

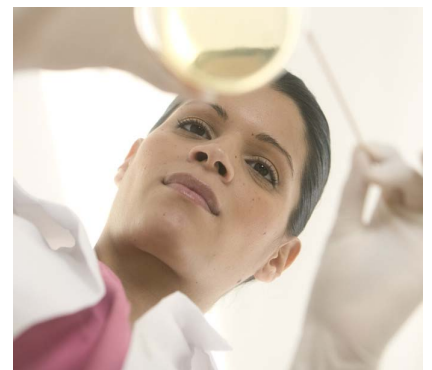


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EXPORT IMPACT
FOR GOOD

DEMAND FOR GREATER GLOBAL TRANSPARENCY

A ROLE FOR ITC AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS



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Non-tariff Measures (NTMs) have become a major impediment to international trade and market access, and are of particular concern to exporters and importers in developing and least developed countries.

ITC and UNCTAD, in collaboration with other organizations¹ and stakeholders, are spearheading an initiative to better understand, classify, capture and disseminate non-tariff measures globally, helping:

- Developing country companies to access information about NTMs that affect their products
- Developing country trade support institutions and trade policy makers to understand better the impediments to trade faced by their business sector
- Developing country business sector to share their insights about NTMs with policy makers

While tariffs have continuously declined in eight rounds of multilateral trade negotiations, the importance of NTMs as instruments of market protection and regulation has risen significantly. Moreover, with the enforcement of the Uruguay Round Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) agreements against regulatory protectionism, NTMs have become less visible and direct, but rather more complex. NTMs also reflect the increasing sophistication of markets, with consumers increasingly demanding more information about the products they buy.

In 2008, ITC and UNCTAD piloted the collection, classification and dissemination of NTMs in seven developing countries, including Tunisia and Uganda. In each of the seven countries between 300 and 500 exporting and importing enterprises were surveyed through direct interviews to identify the most prevalent non-tariff measures they faced.

Preliminary analysis from the pilot surveys finds that the problems faced by exporters and importers on reported non-tariff measures applied by a partner country often stem from weak infrastructure and inefficient processes in their own country. The main obstacles to trade reported related to TBT – Technical Barriers to Trade (46%), and SPS – Sanitary and Phytosanitary (28%) measures. Exporters and importers in “North-South corridor” countries may also face similar issues.

With a view to the extension of this NTM initiative to additional countries, interested trade support institutions and government ministries in the north-south corridor are invited to contact ITC for further information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT



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¹ FAO, IMF, ITC, OECD, UNCTAD, UNIDO, World Bank, WTO, European Commission, US Department of Agriculture, US International Trade Commission among others