



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TENTH TRIENNIAL REVIEW

Proposal from the United States

The following submission, dated 18 January 2024, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the United States.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1. Technical assistance is a priority for the Committee and essential to support human and institutional capacity to fully implement and benefit from the TBT Agreement.¹ Committee Members provide substantial support to assist Members and Observers on the implementation of the TBT Agreement. Over the past 20 years, the United States has provided more than USD 6 billion in technical and capacity-building assistance for more than 110 countries. In the same period, the United States has channeled over USD 27 million to the WTO's various trust funds.²

1.2. With the goal of minimizing duplication and enhancing the delivery of technical assistance, Members regularly share, on a voluntary basis, information and experiences on Member-led technical assistance in order to enhance the implementation of Article 11 of the TBT Agreement. However, the Secretariat also provides substantial TBT-related technical assistance to Members and Observers.

1.3. In 2003, the Committee requested that the Secretariat deliver, as part of the Committee's standing agenda item on technical assistance, information on its recently concluded programmes and future plans on TBT-related technical assistance, and reflect this in the Committee's annual reviews.³ Since this time, the Secretariat has expanded its delivery of TBT-related technical assistance.

1.4. Given the wide array of Member and Secretariat-led technical assistance activities, it remains important for Members and the Secretariat to regularly discuss these efforts to increase the effectiveness of technical assistance in the TBT area.

2 PROPOSAL

2.1. Building upon previous recommendations of the Committee that reaffirmed the need to review the effectiveness of technical assistance in the TBT area,⁴ the United States recommends that the Secretariat prepare an annual report outlining technical assistance provided by the Secretariat to Members and Observers related to the implementation and operation of the TBT Agreement. The United States also recommends that the TBT and CTD Secretariats collaborate on experience sharing exchanges across the TBT and CTD Committees to capture and map-out technical assistance and

¹ [G/TBT/1/Rev.15](#), section 7, para. 7.1.

² https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres22_e/pr911_e.htm.

³ [G/TBT/13](#), para. 55.

⁴ [G/TBT/37](#), Section 6.2, para. 6.7(a).

capacity building practices have been proven to be highly effective in fostering collaboration among peers and colleagues, filling knowledge gaps, and generating fresh thinking on TBT issues.

2.2. A regular report should be developed with the view to complement existing Committee work on technical assistance by facilitating coordination between the Secretariat and Committee Members and to avoid duplication with Member-led technical assistance. This report should include both forward-looking and retrospective information on technical assistance. A verbal summary of the report should be presented by the Secretariat to the Committee as part of the agenda item for technical assistance during the first Committee meeting each calendar year to increase Member awareness and provide an opportunity for input.

2.3. This report should include the following items:

- a. Complete list of technical assistance activities provided by the Secretariat in the previous year, including a brief summary of objectives and outcomes for each training activity;
 - b. Information regarding the Members and Observers that received training and, as appropriate, specific training requests related to the implementation of the Agreement;
 - c. Participant and speaker information including a list of Members, Observers, international organizations, and other bodies that participated in technical assistance activities provided by the Secretariat;
 - d. Summary of challenges, limitations, and lessons learned in the delivery of technical assistance, including what topics are the most frequently requested for technical assistance and how are the requests met, including through "learning agendas" that are very similar to workshops aimed at disseminating findings in collaboration with the Committee on Trade and Development;
 - e. Implementation costs and budget information; and
 - f. Workplan of proposals and planned activities for the coming year (12 months), and updates to the plan can be communicated regularly during the technical assistance agenda item at WTO TBT Committees.
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