United Nations Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

2021 – Survey Instrument & Methodology

Jiangyuan Fu
Consultant
TIID, ESCAP
Measures covered by the survey

WTO TFA Commitments
(Cross-Border)

Sustainable TF (Agriculture, SMEs, Women)

Trade finance facilitation

Trade facilitation in times of crisis

The overall scope of the survey goes beyond the measures included in the WTO TFA
UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation

About the Survey

The United Nations Regional Commissions, including ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA, have been conducting the Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation (formerly known as the UN Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation) since 2015 to review the progress of trade facilitation reforms in their respective Member States. The initiative, led and coordinated by ESCAP, supports the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, as well as emerging regional and global initiatives on paperless trade or e-trade, such as the recent Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA). Cooperation among the UN Regional Commissions and other UN and relevant regional and sub-regional organizations is key to the success of the Global Surveys. UNCTAD, who collaborated with UN Regional Commissions in past surveys, has become a full partner of the initiative and will be part of the core team of organizations conducting the UN Global Survey from 2023 onward. Sub-regional collaboration have also been strengthened, e.g. with ASEAN in the Asia-Pacific region. Interested organizations, industry associations, academia, research institutes and other stakeholders are very welcome to join the initiative.

Scope and Methodology

The survey covers a WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) set of nearly 60 trade facilitation measures categorized into eleven sub-groups, namely: Transparency, Formalities; Institutional arrangement and cooperation; Transit facilitation; Paperless trade; Cross-border paperless trade; Trade facilitation for SMEs; Agricultural trade facilitation; Women in trade facilitation; Trade finance for trade facilitation; and Trade facilitation in times of crisis.

The survey is fact-based rather than perception-based. A three-step approach to data collection and validation is generally followed, implemented over a 6-month period every 2 years: Step (1) Open data collection from experts; Step (2) Data verification by UN Regional Commission Secretariats; and Step (3) Data validation by national governments. For more details on the methodology, please refer to the 2021 Survey Methodology and methodology section of global and regional reports, which are available for 2015, 2017 and 2019. The 2021 Survey questionnaire is available here:

- 2021 Survey Questionnaire [English] [Arabic] [French] [Russian] [Spanish]

For more information, please refer to the 2021 Survey methodology.
Data collection and assessment

A three-step approach to develop the dataset by the UNRCs

Step 1: Data submission by experts
Step 2: Data verification by the UNRCs Secretariat
Step 3: Data validation by national Governments

Every measure is rated as 5 stages
- Fully implemented
- Partially implemented
- Pilot state
- Not implemented
- Don’t know

Not sample-based but FACT-BASED survey
A set of sub-questions to help evaluate the implementation of each measure

Example:

49. Has your government introduced trade facilitation measures that specifically target women involved in trade?
   • 49.1 Is there a gender focal point in the Ministry of Trade and/or Customs?
     [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don’t know
   • 49.2 Has there been specific measures to promote balanced participation of men and women in trainings?
     [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don’t know
   • 49.3 Has there been at least one specific training for women involved in trade during the past 12 months, by Ministry of Trade and/or Customs?
     [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Don’t know
   If yes, please list topics of trainings organized for women involved in trade:
   ___________________________________________________________
General Trade Facilitation Measures

Transparency

01. Publication of existing import-export regulations on the internet

02. Stakeholders' consultation on new draft regulations (prior to their finalization)

03. Advance publication of new trade-related regulations before their implementation

04. Advance ruling on tariff classification and origin of imported goods

05. Independent appeal mechanism
General Trade Facilitation Measures

**Formalities**

1. Risk management
2. Pre-arrival processing
3. Post-clearance audits
4. Separation of Release from final determination of customs duties, taxes, fees and charges
5. Establishment and publication of average release times
6. Trade facilitation measures for authorized operators
7. Expedited shipments
8. Acceptance of copies of original supporting documents required for import, export or transit formalities
General Trade Facilitation Measures

Institutional Arrangement and Cooperation

01 Establishment of a National Trade Facilitation Committee or similar body
02 National legislative framework and/or institutional arrangements for border agencies cooperation
03 Government agencies delegating border controls to Customs authorities
04 Alignment of working days and hours with neighbouring countries at border crossings
05 Alignment of formalities and procedures with neighbouring countries at border crossings
General Trade Facilitation Measures

Transit Facilitation

01. Transit facilitation agreement(s) with neighboring country(ies)

02. Customs authorities limit the physical inspections of transit goods and use risk assessment

03. Supporting pre-arrival processing for transit facilitation

04. Cooperation between agencies of countries involved in transit
Digital Trade Facilitation

**Paperless Trade**

- Internet connection available to Customs and other trade control agencies at border-crossings

**Automated Customs System**

- Electronic submission of Customs Declaration
- E-payment of Customs duties and fees
- Electronic application of Customs refunds

**Electronic Single Window System**

- Electronic application and issuance of import and export permits
- Electronic submission of Sea Cargo manifests
- Electronic submission of Air Cargo manifests
- Electronic application and issuance of Preferential Certificate of Origin
Digital Trade Facilitation

Cross-border paperless trade

01. Laws and regulations for electronic transactions

02. Recognized certification authority issuing digital certificates to traders

03. Electronic exchange of Customs declaration

04. Electronic exchange of Certificate of Origin

05. Electronic exchange of Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Certificate

06. Paperless collection of payment from a documentary letter of credit
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sustainable Trade Facilitation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Testing and laboratory facilities available to meet SPS of main trading partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>National standards and accreditation bodies established to facilitate compliance with SPS</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Electronic application and issuance of SPS certificates</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>Special treatment for perishable goods</td>
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Women in Trade Facilitation

01
Trade facilitation policy/strategy to increase women’s participation in trade

02
Trade facilitation measures to benefit women in trade

03
Women’s membership in the NTFC or similar bodies
Other Trade Facilitation

Trade finance facilitation

01 Single window facilitates traders to access to finance

02 Authorities engaged in blockchain-based supply chain projects covering trade finance

03 Variety of trade finance services available
Trade facilitation in Times of Crisis

01. Agency in place to manage trade facilitation in times of crises and emergencies
02. Online publication of emergency trade facilitation measures
03. Coordination between countries on emergency trade facilitation measures
04. Additional trade facilitation measures to facilitate trade in times of emergencies
05. Plan in place to facilitate trade during future crises
Consultation – Comments and suggestions welcome as we prepare for the 2023/24 Survey

01. Any measure (or groups of measures) you would like to see, added, removed?

02. Any suggestions on improving the data collection/verification process? On partnerships?

03. Any suggestions on making the survey more relevant/easy to use by NTFCs?

04. Any suggestions on analysis of the data? On dissemination?

05. Any suggestions on improving functionalities of www.untfsurvey.org? On aggregate indicators listed?
THANK YOU