Evaluation Department

Norad

Norway's Trade Related Assistance through Multilateral Organizations: A Synthesis Study

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Norway's Trade Related Assistance Through Multilateral Organizations: A Synthesis Study

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Preface

The multilateral trade negotiations of the Doha Round established an Aid for Trade (AfT) agenda in 2005, and a trade related Norwegian Action Plan was subsequently approved in 2007. This report assesses the experiences and results of channeling Norwegian trade-related assistance through nine important multilateral organizations.

According to the report, there is a discrepancy between perception and reality in Norway about its importance as a donor of trade-related assistance. Firstly, the reported figures are underestimated. Norway uses an outdated and narrower definition of what constitutes trade-related technical assistance as compared to the one currently in use by the OECD. Secondly, although Norway allocates only 0.5% of its development assistance overall to trade-related technical assistance, it is one of the main donors channeling funds through multilaterals. Finally, the fact that Norway often provides un-earmarked funds means that its visibility is less than it otherwise could have been. The report notes that this funding approach may not necessarily reduce the transaction costs compared with bilateral projects.

The report finds that several of the multilateral organizations have inadequate systems for assessing and reporting the results of their work. Having noted this limitation, the study uses existing reports and expert interviews to assess the relative effectiveness of the organizations. While the findings are mixed, records for some organizations are discouraging with slow implementation and few results on the ground. As for the Norwegian priority areas, better performance is reported on *good governance, regional trade* and *gender,* whereas *climate* and *social responsibility* are near non-existing as priorities and in the reporting.

The report has been prepared by an independent Swedish consultancy firm, Devfin Advisers. The views and conclusions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the Evaluation Department in Norad (EVAL). As for the recommendations of the report, a precautionary note is in order due to the limited evidence and external evaluations available. Nevertheless, the findings and assessments will hopefully provide useful insights for the work on updating the Norwegian action plan for trade related assistance.

Oslo, November 2011

Marie Gåarder
Director of Evaluation

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Acronyms

ACWL	Advisory Centre on WTO Law
AFRIMETS	Inter Africa Metrology Systems
AfT	Aid for Trade
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
CFC	Common Fund for Commodities
CHF	Swiss france
CRS	Creditor Reporting System (of OECD)
DB	Doing Business (of the World Bank/IFC)
DDA	Doha Development Agenda
DDAGTF	Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DIFD	(United Kingdom) Department for International Development
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (under EIF)
EIF	Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance
EUR	Euro
FIAS	Foreign Investment Advisory Service
FLO	Fair Trade Labeling Organization
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
HSH	(Norges) Handels- og Servicenæringens Hovedorganisasjon
ICB	International Commodity Board
IF	Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOB	Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (of the MFA Netherlands)
ITC	Internal Trade Centre
ITTC	Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (in WTO)
JITAP	Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFA	(Norwegian) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTDF-TD	(World Bank) Multi Donor Trust Fund for Trade Development

MTN	Multilateral Trade Negotiations
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NIU	National Implementation Unit (under the EIF program)
NOK	Norwegian Crowns
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Development
OED	(World Bank) Operations Evaluation Department
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
RBM	Results-based Management
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SMTQ	Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures
STDF	Standards and Trade Development Fund
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TCB	Trade Capacity Building
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRA	Trade-related Assistance
TRIPS	Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights
TRTA	Trade-related Technical Assistance
TRTA/CB	Trade-related Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
TSI	Trade Support Institution
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIDO	United National Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UR	Uruguay Round
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WBI	World Bank Institute
WCO	World Customs Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Purpose The purpose of this synthesis study is to document and systematize the experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance channeled through multilateral organizations. This includes an assessment of the competence of these organizations to implement and report on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance in its Action Plan for Aid for Trade of 2007, i.e. good governance, regional trade and gender & trade. Furthermore, the report makes an assessment of the quality assurance system and result-based system in these organizations in order to determine reliability and validity of the results-information delivered. The report contains a comparison of the strong and weak sides of the organizations as channels for Norwegian trade support and also suggests which organizations that are most effective to use for Norwegian trade-related assistance.

Coverage The report covers nine multilateral organizations and multilateral trade-related programs which jointly have received 97% of the Norwegian trade-related support since 2007 channeled through multilateral organizations. These are the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) with United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as trust fund manager, the United National Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank's Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Trade Development (MDTF-TD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Advisory Centre on WTO Law (ACWL).

Method and limitations The study is a desk review, using existing reporting by the organizations including annual reports, policies, reporting to Norway, and also external reviews and evaluations of projects. In addition to this, the study uses relevant research reports, selected evaluations by other donors and broader independent evaluations and reviews of the organizations. The study included a visit to Geneva in the context of WTO's 3rd Review of the Aid for Trade with meetings with relevant Geneva-based organizations.

The evolution of trade-related assistance Support for trade development is about as old as official development assistance itself, and Norway has been part of that assistance from the beginning. The creations of UNCTAD and ITC in the 1960s are reflections of this at the multilateral level. With the shift towards open, market-driven economies as the development model under the banner of Washington Consensus from the 1980s, support for trade development got an additional impetus. This was further reinforced in the mid-1990s through the creation of WTO and also the multi-agency, multi-donor programs focusing on trade-related assistance to the

least developed countries, the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program (JITAP) and the Integrated Framework (IF). With the multilateral trade negotiations of the Doha Round initiated in 2001, trade-related assistance was further highlighted with the Doha Development Fund in 2002 and culminating with the Aid for Trade (AfT) agenda in 2005 under the auspices of WTO. The AfT broadened the concept of trade-related assistance to also encompass especially *trade-related infrastructure* and *building productive capacity.* Thus, OECD includes now five categories of assistance under the concept Aid for Trade: 1) trade policy and regulation; 2) building productive capacity; 3) trade-related infrastructure; 4) trade-related adjustment and 5) other trade-related needs. This is a considerable widening of the concept trade-related assistance used by OECD prior to 2006, which then included trade policy and regulation, and trade development meaning technical support to the private sector in its trade activities. In line with the broad AfT agenda official development assistance (ODA) for trade was reclassified and has grown in OECD's reporting from less than one percent of ODA in the early 2000s to a level of 25-30% from 2007 and onwards.

Norwegian Aid for Trade According to OECD data Norwegian support for the broader Aid for Trade agenda was USD 450 million in 2009. This was less than 10% of Norway's total official development assistance that year, a much lower figure than the average for OECD countries. This reflects that Norway only partially reports its assistance in infrastructure, agriculture, fisheries, etc under the Aid for Trade category 2 and 3. The Norwegian Action Plan for Aid for Trade in 2007 also reflects this narrow view of AfT: the Plan is limited to the 'old' concept trade-related technical assistance, which in OECD's current reporting accounts for a few percent of the total assistance in Aid for Trade.[1] This narrow definition also determines the focus of this report in line with its Terms of Reference.

Benefits to align with Aid for Trade While beyond the mandate of this study, it seems worthwhile for Norway to adjust both its policy and its reporting to the broader Aid for Trade agenda. Norway is an active partner in the WTO reviews and fully committed to Aid for Trade. A consolidated reporting would not only be of value for Norway's reporting under the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS), but also, and more important, be essential for Norway's policy setting and policy follow-up. Linking investments for example in power to policy and capacity building in trade might improve the effectiveness of both. An alignment will require a more systematic marking of Norway's ODA in the CRS by the various entities managing Norwegian official development assistance, i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norad, the embassies and FK Norway. An alignment would also require an up-date of the Aid for Trade Action Plan to make it coherent with the current definition in the donor community of Aid for Trade.

Norwegian trade-related technical assistance – the subject for this study – has expanded from a level of NOK 70 million per annum in the mid 2000s to about NOK 130 million per annum from 2007 and thereafter. Of this about 80% has been channeled to multilateral organizations, a pattern which existed also before the

1 Statistically it is complicated as 'trade development' in the sense of technical assistance to businesses was part of the trade-related technical assistance reported earlier, but now is or should be part of Aid for Trade category 2, building productive capacity.

Plan. The Action Plan, which states that the Norwegian assistance should take place primarily to the multilateral organizations, does not suggest any significantly deviances from the earlier pattern of support to these. Hence, in the Plan the Enhanced Integrated Framework is seen as a key channel, and there should be continued and deepened assistance through most of the organizations included in this review. The Plan also defined a series of priorities in Norway's trade-related assistance, including focusing on Africa and LDCs, prioritizing regional trade, women and trade, good governance, social responsible trade and trade with concern for the environment and the climate.

Adherence to the Plan Since the Plan was issued the Norwegian support has largely followed these intentions in terms of total allocations and the distribution on channels. Only a rather sharp decline in support of UNCTAD has taken place. This was not envisaged in the Plan, but is nevertheless a deliberate strategy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs due to disappointment with UNCTAD's slow reform. In terms of the priority areas, the results are more mixed. While *good governance, regional trade* and *gender* are mainstreamed in donor support for trade-related assistance today to which most of the multilateral organizations respond fairly well with explicit projects and reporting, *climate* and *social responsibility* are near non-existing as priorities and in the reporting.

Norway a key player A general conclusion in this study is that, albeit Norway does not have trade development as a key theme in its development assistance and allocates a mere 0,5% of its total ODA to trade-related technical assistance, Norway is one of the most important of all donor countries in provision of funds for trade-related technical assistance to the multilateral organizations and programs. Norway has a persistently high level of funding to all major organizations and programs in this field, both before and after the Action Plan. Norway is number one donor in terms of disbursements to the currently most central program, the EIF; Norway has until recently been the most important donor to UNCTAD, second largest to UNIDO's and WTO's technical trade assistance, and one of the 3-4 major donors to ITC, CFC, ACWL and the World Bank's MDTF-TD.

Not only is Norway a most significant donor to these organizations and programs, but also one which as policy provides un-earmarked funds when this is possible. A conclusion is that there is a discrepancy between perception and reality in Norway in the sense of its role in trade-related assistance. Norway could have a higher profile and visibility in trade development than currently is the case, should the government so wish.

The assistance landscape Due to the increased attention to trade-related assistance especially since the mid-1990s, there is today a large and increasing number of multilateral organizations involved in providing such assistance. The number of projects and activities these organizations and multilateral programs carry out on an annual basis can probably be counted in thousands. These include projects for capacity-building, training, research, creation of data-bases, production of reports on various aspects, trade diagnoses, policy support, export promotion, pilot

projects, gender focused projects, commodity support, institutional development, etc.[2] No overview of this exists and there is likely much overlapping and repetition.

The diverse and heterogeneous portfolio of often small projects carried out by the multilateral organizations could be seen as a means to satisfy different needs by many countries. However, it might also be a function of the fact that multilateral organizations depend on donor funding for its technical assistance work. A diverse and scattered supply might be a way of attracting funding and respond to many different donor demands, a process also reinforced by donors' interest in having a profile on their support. As Norway often provides support which is not earmarked, the Norwegian support can therefore on an annual basis be counted in hundreds of non-specified projects. One of the motivations for Norway to channel its funding for trade through multilateral organizations is to reduce the burden on recipient countries. However, it is far from evident that such funding in fact reduces the transaction costs for the recipients versus bilateral projects. As bilateral projects tend to be larger due to bilateral administrative constraints, the reverse might in fact be the case.

Weak results assessment While evaluations of projects and programs are standard procedures since a long time for all agencies, such efforts tend to be focused on delivery of outputs, and on non-quantifiable and 'soft' non-quantifiable outcomes such as *increased knowledge, greater awareness*, etc. The smallness of most projects, time factors and associated problems of attribution and counterfactuals, prevent evaluations from delivering evidence-based results on aspects such as *improved trade performance* and even less concerning the overriding objectives of *stimulating economic growth* and *reduce poverty*. This is a conclusion by various meta-evaluations of trade-related assistance and Aid for Trade undertaken by bilateral donors and organizations such as WTO and OECD, which this study also confirms.

Overall, reviewed project evaluations tend to claim that most projects are relevant and efficiently delivered (albeit without evidence from cost-data or bench-marks). However, whether the projects deliver "value for money" in terms of *improving trade* is rarely or never proven or even discussed. Furthermore, compared to the large number of projects undertaken, independent project evaluations tend to be few, partly due to financial considerations, but partly also as the Monitoring and Evaluation functions (M&E) for some of the multilateral organizations are surprisingly poorly developed or prioritized. For example, the EIF, against a background of a persistently poorly performing predecessor (the IF), did not set up an M&E system until 3 years after the start of the program, i.e. more than half way during the program period; UNCTAD has one single person responsible for evaluations in an organization which undertakes 200 - 250 projects per annum; ITC, with a similar number of projects as UNCTAD, has an evaluation unit which basically has been non-operational for some time due to shortage of staff; and WTO, while undertaking professional M&E for its fragmented project portfolio, does not disclose the results outside the organization. Results-based management (RBM) is a concept in vogue, but

2 This excludes large but unknown number of projects under category 2-5 in the AfT agenda.

whether RBM actually will deliver more evidence-based results, is yet to be seen. RBM without effective and systematic evaluation mechanisms, risks of being just another buzz word.

Assessment of organizations There are broad independent reviews for most of the organizations and programs included in this study. The results of these tend to provide mixed verdicts, in some cases with a contradictory positive view to that of the prevailing negative opinion in the donor community of the usefulness and effectiveness of these organizations. This is the case, for example, for UNCTAD and CFC. In other cases negative results are strongly disputed by the organizations themselves, pointing at weaknesses in methodology. This was, for example the case of WTO. In 2005 and recently in 2011 Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) undertook bold exercises to assess effectiveness of the multilateral organizations as channels for DFID funds. Unfortunately, these reviews only covered one of the organizations included in this study, UNIDO. Furthermore, the reviews of UNIDO came to quite different conclusion 2011 (negative) versus 2005 (positive), seemingly more reflecting changing political priorities in Britain than deterioration of UNIDO's performance.

Short of robust evidence on the relative effectiveness of the different channels for Norwegian trade-related support, a summary is provided below for those reviewed with recommendations on how Norway is suggested to act in a second phase of the Action Plan. The organizations/programs are presented in order of their current importance in Norwegian financial flows.

The Enhanced Integrated Framework is a multi-donor program in trade-related assistance for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), involving seven multilateral organizations (ITC, IMF, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and WTO, and UNIDO as an associated member). The program is very ambitious with the objective of mainstreaming trade into the LDCs' policy making, strategizing and planning. Through its planning and coordination mechanism it is perfectly in line with the Paris agenda on aid effectiveness. EIF's predecessor, the Integrated Framework 1997–2005, showed such disappointing results that it was reformulated several times, until a major overhaul took place 2005-2008, leading to the Enhanced Integrated Framework. The main difference between the programs is that EIF has a highly elaborate implementation structure both centrally (attached to WTO and with UNOPS as trust fund manager) and nationally, and considerable efforts are made to strengthen LDCs' institutional capacity to implement trade development. This is in response to the perception that the key fault with the IF was lack of country ownership and poor administrative capacity at country level. So far the EIF implementation has been very slow with disbursement of about 6% of the target budget of USD 250 million for the program. (Initially EIF's first phase would be 2007-2011, but it has been delayed to 2008-2013). Almost 95% of these funds have been spent on building the implementation capacity at the centre and in the countries. Results on the ground beyond that are still to be delivered. The planned independent mid-term review of EIF has also been postponed to 2012.

EIF is a top priority in the Norwegian Action Plan. Norway, also a key funder of the IF, has disbursed NOK 93 million 2008-2010 to EIF and is the largest funder so far among the more than 20 donors supporting EIF (although Norway is 4th largest in commitments). Whether the EIF eventually will deliver value for money in terms of concrete results in trade performance by the LDCs is yet too early to determine. Taking into account the slowness in implementation and the full 14 years period since the IF was established, the record is discouraging. Our recommendation is that Norway should take a cautious approach to the EIF, delay further disbursements and carefully assess the emerging results beyond building implementation structures at the centre or at the recipient country level.

UNOPS is not an organization specializing in trade-related assistance as such, but has been designated Trust Fund manager for the EIF for the period 2008-2013. UNOPS role includes trustee functions such as negotiation of agreements with partners, preparation of budgets and financial management forecasts, fiduciary appraisal of project proposals and assessment of the grant recipient's capacities, monitoring of compliance with requirements, and financial reporting to the EIF Board and donors. UNOPS also provides recommendations on capacity building and training, helps review the overall effectiveness of the framework and ensures transparency of the EIF process. The fund management is coordinated from UNOPS regional office in Geneva, supported by the UNOPS regional offices in Dakar, Nairobi and Bangkok.

UNOPS provides a professional project management capacity to the EIF which was lacking under the IF. Given the complexity of EIF and the need for a functional relationship between the seven multilateral agencies involved and more than 20 donors, such professionalism is critical. While the EIF secretariat is the front of the program, UNOPS' ability as the 'back-office' to manage will be critical for the performance of the program. Norwegian support to UNOPS is entirely due to the fact that UNOPS is the designated trust fund manager. Norway has no option but to channel its funding to UNOPS as long as Norway supports the EIF. Hence, there is no point of assessing the role of UNOPS under the Norwegian Aid for Trade Action Plan except as an integral part of the EIF. We assume that the performance of UNOPS will form a key task of the 2012 mid-term evaluation.

UNIDO has an extensive technical assistance program in trade capacity building with standards and quality as focus. The annual disbursement on technical assistance under this program is between USD 20 - 25 million with Norway as the second largest donor after the EU. Norway has established a good partnership with UNIDO since the late 1990s, and based on project evaluations of the Norwegian financed portfolio, UNIDO appears to be delivering good value for money in the field of standards and quality, an area where the organization has a unique competence internationally, which also Norway has played a key role to develop. Norway, through Norad, has been supporting a dozen trade-related assistance projects during the 2007 plan period, most of them in standards and quality with a total allocation of about NOK 80 million in 2008-2010. Norway is given good visibility by UNIDO and Norway seems to be able to play an active role in the overall organizational development of UNIDO's trade capacity building. Amongst all the channels of Norwegian Aid

for Trade funding, UNIDO stands out as the one where Norway has most additionality, albeit in one fairly small segment of trade-related assistance.

ITC has a more than 40 years experience as a specialist agency in trade-related assistance with a focus on Trade Support Institutions and enterprises. ITC is operating at an annual budget of USD 70 million all of which is devoted to trade-related assistance. ITC is flexible and business-like, good in responding to donor priorities such as gender and south-south trade. ITC has a prolific portfolio of some 200 projects ongoing annually. Norway, the fourth largest donor to ITC in 2009-2010, has a long record of support through ITC, since 2003 as a mixture of non-earmarked funds and 'soft' earmarking. 2008-2010 the Norwegian support was NOK 60 million, making ITC Norway's third most important channel.

The result of Norway's support to ITC is difficult to determine of several reasons. First, non-earmarked funds are used by ITC to a large extent for central organization expenditures such as retaining technical core staff. Second, ITC's evaluations of its projects and activities have suffered from under-staffing for some time and little in terms of independent results-assessment has taken place. Nevertheless, client surveys undertaken by ITC show satisfaction among stakeholders, and an organization-wide evaluation in 2006 also concluded that ITC is delivering value, albeit it was critical of ITC's M&E activities.

ITC is a trusted partner to Norway and there are no apparent reasons to change this relationship. There is, on the other hand, today no strong argument for Norwegian soft earmarking in its current form as Norway's priorities (gender, south-south trade etc.) are mainstreamed in the donor community and well integrated into ITC's work. An alternative for the future might be a mixture of Window 1 and Window 2 funding, which would allow Norway to tailor its support better along other, under-financed priorities, also providing better accountability and visibility of the Norwegian support.

The World Bank is the key player in development assistance both from a resource- and knowledge point of view, but had not until the mid 2000s a strong role in trade-related technical assistance. The Multi-donor Trust Fund for Trade Development was initiated in 2007 and operating 2008-2011 with the purpose of helping developing countries to integrate trade into their development strategies. This was achieved through building capacity by the World Bank in trade policy, trade-related research and training as well as overall to integrate trade in the Bank's other work. The USD 28 million fund has been financed by four donors including Norway, providing 19% of the fund. The fund has through some 160 'projects' supported a large number of policy activities, reports, data bases and training activities. External reviews of the fund in 2009 and 2011 claim good outcome in terms of knowledge building, awareness creation, policy influence, etc., perhaps with the most tangible result that the World Bank's capacity in trade-related assistance has been greatly enhanced, resulting in the Bank's ability to provide policy support to client countries and leveraging trade in its lending operations.

The MDTF-TD is coming to a close, but the Bank will deepen its support in trade-related assistance through continuing trust fund(s) for this purpose and also through

a new Trade Strategy (2011-2021). There is a justification for Norway to participate in such efforts, not least for Norway's own learning in Aid for Trade.

WTO is a central player in trade development through its role in the multilateral trade agreements, but also through WTO's technical assistance activities. WTO undertakes technical assistance through the Doha Development Fund at a level of USD 20 million in external funding per annum, financed by some 20 donors. Norway is the second largest funder of WTO's technical assistance program which comprises mostly of short and medium term training and capacity building activities related to the WTO law and framework. The overall work comprises of in the order of 300 – 350 activities per annum, i.e. courses, seminars, symposia, conferences, etc. focusing on WTO rules and regulations.

WTO's technical assistance was reviewed in 2006 by an external evaluation which had some critical views of WTO's training activities. Continued Norwegian support to WTO's technical assistance is, nevertheless justified as WTO is likely to play an increasingly important role, especially as a lead agency in the Aid for Trade agenda. It is suggested that Norway in cooperation with other key donor(s) put pressure on WTO to focus more on institutional needs and development than maintain a prolific short-term course portfolio, and also to allow greater transparency in its results-assessment.

CFC is small multilateral organization focusing on commodity development. It has its origin in the 1970s as a concept to create buffer stocks for key commodities to reduce price volatility. However, CFC was not established until 1989, and its original purpose was then outdated. CFC, with a staff of less than 30 persons, implements some 10-15 technical assistance projects per annum in cooperation with International Commodity Boards with a total annual expenditure of about USD 10-12 million. CFC has due to its smallness low visibility and has been in crisis for many years due questions concerning its relevance by many of its donors. Norway has been of the key funders of the organization from start. With a total allocation of NOK 21 million 2008-2010, CFC is the sixth most important channel. But Norway is also one of the most active donors in the efforts to reform CFC in its current format.

External reviews of CFC in 2005 and 2010 have not supported the notion that CFC is irrelevant, but rather pointed at its unique role in the global trading system with a sole focus on commodities. The risk that CFC as an independent organization will have to close down in 2013 due to lack of further funding is, nevertheless, considerable. While CFC was established on an outdated premise, issues in commodities are today more significant than ever due to escalating prices and a scramble by many investors for large scale investments in land, not least in Africa, for new commodities such as biofuels with unknown consequences. The timing to reduce commodity focused work in Aid for Trade might not be opportune from this point of view, whether CFC is part of the game or not.

UNCTAD is the 'grand old lady' of trade-related assistance, for a long time the only multilateral organization devoted to trade-related support jointly with ITC. With an annual support by donors and voluntary bilateral contributions in the order of USD

30 million for technical assistance, UNCTAD undertakes 200-250 trade-related technical projects per annum with trade logistics and investment promotion as key services. Norway has been UNCTAD's most significant contributor for its technical assistance activities, but is radically reducing this from a level of NOK 13 million in 2007 to NOK 4 million in 2010 as UNCTAD by the Norwegian government is not considered a relevant and effective organization.

The perceived problems of UNCTAD's operations are several: first, other organizations are infringing on UNCTAD's traditional turf, such as WTO and the World Bank, organizations which are considered more dynamic than UNCTAD. Second, UNCTAD is slow in reforming itself in a changing global economy for example as UNCTAD operates with a wide and rather non-transparent portfolio with an outdated portfolio-management system and weak evaluation mechanism. However, it is an organization which seemingly has the support of many developing countries. A review of UNCTAD in 2005-2006 by a Panel of Eminent Persons came also to a strong defense of UNCTAD.

There might be reasons to re-assess the current Norwegian strategy concerning UNCTAD. The supervision of the current Norwegian project portfolio in UNCTAD with more than 20 projects is today handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We suggest it should be shifted to Norad which, as an organization, has a better capacity to deal with complex portfolios of projects. We believe that Norway has the opportunity to have considerable leverage in streamlining this prolific portfolio for more concentration to key areas of UNCTAD's competencies, in a similar way which has taken place in UNIDO. This could initiate a reform of UNCTAD from 'below' and also provide clear additionality to Norway's trade-related support.

ACWL is a small intergovernmental agency established in 2001 to provide support to developing countries related to dispute settlements under WTO law. The small Geneva-based organization has 11 professionals employed and provides advice, support in dispute cases and training on WTO law. Its operating budget is about USD 4 million per annum provided by eleven donors of which Norway is one of the most important. ACWL is generally seen as an effective facility, confirmed by a Dutch comparative evaluation in 2004 and also in later studies. However, its support is so far marginally used by LDCs and African countries. Norway's support to ACWL should be towards making ACWL more independent of continuous donor funding, partly by an expansion of the original concept of an Endowment fund, partly by encouraging ACWL to charge more for its services to non-LDC clients.

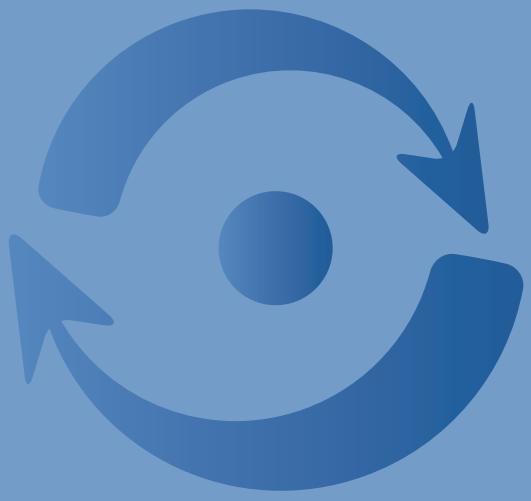
Summary of recommendations We suggest that Norway should:

1. Raise the Norwegian 'profile' in Aid for Trade, applying the broad agenda. This will give Norway a better leverage on its relationship with the multilateral organizations.
2. Update the current Action Plan for Aid for Trade to focus on the broad AfT agenda and systematically record the Norwegian assistance in all the five Aid for Trade categories, involving all actors in the Norwegian aid structure.
3. Continue with Norway's current broad-based support through the multilateral organizations, including those organizations which risk of being marginalized, i.e.

UNIDO and UNCTAD, while take a more cautious approach to EIF. The rationale for this is that there is so far no good evidence-base to conclude on the relative aid effectiveness of the various organizations, while, at the same time, donors tend to drive concentration of internal administrative reasons.

4. Shift the responsibility for the support to UNCTAD from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Norad which is likely to have better capacity for handling of the complex portfolio, and that Norad is given the responsibility to strengthen UNCTAD from 'below' through the portfolio management.
5. Consider the balance of non-earmarked core funding and project funding towards more of the latter in order to achieve better visibility, better accountability towards Norway's own constituency and better prioritizing against Norwegian values.
6. Put pressure on the multilateral organizations to increase their efforts for independent evaluations by building out their M&E functions and increasing the transparency in reporting using web-based media (when this is not the case today). Norway might consider provide special allocations for such support as is the case with UNCTAD.
7. Focus on essential cross-cutting issues which are marginal or near neglected today both by donors and the multilateral organizations in trade-related assistance, especially *climate* and *environment,* and *social issues* such as labor rights and more broadly corporate social responsibility.
8. Initiate a study from a country-perspective of the supply of trade-related technical assistance to determine what is the value for money from the users' perspective, also including the actors in trade, i.e. the business community, in such a review. Such a study could go a long way in determining which multilateral organizations which in fact deliver effective services.
9. Review the options of supporting the new multi-organizational Transparency in Trade Initiative in order to increase the transparency in who is doing what and where in trade-related assistance.
10. Consider the balance between trade-related assistance through multilateral organizations and bilateral support in view of the fact that the former support tends to be fragmented on many small projects often with weak-results reporting and therefore is not fulfilling the rationale of reducing administrative burden on recipient countries.

Main Report



1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purposes of this synthesis study are according to the Terms of Reference (ToR)[3]

- Document and systematize the experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance channeled through multilateral organizations with focus on those six organizations which have received most of the financial resources from Norway, i.e. International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United National Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank.
- Assess the competence of these organizations to implement and report on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance in its Action Plan for Trade of 2007 (good governance, regional trade and gender & trade).
- Assess the quality assurance system and result-based system in these organizations in order to determine reliability and validity of the results-information delivered. Also assess to what extent these organizations are 'learning organizations' in the sense that they are using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance.
- Compare the strong and weak sides of the organizations as channels for Norwegian trade support in order to suggest which organizations that are most effective to use for Norwegian trade-related assistance, and indicate whether this analysis justifies a change in the Norwegian priorities of channels for the future.
- Describe and assess the effectiveness of the channeling mechanisms of the support to the multilateral organizations, especially the role and effectiveness of UNOPS.
- Describe the experience of some other organizations which have been involved in Norwegian trade-related assistance.
- Determine if the findings are supported or rejected in evaluations undertaken by other likeminded donors and researchers.
- Suggest how Norwegian trade-related support can help in strengthening the support provided by the multilateral organizations.

As indicated in the ToR, the study should be in the form of a desk review, using existing reporting by the organizations such as mid-term reviews and evaluations, and in addition relevant research reports. The study would also include a short tour to some of the European-based organizations. The study is an element of a review of Norway's Action Plan for Trade of 2007. The ToR stress that the study is not an

3 This is a summary and translation of the ToR which is in Norwegian. For that reason, the ToR is not attached as an annex to the report.

assessment of the Action Plan as such. However, the plan should function as a framework for the study in the sense of identifying, for example, key priorities for the Norwegian trade-related assistance.

1.2 Methodology

This review has been carried out between June 20 and end of August 31, 2011. It is focused on the eight multilateral organizations and programs which have received most of Norwegian trade-related support since 2007. Besides those six highlighted in the ToR, the study has also included the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the Advisory Centre on WTO Law (ACWL).

The report is based on the following sources of information:

- evaluations and reviews of the organizations when such exist; evaluations and mid-term reviews of specific projects of relevance undertaken by these organizations with Norwegian support; annual reports or other relevant documents produced by these organizations; progress reports to Norway on the cooperation; and relevant documents produced by the Norwegian organizations involved in trade-related support, i.e. mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad);
- meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad in Oslo.
- participation in WTO's 3rd Review of the Aid for Trade in Geneva July 2011;
- interviews in person with various persons in the Geneva-based organizations, ACWL, the EIF Secretariat, ITC, UNCTAD, UNOPS and WTO; and
- Telephone interviews and e-mail contacts with additional relevant persons.

For persons interviewed and documents consulted see Annex 1 and 2.

1.3 Limitations

This study is focused on Norwegian trade-related assistance channeled through the multilateral organizations. It has not covered bilateral such assistance, nor has it covered the new, broad Aid for Trade agenda, including *trade-related infrastructure* and *building productive capacity* of reasons further discussed later in this report (and also in line with the ToR). However, as the broad Aid for Trade is at the forefront of trade-related assistance in the donor community, the Norwegian position in this is also covered, and recommendations made in the final chapter related to Aid for Trade.

An important limitation to the study is also that – in line with the ToR – does not contain an assessment of the Norwegian supported Aid for Trade as seen from the recipient country perspective, for example addressing issues such as which services and delivery mechanisms that are judged as effective and which are less so by the recipients. A recommendation in the report is that such a review should be a complement to this report in the on-going review by Norad of the Norwegian Aid for Trade Action Plan.[4]

4 This was also a critique highlighted in the comments on the draft report by the EIF Secretariat.

1.4 Key terms

The terminology for the subject of this study – *handelsrelatert bistand* in Norwegian – is not consistent over time and between different donors and agencies. Different terms for basically the same thing are used, such as trade-related assistance (TRA), trade-related technical assistance (TRTA), trade capacity-building (TCB), and trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building (TRTA/CB). We use these terms as synonymous in this report. Through the introduction of the concept Aid for Trade since 2005 new terms are added, besides the term Aid for Trade itself, as discussed later in the report.

2. The emerging trade-related assistance

2.1 Background

Trade-related assistance has a long history in development assistance, basically as long as Official Development Assistance (ODA) itself. Manifestations of this at the global level are the creation of UNCTAD in 1964 as a forum to discuss trade issues between developed and developing countries, as well as the establishment of ITC in 1968 to focus on providing technical assistance in trade development. Norway was a supporter of these trade-related efforts from their earlier days.

New International Economic Order and Washington Consensus In the 1970s trade issues was a part of the concept New International Economic Order (NIEO). This encompassed efforts by many developing countries to promote a different global economic and trade system and – in their view – rectify the unfairness of the existing system with declining terms of trade for many export commodities on which developing countries relied on- In these efforts UNCTAD was an important arena. While NIEO did not leave much imprint on factual trade regimes, the World Bank's and International Monetary Fund's (IMF) *structural adjustment lending* in the 1980s did. These new style concessional loans which most donors would support in what has been called the Washington Consensus, had a strong influence on trade with its focus on open, liberal, market- and private sector driven economies as model for development. Reinforced by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist economies in the east in the late 1980s, market-and export driven open economies became the all dominant model for economic development, replacing the doctrine of import-substitution, and protected basic industry and infant industry doctrines from the 1960s and 70s. This encouraged or forced developing countries to promote its exports, to open their domestic economies and to be concerned with the competitiveness of its economies on regional and global markets. Trade-related support to assist countries to benefit from global trade grew as a consequence.

The Multilateral Trade Negotiations and WTO Trade-related support for developing countries and economies in transition has been closely linked with the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) conducted within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Especially the Uruguay Round starting 1986 highlighted areas such as trade in services, intellectual property, and reform of trade in sectors such as agriculture and textiles, all of significant importance to developing countries. Under the Uruguay Round the World Trade Organization was established in 1995 to replace GATT, by some described as the most profound institutional reform of the world trading system since the formation of GATT in

1947.[5] As developing countries increasingly joined WTO, the organization also became a central player in trade-related assistance.

Framework support for trade in the poorest nations In the 1990s several efforts of making trade and trade development better integrated into the economic policies of developing countries, and especially those most marginal to the global economy, were made by donors and multilateral organizations. Examples of these were the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program to Selected Least Developed and Other African Countries (JITAP) established in 1996, and the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance for the Least Developed Countries (IF) stated in 1997. Both these programs aimed at mobilizing donor support, coordinating the efforts by several multilateral organizations in trade-related assistance, and placing trade at the centre of recipient countries' development agendas. In the JITAP, three multilateral organizations cooperated (ITC, UNCTAD and WTO), and in the IF six multilaterals joined forces, namely ITC, IMF, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and WTO. JITAP was presented as the 'most high profile technical assistance program in the world'[6] and 'an innovative approach to technical assistance and a path-breaking effort to address the problems of least-developed and other poorer developing countries.'[7] Reality turned out to be something different as discussed later in this report.

Doha Development Agenda In the round following Uruguay of the MTN – the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) named after the first minister conference in Doha in 2001 – technical assistance and capacity building in trade was made a key component, by critiques seen as a means to persuade developing countries to accept the proposed multilateral trade agreements. Thus, the Doha ministerial declaration included commitments to trade-related technical assistance in terms of increase in the volume of activities. A manifestation of the latter was the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund (DDAGTF) to which donors pledged resources in order to increase WTO's trade-related training and capacity-building support. Out of Doha grow also the Aid for Trade concept (AfT). The Doha round has so far not been completed and negotiations have collapsed. Aid for Trade, on the other hand, is much alive, and today dominates the discourse on trade-related assistance.

2.2 Aid for Trade

At the 2005 WTO ministerial conference in Hong Kong, a WTO Aid for Trade task force was formed with a mandate to provide recommendations to the WTO director-general on how to best operationalize AfT. The task force gave its recommendations in a report 2006. Two of its recommendations have had profound influence on the concept of Aid for Trade:

- Building productive capacity and trade-related infrastructure in developing countries should be a major part of the AfT efforts;
- WTO should periodically conduct global reviews of AfT based on reports from stakeholders, including those from recipients, the donor community, regional and multilateral agencies, and the private sector.[8]

5 P. Gallagher (2005), *The First Ten Years of the WTO.*
6 Haefliger et al. (2000): *Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program.*
7 de Silva and Weston 2002): *Report of the Summative Evaluation of the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Program (JITAP).*
8 WTO (2006) *Recommendations of the Task Force on Aid for Trade.*

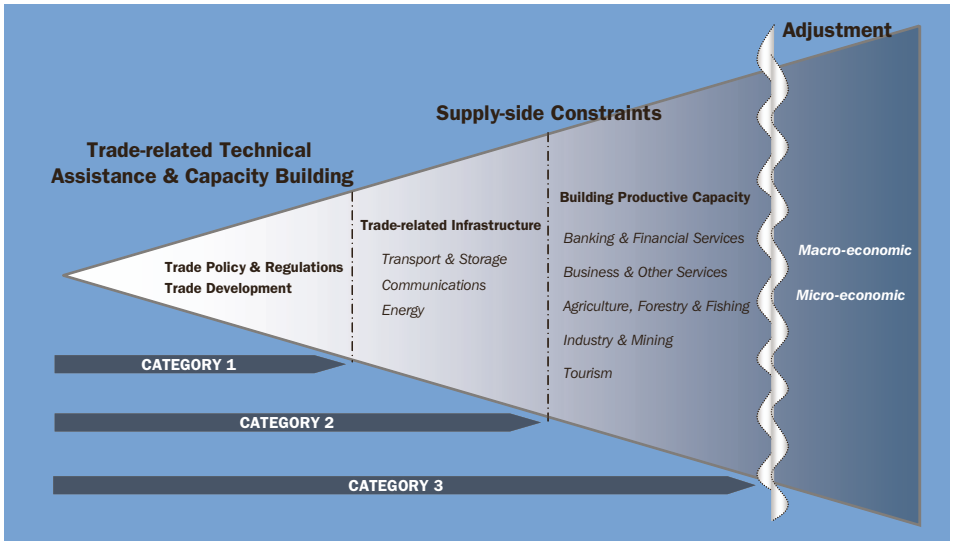
Since then the commitment to Aid for Trade has been reiterated repeatedly by most donors at global AfT review meetings hosted by WTO. Such reviews have taken place in 2007, 2009 and most recently in July 2011.

Aid for Trade is not a new program for trade-related assistance with specific donor pledges etc. It is rather a framework for any form of trade-related assistance without any specific targets or commitments. Nevertheless, the Aid for Trade has so far meant the following conceptual new directions:

- It has created an institutionalized global framework for trade-related assistance manifested in the biannual global reviews conducted by WTO; as a result, trade-related assistance has been lifted on the development agenda, manifested also in donor financial commitments;
- It made donors report on extended categories of ODA under the mark of Aid for Trade. From a fairly small amount counted as trade-related techncial assistance in the OECD statistics, Aid for Trade has grown to encompass some 25-30% of all ODA;
- There are emerging analytical tools to diagnose trade performance at country level, and reporting systems of different aspects of Aid for Trade.

The broadening definition of trade-related assistance under AfT is demonstrated in the following figure:

Figure 1. The Aid for Trade categories



Source: OECD (2006) *Effective Aid-for-Trade: Local Accountability and Global Review*, replicated in Norway's Aid for Trade Action Plan 2007

The figure above shows three categories of Aid for Trade. A fourth category, *Trade-related Adjustment* is indicated (for which reporting began in 2008), and a fifth category has been agreed upon – *Other trade-related needs* – but so far with no practical implications, nor any reporting.

2.3 Reporting on support for trade development

The new view of assistance for trade development since Doha has led to a number of changes in the donor reporting on trade-related assistance. OECD and WTO initi-

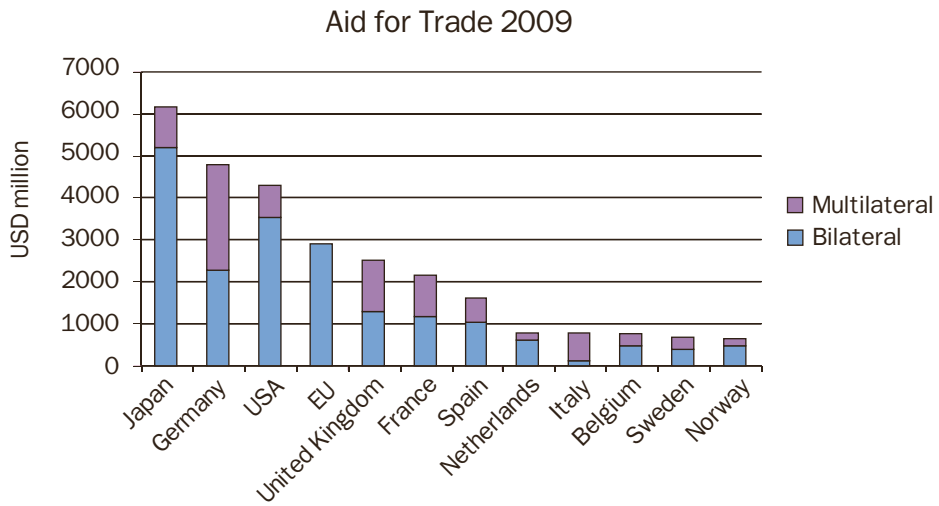
ated in 2002 a joint data base for TRTA/CB using an expansion of the existing OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS)[9] to include the old CRS code *Trade Policy and Regulations* and a new code for *Trade development.* With the introduction of Aid for Trade, the TRTA/CB data base has been abandoned and is replaced by Aid for Trade reporting using the CRS, but with AfT markings along the four categories as indicated in figure 1 above.

As a result of these changes in concept and reporting, a certain degree of anomaly has emerged in reporting on trade-related assistance. Thus, the 'old' concept of *trade development* reported under the OECD TRTA/CB data base which includes assistance to help enterprises engage in trade, reinforce business support structures and create a favorable business climate for traders, should be reported under the Aid for Trade category 3 above, hence be a part of a broader Aid for Trade reporting. However, several donors, including Norway, report this under the 'old' concept of trade-related technical assistance.

2.4 The levels of Aid for Trade

According to OECD, Aid for Trade accounted in 2009[10] for USD 40 billion in commitments, an increase by 60% from the 2002-2005 base-line,[11] Disbursements had grown by a steadily since 2006 reaching USD 29 billion in 2009. Africa showed the most rapid growth as recipient with disbursements of about USD 13 billion in 2009, making Africa receiving the largest share of all regions for the first time that year. Also the flow to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) had increased steadily, reaching USD 12 billion in 2009. Among donors, the World Bank, Japan, United States and the EU have been the largest donors since 2006. Excluding the banks (which get most of their grant funding through donors) the data for 2009 in terms of largest donors (disbursements) are as follows:

Figure 2. Donor flows in Aid for Trade 2009



Source: WTO (2011). The multilateral channeling is an estimate by WTO. The EU allocation is understated as WTO did not undertake an estimate for the EU

9 The CRS aid activity database was established in 1967 and collects information on official development assistance and other official flows to developing countries. It is the internationally recognized source of data on aid activities (geographical and sectoral breakdowns) and is widely used by governments, organizations and researchers active in the field of development.
10 Last available data year.
11 WTO (2011): *Aid for Trade at Glance 2011 – Showing Results.*

As shown in the figure above, Norway with official disbursements in the order of USD 450 million in 2009 under Aid for Trade Agenda is the 12th largest donor country, dwarfed by Japan and Germany by a factor of 10-15.

It should be noted that of the Aid for Trade flows 97-98% concerns category 2 and 3 in the OECD statistics: *trade-related infrastructure* which includes investments in roads, ports, power, telecommunications, etc. and *productive capacity building* which includes investments in agriculture, industry, mining, banking and finance, tourism, etc. To a large extent, the volume of Aid for Trade support is thus a matter of reclassification in the OECD's reporting system. As noted by the World Bank:

> *The OECD definition of aid for trade is a very broad measure of trade-related sassistance and therefore overstates the overall magnitude of aid for trade. It includes* ***all*** *financing of infrastructure with the exception of water and sanitation projects. As infrastructure accounts for a large share of total ODA expenditures, this inflates the aggregate numbers for aid for trade.*

2.5 Reviews of the results of trade-related assistance

In line with the ToR, this study has reviewed some evaluations and assessment made on trade-related assistance undertaken by other donors and organizations. The following section is a summary of these. It has no ambition to be all encompassing, but merely to give an indication of the current issues involved in assessing trade-related assistance.

Evaluation of the Netherlands TRTA In 2004 the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs undertook an evaluation of the Netherlands' trade-related technical assistance. The evaluation, carried out by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the ministry, noted that in the early 2000s there were over one hundred providers of TRTA, including multilateral agencies, regional organizations, bilateral donors, NGOs and research institutes, together financing thousands of activities per year in over a hundred developing countries. The evaluation focused on the multilateral programs and international organizations because Netherlands used these organizations as the principal channel for funding TRTA. Thus, the evaluation chose four programs for its review, the IF, JITAP and two UNCTAD technical assistance programs,[12] and three smaller international Geneva-based organizations of which one was ACWL. The evaluation concluded that:

- The design and implementation of nearly all selected TRTA activities devoted too little attention to formulating and using measurable indicators that could provide an insight into what is actually done with TRTA and what it achieves.
- Mid-term reviews, policy reviews and other evaluation reports of projects and programs provided few insights into outcome and impact because measuring and assessing results was not the main objective.
- Large-scale, integrated multilateral TRTA programs targeting LDCs, (i.e. JITAP, IF) were neither efficient, nor effective in the countries visited by the evaluators.

12 Program on Possible Multiple Framework on Investment, and Competition Law and Policy for African Countries.

- There was respect in developing countries for UNCTAD's technical assistance in the field of investment and competition, but its use-value could not be determined. UNCTAD was not a transparent and efficient channel for TRTA.
- TRTA provided by the three small and single-issue organizations (including AWCL) serving non-LDCs was considered more efficient and effective than those above.

The IOB evaluation concluded that in terms of the multi-agency programs JITAP and IF, disappointing results throughout their implementation had repeatedly led to the response that the programs 'needed more time'. In the view of the evaluation, however, this had not led anywhere due to the inherent problems of the programs. In terms of its findings concerning UNCTAD, the report concluded there were consistent with earlier fairly negative evaluations of UNCTAD programs (see further chapter 4). A questioned posed by the report (but not answered) was whether the Netherlands should end its TRTA funding through UNCTAD.

OECD's evaluation s of TRTA In 2006 OECD undertook a 'meta-evaluation' of trade-related technical assistance carried out by various donors and agencies, resulting in a report with the title: *What do recent evaluations tell us?*[13] The study noted that development assistance for trade had grown considerable recent years, but it was from the evaluations conducted by donors it was difficult to determine the effectiveness and longer-term impact of the trade-related donor assistance. The lack of clear and measurable objectives and indicators in programming documents prevented such assessments. In addition, it was difficult to attribute changes at the macro-level (e.g. changes in a country's export performance) to micro-level activities. The study found that half of the evaluation reports assessed indicated that trade-related assistance has increased partner country *understanding* of the importance of trade for growth and poverty reduction, raised *awareness* and *knowledge* of trade policy matters and *strengthened* national dialogue on these issues. For this to translate into sustainable impact, the study suggested two required pre-conditions:1) the existence of a *favorable domestic business environment* and 2) *political will* to use trade as an engine for development.

Evaluation of Sida's trade-related assistance Swedish Sida undertook an independent evaluation of Sweden's trade-related assistance in 2009.[14] The evaluation was based on a review of available results-reporting from 20 supported projects and programs, four of which were multi-donor projects implemented by multilateral organizations or facilities. These were the IF, ITC, STDF and the World Bank Multi-donor Trust Fund for Trade Development, all programs and agencies which also have been receiving Norway support. The report concluded that the projects/programs overall were well implemented and accounted for in terms of delivering *inputs* and producing *outputs*, but much less could be said of *outcome* and even less of *impact.* The reason was mainly that the underlying results-chains of the projects had not been or could not be tested empirically. The multilateral projects were especially weak in this respect as they themselves comprised a large number of smaller sub-projects. The study identified only one project for which there was good evidence that it had resulted in reduction of poverty. This was a long-term, large-

13 OECD (2006) *Trade-related assistance: What do recent evaluations tell us?*
14 Goppers, K. and Lindahl, C. (2009): *Sida's Trade-Related Assistance: Results and Management.*

scale bilateral project focusing on export development of organic products in East Africa.

The evaluation proposed the hypothesis of a possible 'over-supply' of technical assistance in trade policy/regulations in the portfolio as a result of the traditional focus in trade-related assistance, while the key constraints especially for poor countries tend to be 'behind the border', i.e. infrastructure of importance for trade in the country. The evaluation concluded that Sida's trade-related portfolio poorly reflected the Aid for Trade agenda with its focus on behind the border constraints of infrastructure and productive capacity.

Evaluation of USAID's Trade Capacity Building In 2010 the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) undertook an evaluation of its Trade Capacity Building support since 2002[15] reviewing some 250 projects in 78 countries. The evaluation concluded that USAID's TCB support (which entailed mainly policy and capacity building in public institutions and export development for private enterprises) positively had impacted on trade and exports. Through regression analysis the evaluation concluded that one dollar in US support was associated with 40-50 dollars in increased exports in the recipient countries a couple of years later. Due to methodological reasons the evaluation could not claim that this increase was due to the USAID interventions as such. It was possible that USAID carefully had selected countries and sectors with strong growth potential in trade, hence other factors than the support of UAID was the determinant for positive outcome. Nevertheless, the regression analysis showed that the relationship between the support and developing country exports also was strong in countries that were challenging from an export expansion perspective, including landlocked countries, countries that are distant from the centre of the world trading system, and LDCs.[16] The evaluation further noted that independent evaluations had been carried out in about 15% of all the projects, a small percentage according to the evaluation but due to the often limited amounts per project.

OECD evaluation of Aid for Trade OECD undertook a meta-evaluation in 2010 with the purpose to assess how donors and multilateral organizations evaluate and assess their Aid for Trade operations.[17] It focused on 162 evaluations of operations between 1999 and 2010 in two countries – Ghana and Vietnam – and two sectors – transport and storage. Hence, the evaluation was focused on category 2 in the Aid for Trade agenda. The key findings were:

- the reviewed evaluations did not say much about trade. "Trade" and "exports" were not among the most frequently mentioned words, while "imports" was almost completely ignored. Similarly, references to WTO or regional trade agreements were largely absent from the evaluations. Not only was the trade impact of operations clearly not the main focus of evaluators' work, but — in a number of cases — it is not even addressed.
- the evaluations usually did not clarify the policy linkages which matter most to policy makers, for example, the potential impact—positive or negative—of trade

15 USAID (2010): *From Aid to Trade: Delivering results.*
16 USAID has contributed in the Integrated Framework for LDCs but through bilateral projects.
17 Delpeuch, C. et al (2011) *Aid for Trade – A Meta Evaluation* (for OECD).

policy instruments, such as tariffs, quotas or subsidies, on funded projects was not assessed.
- the evaluations referred extensively to concepts such as gender or poverty reduction, but without clearly defining these terms. This tendency to favor generic concepts over precise terms often meant that the evaluations were vague and ill-focused. For instance, gender was either mentioned as a cross-cutting issue in operations that had little tangible relevance to a project's impact on women's economic or societal situation, e.g., they merely added up the number of women participating in a given seminar.
- the evaluations' conclusions provide little insight as to whether Aid for Trade works and why. Evaluators were rarely able to identify causal links between operations and performance.

WTO Aid for Trade review 2011 The third WTO meeting on Aid for Trade in July 2011 was devoted to 'showing results'. A concerned effort had been done by OECD and WTO prior to the conference in this respect using several means:
- analysis of statistical OECD data on Aid for Trade flows since the early 2000s showing trends, sector and geographical flows, etc.;
- collection of some 270 case stories covering 150 countries on various types of projects under the umbrella Aid for Trade. These case stories were produced by recipient countries, donor agencies and multilateral organizations;[18]
- self-assessments using a WTO designed questionnaire by donors and recipients.

In terms of results 'on the ground' the report noted a discrepancy between expectations and actual results in the sense that the case stories and the responses to the self-assessing questionnaires mostly could report on outcomes such as *better awareness* of the role of trade; *increased profile* of trade in recipient country strategies, *mainstreaming* trade in development strategies, etc., but fairly little in terms of outcome and impact such as *enhanced trade and exports*, or *export diversification*. The report also concluded that little emerged in the form of results in terms cross-cutting issues such as *environmental sustainability* and *gender.*

The review highlighted the methodological difficulties to evaluate quantifiable impact of Aid for Trade, but presented new methodologies for assessment, using control groups and randomized samples, etc.. An outcome of the discussions that followed presentations was, however, a need to be realistic on what could be achieved in showing results. The case story method was seen as a promising means.

Evaluation of Finland's Aid for Trade The Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated in 2011 an evaluation of Finland's Aid for Trade support in the context of Finland's Action Plan for Aid for the period 2008-2011[19] (One objective of the plan is to increase the amount of support for the wider AfT agenda to about 25% of Finland's total ODA with a focus especially on agriculture, forestry and sustainable energy development.)[20] The evaluation was based on a review of 34 projects, of which a

18 Norway provided four case stories, Oil and gas in Mozambique; sub-marine telecom cable in Tanzania; Agriculture corridor development in Tanzania, and strengthening women entrepreneurs in Uganda. A number of cases provided by multilateral organizations concerned projects with Norwegian funding, for example by UNIDO.

19 Bird, K. et al (2011): *Evaluation of Finland's Aid for Trade*. The final report is due early September. Above is an extract from a power point presentation.

20 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2008): *Finland's Aid for Trade Action Plan (2008-2011)*.

third implemented by multilateral organizations. The focus of the evaluation was not on results, but how the Finnish aid administration handles the concept. It concluded that:

- The broader concept of Aid for Trade has not yet fully permeated in the Finnish aid structure, but tend to be seen as the 'old', narrow trade promotion; Government officials in the ministry and embassies often do not see how their projects fit into AfT
- AfT projects rarely are explicit how they will achieve impact and outcome, but focus in outputs. Indicators and objectives tend not to follow the principles of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.
- The guides for design, implementation and monitoring of AfT is inadequate, there is little integration between different aspects of AfT, and Finland lags behind the current concept and thinking on Aid for Trade.

2.6 Lessons from some evaluations of trade-related assistance

The following conclusions can be drawn from this limited sample of evaluations of trade-related assistance, some carried out prior to Aid for Trade:

- The methodological problems of assessing results beyond delivery of outputs and non-quantifiable and impressionistic outcome such as 'increased knowledge' and 'greater awareness' are a common thread. The evidence of results in the form of impact on trade flows, employment, economic growth and poverty reduction are scarce. The USAID study is an exception, but the caveat in this study is important – there is no clear evidence that it is the support which created increase in trade flows.
- The quality of underlying reviews and evaluations leaves much to be desired. However, evaluations are generally hampered due to a systemic lack of baselines and operational indicators to be used for assessing the results.
- The evaluations give not much evidence on the relative effectiveness of different delivery systems, (bilateral versus multilateral), or which organization that delivers better results. The Dutch study from 2005 is an exception, being quite critical of the then ongoing multi-agency programs focusing on LDCs (JITAP and IF), and of UNCTAD's performance. The Sida evaluation also concluded that support via multilateral organizations is especially difficult to assess due the large number of smaller projects they carry out.

3. Norwegian trade-related assistance

3.1 Background

Norway has been a strong supporter of trade-related assistance more or less since the concept was introduced in ODA. Much of this support was channeled at the multilateral level to UNCTAD and ITC. Norway has of tradition been one of both UNCTAD's and ITC's major funder in terms of voluntary contributions.[21] Norway has also promoted import from developing countries through a special office, Norimpod, established in 1980. Thus, trade-related technical assistance is not a new feature of Norwegian aid, but rather well ingrained both in the bilateral support and through the multilateral organizations. Similar to many smaller countries dependent on trade, Norway has always had full understanding of the importance of trade for development.

3.2 The Aid for Trade Action Plan 2007

The Action Plan for Aid for Trade of 2007 by the Norwegian government states that "Norway's Aid for Trade aims at ensuring that the developing countries, and especially the LDCs, achieve sustainable economic growth, higher employment, poverty reduction and an improved quality of life for the entire population." The Action Plan establishes a number of principles for Norway's aid for trade. Thus it should:

- give clear priority to Africa and the LDCs;
- be based on national priorities of the partner countries;
- promote the economic position of women;
- be based on considerations for income distribution, fundamental social standards, the environment and food security;
- adhere to the Paris Declaration of Aid effectiveness;
- promote regional trade, especially south-south trade; and
- involve the private sector both in Norway and in partner countries.[22]

The Plan states that channeling Aid for Trade, especially to the least developed countries, might be more effective through "multilateral organizations and through programs supported by several donors rather than through individual, bilateral projects, which often impose an unnecessary burden on national authorities." The plan thus indicates that the increase in Norway's Aid for Trade will mainly take place through multilateral organizations, with particular emphasis on the EIF. The plan identifies specific areas for Norwegian support as:

- trade policy – especially in capacity building in know-how in trade negotiations, WTO rules and dispute settlement;
- trade facilitation – such as customs;

21 O. Gjölberg et al (1987): *Vekst gjennom handel- Hvordan øke Norges import fra utviklingslandene?*
22 Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2007): *Aid for trade. Norway's action plan.*

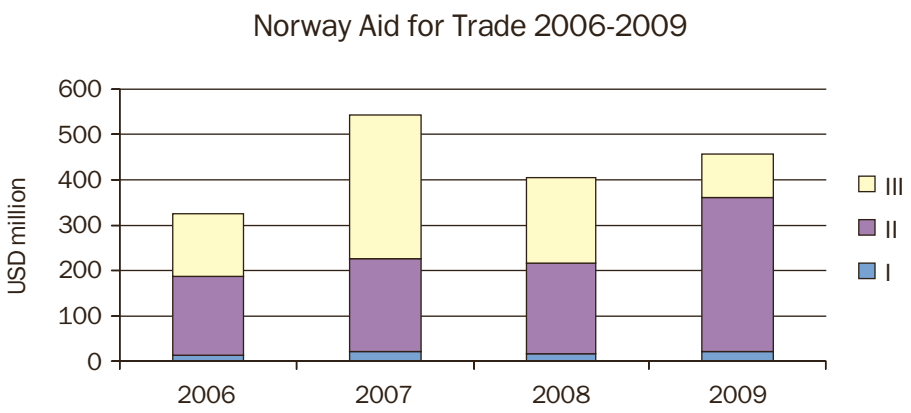
- standards and trade – for example in food safety and WTO agreements on Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT); and
- fair and responsible trade – e.g. decent labor rights and conditions, and to ensure that environmental aspects are taken into account, as well as regional trade and women and trade.

The Action Plan is limited to the 'old' concept of trade-related technical assistance –and does not deal with the broader Aid for Trade categories 2-4. Another feature of the plan is that it does not envisage any major change from past Norwegian trade-related support, but is largely reinforcing already on-going support though the multilateral organizations.

3.3 Norwegian Aid for Trade

While Norway in its Action Plan is not including the broader definition of Aid for Trade, in the OECD CRS data base Norwegian disbursements on all categories 1-3 are recorded. Thus, OECD indicates that Norway's disbursements under AfT have increased from a level of USD 300 million in 2006, peaking at about USD 540 million in 2007 and after the Action Plan was issued declined to around USD 400 -450 million as indicated in the figure below. Of this, less than 5% are category 1.

Figure 3. Norwegian Aid for Trade disbursements 2006-2009



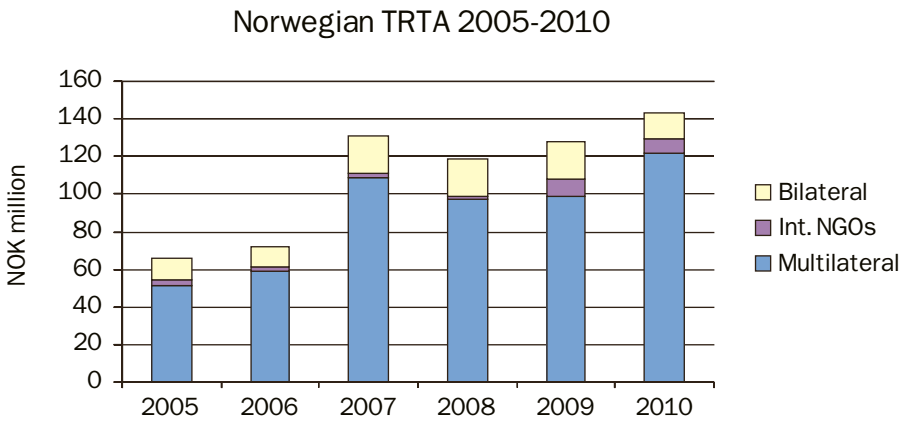
Source: WTO (2011);

As noticed in the figure, there are great variations between the years as well as between the categories 2-3. (Category 4, trade-related adjustment, has no recording for the period.) Aid for Trade at a level of USD 450 million per annum, represents about 9% of Norway's total ODA. This is much less than the average of OECD donor countries, which, according to OECD, allocates about 25% to Aid for Trade of the total ODA. Furthermore, Norway has no clear upward trend, except for the increase from 2006 to 2007. We believe, however, that the OECD data do not reflect less commitment to Aid for Trade by Norway than other donors, but rather a recording and statistical problem. Norway has not systematically reported its Aid for Trade under the broader agenda, a conclusion further supported by the great variation between the category 2 and 3 over the period 2007-2009 as shown in the figure.

3.4 Implementation of the Action Plan

As noted above, the Action Plan 2007 is not aligned with the broad Aid for Trade, but rather the Doha agenda of 2002 focusing on trade-related technical assistance. In line with the ToR of this report, the analysis will in the remaining part of the part of the report deal with this only. i.e. what corresponds largely to category 1 in the AfT agenda. The allocations of Norwegian trade-related technical assistance (recorded under Trade policy and regulation category 1 in CRS) 2005 to 2010 are given below.

Figure 4. Norwegian trade-related technical assistance 2005-2010



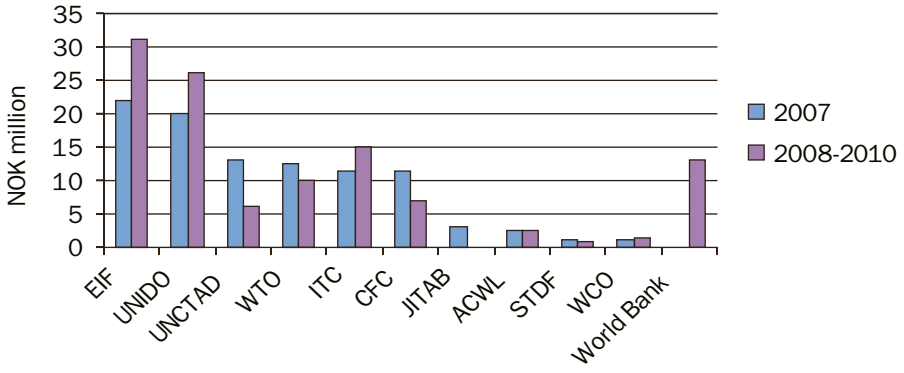
Source: CRS 2005-09 (data from ToR); for 2010 estimates by MFA

As shown in the figure, the allocations increased considerably from a level of about NOK 70 million per annum 2005-2006 to about NOK 130 million per annum for 2007 – 2010. In terms of TRTA, the allocations follow the Plan of increasing allocations. The dominance of the multilateral channels is strong in the Norwegian trade-related assistance as shown in the figure, accounting for about 80% of the total allocations. There is no difference in this respect between 'before' and 'after' the Plan. The total Norwegian official development assistance was in 2009 according to OECD data NOK 25,7 billion. Trade-related assistance is thus a very small share of the total Norwegian aid, or about 0,5%.

Allocations before and after the Plan A comparison of the Norwegian allocations of its trade-related assistance to the multilateral organizations before the Action Plan was enacted (2007),[23] and thereafter gives the following picture below. These organizations will be described more in detail in chapter 4.

23 Data for 2007 is used as these are included in the Plan.

Figure 5. Norwegian trade-related assistance to multilateral organizations 2007-2010



Source: 2007: The Action Plan; 2008-2010 (yearly average): data from MFA 2010

As noted in the figure, EIF was the most important channel in 2007 and is even more so since the Plan was introduced. This is well in line with the intentions as explained above.[24] UNIDO continues to be the second largest channel and has in relative terms been given an even stronger role. On the other hand, a major change has taken place for UNCTAD, an organization which Norway has supported for many years and even been the largest contributor to in extra-budgetary funds until the mid 2000s. The decline in allocations, which in 2011 will continue, was not envisaged in the Action Plan. However, it follows a deliberate strategy by the ministry of reasons further discussed later in this report.

ITC has surpassed both WTO and UNCTAD in financial allocations for trade-related assistance and has become the third most important Norwegian channel. There was no explicit intention in the Action Plan in line with this. It might reflect that ITC recent years has streamlined its assistance from a management and results-based point of view and also that ITC has been effective in addressing Norwegian concerns especially on trade and gender. CFC, which in 2007 was the sixth most important channel has maintained this position 2008-2010, albeit at lower level.

The multi-donor program JITAP has ended, hence there are no allocations to this after the plan was issued. The special facilities Advisory Centre for WTO Law, the Standards and Trade Development Facility and the World Customs Organization continue to be supported each at a level of NOK 1 - 2,5 million per annum with no noticeable change before and after the plan. The World Bank, finally, initiated its Multi Donor Trust Fund for Trade Development (MTDF-TD) in 2007. Norway joined the fund in 2008, making it the fourth largest channel in financial terms in the plan period.

Core or project support Table 1 below gives more details of the Norwegian trade-related assistance from 2008 to the multilateral organizations and facilities.[25] The table shows that the Norwegian support varies not only in the level of funding, but also how it is distributed. There are three types of aid modalities:

24 UNOPS is not shown in the figure as UNOPS is an intermediary trust fund manager for the EIF.
25 Data provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as of December 2010.

- support is provided 'un-earmarked' to a trust fund financing core functions to the organizations/programs, often named Window 1 in which the organization determines the allocations to specific projects or activities. This is, for example the case with CFC, EIF, WTO and the World Bank's MDTF-TD, and also the smaller facilities ACWL and STDF.
- Support is provided to specific projects administered by the organization, but determined by Norway. This is the case with UNIDO and UNCTAD. This project support is often based on a general long-term framework work agreement between Norway and the organization.
- The support to ITC is a 'hybrid' in the sense that the Norwegian support is provided to Window 1 trust fund, but half of the allocation has a 'soft-earmarking' to projects and programs in line with Norwegian priority areas such as women and trade.

As will be further discussed under each of the main organizations, donor strategies are different in respect of funding modalities. Norway is overall having a stronger tendency to provide un-earmarked window 1 funding than most donors.

Responsibility in Norway As shown in the table below, most of the support to the multilateral organizations is under the responsibility of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, while a few of the organizations are handled by Norad. There is seemingly no clear rationale for this division.

Table 1. Norwegian allocations to multilateral organizations and programs 2008-10

Impl. org	Program/projects	Norwegian support 2008-2010		
		Resp.	NOK mill	Share
EIF (Multi-agency)	Un-earmarked core funding, channeled through UNOPS (since 2007)	MFA	93	26,7%
UNOPS	UNOPS is the Trust fund manager of EIF, hence receives all the support	MFA	(93)	(26,7%)
UNIDO	Framework agreement. Project portfolio (currently 13 projects)	Norad	78	22,3%
ITC	Framework agreement 2003. Window 1 core funding of which half has soft earmarking	MFA	60	17,1%
World Bank	Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Trade and Development since 2008	MFA	30	8,5%
WTO	Doha Development Global Trust Fund from 2002	MFA	30	8,5%
CFC	Un-earmarked core funding based on a pledge 1979	MFA	21,1	6,1%

Impl. org	Program/projects	Norwegian support 2008-2010		
		Resp.	NOK mill	Share
UNCTAD	Framework agreement 2003. Project portfolio with 24 projects since 2007	MFA	19	5,4%
ACWL	Un-earmarked trust fund since 2001	MFA	7,6	2,2%
ILO	Project: Women entrepreneurship in Africa	Norad	5	1,4%
WCO	Colombus project	Norad	4,1	1,2%
STDF (multi-agency)	Un-earmarked trust fund	MFA	2	0,6%
Total			**349,8**	**100**

Source: Norwegian MFA 2010

4. Assessment of the Norwegian support to multi-lateral organizations and programs

This chapter assesses the major channels for the Norwegian trade-related assistance using the same format for each subchapter, ending with a summary of the different questions in the ToR. The organizations are presented in the order of level of financial allocations by Norway 2008-2010.

4.1 Enhanced Integrated Framework

Background The EIF has a background in the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance which was established in 1997. IF was intended to strengthen and streamline the trade-related assistance delivered by six multilateral agencies, ITC, IMF, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and WTO, via three activities:

1. helping LDCs meet WTO requirements and ensure the compatibility of laws with WTO commitments;
2. assisting in devising strategies to benefit from Uruguay Round (UR) agreements and ensure trade regime conformity to UR; and
3. enhancing LDC capacity to analyze trade policies and problems facing the external sector.

The program was evaluated several times. The World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (OED) found in 2000 that IF had led to limited results due to lack of clear priorities, ill-defined governance structure and low levels of funding.[26] This resulted in a redefining of the program. In 2003 the redesigned IF was subject for a new external evaluation, undertaken by the Canadian consortium Capra-TFOC. The study concluded that IF had a sound approach which was capable of achieving positive results. However, the achievement of concrete results had been highly variable. Developing country ownership continued to be limited and, according to the review, the program was donor and agency-driven.[27] As a result of the study, IF was once again redesigned. The focus was on enhancing the commitment of donors and the governments of beneficiary countries through mainstreaming IF into the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes, and also making the IF secretariat more proactive.

In 2004 the reformed IF was again evaluated by OED.[28] The evaluation concluded that, despite the restructuring, some of the weaknesses of the original program remained, and the shortage of resources prevented the program from meeting the increasing demands for technical assistance in developing countries. Moreover, the

26 Rajapatirana et al (2000): *Review of the Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance for Trade Development of Least Developed Countries.*
27 Capra-TFOC (2003): *Evaluation of the Revamped Integrated Framework For Trade Related Technical Assistance to the Least Developed Countries.*
28 Agarwal, M. and Cutura, J. (2004*): Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance. Addressing Challenges of Globalization: An Independent Evaluation of the World Bank's Approach to Global Programs.*

revamped IF did not address the various external market access and internal supply constraints that the diagnostic studies had identified. The evaluation concluded that the program had created too many expectations which it was unable to deliver. The IF was also a part of an evaluation by the Netherlands ministry of foreign affairs as referred to in section 2.5 The study concluded that IF had been ineffective because the program was too ambitious, had low or no ownership by the LDCs and the capacity of the LDCs to implement the program was in general too weak.[29] I

Formulation of the EIF In 2005 it was agreed among donors and implementing agencies to overhaul the IF and give it a fresh start. This process took several years and the Enhanced Integrated Framework as it would be called was not operational until 2008. The redesigned program was supposed to:

- provide increased, predictable and additional funding on a multi-year basis;
- strengthen the IF in-country, including through mainstreaming trade into national development plans and poverty reduction strategies;
- provide more effective follow-up to the diagnostic trade integration studies and implementation of the action matrices;
- achieving greater and more effective coordination amongst donors and IF stakeholders, including beneficiaries; and
- improve the IF decision-making and management structure to ensure an effective and timely delivery of the increased financial resources and programs

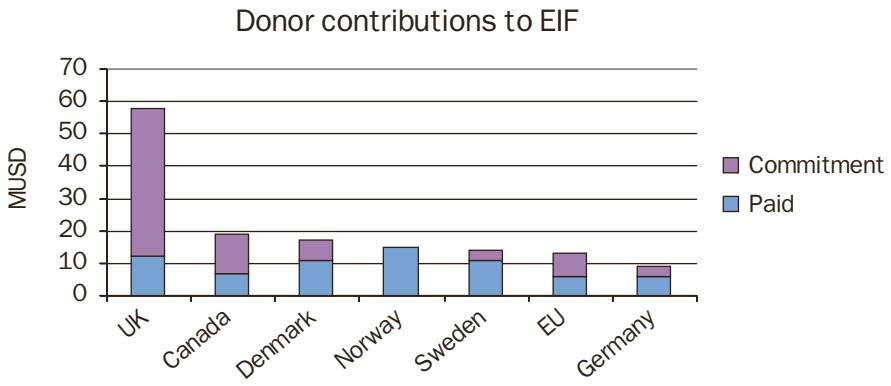
Under the EIF an elaborate organizational structure to implement the program was enacted both at the centre and at country level. Thus, an EIF Secretariat was formed, housed in the WTO; the management of the EIF Trust Fund was delegated to UNOPS (see further below); a Steering Committee comprising all eligible LDCs, the donors and the executing organizations was established, as well as a Board comprising three donors, three LDCs and the implementing agencies.[30] At country level an equal elaborate organizational structure was envisaged including a National Steering Committee – a senior level forum for decision-making and coordination among government partners on trade, the private sector, civil society and the donor community; a National Focal Point – a senior government official leading the EIF process in the country – was appointed, supported by a National Implementation Unit (NIU). There is also a Donor Facilitator working with the Focal Point to facilitate donor coordination and the donor/government dialogue on trade issues and Aid for Trade. The elaborate structure was a direct result of the critique of the IF. UNIDO also became an associated member of EIF, thus making the number of implementing agencies seven.

Donor support In 2006 the required resources for the Enhanced IF was originally calculated by the World Bank to USD 400 million over the planned 5-year period 2007-2011. The target for funding at a pledging conference in Stockholm 2007 was USD 250 million, which has become the official target budget for EIF's first 5 year period. At the end of 2010, 22 donors hade made commitments of in total

29 IOB (2005): *Aid for Trade? An evaluation of Trade-related technical assistance.*
30 The membership for the current period (2010-2012) is Mali, Nepal and Uganda representing the LDCs, and the EU, Norway and the UK the donors. There is a donor consultation facility, currently headed by Denmark, which assures that other donors' views are voiced at the board meetings.

USD 208 million.[31] The largest individual contributions in terms of commitments and disbursements to EIF are indicated below:

Figure 6. The major donors to EIF 2007-11 (as of March 2011)

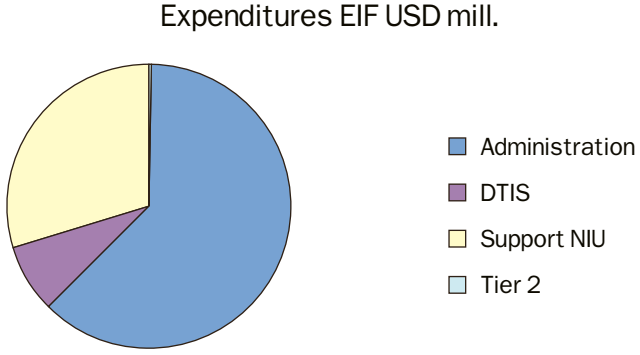


As noted, Norway is the fourth largest contributor in terms of commitment, but has so far disbursed the largest sum.

Performance EIF builds on the old IF with Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS) as a key tool. It has two financial mechanisms, Tier 1 and 2. Under Tier 1, a country can get pre-DTIS support – a small fund which would allow the country to start establishing its national implementation arrangements – and support to carry out a full DTIS. Furthermore, Tier 1 provides financial allocations for updates of 'old' DTIS carried out under the IF. Bulk of the Tier 1 provisions are geared for capacity building of the National Implementation Units. Tier 2 projects can be approved once a country has undergone a DTIS and a 'matrix of priorities' has been established.

The actual implementation and spending under the program has been much less than envisaged. As of March 2011 the total expenditures have been USD 16,4 million, a mere 6 % of the target budget for EIF. As a result, the plan period has been extended and is now 2008-2013. So far the actual spending under EIF has been for program administration and capacity building of local structures to implement EIF as indicated in figure below:[32]

Figure 7. The expenditures of EIF as of March 2011



31 UNOPS (2011) *Report of EIF at WTO's Third Review of Aid for Trade, July 2011*. Of these USD 125 million has been paid into UNOPS as of end March 2011.
32 UNOPS (2011): *Interim Quarterly Certified Financial Statement as of 31 March 2011.*

USD 10 million, or 62% of the total disbursement, has been spent on the EIF secretariat and fund management by UNOPS; USD 5 million on capacity building of National Implementation Units in about 20 countries, and slightly more than USD 1 million on DTIS and pre-DTIS projects. As of July 2011 no Tier 2 project had been approved.[33]

There a several reasons for the slow implementation process: first, it has been an explicit strategy in EIF to build a strong national ownership of the program and develop the capacities in LDCs to participate. Second, as a result of this, the organization of EIF is complex both at the centre and at country level with different players. Third, the EIF is also complex in the sense of involving more than 20 donors and today seven implementing organizations, besides the LDC countries. Not only are the efforts to create consensus in such a structure time consuming, but also communicating the system to all parties involved complex. The time which elapsed between IF and EIF has also reduced much of the value of the work carried under the former program. Thus, many DTISs have to be redone as they are considered outdated. Nevertheless, the EIF secretariat expects that the implementation will increase substantially over the coming 1-2 years. In the pipeline there are some 20 Tier 2 projects in different stages of preparation. These projects tend to be larger, hence once Tier 2 is on stream the disbursements under EIF are likely to increase substantially.

Outcome and impact Given the slow process of implementation, the outcome and impact of EIF is yet much too early to have materialized. As noted above, most of the activities so far have been on administrative systems and on building capacity in the LDCs for the countries to be able to implement the EIF.

In-house Monitoring and Evaluation Work towards a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for the EIF was initiated in 2008 using a consultant to develop a system.[34] The proposed system has been subject for consultations with stakeholders and not until mid 2011 an M&E system is in place ready to be launched. The secretariat has recently recruited an M&E specialist. A mid-term review of EIF was initially planned for 2010. This review was postponed to 2011 and is now planned for 2012. The draft Terms of Reference for the mid-term review are yet to be shared with the Board for their inputs.

Norwegian support Norway was an active partner in the Integrated Framework and for a period the largest contributor to the program. Norway's commitment to the Enhanced IF was reiterated in Norway's Action Plan for Trade in 2007. The Plan noted that:

> *"Norway regards the IF as an important instrument for promoting trade-related cooperation with the LDCs... The purpose of the EIF is to integrate trade into the LDCs' development plans so that trade can become an effective tool for poverty reduction… The EIF's purpose and structure, with its emphasis on national ownership and donor coordination, can make a positive contribution to the practical implementation of important goals*

33 The first Tier 2 project was approved in August 2011.
34 Smith, M. (2009): *Monitoring and Evaluation in the Enhanced Integrated Framework: Draft Policy and Guidelines.*

such as the initiative for "one UN" at country level. The EIF will be one of the main channels for Aid for Trade in the LDCs."

Norway pledged NOK 150 million at the donor conference in Stockholm to EIF, and has disbursed NOK 30 million per annum to EIF since 2008. Having paid in about USD 15 million 2008-2010 Norway is the largest contributor to the EIF in actual payments, accounting for 16% of the total available funds.[35] As Norway provides core funding to EIF it is not possible to separate out the results of the Norwegian support from the EIF's overall performance. In view of the limited actions under EIF so far in terms of country work, the results are basically limited to establishing the management structure at central and country level.

The table below contains an assessment of EIF against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of EIF

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	The experience during 8 years of the IF was one of periodic revamping of the structure, yet leading to overall disappointment. The EIF has been slow to get off the ground from the initial decision in 2005. Most of the actual expenditures so far have been for central program management and for capacity building of local implementation structures, partly to avoid the problems of the IF. There are most likely not much of results in terms of enhancing trade to report so far under the EIF.
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: in principle high. Efficiency: low, as little output has emerged so far Effectiveness: low so far due to the slowness in implementation Value for money: too early to judge Norwegian additionality: Norway one of more than 20 donors. However, Norway has shown stronger commitment than most donors reflected in the payment to EIF; additionality also strong due to Norway's current EIF Board position.
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: 100% – EIF is entirely focused on LDCs Gender: few activities carried out Regional integration: there are some evidence of inter-regional learning under DTIS, also provided for in the EIF Governance: UNOPS playing a key role in this respect in terms of financial management assessment and supervision. Also the focus on building strong mechanisms at country level should reinforce this. The effectiveness of this is yet to be determined
The competence of the organization to **report on** performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	There is extensive and good reporting under the EIF both by the Secretariat and UNOPS in terms of implementation. This reporting is not geared to the Norwegian priorities

35 In total USD 125 million is paid in to EIF so far. Of this USD 31 million was transferred from IF.

Criteria	Assessment
The quality assurance system (QA) and result-based system in the organization	Outputs: Progress reporting is a good quality Outcome: Too early to have emerged under EIF, hence no reporting so far Impact: Too early to have emerged, hence no reporting in respect of EIF Quality of reporting: Country annexes in semi-annual report provide information on the current situation. QA No specific QA except the elaborate management and governance structure Evaluation system slow to be set up
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered.	Weak – M&E is just beginning to function; no independent review or evaluation of EIF so far
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	There has been a constant learning in the IF with repeated changes, ultimately leading to the EIF. Learning in EIF unclear. The envisaged M&E system yet to be implemented.
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** EIF is the current donor flagship in Aid for Trade with the ambition of fully integrate trade into country planning and strategizing, coordinating 7 major multilaterals in this, and provide a framework for all Aid for Trade in the LDCs. EIF is the Paris Effectiveness agenda in practice. Being a large donor gives Norway a good position in the initial stage of insight through board membership. There is a record of strong commitment under IF to build upon. **Minus:** there is not an insignificant risk that the grand ambition of EIF might lead to as much disappointment as was the case with IF, and possibly limited value for money in the end. There are increasing questions if the Paris Agenda in fact is an effective development model.
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	The strong financial support to EIF is in line with the Plan. The focus on LDC is also clearly in line. Other priority areas less so.

4.2 United Nations Office for Project Services

Background UNOPS, established in 1994, is dedicated to implementing projects for the UN organizations, international financial institutions and governments.[36] It provides support services such as project management, procurement of goods, recruitment of personnel, infrastructural support, civil works and institutional capacity building, including training. It provides services worth about USD 2 billion per annum, mainly in the field of health, infrastructure, peace keeping, justice and security, and environment.[37] The organization's headquarters is located in Copenhagen with five regional offices of which one in Geneva. Since 1995 UNOPS is a self-financing organization living on paid contracts. UNOPS receives no budget from the UN, nor directly from donors.

36 UNOPS' predecessor was an office in UNDP for project execution, established in 1974.
37 www.unops.org

UNOPS in EIF UNOPS has been designated Trust Fund manager for the EIF. This contract was won in competitive bidding for a five year period (2008-2013). UNOPS role includes trustee functions such as the negotiation of agreements with partners, the preparation of budgets and financial management forecasts, fiduciary appraisal of project proposals and assessment of the grant recipient's capacities, monitoring of compliance with requirements, and financial reporting to the EIF Board and donors. UNOPS also provides recommendations on capacity building and training, helps review the overall effectiveness of the framework and ensures transparency of the EIF process. The fund management is coordinated from UNOPS regional office in Geneva,[38] supported by the UNOPS regional offices in Dakar, Nairobi and Bangkok.

UNOPS undertakes a number of functions as fund manager including capacity assessment missions, start-up facilitation missions, supervision missions and capacity building workshops. On an annual basis some 30 missions are carried out and 10-15 workshops. The focus of this is on the financial management and fiduciary issues such as transparency, accountability and efficiency, and on basic management principles of EIF, including country ownership, a demand-driven process and participatory approach. UNOPS is not involved in the subject matter of trade development as such.

Planning and Reporting UNOPS has developed a Results Framework Matrix to govern its operations under the EIF. This plan identifies 17 outputs (such as reports to be delivered; training to have been undertaken; projects on-going, etc). UNOPS issues a number of reports, including capacity assessment reports, supervision reports, etc. It provides the EIF secretariat and board with quarterly financial reports. UNOPS also issues half annual progress reports covering the key legal, financial, fiduciary and operational issues in line with the fund management's work plan.

Assessment UNOPS provides a professional project management capacity to EIF, which was lacking under the IF. Given the complexity of EIF and the ambition of mainstreaming support into the LDC's strategies and operations, developing sufficient implementation capacity among the institutions and getting a smooth and functional relationship between the six multilateral agencies involved and the 20+ donors, such professionalism is critical. The reporting of UNOPS is clear and results-oriented, and the focus on accountability and transparency critical. While the EIF secretariat is the front of the program, UNOPS' ability as the 'back-office' to manage will be critical for the performance of the program.

Norwegian support The ToR for this synthesis study include that we should "describe and assess the effectiveness of the channeling mechanisms of the support to the multilateral organizations, especially the role and effectiveness of UNOPS." As noted above, UNOPS is not an organization providing trade-related technical assistance as such. Prior to its engagement in the EIF, UNOPS had no record in trade directly or indirectly. In terms of Norwegian support to UNOPS, this is entirely due to the fact that UNOPS is the designated trust fund manager since

38 This office also handles fund management for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

2008. Norway has no option but to channel its funding to UNOPS as long as Norway supports the EIF. Hence, there is no point of assessing the role of UNOPS in the Norwegian Aid for Trade Action Plan except as an integral part of the EIF. In the latter context, the use of a professional project management facility appears to be a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for effective implementation of the complex program. UNOPS plays especially a central role in assuring the prudent use of financial resources at country level with capacity building and supervision related to this as a key function. This is critical for good governance.

UNOPS is not a free service and whether UNOPS in the end will provide value for money is too early to determine. Presumably, this will be one of the aspects of the mid-term review to assess.

4.3 The United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Background UNIDO, established in 1966, is an agency of the United Nations with the mandate to promote sustainable industrial development in developing countries and economies in transition. It has two core functions: as a global forum generating and disseminating industry-related knowledge; and as a technical cooperation agency, providing technical support and implement projects. UNIDO employs some 650 staff in Vienna and in field offices in about 60 countries. UNIDO focuses on three main thematic areas: 1) poverty reduction through productive activities; 2) trade capacity-building; and 3) energy and environment.

The objective of the TCB is to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to raise their productivity in order to compete in the global market and benefit from the trade opportunities presented to them under the open rule-based trading system. To this end, UNIDO pursues two broad categories of interventions:

- Capacity building in the area of standards, metrology, testing and accreditation to overcome technical barriers to trade (TBT) and sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures (SPS) constraints.
- Enhancing the competitiveness of developing country enterprises through quality and productivity improvements, and supporting the development of mechanisms to assist them in accessing global subcontracting and supply chains and networks.

Among the TCB support for standards has become the largest area of support, and UNIDO is undertaking 25-30 projects annually with a total annual budget in the order of USD 20 - 25 million. These projects are both country-specific and regional.

Donor support The total annual budget of UNIDO is about USD 500 million. The regular budget accounts for about 40% of this, the balance are voluntary contributions. Italy, EU and Norway are the three largest contributors to UNIDO. In terms of TCB, the EU is the largest donor followed by Norway.

Organizational evaluations UNIDO was one of 23 multilateral organizations which were assessed for developmental effectiveness in 2005 by DFID.[39] The assessment concluded that:

> *"the reform process of the last seven years has greatly increased the cost-effectiveness and relevance of UNIDO and consequently the confidence in the Organization of Member States; increasing technical cooperation delivery; growing consensus on the strategic direction of the Organization; a good integrated approach to programming; a recognition for UNIDO's implementation and demand for services due to its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals…Taking into account all these developments and achievements, UNIDO has, inter alia, been rated as the best Organization within the United Nations standard setting agencies. It can be said that UNIDO emerges from the assessment as one of the most effective of the 23 institutions reviewed by DFID."*

In a review of Norway's cooperation with multilateral organizations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made an assessment of UNIDO with conclusions similar to that of DFID.[40] In 2011 DFID published a follow up of its review of the multilateral organizations.[41] This time UNIDO got an unsatisfactory rating, mainly as the organization was not perceived to work in fields of relevance to DFID in achieving the millennium goals. According to the review: "UNIDO does some useful work but does not play a critical role in delivering international development and humanitarian objectives" (due to its focus on SMEs). The assessment of the work of UNIDO in terms of cross-cutting issues such as *gender* and *climate change* was rated as weak, as also the focus on poor countries. UNIDO was also rated as weak in terms of applying *results-based management*.[42] The report, which resulted in a decision by the British government to end its support to UNIDO, led not surprisingly to a strong response from UNIDO's Director General. He argued that the review had been based on weak research, that no visits to UNIDO had been undertaken nor to any of its projects, and it contained factual mistakes. He also indicated that:

> *"UNIDO is the largest provider of trade-related technical assistance in the UN system. As a result of in-depth field evaluations of ongoing programs in Asia and Africa, partnership with the European Commission in this area has grown in volume terms from about $18 million to over $100 million in the past five years."*[43]

Thematic evaluation of SMTQ An independent evaluation was carried out during 2009 by UNIDO assessing 15 projects in the field of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ), one of the key areas of UNIDO's trade-related assistance, and also a focus area of the Norwegian support.[44] These projects were implemented between 1999 and 2009, some still on-going at the time of the evaluation. Donors funding these projects were primarily the EU, Norway and Switzerland. The total

39 DFID (2005) Multilateral aid review.
40 The undated assessment is posted on the Ministry's home page in Norwegian.
41 DFID (2011): *Multilateral Aid Review.*
42 UNIDO was the only multilateral organization of those covered by the review of Norwegian partners in trade-related assistance. The reason for this is not clear, but might be that trade-related assistance was not seen as a priority by DFID.
43 Yumkella, K. (2011): *Response to the Assessment of UNIDO conducted by The Department for International Development under the Multilateral Aid Review.*
44 Bennet, Keller and Loewe (2010): *Thematic Evaluation Report UNIDO activities in the area of Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ)*.

budget for these 15 projects was in the order of USD 35 million of which Norway (through Norad) had contributed about USD 7 million. The projects covered primarily Africa and South Asia. Six of the projects were located in Sri Lanka alone.[45]

The evaluation, which built partly on previous project specific evaluations, concluded that UNIDO's main strength is the provision of high quality technical expertise, and ability to respond to urgent problems at country level. The evaluation found that "with a few exceptions partners were highly satisfied with the quality of the advice they received." The evaluation also concluded that UNIDO projects in the area of SMTQ are in general highly relevant, "reflecting the pressures that governments and enterprises are under in developing economies to respond to the new world quality order where the onus is on the producer to comply." On the other hand, effectiveness was an issue as "few projects evaluated had achieved their planned outcomes within the initially planned time frame. While the assessed projects had often performed most of the planned *activities*, they had achieved only some of the planned *outcomes*. The reason was "that project plans constantly were too ambitious (intervention time not sufficient, project too short or aiming at covering too many areas, absorption capacity of beneficiary institutions too low)."

In terms of *efficiency*, the thematic SMTQ evaluation noted lack of cost-analysis, hence was not able to make an assessment. Also, there was little that could be said about the *impact* of the projects evaluated because in almost all cases the means to measure impact in unavailable. In the words of the evaluation:

> *"Impact of UNIDO support may be substantial, but the projects evaluated had no effective means to assess impact such as base-line surveys or bench-marking against other SMTQ systems designed into them."*

The evaluation also questioned the *sustainability* of the achievements, noting that

> *"some countries seem to assume that UNIDO or another donor would continue support at the point of evaluation. The fact that some SMTQ projects had failed to achieve their immediate objectives at the time of evaluation encouraged recipients to believe that continued support from UNIDO is irrefutable."*

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation UNIDO has quite an elaborate system for evaluations, and UNIDO's Evaluation Group is undertaking in the order of 20 evaluations per annum. These evaluations are a mixture of thematic, country and project evaluations. The work of the evaluation group has increased dramatically over the last decade, from a few evaluations in the early 2000s. UNIDO has an official work program for the evaluations the organization will carry out the coming year, posted on UNIDO's website. The budget for the Evaluation Group is in the order of USD 0,5 million per annum. This figure does not include evaluations undertaken by donors of UNIDO's projects, not UNIDO staff. In the Evaluation Group 4 professionals are working with a support staff of 3-4 persons. Overall, there is a high degree of trans-

45 The Sri Lanka projects could be considered a SMTQ program in several phases, most of them financed by Norway.

parency in the evaluations undertaken by UNIDO with an elaborate web-site where the evaluation policy, work program, and evaluation reports are posted.

Norwegian support Norway is UNIDO's third largest donor in terms of voluntary contributions as noted above, with annual contributions in the order of NOK 50 million, covering not only trade-related assistance. In terms of TCB, Norway has since 1999 funded trade capacity building programs in 14 countries in total of about NOK 100 million. Norway was also one of the first donors to establish a Framework agreement with UNIDO.

The Aid for Trade Action Plan 2007 says concerning UNIDO that Norway should:

> *"Increase support for UNIDO programs relating to standardisation and product control. This includes facilitating the start-up of new programs, especially in Africa."*

Furthermore, according to the Action Plan Norway should

> *"Reinforce efforts through multilateral organizations, such as the ITC and UNIDO, to introduce special programs related to women and trade."*

Norad has since 2007 supported 11 trade-related projects or programs through UNIDO, some of which were started before the Action Plan. The total project cost for these is in the order of NOK 110 million (2007-2011). These projects are almost exclusively focusing on quality standards and SMTQ and trade capacity building in LDCs in Asia and Africa. However, they also include smaller amounts for global projects such as UNIDO reports (the "Trade Standards Compliance Report" and the "Guide to private standards"). The table below summarizes the Norwegian funded UNIDO projects since 2007, including the key results of those evaluated:

Table 2. UNIDO projects with Norwegian financing in trade development since 2007

Project	Comments	Budget NOK mill. (2007-11)
Mekong Delta SMTQ	Project phase II started 2006 with planned end 2008, covering Cambodia, Lao, and Vietnam. Co-financing with Switzerland (only Vietnam). Period extended to 2010. The project was part of the thematic SMTQ evaluation 2010 providing positive results	12
Bangladesh Quality support program	Project period 2006-09; a phase II from 2009-2011 with joint financing of the EU (project name BQSP) with 10% financing of Norway.	7
The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) SMTQ*	Market Access and Trade Facilitation Support for South Asian LDCs (SAARC) through SMTQ. Project first phase started 2002 with co-financing by India. Project covered Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives. Phase II: 2007-2010, extended to 2011. Evaluated in 2007. The report considered the project highly relevant, efficiently implemented by UNIDO.[46] Also part of thematic evaluation of SMTQ 2010	18
Trade capacity building in agro-industry products. East Africa *	The project covers Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda. Purpose – compliance with international market requirements. Project period 2007-2011. Problematic project in the initial phase. Not yet evaluated.	30
Integrated industrial production in Sri Lanka – SMTQ	Series of six projects from 1999 with Norway as major donor. Current phase 2007-11. Evaluated in 2009 for the 1999-2007 period. The evaluation gave the project(s) high marks in terms of delivery of outputs, outcome and with impact on institutions and trade, and greater competitiveness. The projects had had considerable learning and also promoted south-south cooperation. "The dimension of increased South-South knowledge flows and cooperation has been one of the most salient achievements of the projects under evaluation."[47] The 1999-2007 phase also part of the 2010 thematic evaluation SMTQ. The current phase concerns Certification in social accountability and food safety standards.*	7,8
Trade Capacity-building Zambia*	Project period 2008-11. Objective adjusting Zambian products to local and international market requirements. Focus on Zambia Bureau of Standards and other institutions. Delay due to Zambia government problems for 2 years. No evaluation so far.	24
Globalgap	Private certification in Uganda. Project period 2008-10. Project failed and is closed.	2,5

46 Ivar Foss et al (2007) *Independent Evaluation: Market access and trade facilitation support for South Asian LDCs, through strengthening institutional and national capacities related to standards, metrology, testing and quality (SMTQ).*
47 Peter Loewe et al (2010) *Independent Evaluation Report Impact of UNIDO SMTQ projects in Sri Lanka.*

Project	Comments	Budget NOK mill. (2007-11)
ISO 9001Quality Management System in Asia*	The project is aimed at assessing effects of ISO 9001 on 12 Asian countries. Results according to UNIDO showing 98% of users ISO 9001 a good investment. Project period 2009-10. No evaluation.	4
AFRIMETS *	Institutional Strengthening of the Inter Africa Metrology Systems. Project period 2009-11. No evaluation	4,5
Trade Standards Compliance Report 2010.	The first issue of a new report to be produced annually by UNIDO. Project period 2008-09	1,8
Guide to private standards*	Developing a practical guide 'Making Private Standards work for you" (with CBI, Netherlands.). Period 2008-09	2,8

Source Norad 2011, and UNIDO 2011

As noted from the table, four of the eleven projects have been evaluated, all with good results.

There is a quite positive view in UNIDO of Norway as a donor, with a strong appreciation of the technical competence combined with knowledge of aid issues. Also UNIDO appreciate Norway's focus on evaluations and results-based management. Norway was the first donor in the late 1990s to focus on standards in trade context, which later was followed by the EU and Switzerland. UNIDO gives Norway explicit credit and good visibility of its support. For example, at the WTO Aid for Trade review in July 2011, UNIDO presented 23 of its projects, of which 9 were funded by Norway, clearly showing so in the text and with Norad's logo.[48]

The table below contains an assessment of UNIDO against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of UNIDO

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	The results of the Norwegian financed TRA projects which have been evaluated have overall been positive (SMTQ). Evaluations indicate that UNIDO is a unique supplier of services in SMTQ, albeit there are some questions of sustainability and aid dependency of the public institutions supported. Norway is given a high profile by UNIDO with considerable visibility. Norad experience that the cooperation with UNIDO in TRA since 1990 have been increasingly positive. UNIDO considers Norway an excellent and professional partner

48 Projects marked with * in the table above were highlighted through pamphlets by UNIDO during the Aid for Trade global review of results in July 2011. Norway was more prominently featured than the EU.

Criteria	Assessment
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: High according to evaluations Efficiency: Unclear due to lack of cost-analysis and comparable studies of other suppliers. DFID, however, gives UNIDO good marks for cost-consciousness in its 2011 review Effectiveness: Probably good, but impact assessment limited Value for money: – Norway strongly featured as a key funding agency in SMTQ Additionality: High – Norway a main funder of UNIDO, and a key player in SMTQ, having also posts in key steering functions
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDCs Good, most projects aimed at LDCs and Africa. Regional cooperation: Fair – Most projects are covering several countries with interactive elements Gender: Poor – not featured strongly in the portfolio Goverance: The portfolio has a focus on quality standards
The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	UNIDO's reporting only partially aligned with Norwegian priorities
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	Independent evaluations applied systematically. The evaluation unit in UNIDO perceived to be quite independent and open
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered.	Good – frequent evaluations involving independent consultants
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	UNIDO has undergone a considerable reform over the last decade and ranked high in DFID's 2005 comparative study on multilateral organizations. Learning is an element of the evaluation mechanism. However, UNIDO is also a large, centralised UN bureaucracy with its in-built problems in terms of learning. Norad experience positive developments in learning especially since mid 2000s.DFID, on the other hand is critical in its 2011 review
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** UNIDO has a strong partnership since many years with Norway, and UNIDO highlights Norway's role in its official communication. Especially in SMTQ Norway played a pioneering role and has created a niche. UNIDO was considered one of the better UN agencies in 2005 and Norway plays a role in its steering through key positions. UNIDO is handled by Norad, giving it a special attention and also with linkages to Norad's PSD work. **Minus:** DFID gave UNIDO 2011 a negative rating which might affect the resource flow to UNIDO in general. The Norwegian project portfolio approach is administratively demanding, requiring an active management role by Norad.
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	Good coherence with focus, but not much seen on the specific attention to gender as highlighted in the Action Plan

4.4 The International Trade Centre

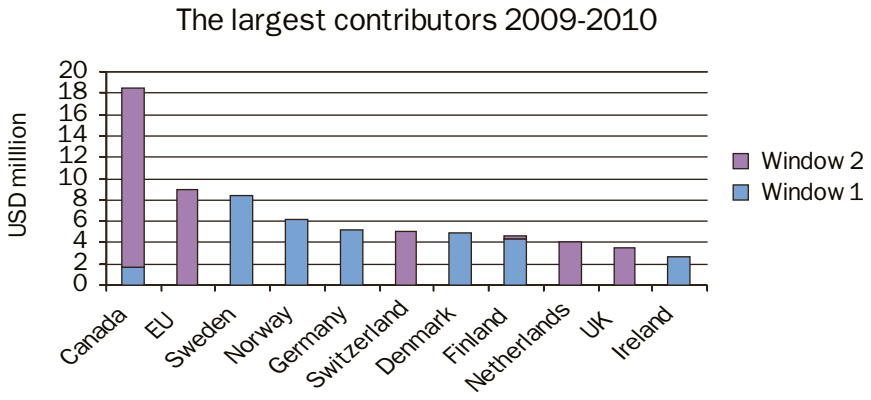
Background ITC, established in1968, is a Geneva-based, specialized multilateral agency providing technical support in trade development. ITC is 100% oriented towards trade-related assistance with no other functions. ITC defines its mission as:

> *"to enable small business export success in developing and transition-economy countries, by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions and policy-makers."*

The organization has identified five 'business lines' for its work: 1) business and trade policy; 2) export strategy; 3) Trade Support Institution strengthening; 4) trade intelligence and 5) exporter competitiveness. Overall, ITC has an emphasis on global and generic products, in part as a strategic response to limited resources, and in part due to the need to provide assistance across a broad range of countries, reflecting the emphasis in the United Nations on utilization of regular budget resources for the "benefit of all".

Donor support ITC's current operating expenses of about USD 65 million are partly financed by UNCTAD (as an allocation from UNDP) and WTO, forming ITC's regular budget, partly through allocations by donors in voluntary trust funds.[49] UNCTAD and WTO contributions were in 2010 about USD 30 million, and donor trust funds USD 35 million. ITC has established a Global Trust Fund covering both funds earmarked for specific projects (Window 2), and funds which are not earmarked or with 'soft' earmarking[50] (Window 1). In 2010, Window 2 accounted for almost about 60% of the total extraordinary budget resources. As indicated in the figure below, Canada is currently by far the most important donor to ITC with Norway as the 4th largest. However, donors have different strategies. Some, as Canada, the EU, Switzerland and the UK, provide all or nearly all funding as earmarked Window 2 contributions, while others, such as Norway and the other the Scandinavian countries provide all, or nearly all, as un-earmarked under Window 1.

Figure 8. The largest donors to ITC 2009-10



49 ITC (2011) *Annual report 2010.*
50 Soft earmarking means that a donor wishes that a certain share of its funding should go to projects with certain themes, such as gender, without necessarily specifying for which projects or countries.

Performance ITC has in the order of 200 projects on-going currently, of which about 70 are country specific, and the balance regional or inter-regional. The Window 1 funding has to a large extent been used for central ITC functions such as financing the salaries of technical core staff not covered by the regular budget (only about half of ITC's staff are funded by the regular budget, the rest depend on extra-ordinary budget resources), general travel and other central organization functions. In 2010 about USD 13,5 million, or nearly half of the Window 1 budget, was used for such a purpose, of which USD 11.5 million was staff costs. Other use of Window I budget recent years has been for programs such as *Trade for sustainable development*; *Ethical fashion from Africa;* and *Export-led tourism-led poverty reduction*. Some long-standing ITC global services such as the *Market News Services* are also financed through Window I. All-in all some 55 different budget lines were funded through Window 1 in 2010.

The 'Danish evaluation' In 2003 Denmark proposed a joint evaluation of ITC with the purpose to respond to three key questions:

- *The comparative advantage of ITC* in comparison with other international organizations, such as WTO; UNCTAD and UNIDO.
- *The performance of ITC's interventions*, results achieved, bottlenecks and key risks identified, and which activities have been most efficient and effective.
- *The capacity of ITC* including monitoring and evaluation systems, cooperation with other partners, resources and capacity in relation to activities.

The evaluation took time to be undertaken and the final report was not published until 2006. The evaluation, often referred to as the 'Danish evaluation', concluded that there was a clear division of labor between ITC and its parent organizations, UNCTAD and the WTO, with ITC focusing on *trade development* and UNCTAD and WTO focusing on *trade policy and regulation*. The comparative advantage of ITC rested on its technical expertise in trade development, its experience in networking, and its entrepreneurial and responsive approach. The evaluation further concluded that:

- *Relevance* of ITC products is generally regarded as high by ITC partners, and this includes newer products aimed at business participation in the trading system and mainstreaming trade development into overall development strategies.
- *Efficiency* is viewed favorably by ITC partners, as ITC's products are regarded as acceptable in quality.
- *Effectiveness* in achieving development results differs for products and country-specific projects.

Nevertheless, the evaluation found that there was

> *"a lack of a systematic process for monitoring results and outcomes achieved with ITC products and through ITC projects, either with Trade Support Institutions or with end-user enterprises, including results in terms of the targets for MDG 8 as well as other MDGs, in particular poverty reduction and gender equity… More broadly, poverty reduc-*

tion, gender equity and other development objectives require attention in program and project design and implementation, as well as in monitoring and evaluation."[51]

The evaluation provided a number of recommendations, including that donors should provide better predictability of resources for ITC by multi-year allocations, preferably un-earmarked to reduce transaction costs and provide for better efficiency and reduce project proliferation.

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation ITC has undertaken ad hoc evaluations of its projects and activities dating back to the 1980s using external consultants. In 2008 ITC established an Evaluation Policy and Annual Evaluation Program[52] in response to the recommendations by the Danish evaluation. ITC has a policy for evaluation as well as explicit guidelines on how evaluation reports should be structured. ITC has an M&E unit with two professional positions, but which currently is understaffed. The level of outputs in terms of independent evaluations of ITC projects and programs is limited as a result of this. For some years ITC undertakes client surveys through electronic means to assess satisfaction with its services as a compliment to the evaluations. In 2010 some 1500 persons responded. The client surveys show overall positive perception of ITC and its services. The results of the surveys are posted on ITC's home page.

Norwegian support Norway has over the years been one of the major funders of ITC's extra-ordinary budget. A framework agreement signed in 2003 between Norway and ITC governs the support. Specific agreements under this framework are decided biannually, most recently for 2010-2011.

The Norwegian Action Plan 2007 envisages in terms of support to and through ITC that Norway should

- provide increased support for fair trade initiatives, both bilaterally and multilaterally, through organizations such as the ITC and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM);
- reinforce efforts through multilateral organizations, such as the ITC and UNIDO, to introduce special programs related to women and trade; and
- strengthen the capacity of the regional institutions in the area of trade, mainly through relevant UN agencies, ITC, and the multilateral development banks.

The Norwegian support to ITC is channeled to Window 1. Norway's funding was NOK 22,5 million per annum in 2008 and 2009, and NOK 15 million in 2010. While Window 1 is non-earmarked, Norway has applied a 'soft' earmarking for half of its funding. This earmarking is for women and trade, regional trade in Africa, export-led poverty reduction, and ethical trade, Africa. Support is given for specific projects and programs financed by Window 1. An example of such a program is the Ethical Fashion Trade Africa. The program, which began in 2008, has the objective of creating commercial links between international fashion companies and micro producers in poor communities in Kenya and Uganda with a focus on female producers and involving these in the international companies' value chains.

51 DMI Associates (2006): *Evaluation of the International Trade Centre*.
52 ITC (2008): *Evaluation Policy*.

Results of the Norwegian support As noted above, Window 1 is to a large extent used for central functions such as retaining core staff, hence it is not possible to determine the 'results' of the Norwegian support as such, other than that Norway has contributed to ITC's overall capacity as a technical assistance organization. However, for specific projects supported by Window I funds, some results are reported. For example, under the Ethical Fashion Trade Africa, according to an inbuilt social impact assessment tool, the program has so far created 7,000 jobs for these women with measurable impact on the standard of living in the targeted communities.[53] None of the Norwegian funded projects has been subject for an independent evaluation.

The table below contains an assessment of ITC against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of ITC

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	Norway has a long-standing cooperation with ITC and channels its support to Window I in core funding, albeit with soft earmarking of half. ITC is overall considered a professional, specialized agent in trade development with 40+ years of experience. Norway's support contributes to maintain key staff and key central functions, plus specific projects in line with MFA priorities. ITC tends to get high marks for well delivered operational support. However, there are no independent evaluations of the on-going support and 'results' are more based on general impressions of the organization, than evidence.
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: good – ITC is 100% Trade-related assistance. It has a stronger focus on the private sector than any other multilateral organization Efficiency: no benchmarks to compare with; no cost analysis. However, work is ongoing to establish standard costs for activities and outputs. Effectiveness: Unclear due to limited evaluations Value for money: Probably good albeit lacking broad impact assessments. Risk that some support is myopic being enterprise focused Norwegian additionality: Good, as one of the key donors to Window 1. The soft earmarking allows Norway to put a 'stamp' on its support, yet, also allows ITC flexibility in resource use.
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: Good; about half of ITC's portfolio aimed at LDCs Gender: very good – ITC has a broad focus on women and trade, including a gender mainstreaming policy Regional integration: good through a large number of regional and interregional projects and programs Governance difficult to judge

53 The program was used by ITC as a one of the case stories submitted to WTO's 2011 Aid for Trade Global Review.

Criteria	Assessment
The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	ITC has a modern reporting system adjusted to clients and especially donor priorities. However, the weak independent evaluation does not provide much on outcome and impact
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	Outputs: Good reporting on what ITC is doing Outcome: Qualitative reporting on immediate outcome from projects. However, few independent evaluations; efforts to determine ITC broad indicators and report on those. Impact: Not known as ex-post evaluations are very rare: Quality of reporting: Reader friendly and comprehensive
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered.	Weak – the M&E system not operating as planned. Few independent external evaluations;
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	Smallness of ITC allows learning with active involvement from parent organizations and donors. A business-like culture.
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** ITC has more than 40 years of experience as a specialist organization in trade-related assistance; evaluations of discrete projects tend to indicate positive results and client surveys also show fair degree of satisfaction. Norway has a long history with ITC. ITC is business-like with the private sector as main client; complement the more common public sector approaches in TRA. **Minus:** Risk that ITC is too micro-oriented in its enterprise and TSI approach, hence its impact might be marginal in a broader development context. The evaluation system in ITC under- developed.
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	Good coherence both thematically and in focus. ITC excellent to respond to gender priority

4.5 The World Bank

Background Trade development was not a feature of the World Bank operations initially. With structural adjustment lending in the 1980s, trade policy became an element as part of the liberalisation and opening of economies. In 2001 the World Bank created a Trade Department in conjunction to the Doha round of trade negotiations. From 2001 DFID and other donor trust funds gave grant support to the World Bank's trade policy research. Yet, until the mid 2000s, the World Bank's trade-related technical assistance in the narrow definition was limited. Applying the broader Aid for Trade concept, the Bank's investments in infrastructure, agriculture, banking and finance, etc., have always been large. The World Bank is according to OECD data the largest provider of Aid for Trade in the donor community since AfT was established.

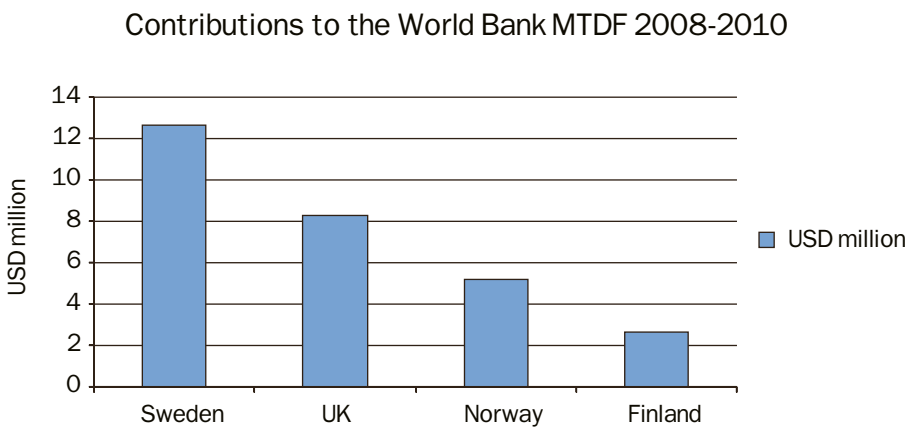
The Multi-donor Trust Fund for Trade Development Discussion on a trust fund for trade development began with Sweden in 2005. The MTDF-TD, which began in early 2008, was planned to operate until the end of 2010, a date later extended to mid 2011. While the Fund originally was planned for USD 30 million, it would eventually receive USD 28 million in external funding. The MDTF-TD was intended to support the World Bank's work in trade development, which focuses on helping developing countries benefit from their integration into the global economies. More specifically, the trust fund should enable the World Bank to:

- respond to client demand for trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building;
- develop analytical tools to assist countries to define trade and export competitiveness strategies;
- expand research and datasets on trade topics of importance to developing countries; and
- diffuse knowledge on international trade to developing countries

The fund finances global public goods – such as research, toolkits and databases that help inform country-level activities. It also finances diagnostic studies, capacity building, and project-preparation activities needed to make investment projects funded through the EIF and Aid for Trade initiative more effective. The Fund has a strong preference for IDA-eligible countries and least developed countries.[54]

Donor support The MTDF-TD is financed by four donors: Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway and Finland. Their contributions to the fund are as follows:

Figure 9. The donors to the World Bank MTDF-TD



Performance By March 2011, near 90% percent of the funds' resources had been committed and 80% disbursed in about 160 activities and multi-activity packages.[55] These activities are grouped in five clusters:

- *Economic and sector work* including policy notes and other analysis delivered to client countries such as World Bank Country Economic Memoranda. These account for about 40% percent of total activities.

54 Program Description; October 1, 2008.
55 The data in this section are taken from Meyer, M. (2011) *World Bank: Final Evaluation of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Trade and Development.*

- *Technical assistance and training* activities to help governments to implement policies, strengthen institutions, and facilitate knowledge exchange. These account for about a quarter of activities in the portfolio.
- *Research* including policy analysis aimed primarily at either global audiences or Bank staff, corresponding to 20 percent of MDTF-TD activities.
- *Lending appraisal and supervision support* including institution-building, analytical work, technical advisory work, and other activities undertaken by country teams in developing or supervising Bank lending operations. These make up less than 10 percent of total activities.

The trust fund has been used by different organizational units in the World Bank. About 70% have been used by the Bank's regional departments, of which Africa account for more than half. The balance has been used by the central units the Development Research Group, the Trade Department, and the World Bank Institute (WBI).[56] Most of the funds used by the latter, or USD 6 million, was allocated for research purposes and provision of public goods such as analytical tools.

The MTDF-TD has produced a large number of reports, books, workshops and seminars. These have been devoted to subjects such as trade strategies, export promotion, sector assessments, trade information systems, trade in services, international labour migration and remittances, regulatory reform and cooperation, investment, technology transfer and innovation, capacity building for trade policy and trade negotiations, and a few impact assessments.[57] The Fund has financed some 300 publications and 10 databases. The Fund was also used to finance WBI's e-learning courses for 500 participants and face-to-face courses for 170 participants.

Outcome and impact An evaluation of the MTDF-TD undertaken in early 2011 listed a number of outcomes of these outputs, including:

- Bank-funded policy reforms/projects, policy and institutional reforms which developing country governments are undertaking based upon the results of the study funded by the MDTF-TD;
- Many developing countries now see the importance of service sectors for economic development and the need for regulatory reform to facilitate growth,
- Many low-income countries have a better understanding of their trade interests and the important role of service trade in economic development
- Better informed trade strategies, trade-related policy and institutional reforms and to capacity-building work.
- Extensive use of databases in Bank analytical reports and external researchers;

According to the 2011 evaluation, 63 percent of these outcomes were *Bank-funded policy reforms/projects*, *policy and institutional reforms* which a developing country government is undertaking based upon the results of the study funded by the MDTF-TD. A considerable level of 'outcome' of the Fund was in the form of

56 DEC is responsible for policy research, the Trade Department uses the research results in its task to create tools and guidelines for the World Bank's grant and lending operations, and WBI disseminates both research results and guidelines in its training events.

57 Three activities supported by the MDTF were *impact evaluations.* In Tunisia an innovative support program for exporters was analyzed (subsidies to exporters to hire consultants specialized in export marketing). The trade agreement between the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic with the USA was assessed to see which benefits and costs the agreement had brought to the region and how to improve its positive development impact. In the Africa region the impact of the Africa Trade Insurance Agency was evaluated.

inputs into World Bank documents such as Country Economic Memoranda, Development Policy Reviews, or Country Partnership Strategies. While not directly linked, the Fund also contributed to the establishment of a new World Bank Trade Strategy for 2011-2021.[58]

Overall evaluation The MDTF-TD was subject for an interim external evaluation in the end of 2009, and a final external evaluation in early 2011. Both evaluations were one-person studies, carried out by the same consultant.[59] The final evaluation was expected to provide answers to: a) the quality of selecting and implementing activities; b) governance and management, including central monitoring and reporting to donors; and c) outputs and outcomes. The evaluation should also provide recommendations on the future demand for grant resources of a possible second stage fund. The outcomes mentioned above are derived from this evaluation. The evaluator gave the MTDF-TD in both evaluations a positive assessment. He concluded that the fund had been well managed by the Bank regions and the three central units. Only a few of the 160 activities showed problems such as low local ownership. In the evaluator's final assessment:

> *"the Fund has been successful in introducing a comprehensive trade agenda in developing countries and particularly low-income and marginal trading countries. Also, trade research has been intense, the toolbox which helps to find and deal with main factors of trade competitiveness has been considerably enlarged, and adequate training materials and channels have been founded."*

In summary, the Fund had in the evaluators words contributed to that the "World Bank is becoming a key player in trade policy and trade competitiveness in low-income and marginal trading countries." It is noteworthy that the evaluator entirely dependent on World Bank sources for his final evaluation without any triangulation with, for example interviews with recipient stakeholders.[60]

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation The World Bank has its own system for M&E through the OED which is not elaborated here, but this section is limited to the M&E of the MTDF-TD. (OED never reviewed the fund). As the fund was utilized throughout the Bank, various units were supposed to report on outputs and emerging outcome. The external evaluator reported on varying quality of this system, and that the synthesis of the 160+ activities in terms of outcome (and even to some extent outputs) had to be compiled through additional work. Thus, according to the evaluation:

> *"the task team leaders reported very unevenly. Some were specific and accurate, others evasive. Only through a tedious consultation process was it possible to obtain accurate information on a substantial majority of activities."*

The MTDF-TD was ambitious in its efforts to report on outcome and the special report prepared by the external evaluator is a comprehensive list of outputs and

58 World Bank (2011): *Leveraging trade for development and inclusive growth. The World Bank Group Trade Strategy 2011-2021.*
59 Meyer, Matthias (2009) *World Bank: Interim Evaluation of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Trade and Development*; and Meyer, M. (2011) *op cit* The evaluator had internal support by Bank staff, including a research assistant.
60 The 2009 included fieldtrips to four African countries.

outcome from the many activities carried out by the fund. It suffers from the same problems, nevertheless, as other results-reporting in technical assistance in trade development. Outcome tends to be defined as *better understanding, more knowledge*, etc., with no tracing on how this is translated (if at all) into trade performance.[61]

Norwegian support The Action Plan of 2007 says Norway will "support the World Bank's multi-donor fund for integrating trade into national development plans" and also provide "support for specific trade facilitation projects through the World Bank, and "contribute towards financing and follow-up of regional diagnostic studies and measures through the World Bank, including regional infrastructure projects."

Norway has followed this. As noted above, Norway was one of four donors to support the MTDF-TD, albeit not one of the initiators. As Norway provide core funding of the MTDF-TD (about 19% of the total fund), it is not possible to single out the results of the "Norwegian contributions" as such.

The table below contains an assessment of MTDF-TD against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of World Bank MTDF-TD

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	The two evaluations carried out by the same consultant points at positive outcome of the Fund activities and well implemented large number of activities with few exceptions. The outcome is overall closely related to strengthening the World Bank's role in trade-related technical assistance in policy, strategy, research, knowledge, information and lending. The concrete outputs are a very large number of reports, books, notes etc.
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: good – the World Bank a key player and strengthening the Bank's capacity in TRA is highly relevant. Efficiency: – no cost benchmarks to compare with Effectiveness: appears good Value for money: good in terms of improving Bank capacity Norwegian additionality: Fair, while one of the four donors not one of the initial (Sweden and the UK).
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: Fair – Africa with a good prevalence (about 35% of total Fund disbursements) Gender: a problem noticed throughout the Fund implementation. Some work undertaken such as guide on mainstreaming gender in trade development Regional integration: fair – a substantial share of regional activities Governance implicit

61 The MDTF-TD was partly used to develop methodologies for evaluation of Aid for Trade.

The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	Mixed – good on LDC focus, less on gender, regional cooperation and governance
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	Outputs; Good – excellent records of outputs Outcome: Fair – questioned by the evaluator with varying quality between different part of the Bank, but independent evaluation part of the set-up Impact: Unknown at country level due to time lag. Quality of reporting: Good – thorough half yearly progress reporting focused on outputs;
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered	Two evaluations 2009 and 2011 by one consultant both times with focus on how to improve and continue the system
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	Excellent – The Fund contributed to a great extent to the Bank's learning, in fact might have been the key outcome of the Fund. This is translated for example into development of a Bank Trade Strategy in 2011
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** The World Bank the key player in (economic) development. Trade was long a neglected area which the Fund (and other activities) has rectified. Essential in policy influence, etc. Good for Norway's own learning due to the massive focus on information and research **Minus:** risk of a too dominating role among providers of support due to its financial resources and knowledge base. Norway's 'visibility' low as the Bank generally not strong in giving credit to its funders
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	Good –No diversion from the Plan

4.6 World Trade Organization

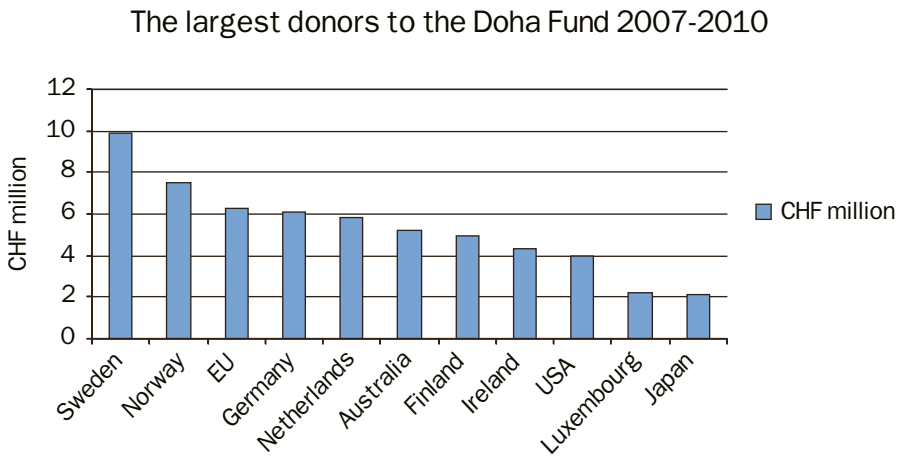
Background WTO, which replaced GATT in 1995, deals with regulation of trade between participating countries, provides a framework for negotiating and formalizing trade agreements, and a dispute resolution process aimed at enforcing participants' adherence to WTO agreements. Most of the issues that the WTO focuses on derive from previous trade negotiations, the two most recent being the Uruguay Round (1986-1994) and the Doha Development Agenda (2001 -). WTO, with headquarters in Geneva, is employing about 700 persons and operating on an annul budget of about USD 220 million. WTO's technical assistance operations are a fairly small share of WTO's work, accounting for less than 10 percent of the total budget. In 2003 the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTC) was created to administer all the technical assistance activities of WTO.

Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund The DDGTF was established in 2002 with the dual purposes of consolidating several exiting trust funds in WTO for

technical assistance purposes, and receiving extra budgetary contributions to finance the implementation of the annual technical assistance plans in line with the Doha Development Agenda. The agreement was that DDGTF would receive annual contribution of CHF 24 million which with funding from the regular budget of WTO would provide technical assistance worth CHF 30 million per annum.

Donor support The donor contributions to the Doha Fund has on the average been about CHF 18 million (USD 22 million) per annum after 2002.[62] While 27 countries contributed to the fund in 2007, there has been a steady decline of donors and in 2010 the number had shrunk to 19, and the contributions were this year an all-time low of CHF 16 million.[63] The main donors to the fund for the period 2007-2010 have been Sweden, Norway and the EU as indicated in the figure below.

Figure10. The largest donors to the Doha Fund 2007-10



(Source: Data provided by WTO 2011)

Assuming WTO is maintaining its expected share of the technical cooperation from regular budget resources, the total annual expenditures for WTO technical trade assistance is at a level of USD 30 million per annum.

Performance In 2001 WTO established the *New Strategy for WTO Technical Cooperation for Capacity Building, Growth and Integration* based on the Doha Development Agenda. According to this, WTO provides the following assistance:[64]

- General WTO-related training and technical assistance including Trade Policy Courses in Geneva and in the regions;
- specialized and advanced training and technical assistance including national and regional workshops/seminars;
- academic support for training and capacity building including workshops for university professors and research collaboration;
- support training and technical assistance facilities in Geneva, from symposia to internships; and

62 The exchange rate used throughout in this report is CHF = USD 1,25.
63 WTO (2011) *Annual Report on Technical Assistance and Training 2010*.
64 WTO (2001) *New Strategy for WTO Technical Cooperation for Capacity Building, Growth and Integration*.

- other programs and support activities with funding requirements such as involvement in other organizations' workshops

The first two categories account for two thirds of the total expenditures.

The WTO technical assistance program (and activities supported under the Doha fund) comprises of short and medium term training and capacity building activities related to the WTO framework. The overall work comprises of in the order of 300 – 350 activities per annum, i.e. courses, seminars, symposia, conferences, etc. focusing on WTO rules and regulations such as regional trade agreements, dispute settlements, Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, (TBT), General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), Trade-related Intellectual property Rights (TRIPS), trade negotiations, etc. The bulk of the training events are of a few days in Geneva, regionally or country-wise; but also some longer courses of up to 3 months. Increasingly e-based training is delivered.

As all training are provided free of charge for the participants, the expenditure is to a large extent travel costs, hotel, per diem etc. for the participants. Most of the training and capacity building are in the form of repeated programs. Some 30,000 persons, or about 4,000 persons per year, have participated in WTO's training activities since 2003, the great majority in short-term events. The longer 3-months training courses attract some 250 persons annually.[65] WTO's technical assistance has a focus on Africa and on LDCs, accounting for nearly half of the activities.

Organizational evaluation An independent evaluation of WTO's technical assistance (and thus de facto also of the Doha Fund) took place in 2006 covering the period 2002 to 2004.[66] The evaluation found that WTO's assistance was generally relevant by responding to national, institutional and individual needs. Thus, "95 per cent of interviewees found that the WTO courses had matched their requirements considerably or to some extent." Persons participating in the assistance found WTO experts:

> *"of high quality with strong trade law expertise, but sometimes doctrinaire, in contrast to others who were less familiar with legal or negotiating details but offered a broader approach and regional experience".*

The evaluation expressed difficulties to trace impact of the WTO support at institutional level, however, argued that "in many countries the training has had an institutional impact, primarily in building up the capacities of a cadre of trade-skilled professionals particularly in trade ministries, to understand and implement WTO rules." The evaluation, nevertheless, expressed considerable criticism of WTO's assistance. Thus, it argued that

65 WTO (2011) *ICCT Case story on Trade capacity Building in the WTO*.
66 Cuts et al (2006): *Strategic Review of WTO Trade-Related Technical Assistance Activities.* Besides a large number of interviews in Geneva, it was based on questionnaire interviews in nine countries with officials and others who had participated in one or more of the WTO's seminars, courses, workshops or other activities. The nine countries were Bangladesh, Barbados, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova Senegal and Yemen.

"the approach of the ITTC management is characterized by routine churning out of TRTA activities within a pre-determined static framework. This state of affairs has, in turn, lessened the motivation of the workforce and, by extension, negatively influenced the desirable and long-lasting impact of TRTA on beneficiary countries.

It pointed at weaknesses such as lack of prior needs assessment at country level; trainee selection processes lacking in focus and transparency; inadequate quality control of trainers, etc. Indirectly, the evaluation concluded that the key tasks of WTO's technical assistance as expressed in its 2001 strategy had not been met. It concluded that:

'the continued inability of developing and least developed countries to understand and respond to the implication of WTO agreements and negotiate national interests and priorities have led to calls from beneficiary countries for a reorientation and rationalisation of the WTO's TRTA activities."

The evaluation provided a long list of recommendations on how WTO could improve its services and effectiveness. The report was met with a strong management response from WTO disagreeing with the most critical points.

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation WTO has an M&E unit, called the Technical Cooperation Audit Unit, staffed by two professionals with administrative support. The unit carries out the M&E activities on the WTO program through a variety of means, including: after-event surveys among participants; selected follow-up surveys after a year or so; field evaluations under which the WTO evaluators review ongoing activities; and ex-post evaluations, where a selected program (course) is followed up several years after through tracing of participants. The unit is experimenting with knowledge assessing tools such as quiz, simulations, etc. All the evaluations are carried out by the staff of the unit; consultants are not used. The reporting on the M&E activities is in the form of internal documents to management and not disclosed to the public, nor published.[67] They feed, however, into WTO's annual reports. WTO has for a decade had a good manual for its M&E work which both covers the general approach of M&E and the specifics applied to WTO.[68] The cost for the unit, paid out of WTO's regular budget, is in the order of USD 0,7 million per annum, i.e. M&E accounts for about 2 % of the total TRA expenditures. WTO is in the process of setting up a Results-based management (RBM) system which is expected to deliver results information for the first time in 2012.

Norwegian support Norway has supported the Doha Development Fund since 2002. The support has been at a level of NOK 10 million per annum since 2007. There is no earmarking of the Norwegian support, albeit Norway has expressed its general concerns in trade-related assistance as focus on the LDCs and on gender. The 2007 Norwegian Action plan for Trade, says that Norway will continue and further develop its current efforts through organizations such as WTO. Thus Norway will cooperate

67 An exception was a case study with references to several evaluations presented at the Aid for Trade review summit in 2011.
68 WTO (2000): *Monitoring and Evaluation of the WTO's Technical Cooperation Activities. Manual for WTO's Secretariat Staff Dealing with Technical Cooperation Activities.*

"with WTO on capacity building in the LDCs and other low income countries in relation to trade rules and trade negotiations, including the development of national priorities and positions."

Furthermore Norway shall

"contribute to the WTO trade facilitation needs assessment trust fund. Emphasis will be put on active participation in the work of WTO bodies, in particular on the annual debate in the WTO General Council."

Through the nature of a non-earmarked trust fund, it is not possible to define the results of the contribution of Norway per se, except as a share of the overall performance of WTO. Below is our summary of the assessment of WTO in relation to the criteria established in the ToR:

Summary of the review of WTO

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	While WTO surveys indicate overall satisfactory outcome, the evidence of results in terms of, for example, enhanced institutional or national capacities are at best provided in anecdotal form. The 2006 evaluation raised considerable criticism on performance, disputed by WTO. The overall outcome beyond the individuals of WTO's TRA is not clear
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: Good – WTO, building on GATT, has 50 years of experience in providing training in trade-related matters. 2006 evaluation showed clear comparative advantage on certain TRA to other suppliers. With increasingly more important and more complex multilateral trading agreements, WTO's TRA is clearly relevant. Efficiency: Unknown – costs in delivering services is not assessed systematically, no benchmarks established, nor comparisons to other suppliers. Effectiveness: Unclear – a large share of very short events makes assessment of fulfillment of broad organizational objectives difficult. Value for money: Unclear Norwegian additionality Norway a large donor, hence is important to WTO's TRA. No other specific added value is apparent
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC: WTO has a good focus on LDCs. Regional trade: at the core of WTO specializing in multilateral trade agreements Gender: Not explicit in WTO's work Good governance: not assessed

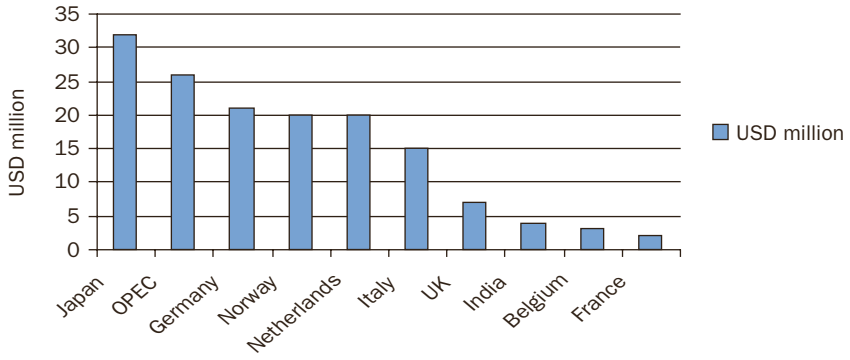
Criteria	Assessment
The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	The reporting on the specific priorities for Norway is weak
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	The audit unit in WTO provides good, independent assessment of performance, often critical. Tools to assess results are being developed systematically. M&E policy exists and RBM under work to be introduced 2012. However, a weakness is that WTO is not publically disclosing the results
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered	Rather elaborate M&E system. However, no independent evaluation of overall portfolio, nor disclosing the results to the public
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	The audit unit provides follow up on results, hence push organizational learning. The unit has learning as main objective. The 2006 evaluation critical on this, however.
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** WTO at the heart of the multilateral trade agreements with a very long institutional record through GATT. WTO plays a lead role in the Aid for Trade. Supporting this is essential and provides also learning to Norway's TRA. Good focus on LDCs and Africa. **Minus:** The value of WTO's extensive training in short-term events largely unknown. There might be a considerable degree of overlapping with other organizations, such as UNCTAD. Gender dimension not elaborate in WTO. There seems to be a declining trend in overall support to WTO's TRA
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	The support follows the Action Plan in general.

4.7 Common Fund for Commodities

Background The Common Fund for Commodities, based in Amsterdam, is an institution established by the United Nations in 1989. However, the origin goes back to the mid 1970s in the context of the New International Economic Order when a mechanism to intervene in price volatility which hit the revenue and livelihoods in some of world's poorest countries was suggested at a UNCTAD conference. In 1979 many donors, including Norway, pledged financial support to a fund with the dual purposes of establishing buffer stocks for commodities, and financing of commodity projects. When CFC eventually was operational in the early 1990, the original concept and rationale for CFC was not longer there, and CFC focussed on its second mandate, financing pilot projects in commodities. Such projects are normally determined by stakeholders of the International Commodity Boards (ICBs) and proposals are submitted through an ICB to the CFC Secretariat.

Donor funding In total some USD 300 million was pledged to CFC by donors when CFC was initiated. Two accounts were established for funding: one with the purpose a financing a buffer stock arrangement in order to stabilize commodity prices on global markets, the other for technical assistance projects. The first account was never used as the buffer stock model. It was agreed in the late 1990s that donors could transfer funds from account 1 to account 2. Japan, OPEC and Germany are the largest contributors as indicated in the figure below. As shown, Norway is the 4th largest contributor to CFC.[69]

Figure 11. 10 largest contributors to CFC



Performance CFC initiated its first projects in 1991. Until 2009 the fund had approved near 300 projects with a total cost of USD 540 million of which the fund financed about 50%, covering 40 commodities, most of them in agriculture.[70] From a level of disbursement in the late 1990s of about USD 7 million the fund disburses today about USD 20 million in 10-12 projects per annum. Projects are proposed, prioritised, formulated and supervised by an ICB, and normally involve a counterpart contribution (in cash and/or kind) by the ICB.

Evaluations of CFC There have been discussions in the donor community of the usefulness of CFC and its role versus other international organizations since the late 1990s. In 2001, the Nordic countries took the initiative for an evaluation of CFC, basically to assess its usefulness, and its comparative advantage to other organizations. An evaluation was carried out, but with a more limited mandate than wished by, for example, Norway. A review in 2007 found that CFC had a clear role to play. However, the questioning in the donor community did not vanish. For example, a Finish review in 2008 of CFC concluded in a report to the Finnish government that:

> *"CFC is a relatively small and somewhat ineffective unit with respect to the real need in the primary commodities market – diversification of the economy. At best, the CFC could finance pilot projects in primary commodities processing and markets… As regards another major objective of the CFC – enhancing strategic approaches and project preparations of international commodity bodies – little progress has been*

69 As a contrast, Sweden's contribution to CFC is about 10% of Norway's.
70 CFC (2010) *Basic facts*.

made… Project preparation has often failed to reach the technical level that could have been reasonable to expect."[71]

In 2009 it was agreed that a review of CFC would be carried out by a Working Group with the support of an independent consultant to look at CFC's role in the current context, and also assess its efficiency and effectiveness. Within the mandate was also to "examine different options for CFC among others operation as a standalone organization, merger with other relevant organization or sharing of office space and facilities, as well as other interim measures which may be required till discussions on the future of the Fund were concluded". The same consultants would also undertake a mid-term review of CFC's third 5-year plan 2008-2012. The consultants submitted their reports in 2010[72] In terms of the mid-term review, the consultants argued that:

"the CFC, although a small player in the overall aid and development agenda, is well positioned to support commodity developments given its unique focus on commodities that confers a specific legitimacy on the organization. It is well placed to influence the debate on international financial crisis which has highlighted the contributions commodities could have on food production and income generation."

The consultants concluded that CFC had significantly improved its efficiency in project implementation, was able to leverage its resources with other contributions, that its projects were generally relevant and that many of CFC's projects contributed to poverty alleviation. But at the same time that:

it is widely acknowledged that CFC is not delivering wider and more sustainable impact from its interventions. This is partly because at present the CFC is a collection of pilot projects and there is limited size and financial resources allocated to projects, but also to the fact that there has been little attention to scaling up of initiatives or replication of successful interventions.

The consultants noted the lack of current enthusiasm for CFC, borne out by a certain amount of donor fatigue to requests for further funding and absence of commitment to the organization evidenced by recent lack of attendance at general meetings, and that North was looking for ways of ending CFC. However, the consultants saw CFC as a unique organization with a role to play, nevertheless requiring both internal changes in CFC and a stronger commitment by donors for funding.

In 2011 the discussions of the future of CFC intensified, at one point with the risk that if no compromise could be reached during 2011, CFC a decision regarding winding up or termination of the Agreement of the Common Fund for Commodities may have to be taken as the resources available for fresh commitments fro projects would be practically exhausted in 2012 at the end of the current 5 year plan. However, in September 2011 it was agreed at the Executive Board meeting that the point of critical decision would be postponed to the end of 2012, and that until

71 Laaksonen, K. (2008) *Review of Primary Commodities and the Finnish Development Policy.*
72 Tripleline Consulting)2010): *The Relevance, Functioning and Future Direction of the Common Fund for Commodities;* and *Mid-term review of the five year action plan 2008-2012.*

then two options for the future of CFC would be investigated, including reforming CFC with a slimmed down staff, narrower focus, larger role for fund raising; or transferring the CFC to another UN organization, most likely UNIDO or UNCTAD which had indicated interest in such an arrangement. There is a clear division on views on CFC between donors and recipient countries, where the former question the role of CFC while the latter tend to want to preserve the organisation.

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation CFC is a small international organization, and its M&E function is a part of a broader Policy, Programming and Evaluation Unit. CGF undertakes regular evaluations of its portfolio often using external consultants. 2-3 export evaluations are carried out per annum. A review by us of a sample of evaluations conducted by CFC indicates good quality of the methodology and also good results. Efforts are made to trace impact at the level of actual trade and exports.

Norwegian support The Common Fund for Commodities has received funding for the beginning by Norway which was one of the most important donors at the outset with a commitment to CFC of USD 25 million. Of this 10% was allocated to account 1 and the balance to account 2 for technical assistance projects. Until 2011 Norway has paid in about USD 20 million of its commitment under account 2. The level of funding per annum 2003 to 2007 was USD 2,3 million. The 2007 Action Plan for Aid for Trade mentions CFC, but has no explicit view on the fund, negative, or positive. For CFC's second five year plan (2008-2012) Norway committed USD 1,18 million per annum (out of the of the original pledge), corresponding to about NOK 7 million per annum. This makes CFC the sixth largest Norwegian channels for TRA among the multilateral organizations. By end 2012, the original commitment will stand fulfilled.

In the fall of 2011, the Norwegian government has reiterated its view that a major change must take place concerning the fund, preferring that CFC cease to exist as a independent organization, for example by integrating CFC's activities into UNIDO.

The table below contains an assessment of CFC against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of CFC

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	The project evaluations carried out by CFC indicate good results, also confirmed by the 2010 mid-term review. Problems identified in scaling up of the pilot projects due to shortage of resources and, partly, the design of the pilots. Norwegian funding is core, hence no specific results of the Norwegian fund can be traced.

Criteria	Assessment
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: CFC is relevant in terms of subject matter, commodities, but has not been sufficiently effective to scale up its pilot projects Efficiency: Improving and good according to a comparative study in 2010 Effectiveness: fair – problem of having a greater impact of its projects Value for money: Unclear Norwegian additionality: Norway has played an important role both as a major donor and as an active Board member in the late 2000s; Norway has been one of the most active countries in pushing for a reform,.
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: Fair – LDCs often have commodities as their main export item, employing a large share of the population Gender: Not known Regional integration: Good – CFC works on commodity basis, hence is not country focused, which allow regional focus Governance An issue due to the selection mechanism
The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	No direct reporting on the Norwegian priorities
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	At project level seemingly good
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered	Good – few organizations have been subject to such external assessments as CFC in the 2000s; the quality of the internal M&E is good
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	According to external reviews, CFC has improved performance, but has a governance structure which is cumbersome and not promoting rapid change and efficient performance
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** CFC is working with one of the most important issues for poor people in LDCs; there is an in-house competence in the area built up and working relationthip with commodity boards **Minus:** CFC may be too small to have overriding impact and visibility. It is an organization which in the view of donors is in dire need of fundamental change. The option of winding up of CFC as an independent organization will be subject to discussion in the ongoing reform process. Possible Norwegian support in the future will dependent on the outcome of this process.
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	There is no view on CFC in the Action Plan

4.8 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Background UNCTAD was established in 1964 with the purpose to facilitate the integration of developing economies into the world economy. The primary tasks of UNCTAD is support the trade, investment and development opportunities of developing countries and assist them in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis. UNCTAD, based in Geneva, has a staff of about 400 persons. The organization has no regional offices or country representation. The conference is a subsidiary organ of the United Nations General Assembly. In between the conferences, the Trade and Development Board oversees the activities of the organization. UNCTAD carries out three functions:

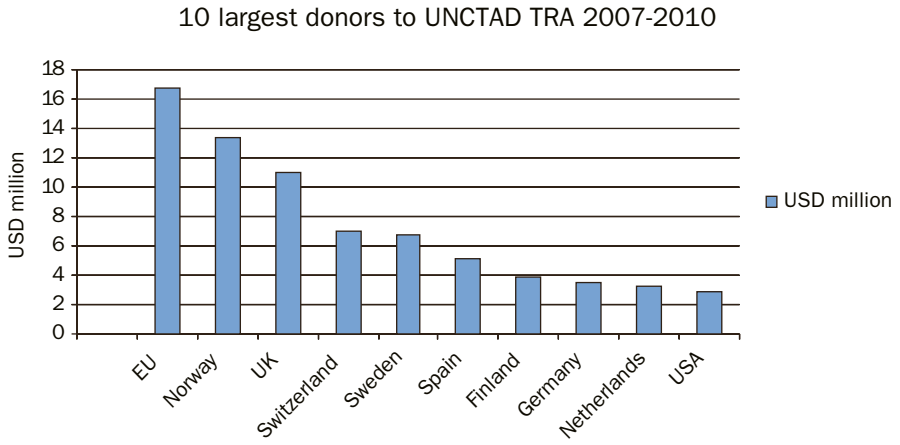
- It is a forum for intergovernmental deliberations, supported by discussions with experts and exchanges of experience.
- It undertakes research, policy analysis and data collection for the debates of government representatives and experts.
- It provides technical assistance to developing countries and economies in transition.

Technical cooperation UNCTAD provides technical assistance in: 1) globalization and development; 2) international trade in goods and services and commodities; 3) investment and enterprise development; 4) trade logistics and technology; and 5) services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency. In financial terms, the most important projects are in trade logistics and of customs automation (through ASYCUDA, see below), and debt management (which is not counted as trade-related). About 80% of UNCTAD's technical assistance is counted as trade-related.

Donor funding Until the early 1990s, UNDP accounted for over 80% of the budget for UNCTAD's technical assistance. Since then there has been a dramatic shift as UNDP's contributions have declined and donor trust funds have expanded. Since the mid- 2000s trust funds account for about 90% of UNCTAD's technical assistance.[73] The most important donors are the EU, Norway and the United Kingdom as shown in the figure below.[74] It is noteworthy that developing counties contribute to UNCTAD's funds for financing technical assistance with about USD 10 million annually. Such funding is often elements of multilateral bank financed projects.

73 UNCTAD (2009) *Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing.*
74 UNCTAD (2011): *Review of the Technical Cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing.*

Figure 12. The largest donors to UNCTAD 2007-10



Source: UNCTAD 2011

Performance UNCTAD has a prolific project portfolio with some 200 - 250 technical assistance projects ongoing annually. The large and fragmented portfolio has caused donors to put pressure on UNCTAD to rationalize its work in order to increase transparency and accountability. Since a few years UNCTAD arranges the portfolio under 18 clusters. The cluster arrangement, which is limited to interregional and regional projects, has reduced the number of such projects to some extent. However, the overall portfolio continues to be fragmented.For example, UNCTAD's largest program, Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), contains currently some 60 country or regional projects, each one with its own funding and donor set-up.[75] Efforts by UNCTAD to have a Global Trust Fund for core funding similar to several other multilateral organizations have not been effective so far as donors have not agreed to such an arrangement..

Outcome and impact UNCTAD issues annually a report on its technical assistance activities. This report, structured along the 18 clusters, provide information on outputs and results (outcome and impact) on the clusters and sub-clusters. Such outcome is by few exceptions general expressions such *as increased awareness*, *improved knowledge*, *deeper understanding*, *stronger interest*, etc among beneficiaries. Evidence of this is rarely or never provided, for example through project evaluations.

In a study for the Netherlands referred to earlier, IOB included two Dutch financed programs by UNCTAD. The evaluation concluded that:

> *"There was respect among representatives of developing countries and developed countries alike for the high quality of UNCTAD's work on competition and investment. However, the use-value of technical papers and regional seminars – in terms of contributing to trade negotiating capacity or strengthening ability to formulate trade policy – could*

75 ASYCUDA assists developing countries by installing its software in customs offices and training customs officers in the use of the system. It is a program which started already in the 1980s covering about 90 countries today. ASYCUDA, accounting for a third of UNCTAD's TA, is under the cluster 'transport and trade facilitation' which in 2009 featured some 70 sub-projects. (UNCTAD (2010): *Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing*.

not be determined. The IOB evaluation showed that UNCTAD was not a transparent and efficient channel for the two programs."[76]

The IOB study found that UNCTAD's reporting tended to be strongly focused on activities such as reports written and training undertaken, not outcome on how these reports were used in policy setting, etc.. Similar conclusions were drawn in an UNCTAD meta-evaluation of 12 programs in 2002.[77]

A different conclusion emerged from a thematic evaluation carried out by UNCTAD with Norwegian support in 2006.[78] This evaluation concluded that:

"UNCTAD's technical assistance and capacity building activities are considered to be very relevant, focused and timely, pro-development and responsive to the changing needs of the beneficiary countries. Accession to the WTO is a very complex and complicated process. Recipient countries have indicated they rely heavily on UNCTAD to provide objective, evidence-based and development-focused support. Evidently UNCTAD has an important advantage compared to other international organizations/ agencies and bilateral technical assistance providers.

Nevertheless, the evaluation concluded that the number of UNCTAD staff involved in the program was very small, and they were overstretched. Predictable financing and availability of more staff in house were seen as necessary ingredients to ensure the future of the program.

An assessment of UNCTAD In 2005 UNCTAD's Secretary General appointed a *Panel of Eminent Persons* with the objective to enhance the development role and impact of the organization. The Panel looked into what could be the best strategies for organization to fulfill its development mission and mandates. The Panel, headed by the former Brazilian Prime Minister, Fernando Cardoso, submitted its report in 2006.[79] In its introduction, the report raised a key issue:

"UNCTAD is at a crossroads, defined by a growing conflict between the reality of its success and the perception of its redundancy. The reality is that UNCTAD has a history of achievements that reflect a fulfillment of its mandate as the premier international organization addressing the problems of trade and development. Yet the perception has undeniably grown that UNCTAD today lacks relevance, effectiveness and impact."

The Panel concluded that UNCTAD over the years had played an essential role, indicating a number of achievements such as the creation of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP); pioneering the issue of trade in services; pioneering the focus on South-South trade, and providing substantial input to commodity agreements as a way of addressing the persistent problems of earnings instability by countries dependent on one or just a few primary products. The Panel argued that

76 IOB 2005.
77 Denis, J.E,, Saha, H. and Griffiths, D. (2002): *Evaluation of capacity building in UNCTAD's Technical Cooperation Activities.*
78 Manickam S., Arthur, F. and Hamim, N. (2006): *Evaluation of UNCTAD's Trade-Related Technical Assistance and Capacity Building on Accession to the WTO.*
79 UN (2006): *Report on the Panel of Eminent Persons: Enhancing the Development Role and Impact of UNCTAD*.

"UNCTAD's reputation has suffered from an inadequate familiarity with the totality of the institution's record of achievements…. Despite UNCTAD's fine record of producing first-rate policy analysis on development issues within its mandate, it has been excluded from shaping the international institutional framework that has evolved to address development issues in a globalizing world."

The Panel indicated several reasons why UNCTAD had become marginalized and perceived as ineffective: a changing developmental landscape since the 1960s; a number of multilateral organizations which had begun providing services in areas where UNCTAD earlier had been largely alone such as WTO, the World Bank and UNDP; and an inability of UNCTAD to adjust to changing circumstances. The Panel provided 21 recommendations, including that "Member States should overcome confrontational attitudes, build trust and create a comfort zone that nurtures a spirit of development partnership and shared success."

The disappointment with UNCTAD in the donor community has not been reduced since the issuing of the Panel's report. UNCTAD has sometimes been seen, including by Norway, as an example of a UN organization unwilling or unable to reform, plagued by internal conflicts and vested interests, and weak leadership.

In-house Monitoring & Evaluation UNCTAD has undertaken on the average three evaluations per year since 2007. The evaluations are administered by an M&E unit in UNCTAD. This unit has only person employed. The evaluations tend to be on *themes*, or covering the work undertaken by one of its divisions, each evaluation thus covering a number of projects. The evaluations are carried out by independent consultants jointly with a donor representative and a person selected among beneficiary countries. UNCTAD is increasingly adding a budget line for evaluations to the project budget, but can also finance evaluations from the Norwegian Trust Fund for Results-based Management which was established in 2004. Evaluation reports should according to UNCTAD's policy be placed on UNCTAD's website. While the site features some 20 evaluations, some of which date back to 1997, the site seems not to have been updated since 2007. UNCTAD intends to strengthening its M&E by adding another staff, and in 2011 the number of evaluations to be undertaken is expected to be tripled as compared to 2010.

Norwegian support UNCTAD has received support from Norway for many years. Norway has a framework agreement with UNCTAD from 2003 governing the support, updated biannually with specifics in terms of projects and allocations. The most recent agreement is covering 2010 -11. Norway's Action Plan 2007 states that:

"Norway will continue and further develop its current efforts through organizations such as UNCTAD,.. Cooperation with UNCTAD and the WTO on capacity building in the LDCs and other low-income countries in relation to trade rules and trade negotiations, including the development of national priorities and positions. Collaboration with UNCTAD will continue on regional ASYCUDA centers in Africa."

Norway was the largest bilateral donor to UNCTAD until a few years back. However, the Norwegian annual contribution was reduced from NOK 13 mill in 2007 to currently NOK 4 million (2010). Hence, there is a clear deviation in funding as compared to the Action Plan.

In UNCTAD's records there are 24 projects with Norwegian funding in the period 2007-2011 which can be defined as trade-related. The portfolio covers both projects for which Norway is the only donor and multi-donor funded projects. There is a wide spread on themes, covering most of the current clusters and with subject matters such as trade facilitation, trade policy, gender and trade, LDC capacity building, bio-fuel trading, environment and trade, climate change, support for an ASYCUDA regional centre in East Africa, investment promotion, and support to some of UNCTAD's annual reports such as the *LDC report* and the *World Investment Report*. The table below summarizes the portfolio.

Table 3. Norwegian supported trade-related assistance projects from 2007

Title	Evaluation
Norway only donor	
Training & Capacity Building in LDCs & Developing Countries on Trade Policies Formulation	*
Support to the UNCTAD/ICC Investment Advisory Council	None
Strengthening Results-based Management of UNCTAD Program	None
Implementing the BioFuels Initiative in LDCs and countries with vulnerable economies	*
Establishment of the Southern and Eastern African Technical ASYCUDA Centre (SEATAC)	None
Adjusting to trade liberalization in selected developing countries: unbinding supply capacity constraints	*
Strengthening participation of selected developing countries in dynamic and new sectors of World Trade	*
Civil Society Participation in the activities of UNCTAD	None
Business Linkages in Zambia	*
Support to INTOSAI activities	None
Enhancing capacities of Lesotho to Mainstream Gender in Trade Policy.	
General Trust Fund on WTO Accession	*
Capacity building in Investment for Development	
Multi-donor	
Capacity-Building in Developing Countries in IIA	*
Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirement and International Trade	None
World Investment Report Series	Surveys
Mid-term Review of Progress in Implementation of the Program of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010	None
Trust Fund for Least Developed Countries: Core Project	*
Examen des Politiques d'Investissement et Program de Suivi	None
Investment Guides and Capacity Building for Least Developed Countries	*
Financing of participation of Experts from Developing Countries and Countries with economies in transition in UNCTAD Expert Group Meetings	None
Training Programs on Restrictive Business Practices	None
Capacity Building in Developing Countries and Least Developed Countries to support their effective participation in the WTO Negotiations Process on Trade Facilitation	None
Training & Capacity Building in LDCs & Developing Countries on Trade Policies Formulation for a better understanding of & Participation in the International Trading System	None

* Reference made to a thematic evaluation which may or may not include the specific project

Results of the Norwegian support UNCTAD provides annually reports on each of the projects that Norway support, either alone or in a multi-donor arrangement. One of these reports is financial, indicating expenditures during the year, the other is a 2-4 page performance report, indicating activities carried out during the year (outputs), and results (outcome and impact), and also an assessment of constraints and issues. The 'results' tend to be outputs (activities undertaken) and when outcome is reported it is of the same character as mentioned above, i.e. *improved, enhanced,* etc.

None of the Norwegian supported projects have been subject for an evaluation per se, albeit references are made for some of them to thematic evaluations. The latter tend to be too broad to say anything on the specific projects. Given the variety of assistance, it is difficult to get an overview of performance. Norway has been one of the critics of UNCTAD, urging the need for reform. During 2010 Norway made an assessment of UNCTAD through a set of meetings with various stakeholders (UNCTAD, donors and recipient countries). The results indicated conflicting views of the usefulness of UNCTAD, but a consensus on persisting management and organizational problems.[80] The declining support since 2007 is a reflection of unhappiness in the ministry with UNCTAD's performance.

The table below contains an assessment of UNCTAD against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of UNCTAD

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	UNCTAD has been subject for criticism in the donor community also by Norway. This is reflected in declining funding by Norway recent years. Evaluation reports of UNCTAD's TRA gives conflicting views. It is not evident that UNCTAD provide 'less value for money' than other multilateral organizations in TRA. However, the fragmentation of the portfolio, UNCTAD's reporting system and lack of specific evaluations makes it difficult to get a picture of the results and makes administration of the UNCTAD portfolio cumbersome.
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: good – UNCTAD is an old, specialized entity in TRA; providing a broad spectrum of services; through a demand-driven portfolio, these projects should reflect existing issues in partner countries. However, other organizations, especially the World Bank and WTO are now doing some of same work. UNCTAD appreciated in developing countries Efficiency: no benchmarks to compare with; no cost analysis Effectiveness: Unclear (see above) Value for money: Unclear Norwegian additionality: Strong, as one of the key and most active donors

80 Norwegian MFA (2010): *UNCTAD – en organisasjon i forvitring?*

Criteria	Assessment
The competence of the organization to implement with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: Good; the portfolio approach allows projects with a good focus on LDCs. Norway can select in a menu of projects annually. About half the portfolio focuses on LDCs. Gender: fair, several projects with this focus Regional integration: Fair Governance: Unclear
The competence of the organization to report on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	UNCTAD provides both general annual report and specific reports annually on all Norwegian funded projects. Reporting is not systemic on the Norwegian priority issues. The reporting is annual with no historical information
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	Outputs: Good -There is a focus on outputs and activities in the reporting with details provided Outcome: Poor – No system to set up to assess outcome, except for infrequent independent evaluations of a small share of the portfolio. Impact: Unknown Quality of reporting: Unsatisfactory – it is complex in order to satisfy UN, finance and donors; not user-friendly; difficult for a donor to get a good grasp on performance
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered	Weak – the M&E function small; no evaluation of Norwegian financed projects
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	System is in place, but UNCTAD is a complex bureaucracy; the M&E unit is very small. The overall impression in the donor community is that UNCTAD is unable or unwilling to reform
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** UNCTAD has 30 years of experience as a specialist organization on trade-related assistance, for many years when there was little interest by other organizations for the subject matter; evaluations of discrete projects tend to indicate positive results and well implemented projects; there are specialist and well performing programs such as ASYCUDA; Norway has a long history with UNCTAD and is respected by the organization; Norway has potential leverage for change. UNCTAD has a strong backing among developing countries. **Minus:** UNCTAD perceived as a unreformed UN bureaucracy with weak management structure, conflicting interests among stakeholders; a cumbersome and not user-friendly project portfolio structure and reporting system; among the 'service providers' in trade related assistance today, UNCTAD is perceived as 'old-fashioned'.
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	Thematically UNCTAD scores well; The actual financial allocations by Norway are not coherent with the Plan.

4.9 Advisory Centre for WTO Law

Background The Advisory Centre on WTO Law was established in 2001 with the purpose "to enable developing countries to better understand their rights and obligations in the WTO, and to provide them with an equal opportunity in the WTO dispute settlement proceedings." ACWL provides three types of services:

- general legal advice on WTO law;
- support to parties and third parties in the dispute settlement process; and
- training on WTO law.

The services are provided free of charge, except for support in disputes when a highly subsidized fee is charged. ACWL is a small, Geneva-based organization, currently employing 11 persons of which 9 are lawyers.

Donor funding ACWL's operating budget is currently in the order of CHF 3 million (USD 3,75 million) per annum. All of the operating costs are financed by 11 donor countries. These are Norway and the other Scandinavian countries, UK, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, Netherlands, Ireland and, since 2010 Australia. Developing countries can become members against a fee which is determined by the GDP of the country. Membership is a requirement for utilizing ACWL's services. LDCs, however, can utilize ACWL's service free of charge. When ACWL was established an Endowment fund was created with the purpose that the rent from the fund would pay for ACWL's operations in the long run. This has not yet happened.

Performance Currently, the Centre delivers annually some 200 legal advice (not counting shorter consultations over the phone), assists members in 5-6 dispute settlements (each dispute takes normally 1-2 years), and provides training to about 30 persons (6 months course in Geneva). The output of the Centre has increased over the years; for example, the number of legal opinions has doubled from less than 100 in 2006. Since the beginning of the Centre, support in dispute settlements has provided in some 40 cases. A substantial number of these cases concern disputes between developing countries. ACWL sees as one of its main results that it often discourages parties to initiate a formal dispute process, hence – in the opinion of the Centre – is advice avoid unnecessary legal costs and other costs associated with a dispute.

Outcome and impact ACWL assesses the results of its capacity building in terms of training in similar ways as many donor-supported training programs, i.e. through post-training surveys. These surveys indicate a common high degree of satisfaction by the trainees. ACWL also conduct surveys on an annual basis of its clients who have sought legal advice from the Centre. Also these give overall good remarks of the professionalism and quality of ACWL. There are so far no efforts of pursuing results at outcome or impact level. On the request by Canada, one of the main funders, ACWL is currently developing a log frame system.

Providing services to the countries with the presumably weakest position in the trade agreement system – the LDCs – is a key justification for ACWL. However, these countries only marginally request services from the Centre. Of 43 dispute settlements in which ACWL directly or indirectly have been engaged in sine 2001,

only two concern LDCs, Bangladesh and Chad. Of the 200+ advice services provided in 2010, 14% were provided to LDCs. Latin American countries clearly dominate the demand for services, accounting for more than half of both legal opinions and assistance in dispute settlements, as indicated in the table below, while Sub-Sahara Africa is very poorly represented. This is not a deliberate choice of ACWL, but reflecting the demand on its services. It also a reflection of LDCs and Africa's marginal position in world trade. A few countries feature strongly in the dispute settlement services, first and foremost Thailand which has used ACWL services in 9 cases in disputes primarily with USA (6) and the EU (2).

Table 4. Outputs of ACWL

Region	Legal opinions 2010	Participation in dispute settlements 2001-2010
Sub-Sahara Africa	2	1
Asia	54	20
North Africa and Western Asia	12	1
Latin America	113	21
LDC (as a group)	21	--
Total	**206**	**43**

Sources: data provided by ACWL for this review, and ACWL annual report 2010

Evaluation of ACWL The centre was evaluated in 2003 on the initiative of the Netherlands.[81] The report, covering the first two years of the Centre's existence, concluded that ACWL responded fast to requests for its legal services and had been able to produce a substantial number of outputs, indications that ACWL operates efficiently. The study further concluded that the effectiveness of ACWL was good "as it has contributed to increased knowledge of delegates in the field of WTO law, and also increased the capacity of the beneficiaries to participate in dispute settlement proceedings."

In a review 2009 of AWCL in the context of WTO dispute settlement, professor Chad Brown concluded that AWCL is performing a needed services for developing countries, especially for companies which otherwise would not have been able to afford the legal market fees:[82]

> *Theory and early evidence on ACWL activities in WTO enforcement cases suggests that it is playing a critical role. Although the ACWL has not yet been able to spread WTO enforcement access to new countries that do not have prior experience in the DSU (Dispute Settlement Understanding system) evidence on how developing countries are using its services indicates it is improving enforcement in instances in which the market access at stake for exporters in poor countries is too small to make market-provided legal counsel a practical option.*

81 IOB (2004): *Evaluation of Trade-Related Technical Assistance. Three Geneva Based Organizations: ACWL, AITIC and QUNO.*
82 Brown, C. (2009): *Self-enforcing trade – Developing countries and WTO dispute settlement.*

Norwegian support Norway was one of the countries behind the creation of ACWL in 2001. Norway has also been and continues to be a main donor to ACWL. Norway, through the mission in Geneva, is seen by ACWL as an active, committed supporter. The Norwegian support to ACWL on an annual basis is about NOK 2, million, or about 10% of ACWL's budget. In the Action Plan for Trade of 2007, Norway reiterates it support to ACWL, stating that Norway will "contribute towards strengthening the ACWL's work providing legal advice to LDCs and other developing countries, and assistance in dispute settlement proceedings in the WTO." Norway has pursued this in its support to ACWL since 2007. However, ACWL scores poorly on some of Norways' key concerns, focus on LDCs and Africa, and on gender.

The table below contains an assessment of ACWL against the criteria given in the ToR.

Summary of the review of AWCL

Criteria	Assessment
The experience and results of Norwegian support for trade-related assistance	ACWL is considered an effective, small, specialized professional organization. Surveys conducted by ACWL, donor assessments, and a 2003 evaluation give all good remarks. Norway provides core funding, hence no attribution possible of the Norwegian funds per se.
Evaluation criteria	Relevance: fair – function in terms of trade agreements, however marginally including LDCs and Sub Sahara Africa Efficiency: improving – no benchmarks to compare with Effectiveness: good, given the mandate Value for money: difficult to assess Norwegian additionality: Fair, one of the key donors and initiator
The competence of the organization to **implement** with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	LDC's: ACWL has a poor targeting on LDCs reflecting the demand for its services and LDCs' limited role in global trade Gender: there is no explicit gender dimension in AWCL's work, Regional integration: regional trade disputes feature frequently: Governance: indirect
The competence of the organization to **report** on performance with a focus on the priority areas in Norwegian trade-related assistance	Reporting not aligned to Norwegian priorities
The quality assurance system and result-based system in the organization	Outputs; good records of outputs Outcome: Simple method for assessment, based on surveys with fairly low degree of response; Impact: Unknown; methodological problems considerable Quality of reporting: clear an concise annual report
Reliability and validity of the results-information delivered	No independent evaluation of results since 2003; however, indirect evidence in research studies

Criteria	Assessment
To what extent the organization is a 'learning organization' using feed-back from results-reporting in order to improve performance	There is a clear process of professional development with the experience in ACWL. Surveys play a part in the learning.
The strong and weak sides of the organization as channels for Norwegian trade support	**Plus:** Small, specialized, professional services in demand; fair degree of additionality by Norway; active role in leadership; good reflection of Nordic values' **Minus:** administrative intensive – small budget; low visibility due to AWCL's special character; poor targeting on some of Norwegian special concerns (LDC, gender);
Coherence with Action Plan 2007	Continuous support, but weakness on Norway's special concerns and geographical focus, especially LDC and Africa

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Low priority, yet a key funder

Norway does not have trade development as a key theme in its development assistance and allocates a mere 0,5% of its total ODA to trade-related technical assistance. Yet Norway is one of the most important of all donors in provision of funds for trade-related technical assistance to the multilateral organizations and programs. Norway has a persistently high level of funding to all major organizations and programs in this field, both before and after the Action Plan. As described in the previous chapter, in terms of actual disbursements Norway is number one donor to the currently most central program, the EIF; Norway has until recently been the most important donor to UNCTAD, and one of the 3-4 major donors to UNIDO, ITC, WTO, CFC, ACWL and the World Bank's MTDF-TD. Not only is Norway a most significant donor to these organizations and programs, but also one which as of policy provides un-earmarked funds when this is possible. A conclusion is that there is a discrepancy between perception and reality in Norway in the sense of its role in trade-related assistance. Norway could have a higher profile and visibility in trade development than currently is the case should the government so wish.

5.2 Norway and the Aid for Trade Agenda

Norway is not aligned to AfT A feature of the Norwegian trade-related assistance noticed earlier in this report is that it is not aligned to the Aid for Trade agenda. Since 2006, the donor community is pursuing a broadening of the Aid for Trade concept to include 'behind the border constraints' in the form of building productive capacity in agriculture, industry, finance etc, and in infrastructure essential for economic activities ands trade, such as roads, ports, tele-communication and power. The Norwegian Aid for Trade Action Plan of 2007 – while acknowledging the broad agenda – is focused on the 'old' Trade-related Technical Assistance concept. This is also reflected in Norway's reporting on Aid for Trade since the plan was issued, on Norad's homepage, in the Ministry's internal reporting as well as in the ToR for this study. Yet, in the global context of Aid for Trade Norway is an active party and reports on the broader agenda.[83] Thus, there is a lack of policy coherence.

Not systematic reporting on Aid for Trade, whether narrow or broad Norwegian level of funding for TRTA has increased considerably from the pre-Plan period as shown earlier in this report. It appears, however, that the current figures are under-reporting actual trade-related assistance. Thus, a considerable share of the

83 This is reflected, for example, in the WTO Aid for Trade review 2011. Of the four case stories on 'results' of the Aid for Trade submitted to WTO b y Norway all were under category 2 and 3, none under category 1. UNCTAD, on the other hand, in submission of some of its case stories chose several Norway funded TRA projects in category 1.

support for private sector development which Norway is pursuing would fit under the old TRTA definition 'trade development'.

The same form of under-reporting also applies in the OECD's reporting on Norway's Aid for Trade disbursements category 2-3. According to this data base, since 2006 Norway has disbursed at a level of USD 400-500 million per annum. These figures, indicating that Norway's total Aid for Trade would be in the order of 10% of Norway's total ODA, are likely to be considerable underestimates of the 'real' Norwegian Aid for Trade disbursements. Major categories of Norwegian aid would classify as Aid for Trade, for example in programs such as Oil for Development, support in fisheries, in the power sector, and most of its private sector development, etc. As noted earlier in this report, the average Aid for Trade among OECD countries is today about 25% of the total official development assistance. There is little to indicate that Norway has a substantially lower percentage than other donors.

Benefits to align with Aid for Trade It seems worthwhile for Norway to adjust both its policy and its reporting to the broader Aid for Trade Agenda. Norway is an active partner in the WTO reviews and fully committed to Aid for Trade. By aligning with the broad Aid for Trade Agenda, Norway will be in a better position to utilize the ongoing learning in Aid for Trade. A consolidated reporting would not only be of value for Norway's reporting under the OECD Creditor Reporting System, but also, and more important, would be essential for Norway's policy setting and policy follow-up. Linking investments for example in power to policy and capacity building in trade might improve the effectiveness of both.

An alignment will require a more systematic marking of Norway's ODA in the CRS by the various entities managing Norwegian development assistance, i.e. the Ministry, Norad, the embassies and entities such as FK Norway. An alignment would also require an up-date of the Aid for Trade Action Plan.

5.3 A fragmented trade support system

Plethora of projects The trade-related assistance provided by the multilateral organizations and programs included in this review comprises a very large number of on-going projects and activities. Taken together the organizations reviewed probably provide annually more than thousand projects in capacity building, institutional strengthening, training, studies, reports, advisory services etc. It is unavoidable that there are overlaps, duplications and redundancies in these given that a dozen organizations are involved in similar TRTA activities and there is a lack of a central coordinating mechanism or informational portal. From a donor perspective it is very difficult to determine an effective portfolio of support in Aid for Trade, avoiding for example, that different suppliers provide more or less the same training and capacity building on WTO law. From Norway's perspective, the problem has added dimensions. First, the aid management is split between different entities in Norway, increasing the risk of duplication. Second, Norway prefers core funding of the organizations, hence has little or no direct control or even information of what is

financed at project or country-level. An initiative was launched at the WTO Third Review of Aft in July 2011 called the Trade Transparency Initiative by seven multilateral organizations, including the World Bank, ITC, UNCTAD and WTO. The purpose of this initiative would be to increase transparency in the global trade system including trade flows, policies, tariffs, etc. It will also include information on on-going and planned trade-related projects.[84] Norway might consider review this initiative to determine whether support would be required and useful.

Is multilateral support reducing transaction costs? The plethora of trade-development assistance by the multilateral organizations might be seen as a means of servicing many needs and a large number of countries in a coordinated fashion. However, it might also have a different explanation. Multilateral organizations are competing for donor resources, and a large menu of projects is might be a strategy to attract many donors with varying priorities. Popular themes by donors, such as gender and south-south trade, stimulate development of projects to respond to this demand. The Norwegian Action Plan for Aid for Trade sees channeling of its support through the multinational organizations as a means of reducing the administrative burden on recipient countries, i.e. reduce their transaction costs. That might not be the result, however. The Norwegian annual allocation of about NOK 100 million for trade-related assistance through multilateral organizations might in fact directly or indirectly support thousand or more specific TRTA projects. It is highly unlikely that a bilateral portfolio would be as scattered on many projects as that.[85] There might be other reasons for channeling funds through multilateral agencies, such as limited own bilateral implementing capacity, a desire to strengthen the international system and to build high-level technical competencies, etc. Transaction cost consideration, however, is not a good justification the way the system works today.

5.4 A not so transparent system

What are the results? Another consequence of the plethora of generally smaller projects is the ability to determine results and relative effectiveness. While the multilateral organizations and programs generally are good in recording their activities and their outputs, the reporting on outcome and impact leaves much to be desired. This was a general conclusion by the evaluations undertaken by OECD, the Netherlands, etc. referred to in chapter 2 and it is reinforced by the findings of this study. There are several reasons for this. First, independent reviews and evaluations of the TRTA projects carried out are few relative to the large number of projects and activities undertaken. Second, to a large extent weak results-reporting on outcome and impact is due to the nature of TRTA. Projects are small, not allowing more elaborate M&E systems of cost-reasons; attribution by small projects beyond statements such as 'increased knowledge,' etc., is often not possible. But there are other reasons as elaborated below.

Focus on reports and information Multilateral organizations have in terms of trade-technical assistance overall a tendency to finance research, studies, reports and similar knowledge-based outputs. To what extent such outputs are effective

84 While the initiative was launched in July 2011, there is no updated information available on the web as of mid October 2011 on its content.

85 It could be argued that many of these projects have several donors, hence there is an administrative reduction for the recipient from that point of view. But, a considerable number of projects are financed by Norway only.

means for improved trade, more employment and reduction of poverty are unclear. The capacity of poor countries with often weak administrative structures to absorb and productively use all the knowledge produced in the donor system might be a major bottleneck. A person in Uganda, for example, interested in what the World Bank has on trade in his or her country, would find near 50,000 hits on the World Bank's website on Uganda + trade. As was the result of the IF the basic diagnostic studies produced which should be a basis for various action-oriented assistance, were not sufficiently operational, not prioritized, etc. There is a risk that this is a systemic problem TRTA, i.e. providing outputs more geared for academic-oriented international organizations than practitioners on the ground in poor countries.

Underdeveloped evaluation systems Monitoring and evaluation is not a strong feature in several of the multilateral organizations, in spite of much attention to this subject in the donor community for decades. For example, in UNCTAD, one person is dealing with all of M&E for the organization in spite of the fact that various reports have been critical of UNCTAD's poor reporting on outcome for many years. The M&E unit in ITC has basically been without manning for a year and the evaluations of ITC's prolific program are very far in between. The World Bank has its well resourced Operations Evaluation Department, but OED is dealing with all evaluations for the Bank, while for the MTDF-TD, one consultant was utilized to evaluate the USD 30 million fund covering hundreds of projects. He had to rely mostly on in-house reporting of varying quality, besides himself seemingly more inclined to see how the Bank was going to extent its trade-related assistance, than critically review the 'value for money' of past assistance. The establishment of an operational M&E system in the EIF has taken years and is not yet fully operational four years since the start of EIF, in spite of the fact IF showed so poor results.

The recent focus on results-based management, which all of the multilateral organizations today claim is under way, risks of being more a buss-word than reality at least so far. As a result, what is perceived by donors as effective organizations and non-effective appear more based on image than on evidence 'on the ground'. Some fare well in this respect, such as ITC and the World Bank, reflecting overall management style. Others fare quite badly, such as UNCTAD and CFC. But whether the World Bank in fact is providing better value per dollar in trust funds for trade than UNCTAD is yet to be proven by evidence.

5.5 Which organizations are most effective as channels for Norwegian support?

A key question for this study as identified by the ToR is to "suggest which organizations that are most effective to use for Norwegian trade-related assistance, and indicate whether this analysis justifies a change in the Norwegian priorities of channels for the future." The answer to the question will be disappointing. From the evidence of evaluations and reviews of the organizations, as well as from evaluations of their projects, it is very difficult to draw robust conclusions whether one multilateral organization is more effective and provide better value for money than the other. DFID has undertaken bold efforts to compare different multilateral organizations as to their provision of 'value for money' referred to earlier in this report. While these studies have had far reaching consequences for British aid, the reviews have

not been focused on trade, however, and in fact covering only one of those organizations of relevance for the Norwegian trade support. Furthermore, the quite different conclusions in these reports concerning UNIDO probably more reflect changing political attitudes in the British government than deteriorating performance of UNIDO.

Other broad organization-focused evaluations and reviews give no clear indication of relative effectiveness of the organizations either. Those carried out for the ITC and WTO show a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. In respect of UNCTAD – an organization which have been subject for much criticism in the donor community for years – the Panel of Eminent Persons reviewing UNCTAD in 2006 came to strong defense of the organization, and rather put some of its critic on a 'confrontational donor community'. Also, the evaluations on specific themes by UNCTAD tend to provide positive results. CFC, another organization under fire from the donor community, has been defended by independent consultants reviewing its operations.

5.6 Consequences for Norwegian trade-related assistance

Short of robust evidence on the relative effectiveness of the different channels for Norwegian trade-related support, a summary is provided below for each one those reviewed with recommendation on how Norway is suggested to act in a second phase of the Action Plan. The organizations/programs are presented in order of their current importance in Norwegian financial flows.

EIF is a top priority in the Action Plan, well reflected in Norwegian funds to the program since then, and also Norway's current position as a member of the Board. EIF is a bold, ambitious multi-donor, multi-agency effort focusing on those countries most in need of support, and structured fully in line with the Paris Agenda. But whether EIF will deliver value for money in terms of concrete results on capacity to trade by the LDCs is yet too early to determine. Taking into account the full 14 years period since the IF was established, the record is quite discouraging. Our recommendation is that Norway should take a cautious approach to the EIF, delay further disbursements and carefully assess the emerging results beyond building implementation structures at the centre or at the recipient country level.

UNIDO Norway has established a good partnership with UNIDO in trade-related assistance, and UNIDO appears to be delivering value for money in the field of standards and quality, an area where the organization has a unique competence internationally. The handling of UNIDO's project portfolio by Norad is a plus as it allows integration with Norad's other PSD work. Norway is also given very good visibility by UNIDO, and Norway seems to be able to play an active role in the overall organizational development of the organization. Thus, there is clear additionality in Norway's channeling of TRTA through UNIDO. There is a good mixture of country-specific projects on standards and on a 'global goods'. Amongst all the channels of Norwegian Aid for Trade funding, UNIDO stands out as the one where Norway has most additionality.

ITC has a long record in trade-related assistance with a focus on Trade Support Institutions and enterprises. Being a fairly small organization in an international con-

text, it is flexible and business-like, good in responding to donor priorities such as gender. Norway has a long record of support through ITC. There is today no longer a strong argument for Norwegian soft earmarking, as the Norway's priorities (gender, south-south trade etc.) are mainstreamed in the donor community and well integrated into ITC's work. An alternative is rather a mixture of Window 1 and window 2 funding, which would allow Norway to tailor its support better, providing better accountability and visibility. Norway should put pressure to have some of the priority area work subject for an independent evaluation.

The World Bank is the key player in development assistance both from a resource- and knowledge point of view. The MTDF-TD has greatly contributed to that the Bank also can play this role in trade-related technical assistance. There is a value with this in the sense that the Bank can integrated technical assistance elements such as trade policy to large-scale investments in, for example, trade-related infrastructure. The MTDF-TD is closing, but the Bank will deepen its support in trade-related assistance through continuing trust fund(s) for this purpose and through its new Trade Strategy (2011-2021). There is a justification for Norway to participate in such efforts, also for Norway's own learning in Aid for Trade.

WTO is a central player in trade development as the key in the multilateral trade agreements. Its technical assistance activities in capacity building and training are specialized, albeit some of it also carried out by other organizations. Continued Norwegian support to WTO's technical assistance is justified as WTO is likely to play an increasingly important role in this, especially as a lead agency in the Aid for Trade agenda. We suggest that Norway in cooperation with other key donor(s) puts pressure on WTO to focus more on institutional needs and development, than maintaining a prolific short-term course portfolio.

CFC is small multilateral organization with low visibility and in crisis due to donor fatigue for funding beyond 2012 based on a perceived low relevance of the organization. Norway has been one of the key funders of the organization, but Norway is also one of the most active donors to reform CFC. While CFC was established on a incorrect premise – a buffer stock arrangement originating in the 1970s, issues in commodities are today more significant than ever due to escalating prices and a scramble by investors such as China for large scale investments in land, not least in LDCs in Africa with unknown consequences. The timing to reduce commodity-focused work in Aid for Trade might not be opportune from this point of view, whether CFC is part of the game or not.

UNCTAD Norway has been UNCTAD's most significant contributor for its technical assistance activities, but is radically reducing this since 2007, a shift not reflected in the Action Plan. There are problems with UNCTAD's operations of several reasons: other organizations are infringing on UNCTAD's traditional turf such as WTO and the World Bank. UNCTAD is a slowly reforming organization in a rapidly changing global economy, and operates with a wide and rather non-transparent portfolio due to a weak reporting system, an outdated portfolio-management system and weak evaluation mechanism. However, it is an organization which seemingly has the support of many developing countries. There might be a rationale to have a coun-

terweight to the increasingly dominant World Bank in trade policy analysis and advice. There might be reasons to re-assess the current Norwegian trend of declining funding to UNCTAD and rather focus on the reform process on the organization, but with a different strategy. We suggest that the current project portfolio support to UNCTAD provided through MFA is shifted to Norad which, as an organization, has a better capacity to deal with complex portfolios of projects. Norway has the opportunitity to have considerable additionality towards UNCTAD, streamlining its prolific portfolio for more concentration to key areas of UNCTAD's competencies, in a similar way which has taken place in UNIDO.

ACWL is an example of a positive role played by Norway at the creation of this small, specialized organization. ACWL is generally seen as an effective facility. In terms of focus on support for LDCs and Africa in line with Norwegian development orientation, ACWL has so far not been an effective channel mainly as LDCs and African nations have not requested ACWL's services. If Norway continues its support, we suggest a focus on making ACWL more independent of continuous donor funding, partly by an expansion of the Endowment fund, partly by encouraging ACWL to increase the charges for its services to non-LDC clients.

Table 5 Summary of the strong and weak dimensions of the multilateral channels

Organization/ Program	Strengths	Weaknesses
EIF	High profile, perfectly in line with the Paris agenda; 100% LDCs; many donors behind it	Slow implementation so far; a cumbersome structure with risk of high administrative costs; very poor record of previous multi-donor support (IF)
UNIDO	Specialized in standards and quality, improving on delivery, excellent relationship with Norway. The organization for which Norway has clear additionality	A narrow supply and rather complex portfolio to manage
ITC	Strong enterprise-focus, a flexible and business-like organization, some good global goods products	Enterprise focus might be myopic; poor record recently in evaluations
World Bank	The flag-ship in development, very strong knowledge-base, fast moving to a lead position in trade development; possibilities to deliver on the whole Aid for Trade Agenda	When the Bank gets it wrong, the effect can be damaging for the recipient due to the Bank's (increasing) dominance, risk of being too academic in TRTA?
WTO	Specialized on WTO Law, long record of training products related to this; lead position in Aid for Trade	Too much routine in its delivery? Too many small, short-term activities with questionable or at least not measurable outcome

Organization/ Program	Strengths	Weaknesses
CFC	Commodity-specialization, generally the most important exports for LDCs	Too small and too weak financially, donor fatigue and acute risk of being closed down
UNCTAD	Long record on trade-related assistance when there was no one else. Specialized products such as ASYCUDA and investment promotion. Supported by developing countries	Perceived as un-dynamic and reform-resistant, its service areas being eaten away by other organization; large, heterogenic portfolio, poor results-based reporting
ACWL	Small specialized and stream-lined entity	So far not servicing LDCs and Africa to any extent du to limited demand

5.7 IFC – The invisible Aid for Trade organization

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is not much visible in the Aid for Trade agenda, similar to other Development Finance Institutions (DFIs). This is line with the fact that the CRS does not include commercial investments without subsidy element that can be counted as ODA. But IFC is increasingly implementing donor-funded technical assistance programs, and also provides own funds from profits for this purpose. Especially technical assistance related to the World Bank/IFC's 'Doing Business' (DB) index and reports, reflecting the Business Environment in partner countries has become an essential tool also in improving conditions for regional or global trade. An essential aspect of technical assistance projects linked to DB is that has established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess reforms, besides create a transparent international benchmark which tends to trigger political will for reform.[86] Norway supports IFC in its technical assistance work which should be recognized in this context, for example in a potential second version of the Action Plan. Thus, there is ongoing Norwegian support to IFC's work in trade logistics under the Norwegian Trust Fund for Private Sector and Infrastructure, various regional IFC technical assistance facilities for trade finance, quality assurance and trade promotion, and also support to IFC's Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS).

5.8 Key strategic considerations for Norwegian effectiveness

We believe that a key criterion for the Norwegian trade-related assistance through the multilateral organizations is the degree of additionality the Norwegian funds are likely to have. It could be argued that if there is no additionality in quantity or quality, the Norwegian support is wasted. Prior to decisions to allocate funds to the multilateral organizations for trade-related assistance we suggest therefore that Norway considers three strategic questions which are related to additionality:

- Wide spread support or concentration?
- Earmarking or not?
- The balance between multilateral vs bilateral support

86 For an evaluation of ITC's Business environment reform projects see for example Lindahl et al (2011): *Meta evaluation – the role and effectiveness of SECO cooperation in business environment reform*.

Concentration or wide spread support As evident in this report Norway has a wide spread support to the multilateral organizations. There is a tendency in the donor community towards concentration of the assistance which also includes channeling of funds to multilateral organizations. The argument is that concentration reduces the administrative burden and strengthens the potential impact of the governing role. As a result, there is a risk that most donors concentrate on the same organizations with the result of reduced additionality, also of possible over-funding of some as today is the case of the EIF. Given these trends we believe that a continued wide-spread support can be an effective strategy for Norway, especially if is includes agencies which of one reason or the other are marginalized by other donors (such as UNIDO and UNCTAD.)

Earmarking or not? Norway has a policy of un-earmarked support for core functions of the organizations to a greater extent than most donors. There is a trade-off in this. Non-earmarked funds give the organization much better options to set its own priorities, plan its activities and allocate funds where it sees it is most cost-effective. As such it is likely that non-earmarking contributes to overall organizational effectiveness if such funding is vigorously followed up. If not, it can rather contribute to organizational ineffectiveness. On the other hand, such core funding gives the donor much less visibility, making accountability towards its own constituency more difficult. There appears to be certain disappointment of low visibility of the Norwegian support in the Norwegian aid administration. For example, while Norway for many years have prioritized gender in its development assistance, other donors get more 'credit' for this through more recent profiling in its support. We believe that Norway might shift the balance towards more project-support for the purpose of accountability, visibility and effectiveness against Norwegian priorities (see below).

Multilateral support vs bilateral Norway channels about 80% of its trade-related assistance through the multilateral organizations. This is in line with broader policies in Norwegian aid. However, given the strong fragmentation of the multilateral support on many often small technical assistance projects with often weak results-reporting, we believe that a shift to more balanced bilateral-multilateral support could add value to the Norwegian assistance, increase visibility and tailor the support better to Norwegian priorities without adding transaction costs for the recipient countries.

5.9 Pursuing Norwegian priorities

A key question for the study is an assessment to what extent the multilateral organizations *implement* and *report* on Norwegian priority areas, gender, regional trade and good governance (and LDC focus which is an overriding concern). As noted in chapter 4 there is considerable variety amongst the reviewed organizations in this respect. For example, ITC is strong on the gender aspect, while UNIDO and WTO are weak. Regional trade tends to be a focus area for most of the organizations, while governance as such is more an implicit dimension, than explicit, and rarely or never reported. The LDC dimension tends to be well catered for both in implementation and reporting, reflecting that this is a concern of basically the whole donor community. Thus, these four Norwegian priorities are today mainstreamed in the trade-

related development assistance, to such extent that Norway does not need a specific effort in this respect. The focus on gender, for example, could be seen as once a Nordic preoccupation which has permeated throughout ODA today.

Other priorities The Norwegian Action Plan highlights several other priorities. Its support should build upon "fair and responsible trade – e.g. decent labor rights and conditions, and ensure that environmental aspects are taken into account". While not included in the ToR for this study, it is clear that the first dimension hardly at all is an issue dealt with by the multilateral organizations' TRA, nor an issue included in, for example, project evaluations. Norway could provide additionality to the system through a focus on this. Corporate ethical and social responsibility is moving up the agenda in global production and value chains. Such dimensions are not only critical for poverty reduction, but increasingly also a competitive tool in business and potentially among countries. Norway could be in the forefront of this in the trade-related technical assistance

5.10 What happened to the climate?

Even more surprising is that environment overall has a low profile in TRA, even if there are a few specific projects with this focus, for example undertaken by ITC. The issue of impact on *climate* specifically is near non-existing in the TRA discourse. This is remarkable given the dominance the climate issue has had in the global debate under the last decade. Global trade has obviously considerable impact on climate due to transport, production, economic growth, etc.

The Norwegian Action Plan states that

> *"The Action Plan and its implementation will be subject to a thorough assessment after three years. The assessment will consider whether the priorities should be revised, for example by increasing the efforts related to climate change and the environment."*

We believe that Norway could do no better in its trade-related assistance than strongly make such a focus, as no one else seems to be concerned in the donor community, nor in the multilateral organisations. Such a focus would also be coherent with the overall focus of the Norwegian development assistance policy.

5.11 The perspective from a recipient country

This study has taken a supply-oriented approach in line with the ToR. A complement would be to look at the service delivery from a recipient country perspective. How useful are the various projects and services delivered by the multilateral organizations in trade? Which one delivers best value? To what extent does a poor country benefit from the enormous production of trade-related reports, strategies, research, diagnoses, data-bases, and training events that most of the multilateral agency TRA consists of? Which of all the suppliers do stakeholders in a recipient country find useful, efficient and responding to the needs? We believe that a demand-oriented study in one or two key countries, which also could include Norwegian bilateral trade-related assistance would be critical to guide the future Norwegian Aid for Trade support, and possibly also of value in general to the donor community.

5.12 The division of labor in Norway

As elaborated earlier, the Norwegian trade-related technical assistance is split between MFA and Norad, with MFA a the key channel. A clear rationale for the current division is not obvious. However, it might be that support which is delivered as core to the organization fits better in MFA where dialogue with other donors and participation in broad steering groups are key management principles. Norad, on the other hand, seems to have a comparative advantage to deal with project portfolios, requiring a different form of administration, supervision and follow up. MFA, with its very limited manpower and often transfer of personnel might have a disadvantage to deal with complex project portfolios. A suggestion is therefore that trade-related technical assistance through multilateral organizations which is based on project portfolios or is project-based and today handled by MFA (as is the case of UNCTAD) fit better in Norad.

5.13 How could Norway strengthen the multilateral TRA support?

The ToR propose that the study should "suggest how Norwegian trade-related support can help in strengthening the support provided by the multilateral organizations." Our answer has been provided in this chapter.

5.14 Summary of recommendations

We suggest that Norway should:

- Raise the Norwegian 'profile' in Aid for Trade, applying the broad agenda. This will give Norway a better leverage on its relationship with the multilateral organizations.
- Update the current Action Plan for Aid for Trade to focus on the broad AfT agenda and systematically record the Norwegian assistance in all the five Aid for Trade categories, involving all actors in the Norwegian aid structure.
- Continue with Norway's current broad-based support through the multilateral organizations, including those organizations which risk of being marginalized, i.e. UNIDO and UNCTAD, while take a more cautious approach to EIF. The rationale for this is that there is so far no good evidence-base to conclude on the relative aid effectiveness of the various organizations, while, at the same time, donors tend to drive concentration of internal administrative reasons.
- Shift the responsibility for the support to UNCTAD from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Norad which is likely to have better capacity for handling of the complex portfolio, and that Norad is given the responsibility to strengthen UNCTAD from 'below' through the portfolio management.
- Consider the balance of non-earmarked core funding and project funding towards more of the latter in order to achieve better visibility, better accountability towards Norway's own constituency and better prioritizing against Norwegian values.
- Put pressure on the multilateral organizations to increase their efforts for independent evaluations by building out their M&E functions and increasing the transparency in reporting using web-based media (when this is not the case today). Norway might consider provide special allocations for such support as is the case with UNCTAD.
- Focus on essential cross-cutting issues which are marginal or near neglected today both by donors and the multilateral organizations in trade-related assist-

ance, especially *climate* and *environment,* and *social issues* such as labor rights and more broadly corporate social responsibility.

- Initiate a study from a country-perspective of the supply of trade-related technical assistance to determine what is the value for money from the users' perspective, also including the actors in trade, i.e. the business community, in such a review. Such a study could go a long way in determining which multilateral organizations which in fact deliver effective services.
- Review the options of supporting the new multi-organizational Transparency in Trade Initiative in order to increase the transparency in who is doing what and where in trade-related assistance.
- Re-consider the balance between trade-related assistance through multilateral organizations and bilateral support in view of the fact that the former support tends to be fragmented on many small projects often with weak-results reporting and therefore is not fulfilling the rationale of reducing administrative burden on recipient countries.

Annexes

Annex 1
Persons interviewed

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norway, Oslo
Håvard Hugås,

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Oslo
Dag Larsson, Senior PSD-Adviser, PSD-dept.
Elisabeth Sollner, Senior PSD-Adviser, PSD-dept.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland;
Riitta Oksonen, Evaluation department
Ilona Mattila, Evaluation department

ACWL, Geneve
Leo Palma, Deputy Director
Cherise Valles, Senior Counsel
Niall Meagher, Senior Counsel

CFC, Amsterdam
Parvindar Singh, Head, Policy, Programme Management and Evaluation Unit

EIF Secretariat, Geneve
Dororthy Tembo, Executive Director

ITC, Geneve
Elaine Bisson, Senior Executive
Kok Cheng Tan, Chief Financial Management
Miguel Jiménez Pont, Head Evaluation and Monitoring Unit

Triple Line Consultants, London
David Smith, consultant

UNCTAD, Geneve
Maria-Sabina Yétérian-Parisi, Senior Programme Officer
Yuen Ching Ho, Programme Officer Evaluation and Planning Unit

UNIDO, Vienna
Lalith Goonatilake, Director TCB-Branch
Margareta de Goys, Head Evaluation Group

UNOPS, Geneve

Jean-Francois Delteil, Progamme Officer EIF Trust Fund Manager

WTO, Geneve

Jorge Viganó, Head Technical Cooperation Audit Unit

Claude Trolliet, Technical Cooperation Audit Unit

John Beckenridge, Financial Controller, Performance Management

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