA activities reported during 2020. Key Results 3 and 4, in favour of academia and other stakeholders, represented a smaller share than in previous years.

30. Overall, WTO TA reached 65% of its agreed targets (53% fully and 12% partially). Given the constraints imposed by the pandemic and the inadequacy of the metrics chosen in pre-COVID-19 times, these results represent a notable performance. Remarkable results were observed in several areas. For example, the number of outstanding notifications - for Agriculture, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), or Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), among others - continued to fall in 2020. The improvement may be partly attributed to the transition initiated by the WTO more than a decade ago towards electronic notification tools and databases. During the pandemic, most communications, including notifications, were electronic or online. Overall, digital tools saw their use increase in 2020.

31. Developing and LDC Members continued to actively contribute to the work of the MTS. They maintained their submissions of working documents to WTO bodies. Accession processes to the WTO and the Government Procurement Agreement also proved resilient to the pandemic. Work continued at about the same pace as in previous years. Observers also adjusted well to the new modes of TA delivery.

32. The various internship programmes were not affected by the pandemic. For the most part, they proceeded almost as initially planned. Many of the interns were already present in Geneva by the time travel restrictions began. While the interns worked from home for most of the year, they still achieved their objectives of learning by doing. Their supervisors evaluated their performance as fully satisfactory.

33. The year 2020 was a year of consolidation for the WTO Chairs Programme. Two years after the last grant was paid to the Phase II Chairs, the outcomes of the programme look set to remain sustainable. The Chairs remained influential in their regions and impacted trade policy. They also continued to update the curriculum of their courses and reported an unprecedented level of research output. In December 2020, an application process for Phase III was launched.

34. Outreach activities for non-traditional audiences - such as journalists, legislators, private sector or civil society - were severely affected by the pandemic. Unable to hold in-person events, the Secretariat turned to other communication channels to communicate with these communities.

¹¹ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 56-57.

Activity increased through social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram), the WTO website, and the News Bulletin on TA. The Training Material Request (TMR) facility disseminated WTO teaching materials well beyond the traditional circles of beneficiaries. After halving in 2019, the TMR bounced back in 2020. The numbers of persons accessing TMR returned to their pre-2019 levels, especially for academia and the private sector.

3.2 Lessons learnt from implementing the TA Plan 2020-21

35. Several relevant lessons can be drawn from the implementation of the TA activities in 2020-21 and in earlier years, which will shape the implementation of this TA Plan. The lessons drawn relate to the implementation of the Secretariat's RBM approach, the PLS, the pedagogical methods, and prioritizing inclusion.

3.2.1 Managing for Results

36. The progress made over the last years, as described in previous performance reports in accordance with the Secretariat's TA monitoring and evaluation, provides the basis for the TA Plan to continue the overall approach established in the last biennium. Appropriate changes will be made to reflect new TA demands to meet evolving circumstances surrounding the WTO work programme. Adjustments will also be made to provide the necessary flexibility to take into account factors such as the manner in which current COVID-19-related restrictions are lifted at a national or regional level. Consequently, this TA Plan is structured according to the same overall philosophy and broad operational modalities as the previous TA Plans.

37. At the same time, minor adjustments have been made to the indicators, targets and assumptions for some Key Results and Outputs, as a result of lessons learned in the 2020-21 period. These changes will allow the Secretariat to collect relevant data, taking account of the limited capacity of many beneficiaries to provide reliable information on the results of TA at the national level. Some minor adjustments have also been made to the logframe (Annex 1) to address identified shortcomings.

38. With the objective of facilitating data collection for the purpose of RBM (such as information of beneficiaries' needs, level of TA demand, and partnerships), enhancements were made to the TA Management System (TAMS) during the 2020-21 biennium. These changes included improving and creating new functionalities for online national TA requests, BTOR's recommendations module, and eDashboards.

39. The combination of the availability of real-time TA data visualization and an annual TA reporting that includes qualitative evidence of impact through storytelling assists the Secretariat in a more strategic communication of TA results and fosters transparency and accountability. It also captures elements of sustainability of TA results that cannot be captured otherwise through the indicators included in the TA plan (such as the WTO Chairs Programme and long-term internships).

3.2.2 The Progressive Learning Strategy

40. The Secretariat's TA offer continued being guided by the PLS. During the year 2020 most registered TA activities were part of the PLS. Only 13% of registered TA activities could not be ascribed a specific level and did not fit into the PLS.¹² This proportion was consistent with previous years and indicates a good absorption of PLS in the Secretariat's TA activities.

41. Efforts to introduce progressivity in the training courses were mostly concentrated on regional, global and online courses. Applying the PLS approach in national activities is often challenging due to the limited control that the Secretariat has in determining participation.

¹² See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 41.

3.2.3 Course Content and Pedagogical methods

42. Despite the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariat continued adjusting its course offer and curricula¹³, improving its pedagogical approach, and carefully identifying the needs of beneficiaries with a view to achieving the desired learning outcomes.

43. With respect to means of delivering TA activities, the year 2020 imposed a steep learning curve for trainers and participants, as well as for the organizers of these activities. Virtual TA delivery was initially launched in mid-2020 as a bridge for the Secretariat to continue addressing beneficiaries' TA needs to the extent possible while face-to-face activities were impossible. It has resulted in a better understanding, for both the Secretariat and beneficiaries, of the opportunities that remote TA delivery may offer.

44. At the same time, the experience of 2020 has also allowed a better understanding of the limitations of remote TA delivery, when compared to face-to-face training. Beneficiaries were often reluctant to replace face-to-face activities with equivalent virtual events. To maximize the impact of virtual activities, as compared to face-to-face events, some conditions proved necessary, including the participants being able to dedicate sufficient time to the activity, balancing work, family and other personal constraints. As noted in the feedback provided by participants, devoting exclusive attention to a training activity has become more of a challenge in the remote environment. Access to strong and reliable internet connection and adequate computing equipment also proved to be essential. Finally, with current technology and other current arrangements, it was challenging to convert all TA activities traditionally offered in a face-to-face modality for remote delivery maintaining equivalent results. This proved to be the case especially for advanced activities, both generalist and specialized, which require a high degree of interaction between participants, trainers and other resource persons, as well as among participants themselves. The adjustment to a virtual medium requires that a TA activity must be entirely redesigned. As a general rule, the conversion of a face-to-face training activity requires a significant additional amount of preparation and an adjustment in the level of ambition. Due to the limitations of the medium, this normally results in shorter real time sessions and less intensive group work. In order to cover similar ground, some virtual activities have been designed for a longer duration than their equivalent face-to-face format.¹⁴ The intensive interaction of participants with trainers, and among participants, for the duration of the training, which is a highly significant aspect of face-to-face activities, is severely diminished in the virtual format.

45. Over the past years, in response to a recommendation made by a 2016 external evaluation, the Secretariat has organized a number of Training of Trainers (ToT) courses which have been followed by many Secretariat staff involved in the delivery of TA. The 2020 forced conversion of face-to-face activities to remote delivery led the Secretariat to organize a number of ToT courses dealing with virtual delivery of trainings to bring its trainers up to speed with this form of teaching. The Secretariat will continue to consolidate, enrich and enforce the ToT offer for its staff involved in the delivery of WTO TA.

46. Technological tools that allow remote delivery of TA and increase interactivity are evolving rapidly and becoming more easily accessible. Recent years witnessed an expansion in the uptake of techniques and technologies in WTO TA that aim to sustain participant's attention and enhance the learning experience. WTO Trainers increasingly embraced interactive training techniques and

¹³ Notable examples are the preparation and delivery of a training activity in October 2020 on health, trade, and intellectual property to address the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the second edition of the trilateral study "Promoting Access to Medical Technologies and Innovation: Intersections Between Public Health, Intellectual Property and Trade, both in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization. See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 43-44 and 49.

¹⁴ As a case in point, the Regional Trade Policy Course, an intermediate level activity for generalists was reconverted into an online format. Two editions were delivered in 2020, the first for the Caribbean region and the second for the Arab and Middle Eastern region. Due to the limitations of the format, the eight-week face-to-face version turned into a 14-week long online course, to cover an equivalent amount of material with limited objectives. Despite the reduced level of ambition, most participants noted that the level of work required by the course was highly burdensome especially because they could not dedicate exclusive attention to the training.

incorporated digital innovations in face-to-face activities, resulting in traditional lecturing taking up less than half of training time at the start of the 2020-21 biennium.¹⁵

47. The greater mastery by and familiarity of Secretariat's trainers with interactive teaching methods and tools acquired in 2020 as a result of the shift to remote TA delivery marked a turning point in TA implementation in this regard and will likely continue in the future.

3.2.4 Prioritizing Inclusion

48. Despite the development of new products which generated significant LDC participation (in topics such as accessions, LDC graduation, technology transfer, and the impact of COVID-19), overall demand for TA dropped significantly in 2020 with a particularly severe effect on LDC participation. For many LDCs, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ability to participate in TA activities were compounded by connectivity challenges when trying to attend virtual events.¹⁶ LDCs were also affected by administrative measures taken with respect to Members and Observers in arrears on their contributions to the WTO. By late 2020, eight beneficiaries, including five Members and three Observers, could not access TA from the WTO due to administrative measures. Of these, three were LDCs. This situation poses a challenge to the Secretariat in addressing the needs of a number of beneficiaries, especially LDCs.

49. As noted in the 2020 TA Annual Report, with nearly half of all TA activities delivered virtually not having been recorded in the TA Management System (TAMS), it was challenging to monitor participation in 2020. The consequences of the pandemic, however, appear to have disproportionately affected the participation of women in TA activities. For those TA activities for which data is available, women comprised 45% of participants. While the figure does not fully reflect the situation in 2020, it was close to the 47% average reached in 2017-19.¹⁷

50. As in previous periods, there were variations across regions, with increases in some regions, decreases in others, and stability in a few regions. In some regions, such as Asia Pacific and CEECAC, where women representation was already low, it fell further. Women participation also fell in e-learning activities. Having said that, our experience in 2020 suggests that, when women are able to fully participate in TA activities, their level of engagement leads to excellent learning outcomes.¹⁸

51. In terms of language diversity, of the three WTO working languages, English remained the predominant language in TA activities followed by French and Spanish. Providing interpretation in remotely delivered TA activities was challenging and limited by the availability of interpreters but was relatively easier than for face-to-face activities, where interpretation is additionally constrained by the facilities of the venue.¹⁹ Language preferences for eLearning activities in 2020 followed similar patterns as in the previous year. The audience for English language courses increased from 64% to 69% of participants, while participants in French language courses went from 20% to 19% and those in Spanish language courses from 16% to 12%. The launch of 15 new courses, initially available only in English, reduced to 65% the eLearning catalogue offer available in the three working languages.²⁰

4 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

52. As part of the preparations for the TA Plan, and consistent with past practice, the Secretariat interacted with beneficiary Members and Observers to identify their TA priorities and seek their comments on various aspects related to the provision of TA. In this regard, an online questionnaire was circulated to beneficiaries' permanent missions to the WTO, inviting feedback on a number of issues: their TA needs and priorities; the TA challenges they face in accessing TA, including with respect to the various forms of training delivery (such as online, remote, or face-to-face); and their views on the involvement of various stakeholders in training activities. The responses received were analysed and used as the basis for the preparation of the TA Plan.

¹⁵ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 45.

¹⁶ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 56.

¹⁷ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 58.

¹⁸ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, pp. 56-58.

¹⁹ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 61.

²⁰ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 61.

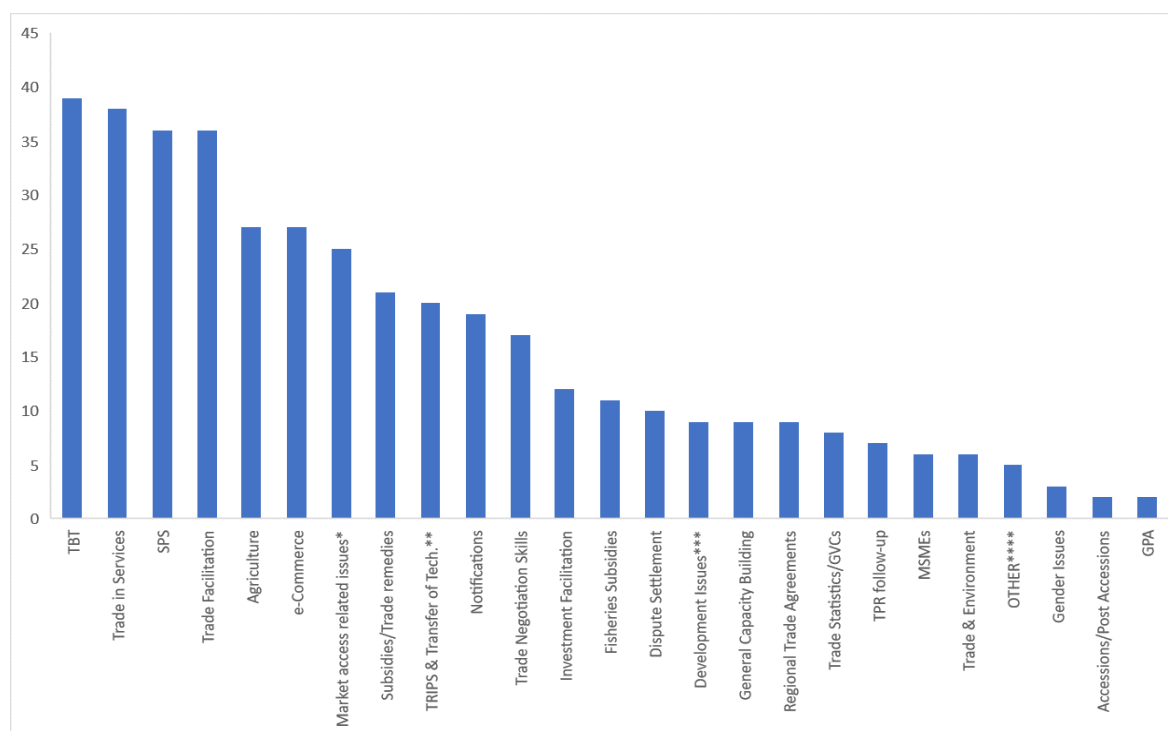
4.1 Identified priorities

53. In total, the Secretariat received responses from 73 beneficiaries. The information gathered can be considered as broadly representative of beneficiaries' views concerning their TA priorities and desired outputs from TA activities for this biennium. As shown in Chart 1, the responses on TA needs and priorities were broadly similar to those provided in the preparation of the previous TA Plan with respect to traditional WTO subjects such as TBT, Trade in Services, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), Trade Facilitation, Agriculture, Market Access related issues, Subsidies/Trade Remedies, etc., and with a noticeable demand for emerging issues such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, and fisheries subsidies.²¹

54. About half of the respondents indicated that they had conducted a TA needs assessment, either comprehensive or specific (e.g., related to specific topics such as trade facilitation). Several mentioned that other tools were used in order to identify their priorities, notably internal consultations with relevant stakeholders, national plans and strategies, and the results of recent trade policy reviews (TPRs).

55. Beneficiaries were also asked whether they considered that WTO TRTA should broaden the range of issues covered to include other topics under discussion in the WTO. Almost all respondents answered affirmatively and indicated as the main subjects those covered by Joint Statement Initiatives (either in general terms or by indicating specific subjects). Among these, e-commerce and investment facilitation were the most frequently mentioned topics, followed by MSMEs and domestic regulation in trade in services. TRIPS-related topics, trade and health related issues, fisheries subsidies, trade and environment, and trade and gender issues are other topics mentioned by several respondents. Other topics identified by respondents include trade and development, trade facilitation issues, trade financing, the WTO reform, the role of the WTO in the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and competition policy. A few respondents considered that the current TA programmes fulfil their needs, and some suggested that existing activities, such as eLearning courses, should be reinforced.

Chart 1 - Beneficiaries priorities for 2022-23



²¹ As was done in previous TA plans, and in order to facilitate comparison, these broad categories attempt to group very diverse and often heterogeneous issues identified by beneficiaries by relating them to existing covered agreements, TA/training topics or specific issues under discussion in the WTO.

* Market access related issues includes among others customs valuation, import licensing, rules of origin, tariff liberalization, non-tariff measures.

** The category "TRIPs and transfer of technology" includes a wide range of trade and development aspects of intellectual property, among others, intersections with innovation, digital transformation, value addition to local products, public health, climate change, and technology transfer programs for LDCs.

*** Development Issues includes among others EIF Support, S&DT, supply-side constraints.

**** OTHER includes among others Reference centers, international competitiveness, WTO reform.

56. Beneficiaries were invited to identify and describe any capacity constraints that hinder them from taking full advantage of the rules-based multilateral trading system, including dealing with emerging WTO issues. The responses were very diverse, and in general the most frequently mentioned issues were related to human resources constraints and limitations in knowledge on WTO matters. With regard to human resources, the main constraints relate to the low number of officials familiar with WTO issues, the weak institutional capacity caused by inadequate staffing, and the high turnover of staff, including mobility of trained officials from department to department or their exit from the public service, resulting in loss of resources and poor institutional memory. This was noted in several regions, and in particular among respondents from Latin America and the Asia-Pacific regions. The limited knowledge on WTO issues, which was noted for both the public and private sector, includes issues such as lack of expertise and limited training. Among the total number of respondents from all regions, this was the most frequently mentioned constraint. Other constraints indicated by respondents relate to limited financial and material resources, limited or non-existent institutional coordination at the national level between the agency responsible for international trade and the various departments whose work is connected with any of the WTO Agreements, as well as limited trade information or data. Some respondents also mentioned other constraints, including internet connectivity problems, the non-existence of resident missions in Geneva (or the small size of such missions), language constraints, and few university courses and professionals dealing with WTO topics in their countries.

4.2 Target audiences

57. Most respondents indicated that, apart from government officials, other stakeholders should participate in TA activities to enhance knowledge of the rights and obligations contained in the WTO Agreements. In the opinion of several respondents, this would support domestic policy making and the implementation of Member's rights and obligations under the WTO Agreements. As part of these other stakeholders, in addition to legislators, academia, researchers, civil society, and media, more than 80% of the respondents identified the private sector, which includes producers, exporters, traders, and chambers of commerce and industry. About 40% of the respondents mentioned academia (universities, researchers, students) and non-governmental and civil society organisations, including trade unions. The media and journalists were also mentioned, while parliamentarians were identified mostly in French-speaking Africa and in Latin America. A few respondents did not indicate other stakeholders they would like to participate in TA activities. In this regard, the range of views on the importance beneficiaries attach to involving other stakeholders as a means of enhancing capacity on WTO-related issues will be reflected when designing activities targeting non-governmental stakeholders. Although the areas identified as useful for other stakeholders to be informed of were quite varied across the regions, they broadly include general sensitization on the role and functioning of the WTO and its Agreements, ongoing discussions on institutional reform of the WTO, emerging issues such as e-commerce, MSMEs, and investment facilitation, as well as the interplay between trade and development generally. Activities targeting other stakeholders will reflect the specific needs of each region.

4.3 Preferences and constraints to accessing TA

58. The Secretariat received a wide range of responses regarding preferences or constraints with respect to specific forms of delivering training, such as online (as in eLearning activities); face-to-face; remote (as in virtual activities, including webinars); or "blended" activities that involve a combination of face-to-face and online or remote components. While some respondents established a ranking of preferences, some of the preferences indicated are difficult to reconcile with each other. Most respondents preferred to indicate reasons why they considered one or the other form of delivery as suitable or less suitable in different circumstances, as well as their advantages and/or disadvantages.

59. Despite the heterogeneous responses, some trends can be identified with regard to the different means of delivery, namely:

- eLearning: Most respondents consider eLearning to be a good and appropriate tool for delivering TA and training because of, among other reasons, its low cost, its uninterrupted availability, its flexibility, and the fact that it can be used by a large number of participants. Some qualifications were also expressed. This modality may be adequate for basic/introductory levels, should cover more topics and should include more videos. On the other hand, most respondents indicated that in eLearning there is limited interaction and that they may face connectivity or equipment issues. For most respondents, eLearning is not considered suitable for advanced levels of training or TA.
- Face-to-face: A significant number of respondents indicated face-to-face as their preferred (or second best) means of TA and training delivery. Among the reasons or benefits identified: high interaction, training/TA is more focused and easier to follow. Several respondents indicated that face-to-face is the best option for intermediate/advanced level and specialized activities, and for regional or Geneva-based activities. Main constraints/disadvantages mentioned for face-to-face activities were current COVID-related restrictions, higher costs, limited number of participants allowed for each activity, and the considerable time required to participate (including travel). A few respondents also mentioned local budgetary limitations and constraints for national TA activities and logistics issues.
- Remote or virtual: With respect to remote or virtual activities, such as webinars, the Secretariat received contrasting responses. For some respondents, this was their preferred mode of delivery, for others it is an acceptable solution, and for others still it is one of the least appropriate options (last or second to last preference). A few respondents even ruled out remote or virtual as an appropriate means of providing TA. Among the reasons most often cited by those who consider it a good, or acceptable, alternative, are the fact that virtual activities allow for more participants than face-to-face activities, are relatively low cost, and allow for more interaction than eLearning. A few respondents indicated that virtual activities can be a good option when there are restrictions for face-to-face activities, as is currently the case. When referring to the restrictions or constraints attached to this means of delivery, connectivity and technical issues were the most often cited. A significant number of respondents from various regions mentioned time differences across different regions and a relatively low interaction when compared to face-to-face activities. A significant number of respondents also indicated that virtual activities are less focused and more prone to distractions on the part of the participants. Low effectiveness was also mentioned as a limitation.
- Blended format: A blended format of delivery, combining face-to-face with online or remote components, was cited as a suitable option by most respondents, although the ranking of preferences ranged from first to last place. Respondents who indicated a strong preference for a blended approach emphasised that this modality can be more interactive and allow for more participants than others (such as completely virtual or face-to-face). Some of the constraints identified for other modalities (such as connectivity issues, costs, distractions, time differences, logistical issues, limited interaction, etc.) were mentioned also for blended activities. Some specific constraints were also identified for blended activities, such as the difficulty of ensuring continuity of participants under different modalities. A few respondents also pointed out that it is a modality that is unclear or still insufficiently tested.

60. Beneficiaries were also requested to provide any other information that they considered relevant in making WTO TA and training activities better targeted and more useful for them. Among the respondents who answered the question, the most frequently mentioned items referred to the implementation of more national and regional activities (with a more tailored and focussed approach); more face-to-face activities; an increase in their number of participants (in particular

more opportunities for LDCs); as well as the enhancement and expansion of eLearning courses (including more courses in languages other than English). Other points mentioned by some respondents included the addition of new topics in TA and training courses and workshops; taking into account work experience when selecting participants for TA activities, instead of following the PLS approach; and more advanced courses for specialists.

61. The Secretariat invited all WTO Members and Observers for informal consultations on the TA Plan 2022-23, which were held on 21 July 2021. At the meeting, the Secretariat briefed attendees on the responses to the TA Questionnaires, presented the proposed strategic approach for the biennial TA Plan, and updated them on the status of preparation of the Plan. The Secretariat also presented the eDashboard developed to provide Members and Observers with real time access to TA data.

62. On the basis of the information obtained from the questionnaires, the additional information obtained from the informal consultations on the TA Plan 2022-23 held with Members and Observers on 21 July, and the lessons learnt from the implementation of previous TA Plans, the Secretariat will adopt the strategy indicated in the following paragraphs in implementing activities under the TA Plan.

63. In order to better tailor activities for each specific beneficiary, rather than offer generic products, as is done at the regional or global level, the Secretariat will give priority to national activities. This is the best way in which each Member's or Observer's specific interests can be accommodated in the design of TA activities.

64. In this regard, the national TA online request form will continue to be used as the main tool for requesting TA to be provided to Members and Observers. Many beneficiaries have not made full use of national activities from the Secretariat. This is due to several challenges, including those specifically affecting LDCs and some low-income developing countries.

65. With respect to regional activities, the Secretariat will ensure that these activities are organized around subjects on which there is a collective interest among most beneficiaries in the specific region. In this regard, the programme content in regional thematic activities will reflect the specific needs of each region.

66. Some beneficiaries feel that the Secretariat should broaden its scope of assistance to include trade policy advice. However, the Secretariat is limited only to what it can do within its mandate and within the common understanding among Members on the role of the Secretariat. The Secretariat is willing to engage Members on this point for further guidance. In the meantime, for those activities delivered jointly with partners the role of providing trade policy will continue to be assumed by those institutions whose mandate permits them to provide such role.

67. With regard to requests on emerging issues, the Secretariat, while acknowledging that such issues may not be agreed to by all Members and as such remain sensitive, will respond positively on the basis that WTO TA is demand driven. The Secretariat will, therefore, provide TA in those cases where such TA is specifically requested. The Secretariat will particularly make use of partnerships in the delivery of such TA requests.

68. Based on previous discussions and guidance from Members, Observers and from the consultations undertaken during the preparation of previous TA Plans, the Secretariat will maintain the agreed communication channel with Members and Observers, which is their permanent missions to the WTO. To complement these efforts, the planned regional and global TA activities will continue to be published on the dedicated TA link to the WTO website (https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/teccop_e/tct_e.htm).

69. A number of responses from acceding beneficiaries emphasised the need for the Secretariat to provide specific activities to assist in their accessions process. The Secretariat already conducts accession-related TA activities developed in consultation with the Accessions Division; almost all national activities in acceding beneficiaries are in furtherance of their accession to the WTO. Furthermore, recently acceded WTO Members also benefit from a number of post-accession activities, again implemented jointly with the Accessions Division. The Secretariat will continue with this approach in the 2022-23 biennium.

5 STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN 2022-23

70. TA is a core element of the development dimension of the multilateral trading system.²² The delivery of WTO TRTA is designed to assist developing countries, and especially the least-developed among them, to adjust to WTO rules and disciplines, to implement their obligations and exercise their rights of membership, including drawing on the benefits of an open, rules-based MTS. Priority is accorded to LDCs, as well as to Members and Observers without representation in Geneva.

71. The TA Plan focuses on the needs of beneficiaries and reflects the priorities and mandates adopted by Members. Increased ownership by beneficiaries ensures the efficacy and sustainability of TRTA programmes, as beneficiaries are best placed to determine their own needs. Accordingly, as part of the preparation of this TA Plan, the Secretariat has consulted TA beneficiaries including through *ad hoc* questionnaires. In designing TA activities tailored to the needs of each beneficiary, the Secretariat attaches great importance to TRTA needs assessments, undertaken by the beneficiaries themselves. At the same time, the Secretariat will provide as much guidance as practically possible, to assist beneficiaries in undertaking their own needs assessments, in view of the fact that a number of beneficiaries, especially LDCs, request assistance with the tools with which to conduct their needs assessments.

72. The TA Plan, while responding to the evolving needs of the MTS and of TA beneficiaries, seeks to make improvements in the quality and effectiveness of TA by prioritizing activities with the highest potential to produce results for beneficiaries. With respect to the design and implementation of these activities, the Secretariat will endeavour to use methods and technologies that improve knowledge sharing, maximize impact, and make a more efficient use of resources. At the same time, the TA Plan envisages that the volume of TA offered will remain largely the same, based on the assumption that available TA human and financial resources will remain broadly unchanged during the 2022-23 biennium.

73. The overall strategic approach for the design of the TA Plan is mainly established by two components: the WTO's Managing for Results Strategy and the Progressive Learning Strategy (PLS). These two strategies are complemented by the following considerations: use of appropriate pedagogical methods; use of partnerships; and prioritizing inclusion.

5.1 Managing for Results

74. The TA Plan is designed on the basis of the Secretariat's strategy of managing for results, which has been endorsed by Members since 2013. This strategy is framed by the concepts and terms defined by the Results-Based Management (RBM) approach, which focuses on achieving measurable results through improved planning, decision-making, transparency and accountability. The Secretariat intends to continue its implementation of RBM.

75. Under the RBM methodology, Key Results feed into a higher result level, termed Impact. No causal link can be expected to be established between TA activities and any observable result at the global Impact level. The TA Plan will focus on defining and measuring the Secretariat's contribution towards agreed Outputs which support the achievement of Key Results. In this context, clear objectives of what needs to be achieved are set together with sound indicators for measuring progress and making sure that the various TA activities contribute to reaching the expected outputs that feed into the established Key Results.

76. Since the adoption of the managing for results strategy, TA Plans have presented three result levels (Outputs; Key Results; and Impact) and the way TA activities contribute to Outputs, and Outputs to Key Results, with the expectation of having an Impact for beneficiary Members and Observers. The respective contribution of the three result levels is presented by using a Logical Framework Matrix or logframe. This matrix provides detailed performance indicators, baselines, targets, evidence and assumptions that guide the design and implementation of the TA Plan and also help measure achievements. For the TA Plan, the logframe matrix is presented in Annex 1, which is an integral component of the TA Plan. The Outputs, Key Results and other components of the logframe for 2022-23 are discussed in section 6 below.

²² Doha Ministerial Declaration, WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, para. 38.

77. The TA Plan will provide indicators, baselines, and targets to be used to measure the attainment of the Key Results assuming that the current conditions that negatively affect TA activities will be to a significant extent overcome at the beginning of the period 2022-23 or soon thereafter.

78. The logframe in Annex 1 serves as the foundation to monitor and evaluate progress towards the expected results during the implementation of the TA Plan. The Secretariat will also continue to roll-out a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) workplan to contribute to measuring the attainment of the Key Results. Such monitoring and evaluation are essential for an efficient utilisation of TA resources. The Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTC) is responsible for coordinating the monitoring and evaluation of TA activities, and for producing at the end of each year an annual report on implementation of TA activities. The M&E workplan shall mirror the TA Plan and allocate M&E resources according to the relative importance of each of the Key Results in the TA mix. According to which of the two scenarios described above will prevail during the biennium, the M&E workplan and tools may be adjusted to account for the absence of field-based data collection.

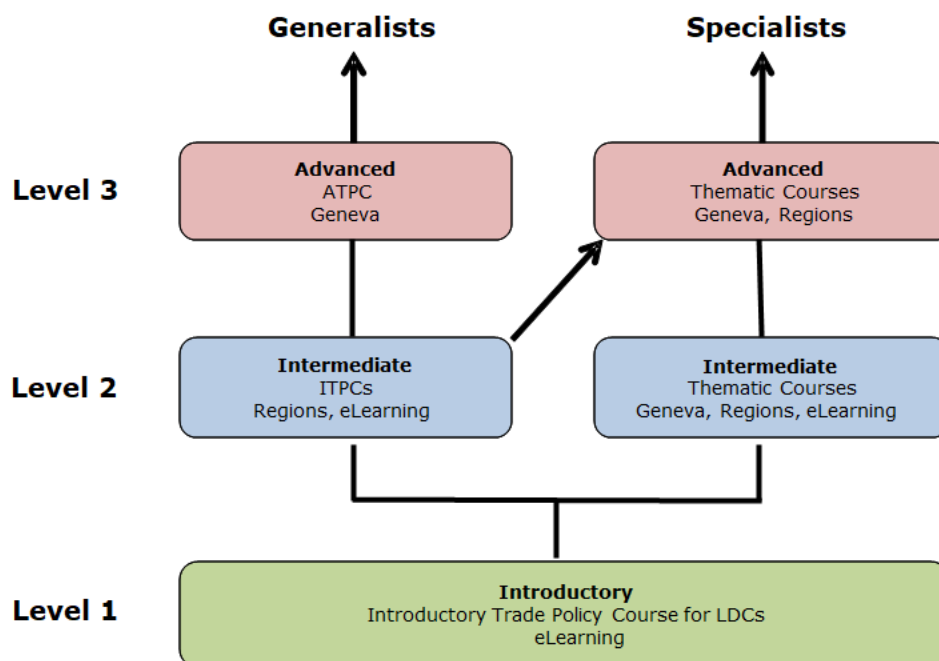
79. As in the past, the TA annual reporting to Members will continue to focus on TA results as outlined in the TA logical framework with monitoring conducted by the programme managers, organizers and trainers focusing on the immediate results or Outputs of the various TA activities.

80. An essential element in the implementation of RBM is the TA Management System (TAMS). The Secretariat intends to continue refining the operation of TAMS, to increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability, including by improving the recently developed dashboards to allow Members real time access to all TA relevant data, from initial requests to evaluations. The development of all the functionalities of TAMS shall be completed by the end of the period covered by this TA Plan. The Secretariat will also aim at setting up a single portal to receive and process applications to TA activities and to allow participants, beneficiaries, and Secretariat staff access to relevant data.

5.2 Progressive Learning Strategy

81. The other major component of the overall framework for the TA Plan is the Progressive Learning Strategy (PLS) endorsed by Members in 2011. The PLS has made it possible to tailor WTO activities more closely to the evolving needs of beneficiaries while improving the effectiveness and efficiency of WTO's overall TA programme. The PLS also allows for a more efficient use of TA resources by building on the knowledge and experience previously acquired by participants, and progressively taking participants to a higher level of training.

82. Under the PLS, WTO training activities are defined by two criteria: level and target audience. The PLS comprises three continuing training levels, namely: introductory (Level 1); intermediate (Level 2); and advanced (Level 3). In parallel, the PLS includes two categories of target audiences: generalists and specialists. Generalists are government officials who need broad knowledge of the WTO to conduct their work, such as capital-based officials dealing with WTO issues or delegates posted to WTO permanent missions with general responsibility for topics across the entire WTO work programme. On the other hand, specialists are government officials who require in-depth knowledge of a specific WTO subject matter, such as officials working on a specific issue in a particular ministry or agency. Chart 2 illustrates the configuration of the PLS framework.

Chart 2 – WTO's Progressive Learning Strategy

83. The Secretariat has developed guidelines on the content of each of the three training levels, subject by subject, to define the substantive elements that should be mastered by generalists and specialists at the end of each training activity. Successful completion of each step constitutes a prerequisite for progression to the next level. Such progression might also be possible where a participant otherwise possesses knowledge or professional experience that is demonstrably commensurate with the requirements of a level stated as a prerequisite for training at the next level. WTO training programmes are periodically revised in order to provide beneficiaries with a more clearly defined progressive training path, both for generalists and specialists.

84. While some TA activities do not easily fit into the PLS, the Secretariat will continue to promote the understanding of the concepts underpinning the different training levels, clarifying the knowledge, concepts and principles that have to be acquired at each level. Progressivity and further synergy will be pursued between TA activities, including online and face-to-face TA activities. The Secretariat will pursue a better articulation and progressivity between the three training levels, especially for generalists activities, so that higher level activities build more effectively on the knowledge acquired at previous levels.

85. The experience gained during the 2020-21 biennium, because of the pandemic, in the deployment of remote learning in TA activities with fit-for-purpose content should pave the way to a greater coherence and a more widespread application of PLS. The implementation of progressivity in learning will continue to be supported, when appropriate, through means to test participants' knowledge at the end of TA activities.

86. The Secretariat intends to continue consolidating the PLS into a wider scope of activities, including national activities where applying the PLS approach is often challenging due to the limited control that the Secretariat has in determining participation.

87. The introduction of a participants' online registration option into the TAMS will facilitate the implementation of the PLS. Candidates' histories of participation in WTO TA will enhance the selection process by ensuring that reliable information on candidates' prior knowledge is available to the trainers.

88. Within the eLearning environment, the online course "Introduction to the WTO" will provide the basic training required to understand the structure and functioning of the WTO. This course will

also serve as a prerequisite for participation in more advanced online or face-to-face activities. Intermediate eLearning courses for generalists will allow participating government officials to enhance their overall understanding of the WTO, while the courses for specialists will permit participants to acquire expertise on specific WTO Agreements or subjects.

5.3 Course Content and the use of Appropriate Pedagogical Methods

89. The Secretariat will continue to develop and incorporate more effective pedagogical methods into its TA activities, including with respect to the means of delivery. Travel restrictions, social distancing and other measures imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic during most of 2020 and still in force at the time this TA Plan is being prepared, have impeded the delivery of face-to-face TA activities. As a result, like many other organizations, the Secretariat has temporarily suspended face-to-face activities and resorted to an intense use of remote means of delivery.

90. This situation has had the dual effect of allowing a better understanding, for both the Secretariat and beneficiaries, of the opportunities that those remote means offer for the delivery of TA to address training needs, as well as of the limitations that remote means of delivery have, when compared to face-to-face training. With respect to the latter, in order to benefit to the fullest extent from remote learning opportunities, participants must have access to strong and reliable internet connection, adequate computing equipment, and the possibility to dedicate sufficient time to the training activities, taking into account work, family, workspace, and other personal constraints. At the same time, as noted above²³, most face-to-face TA activities cannot completely be converted to a virtual delivery mode without an important investment of resources²⁴ and a considerable scaling down of ambition.

91. As the current limitations on travel and meetings are gradually lifted²⁵, the Secretariat intends to progressively resume face-to-face training activities. Indeed, as noted earlier, many beneficiaries have identified face-to-face as their preferred means of receiving TA.²⁶ The Secretariat is also aware that face-to-face may be the best means of delivering some TA activities, such as those at an advanced level and those activities that require a significant level of interaction with trainers and peers.²⁷ The progressive resumption of face-to-face training activities will be rolled-out taking into account regional and local circumstances, as well as the preferences and constraints expressed by beneficiaries.

92. The resumption of face-to-face training activities may have to be flexible enough to take into account the manner in which restrictions are lifted at a national or regional level. At the same time, the Secretariat intends to utilize the experience of the past months to make a more efficient and flexible use of different methods of delivery in TA activities. In particular, in order to make an optimal use of financial and human resources, to promote a lighter environmental footprint, as well as to foster the well-being and productivity of trainers and participants, travel will be avoided whenever the objectives of a particular training activity can be adequately achieved through remote means of delivery.

93. Virtual activities can coexist with face-to-face activities, once the latter become feasible again. Virtual activities can enrich the WTO training offer either by themselves or by forming part of blended TA activities that combine face-to-face and remotely delivered content. This may allow expanding and improving the TA offer with an investment of financial and human resources, promoting a lighter environmental footprint, and fostering the well-being and productivity of trainers and participants.

94. With respect to specific training activities, the Secretariat will continue to encourage trainers to use an appropriate mixture of traditional lectures and interactivity with other methods such as hands-on training in those cases where this helps participants to learn and retain knowledge. Trainers will be especially encouraged to use interactive training methods like Questions and Answers (Q&A) sessions, case studies, and small group discussions. Interactivity is especially important in

²³ See above, para. 44.

²⁴ Virtual activities require a significant additional amount of preparation and are often redesigned to take place over a longer period than equivalent face-to-face activities. Therefore, maintaining a similar volume of TA would require an investment in additional resources.

²⁵ See scenarios described in the previous section, para. 7.

²⁶ See above, para. 59.

²⁷ See above, para. 44.

online or virtual TA activities, where sustaining participants' attention and engagement is challenging.

95. Trainers will likewise be encouraged to assess the appropriateness of complementing real time (synchronous) components with asynchronous components in TA activities, to increase flexibility and allow participants to study at their own pace and combine learning with their daily work and family commitments. In view of the importance of using the right training methods to create an effective learning environment, the Secretariat will continue to closely monitor the use of the different training methods used by trainers when delivering TA.

96. The Secretariat will also continue its efforts to promote, improve or widen the availability of existing courses. This may involve altering the programme or the methodology, or the possibility of proposing additional thematic courses in French or Spanish. Efforts will also continue to increase the number of selected candidates²⁸, whether in face-to-face or in remotely delivered training activities, to the extent that the objectives of the specific training activities are achieved, and the use of the most appropriate pedagogy is not affected.

97. The Secretariat will maintain the practice of having consultations with beneficiaries ahead of regional and national activities to tailor TA activities to the specificities of the local contexts of beneficiaries. This will help identify the most appropriate pedagogical approach to organizing a TA activity, including the preferred means of delivery, and tailor the substance to the particular needs of the activity.

98. eLearning has played a critical role in the provision of TA activities over the past years, proving to be an efficient and cost-effective way to train large numbers of individuals around the world on a number of WTO topics. The WTO eLearning courses are part of the PLS and provide training at the introductory and intermediate levels. The course catalogue includes a generalist and a specialist path to respond to participants' profiles and to specific learning needs. In addition, some courses are offered outside the PLS to increase outreach and develop awareness of WTO issues. In times of restricted mobility, eLearning courses are an indispensable component of WTO TA. As noted above, beneficiaries consider eLearning to be a good and appropriate tool for delivering TA and training because of, among other reasons, its low cost, its uninterrupted availability, its flexibility, and the fact that it can be used by a large number of participants.²⁹

99. In the period 2022-23, the eLearning courses will continue to be available on the eLearning platform (<https://wtolearning.csod.com/client/wtolearning/default.aspx>) on an uninterrupted basis.³⁰ This allows participants to study at their own pace and combine learning with their daily work and family commitments. Interested government officials will be able to register, have access to the catalogue of eLearning courses, select curricula that fit their needs, undertake courses, take part in interactive activities, access the module exams and obtain a WTO certificate at their convenience throughout the year.

100. The training materials will remain available for self-study on the eLearning platform for those who are not eligible to register for a course but are interested in getting acquainted with the WTO and/or trade-related issues generally. This is an important component of the WTO eLearning programme, which aims to increase outreach to academics, legislators, journalists, NGOs and the private sector.

101. The Secretariat will update and enhance existing courses in the eLearning catalogue. It will also continue providing training, in the three WTO working languages, on the main WTO agreements and core trade-related topics, while expanding its offer on other topics being discussed in the WTO work programme.

²⁸ The increase in the number of participants in face-to-face TA activities will be subject to the physical capacity of the facilities at which these courses are held, as well as to any limitations imposed by host countries such as those related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

²⁹ See above, para. 59.

³⁰ The current contract for the provision of the Learning Management System platform will expire in December 2021. The Secretariat is running a competition to identify the provider of the platform for the following five-year period.

102. In terms of didactic approach, the Secretariat will complete by the end of the biennium the conversion of first-generation courses into interactive courses in line with industry standards (Sharable Content Object Reference Model - SCORM). The portfolio will also continue its shift towards multimedia-rich material, mobile learning, and micro-courses to respond to new trends and needs. In addition, synchronous and asynchronous interactions will be strengthened in the programme to support knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing and increase motivation in the courses, through the introduction of regular web sessions and the development of learning communities as core components of the courses.

5.4 Use of partnerships

103. The WTO has entered into numerous partnerships to deliver TA throughout the years. By bringing additional expertise and knowledge, partnerships help offering context-sensitive TA. They are also instrumental in promoting the benefits of WTO TA and delivering activities more efficiently. To achieve its goals of relevance and effectiveness, the WTO will continue maintaining, and when relevant expanding, its extensive network of partnerships and collaborations.

104. Partnerships are either long term, short term or *ad-hoc* for a particular TA activity. In this regard, the Secretariat will continue to develop TA activities with partners. As one of the strategic approaches for 2022-23, the Secretariat will continue to focus on the four areas below in which partners could add value to the TA provided by the WTO:

- a. **Substance:** whether the cooperation is mandated by a WTO Agreement or not, the partner adds value to the content of the TA activities by bringing on board their specialized knowledge on a particular subject, a local context or the institutional role it plays in an area. Such partnerships would typically involve a joint preparation and delivery of the programme of the activity, or of part of it.
- b. **Cost-sharing:** the partner shares the costs associated with the organization of a particular TA activity. The contribution of the partner may be limited to some of these costs, defined in terms of percentage of the total or as a lump sum.
- c. **Field support / Logistics:** the partner takes care of part of the logistics related to the TA activity. This may involve tasks such as the identification of a venue for the activity, booking hotels, preparing travel itineraries, sending invitations, organizing interpretation or local transportation, providing support staff on site, setting up and maintaining a virtual classroom, or distributing the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) to participants, where applicable.
- d. **Outreach:** cooperation with certain institutions may give the WTO access to a different public or may increase its visibility in non-traditional circles.

105. The Secretariat will continue to analyse the functioning of different partnerships, including the encouragement of those that are more valuable to the WTO's TA programme. The use of regional experts for regional TA activities will be encouraged whenever possible. The Secretariat will consult further on the possibility of strengthening training capacities within beneficiaries and regions in addition to existing activities that target the academia.

5.5 Prioritizing Inclusion

106. The Secretariat is committed to fully inclusive TA activities that respond to the evolving needs of the weakest and most vulnerable beneficiaries. The integration of LDCs into the MTS will continue to be pursued through TA products designed by the Secretariat to address LDCs' systemic and evolving needs. Strengthening LDCs participation in TA activities will remain a priority, with the objective of assisting them in obtaining a greater benefit from their active participation in the WTO.

107. With respect to women's participation in TA activities, the Secretariat remains committed to ensuring gender parity in its activities and sustaining its efforts to provide a gender perspective in TA activities. As noted in the 2020 TA Annual Report, with nearly half of all TA activities delivered virtually not having been recorded in the TA Management System (TAMS), it was challenging to monitor participation in 2020. For those TA activities for which data is available, women comprised

45% of participants. While the figure does not fully reflect the situation in 2020, it was close to the 47% average reached in 2017-19. As in previous periods, there were variations across regions, with increases in some regions, decreases in others, and stability in a few regions.

108. The Secretariat will continue to monitor and report the participation of women and men in WTO TA activities for the foreseeable future with a view to addressing gender imbalances. In addition, reflecting the importance it attaches to gender issues, the Secretariat will maintain its efforts to ensure gender balance in WTO TA participation. The Secretariat will make a particular effort to improve the participation of women in those regions which either showed a decrease or a stagnation in their participation.

109. While recognising that there are other international actors with a specific mandate on gender issues, in the context of implementing the current TA Plan, the Secretariat will maintain and continue developing its trade and gender training modules in WTO TA activities and integrate issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women into TA programmes and training material in the context of emerging initiatives on social and poverty implications of trade. In response to the request of some beneficiaries, the Secretariat is developing a virtual course on trade and gender. The results of that pilot course will be closely monitored to assess their replicability for other interested governments. The Secretariat shall also contribute to trade and gender discussions as part of TA activities organized by partners. Women's economic empowerment has a positive impact on economic growth and helps to reduce poverty. Although trade has increased job opportunities for women and expanded their access to training, women still participate less in trade because they face numerous challenges and obstacles, including extra hurdles in acquiring trade-related knowledge.

110. Finally, language diversity and the use of all WTO working languages in TA delivery will be an additional tool to achieve inclusion. The Secretariat delivers TA in the three WTO working languages: English, French, and Spanish. Participants in TA activities may, therefore, follow TA courses in any of these languages, to the extent that a particular course is available in all the languages. Offering the same courses in the three WTO working languages will be the preferred option in order to promote inclusion and keep as much interactivity as possible. Interpretation will also continue to be used, as feasible and appropriate, to reach a wider audience. New or updated eLearning courses, which are generally launched in English, will continue to be progressively translated to French and Spanish.

6 EXPECTED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE KEY RESULTS

111. One of the Secretariat's main functions under the TA programme is to enhance the capacity of TA beneficiary officials to deal with the various issues under the WTO Agreements. WTO TA is aimed at enhancing capacity in developing countries and LDCs so that they can: (a) participate effectively in the core areas of the WTO's work and its respective bodies; (b) implement their WTO obligations; (c) be able to defend the rights accruing to them under the WTO Agreements; and (d) negotiate effectively. While for the Observers, the TA aims to ensure that acceding governments or territories are participating effectively in accession negotiations, in line with WTO accession processes and procedures.

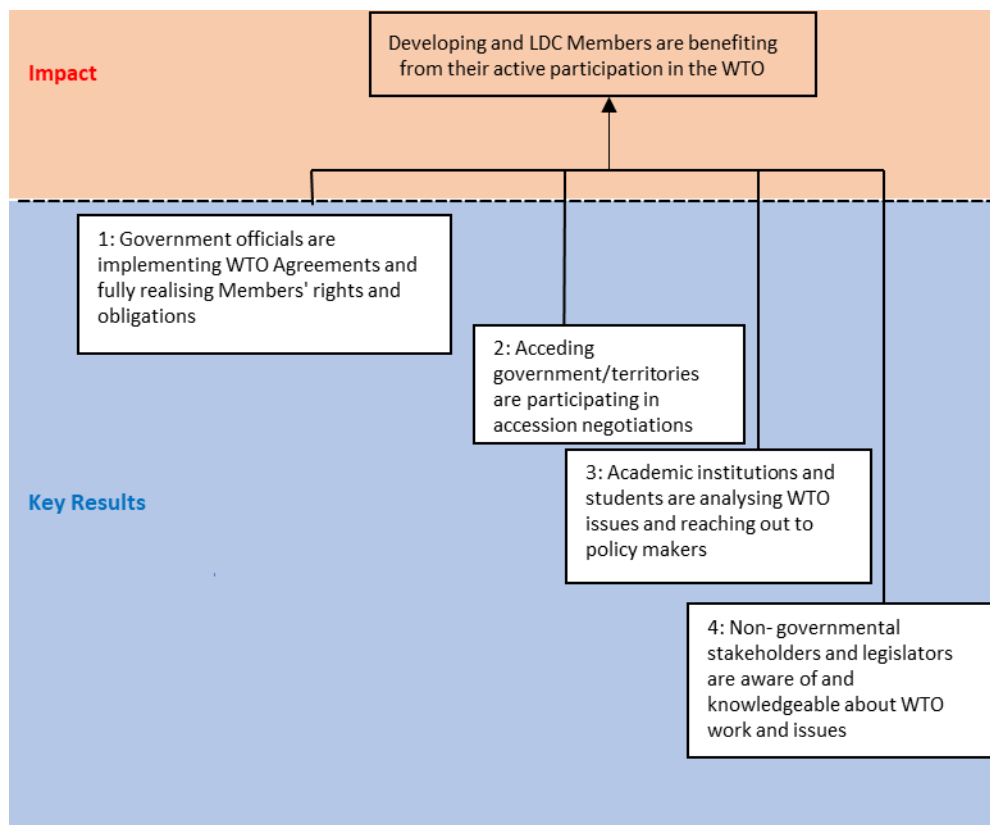
112. The TA Plan primarily targets government officials since the main purpose of TA is to assist beneficiary governments or territories build capacity to implement the WTO Agreements and thereby enforce their rights under the Agreements. The Secretariat will continue to provide TA to government officials and others through activities organized at the national, regional and global levels. In terms of delivery, the Secretariat intends to use face-to-face, virtual, online, and blended formats, the latter involving a combination of face-to-face and online or remote components.³¹

113. It is also recognized that trade policy has multiple actors, in addition to government officials. The Secretariat will, therefore, in accordance with this TA Plan, continue to target other audiences such as academics, legislators, journalists and private sector operators, particularly in outreach activities.

³¹ The Secretariat intends to progressively resume face-to-face TA activities as current limitations on travel and meetings are gradually lifted.

114. The TA Plan has been designed to achieve the four Key Results indicated in Chart 3, which have remained the same as in previous TA Plans. As in the past, achieving the Key Results in the TA Plan will require a close cooperation between the Secretariat, governments and other non-governmental beneficiaries, financial contributors to the TA budget, and TA delivery partner institutions.

Chart 3 TA Key Results for 2022-23



115. Chart 3 identifies an overall Impact as the highest level of result to which the WTO related work contributes jointly with other players in trade related capacity building. It is not an exclusive attribution to TA from the WTO, but an indication of the contribution the WTO is making to a common goal. In view of this, the Secretariat, like in previous TA Plans, will focus on measuring Outputs and progress towards specific Key Results, which are discussed in detail in the subsequent parts of this section.

116. The logical framework in Annex 1 provides details on the indicators and targets associated with each of the Key Results in Chart 3. Those indicators and targets constitute the markers that will guide the implementation of the TA Plan at the operational level and will help measure its achievements.

6.1 Key Result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations

117. Key Result 1 aims to enhance Members' capacity to comply better with their obligations under the WTO Agreements and make full use of their rights. This Key Result corresponds to the bulk of the TA provided by the WTO to TA beneficiaries. The goal is to ensure that government officials have enhanced knowledge about the WTO Agreements and trade issues and are able to participate effectively in the MTS. The 2020 TA Annual Report confirmed that during that year 86% of TA activities contributed to Key Result 1 (see Section 3 above).

118. Drawing from the implementation of TA activities in previous years, the bulk of TA activities for this TA Plan is geared towards assisting Members to implement WTO Agreements and enhance knowledge about their rights and obligations, to better formulate their trade policies and effectively participate in trade negotiations. These include training activities on specific topics of interest to the TA beneficiaries as pursued in recent years.

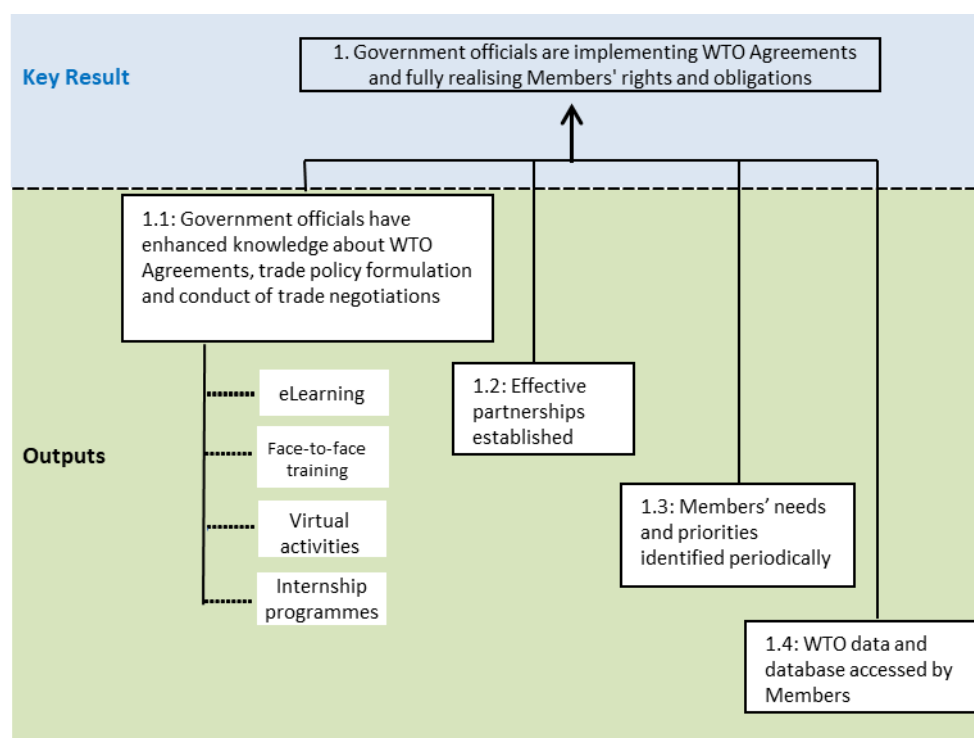
119. To achieve Key Result 1, the Secretariat will continue to work closely with the permanent missions to the WTO and with capital-based focal points responsible for WTO issues. Attaining this Key Result will also entail allocating time and resources to the design of new courses based on Members' identified needs and on PLS guidelines. In addition, this will also require support from beneficiaries, such as measures taken to retain trained participants in appropriate functions, the ability to spread the knowledge acquired across relevant agencies, as well as effective communication between the permanent missions and the capitals.

120. To achieve Key Result 1, the Secretariat will aim to achieve four main Outputs identified in Chart 4. The Secretariat will be responsible for the effectiveness and efficiency with which Outputs are achieved, while accountability for achieving the overall Key Result 1 will be shared with TA beneficiaries.

121. Details on indicators, baselines, targets, evidence and assumptions associated with this Key Result are included in Annex 1. Key Result 1 targets, among other things, an increase in beneficiaries' submissions to WTO bodies, which is used as proxy indicator since a large part of the WTO work is performed by Bodies and Committees in which proceedings are in writing, as well as a decrease in the number of outstanding notifications.

122. It is expected that a total of approximately CHF 14.345 million in 2022 and CHF 14.045 in 2023 will be needed to implement the planned activities³² contributing to Key Result 1. This amount represents about 74% and 73% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results in both 2022 and 2023 (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

Chart 4 Key Result 1: Outputs



³² Assuming the prevailing situation will allow for face-to-face activities to take place.

6.1.1 Output 1.1: Government officials have enhanced knowledge about WTO Agreements, trade policy formulation and conduct of trade negotiations

123. Output 1.1 (Government officials having enhanced knowledge of the WTO Agreements, formulation of trade policies, and conduct of trade negotiations) has historically been the main item under the Key Result 1 of the logframe. The objective is to offer government officials progressive learning paths that help them improve their knowledge and effectiveness in performing their work and participating in negotiations.

124. The indicators, baseline, target, evidence and assumptions associated with this Output are detailed in Annex 1. Taking into account the lessons learnt from the implementation of previous TA Plans, as well as the experience of the past months with respect to the use of remote means of delivery, the Secretariat will aim at designing TA activities in a way that improves knowledge sharing, maximizes impact, and makes a more efficient use of resources. This will involve continuing to improve the Secretariat's pedagogical methods and its Training of Trainers (ToT) efforts.

125. As in the past, most TA activities under Output 1.1 will seek to enhance the WTO-related knowledge of junior to senior level government officials from eligible beneficiaries through targeted generalist or specialized technical assistance. A description of the wide range of TA activities under Output 1.1 can be structured around the following four training modalities, each of which is discussed in the sub-sections below: (a) eLearning; (b) face-to-face training; (c) virtual or remote training; and (d) internship programmes.³³

126. The Secretariat will continue to collaborate with beneficiaries to promote the movement of participants through the three PLS levels. This requires, for example, promoting the understanding of the concepts underpinning the different training levels, clarifying the knowledge, concepts and principles that have to be acquired at each level, and ensuring that candidates nominated for the available courses satisfy the pre-requisites defined for each course. Uniformity in application of this requirement will ensure that all participants for a particular course begin each training at a similar level of knowledge. The Secretariat will also pursue a better articulation and progressivity between the three training levels, so that higher level activities build more effectively on the knowledge acquired at previous levels.

eLearning

127. Under the current strategic approach, eLearning courses are an indispensable entry portal for most TA activities, providing large numbers of participants with the opportunity to learn about the WTO, the WTO Agreements, and other key trade-related issues. During the biennium, the Secretariat will seek to secure a geographical balance across the regions. Moreover, the Secretariat will seek to maintain the good results obtained previously regarding participants' success rate in the courses.

128. The Secretariat will maintain, update and enhance the courses in the eLearning catalogue in the three WTO working languages, to the maximum extent possible within the available resources. The strategy that will be implemented in 2022-23 will include completing the conversion of the training material into a more interactive format in line with industry standards (SCORM) and incorporating more multimedia elements, interactive exercises and other improved pedagogical methodologies. In particular, the objective is to develop new interactive versions of older courses or new material covering trade-related topics that had not been previously covered by the eLearning programme. The portfolio will also continue its shift towards multimedia-rich material, mobile learning, and micro-courses to respond to new trends and needs. Detailed targets are covered in Annex 1 as part of the key results in the logframe.

129. Interactivity will remain an important component of the eLearning courses to trigger interest, achieve effective knowledge transfer, reduce the digital gap and keep participants up to date with the latest developments. Chat sessions will continue to be organized. Learning communities will continue to be encouraged to develop peer-to-peer interactions in the online courses, as well as allow participants to have updates on the latest news on trade-related issues, exchange views with other trade experts, and establish a global professional network.

³³ Blended activities may also involve a combination of face-to-face and online or remote components.

130. In terms of the PLS, and as explained in section 5.2 above, the eLearning offer for participants will include the Introduction to the WTO Course at the introductory level, and courses such as the Multilateral Trade Agreements Course at an intermediate level.

131. An appropriate focus on the use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube) will be maintained to develop outreach, raise awareness and promote WTO training activities. Material developed in eLearning activities will also continue to be used to develop strategic synergies with face-to-face activities once it is feasible to organize face-to-face events.

Face-to-face training

132. As current limitations on travel and meetings are gradually lifted, the Secretariat aims to progressively resume face-to-face training at the national, regional or sub-regional and global levels at any of the three PLS levels depending on the specific needs of beneficiaries. The face-to-face training for generalists includes trade policy courses at the introductory, intermediate and advanced PLS levels. These courses, held in Geneva and in the regions, aim to provide a strong general knowledge of the MTS and of the main provisions of the WTO Agreements, which should enable participants to work in a large variety of WTO-related areas or develop a more specialized expertise. The TA Plan will maintain a suitable concentration of candidates complying with the prerequisites of an activity to ensure the effectiveness of the PLS.

133. At the introductory level, the face-to-face training courses for generalists will comprise the Geneva-based Introductory Trade Policy Course for LDCs, which will continue to be offered at least once a year as it has proven to be in high demand by beneficiaries. This course will be offered in English and French.

134. At an intermediate level, the Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs) will also continue. These eight-week courses target government officials working on trade-related issues who have completed an introductory WTO training. The Secretariat will aim at resuming the offer for these courses in each of the WTO's seven regions as soon as conditions allow it. RTPCs will deliver a comprehensive syllabus covering the WTO Agreements and, generally, the MTS as a whole through pedagogical methods that can help strengthen participants' knowledge of the WTO Agreements, and their autonomy to use WTO resources and conduct WTO-related work. Participants' progress will be regularly monitored and assessed, through different means such as weekly quizzes, level of participation and engagement in the course and a final graded exam. RTPCs will be organized in partnership with local academic institutions.

135. At an advanced level, the Secretariat intends to maintain the eight-week Advanced Trade Policy Courses (ATPCs) for generalists as a face-to-face event. The aim will be to resume the previous arrangement of three ATPCs per year, two in English and the third alternating between French and Spanish each year. This reflects the historical language demand of Members for this course.

136. The TA Plan 2020-21 had expected that a final evaluation for participants would be introduced with the first ATPC in 2020, as had been recommended in an internal assessment for this course. The Secretariat expects this final evaluation to be introduced when ATPCs resume. This experience will guide future efforts to extend the use of final evaluations to other face-to-face courses.

137. The Secretariat also intends to resume its offer of a comprehensive range of advanced thematic training activities for specialists in Geneva, as soon as conditions allow it. This is in response to demand from many beneficiaries, who have clearly expressed an interest in specialized thematic courses. As in previous years, some of these activities will seek to focus on implementation challenges, including through the development of action plans, coaching of participants and a follow-up over a period of time.

138. The Geneva-based activities will also comprise symposia or seminars held at the request of WTO Committees and Geneva Weeks. The Secretariat will accommodate Focus Activities including the introduction days for Geneva-based delegates, NGOs, WTO staff members, interns working in the Secretariat and officials from international organizations. The aim of Focus Activities is to cover in depth a narrowly defined WTO subject over one or two days.

139. At the national level, face-to-face activities will aim to contribute to building trade-related local capacities. Each national TA activity will be guided by its own specific objectives addressing the priority needs of the beneficiary. To achieve this, beneficiaries will indicate their needs in a national TA request form (available online). The Secretariat will aim at resuming its offer of national activities, as soon as conditions allow it and taking into account the manner in which restrictions are lifted.

140. At the regional and sub-regional levels, this TA Plan includes face-to-face activities for capital-based officials, mostly at intermediate level, focusing on areas identified as priorities by the beneficiaries concerned. Geography, language or common interests will guide the inclusion of a beneficiary in a region or sub-region. Where relevant, such activities will be conducted in collaboration with partner institutions to ensure that local considerations are incorporated into the training. The Secretariat will aim at resuming its offer of regional or sub-regional activities, as soon as conditions allow it and taking into account the manner in which restrictions are lifted at a national or regional level.

141. Reflecting the wide range of face-to-face training activities, these activities are associated with several different indicators and accompanying targets, baseline values, evidence and assumptions as shown in the logframe.

Virtual activities

142. In response to limitations on travel and in person meetings, the Secretariat has developed since mid-2020 a large number of virtual activities outside of the eLearning programme. These activities are aimed at addressing beneficiaries' needs for TA, due to the impossibility of delivering face-to-face training. In many cases these virtual activities replicate the learning objectives intended for face-to-face activities. The experience of delivering these virtual training activities has allowed a better understanding for both the Secretariat and the beneficiaries of the usefulness and limitations of this modality of TA delivery.

143. When conditions evolve, and face-to-face activities become feasible again, virtual activities can still provide a relevant means of TA delivery in a cost-efficient manner for specific contexts and needs. This can be either as the sole means of delivery of a particular TA activity (such as in extremely short activities or in activities requiring the intervention of multiple subject experts) or as components integrated into blended TA activities that combine face-to-face and remotely delivered content.

144. The Secretariat is also mindful that the resumption of face-to-face activities may be a gradual process with different timelines in different countries and regions. Accordingly, it is possible that face-to-face training may not resume simultaneously in all countries or regions. Instead, for some beneficiaries or regions, virtual TA activities may remain for some time the only way for the Secretariat to deliver training even as other regions or beneficiaries allow face-to-face TA activities.

145. The Secretariat will aim at maintaining and, if necessary, increasing and diversifying its offer for virtual TA activities, until conditions allow the full resumption of face-to-face TA activities. The use of blended learning combining face-to-face and online means of delivery will also be pursued as a way to increase the efficiency of traditional TA activities, as it maximises the return on the time spent face-to-face, which is the expensive part of the training

Internship programmes

146. The WTO operates four long-term internship programmes focused on "learning-by-doing". Three of these programmes focus on government officials while one focuses on non-government officials. These internships aim to give the beneficiaries an opportunity to acquire in-depth knowledge on WTO matters under the guidance of staff in the Secretariat or in the permanent missions to the WTO in Geneva. Given the strong evidence of the effectiveness of internship programmes, although with variations between them, the TA Plan includes three internship programmes under Key Result 1 and an Accession Internship Programme (AIP) under Key Result 2.

147. The three internship programmes under Key Result 1 are: (a) the Netherlands Trainee Programme (NTP), financed by the Netherlands; (b) the French and Irish Mission Internship

Programme (FIMIP), financed by France and Ireland; and (c) the Regional Coordinator Internship Programme (RCI), financed by the Global Trust Fund.

148. Participants in the NTP are mid-level public officials from LDCs, low-income countries and comparable small and vulnerable economies. NTP interns work in areas of interest to them or their countries and are usually assigned to various Secretariat divisions at different periods of their programme in the Secretariat, which cumulatively lasts a maximum of ten months. NTP interns will be evaluated by their supervisor based on the objectives set individually at the beginning of the internship. A maximum of 14 NTP interns will be recruited annually during this biennium.

149. Measuring how much is learnt by these interns is a real challenge. Therefore, a proxy indicator to measure how much the interns achieved during their stay in Geneva will be used as has been the case in previous years. Interns will be required to prepare monthly report explaining how their time has been allocated between five broad categories of outputs: (a) WTO meetings; (b) meetings of regional groups; (c) training sessions organized by the Secretariat; (d) research briefing notes and needs assessments; and (e) other activities. This data is used to analyse the performance of the NTP interns.

150. FIMIP interns are mid-level public officials from LDCs, other developing countries, and economies in transition placed in the Geneva-based mission of their country for purposes of this internship. The internship has a maximum duration of ten months. FIMIP interns operate under the direction of the Permanent Representative and other officials of their mission, who evaluate the intern's work at the end of the internship based on the objectives agreed at the beginning of the internship. The programme targets primarily Members with small missions in Geneva whose capacity to follow WTO matters is very limited. A maximum of 20 FIMIP interns will be recruited annually.

151. As in previous years, FIMIP interns will devote most of their time to participating in the work of the different WTO bodies. This is particularly important for small, understaffed missions as it supports their ability to participate in such meetings. In addition, interns also work on coordination between the Secretariat and relevant government agencies in their respective capitals regarding various WTO-related issues affecting their countries, including their country's notifications commitments under various WTO Agreements. Each intern submits a monthly report which is used to monitor their performance. The supervisors of the interns in the permanent missions evaluate their work and inform the Secretariat. The Secretariat will continue with the same approach for this biennium.

152. Similarly, because of the challenges in measuring how much the interns would have learnt, a proxy indicator to measure how much the interns achieved during their stay in Geneva will be used as has been the case in previous years.

153. RCI interns are mid-level public officials from any TA beneficiary selected to coordinate a WTO regional grouping. These interns are posted in the Geneva-based mission of the beneficiary acting as coordinator of a regional grouping in the context of WTO work, provided that beneficiary is eligible for TA from the WTO. The RCI interns work under the supervision of the head of the mission or his designate, who also evaluate the intern's work at the end of the internship based on the objectives agreed at the beginning. An RCI internship is for the duration of the tenure of the beneficiary as group coordinator but cannot exceed twelve months. The allocation of an RCI intern is demand-driven and depends on a request being received from a beneficiary acting as coordinator for a region or group of beneficiaries. Therefore, the number of RCI interns to be recruited annually is dependent upon beneficiaries requesting an intern. A maximum of six RCI interns will be recruited annually.

154. To facilitate the assessment of the RCI programme, each intern is required to produce a monthly report. The main tasks of the interns include attending meetings of WTO regional groups to which their country belongs, of WTO committees and other institutional bodies, and the related work to facilitate the country's coordination required for their WTO regional group. In addition, the interns also work on research to facilitate the work of the coordinator of the respective regional group and prepare briefing notes, as part of their general training. Available data confirms that the RCI interns reinforce the capacity of the permanent missions acting as coordinators of WTO regional groups to perform their work. Therefore, this programme will continue to be operated on the same basis.

6.1.2 Output 1.2: Effective partnerships established

155. Under this Output, the Secretariat will continue to seek partnerships that add the most value to its TA activities according to the four parameters defined in its effective partnership strategy, namely: substance, cost-sharing, logistics and outreach (see section 5.4 for additional information).

156. In 2020, the Secretariat maintained strategic partnerships to deliver better-tailored TA activities in a cost-efficient way. Despite the difficulties faced, the Secretariat collaborated with 41 different partners to deliver 38 TA activities. The number of partnerships may have been underestimated because half of virtual activities delivered during the year were not registered in TAMS.³⁴

157. As detailed in the logframe in Annex 1, the TA Plan intends to stabilize the share of activities with involvement of a partner while increasing the proportion contributed by partners to particular TA activities. As also indicated in the logframe, attaining Output 1.2 assumes that interested partners will be available with appropriate resources and knowledge to complement WTO expertise and financial resources.

6.1.3 Output 1.3: Members' needs and priorities identified periodically

158. This output relates to the necessity to assess on a regular basis the TA needs of beneficiaries to ensure that the WTO TA offer meets their priorities. With this aim, needs assessments will be conducted periodically, based on demand, to identify beneficiaries' needs and matching these to the most effective and efficient TA product.

159. As described in section 4 and illustrated in Chart 1, the consultations held in preparation of the TA Plan indicated several areas of priority for TA. This information has been confirmed through additional formal and informal consultations between the Secretariat and beneficiaries. The online form for national requests will complement the responses to the TA questionnaire. The online National TRTA Request Form should be used to identify on a case-by-case basis the changing needs and priorities of the beneficiaries of WTO TA in the area to be covered by the activity.

160. Needs assessments prior to the delivery of advanced activities can rely on pre-course questionnaires. The responses will then be used to tailor the content of the activity to the specific needs of the participants. Responses to the TA questionnaires received prior to the preparation of TA Plans will be the main source of information on the needs and priorities of the TA beneficiaries.

161. The TPR process, as well as the TPR follow-up activities, which are conducted on request, will contribute to the identification of specific needs and necessary actions. To attain this target, beneficiaries would need to request a TPR-follow-up activity after a TPR is concluded. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic only seven TPRs were completed in 2020, in contrast with 16 in 2019, and no TPR follow-up took place.³⁵

6.1.4 Output 1.4: WTO data and databases accessed by Members

162. The Secretariat aims to use TA to make WTO statistical tools and databases accessible to government officials dealing with trade-related issues, as well as to other interested parties, so as to improve the analysis of trade developments and trade negotiating positions. In previous years, Reference Centres were one of the tools to enable Members to access and use WTO-related information to raise awareness of WTO matters with all stakeholders. However, Reference Centres have declined in usefulness even for those countries with established Reference Centres, due to the fact that online access in many LDC countries is mainly through mobile devices, which is relatively inexpensive, and not through the considerably more expensive fixed broadband internet, to which Reference Centres are connected.

163. The TA Plan does not envisage any further support to existing Reference Centres³⁶, which should be the responsibility of beneficiaries, as is already stated in the Guidelines signed by

³⁴ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 48.

³⁵ See WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2020, WT/COMTD/W/259, p. 33.

³⁶ Such as replacing equipment namely computers, printers, and photocopying machines.

beneficiaries at the time of the establishment of a particular Reference Centre. Reference Centres may exceptionally be provided to LDCs who have not already benefitted from the establishment of a WTO Reference Centre. This will mainly concern LDCs in the process of accession to the WTO. The Secretariat will consult with Members with a view to find more effective tools to enable LDCs gain better access to WTO online information based on lessons we have learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic regarding virtual delivery of TA activities so as to ensure that LDCs are able to benefit from virtual TA activities.

164. During the biennium, the Secretariat will offer an array of online and face-to-face activities to enhance participants' ability to access WTO data and related information. In 2020, the Secretariat organised 44 such activities at the global, regional and national levels. Training on information sources and databases will be provided as part of the activities for generalists, including the Introduction Course for LDCs, the Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs), the Advanced Trade Policy Course (ATPC), as well as specific training for Interns covered in thematic activities e.g. notifications, agriculture, NAMA etc.

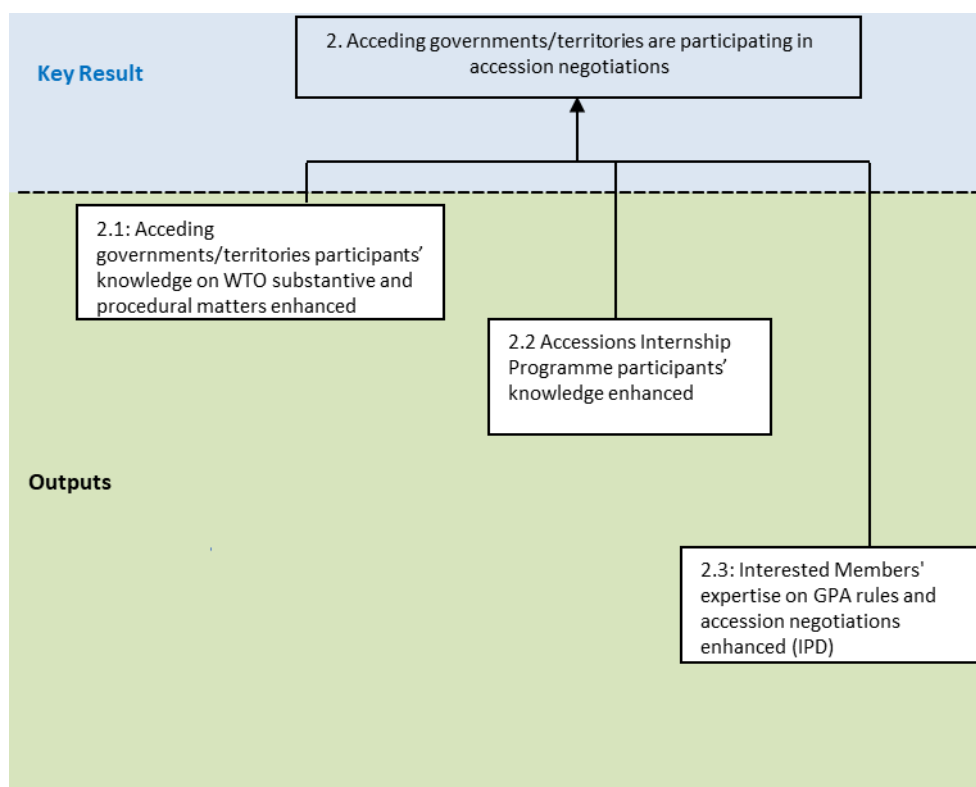
6.2 Key Result 2: Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations

165. This Key Result aims to ensure that acceding governments are participating effectively in accession negotiations, in line with WTO accession processes and procedures. This reflects the strategic priority the WTO gives to accessions-related activities, with 23 governments at various stages of the accession process. Key Result 2 seeks to support these ongoing efforts by helping acceding governments/territories to define their long-term trade reform agendas and strategies. In this context, the TA provided to acceding governments/territories is designed to: (a) enhance their understanding of WTO rights and obligations; (b) support a WTO-compatible domestic policy and legal framework; and (c) facilitate the accession process. This key result area will also include the support the Secretariat provides to those beneficiaries seeking to accede to the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA).

166. The Secretariat will keep supporting acceding governments/territories in their accession negotiations and seek to enhance acceding governments' knowledge on WTO matters.³⁷ In addition, the "China Programme" will continue to assist acceding LDCs through the AIP, the follow-up to the TPRs of recently acceded Members, annual WTO Accession Round Table Meetings, and support for their participation in WTO meetings. This is in line with the priority given by Members to the accession of LDCs at the Doha Ministerial Conference in 2001.

167. Key Result 2 includes the three Outputs shown in Chart 5. The TA Plan provides for CHF 693 million per year in 2022 and 2023 to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 2 and its three Outputs, which is equivalent to about 4 % of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for those years (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

³⁷ The Secretariat also makes available an Accession Transparency Tool Box, available at: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/attb_e.htm.

Chart 5 Key Result 2: Outputs

6.2.1 Output 2.1: Acceding governments/territories participants' knowledge on WTO substantive and procedural matters enhanced

168. In 2020, 23 acceding governments and one Observer (Turkmenistan)³⁸ were invited to participate in TA and capacity-building activities at the global, regional and national levels, as well as in eLearning courses. Many activities were cancelled, postponed or delivered virtually due to COVID-19 related restrictions. The TA activities delivered by the Secretariat included, among others: (a) technical missions; (b) targeted national training sessions and seminars; and (c) participation in conferences. An Accessions Week held virtually from 29 June to 3 July 2020 attracted more than 850 participants.³⁹

169. During the biennium, the Secretariat will address the specific needs of the acceding governments/territories on a demand-driven basis. As indicated in the logframe in Annex 1, the main target during this biennium is to stabilize the number of participants from acceding governments/territories attending TA activities focused on accession. This assumes, among other factors, that accession negotiations will remain active.

6.2.2 Output 2.2: Accessions Internship Programme participants' knowledge enhanced

170. The AIP is one of the four internships under this TA Plan. The beneficiaries of the AIP are recent graduates or postgraduate students from LDCs and developing Members⁴⁰. The AIP is funded by China under the auspices of the "China Programme".

171. AIP interns work on accessions issues in the Accessions Division of the Secretariat under the supervision of a staff member. The interns spend ten (10) months in the Secretariat, which may be spread over a two-year calendar. The intake of interns is adjusted annually according to the workload

³⁸ Turkmenistan became a WTO Observer on 22 July 2020.

³⁹ See WTO Accessions: 2020 Annual Report by the Director-General, WT/ACC/38/Rev.1, WT/GC/228/Rev.1, para. 29.

⁴⁰ Taking into account the balance between acceding governments/territories and WTO Members.

of the Accessions Division. The supervisors evaluate the interns' performance based on the objectives set at the beginning of the internship.

172. The Plan envisions a maximum of five (5) AIP interns will be recruited annually for a maximum period of ten (10) months as indicated in the logframe in Annex 1.

6.2.3 Output 2.3: Interested Members' expertise on GPA rules and accession negotiations enhanced (IPD)

173. This output covers the TA that the Secretariat provides to beneficiaries who consider accession or observership to the Agreement on Government Procurement 2012 (GPA 2012 or GPA). With respect to the GPA, the TA Plan will focus on: (a) providing technical assistance to beneficiaries acceding to the GPA or having committed to accede, as well as to beneficiaries with an interest in observership, on GPA-related matters in general, including linkages with good governance and development; and (b) enhancing beneficiaries' capacity to comply with GPA norms and principles, empowering government officials to work with stakeholders to realize benefits from GPA principles and procedures and market access possibilities, and understanding the developmental dimension of procurement policy. Currently, seven TA-eligible Members are undertaking GPA accession negotiations and a range of beneficiaries show active interest in GPA-related issues.⁴¹ Active partnerships with other international organizations and academic institutions form a vital element of this program.

174. The 2020-21 Plan identified the volume of documentation related to GPA accession circulated by TA-eligible GPA acceding Members as a proxy to measure the extent to which TA provided by the Secretariat enhanced the capacities of these countries to effectively complete their accession negotiations. For this biennium, in addition to accession-related documents circulated by GPA acceding Members, the Secretariat will also consider the interventions made by TA-eligible GPA-acceding Parties during meetings of the Committee on Government Procurement (CGP) as well as bilateral meetings with the Chair of the CGP. This will provide an indication about the impact that GPA-related TA activities have had on acceding Members in terms of GPA accession and implementation. The target is to return to an equivalent volume of documents, interventions, and bilateral meetings recorded before the pandemic.

6.3 Key Result 3: Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers

175. Key result 3 aims to enhance academic institutions expertise on WTO work and issues, with a view to improve research, teaching, as well as outreach to policy makers. The Secretariat will implement the WTO Chairs Programme (WCP), General Academic Support, the PhD fellowship programme, and support the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition (JHJMCC).

176. The WCP is the largest programme encompassed under Key Result 3. It aims to enhance knowledge and understanding of the MTS among academics and students by supporting trade-related research, curriculum development and outreach activities at universities in beneficiary countries participating in the programme. It is organized in cycles of four years, during which institutions selected to participate in the programme receive funding in order to develop their expertise. Upon completion of the four-year cycle, Chairs maintain the status of WTO Chair as well as reporting obligations associated therewith, albeit without further funding from the WTO. They remain part of the WCP network and serve as mentors for participants of subsequent cycles of the programme. In contrast to other TA activities which are carried out by the Secretariat, WCP activities are carried out by external academic institutions participating in the programme. So far, the WCP went through two four-year cycles (phase I: 2010-14; phase II: 2014-18). The selection process for its next four-year cycle was launched in 2021.

177. A comprehensive and independent external evaluation of the WCP was undertaken subsequent to the conclusion of the last four-year cycle of the programme. The evaluation was completed in August 2019 and found that WTO Chairs have been successful in generating good quality research and impactful advice that translated into policy action in beneficiary countries. The WCP has provided financial support to generate knowledge and develop competencies on international trade and

⁴¹ Brazil, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of North Macedonia, Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

development issues, which is particularly relevant for low and lower middle-income beneficiary countries. Chairs have produced a significant amount of relevant and good quality research publications and teaching curricula and have been able to reach out to many policymakers and other external stakeholders. The WCP brand increased the effectiveness of Chairs in reaching out to external stakeholders, offering higher credibility and visibility to external stakeholders and user groups. Research outputs have generally been disseminated in outreach activities and publications. WTO financial support, in most cases, was complemented by significant efforts by the Chairs and their host institutions to ensure that planned activities and outputs were achieved. Chairs showing higher activity outputs during the WCP funding period were able to maintain their levels of performance without depending on continued financial support from the WTO. The WCP has thus been successful in connecting academic research, outreach, and teaching work, with trade policy making and sustainable capacity building in beneficiary countries.

178. The evaluation also made several recommendations for improvement of the WCP, *inter alia*, closer alignment and use of synergies with the WTO's TRTA and economic research activities, better representation of institutions from LDCs and regions previously under-represented in the programme and stronger and more balanced visibility at the global level. In consultation with the WCP Advisory Board, the Secretariat modified elements of the programme to address the recommendations made in the 2019 report and these are taken into account in this TA Plan.

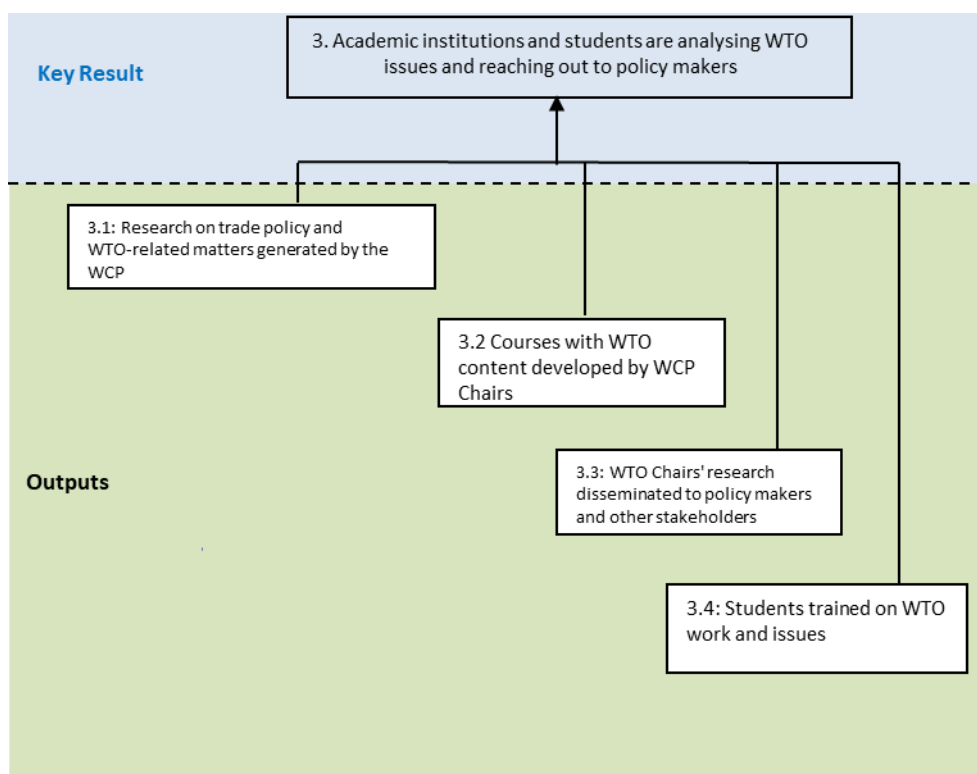
179. Key Result 3 remains unchanged in this Biennial TA Plan. At the same time, certain elements of the logframe have been adjusted in order to recalibrate it to the updated structure of the WCP. For this reason, the Secretariat will use 2021 to collect baselines to be used during the 4-year cycle of the WCP. In order to harmonize the approach under Key Results 3 and 4, the former now captures the diversity of WTO-related topics covered by all WCP Chair activities across all three pillars of the programme. Outputs 3.1 to 3.3 relate to the WTO Chairs Programme, while Output 3.4 captures all other academic outreach activities.

180. Reporting of outputs 3.1 to 3.3 will focus on institutions participating in phase III of the WCP. Activities of institutions that participated in phases I and II and no longer receive funding from the WTO will be taken into account in respect of the diversity of WTO-related topics covered by WCP Chair activities under Key Result 3.

181. WCP phase I and II Chairs have remained active and engaged in the WCP network. As part of the formal agreements signed with these Chairs, and in order to foster and strengthen the collaborative network of academics created through the programme, they are engaged as mentors guiding the next generation of Chairs and continue actively in research, teaching, and outreach activities relating to WTO topics. This contributes to the sustainability of the WCP network and helps develop and enhance a pool of trade expertise for beneficiary countries and regions.

182. The Secretariat also continues to support a limited number of PhD students from developing countries in their research on WTO-related topics, as well as the annual JHJMCC. For the latter, the Secretariat provides technical support through several means, such as, providing advice in the preparation of the case and the bench memorandum; supporting the organization of regional rounds in developing countries; and by hosting and providing prizes for the final round of the competition. Other activities involving academia may also be organized with proposals being assessed based on merit and the availability of resources.

183. The TA Plan provides for approximately CHF1,365,800 in 2022 and 2023 to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 3 and its four (4) Outputs, which are equivalent to about 7% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for 2022 and 2023, respectively (see Table 1 in section 7).

Chart 6 Key Result 3: Outputs

6.3.1 Output 3.1: Research on trade policy and WTO-related matters generated by the WCP

184. Output 3.1 aims to promote research on trade policy and WTO-related matters by WTO Chairs. Changes in the structure of the WCP outlined above, in particular the inclusion of universities from LDCs and regions previously under-represented in the programme have resulted in the adaptation of certain elements. Publications, including books, articles published in academic journals, conference papers, working papers and trade policy briefs, are considered. Individual baselines for each WCP Chair will be established at the beginning of the four-year cycle, based on their activities in the two years prior to joining the programme. This approach accounts for the initial variations in the capacities of WCP Chairs from countries with different levels of economic development at the time of joining the programme.

6.3.2 Output 3.2: Courses with WTO content developed by WCP Chairs

185. Output 3.2 captures WCP Chairs activities relating to the development of trade-related courses for students and other stakeholders, including government officials, researchers, and private sector professionals. The objective is to encourage Chair holders to train and inform both future and present generations of students, trade policy experts, and officials who are at different stages in their professional and educational development. Chairs benefit from access to teaching materials of the Secretariat, including eLearning and expert advice from Secretariat staff as well as Advisory Board members. The two indicators for this output are the number of students in WTO-related courses and the number of new or updated WTO-related courses. Annual average values during the two years prior to participation in the WCP will be used as baseline.

6.3.3 Output 3.3: WTO Chairs research disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders

186. Output 3.3 calls for WTO Chairs to reach out to other stakeholders and key decision-makers. The objective is to ensure and promote the dissemination, relevance and visibility of academic research, for example through seminars, conferences, roundtables or (informal/ongoing) consultative processes, thus providing advice and a sounding board for policymakers and other

stakeholders. Similarly, annual average values during the two years prior to participation in the WCP will be used to determine a baseline.

6.3.4 Output 3.4: Students trained on WTO work and issues

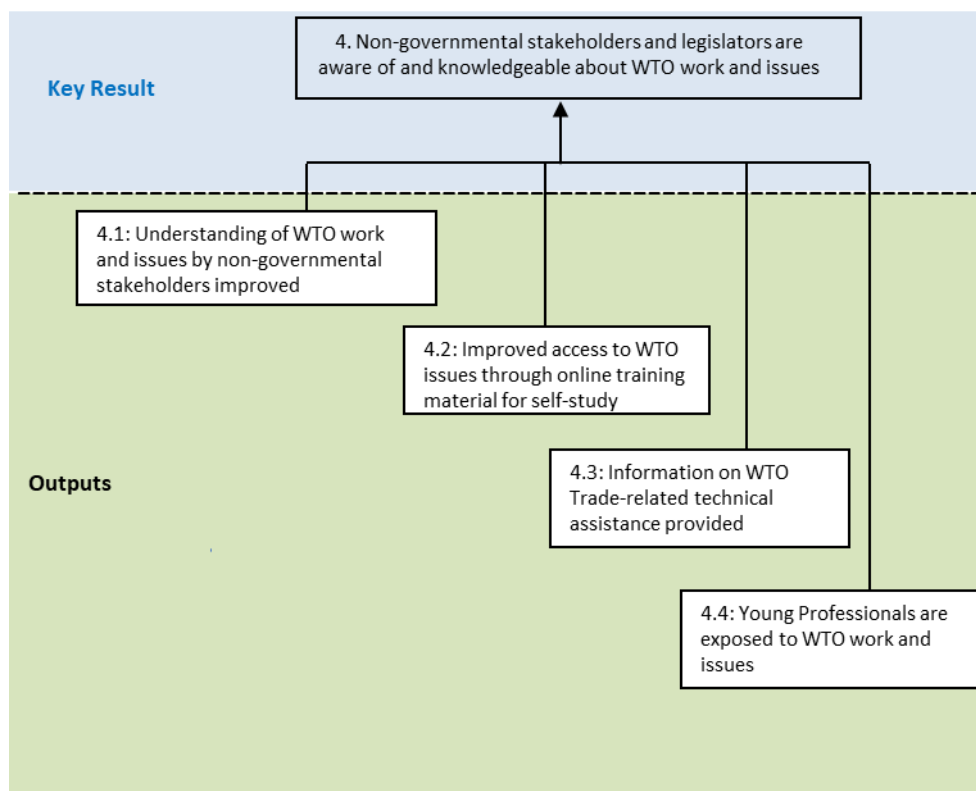
187. The WTO PhD fellowships, the JHJMCC and other WTO-related competitions are activities under Output 3.4. These activities share a common goal: raising students' interest in topics relating to international trade relations and the work of the WTO, stimulating academic exchange on those topics and, ultimately, preparing the next generation of trade experts including government officials working in capital and in delegations in Geneva with the WTO. Annual average number of students participating in competitions supported by the WTO from 2018-2021 will be used as baseline.

6.4 Key Result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues

188. Under the TA Plan, Key Result 4 seeks to ensure that non-governmental stakeholders are knowledgeable about WTO work and issues. The aim is to increase the involvement in trade policy and WTO-related issues by stakeholders other than government officials, such as young professionals, legislators, civil society, media, and the private sector (including producers, exporters, traders, and chambers of commerce and industry). The TA Plan aims to achieve this by strengthening the understanding and institutional capacities of non-governmental stakeholders so that they can reinforce the results of the TA directly provided to Members and their officials. Key Result 4 includes four Outputs as shown in Chart 7.

189. The WTO Young Professionals Programme, as part of this Key Result, will aim to recruit at least 15 YP in 2022. An evaluation is envisaged in 2022 in order to assess its effectiveness and impact to date. It should be noted that, for the 2022 intake, the Secretariat received more 7,000 applications for 15 places indicating that there is very high demand for the programme. A decision to expand the YPP will entail a small increase to the funds for Key Result 4 in 2023. The Secretariat will keep Members informed and seek their views on how the programme could be revamped.

190. It is expected that a total of approximately CHF1,262 million per year in 2022 and 2023 will be available to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 4 and its four (4) Outputs, which is equivalent to about 6% and 7 % of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for those years (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

Chart 7 Key Result 4: Outputs

6.4.1 Output 4.1: Understanding of WTO work and issues by non-governmental stakeholders improved

191. Output 4.1 seeks to organize outreach activities to attain an improved understanding of WTO-related issues by legislators, civil society, journalists, and private sector operators. The expectation is that broadening the pool of stakeholders with an appropriate knowledge and awareness of WTO matters will encourage support for more engagement in global trade. As indicated in the logframe in Annex 1, the TA Plan foresees returning to an equivalent number of stakeholders reached and activities delivered. The number of seminars or workshops organised will be one of the indicators to be used under this output. In past years activities were organized at global and regional levels. The same approach will be followed for this Plan. As in the past, these activities will be delivered in collaboration with WTO's regular TA partners.

6.4.2 Output 4.2: Improved access to WTO issues through online training material for self-study

192. Output 4.2 relates to access to online training material for self-study for those not eligible to enrol for WTO eLearning courses, which are reserved for government officials from eligible Members and Observers. Under this Output, online training material is made freely available to the public for self-study on the e-Campus website. As indicated in Annex 1, the target is to return to an equivalent number of downloaded training materials.

6.4.3 Output 4.3: Information on WTO trade-related technical assistance provided

193. Output 4.3 is related to access to trade-related TA information provided by the Secretariat, including through the Secretariat's Newsletters made available to the public through the WTO website. Social media channels are used by the Secretariat to give visibility to its TA activities. The Secretariat also disseminates information on its TA activities through a TRTA Newsletter available in all three languages. The Newsletter covers discussions during Ministerial Conferences, objectives of WTO TA, the results of the TA provided, and the importance of voluntary contributions.

6.4.4 Output 4.4: Young Professionals are exposed to WTO issues and work

194. Output 4.4 relates to the WTO Young Professional Programme (YPP) introduced in 2016, which aims to expose young professionals to WTO issues and work.

195. The YPP targets young professionals with graduate degrees in international trade and trade policy. Recruitment for young professionals takes place through a competitive process based on merit. Priority is given to professionals from LDC and developing Members not represented at the professional level in the Secretariat.

196. The Secretariat aims to host 15 young professionals per year, subject to the absorption capacity of the Secretariat in each year and the findings and recommendation of an evaluation of the programme that will be conducted in 2022. As YPP recruits will work hand-in-hand with Secretariat staff, their work performance will be evaluated by their supervisors following a procedure similar to that applied to WTO staff members. The performance evaluation and the number of young professionals hosted annually will be used as indicators for this Output, as indicated in the logframe in Annex 1.

7 FUNDING

197. The implementation of this TA Plan will be funded through the Regular Budget, extra budgetary funds from voluntary contributions by Members, and cost-sharing arrangements with identified partners. The management of the Regular Budget under the TA Plan will follow the same underlying principles and build on the improvements implemented during previous TA Plans.

Table 1 Costs by Key Result – 2022 and 2023

(in thousand Swiss francs)

Key results	Budget line 2022			
	Regular Budget	GTF	Earmarked Funds ⁴²	Total
Key result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations	4,672	7,742	1,930	14,345
Key result 2: Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations	50	313	330	693
Key result 3: Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers	1	65	1,300	1,366
Key result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues	-	1,262	-	1,262
Sub-total	4,723	9,383	3,560	17,666
Other programmes	125	1,700	-	1,825
Total	4,848	11,083	3,560	19,491
Overheads (13%)	-	1,441	463	1,904
Grand total - 2022	4,848	12,523	4,023	21,394

Key results	Budget line 2023			
	Regular Budget	GTF	Earmarked Funds	Total
Key result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations	4,372	7,742	1,930	14,045
Key result 2: Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations	50	313	330	693
Key result 3: Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers	1	65	1,300	1,366

⁴² Earmarked Funds include the contributions earmarked by donors to finance the China Programme, French-Irish Mission Internship Programme, Netherlands Trainee Programme and WTO Chairs Programme.

Key result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues	-	1,262	-	1,262 ⁴³
Sub-total	4,423	9,383	3,560	17,366
Other programmes	125	1,700	-	1,825
Total	4,548	11,083	3,560	19,191
Overheads (13%)	-	1,441	463	1,904
Grand total - 2023	4,548	12,523	4,023	21,094

7.1 Regular Budget for TA

198. The Regular Budget dedicated to TA stood at CHF 4.5 million per year during the last three biennia. In view of the continued pandemic and its impact on the delivery of technical assistance, in anticipation that we may resume face-to-face activities and be required to do more, the budget for 2022 is pegged at CHF 4.8 million. While it is expected to maintain the 2023 budget at CHF 4.5 million.

199. The TA Plan has been prepared under the assumption that this part of the Regular Budget will be back to its previous level by the end of the next biennium. As was the case for the previous TA Plan, the Secretariat will continue with the practice of redirecting savings registered on any of the activities during the year to finance other TA programmes included in the TA Plan and identified as priorities by Members and Observers.

200. To preserve the minimum level of flexibility required to make the best possible use of the approved budget, the Regular Budget for TA will continue to be grouped in four (4) main envelopes:

- i) Geneva-based activities for generalists: These will include the ATPC, the Introductory Trade Policy Course for LDCs, Geneva Week for non-residents, specific activities for Geneva-based delegates and any other training activity with a general scope held in Geneva. The TA Plan intends to allocate CHF 2.0 million to these activities in 2022 and CHF 1.8 million in 2023.
- ii) Geneva-based thematic activities: These will include, among others, the current activities in the field of dispute settlement, the thematic advanced courses held in Geneva and thematic activities for LDCs. Some Geneva-based symposia or workshops organized by WTO Committees in relation to aspects of their work may also be financed as part of this envelope. It is proposed to allocate CHF 1.9 million to these activities in 2022 and CHF 1.8 million in 2023.
- iii) National activities: The TA Plan proposes to set the budget for this envelope at CHF 0.7 million.
- iv) Miscellaneous: This will include the funding of consultants performing the advisory role under Article 27.2 of the Dispute Settlement Understanding and of external consultants on the implementation of RBM and eLearning courses. Some outreach activities for non-governmental audiences will also be funded under this envelope. Limited funds will be set aside to purchase WTO publications to be donated to universities and distributed at outreach events. Altogether, it is proposed to set aside CHF 0.2 million for these various purposes.

201. It should be noted that the budget line for hiring external experts will continue to be managed as a pool and distributed as appropriate where required without exceeding the overall budgetary cap for such expenses.

⁴³ The funding may be adjusted for 2023 to take into account the results of the evaluation of the YPP and a decision to revamp it.

7.2 Extra-budgetary funds for TA

202. As has been the case for many years, the main proportion of the implementation of the TA Plan will again be funded through extra-budgetary funds during the 2022-23 biennium. The Global Trust Fund (GTF) will continue to play a central role in this regard, as it is the main channel through which Members' contributions support the TA provided by the WTO.

203. The TA resources available to the WTO (carried forward from previous years) to finance its TA to developing Members and Observers have been relatively stable since 2016. The Secretariat has assumed continued support from Members, in particular from contributors to the GTF during the previous biennium.

204. The TA Plan has been prepared on the premise that the support to the GTF will continue during this biennium at a slightly higher level than in the last TA Plan. This would allow the Secretariat to accommodate any increases in the volume of TA activities as a result of a resumption in face-to-face delivery of TA, and the possibility of MC12 outcomes. Taking these elements into consideration, it is proposed to set the target amount for the GTF in 2022 and 2023 at CHF 12.523 million.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The funding may be adjusted for 2023 to take into account the results of the evaluation of the YPP and a decision to revamp it.

ANNEX 1. WTO TRTA LOGFRAME 2022-23

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
Impact ⁴⁵	Developing and LDC Members are benefiting from their active participation in the WTO	Share of developing Members' total trade (imports and exports)	2018-20 average: 41.3%	> 40%	WTO statistics	Global economic and political stability or improvement
		Share of LDC Members' total trade (imports and exports)	2018-20 average: 1.1%	> 1.00%	WTO statistics	The number of LDCs remains constant over the biennium
Key Result	1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations	Number of documents submitted by beneficiary developing and LDC Members to WTO Bodies	Annual average 2017-19: Developing: 611 LDCs: 99	Increase	WTO Documents Online database	1. Political support for WTO-related issues 2. Trained staff retained in relevant positions 3. Human and financial resources available
		Number of outstanding notifications by TA beneficiary Member	26 per beneficiary Member on average in 2017-19	Decrease	Notifications database (CRN)	
Output	1.1: Government officials have enhanced knowledge about the WTO Agreements, formulation of trade policies and conduct of trade negotiations	Number of participants completing each PLS level	Annual average 2017-19: Level 1 – 3,608 Level 2 – 11,746 Level 3 – 1,833	Stability for levels 1 and 2 Increase in level 3	TAMS database	1. WTO negotiations remain active 2. Trained staff retained in relevant positions 3. Members present suitable candidates 4. Availability of training facilities in Geneva
		Number of national activities requested	2017-19 average: 145	Increase	TAMS database	The number of TA beneficiaries under WTO administrative measures does not increase

⁴⁵ In accordance with the RBM approach, the impact is the highest-level result to which WTO contributes jointly with other stakeholders. It is not an exclusive attribution to WTO TA, but an indication of the contribution the WTO TA is making to a common impact – see section 6 for further information.

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Number of beneficiary Members and Observers participating in TA courses	2017-19 average: 163	Stability	TAMS database	1. WTO negotiations remain active 2. The number of TA beneficiaries under WTO administrative measures does not increase
		Number of LDCs participating in TA courses	2017-19 average: 43	Stability	TAMS database	1. Number of LDCs remains constant 2. The number of TA beneficiaries under WTO administrative measures does not increase
		Interactive training methods' share of time in each activity (exercises, case studies, simulations, Q&A, participation in Committee meetings, etc.)	2017-19 average: - 42% lectures - 58% interactive methods	Increase share of interactive training methods to an average of at least 60%	TAMS database	1. Enough WTO staff undergo training on pedagogical skills 2. Courses delivered as face-to-face training
		Success rate in RTPCs and ATPCs	2017-19 average (RTPC): 96%	Stability	BTORs	
		Distinction rate in RTPCs and ATPCs	2017-19 average (RTPC): 37%	Stability	BTORs	
		Percentage of participants rating the overall content and results in RTPCs, ATPCs and advanced thematic courses with the two top marks ⁴⁶	2017-19 average: - RTPCs: 98% - ATPCs: 93% - advanced thematic courses: 96%	Stability Stability Stability	BTORs	A representative number of complete assessment forms by participants are received at the end of such training activities

⁴⁶ The top two marks are normally five out of five and four out of five.

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Number of participants trained in advanced trade negotiating skills	2017-19 average: 238	Stability	TAMS database	1. Enough demand for training activities 2. Availability of resources 3. Courses delivered as face-to-face training 4. Availability of training facilities in Geneva
		Number of advanced thematic courses using pre-diagnostics, coaching, leadership, action plans or follow-ups ⁴⁷	2019: 5	Stability	BTORs TAMS database	1. Enough demand for training activities 2. Availability of resources 3. Courses delivered as face-to-face training 4. Availability of training facilities in Geneva
		Number of interns trained by various Internship programmes	2017-19 average: FIMIP: 17; NTP: 14	Increase for FIMIP Stability for NTP	BTORs TAMS database	1. Availability of adequate funding 2. Members present suitable candidates 3. Selected interns are able to participate in the programmes
		Number of interns trained by the Regional Coordinators Internship Programme	2017-19 average: RCI: 6	Stability	BTORs TAMS database	1. Availability of funding 2. Members present suitable candidates
		Final evaluation of each intern by their supervisor	100% of at least fully satisfactory in 2017-19	Stability	Evaluation by the supervisors	
		New, revised or translated eLearning courses released during the year	2017-19 average: 10	Stability	BTOR	1. Appropriate eLearning resources 2. Absence of disturbance

⁴⁷ On topics such as Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures; Technical Barriers to Trade; Agriculture Notifications; Import Licensing; and Trade in Services Statistics. WTO Technical Assistance Annual Report 2019, WT/COMTD/W/256, para. 5.75.

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Percentage of eLearning courses in SCORM format	62% in 2019	Increase to 100% by the end of biennium	BTOR	in e-Campus 3. Continued availability of current platform for eLearning programme
		Percentage of participants rating the quality of the eLearning courses content with the two top marks	2017-19 average: 94%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Campus
		Percentage of participants rating the effectiveness of the eLearning website with the two top marks	2017-19 average: 94%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Campus
		eLearning success rate of participants attending the courses	2017-19 average: 68%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Campus
		eLearning drop-out rate	2017-19 average: 24%	Stability		
		eLearning distinction rate	2017-19 average: 53%	Stability		
Output	1.2: Effective partnerships established	Proportion of activities with the involvement of a partner	2016-18 average: 54%	Stability	TAMS database	Potential partners are interested and have the required resources and knowledge in areas where WTO may not have the necessary knowledge or skills
		Proportion of partners' contribution to the TA activities	2017-19 average: 47% low contributions	Decrease the proportion of low contributions		
Output	1.3: Members' TA needs and priorities identified periodically	Number of responses to TA questionnaire	2017-19 average: 76	Stability	Secretariat questionnaires	Members can identify and prioritize their needs
		No of TPR Follow-ups	2017-19 average: 8	Stability	BTORs	Stability in the number of TPRs and constant demand for TPR follow-ups

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
Output	1.4: WTO data and databases accessed by Members	Visits by Members' logging in to the WTO website	60,427 in 2019	Increase	WTO Webmaster	Members' willingness to use available WTO data sources
		Number of TA activities that include training on WTO databases as one of their objectives	2017-19 average: 60	Increase	TAMS database BTORs	Enough demand for training on WTO databases
Key Result	2: Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations	Number of formal or informal Working Party meetings held for acceding beneficiary governments/territories	2017-19 average: 6	Stability	DG Annual Report on Accessions	Accessions are active Governments/territories submit required input to their Working Parties
Output	2.1: Acceding governments/territories participants' knowledge on WTO substantive and procedural matters enhanced	Number of participants from observer governments/territories attending TA activities focused on accessions	2017-19 average: 1,179	Stability	BTORs TAMS Database DG Annual Report on Accessions	1. Accessions are active 2. The number of TA beneficiaries under WTO administrative measures does not increase 3. Trained staff are retained in relevant positions
Output	2.2: Accessions Internship programme participants' knowledge enhanced	Final evaluation rate of each intern by supervisor	2017-19 average: 100% at least fully satisfactory	Stability	Evaluation by the supervisors	Availability of funding Members present suitable candidates
Output	2.3: Interested Members' expertise on GPA rules and accession negotiations enhanced (IPD)	Average no. of relevant accession-related documents circulated per TA-eligible GPA acceding Member ⁴⁸	2017-19 average: 5.2	Stability	Documents online	GPA accession negotiations remain active
		Average no. of interventions made by TA-eligible GPA-acceding Parties during meetings of the CGP	2018-20 average: 2.9	Stability	Documents online	

⁴⁸ Eligible documents for purposes of the indicator include (a) GPA/ACC/* series documents; (b) relevant documents in the GPA/*; WT/Let/*; GPA/W/*; GPA/CD/* (from 2018); RD/GPA/* series; and (c) any other relevant documents.

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Average no. of bilateral meetings of TA-eligible GPA-acceding Parties with Chair of the CGP	2018-20 average: 1.29	Stability	Internal database	
Key Result	3: Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers	Diversity of WTO related topics covered by activities	2018-19 average	Stability	Intermediate and annual reporting by the Chairs BTORs	Academic institutions and other stakeholders remain interested in WTO issues
Output	3.1: Research on trade policy and WTO- related matters generated by the WCP	Number of publications	To be collected in 2021	Stability in 2022; increase in 2023	Publications, Annual Reports from the Chairs Evaluations/Assessments Report by the Advisory Board	Compliance with programme guidelines
		Assessment of the quality of the key research output per Chair per year by the Advisory Board	To be collected in 2021	Positive evaluation	Advisory Board Reports	Compliance with programme guidelines
	3.2: Courses with WTO content developed by WCP Chairs	Number of students completing a WTO-related course	To be collected in 2021	Stability in 2022; increase in 2023	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations /Assessments	Interest in multilateral trade. Compliance with programme guidelines.
		Number of new or updated WTO-related courses	To be collected in 2021	Stability in 2022; increase in 2023	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations/Assessments WCP Platform and other online research network activities (inc. social media)	
Output	3.3 WTO Chairs' research disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders	Number of outreach events per year	To be collected in 2021	Stability in 2022; increase in 2023	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations/Assessments WCP Platform and other online research network activities (inc. social media)	Compliance with programme guidelines

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Advice provided to governmental policy makers and other stakeholders	To be collected in 2021	Stability in 2022; increase in 2023	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations/Assessments WCP Platform and other online research network activities (inc. social media)	
Output	3.4 Students trained on WTO work and issues	Number of students participating in competitions supported by the WTO	To be collected in 2021	Stability	BTORs	External partner remains engaged
		Number of PhD students supervised graduating with a PhD	Students supervised graduate with a PhD each year: 5	Stability	BTORs	PhD students remain interested in WTO issues
Key Result	4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues	Diversity of WTO related topics covered by statements, reports, and papers produced by this group of stakeholders	In 2017: 26 WTO-related topics covered	Stability	Media reports when available, Statements made by legislators, business associations, NGOs when available	1. Stakeholders remain interested in WTO issues 2. Collaborating partners remain interested in trade issues
Output	4.1: Understanding of WTO work and issues by non-governmental stakeholders and legislators improved	Number of seminars, workshops conducted	2017-19 average: 7 activities	Stability	TAMS database	Legislators, journalists and civil society remain interested in WTO issues
		Number of key non-governmental stakeholders and legislators reached during the year	2017-19 average: 355 legislators 73 journalists 28 civil society	Stability	BTORs	

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
Output	4.2: Improved access to WTO issues through eLearning training material for self-study	Number of training material consulted	2017-19 average: 3,336	Stability	Online form	1. Public interest in WTO issues 2. Appropriate eLearning resources 3. Absence of external disturbance in e-Campus 4. Continued availability of current platform for eLearning programme
Output	4.3 Information on WTO trade-related TA accessed	Number of views of the web pages on technical assistance including news items on this subject	2017: 62,963	Stability	WTO webmaster	Public interest in WTO issues
Output	4.4: Young professionals are exposed to WTO work and issues	Number of Young Professionals selected annually by the WTO	2018-19 average: 15	Stability	TAMS database	Selected YPs are able to participate in the programme
		Final evaluation rate of each Young Professional's performance by their supervisor	100% at least fully satisfactory in 2019-20	Stability	Evaluation by the supervisors	

ANNEX 2: ACTIVITY MATRIX
(in thousand swiss francs)

Key Result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations

Level	Path	Language (s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
					RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds ⁴⁹	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
Introduction	Generalist	E/F/S	Geneva-based Courses for LDCs - Introduction and Focus Activities - Geneva weeks	Global	441			441		
Advanced	Generalist	E/F/S	Applied Advanced Trade Policy Courses	Global	1,625			1,382		
Intermediate	Generalist	E/F/S	Intermediate level activities for: Africa; Middle East; Asia and Pacific Economies; Caribbean; Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus; Latin America	All		3,172			3,172	
Advanced	Specialist	E/F/S	Geneva-based Advanced Thematic Courses and topic specific symposia for Capital-based officials	Global	1,866	950		1,810	950	
Advanced	Specialist	E/F/S	Advisory Role on Legal Issues (Art. 27.2 of DSU)	Global	60			60		
Intermediate	Generalist	E/F/S	Regional and/or sub-regional general capacity-building activities	All		370			370	
Intermediate / Advanced	Generalist/ Specialist	E/F/S	National seminars and workshops, including assistance for needs assessment and monitoring and evaluation	All	680	40		680	40	
Intermediate	Specialist	E/F/S	Regional and sub-regional topic-specific seminars	All		3,000			3,000	
		E/F/S	China's LDCs and Accessions Programme: Participation of LDCs in selected WTO meetings; LDCs TPR follow-up workshops; and, South-South Dialogue	All			95			95
Advanced	Generalist	E/F/S	Internships in the framework of the Netherlands Trainee Programme (NTP)	Global			774			774
Advanced	Generalist	E/F/S	Regional Coordinator Internships programme (RCI)	Global		210			210	
Advanced	Generalist	E/F/S	French-Irish Missions Internship programme (FIMIP)	Global			1,061			1,061
Introduction	Generalist	E/F/S	Online courses: Introduction level	Capital-based officials	x			x		
Intermediate	Generalist/ Specialist	E/F/S	Online courses: intermediate Level (Generalists and Specialists)		x			x		
	Generalist/ Specialist	English	Online course: Tailored Course - Create your own eLearning Courses		x			x		
Sub-total					4,672	7,742	1,930	4,372	7,742	1,930
Overheads @13%					-	1,006	251	-	1,006	251
Total					4,672	8,748	2,181	4,372	8,748	2,181

Key Result 2: Acceding governments/territories are participating in accession negotiations

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
					RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
Intermediate / Advanced	Generalist/ Specialist	E/F/S	National seminars, courses and workshops on Accessions	All	50	313		50	313	
		E	China's LDCs and Accessions Programme: WTO Accession Round Table meetings	Global			230			230
Introduction	Generalist	E/F/S	China's LDCs and Accessions Programme: WTO Accessions Internship Programme (AIP)	Global			100			100
Intermediate	Generalist	E/F/S	Online course: Accession to the WTO	Global	x			x		
Sub-total					50	313	330	50	313	330
Overheads @13%					-	41	43	-	41	43
Total					50	354	373	50	354	373

Key Result 3: Academic institutions and students are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
					RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
	Generalist	E/F/S	WTO Chairs programme - Phase III ⁵⁰	All			1,300			1,300
		E/F/S	WTO Support programme for doctoral students	Global		65			65	
		E/F/S	Donation of WTO publications to Academic Institutions	All	1			1		
Sub-total					1	65	1,300	1	65	1,300
Overheads @13%					-	8	169	-	8	169
Total					1	73	1,469	1	73	1,469

⁴⁹ Earmarked Funds include the contributions earmarked by donors to finance the China Programme, French-Irish Mission Internship Programme, Netherlands Trainee Programme and WTO Chairs Programme earmarked by Australia, Austria, and France.

⁵⁰ Estimate to be adjusted depending on the number of institutions selected to participate in phase III of the programme and on total contributions available

Key Result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
					RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
		E/F/S	Outreach for legislators, journalists, civil society and businesses	All	-	605		-	605	
	Specialist	E/F/S	WTO Young Professionals' programme (YPP)	Global		657			657 ⁵¹	
		E/F/S	Online training material for self-study	All		-			-	
			Sub-total		-	1,262	-	-	1,262	-
			Overheads @13%		-	164	-	-	164	-
			Total		-	1,427	-	-	1,427	-

Other programmes' costs: programme staff and Monitoring and evaluation

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
					RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
			L-Posts			1,700			1,700	
			Implementation of RBM and development of eLearning courses		125			125		
			Sub-total		125	1,700	-	125	1,700	-
			Overheads @13%		-	221	-	-	221	-
			Total		125	1,921	-	125	1,921	-

⁵¹ The funding may be adjusted for 2023 to take into account the results of the evaluation of the YPP and a decision to revamp it.

Summary Grand Total

Title	Region	Estimated cost 2022			Estimated cost 2023		
		RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds	RB	GTF	Earmarked Funds
Sub-total		4,848	11,083	3,560	4,548	11,083	3,560
Overheads @13%		-	1,441	463	-	1,441	463
Total		4,848	12,523	4,023	4,548	12,523	4,023