



BIENNIAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PLAN 2024-2025

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**ACRONYMS**

AfCFTA	The African Continental Free Trade Area
AIP	Accessions Internship Programme
ATPC	Advanced Trade Policy Course
BTOR	Back to Office Report
CEECAC	Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus
FTAs	Free Trade Areas
GPA	Government Procurement Agreement
GTF	Global Trust Fund
GVC	Global Value Chain
ITTC	Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation
JSIs	Joint Statement Initiatives
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
RTA	Regional Trade Agreement
RTPC	Regional Trade Policy Course
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
TA	Technical Assistance
TA Plan	Biennial Technical Assistance and Training Plan
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPR	Trade Policy Review
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
WCP	WTO Chairs Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
YPP	Young Professionals Programme

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## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. World Trade Organization Technical Assistance (WTO TA) is a core function of the World Trade Organization. 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 2024-25. 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 Declaration<sup>1</sup> and other relevant decisions adopted by Members.

3. The TA Plan 2024-25 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/separate customs territories are participating in accession negotiations;
- Key Result 3 – Academic institutions and other stakeholders 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 2024-25 biennium, taking into consideration Members' needs and the outcome of the most recent Ministerial Conferences. The TA Plan takes into account the outcomes from the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference and provides for sufficient flexibility to accommodate any specific outcomes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference to be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in February 2024. In keeping with the Results-Based Management (RBM) approach, and to ensure continuous improvement in the availability of comprehensive data, the Secretariat will continue with the 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 2024-25 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 consolidating 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 using new methods of training and technologies with increased interactivity and more efficient use of resources.

6. As the world prepared to overcome the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, the transition from virtual to face-to-face training was slow and only started to pick up in the second half of the year 2022. The fact that Members were also busy with the preparations of the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (MC12) impacted on the delivery of TA to some extent. Taking into account the innovation and experience gained in the implementation of virtual trainings, which led to an increase in the overall number of activities organised to train TA beneficiaries compared to the previous

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<sup>1</sup> Doha Ministerial Declaration, [WT/MIN\(01\)/DEC/1](#), paras. 38-41.

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biennium, blended activities will be encouraged wherever feasible together with the preferred modes of delivery identified by TA beneficiaries.

7. At the time of preparation of this biennial TA Plan, Members were still discussing and negotiating several topics that could have an impact on the WTO work going forward. Furthermore, Members were preparing for the 13<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (MC13). For these reasons, the Plan has provided for some flexibility to accommodate outcomes of the MC13 and additional TA priority needs. The current global economic environment will be closely monitored with a view to mitigate impact on the implementation of the TA Plan.

8. The TA Plan provides indicators, baselines, and targets to be used to measure the attainment of the Key Results assuming that the current conditions remain stable and those that could negatively affect TA activities are contained to the extent possible at the beginning of the period 2024-25. While there are specific assumptions associated with several of the outcomes outlined in the logframe that may have an impact on the indicators, a general assumption of continued support and commitment to WTO work is central to all the activities envisaged. If the conditions that negatively affect TA activities in 2022 and 2023 continue or worsen during all or most of the period 2024-25, 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 national level.

9. This TA Plan has been developed in the context of a WTO Regular Budget that has been static in nominal terms since 2009 and of generous contributions being provided, though these have been declining from CHF7.3 million in 2018 to CHF3.1 in 2022. Taking this into account, the TA Plan assumes that voluntary extra-budgetary contributions will improve during 2023 and 2024, thereby allowing approximately the same level of TA activity as in the pre COVID-19 pandemic period. 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.

10. 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.

11. Under the guidance of Members, the Secretariat will continue to carry out actions that may arise or require attention, including those arising from external audits such as the Performance Audit on the governance and management of Extra-Budgetary Trust funds as outlined in the Secretariat's response.<sup>2</sup> The Secretariat will take into account the outcome of its structural review, as appropriate, to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of WTO TA.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

12. WTO's TA 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

13. The importance of TA was subsequently re-affirmed by Ministers at the 10<sup>th</sup> 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,

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<sup>2</sup> See Secretariat's Responses to the Report of the Independent External Auditor on the Performance Audit on Governance and Management of Extra-Budgetary Trust Funds, 2023, [WT/BFA/W/623](#).

<sup>3</sup> Doha Ministerial Declaration, [WT/MIN\(01\)/DEC/1](#), para. 38.

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in particular LDCs, to implement their agreements, to adjust to the reform process, and to benefit from opportunities presented.<sup>4</sup>

14. In the preparation of this TA Plan, the Secretariat worked with beneficiaries to identify needs and to ensure the relevance of the WTO TA 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.

15. The TA Plan 2024-25 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 TA priorities and promoting better TA results. Furthermore, the activities included in the TA Plan 2024-25 have been designed to achieve similar overall results as those of the most recent biennial TA Plans. The results expected for 2024-25 are elaborated in section 6 and in the detailed logframe included in Annex 1. The Annexes are an integral part of the TA Plan.

16. The TA Plan has been developed against a background of increased economic uncertainty, compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic and the global economic environment. The majority of TA beneficiaries continue to face the same 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 for development; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); Global Value Chains (GVCs); among others.

17. The TA Plan 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.<sup>5</sup> As in previous TA Plans, the TA activities to be delivered will depend on Members' identified needs and priorities particularly at the national level, with regional activities reflecting overall needs expressed in the various regions as elaborated in section 4. The main TA activities and programmes associated with the TA Plan are listed in Annex 2.

18. 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 beneficiary Members and Observers; 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 2022-23**

#### **3.1 Key achievements of 2022**

19. The lessons learned from the implementation of previous TA Plans and in particular the achievements for 2022 have helped guide the preparation of this TA Plan.

20. The WTO TA Annual Report for 2022 (2022 TA Annual Report) provides a detailed analysis of the TA delivered by the WTO during the first year of implementation of the TA Plan 2022-23. The 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12), which was held in June 2022, dominated the first half of the year, resulting in both reduced staff availability to provide TA as well as a reduced demand by beneficiaries for TA.

21. The easing of travel restrictions precipitated a renewed demand for face-to-face TA activities, coupled with the experience gained in the implementation of virtual, blended, and hybrid training, resulted in an increase in the overall number of TA activities compared with the previous biennium.

22. With the resumption of face-to-face delivery of TA and the experience gained during the pandemic, the WTO was more flexible in identifying the most efficient and effective delivery formats.

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<sup>4</sup> Nairobi Ministerial Declaration, [WT/MIN\(15\)/DEC](#), para. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Doha Ministerial Declaration, [WT/MIN\(01\)/DEC/1](#), paras. 38-41.

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Furthermore, requests for national activities, which are the best way of addressing a beneficiaries' specific needs at a given point in time, rebounded after hitting an all-time low in 2021.

23. In line with previous years, courses with a general scope had the highest level of participation followed by Standards and TRIPS. The latter two can be attributed to a large extent to COVID-related subjects such as patents and vaccines.

24. It appears, that since 2020, beneficiaries have either had other priorities than institutional capacity building in the field of trade or have waited for the resumption of face-to-face activities to reinitiate TA requests. The gradual lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and the resumption of face-to-face activities saw an uptick in requests for national activities in 2022 compared with 2021, however, these were still below the pre-pandemic levels. Beneficiaries continued to focus on addressing public health concerns and the related effects of the pandemic. Furthermore, as expected in a ministerial year, several national and regional seminars on the progress of the negotiations were organised prior to the MC12 to prepare for the Conference and post-MC12 to present its main results and facilitate their implementation.

25. The cancellation of several face-to-face activities for generalists during the pandemic in 2020 resulted in a bigger proportion of specialized training. With the Secretariat gradually adapting to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, activities for specialists continued their upward trend in 2022, although still below pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, participants in the specialised path continued to be an increasing majority in Intermediate and Advanced levels (71%).

26. Advanced-level activities are difficult to convert to a virtual format, resulting in a significant drop in the number and proportion of advanced TA activities and in the size of their audience. This trend continued in 2022. Conversely, intermediate activities have become 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 (PLS) and could not be assigned a specific level.

27. The Secretariat's e-Learning programme continued to provide online courses and was responsible for 55% of total WTO TA participants in 2022. In December 2022, the WTO moved to a new e-Learning platform. The new platform provides for a more user-friendly open-source Learning Management System (LMS) that enhances the user's learning experience. The LMS provides content management, full learning analytics, blended learning features, and competency-based training, making it an all-in-one solution for online training and development. The new LMS also supports mobile learning, enabling users to access training materials from anywhere, anytime, using any device and mobile app for offline learning. The development, migration and launch of the new WTO e-Learning platform was a massive undertaking and a great team effort involving cooperation among several divisions of the Secretariat. The result is an e-Learning platform offering tremendous opportunities for expansion and development. This online portal strengthens the outreach of the WTO to the wider world and is a 21st-century e-Learning programme capable of meeting its users' present and future training needs.

28. However, the migration to a new e-Learning platform during the year mitigated the results achieved through this format. Despite higher participation in 2022, the success rate measured by course completion rates declined significantly from 61% in 2021 to 51% in 2022. The major factor for the decline was that many participants were unable to complete their courses before the transition to the new platform. On the other hand, the number of distinctions achieved remained steady, while the proportion of correct answers improved slightly. Additionally, micro-courses had a higher completion rate, as well as a better correct answers rate than the overall average.

29. Furthermore, the priority for e-Learning is to increase the interactivity of the content of the online courses. Eight new courses introduced in 2022 were in the SCORM format and included interactive training components, bringing the share of interactive online courses to 81%. All e-Learning courses will continue to be revised to increase interactivity.

30. The Secretariat continued its efforts to maintain strong participation of least developed countries (LDCs) as a priority, despite an increase in the number of LDCs under Administrative Measures and, therefore, ineligible to benefit from WTO TA. In addition, the Secretariat remained committed to promoting gender parity in its activities. Inclusion was also promoted through the delivery of TA activities in the different WTO working languages.

31. LDCs remain a priority for the WTO TA. The fact that Africa was again the region with the largest number of participants in TA activities in 2022, followed by Asia-Pacific, reinforced this priority, as all the LDCs except one are in these two regions. LDCs were invited to 65% of all WTO TA activities organised in 2022, including activities focused only on LDCs and their priorities. However, despite the overall level of participation, quantity, and diversity of TA activities increasing in 2022, LDC participation declined. While the number of LDCs taking part in TA activities remained stable (42 different Members and Observers), the share of participants from LDCs decreased to 22% in 2022 compared with 27% in 2021. At a disaggregated level, LDCs' demand for national activities accounted for only 23% of total such requests in 2022. The share of LDC nationals among e-learners also decreased from 30% in 2021 to 26% in 2022. The number of documents LDCs submitted to WTO Committees, another valuable indicator of participation in the system, also decreased in 2022. The ratio was more encouraging for interns and young professionals, as almost half (45%) were nationals of LDCs.

32. The WTO continues to make TA accessible to LDCs to ensure they can contribute to their respective country's participation in the WTO's work and trade negotiations. In this respect, to explore the evolving LDC trade priorities, the WTO Secretariat hosted, in December 2022, a three-day seminar in English and French for LDC capital-based officials, ambassadors, and delegates of the WTO LDC Group in Geneva. Participants exchanged views on the current trade priorities of the Group, which included market access, full implementation of LDC-specific decisions, making special and differential treatment more effective, and making greater use of regular WTO Committees and existing digital tools. Participants also showed an interest in exploring digital trade opportunities and deepening regional integration efforts.

33. Increasing and enhancing the role and participation of women in global trade is an integral part of WTO TA's mission. Through dedicated activities for governments officials, the Secretariat has been supporting WTO Members in building their expertise in inclusive trade policymaking. The Secretariat remains committed to ensuring gender parity in its activities and sustaining its effort to provide a gender perspective in TA activities. 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.

34. With this backdrop, after the COVID-19 years during which women were disproportionately affected by sanitary restrictions and work-from-home conditions, 2022 showed a spectacular improvement. For the first time, more women (51%) than men participated in WTO TA activities. Women accounted for 54% of all e-Learning participants in 2022, which represents an increase of 21% over the previous year. Furthermore, women participants accounted for 55% of all courses passed with a distinction.

35. Latin America (with 56% of female learners) and the Caribbean (75%) remained the region with the highest female participation. In 2022, women's participation increased in Africa, Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and Latin America, while CEECAC and the Caribbean saw a decrease during the same period.

36. The Secretariat continued to offer courses in the three WTO working languages. The proportion of languages used to conduct TA activities has not changed much since 2021 and is more balanced than in pre-pandemic years. English remained the predominant language in TA activities in 2022. More than half of all TA activities – both e-Learning and face-to-face – were conducted in English (52%), while the use of French and Spanish accounted for 24% of activities each. Interpretation was available for 10 activities (9 global and 1 regional) in 2022.

37. Regarding e-Learning, which tends to be monolingual in essence, the number of supporting activities (live questions & answers) in French and Spanish grew by more than a third in 2022. Over 86% of the Live Sessions were multilingual. Of the eight courses launched in 2022, four were in English, two in French and two in Spanish.

38. English remains the language of choice of most participants (66%), either in virtual, online, or face-to-face TA activities. French was the language of choice for over 15% of the learners, while 12% chose to follow activities in Spanish. Multilingual training with simultaneous interpretation accounted for 7% of the participants.



39. Key Result 1, which promotes the implementation of WTO Agreements and the full realisation of Members' rights and obligations, continued to represent the bulk of TA activities, with some 86% of TA activities reported during 2022. Key Result 2, which supports the accession of new Members, was in second place with 12% of TA activities reported during 2022. Key Results 3 and 4, in favour of academia and other stakeholders, represented a smaller share than in previous years.

40. Overall, WTO TA reached 65% of its agreed targets in 2022, which were comparable to the previous year. However, when disaggregated, the numbers depict a starkly different picture: targets achieved dropped to a historic low of 37% compared with 53% in the previous year, targets partially achieved doubled to 27%, the targets not met (29%) were higher than in the previous year. A confluence of factors was responsible for the diminished results, these included: a change in the e-Learning platform; the first half of the year being dominated by MC12 preparations; readapting to face-to-face activities taking time; and virtual activities having lost their sheen.

41. The above is well illustrated by the in-person Advanced Trade Policy Courses (ATPC), and the virtual Regional Trade Policy Course (RTPC), both of which were delivered in 2022. With regards to the ATPC, 98% of the participants succeeded in the course, and 28% received a distinction certificate. In contrast, the online nature of the RTPC presented participants with some challenges such as fatigue and balancing course attendance and assignments with work responsibilities; this manifested itself in decreased interaction and the lower distinction rate.

42. Developing and LDC Members continued to actively contribute to the work of the MTS. They maintained their submissions of working documents to WTO bodies albeit at a slower pace.

43. In 2022, several acceding governments continued working to join the WTO as Members. However, the number of those for which accession was in progress was lower than in 2021 (-44%) and the number of inactive accessions increased (+38%). Consequently, the results of TA under KR2 declined (as active accessions are the main assumption on which the TA targets are defined). Regarding plurilateral agreements, Members could not agree on the designation of the Chair of the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) Committee, which also negatively affected TA results in this domain.

44. The learning-by-doing component, which includes internships and the young professionals' programme attracted 51 participants, who joined the Secretariat or their respective Permanent Missions in Geneva to enhance their knowledge while working on trade-related matters. Except for one, all of them met the performance expectations, with more than one third of them exceeding those targets.

45. In 2022, Phase III of the WTO Chairs Programme (WCP) was launched and will run for four years. The expansion in Phase III nearly doubles the established network from 19 to 36 Chairs, leading to a wider and deeper geographical coverage. Initial results are encouraging and above expectations, with total research output more than doubling to 275 in 2022, compared with 135 in the previous year. The increased output can be attributed to the fact that, unlike many other activities, academic research was not fundamentally affected by the constraints imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, since most of the investigation, drafting, and consulting work involved was already taking place virtually. Outreach activities (conferences, seminars, etc.) organised by Chairs also increased. Furthermore, one former participant in the PhD support programme earned the Asian Development Bank best thesis of the year award.

46. Outreach activities for non-traditional audiences such as journalists, legislators, the private sector, and civil society, which had been severely impacted by the pandemic, also bounced back in the second half of 2022. Four in-person TA outreach activities were organized; two regional and two global. The activities focused on topics such as challenges facing the multilateral trading system, understanding the WTO and the legislative work required to implement the outcomes of the WTO's 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (MC12). Additionally, The WTO went on to strengthen its use of social media and other platforms to spread information on trade issues across diverse audiences. Its number of social media followers and of views of TA webpages and news items increased in 2022. On the other hand, demand for training materials by academia or private actors continued to decline.

## **3.2 Lessons learnt from implementing the 2022 Activities**

47. Several relevant lessons can be drawn from the implementation of the TA activities in 2022 and in earlier years, which will shape the implementation of the TA Plan 2024-25. 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**

48. 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 lessons learnt and experiences gained during the pandemic, so as to identify the best delivery format based on efficiency and effectiveness criteria. This will allow the Secretariat to continue providing valuable support to the needs of Members and Observers. Therefore, the TA Plan 2024-25 is structured according to the same overall philosophy and broad operational modalities as the previous TA Plans.

49. At the same time, minor adjustments have been made to the indicators, targets and assumptions for some Key Results and Outputs. 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.

50. With the objective of facilitating data collection for the purpose of RBM (such as information on beneficiaries' needs, level of TA demand, and partnerships), enhancements were made to the TA Management System (TAMS) during the previous biennium. Changes incorporated included: improving and creating new functionalities for online national TA requests, BTOR's recommendations module, and Dashboards. These dashboards were further enhanced in 2022 to include predefined graphs by mode of delivery, reach, subject, LDC participation, gender, and internships as well as dynamic data for 2022 and the current year. Beneficiaries can also access detailed data on their own participants in TA activities since 2016 and on their national requests. However, in 2022, the development of TAMS stalled, as the consultant recruited in 2021 proved incapable of completing the work. No new functionalities could be incorporated, and the development of the single TA portal was put on hold.

51. It is imperative for transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of TA to have the combination of the availability of real-time TA data visualization and an annual TA reporting to assist the Secretariat in more strategic communication of TA results. This should also capture 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**

52. The Secretariat's TA offer continued to be guided by the PLS. During the year 2022, most registered TA activities were part of the PLS. Approximately 16% of registered TA activities could not be ascribed to a specific level and did not fit into the PLS. This proportion was consistent with previous years and indicates a good absorption of PLS in the Secretariat's TA activities.

53. 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.

### **3.2.3 Course Content and Pedagogical methods**

54. During 2022, the Secretariat continued adjusting its course offer and curricula, improving its pedagogical approach, and carefully identifying the needs of beneficiaries with a view to achieving the desired learning outcomes.

55. With respect to means of delivering TA activities, the pandemic has resulted in a better understanding, for both the Secretariat and beneficiaries, of the opportunities that remote TA delivery may offer. However, the pandemic 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 both virtual and face-to-face activities, the Secretariat has started moving towards blended activities in which the face-to-face segments would focus on what they can best achieve (e.g., elements of interaction, motivation, and enriching connections) and be complemented with virtual segments for the rest. The on-site evaluation of one of these activities found that the contents of the virtual and face-to-face components were complementary. The main areas of complementarity highlighted were that the face-to-face segment was more in-depth, explored more complex issues, and allowed participants to practice the theoretical or generalist aspects learned in the virtual phase, focusing on real cases. According to participants, this format made efficient use of their time.

56. 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. In 2022, the Secretariat launched a Campaign to provide training for staff members responsible for undertaking technical assistance and trade capacity-building programmes. In a shift from previous programmes, the 2022 programme comprised a foundation module on adult learning styles and training design and delivery as well as shorter thematic modules, which, in the future, will be adjusted to the emerging needs of WTO staff. The thematic modules addressed (i) Public Speaking with an Actor; (ii) Designing and Using Case Studies; (iii) Facilitating Virtual Panels; (iv) Using Virtual Platforms, e.g., ZOOM; and (v) Evaluating Learning/ Technical Assistance Activities. This modular approach made it possible to better tailor the programme to each trainer's needs, leading to much higher participation than in previous years.

57. Technological tools that allow remote delivery of TA and increase interactivity are evolving rapidly and becoming more easily accessible. Recent years have witnessed an expansion in the uptake of techniques and technologies in WTO TA that aim to sustain participants' attention and enhance the learning experience. WTO TA Trainers increasingly embraced interactive training techniques and incorporated digital innovations in face-to-face activities, resulting in traditional lecturing being reduced considerably. Furthermore, the greater mastery by and familiarity of Secretariat's trainers with interactive teaching methods and tools acquired during the pandemic, marked a turning point in TA implementation which will continue in the future.

#### **3.2.4 Prioritizing Inclusion**

58. 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), their participation declined in 2022. 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. LDCs were also affected by administrative measures taken with respect to Members and Observers in arrears on their contributions to the WTO. By late 2022, twelve LDC beneficiaries, (seven Members and five Observers), could not access TA from the WTO due to administrative measures. This situation poses a challenge to the Secretariat in addressing the needs of LDCs, who are a priority for WTO TA.

59. During the 2020-2021 period, the pandemic disproportionately affected the participation of women in TA activities. However, in 2022 the participation of women in WTO TA rebounded strongly, and for the first time, more women (51%) than men participated in WTO TA activities.

60. As in previous periods, there were variations in women participation across regions, with increases in some regions, decreases in others, and stability in a few regions. In Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Middle East, and Latin America, women representation rose, while CEECAC and the Caribbean saw a decrease. Women participation also increased in e-Learning activities, where they accounted for 55% of all courses passed with a distinction.

61. In terms of language diversity, of the three WTO working languages, English remained the predominant language in TA activities followed by French and Spanish. With regards to e-Learning which tends to be monolingual in nature, the number of supporting activities (live questions & answers) in French and Spanish grew by more than a third in 2022. Furthermore, over 86% of the

Live Sessions were multilingual. Of the eight courses launched in 2022, four were in English, two in French and two in Spanish.

62. Additionally, interpretation, which plays a very important role for some courses in enabling participants to fully comprehend the material being presented, was also increased. Several live sessions were organised with simultaneous interpretation and ten activities (nine global and one regional) were conducted with interpretation in 2022, thereby increasing language diversity in the WTO TA activities.

#### **4 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES**

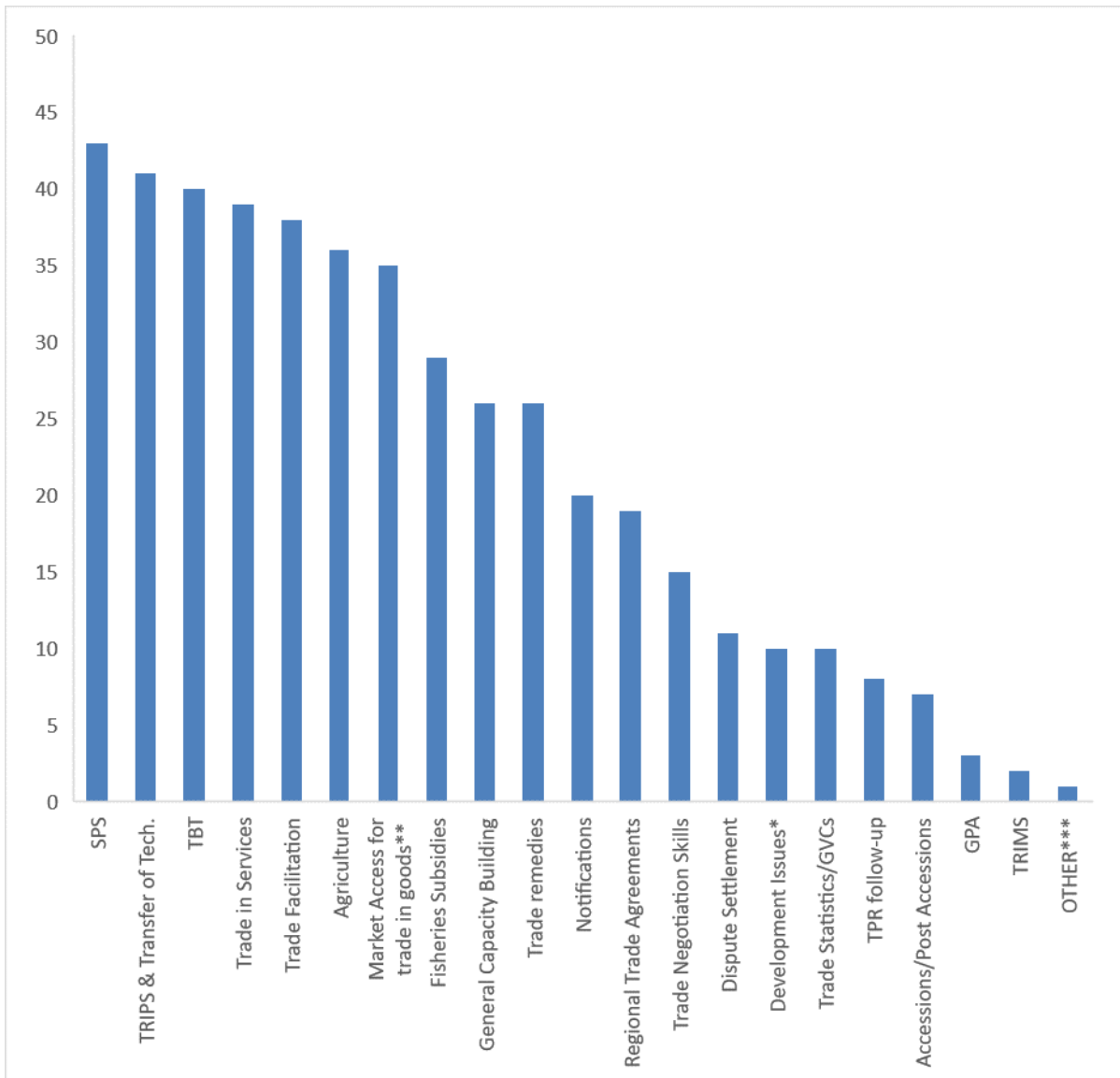
63. As part of the preparations for the TA Plan, and consistent with past practice, the Secretariat interacted with beneficiary Members and Observers to identify their TA priorities and seek their comments on various aspects related to the provision of TA. In this regard, an online questionnaire was circulated to beneficiaries' permanent missions to the WTO, inviting feedback and comments on a number of issues: their TA needs and priorities under existing Agreements and for areas where no agreement exists yet; the TA challenges they face in accessing TA, including with respect to the various forms of training delivery (such as online, virtual, blended 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 this TA Plan.

##### **4.1 Global Priority Needs**

64. In total, the Secretariat received responses from 87 TA beneficiaries, who represent about 60% of the total TA beneficiary Members and Observers. The number of respondents is the highest ever recorded for any TA Questionnaire, and nearly 15% above the average of the two previous TA Plans (75 responses each). The 87 responses have been broken down into regional groups and some of the respondents belong to more than one regional group.

65. While the responses have been categorised into two broad groups in terms of topics or subjects of interest covered by existing Agreements and those that are not, some of the responses were very diverse and focused on topics outside the WTO Secretariat's work. Additionally, within these two broad categories, many beneficiaries mentioned more specific and very detailed aspects. These more specific aspects will be considered in the context of national activities, while the more-straight forward ones and of interest to most beneficiaries of the same region will be addressed as regional activities in line with a demand driven approach to WTO TA.

66. The broad areas of highest priority for WTO TA related to existing WTO Agreements identified by the respondents from all regions are (ordered according to the number of mentions): SPS, TRIPS and transfer of technology, TBT, trade in services, trade facilitation, agriculture, and market access related topics (see Chart 1 below). Compared to the TA needs identified in the questionnaire for the 2022-2023 TA Plan, the priority topics for 2024-2025 have shown little change.

**Chart 1 - Beneficiaries priorities areas related to WTO Agreements for 2024-25**

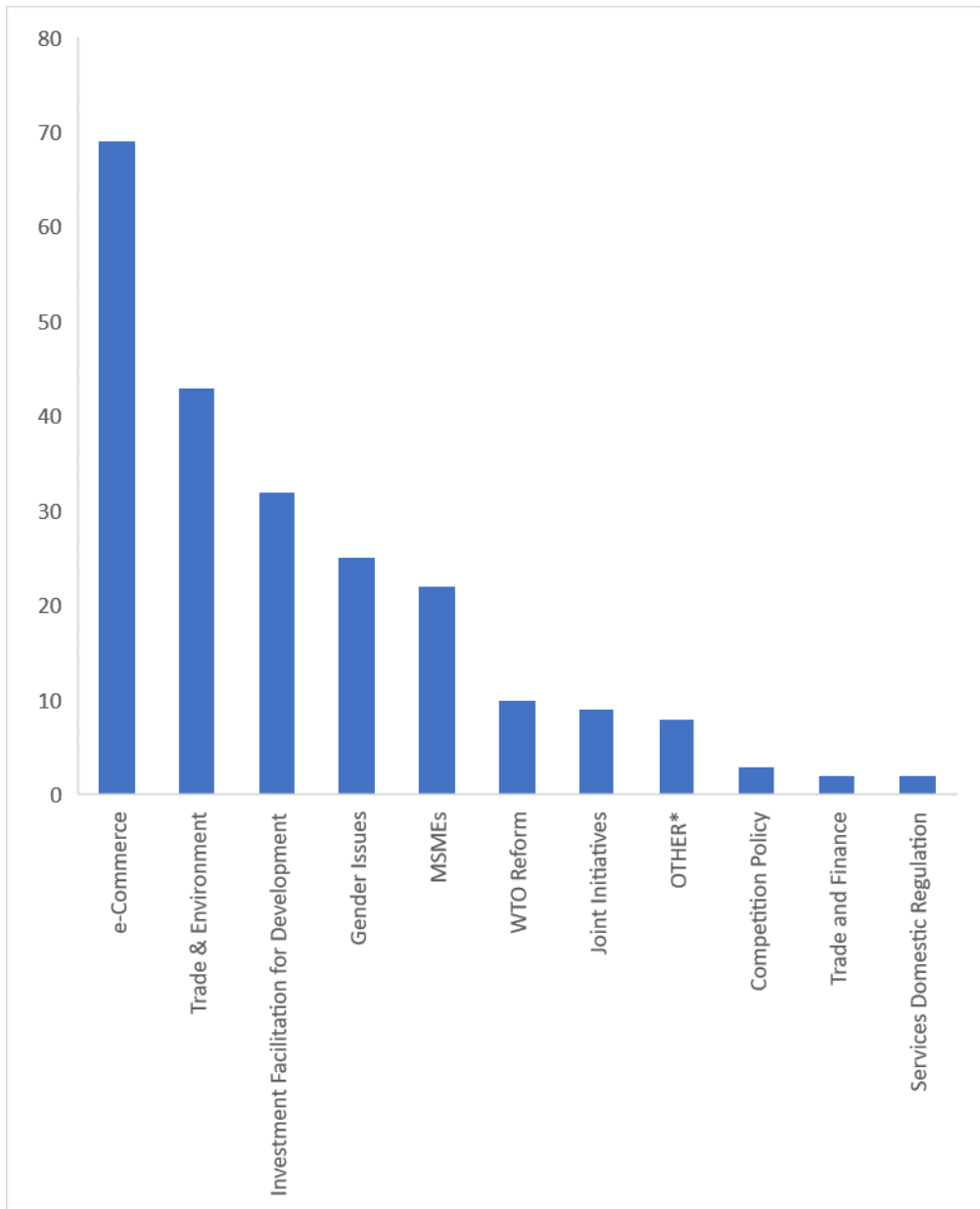
\* Development issues includes small and vulnerable economies (SVEs), and trade and sustainable development.

\*\* Market access for trade in goods includes rules of origin and customs valuation.

\*\*\* OTHER includes COVID impact in international trade.

67. The TA beneficiaries were asked whether they considered that WTO TA should broaden the range of issues covered to include topics under discussion in the WTO, including those that are not part of a multilaterally agreed process. Almost all respondents answered affirmatively and identified the following main subjects (in this order): e-commerce, trade and environment-related issues, investment facilitation, trade and gender issues, MSMEs and WTO reform. Some responses simply indicated Joint Statements of Initiatives (JSIs) in general terms. As indicated in the Chart 2 below, e-commerce (70) received the highest number of mentions, followed by trade and environment-related issues (45), and investment facilitation (30).

**Chart 2 - Topics not covered by an Agreement or not part of a multilaterally agreed process**



\* Other includes, among others, mobilization on trade donor assistance, nexus between trade, migration and work programme on small economies, Aid for Trade, trade and poverty related issues, trade policy instruments, trade finance.

#### 4.2 Priority Needs by region

68. WTO TA is delivered using several approaches, including the regional approach. Regional courses are organised based on the priority topics identified by members of a particular region. In the WTO, there are seven regions identified for the purpose of TA delivery: English-speaking Africa; French-speaking Africa; Arab and Middle East countries; Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus (CEECAC); the Caribbean; Latin America; and Asia and the Pacific. In some regions, the priorities identified are similar to the global priorities indicated in Charts 1 and 2 above, while in others there are differences between the regional and global priorities.

#### 4.2.1 English-speaking Africa

69. Sixteen<sup>6</sup> English-speaking Africa TA beneficiaries out of a possible twenty-six responded to the TA questionnaire. These respondents identified the following as priority topics under existing WTO Agreements (in that order): SPS; non-agricultural market access issues; TBT; TRIPS & transfer of technology; trade remedies; agriculture; trade in services; fisheries subsidies; trade facilitation; development issues; general capacity building; notifications; trade data/GVCs; and trade negotiation skills.

70. For topics not covered by an Agreement or not part of a multilaterally agreed process, the beneficiaries identified: e-commerce; investment facilitation; trade and environment; MSMEs; trade and gender issues; WTO reform; and trade financing.

71. In addition, some respondents also indicated that they would like the Secretariat to deliver tailored training so as to better meet their specific needs, as well as a more flexible approach on what constitutes WTO TA. In this regard, some felt that it would be desirable for WTO TA to go beyond the explanation of the agreements, and the rights and obligations arising therefrom, but instead get into how individual Members could get the most out of the WTO agreements.

#### 4.2.2 French-speaking Africa

72. Eighteen<sup>7</sup> out of the twenty-seven beneficiaries responded to the TA questionnaire in the French-speaking Africa region. The results indicated the priority TA areas with respect to topics covered by existing WTO Agreements such as (in that order): TRIPS/transfer of technology; agriculture; fisheries subsidies; notifications (general); SPS/TBT; trade facilitation; and trade in services.

73. In addition, some respondents indicated the importance of capacity building on market access issues such as rules of origin, tariff negotiations and support to regional integration in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). With respect to agriculture, the issue of food security was highlighted. Horizontal topics, such as general capacity building and trade negotiation skills, were also mentioned by several respondents.

74. For topics or issues under discussion in the WTO or not yet agreed to multilaterally, the members identified the following: e-commerce; trade and environment; trade and gender; trade and investment; competition policy; WTO reform; and joint statement initiatives. In addition, some countries indicated other issues such as trade policy instruments and trade finance.

75. Several beneficiaries also suggested targeted WTO technical assistance and training activities, including increasing the duration of some training activities, the creation of a monitoring system, and provide assistance in the implementation of the AfCFTA.

#### 4.2.3 Arab and Middle East

76. Eleven<sup>8</sup> out of the twenty-one beneficiaries included in the Arab and Middle East region responded to the TA questionnaire. The results indicated the priority areas for countries in the region as (in that order): trade facilitation; general capacity building; RTAs; trade in services; TRIPS; accessions/post-accessions issues; agriculture; fisheries subsidies; market access related issues; notifications (general); SPS; TBT; trade negotiations skills; development issues; dispute settlement; trade remedies; and TPR follow-up.

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<sup>6</sup> Botswana, **Egypt**, Eswatini, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, **Sudan**, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The responses from the Members in bold have also been included in the Arab region.

<sup>7</sup> **Algeria**, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, **Djibouti**, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, **Mauritania**, Niger, Senegal, and Togo. The responses from the Members in bold have also been included in the Arab group.

<sup>8</sup> **Algeria**, Bahrain, **Djibouti**, **Egypt**, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, **Mauritania**, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and **Sudan**. Responses from Arab/African countries, which are in bold, are also analysed in the respective sections relating to English and French-speaking Africa.

77. With respect to the Trade Facilitation Agreement, several Members indicated the need to provide support on the implementation of the single window, information sharing sessions to enhance border agency cooperation to expedite the release and clearance of goods, as well as targeted technical assistance to implement category C measures.

78. For the Members that identified intellectual property rights as a priority, emphasis was placed on patent protection and geographical indications. Many replies also attached importance to general capacity-building activities such as Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs) and Advanced Trade Policy Courses (ATPCs) due to the high turnover of staff dealing with trade issues in capitals. They also highlighted the fact that Arabic is not one of the official WTO languages as a barrier to them.

79. With regard to issues under discussion or not yet agreed to multilaterally, most respondents of this region indicated the following as the main subjects of interest: e-commerce; investment facilitation for development; initiatives relating to trade and environment; the SPS declaration on modern challenges; climate change, circular and green economy; services domestic regulations; and trade and gender.

#### **4.2.4 Central & Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus**

80. Twelve<sup>9</sup> out of the twenty-one CEECAC beneficiaries responded to the TA Questionnaire. The results indicated the main priority areas for the countries in the region as the following (in that order): TBT; agriculture; trade remedies; SPS; trade in services; market access issues; trade facilitation; dispute settlement; general capacity building; and RTAs.

81. For market access related issues, the specific needs for assistance included tariff re-negotiations/compensation and schedules of concessions as well as non-tariff measures (NTMs), such as import licensing procedures. For TBT and SPS issues, they elaborated: the principle of harmonization of international standards, quality infrastructure, risk management, technical regulations, and cooperation between international organizations. Regarding trade remedies, specific issues were highlighted, such as anticircumvention of anti-dumping and countervailing measures, and administrative reviews.

82. Regarding issues under discussion or not yet agreed to multilaterally, most respondents indicated: e-commerce; investment facilitation for development; MSMEs; and services domestic regulations. The responses also mentioned other topics relating to the environment, including the impact of climate change related response measures on international trade.

83. In addition, some countries suggested better targeted WTO technical assistance and training activities, including activities more tailor-made for acceding governments and their stakeholders. They also indicated that it is essential for beneficiaries that have a high turnover of staff dealing with trade to have access to the same courses that were previously offered. The geopolitical situation in the region was also mentioned, and it was indicated that the current circumstances are hampering the full use of the TA on offer.

#### **4.2.5 The Caribbean**

84. Seven<sup>10</sup> out of the fourteen countries of the Caribbean region replied to the TA questionnaire. The topics most frequently identified as TA priorities by the respondents included: SPS; general market access issues; TBT; trade facilitation; agriculture; fisheries subsidies; general capacity building (including the WTO Chairs programme cited by one respondent); notifications; trade in services; TRIPS; development issues; and trade statistics and Global Value Chains (GVCs).

85. On issues under discussion or not yet agreed to multilaterally in the WTO, the responses indicated the following: trade and environment-related issues; trade and gender; e-commerce; MSMEs; and WTO reform. Another category of suggestions included broader issues such as the work

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<sup>9</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan.

<sup>10</sup> Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia; and Trinidad and Tobago.



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programme on small economies, the nexus between trade and migration, and mobilizing Aid for Trade.

86. In addition, suggestions were provided to enhance WTO TA, which included designing generalists' courses targeting the private sector. One respondent suggested considering short-term secondment for government officials other than long-term internship programmes. Another suggestion was to organize regional thematic courses that are tailored to the specific needs of the regions, and even at the sub-regional level.

#### **4.2.6 Latin America**

87. Thirteen<sup>11</sup> out of the nineteen Members from Latin America replied to the TA questionnaire. The main topics of interest in order of priority were: trade facilitation; TRIPS and transfer of technology; agriculture; fisheries subsidies; SPS; market access issues; TBT; and trade in services. Other areas of significant interest included general capacity building; notifications; trade statistics and GVCs. Furthermore, several respondents indicated their interest in development issues, trade remedies as well as cross-cutting themes related to how COVID-19 pandemic affected trade policies and measures.

88. Regarding issues still under discussion or not yet agreed to multilaterally in the WTO, respondents identified several areas including the following (in that order): e-commerce; trade and gender issues; trade and environment; MSMEs; and investment facilitation. General training on JSIs and WTO reform were also mentioned among other areas of interest.

89. Several respondents also made suggestions on how to improve WTO TA, which included providing beneficiaries with the means to evaluate each TA activity. Another suggestion was to provide an annual calendar of activities to enable beneficiaries to plan. Respondents also emphasized the need for more regional courses. It was mentioned that cross-cutting courses (including e-Learning modules) on existing online resources and databases would allow officials to have a general overview of tools available to them. Furthermore, it was suggested that age and experience requirements for some programmes could be reconsidered as criteria for selection to attend some courses. Expanding the number of participants per country in regional and global courses was recommended by one respondent.

#### **4.2.7 Asia and the Pacific**

90. Fifteen<sup>12</sup> out of thirty TA beneficiaries from the Asia-Pacific region responded to the TA questionnaire. Priority areas relating to current WTO agreements indicated by respondents included (in that order): trade in services; trade remedies; fisheries subsidies; SPS; TBT; TRIPS and transfer of technology; trade negotiation skills; market access issues; trade facilitation; agriculture; RTAs; TPR follow-up; dispute settlement; and notifications. For some of these broad categories, several respondents mentioned particular aspects of these categories. For instance, within the broader trade in services category, specific areas for TA that were identified by respondents include, inter alia: special and differential treatment, services schedules under regional trade agreements, dispute settlement in services, analysis of services data, and support in helping draft services legislation.

91. On fisheries subsidies, most respondents indicated the need to have a clear understanding of the agreement and the way forward. With respect to trade remedies, specific areas identified by some respondents were implementation of the agreements and incorporating these into domestic legislation. Notifications, food safety training, sanitary and phytosanitary standards, and technical regulation development in FTAs, as well as e-Ping training, were highlighted under the broader SPS/TBT category. Specific topics highlighted under TRIPS and transfer of technology included geographical indications (GIs), public health, and intellectual property chapters in RTAs.

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<sup>11</sup> Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

<sup>12</sup> Bangladesh; China; India; Macao, China; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Sri Lanka; Chinese Taipei; Thailand and Vanuatu.

92. For the topics on which there are currently no specific WTO agreements or not yet agreed to multilaterally, include (in that order): e-commerce<sup>13</sup>; trade and environment; investment facilitation; MSMEs; and trade and gender issues. With regard to e-commerce, sub-topics identified were digital finance, cyber security, data flows, digital infrastructure, and the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions. Sustainability and plastics pollution were mentioned by several respondents within the trade and environment category.

93. With regards to making WTO TA more targeted and useful, most respondents indicated that the Secretariat should address country specific issues and also adopt a more flexible approach to what can be covered under TA. Issues raised included: making use of more case studies, trade and macro-economic issues, increasing the number of national activities<sup>14</sup>, allowing for more participation in particular courses<sup>15</sup>, longer duration of workshops/seminars<sup>16</sup>, and making more material available online. Some respondents also indicated that the number of internships/traineeships should be increased.

#### **4.2.8 Least Developed Countries**

94. The Secretariat received twenty-two<sup>17</sup> responses out of forty-three WTO Members and Observers included in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) category. The WTO identifies LDCs as a priority group in the provision of TA activities. For this reason, their responses to the TA questionnaire have been analysed as a group although they are also covered in their respective regions. The responses indicate that the priority areas for TA and training for LDCs under existing WTO Agreements are the following (in that order): SPS/TBT; Trade in Services; Trade Facilitation; TRIPS and transfer of technology; market access related issues; and agriculture.

95. In addition, some respondents indicated the importance of capacity building on negotiation skills; notifications in general, and particularly in the area of Agriculture; support in the implementation of the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement; follow up to Trade Policy Reviews; and TA in acceding to the WTO.

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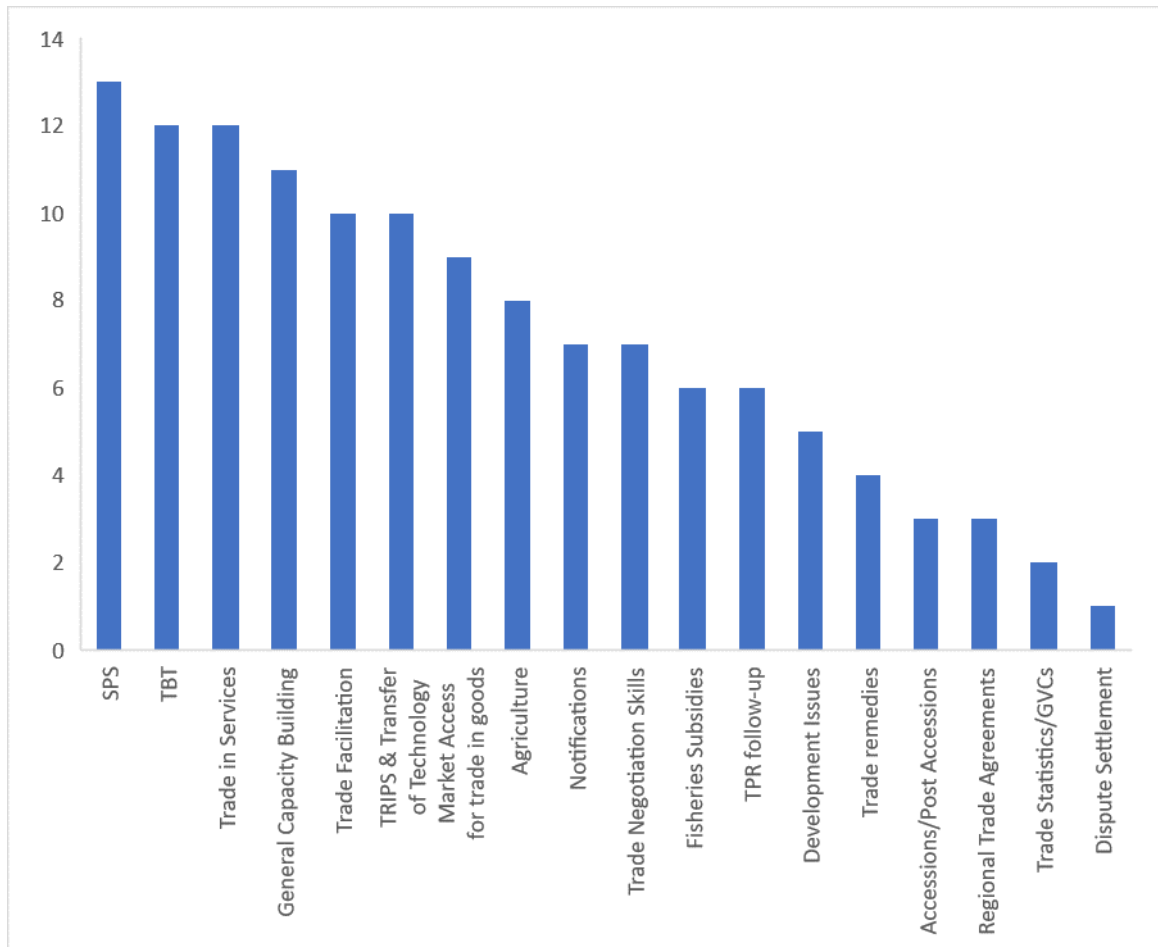
<sup>13</sup> With this topic, some Members referred specifically to the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, adopted by the General Council in September 1998.

<sup>14</sup> The current practice is two national activities per year for Developing Members/Observers and three per year for LDCs.

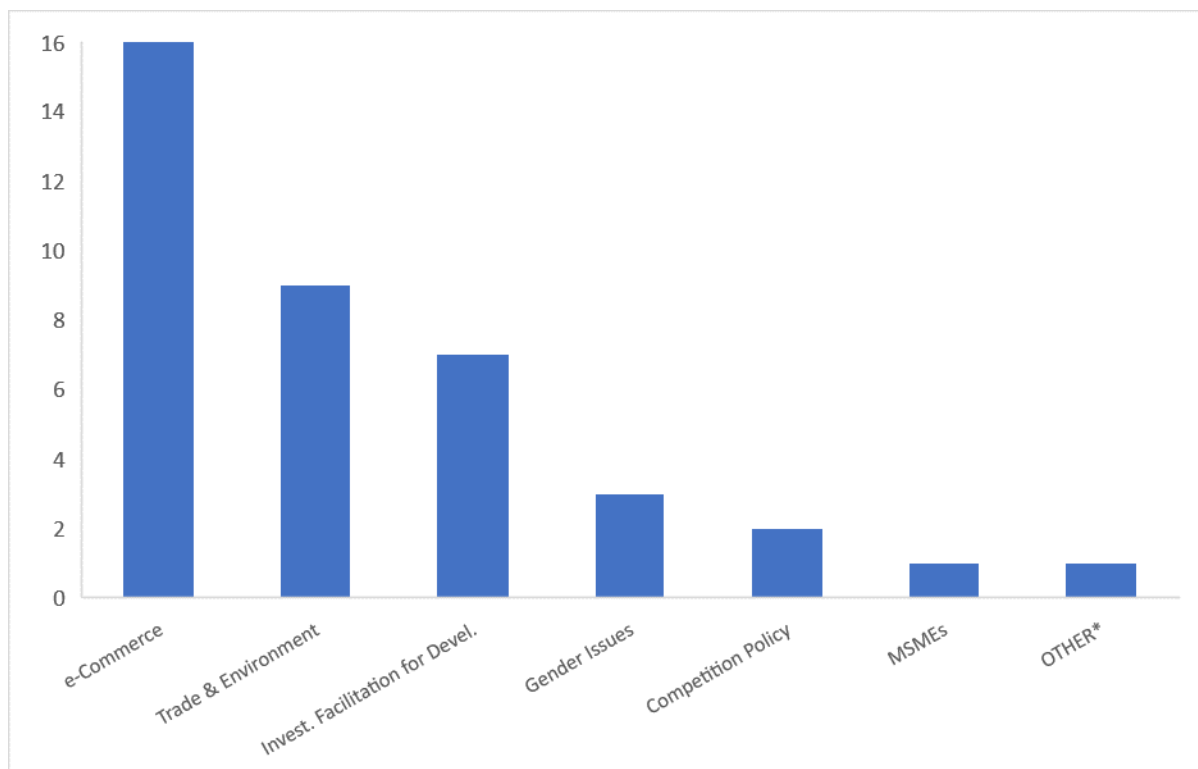
<sup>15</sup> Current maximum is 30 for face-to-face activities for regional and global activities.

<sup>16</sup> Average duration for courses is three days except for the RTPCs and ATPCs, and for the LDCs' short trade policy courses which run for eight weeks and three weeks respectively.

<sup>17</sup> Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, Haiti, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Myanmar, Niger, Nepal, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. Their needs are also covered in the regions that they are grouped in.

**Chart 3 - LDCs' Priority areas related to WTO Agreements**

96. On the question of whether they considered that WTO TA should broaden the range of issues covered under its programmes to include other issues under discussion in the WTO, the respondents answered in the affirmative and identified the following as the main subjects: e-commerce; trade and environment; investment facilitation for development; trade and gender issues; competition Policy; and micro, small and medium enterprises. In addition, some of them mentioned other topics such as statistics in trade in services; trade policy instruments; trade data analysis; trade finance; regional trade agreements; and GVCs.

**Chart 4 - Topics not covered by an Agreement or not multilaterally agreed**

#### 4.3 Capacity Constraints to fully benefit from WTO TA

97. Apart from areas or topics of priority, 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 issues raised in the WTO's work programmes. As in previous questionnaires, the responses were very diverse, and the most frequently mentioned issues were related to human resource constraints and limited knowledge about WTO matters. The specific constraints related to the low number of officials familiar with WTO issues coupled with the high turnover of staff were mentioned by several regions, as well as the lack of expertise, and limited training for those working on trade-related issues. Other constraints relate to limited financial resources and limited or unreliable trade data. Some respondents also mentioned as constraints, the non-existence of resident Missions of their countries in Geneva or the small size of these Missions, and language constraints in accessing some specialized training for countries not proficient in English.

98. LDCs indicated several capacity constraints that hinder them from taking full advantage of the rules-based multilateral trading system. The most frequently mentioned were constraints related to weak institutional and human capacity, high staff turnover in the ministries and departments dealing with WTO issues, and lack of financial resources for the organisation of national activities, resulting in low levels of TA national requests submitted to the Secretariat. Other LDCs pointed out that, because they were in arrears on their dues to the WTO, and thus under Administrative Measures, it has not been possible for them to request WTO technical assistance. They proposed that the ineligibility to TA for countries under Administrative Measures needs to be reviewed.

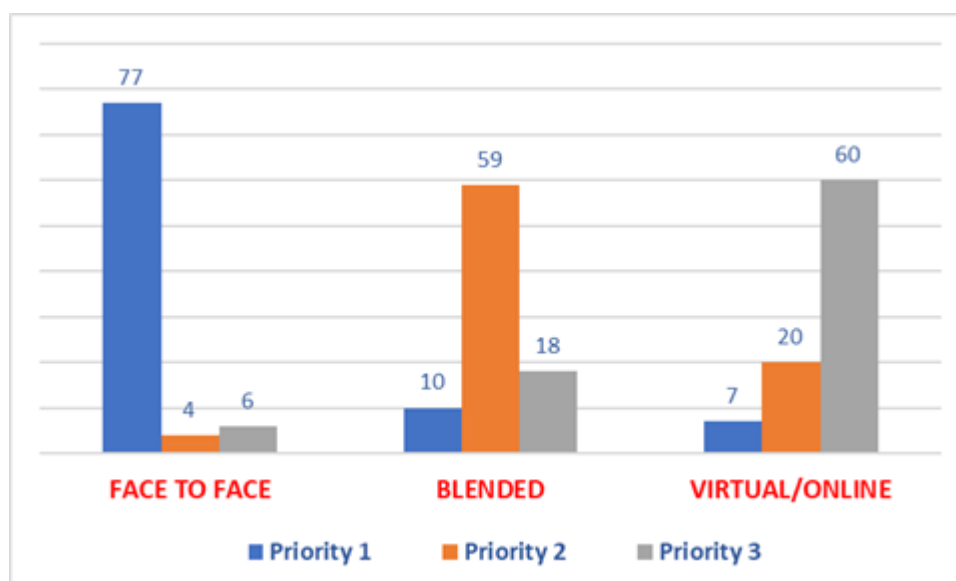
#### 4.4 Preferred modes of delivery of WTO TA

99. e-Learning has become a well-established mode of delivery of WTO TA and a good and appropriate tool for delivering TA and training because of its low cost, uninterrupted availability, flexibility, and the fact that it can be used by a large number of participants. Some beneficiaries suggested that there was need to improve the existing e-Learning offer by expanding the offer to cover emerging trade topics, improving the content of modules, and extending e-Learning to other stakeholders. The e-Learning courses are available to the general public except access to the

course's exams and the issuance of diplomas. e-Learning serves two purposes, as a training tool and as a basis for gaining eligibility for selection to advanced training activities based on the progressive learning strategy.

100. The question on preferred modes of delivery focused on the following modes of delivery: face-to-face, virtual, or blended<sup>18</sup>. 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 e-Learning activities); face-to-face; virtual (including webinars); or "blended" activities that involve a combination of face-to-face and online or remote components. As shown in the table below, many respondents indicated their first preference as face-to-face (77 responses out of the 87), seconded by blended and, lastly, virtual/online delivery. The LDCs preferred modes of delivery of TA activities were not different from the rest of the TA beneficiaries and this preference is consistent across all regions, as detailed below.

**Chart 5 - Preferred modes of TA delivery**



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

102. The Secretariat presented the preliminary analysis of the needs and priorities identified by the TA beneficiaries at the 120th session of the Committee on Trade and Development, held on 5th April 2023. In addition, the Secretariat invited all WTO Members and Observers for informal consultations on the TA Plan 2024-25, which were held on 26 May 2023. 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 the preparation of the Plan.

103. 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 in addressing the needs. The online request form provides TA beneficiaries with an

<sup>18</sup> A blended format of delivery combines face-to-face with online or remote components.

opportunity to refine or reconfirm their priorities. This is the best way in which each Member's or Observer's specific interests can be addressed in the design and delivery of TA activities.

104. 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. In 2022, many beneficiaries did not make use of national activities due to several challenges, including those specifically affecting LDCs and some low-income developing countries as identified in Section 4.3.

105. 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.

106. Some beneficiaries feel that the Secretariat should broaden its scope of assistance to include trade policy options. However, the Secretariat's mandate and scope in this regard is limited. As a result, the Secretariat will continue to work with partner organisations that share the same principles as the WTO to ensure responsiveness to the diverse needs and priorities of TA beneficiaries. In the meantime, for those activities delivered jointly with partners the role of providing trade policy options will continue to be assumed by those partner institutions whose mandate permits them to do so.

107. With regard to requests on emerging issues or those not multilaterally agreed to, the Secretariat will pay necessary attention to the sensitivities that exist for certain topics while also taking into account that WTO TA is demand-driven. The Secretariat will, therefore, provide such TA when specifically requested by a beneficiary or a group of beneficiaries.

108. Based on previous discussions and guidance from Members and Observers, and from the consultations undertaken during the preparation of previous TA Plans, the Secretariat will maintain the agreed communication channels with Members and Observers, which in most cases is through their permanent missions to the WTO. To complement these efforts and ensure transparency on planned courses, the Secretariat will continue to publish the activities on the dedicated WTO webpage on the WTO website ([Upcoming face-to-face activities | TAMS \(wto.org\)](#)).

109. A number of responses from acceding beneficiaries emphasised the need for the Secretariat to provide specific activities to assist in their accession processes. 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 several post-accession activities, again implemented jointly with the Accessions Division. The Secretariat will continue with this approach in the 2024-25 biennium.

## **5 STRATEGIC APPROACH FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN 2024-25**

110. TA is a core element of the development dimension of the multilateral trading system.<sup>19</sup> The delivery of WTO TA 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.

111. 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 TA 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 TA 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, since a number of beneficiaries, especially LDCs, request assistance with the tools with which to conduct their needs assessments.

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<sup>19</sup> Doha Ministerial Declaration, [WT/MIN\(01\)/DEC/1](#), para. 38.

112. 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 as for the pre COVID-19 period, based on the assumption that available human resources facilitating and delivering TA will remain broadly unchanged and financial resources allocated will take into account the global economic environment and its impact on the costs such as flights and hotel accommodation during the 2024-25 biennium.

113. The overall strategic approach for the design of the TA Plan is guided by two main principles: Managing for Results and the Progressivity of the training paths. These two approaches are complemented by the following considerations: use of appropriate pedagogical methods; use of partnerships; and prioritizing inclusion. In addition, and should Members so decide, the TA Plan could be reviewed at an appropriate time to accommodate implementation of recommendations arising from the recent external evaluation of the extra budgetary resources and the outcomes of the ongoing discussions on WTO reforms.

### **5.1 Managing for Results**

114. 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 an RBM approach.

115. Under the RBM methodology, Key Results feed into a higher result level, termed Impact. No causal link can be expected to be established between WTO 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 quantifiable 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.

116. 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. The Outputs, Key Results and other components of the logframe are discussed in section 6 below.

117. The TA Plan provides indicators, baselines, and targets to be used to measure the attainment of the Key Results taking into account the conditions that negatively affected TA activities during the pandemic and in 2022. It has also been assumed that the conditions that impacted the 2022 performance will to a significant extent be overcome by the end of 2023 and the beginning of the period 2024-25 or soon thereafter.

118. 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.

119. 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.

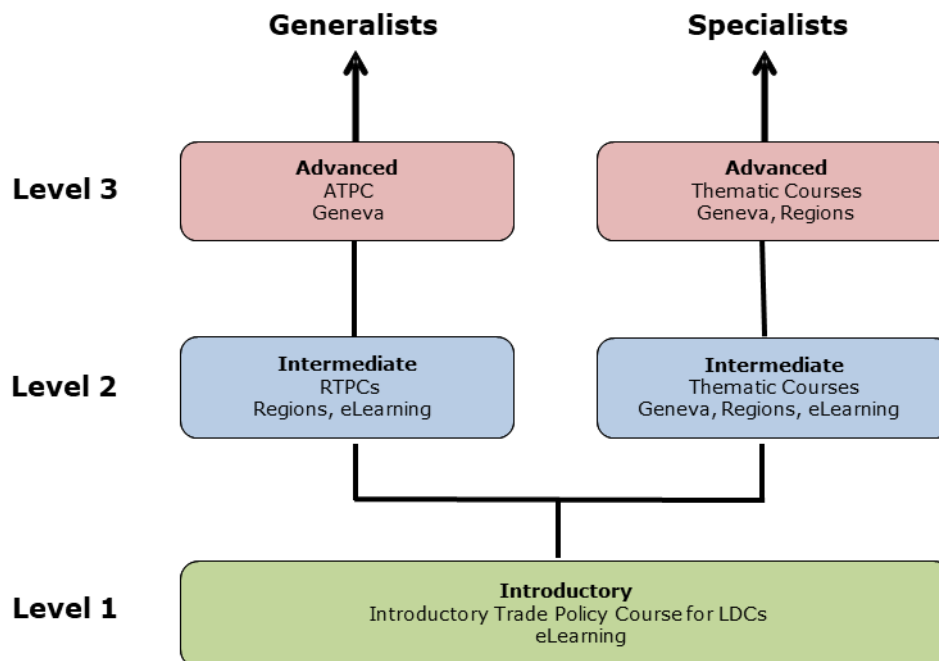
120. An essential element in the implementation of RBM is the TA Management System (TAMS). The Secretariat intends to continue refining the operation of TAMS, to increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability, including by improving the recently developed dashboards to allow Members real time access to all TA relevant data, from initial requests to evaluations. However, as of 2023, the development of all the functionalities of TAMS that was envisaged to be completed by the end of the 2022-2023 TA Plan will be shelved until resources are allocated to resume the analysis and the remaining work required to set up a single portal to receive and process applications to TA activities and to allow participants, in addition to beneficiaries and Secretariat staff, access to relevant data.

## **5.2 Progressive Learning Strategy**

121. 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.

122. 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 6 illustrates the configuration of the PLS framework.



**Chart 6 - WTO's Progressive Learning Strategy**

123. 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.

124. 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 must 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 continue pursuing 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.

125. The experience gained during 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.

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

127. Within the e-Learning 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 e-Learning courses for generalists will allow participating government officials to

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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**

128. The Secretariat will continue to develop and incorporate more effective pedagogical methods into its TA activities, including with respect to the means of delivery guided by the Members preferences as illustrated above in section 4.

129. The pandemic has enabled a better understanding, for both the Secretariat and beneficiaries, of the opportunities that the remote means of delivery of TA can offer to address training needs, as well as of the limitations that remote means of delivery have, when compared to face-to-face training. 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, most face-to-face TA activities cannot be completely converted to a virtual delivery mode without an important investment of resources<sup>20</sup> and a considerable scaling down of ambition.

130. As noted in section 4, many beneficiaries have identified face-to-face as their preferred means of receiving TA.<sup>21</sup> 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. 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.

131. At the same time, the Secretariat intends to utilize the experience of the delivering TA during the pandemic to make a more efficient and flexible use of different methods of delivery in TA activities. Virtual activities will coexist with face-to-face activities, on a case-by-case basis 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.

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

133. 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.

134. 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 candidates<sup>22</sup>, whether in face-to-face or in remotely delivered training activities,

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<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> See above, para. 100.

<sup>22</sup> 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.

to the extent that the objectives of the specific training activities are achieved, and the use of the most appropriate pedagogy is not affected.

135. 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.

136. e-Learning 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 e-Learning 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, e-Learning courses are an indispensable component of WTO TA. As noted above, beneficiaries consider e-Learning 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 many participants.<sup>23</sup>

137. In the period 2024-25, the e-Learning courses will continue to be available on the e-Learning platform (<https://www.learning.wto.org/>) at an uninterrupted basis. 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 e-Learning 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.

138. The training materials will remain available for self-study on the e-Learning 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 e-Learning programme, which aims to increase outreach to academics, legislators, journalists, NGOs and the private sector.

139. The Secretariat will update and enhance existing courses in the e-Learning 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.

140. In terms of didactic approach, during the biennium the Secretariat will continue converting first-generation courses into interactive courses in line with e-Learning methodologies and industry standards. In addition, synchronous and asynchronous interactions will be strengthened in the programme to support knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing and increase engagement in the courses, through the introduction of regular web sessions and the development of learning communities as complementary components of the courses.

#### **5.4 Use of partnerships**

141. Over the years, the WTO has entered into numerous partnerships to deliver TA. Partnerships are either long term, short term or *ad-hoc* for a particular TA activity. 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.

142. The WTO's network of partnerships played an important role in 2022 and 62% of the activities were implemented with the involvement of a partner. These partnerships are a valuable asset for the WTO, as they contribute to the relevance and effectiveness of the activities provided to Members and to ensuring the financial sustainability of WTO TA. In this regard, the Secretariat will emphasise on partners contributing financially to the delivery of TA activities while continuing to focus on the four areas below in which partners could add value to the TA provided by the WTO:

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<sup>23</sup> See above, para. 99.

- 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 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.

143. The Secretariat will continue to analyse the functioning of different partnerships. The use of regional experts for Regional Trade Policy Courses will continue and for other regional TA activities a similar approach will be encouraged whenever possible. The Secretariat will continue to ensure effective use of resources including the use of consultants from outside regions with a view to strengthening training capacities within beneficiaries and regions.

## 5.5 Prioritizing Inclusion

144. The Secretariat is committed to fully inclusive TA activities that respond to the evolving needs of the 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.

145. In 2017, at the Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires, a Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment was launched. Since 2020, increased interest in trade and gender issues was observed, with some Members requesting specific TA activities on Trade and Gender. At the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, ministers recognized in the outcome document ([WTO/MIN\(22\)/24](#)) the links between women's economic empowerment and economic growth, noting the work of the WTO on this issue. WTO's training course on Trade and Gender assists government officials in developing gender-responsive trade policies and explores the development aspects of women's economic empowerment.

146. According to the 2022 TA Annual report, for the first time, the participation of women (51%) surpassed that of men in WTO TA activities. Female participation increased in all activities, regardless of the mode of delivery. Among e-learners, women accounted for 54% of all participants, an increase of 21% over the previous year.

147. 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.

148. While recognising that there are other international actors with a specific mandate on gender issues, in the context of implementing this TA Plan, the Secretariat will maintain and continue developing its trade and gender training modules in WTO TA activities. The Secretariat shall also contribute to trade and gender discussions as part of TA activities organized by partners. Evidence shows that women's economic empowerment has a positive impact on sustainable economic growth and helps to reduce poverty. Although trade has increased job opportunities for women and business

prospects for female entrepreneurs, women still participate less in trade because they face higher challenges and obstacles, including extra hurdles in acquiring trade-related knowledge.

149. 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 e-Learning courses, which are generally launched in English, will continue to be progressively translated to French and Spanish.

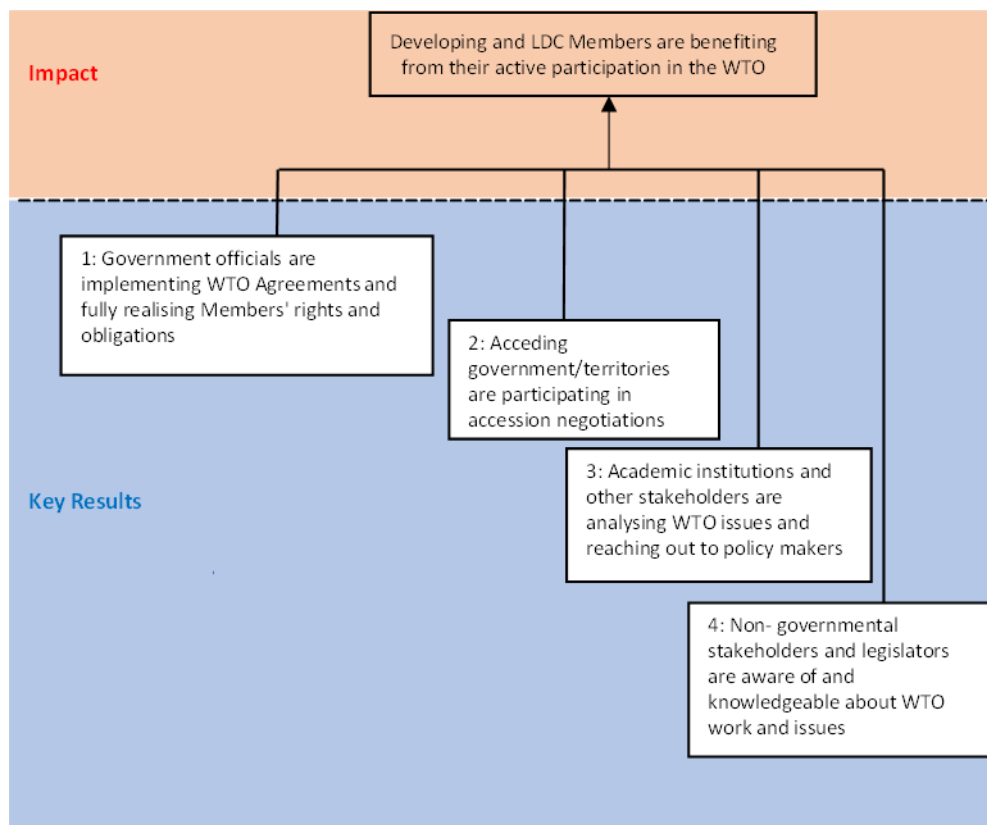
## **6 EXPECTED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE KEY RESULTS**

150. 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) participate effectively in negotiations. For the Observers, the TA aims to ensure that acceding governments or separate customs territories are participating effectively in accession negotiations, in line with WTO accession processes and procedures.

151. The TA Plan primarily targets government officials so as to assist beneficiary governments or separate customs 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.

152. 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 relevant audiences such as academics, legislators, journalists and private sector operators, particularly in outreach activities.

153. The TA Plan has been designed to achieve the four Key Results indicated in Chart 7, which have remained the same as in previous TA Plans. As in the past, achieving the Key Results in the TA Plan will require close cooperation between the Secretariat, governments and other non-governmental beneficiaries, financial contributors to the TA budget, and TA delivery partner institutions.

**Chart 7 - TA Key Results for 2024-25**

154. Chart 7 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.

155. The logical framework in Annex 1 provides details on the indicators and targets associated with each of the Key Results in Chart 7. 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**

156. 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 TA Annual Report 2022 confirmed that 55% of total TA budget funded activities contributed to Key Result 1.

157. Drawing from the implementation of TA activities in previous years, the bulk of TA activities for the TA Plan 2024-25 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.

158. 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

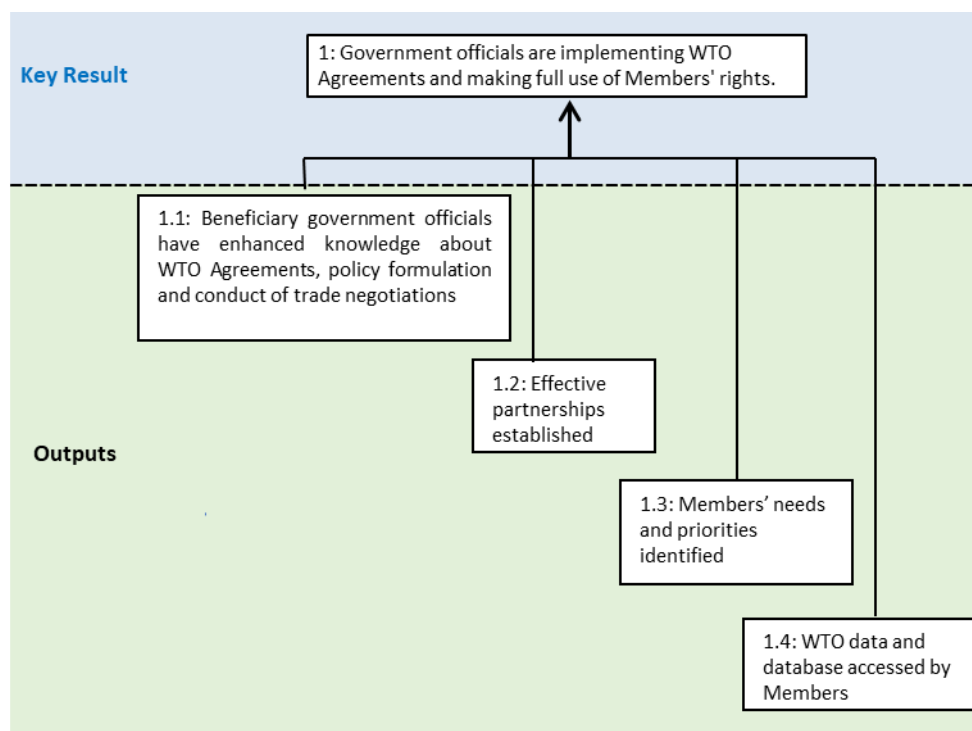
key result will also entail allocating time and resources to the design of new courses based on Members' identified needs and on PLS guidelines. In addition, this will also require support from beneficiaries, such as measures taken to retain trained participants in appropriate functions, the ability to spread the knowledge acquired across relevant agencies, as well as effective communication between the permanent missions and the capitals.

159. To achieve Key Result 1, the Secretariat will aim to achieve four main Outputs identified below in Chart 8 on Outputs for this key result. 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.

160. 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.

161. It is expected that a total of approximately CHF 13.254 million<sup>24</sup> for each year will be needed to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 1. This amount represents about 76.7% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results in both 2024 and 2025 (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

**Chart 8 - Key Result 1: Outputs**



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

162. 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.

<sup>24</sup> This amount excludes the 13% overhead. Of this amount 78.4% is unearmarked and 21.6% is earmarked.

163. 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 during the pandemic with respect to the use of online 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.

164. 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) e-Learning; (b) face-to-face training; (c) virtual or remote training<sup>25</sup>; and (d) internship programmes.

165. 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.

### **e-Learning**

166. The WTO e-Learning programme is an efficient and cost-effective training tool providing WTO Members and Observers access to a vast catalogue of online courses and training events on the WTO, the WTO Agreements, and other key trade-related issues. The new e-Learning portal can be accessed from anywhere, anytime, on any digital device. Built on the PLS, the WTO e-Learning programme is for many TA beneficiaries the gateway to WTO TA with several e-Learning courses serving as prerequisites for more advanced in-person TA activities. During the biennium, the Secretariat will seek to consolidate and expand participation in the e-Learning programme across regions, ensure an increase from 2022 performance of participants' success rate in the courses, and expand its catalogue of online courses and services.

167. The Secretariat will update and enhance the courses in the e-Learning catalogue in the three WTO working languages, to the maximum extent possible within the available resources. The strategy that will be implemented in 2024-25 will include advancing the conversion of existing training material into SCORM<sup>26</sup> and other interactive formats, increase interactivity and participant's engagement by designing courses that include multimedia elements, interactive exercises and case studies, and other improved pedagogical methodologies, and develop new training material covering trade-related topics that had not been previously covered by the e-Learning programme. The portfolio will also continue its shift towards multimedia-rich material and mobile learning to respond to new trends and needs. Detailed targets are covered in Annex 1 as part of the key results in the logframe.

168. Interactivity and participants' engagement are key elements of effective online training and knowledge transfer. Webinar sessions and discussion forums to complement asynchronous training will be developed further to provide participants with a more personal digital learning experience. 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.

169. The e-Learning's communication through the use of social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube) and the features of the new WTO e-Learning portal will be further strengthened to develop outreach, raise awareness and promote WTO training activities. Material

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<sup>25</sup> Remote and virtual activities may also involve a combination of face-to-face where appropriate.

<sup>26</sup> SCORM, which stands for Sharable Content Object Reference Model, is a set of technical standards for e-Learning software products.



developed in e-Learning activities will also continue to be used to develop strategic synergies with face-to-face activities.

### **Face-to-face training**

170. The Secretariat aims to deliver 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.

171. 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 in French.

172. 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 offering these courses in each of the WTO's seven regions. 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 with the involvement of regional experts in the delivery of the course.

173. 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 organize 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.

174. In line with the recommendations contained in the 2016 WTO TA External Evaluation, the WTO Secretariat had planned to introduce a final assessment for ATPCs beginning in 2020. Due to COVID-19 related limitations, ATPCs were suspended in 2020 and 2021. Since the resumption of in-person training activities in Geneva in June 2022, the final assessment of participants in ATPCs has been implemented. The assessment is based on two components: participation in the various modules of the course and a short essay on a WTO-related topic. The design of the assessment takes into account the practical nature of ATPCs, as well as the fact that these are advanced training activities. With the introduction of a final assessment in ATPCs, all generalist courses offered by the WTO Secretariat in the three levels of the PLS include a final assessment.

175. The Secretariat will also offer a comprehensive range of advanced thematic training activities for specialists in Geneva. This is in response to demand from many beneficiaries, who have 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.

176. The Geneva-based activities will also comprise symposia or seminars held at the request of WTO Committees and the Geneva Weeks. The Secretariat will accommodate Focus Activities including the introduction days and other activities 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.

177. In addition, specific training for Geneva-based delegates will be provided focusing on topics of interest and priority to the delegates. A TA questionnaire to identify specific needs for the Geneva-based delegates will be circulated in the third Quarter of 2023 as a pilot with a view to design specific training programmes for Geneva-based delegates going forward.

178. 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, tailor-made and targeted to address the priority needs of the beneficiary. To achieve this, beneficiaries will indicate their needs in a national TA request form (<https://tamis.wto.org/node/9022>).

179. 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.

### **Virtual and Blended activities**

180. The Secretariat has developed since 2020 a large number of virtual activities outside of the e-Learning programme. In most cases these virtual activities replicate the learning objectives intended for face-to-face activities. The experience of delivering these virtual activities has allowed a better understanding for both the Secretariat and the beneficiaries of the usefulness and limitations of this mode of TA delivery. Taking into account the priorities identified by the TA beneficiaries and the experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariat will continue to improve the quality of virtual activities and courses as a means to provide TA in a cost-efficient manner for specific contexts and needs.

181. Virtual/blended activities can 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.

182. The Secretariat will aim at maintaining and, if necessary, increasing and diversifying its offer for virtual 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 most expensive part of the training.

### **Internship programmes**

183. 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.

184. 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.

185. 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. Approximately 30 NTP trainees will be recruited during this biennium.

186. 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 reports 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.

187. 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 their respective permanent missions which 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. Up to 20 FIMIP interns will be recruited annually.

188. 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.

189. 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.

190. 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 a TA beneficiary Member 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 a 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 the availability of financial resources. A maximum of six RCI interns will be recruited annually. In order to allocate the internships, priority will be given to the largest groupings which include beneficiaries from a specific geographic region and to those groups in which coordination is the responsibility of LDCs.

191. 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**

192. 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).

193. The WTO's network of partnerships played an important role in 2022 and 62% of the activities were implemented with the involvement of a partner. These partnerships are a valuable asset for the WTO, as they contribute to the relevance and efficiency of the activities provided to Members and to ensuring the financial sustainability of the WTO TA. Given the current global economic environment, leveraging financial resources from partners will be emphasised during this biennium.

194. In 2022, the Secretariat maintained strategic partnerships to deliver better-tailored TA activities in a cost-efficient way. After the reduction imposed by the pandemic, 2022 saw an increase in partners' contributions to WTO TA initiatives. During 2022, WTO partnered with 85 institutions to deliver 82 TA activities that reached over 6,650 beneficiaries. Despite the difficulties faced in the first semester of 2022, 62% of activities were delivered in collaboration with different partners.

195. 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**

196. 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.

197. 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 TA 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. Annex 3 provides detailed information on requesting WTO TA by beneficiaries.

198. 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.

199. 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.

200. Needs identified by partner institutions are also taken into account when designing specific activities to address priorities identified by the TA beneficiaries. In addition, WTO bodies and specialised Committees may identify needs to be considered by the Secretariat in line with a demand-driven approach of WTO TA.

### **6.1.4 Output 1.4: WTO data and databases accessed by Members**

201. 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.

202. With technological advancements which allow for online access through mobile devices, Members are increasingly utilising online platforms to follow courses, access databases and submit notifications. Specialised platforms, for example, ensure that notifications reach all Members on time while allowing for reactions, clarifications, and further circulation of the information amongst stakeholders. The Secretariat will continue to consult with Members with a view to finding more effective ways 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.

203. 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. Training on information sources and databases will be provided as part of the activities for generalists, including the Introductory Trade Policy Courses for LDCs, the Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs), the Advanced Trade Policy Courses (ATPCs), as well as specific training for Interns covered in thematic activities e.g., notifications, agriculture, Market Access for Goods, etc.

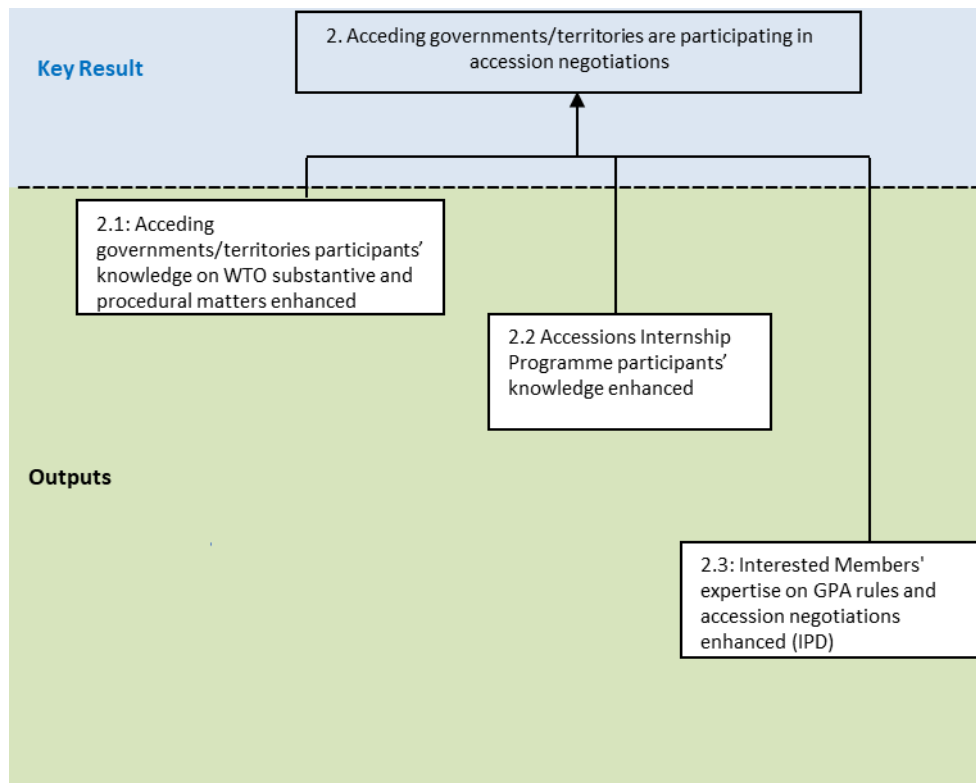
## 6.2 Key Result 2: Acceding governments/ separate customs territories are participating in accession negotiations

204. 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 governments at various stages of the accession process. Key Result 2 seeks to support these ongoing efforts by helping acceding governments/separate customs territories to define their long-term trade reform agendas and strategies. In this context, the TA provided to acceding governments/separate customs 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 Plurilateral Agreements such as the Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA).

205. The Secretariat will keep supporting acceding governments/separate customs territories in their accession negotiations and seek to enhance their knowledge on WTO matters<sup>27</sup>. 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.

206. Key Result 2 includes the three Outputs shown in Chart 9. The TA Plan provides for CHF 680 thousand<sup>28</sup> per year in 2024 and 2025 to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 2 and its three Outputs, which is equivalent to about 3.9% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for those years (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

**Chart 9 - Key Result 2: Outputs**



<sup>27</sup> The Secretariat also makes available an Accession Transparency Toolbox, available at: [https://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/acc\\_e/attb\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/attb_e.htm).

<sup>28</sup> Amount excludes the 13% overhead and 47.6% is unearmarked while 52.4% is earmarked.

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

207. In 2022, acceding governments were invited to participate in TA and capacity building activities at the global, regional and national levels, as well as in e-Learning courses. The TA activities delivered by the Secretariat included, among others: (a) technical sessions; (b) targeted national training sessions and seminars; (c) missions; and (d) roundtables/dialogues.

208. During the biennium, the Secretariat will address the specific needs of the acceding governments/separate customs 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/separate customs territories attending TA activities focused on accessions. This assumes, among other factors, that accession negotiations will remain active.

### **6.2.2 Output 2.2: Accessions Internship Programme participants' knowledge enhanced**

209. 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 Members<sup>29</sup>. The AIP is funded by China under the auspices of the "China Programme".

210. AIP interns work on accessions issues in the Accessions Division of the Secretariat under the supervision of a staff member. The interns spend 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 of the Accessions Division. The supervisors evaluate the interns' performance based on the objectives set at the beginning of the internship.

211. The TA Plan 2024-25 envisions a maximum of five (5) AIP interns be recruited annually for a maximum period of 10 months as indicated in the logframe in Annex 1.

### **6.2.3 Output 2.3: Interested Members' and Observers' expertise on GPA rules, accession negotiations and observer status enhanced**

212. This output covers the TA that the Secretariat provides to observers to the Agreement on Government Procurement 2012 (GPA 2012). With respect to the GPA 2012, the TA Plan will focus on: (a) providing technical assistance to beneficiaries acceding to the GPA 2012 or having committed to accede, as well as to beneficiaries with an interest in observer status on GPA-related matters in general, including linkages with trade, good governance and development; and (b) enhancing beneficiaries' capacity to comply with GPA 2012 norms and principles, empowering government officials to work with stakeholders to realize benefits from GPA principles 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.<sup>30</sup> Effective partnerships with other international organizations and academic institutions form a vital element of this programme.

213. The TA Plan 2022-23 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 move forward their accession negotiations. As the Committee could not resolve the impasse related to the selection of the CGP Chair, no meeting has taken place since June 2021, making it difficult to fully achieve the targets envisaged in 2022.

214. For the TA Plan 2024-25, in addition to accession-related documents circulated by GPA-observers, the Secretariat will also consider interventions made by TA-eligible GPA-observers during meetings of the Committee on Government Procurement (CGP) as well as bilateral meetings with the Chair of the CGP. The aim will be to achieve the set targets contemplated in Annex 1.

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<sup>29</sup> Taking into account the balance between acceding governments/territories and WTO Members.

<sup>30</sup> Members that have been negotiating to join the GPA 2012 are: Albania, Brazil, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation and Tajikistan.

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

215. 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 and Model WTO Competitions.

216. 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 their respective 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.

217. The programme was initiated in 2010 and went through two four-year cycles (phase I: 2010-14; phase II: 2014-18) before a comprehensive and independent external evaluation of the programme was undertaken in 2019. The evaluation found that WTO Chairs had been successful in generating quality research and impactful advice that translated into policy action in beneficiary countries. 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.

218. The evaluation also made several recommendations for improvement of the WCP, *inter alia*, closer alignment and use of synergies with the WTO's TA 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 November 2022, the CTD Chair reported that these recommendations to further strengthen the programme had been implemented, including better geographical representation of all regions, better representation of LDCs in the programme, as well as better integration of the programme with other WTO technical cooperation and research activities and those of other organizations.<sup>31</sup> Chairs continuously engage *ad hoc* and through advisory groups with policymakers from capitals, missions in Geneva, stakeholders from business associations and civil society, to assess beneficiaries' needs and respond to them by co-designing and co-implementing applied research projects, customized training courses and targeted outreach activities on key issues of interest to policymakers. In this way, outputs generated by Chairs can provide feed-back and support fact-based decision-making processes by governments and other stakeholders.

219. Following a call for applications for Phase III of the Programme, over 120 applications were received by the WTO. A selection process resulted in 17 institutions being selected to join the network of WCP Chairs in 2022. This further diversifies the Programme's representation across the globe, with the network now comprising 36 universities.

220. The TA Plan 2022-2023 provides the framework for implementing the Director-General's Decision announced to the CTD in November 2021 on the occasion of the selection of phase III Chairs, to admit institutions more frequently to the WTO Chairs Programme on a rolling basis.<sup>32</sup> As explained on that occasion, there is greater benefit in admitting a smaller number of candidates

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<sup>31</sup> [WT/COMTD/M/119](#) and related room document, [RD/COMTD/3/Rev.1](#) .

<sup>32</sup> [WT/COMTD/M/116](#).

more frequently, rather than a larger number in intervals of four years. Accordingly, an intake of up to three additional universities into the programme has been foreseen in the budget.

221. Key Result 3 remains unchanged in the TA Plan 2024-25, while certain elements of the logframe relating to this key result have been revised in order to recalibrate it to the updated structure of the WCP. The structure of the logframe remains unchanged for 2024 and 2025. However, baselines and targets have been updated in order to reflect the trajectory of phase III Chairs in the four-year cycle of the programme, as well as the implementation of a rolling programme with additional Chairs joining and starting their first year of the programme cycle in 2024.

222. As before, Outputs 3.1 to 3.3 relate to the WTO Chairs Programme, while Output 3.4 captures all other academic outreach activities. Reporting of Outputs 3.1 to 3.3 focuses on Chairs receiving grants under the programme, while institutions from phases I and II who no longer receive funding from the WTO are taken into account in respect of the diversity of WTO-related topics covered by WCP Chair activities under Key Result 3.

223. 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 Members/Observers and regions.

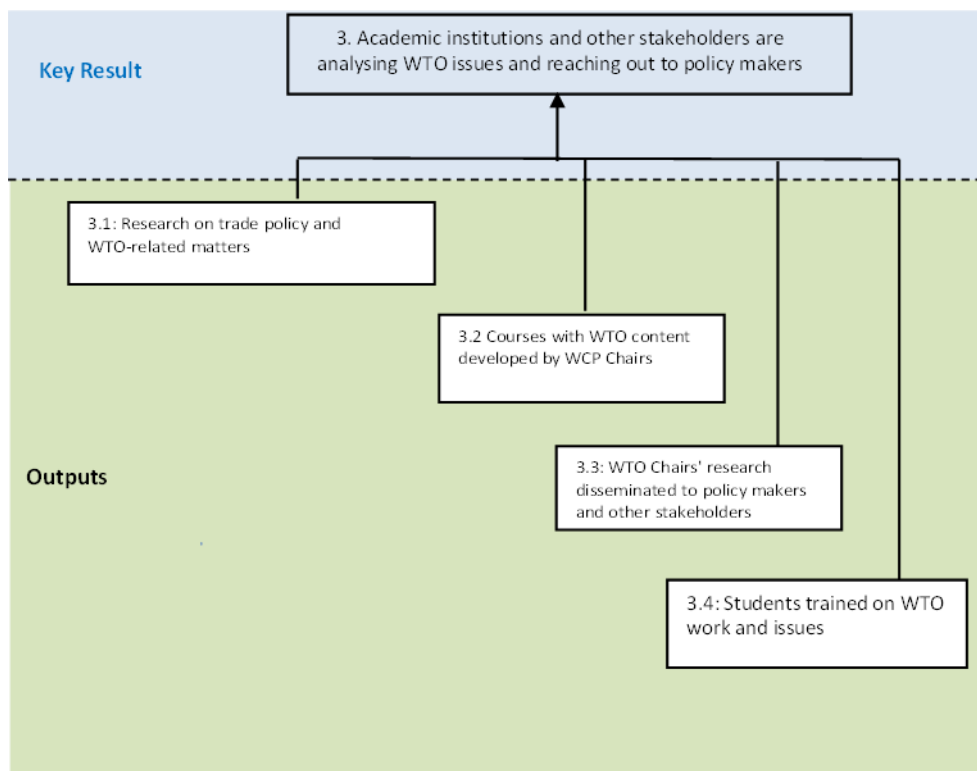
224. The Secretariat continues to support a limited number of PhD students from developing countries in their research on WTO-related topics. In addition, the Secretariat supports the annual John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition, by providing advice in the preparation of the case and the bench memorandum; supporting the organization of regional rounds in developing countries; and by hosting and providing prizes for the final round of these competitions. Other activities involving academia may also be organized with proposals being assessed based on merit and the availability of resources.

225. The TA Plan provides for up to approximately CHF 1.735 million<sup>33</sup> each year to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 3 and its four (4) Outputs, which are equivalent to about 10% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for 2024 and 2025, respectively (see Table 1 in section 7). This estimate may be adjusted depending on the number of institutions selected to participate in the next phase with admission to the programme on a rolling basis and on total contributions available.

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<sup>33</sup> Amount excludes the 13% overhead. About 91.5% of the total funding (CHF 1.735 million) for this Key result is earmarked and 8.5% is unearmarked.



**Chart 10 - Key Result 3: Outputs**

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

226. 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. In order to assess the quality of research outputs, one key research output per Chair per year is reviewed by Academic Advisory Board Members in relation to past research outputs produced by the same Chair.

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

227. 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 e-Learning 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.

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

228. 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.

#### **6.3.4 Output 3.4: Students trained on WTO work and issues**

229. The WTO PhD fellowships, the John H. Jackson Moot Court Competition and other WTO-related competitions are the activities under this output. 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. The number of students participating in competitions supported by the WTO in 2022 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**

230. 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.

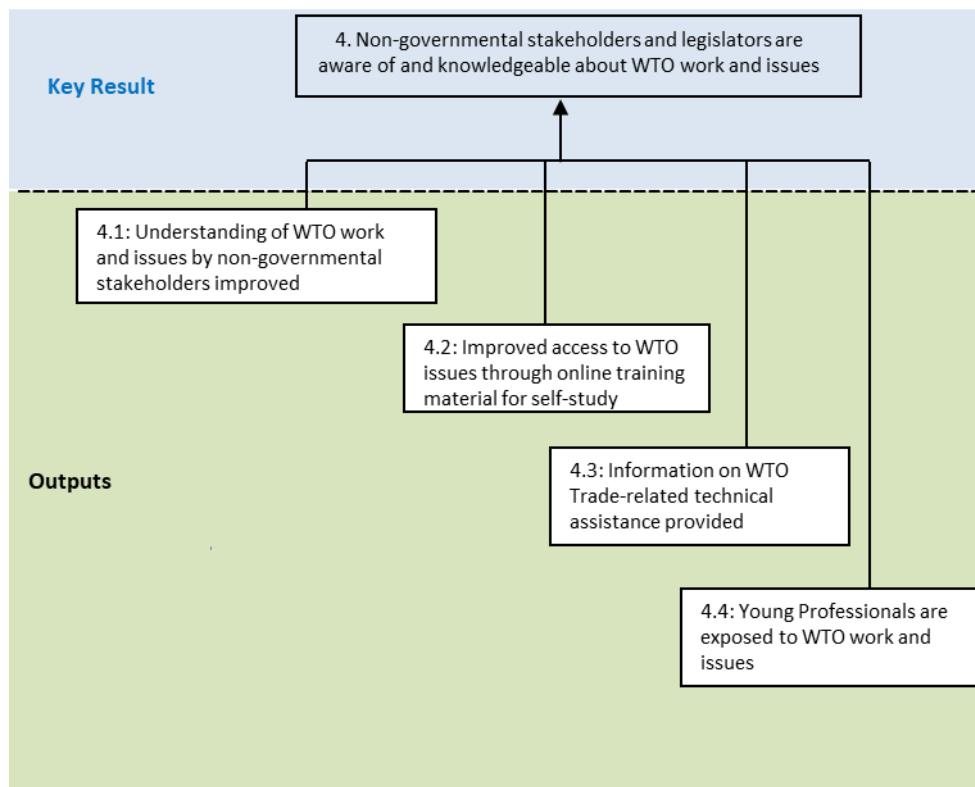
231. Following an evaluation of the WTO Young Professionals Programme in 2022, and based on the high demand from eligible Members, a decision was taken to further strengthen the scope, coverage and conditions of the programme. Under the new programme the Secretariat aims to recruit up to 20 Young Professionals each year in 2024 and 2025. With the increased intake and improved conditions, the Secretariat has slightly increased the funds for Key Result 4 in 2024 and 2025.

232. The Secretariat is planning to deliver a number of activities involving parliamentarians, NGOs, and media. These activities, that represent opportunities for outreach and dialogue with these non-governmental stakeholders, will be further strengthened both in terms of the number of activities, the geographical spread in developing countries as well as enhancing the multi-stakeholder nature of each one of these activities. One key feature going forward is to consolidate the partnerships we have with parliamentary assemblies, foundations, and other organizations to conduct these activities. Most of the partnerships are based on joint funding schemes.

233. A total of approximately CHF 1.621million<sup>34</sup> per year in 2024 and 2025 will be available to implement the planned activities contributing to Key Result 4 and its four Outputs, which is equivalent to about 9.4% of the total TA funding planned for the four Key Results for those years (see Table 1 in section 7 on funding).

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<sup>34</sup> This amount excludes 13% overheads and is 100% unearmarked.

**Chart 11 - Key Result 4: Outputs**

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

234. 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 2024-25 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**

235. Output 4.2 relates to access to online training material for self-study for those not eligible to enrol for WTO e-Learning 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 website. The new e-Learning platform provides features that will facilitate public access to e-Learning course catalogue and consultation of training material on a self-study basis.

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

236. 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 its TA Annual reports available in all three languages. The Annual TA reports cover views of the TA beneficiaries, participants,

objectives of WTO TA, the results achieved or not fully achieved, and the importance of voluntary contributions.

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

237. 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.

238. 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 with no or low representation at the professional level in the Secretariat.

239. The Secretariat aims to host 20 young professionals from Members with low representation per year, subject to the absorption capacity of the Secretariat in each year. As the YPs will work under the supervision of 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**

240. 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 – 2024 and 2025**

(in thousand Swiss francs)

Key results	Budget line 2024			
	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Total
Key result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations	4,333	6,990	1,930	13,254
Key result 2: Acceding governments/separate customs territories are participating in accession negotiations	50	300	330	680
Key result 3: Academic institutions and other stakeholders are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers	25	145	1,565 <sup>35</sup>	1,735
Key result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues	15	1,606	-	1,621
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>4,423</b>	<b>9,041</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>17,289</b>
Other programmes	125	1,700	-	1,825
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,548</b>	<b>10,741</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>19,114</b>
Overheads (13%)	-	1,396	497	1,894
<b>Grand total - 2024</b>	<b>4,548</b>	<b>12,137</b>	<b>4,323</b>	<b>21,008</b>

Key results	Budget line 2025			
	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Total
Key result 1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations	4,333	6,990	1,930	13,254
Key result 2: Acceding governments/separate customs territories are participating in accession negotiations	50	300	330	680
Key result 3: Academic institutions and other stakeholders are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers	25	145	1,565 <sup>36</sup>	1,735
Key result 4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues	15	1,606	-	1,621
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>4,423</b>	<b>9,041</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>17,289</b>
Other programmes	125	1,700	-	1,825
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Overheads (13%)	-	1,396	497	1,894
<b>Grand total - 2025</b>	<b>4,548</b>	<b>12,137</b>	<b>4,323</b>	<b>21,008</b>

<sup>35</sup> To be adjusted depending on the number of institutions selected to participate in the programme.<sup>36</sup> To be adjusted depending on the number of institutions selected to participate in the programme.

## 7.1 Regular Budget for TA

241. The TA Plan 2024-25 has been prepared under the assumption that the Regular Budget would remain unchanged at CHF 4.5 million per year, similar to the last five biennia. However, if the current inflationary pressures continue during the next biennium, it will be a challenge to attain the same quantity of TA delivery as the pre-pandemic period.

242. Since the introduction of an RBM approach to TA, the Secretariat has continued to improve its cost efficiency in TA delivery while avoiding compromising the quality of the TA delivered. Accordingly, the Secretariat will monitor closely the impact of inflation on expenditures which has been estimated at 20% using the current (2023) costs for travel and hospitality budget lines for TA. For these reasons, and taking into account lessons learnt to date, 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 2024-25 and identified as priorities by Members and Observers to maintain the quality and effectiveness of the TA delivered.

243. To preserve the minimum level of flexibility required to make the best possible use of the 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, the 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 1.84 million to these activities in 2024 and in 2025.
- 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 1.74 million to these activities in 2024 and in 2025.
- iii) National activities: The TA Plan proposes to set the budget for this envelope at CHF 0.76 million each year.
- 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 e-Learning 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 0.21 million for these various purposes.

244. 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.

## 7.2 Extra-budgetary funds for TA

245. 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 2024-25 biennium. Unearmarked and earmarked funds will continue to play a central role in this regard, as they represent the main channel through which donors' voluntary contributions support the TA provided by the WTO.

246. While the TA resources available to the Secretariat to finance WTO TA for developing Members and Observers have been relatively stable since 2016, there was a 40% diminution in the number of donors over the last five years and a doubling of the share of earmarked contributions. As a result, the level of unearmarked contributions halved between 2018 and 2022. The sharp reduction of TA expenses during the pandemic is currently being reversed following the resumption of face-to-face TA activities and, as a consequence of inflation, it is anticipated that most of the accumulated TA cash reserves will be exhausted by the end of 2023 unless new contributions are received before

the end of the year 2023. In order to allow the implementation of activities at the beginning of 2024, 25% of the total budget for 2024 will require to be available at the disposal of the Secretariat.

247. To ensure better predictability for implementing TA activities for the rest of 2024-25, the Secretariat will require renewed support from Members, in particular through unearmarked and multi-year voluntary contributions.

248. The TA Plan has been prepared on the premise that this voluntary support will fully resume during this biennium. This would allow the Secretariat to accommodate any increases in the volume of TA activities as a result of a resumption of face-to-face delivery of TA, for the implementation of MC12 outcomes, and in preparation for MC13. Taking these elements into consideration, it is proposed to set the target amount for the unearmarked funds in 2024 and 2025 at CHF 12.137 million.

### ANNEX 1: WTO TA LOGFRAME 2024-25

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
<b>Impact<sup>1</sup></b>	Developing and LDC Members are benefiting from their active participation in the WTO	Share of developing Members' total trade (imports and exports)	2019-21 average: 41.96%	> 40%	WTO statistics	Global economic and political stability or improvement
		Share of LDC Members' total trade (imports and exports)	2019-21 average: 1.1%	> 1.00%	WTO statistics	The number of LDCs remains constant over the biennium
<b>Key Result</b>	<b>1: Government officials are implementing WTO Agreements and fully realising Members' rights and obligations</b>	Number of documents submitted by beneficiary developing and LDC Members to WTO Bodies	Annual average 2019-2022: Developing: 587 LDCs: 103	Increase	WTO Documents Online database	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Political support for WTO-related issues</li> <li>2. Trained staff retained in relevant positions</li> <li>3. Human and financial resources available</li> </ol>
		Number of outstanding notifications by TA beneficiary Member	26 per beneficiary Member on average in 2017-19	Decrease	Notifications database (CRN)	
<b>Output</b>	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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. WTO negotiations remain active</li> <li>2. Trained staff retained in relevant positions</li> <li>3. Members present suitable candidates</li> <li>4. Availability of training facilities in Geneva</li> </ol>
		Number of national activities requested	2017-19 average: 145	Increase	TAMS database	The number of TA beneficiaries under WTO administrative measures does not increase

<sup>1</sup> By 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. The baseline from the 2022-2023 TA Plan has not adjusted to indicators that were significantly impacted by COVID-19.



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 <sup>2</sup>	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
	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

<sup>2</sup> The top two marks are normally five out of five and four out of five.

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
		Number of advanced thematic courses using pre-diagnostics, coaching, leadership, action plans or follow-ups <sup>3</sup>	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	2019-22 average: FIMIP: 20; NTP: 15	Stability 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 2020-22	Stability	Evaluation by the supervisors	
		New, revised or translated e-Learning courses released during the year	2017-19 average: 10	Stability	BTOR	1. Appropriate e-Learning resources 2. Absence of disturbance in e-Learning platform 3. Continued availability of current platform for e-Learning programme
		Percentage of e-Learning courses in interactive formats	2022: 77%	Increase	BTOR	
		Percentage of participants rating the quality of the e-Learning courses content with the two top marks	2020-22 average: 96%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Learning platform
		Percentage of participants rating the e-Learning platform with the two top marks	2020-22 average: 94%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Learning platform

<sup>3</sup> 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
		e-Learning success rate of participants attending the courses	2019-2022 average: 61.5%	Stability	BTOR	Absence of disturbance in e-Learning platform
		e-Learning drop-out rate	2017-19 average: 24%	Stability		
		e-Learning distinction rate	2020-22 average: 54%	Stability		
<b>Output</b>	1.2: Effective partnerships established	Proportion of activities with the involvement of a partner	2020-22 average: 57%	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	2017-22 average: 47% low contributions	Decrease the proportion of low contributions		
<b>Output</b>	1.3: Members' TA needs and priorities identified periodically	Number of responses to TA questionnaire	2019-2022 average: 82	Stability	Secretariat questionnaires	Members can identify and prioritize their needs
		Number of TPR Follow-ups	2017-19 average: 8	Stability	BTORs	Stability in the number of TPRs and constant demand for TPR follow-ups
<b>Output</b>	1.4: WTO data and databases accessed by Members	Visits by Members' logging into the WTO website	2020-2022 average: 87866	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

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
<b>Key Result</b>	<b>2: Acceding governments/separate customs territories are participating in accession negotiations</b>	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/separate customs territories submit required input to their Working Parties
<b>Output</b>	2.1: Acceding governments/separate customs territories participants' knowledge on WTO substantive and procedural matters enhanced	Number of participants from observer governments/separate customs 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
<b>Output</b>	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
<b>Output</b>	2.3: Interested Members' expertise on GPA rules and accession negotiations enhanced	Average no. of relevant accession-related documents circulated per TA-eligible GPA acceding Member <sup>4</sup>	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	
		Average no. of bilateral meetings of TA-eligible GPA-acceding Parties with the Chair of the CGP	2018-20 average: 1.29	Stability	Internal database	

<sup>4</sup> 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
<b>Key Result</b>	<b>3: Academic institutions and other stakeholders are analysing WTO issues and reaching out to policy makers</b>	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
<b>Output</b>	3.1: Research on trade policy and WTO- related matters generated by the WCP	Number of publications	Phase III Chair average 2020-22: 171  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Phase III Chairs: Increase  New Chairs: To be determined	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	Phase III Chairs: Individual baselines established based on past outputs  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Positive evaluation	Advisory Board Reports	

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
<b>Output</b>	3.2: Courses with WTO content developed by WCP Chairs	Number of students completing WTO-related courses	Phase III Chairs: average 2020-22: 2490  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Phase III Chairs: Increase  New Chairs: To be determined	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	Phase III Chairs: average 2020-22: 28  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Phase III Chairs: Increase  New Chairs: To be determined	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations/Assessments WCP Platform and other online research network activities (inc. social media)	
<b>Output</b>	3.3: WTO Chairs' research disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders	Number of outreach events per year	Phase III Chairs: average 2020-22: 86  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Phase III Chairs: Increase  New Chairs: To be determined	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	Phase III Chairs: Average 2020-22: 109  Rolling Programme New Chair: To be collected	Phase III Chairs: Increase  New Chairs: To be determined	Intermediate and annual reporting Advisory Board and other Evaluations/Assessments WCP Platform and other online research network activities (inc. social media)	
<b>Output</b>	3.4: Students trained on WTO work and issues	Number of students participating in competitions supported by the WTO	2022: 344	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
<b>Key Result</b>	<b>4: Non-governmental stakeholders and legislators are aware of and knowledgeable about WTO work and issues</b>	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
<b>Output</b>	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 societies	Stability	BTORs	

	Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Evidence	Assumption
<b>Output</b>	4.2: Improved access to WTO issues through e-Learning training material for self-study	Number of training material consulted	2020-22 average: 3,718	Increase	Online form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public interest in WTO issues</li> <li>2. Appropriate e-Learning resources</li> <li>3. Absence of external disturbance in the e-Learning platform</li> <li>4. Continued availability of current platform for e-Learning programme</li> </ul>
<b>Output</b>	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	2020-2022 average: 327,668	Stability	WTO webmaster	Public interest in WTO issues
<b>Output</b>	4.4: Young professionals are exposed to WTO work and issues	Number of Young Professionals selected annually by the WTO	2020-22 average: 13	Increase	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 2020-22	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 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
					Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
Introduction	Generalist	E/F/S	Geneva-based Courses for LDCs - Introduction and Focus Activities - Geneva weeks	Global	462	-	-	462	-	-
Advanced	Generalist	E/F/S	Applied Advanced Trade Policy Courses (Geneva)	Global	1'382	-	-	1'382	-	-
Intermediate	Generalist	E/F/S	Regional Trade Policy Courses for: Africa; Middle East; Asia and Pacific Economies; Caribbean; Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus; Latin America	All	-	3'080	-	-	3'080	-
Advanced	Specialist	E/F/S	Geneva-based Advanced Thematic Courses and topic specific symposia for Capital-based officials	Global	1'740	700	-	1'740	700	-
Advanced	Specialist	E/F/S	Advisory Role on Legal Issues (Art. 27.2 of DSU)	Global	60	-	-	60	-	-
Intermediate / Advanced	Generalist/ Specialist	E/F/S	National activities, including assistance to needs assessment and, monitoring and evaluation missions	All	690	-	-	690	-	-
Intermediate	Specialist	E/F/S	Regional workshops	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	x	x	x	x
Intermediate	Generalist/ Specialist	E/F/S	Online courses: intermediate Level (Generalists and Specialists)		x	x	x	x	x	x
	Generalist/ Specialist	English	Online course: Tailored Course - Create your own e-Learning Courses		x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>4'333</b>	<b>6'990</b>	<b>1'930</b>	<b>4'333</b>	<b>6'990</b>	<b>1'930</b>
Overheads @13%					-	<b>909</b>	<b>251</b>	-	<b>909</b>	<b>251</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>4'333</b>	<b>7'899</b>	<b>2'181</b>	<b>4'333</b>	<b>7'899</b>	<b>2'181</b>

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

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
					Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
Intermediate / Advanced	Generalist/Specialist	E/F/S	National seminars on Accessions	All	50	-	-	50	-	-
Intermediate / Advanced	Generalist/Specialist	E/F/S	Other activities on Accessions	All	-	300	-	-	300	-
		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	x	x	x	x
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>50</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>330</b>
Overheads @13%					-	<b>39</b>	<b>43</b>	-	<b>39</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>50</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>373</b>

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

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
					Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
	Generalist	E/F/S	WTO Chairs programme - Phase III	All	-	-	1'300	-	-	1'300
	Generalist	E/F/S	WTO Chairs programme – Rolling Programme <sup>5</sup>	All	-	-	265	-	-	265
		E/F/S	WTO Support programme for doctoral students	Global	-	65	-	-	65	-
		E/F/S	Support to Moot Court Competition; WIPO-WTO Colloquium for Teachers of Intellectual Property Law; donation of WTO publications to Academic Institutions	All	25	80	-	25	80	-
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>1'565</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>1'565</b>
Overheads @13%					-	<b>19</b>	<b>203</b>	-	<b>19</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>25</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>1'768</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>1'768</b>

<sup>5</sup> To be adjusted depending on the number of institutions selected to participate in the programme.

#### 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 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
					Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
		E/F/S	National outreach activities		15	-	-	15	-	-
		E/F/S	Other outreach activities for legislators, journalists, civil society and businesses	All	-	610	-	-	610	-
	Specialist	E/F/S	WTO Young Professionals' programme (YPP)	Global	-	996	-	-	996	-
		E/F/S	Online training material for self-study	All	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>15</b>	<b>1'606</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1'606</b>	<b>-</b>
Overheads @13%					-	<b>209</b>	-	-	<b>209</b>	-
<b>Total</b>					<b>15</b>	<b>1'815</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1'815</b>	<b>-</b>

#### Other programmes' costs: programme staff and Monitoring and evaluation

Level	Path	Language(s)	Title	Region	Estimated cost 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
					Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
			L-Posts		-	1,700	-	-	1,700	-
			Implementation of RBM and development of e-Learning courses		125	-	-	125	-	-
<b>Sub-total</b>					<b>125</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>-</b>
Overheads @13%					-	<b>221</b>	-	-	<b>221</b>	-
<b>Total</b>					<b>125</b>	<b>1,921</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1,921</b>	<b>-</b>

**Summary Grand Total**

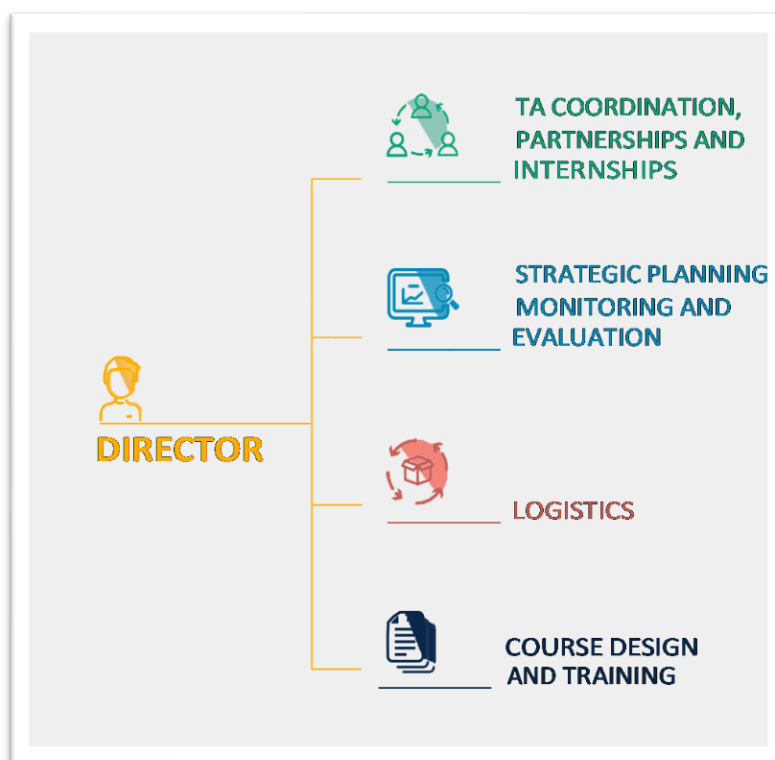
Title	Region	Estimated cost 2024			Estimated cost 2025		
		Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds	Regular Budget	Unearmarked funds	Earmarked funds
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>4'548</b>	<b>10'741</b>	<b>3'825</b>	<b>4'548</b>	<b>10'741</b>	<b>3'825</b>
Overheads @13%		-	<b>1'396</b>	<b>497</b>	-	<b>1'396</b>	<b>497</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>4'548</b>	<b>12'137</b>	<b>4'323</b>	<b>4'548</b>	<b>12'137</b>	<b>4'323</b>

### ANNEX 3: HOW TO REQUEST FOR WTO TA ONLINE

Over three-quarters of the WTO Members are developing or Least developed economies. Capacity Building in the WTO comprises several capacity-building initiatives, including the WTO TA. In the WTO Secretariat, the Institute for Training and Technical Co-operation (ITTC) is the gateway for WTO TA. Members and Observers can request WTO TA using the online TA request form which can be found using the link provided below.

The management of the WTO TA activities is the responsibility of the ITTC which designs the Technical Assistance Plans in consultation with Members and Observers. Within the WTO Secretariat, ITTC coordinates the delivery of the WTO TA activities and manages the allocated financial resources to implement the WTO TA. The delivery of the WTO TA activities is a shared responsibility involving all the technical Divisions of the WTO Secretariat and relevant partners.

The ITTC is headed by a Director and comprises three Sections with units responsible for specific aspects of the WTO TA and regional desks covering the different regions.



**More information:**

**WTO | Development - Technical cooperation and training - WTO assistance:**

([www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/devel\\_e/teccop\\_e/tct\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/devel_e/teccop_e/tct_e.htm))

**If you represent a Member or an Observer and want to make a request for technical assistance:**

(<https://tamis.wto.org/node/9022>)