



Trade **O**bstacles **A**lert **M**echanism

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http://www.intracen.org/publications/ntm/Mauritius/ Mauritus: Company Perspe... x

Exporters Trade support institutions Policymakers



International Trade Centre



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Mauritius: Company Perspectives - An ITC Series on Non-Tariff Measures

Mauritian exporters claim to be less affected by trade barriers than many other countries that have participated in the ITC business surveys on non-tariff measures. Among the 400 Mauritian firms surveyed, 27% of exporters were adversely affected by non-tariff measures; 36% of importing firms reported they were affected by non-tariff measures.

Non-Tariff Measures



Defining Non-Tariff Measures: What are they?

- Policy measures that act as 'structural bottlenecks' on export and import, other than customs tariffs, - import bans, restrictive import licenses, unreasonable product labelling and standards.
- Mandatory requirements, rules or regulations legally set by the government of the exporting, importing or transit country
- Restrictive and distorted effects on international trade.

Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism

- **Online platform** for reporting Trade Obstacles
- Accessible to **all operators**
- **All Government Agencies** linked
- **Formal mechanism** for following-up and addressing reported obstacles

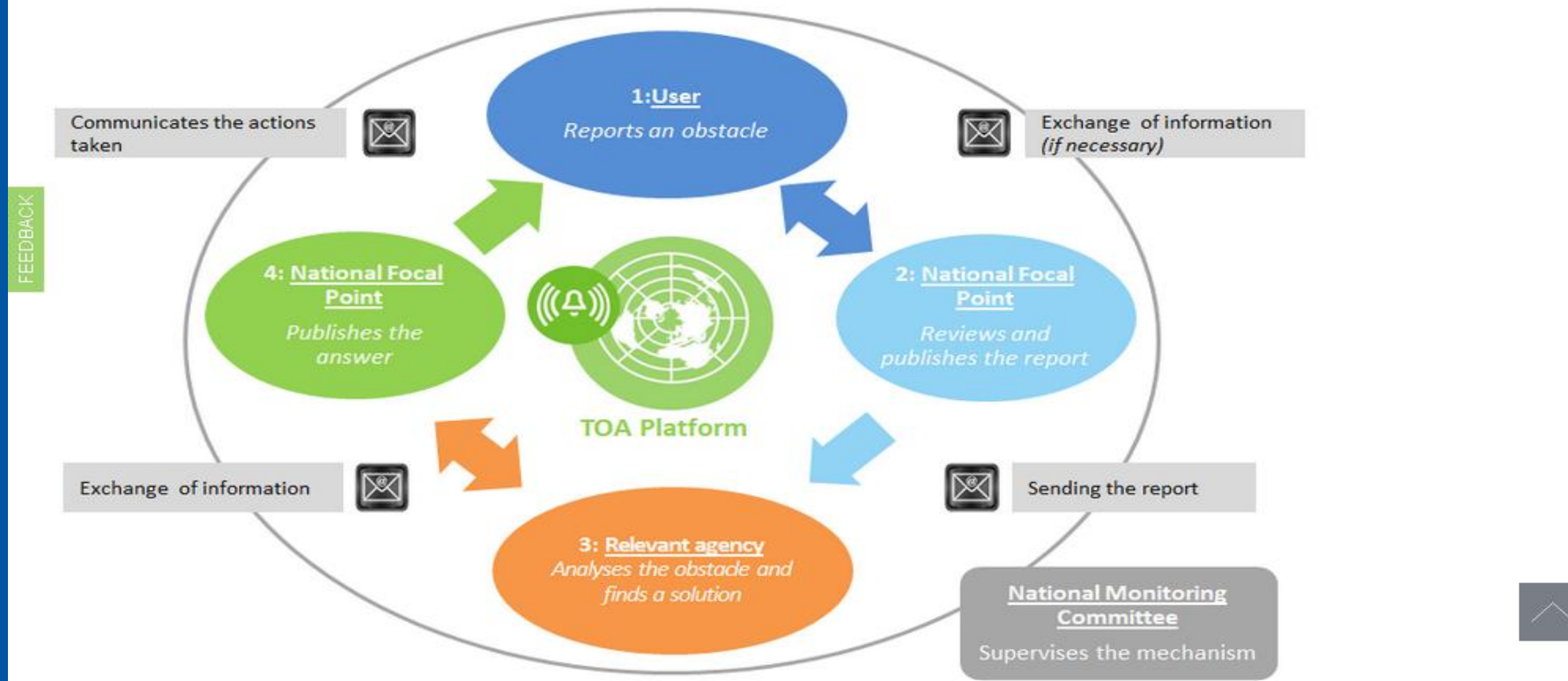
www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius

3 main functionalities

1. **Report a trade obstacle:** allows user to describe the details of the problem faced. The user must be registered to be able to send a report.
2. **Receive trade alert:** allows users to get email alerts on the obstacles reported by other users and solutions provided by the authorities according to different criteria.
3. **Analyse the trade obstacles:** allows users to see all trade obstacles reports created as well as summary statistics.

The Institutional Mechanism

When a report is valid, the agency concerned has to submit a response to the NFP who will then publish it online as a part of the obstacle report. Any update concerning the status of the report and/or the actions taken by the concerned agency will be communicated by email to the user who reported the obstacle. Additionally, all registered users will be notified of any modification or update in those reports that concern the products and the markets of their interest. The chart below illustrates how the mechanism works.



Objectives of the TOA Mechanism

- Provide a **new communication channel** for public-private dialogue on trade obstacles
- Contribute to the **identification and removal** of trade obstacles
- Assist national authorities in the **development and implementation** of trade facilitation policies
- Provide companies and TSIs with **relevant and up-to-date information** on trade rules and procedures
- **Improve** the business environment

TOAM in Mauritius

- **Chair of National Monitoring Committee (NMC)**
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (International Trade Division)
- **National Focal Point (NFP)**
 - MCCI
- **Inter-Agency Protocol**
 - NMC, NFP and all agencies have signed an inter-agency Protocol (approx. 26 agencies)

List of Agencies (1)

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade Division (ITD)
- Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)
- Division of Veterinary Services (DVS)
- National Plant Protection Office (NPPO)
- Food Import Unit (MOH)
- Dangerous Chemicals and Control Board (DCCCB)
- Pharmacy Board
- Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
- Attorney General's Office
- Commerce Division (MICCP)
- Industry Division (MICCP)

List of Agencies (2)

- Ministry of Technology
- Customs Department, Mauritius Revenue Authority
- Board of Investment
- Enterprise Mauritius
- Mauritius Standards Bureau
- Mauritius Ports Authority
- SMEDA
- Competent Authority – Seafood
- Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance
- Ministry of Tourism and External Communications
- Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
- Ministry of Business and Enterprise

MCCI: National Focal Point

- **Responsible for administration and management of the website**
 - Validation of reported trade obstacles in collaboration with NMC
 - Ensure prompt transmission of information to relevant agencies to maintain confidentiality
 - Updating users on the status of their reported obstacles (through the TOAM)
 - Posting updated trade information in news section of the website

MCCI: National Focal Point

- **Communication and Promotion Campaign**
 - Dissemination of brochures to exporters, importers, business associations and trade support institutions
 - 100% Challenge TV Programme
 - Press Campaign
 - Awareness Workshops

The Pilot Phase: Training of Operators



Testing the Platform

- 3 focus groups interviews
- Present the TOA platform
- Training operators how to use the platform
- Help them register as a user and report an obstacle



Evaluation of the TOAM Website

- Obtaining comments on website from operators by filling in questionnaires
- Provide feedback and suggestions to ITC

Training Sessions for Evaluating the Platform

3 Focus Groups



14 Exporters

8 Importers

4 Business Associations

Official Launch: 10 September 2015



Results in Numbers (as at 22 October 2015)

30 Operators
Trained

> 60 Registered
Users



15 Obstacles
Reported / 7
Solved

Thank you!

www.tradeobstacles.org/mauritius

