



Swiss Program on Capacities for Trade Policies (C4TP)

Strengthening governments' capacities in trade policy to ensure favourable framework conditions to engage in inclusive and sustainable trade

The C4TP offers on-demand targeted support to governments of developing and least developed countries to improve their capacities in trade (including digital trade) policy. Through this support, beneficiary countries are empowered to provide favourable framework conditions for engaging in inclusive and sustainable trade, thereby contributing to economic growth and greater resilience.

Rationale

Trade policies are central to foster economic development, ensure trade resilience in times of crisis and foster recovery. In many developing countries, however, trade officials lack expertise to craft domestic trade policies conducive to sustained and inclusive economic growth and to adequately articulate their interests in trade negotiations in multilateral, regional and bilateral fora, as well as to translate the results of negotiations into national policies. This is also true for emerging trade topics, for instance related to e-commerce, environment, MSMEs, gender and sustainability.

With the increase of geopolitical tensions, trade barriers and disruptions and the digitalization of the economy, open trade and digital trade policies are more essential than ever to stimulate economic and social development. At the same time, effective trade rules are needed to prevent countries from unilaterally resorting to protectionist measures that could further exacerbate the current situation. Both objectives require resources and skills that are often beyond the possibilities of many developing and least-developed countries.

Objective, outcomes and activities

The objective of the C4TP is to equip trade-policy makers of beneficiary countries with the necessary knowledge, negotiating skills, analytical methods and networking capabilities to devise, negotiate and implement an effective and conducive trade-policy to their country's economy through 3 Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Improved trade negotiations capacities

Outcome 2: Implementation of trade agreements and unilateral trade policy facilitated

Outcome 3: Improved cooperation among trade policy stakeholders at the national and regional levels

SECO country/region

Global and selected
SECO partner
countries

Main funding partners

Switzerland (SECO)

Implementing partner

GFA Consulting
Group

St. Gallen Endowment
for Prosperity through
Trade

Duration

2021-2026

Total budget

CHF 4,500,000

SECO contribution

CHF 4,500,000

GFA 
CONSULTING GROUP

**St. Gallen
Endowment**
for Prosperity through Trade

To reach these outcomes, the Programme will offer support at two levels:

1. in the collection and access to high-quality data on trade (including digital trade) and,
2. in building up human capacities, including through the effective use of these data in negotiations and trade policy formulation in areas such as trade in industrial goods, agriculture, services, rules of origin, SPS/TBT, trade remedies, trade facilitation, intellectual property, public procurement, dispute settlement or e-commerce.

C4TP develops tools to respond to sustainability and inclusiveness concerns in the formulation of trade policies, such as environment impact assessment of trade agreements or analysis of the impact of specific trade policies on gender. The scope and the modalities of support are defined together with the beneficiary countries based on their needs. Interventions can include on-the-job training, workshops, blended learning, support to technical analyses, legal drafting or research design, network and awareness raising, staff exchanges. In addition, all beneficiary countries benefit from a tailor-made access to the high-quality trade databases, including the Global Trade Alert and the Digital Policy Alert, and are coached to effectively access and interpret such data in the formulation of trade policy.

Governance Structure

The GFA Consulting Group (GFA) works with a wide network of experts including experts from Swiss institutions and often with a local programme manager ensuring on the ground implementation and monitoring. GFA works closely with the St. Gallen Endowment for Prosperity through Trade (SGEPT), who is responsible for producing the databases and for conducting workshops for WTO delegations and capital-based personnel. A C4TP Steering Committee includes both implementing agencies and SECO, which monitors and takes strategic decisions on the Programme. In addition, country Steering Committees follow the implementation of the full-fledge interventions in Serbia and Peru.

Results achieved

Since the beginning of the Programme, 2 full-fledge interventions have been launched in Serbia and Peru. 6 fill-the-gap interventions are underway in Bolivia, Liberia, Moldova, Mozambique, Mongolia and Montenegro. Overall, the programme has shown to be conceptually relevant for beneficiary countries. Its demand-driven approach is characterized by a high degree of participation from the beneficiaries, who can identify their own capacity gaps and request technical assistance tailored to their specific needs. The high-quality trade and digital trade databases are responding to the growing need of governments to monitor trade and digital trade measures worldwide. The data provided by is used by beneficiaries for a wide range of purposes, including monitoring trade policies, developing strategies, conducting impact assessments, and negotiating trade agreements. The relevance of the databases is particularly high for officials engaged in WTO matters and multilateral negotiations, where the data is used to support a variety of trade policy tasks. The Programme has successfully implemented measures to improve trade negotiations capacities, utilization of trade agreements and unilateral trade policy instruments and coordination between trade policy stakeholders. A total of 1'354 persons have been trained since the beginning of the Programme, including 723 women. The technical skills and competencies acquired through the programme have resulted in improved trade negotiations capacities of target beneficiaries and supported implementation of trade policy.

How to get involved

GFA and SGEPT are the main entry points to the C4TP. The Swiss cooperation offices can also follow up on requests regarding the C4TP.

Further information and contact details

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