

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

10 YEARS of CAPACITY-BUILDING UNDER THE CHINA PROGRAMME

2011 – 2021

The China's LDCs and Accessions Programme

The Government of China and the WTO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 14 July 2011, establishing the China's Least-Developed Countries (LDCs) and Accessions Programme (the 'China Programme'). The Government of China and the WTO review the contents and consider the extension of the MoU on an annual basis.

The China Programme is aimed at strengthening LDCs' participation in the WTO and at assisting Acceding Governments in joining the WTO. The programme supports and finances activities under five pillars:

I. **WTO Accessions Internship Programme;**
II. **Annual China Round Tables on WTO Accessions;**
III. **Increasing participation of LDCs in WTO meetings;**
IV. **South-South dialogue on LDCs and development; and**
V. **LDCs' Trade Policy Review follow-up workshops.**[1]

The implementation of the Programme has jointly been carried out by the Accessions Division (Pillars 1, 2), Development Division (Pillar 3, 4), and the Trade Policy Review Division of the WTO Secretariat (Pillar 5). The Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTC) is responsible for coordination of activities under all Pillars and reporting on the implementation of the Programme.

Pillar I. WTO Accessions Internship Programme

This Internship Programme is intended to develop the capacity of recent graduates and young professionals from developing and LDC Members and Observers to master the WTO rules-based system, in particular WTO accessions, so as to prepare for careers in the fields of trade law, international economics and international relations. Five full-time intern positions are available on an annual basis, for a maximum duration of 10 months.

39 interns - 13 men and 26 women - have participated in the Programme since its launch in 2011, out of which 13 have been from LDCs and 25 from non-LDCs:[2]

1 More background and information on the five pillars can be found here: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/china_programme_e.htm.
2 An overview of former and current participants, including alumni stories, can be found here: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/pillar1_e.htm.

Figure 1

Number of China Programme interns by region (2011-2021)

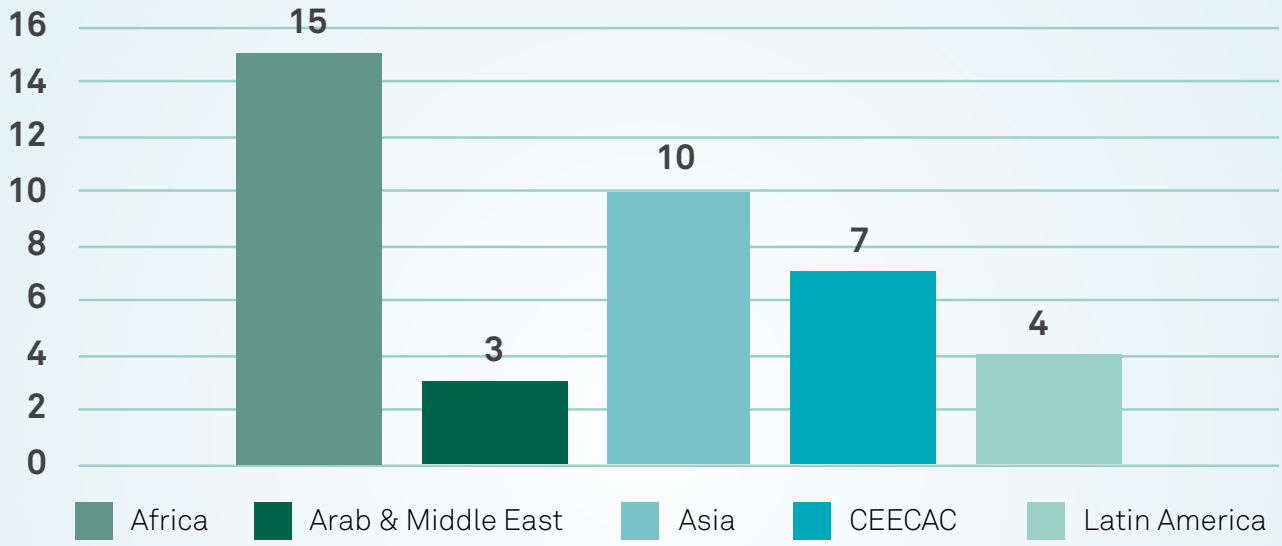
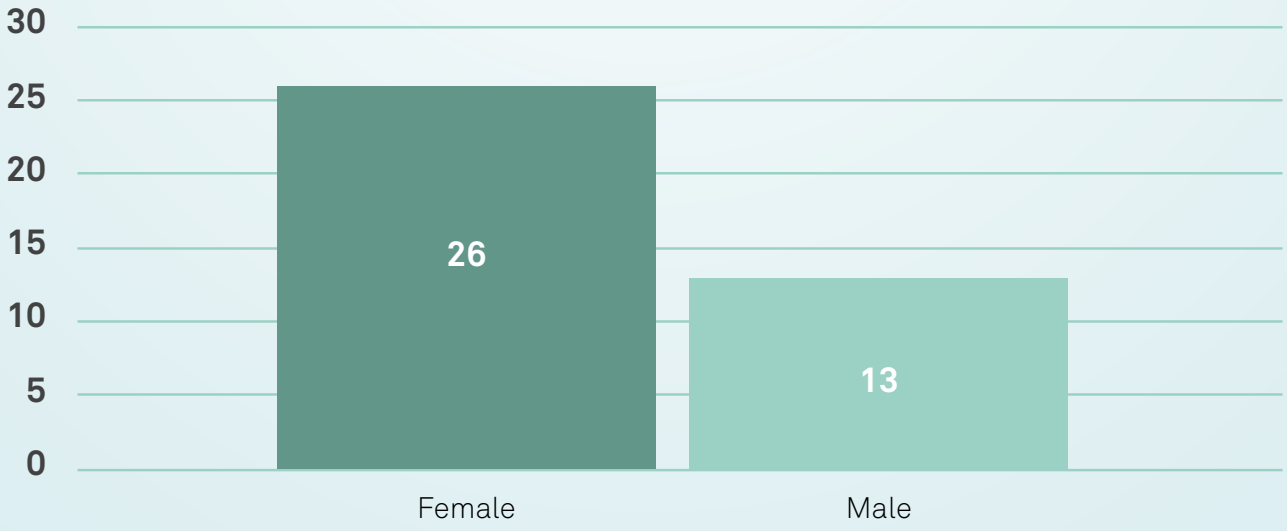


Figure 2

Number of China Programme interns by gender (2011-2021)





List of China Programme interns by region and country

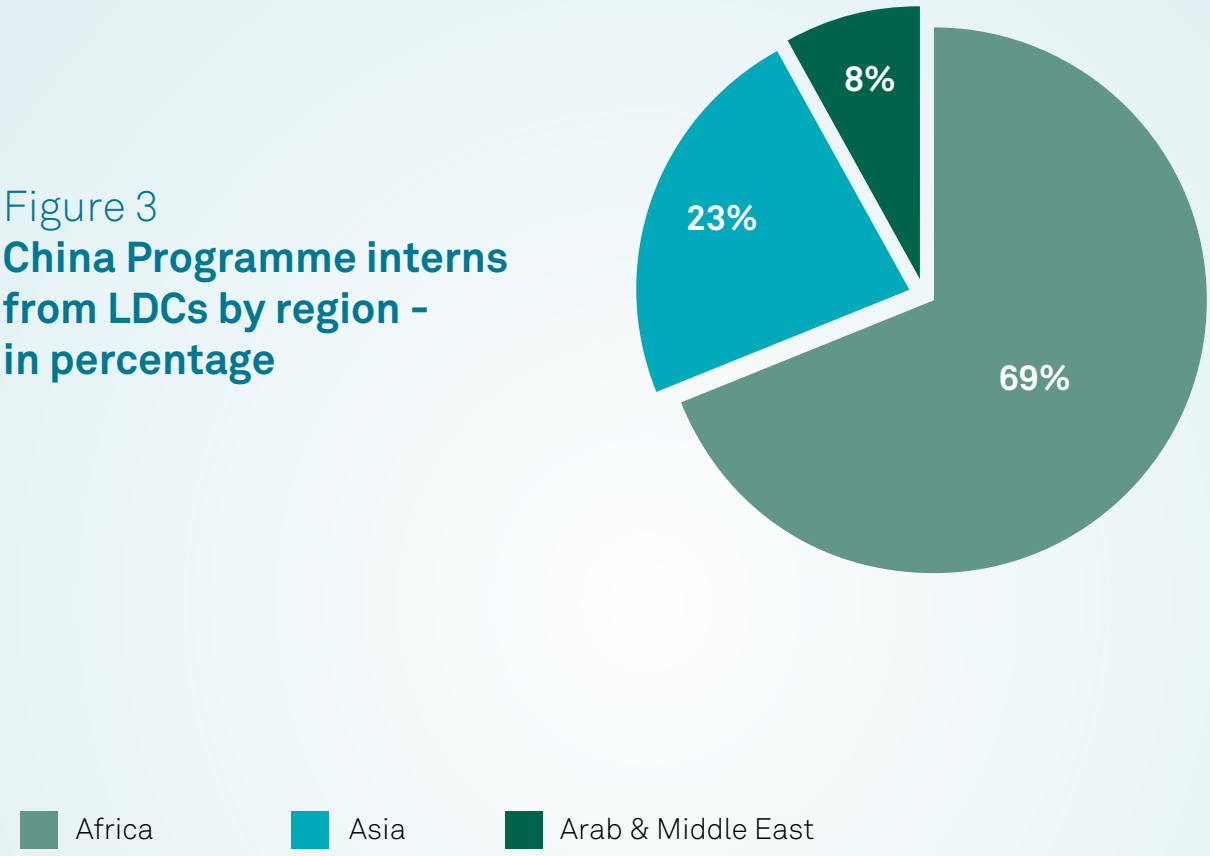
Nationality (by region and country)	Number of interns
Africa	
Angola	1
Ethiopia	2
Ghana	1
Kenya	2
Liberia	1
Mali	1
Nigeria	3
Uganda	3
Zambia	1
Total	**15**
Arab & Middle East	
Iran	2
Yemen	1
Total	**3**
Asia	
Afghanistan	1
Bangladesh	1
India	2
China	4
Viet Nam	1
Timor-Leste	1
Total	**10**
Central and Eastern Europe, Central and the Caucasus	
Azerbaijan	1
Belarus	1
Kazakhstan	1
Montenegro	1
Serbia	1
Tajikistan	1
Uzbekistan	1
Total	**7**
Latin America	
Brazil	2
Colombia	1
Venezuela	1
Total	**4**
Grand Total	**39**



List of China Round Tables and Venues

	Date	Venue
CRT-01	29 May - 1 June 2012	Beijing, China
CRT-02	15-18 October 2013	Luang Prabang, Lao PDR
CRT-03	2-4 June 2015	Dushanbe, Tajikistan
CRT-04	13-14 December 2015	Nairobi, Kenya
CRT-05	20-23 March 2017	Siem Reap, Cambodia
CRT-06	9 December 2017	Buenos Aires, Argentina
CRT-07	26-27 September 2018	Astana, Kazakhstan
CRT-08	4-6 December 2019	Moscow, Russian Federation
CRT-09	11 December 2020, in a virtual format	Geneva, Switzerland
CRT-10	18-20 January 2022, in a virtual format	Geneva, Switzerland

Figure 3
China Programme interns from LDCs by region - in percentage



Testimonials from the participants of the WTO Accessions Internship Programme:



Emilia MALAVOLONEQUE (Angola): *"It has been an enlightening and enriching experience. I appreciate the fact that as trainees, we are given responsibilities that do impact the operation of the division and the institution at large. Every task is challenging and pushes us to the limits of accountability."*



Nosirkhon GOZIKHONOV (Uzbekistan): *"I am very grateful for the unique experience and opportunities provided by the China Programme. Upon completion of the internship, I was able to acquire unparalleled understanding of the complexities of WTO accession process, as well as enhance my communication, diplomacy, teamwork and drafting skills. Along with this, I had an opportunity to be engaged in holding the 4th Working Party meeting on the Accession of Uzbekistan to the WTO, almost 15 years after the last meeting of the Working Party.*

Given the international environment at the WTO, I was also able to meet many interesting people of different nationalities and expand my professional network."



Esau SIMUTOWE (Zambia): *"My experience at the WTO enhanced my understanding of the multilateral trading system and how least developed countries can actively and positively participate in this system."*



Jelena TODIĆ (Serbia): *"The experience allowed me to understand the practical steps a country has to undertake in order to become a WTO Member. I was also lucky to meet many WTO officials with great institutional knowledge and learn from them, as well as to observe how diplomacy is conducted at the WTO.*

I generally think the China Programme is an exceptional idea that adequately addresses the issue of discrimination in accessing opportunities within the framework of international organisations. Had it not been for the allowance I received through it, I would not have been able to conduct the internship in a city as expensive as Geneva. I believe many other WTO Members should follow the lead and establish their own sponsorship for internship programmes. Interning for international organisations should not be a matter of privilege."

Pillar II. Annual China Round Tables on WTO Accessions

Held under different themes, annual China Round Table Meetings on WTO Accessions are organized so as to facilitate and accelerate WTO accessions, and to provide post-accession support, with the emphasis on LDCs. The Round Tables provide a platform for high-level exchanges between acceding governments and WTO members (original and Article XII) on accession- and post-accession-related themes and experiences. So far, ten Round Tables have been held.[3]

CRT-1: Best Practices in WTO Accessions for Least-Developed Countries



Beijing, China, 29 May - 1 June 2012

Outcome: Beijing Statement (WTO document WT/L/856, WT/COMTD/LDC/20, WT/ACC/LAO/35 and WT/ACC/YEM/36)

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/beijingroundtable_e.htm

CRT-2: Future of the Multilateral Trading System: Perspectives of LDCs and Article XII Members



Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, 15-18 October 2013

Outcome: WTO document WT/ACC/20, WT/GC/153, WT/MIN(13)/2

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/prog_chinaroundtable13_e.pdf

[3] More information on the Round Tables is here: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/pillar2_e.htm

CRT-3: Post-Accession: Maximizing the Benefits of WTO Membership and Global Economic Integration



Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 2-4 June 2015

Outcome: Dushanbe Statement (WTO document WT/ACC/24)

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/beijingroundtable2015_e.htm

CRT-4: Domestic Reforms for Competitiveness and Deeper Trade Integration in the Global Economy



Nairobi, Kenya, 13-14 December 2015 (back-to-back with the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference)

Outcome: WTO/CUP publication "African Perspectives on Trade and the WTO: Domestic Reforms, Structural Transformation and Global Economic Integration"

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/chinaround2015_e.htm

CRT-5: Best Practices on the Accession of Least-Developed Countries



Siem Reap, Cambodia, 20-23 March 2017

Outcome: Siem Reap Statement (WTO document WT/ACC/29, WT/GC/183, WT/MIN(17)/1, WT/COMTD/94, and WT/COMTD/LDC/25)

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/chinaround2017_e.htm

CRT-6: Strengthening the Rules-based Multilateral Trading System and Building a Network to Promote Accessions



Buenos Aires, Argentina, 9 December 2017 (back-to-back with the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference)

Outcome: Launch a Network of WTO Accession Negotiators

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/6th_chinaround2017_e.htm

CRT-7: Eurasian Perspectives on the Future of the Multilateral Trading System: Accessions and the Evolution of WTO Rules



Astana, Kazakhstan, 26-27 September 2018

Outcome: WTO document WT/ACC/32/Rev.1

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/progseventhchinaround_e.htm

CRT-8: Accessions and WTO Reform: on the Road to MC12



Moscow, Russian Federation, 4-6 December 2019

Outcome: WTO document WT/ACC/35, WT/GC/204 and WT/MIN(20)/1

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/8thcrt_e.htm

CRT-9: 25 Years of WTO Accessions in Review



11 December 2020, in a virtual format (livestreamed from the WTO headquarters in Geneva)

Weblink: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/9thcrt_e.htm

CRT-10: 10 Years of Capacity-Building under the China Programme - Reflections on LDC Accessions

10th CHINA ROUND TABLE

Geneva, Switzerland, 18-20 January 2022, in a virtual format

Pillar III. Support for the participation of LDCs in meetings



The China Programme funds the participation of LDCs coordinators in meetings related to Aid for Trade, as well as the participation of LDC Delegations in selected WTO meetings of priority to them, inter alia, the Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton (DGCFMC), focusing specifically on cotton development assistance, as well as Trade Policy Reviews and WTO Accession Working Party meetings.

From July 2012 to September 2021, the Programme funded thirty-one (31) events, of which sixteen (16) activities directly related to the DGCFMC, while three (3) to Ministerial Coordination Meetings of the C4 group of West-African cotton-producing countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali).

Pillar IV. South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development

Since 2015, the South-South Dialogue has become an annual capacity-building event for Geneva-based LDC delegations under the aegis of China LDCs and Accessions Programme. The four dialogues organized to date have allowed the participants to review the evolving pattern of South-South cooperation on trade, with a view of strengthening the coordination on topics of mutual interests in the contexts of the multilateral negotiations. These dialogues have contributed to strengthening coordination among LDCs and their South-South partners on topics of mutual interest in the multilateral negotiations.

First South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development, Annecy, 19-20 September 2016

Nearly 80 participants, including Geneva-based LDC delegations, LDC trade and development partners and representatives from the International Organizations and academia, joined the discussions around the role of South-South partners in supporting LDC participation in global trade; and use of LDC trade preferences. The implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and infrastructure investment were highlighted as key actions to attract FDI and to foster regional and global value chains.

Second South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development, Montreux, 23-24 November 2017

Nearly 60 Geneva-based delegates participated in the 2017 Dialogue, including H.E. Mr. Pan Sorasak, Commerce Minister of Cambodia and Coordinator of the WTO LDC Group. The event offered an opportunity to the participants to increase their understanding on the negotiating issues ahead of the 11th Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference. The participants highlighted the importance of building greater synergies between traditional and emerging priorities in the multilateral negotiations. Examples of South-South cooperation, including the efforts of the International Organizations to accelerate the LDC integration into global, were also highlighted.

Third South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development, Chavannes-de-Bogis, 7 December 2018

Over 60 Geneva-based LDC delegates and their trade and development partners exchanged views on the topic of WTO reform. The event enabled the participants to discuss the proposals on WTO reform, in the areas of the dispute settlement system, rulemaking, and monitoring and transparency. The LDCs highlighted that discussions at the WTO should remain inclusive and bottom up, and underscored the need to further strengthen the development dimension of the multilateral trading system.

Fourth South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development, Montreux, Switzerland, 16-17 September 2021

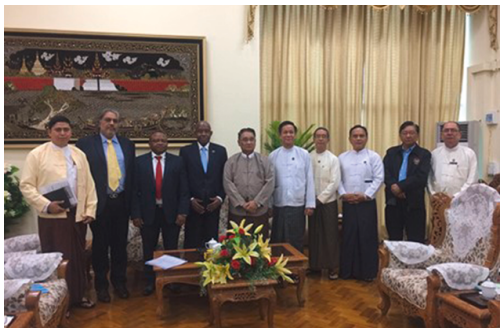




Over 80 delegates, with nearly half of them being at Ambassadors' level, participated in the 2021 South-South Dialogue. It was the first in-person event organized by the WTO Secretariat after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, WTO Director-General, opened the discussion and provided an update state of play in the ongoing WTO discussions. Geneva-based LDC delegations obtained the latest insights from the Chairs' of different WTO negotiating bodies and provided their views on MC12 priorities, WTO response to the pandemic and WTO reform. A multilateral response to the pandemic at MC12 was the most recurrent theme of the event. It was noted that trade policy could play a vital role in ensuring an equitable distribution of vaccines. The LDCs indicated that an outcome on LDC graduation was one of the top priorities of the WTO LDC Group for the 12th Session of the WTO Ministerial Conference.

More information about Annual South-South Dialogues can be found at the following link:
https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/ssd_sept21_e.htm

Pillar V. LDCs Trade Policy Review Follow-up Workshops



Starting in 2015, the China Programme also funds the participation of experts from the WTO Secretariat in workshops hosted by LDC Members which are subject to a Trade Policy Review (TPR). The workshops are aimed at further disseminating the results of the country's TPR to all domestic stakeholders, discussing with national authorities the areas of possible trade reforms identified by Members during the review, and matching resulting trade-related technical assistance and capacity building needs with donor's current and future activities in the country.



The Programme has supported six (6) of such workshops between April 2016 to June 2019. A follow-up workshop was held in Antananarivo for Madagascar (18-21 April 2016). The same workshops were organized for Chad (25-27 July 2017), Togo (16-19 April 2018), Benin (20-23 March 2018), Angola (13-16 November 2018) and Vanuatu (26-28 June 2019) respectively in N'Djamena, Lome, Cotonou, Luanda, and Port Vila. In addition, a Regional Trade Policy Review Roundtable workshop for 5 Asian LDCs was organized in 2017 in Myanmar.

Extension of the MoU

Signing ceremonies in Nairobi (December 2015) and Buenos Aires (December 2017)





China Programme Activities under Pillars III, IV and V

Activity*	Date	Location
III. Increasing participation of LDCs in WTO meetings		
Accession of Vanuatu to the WTO - Participation of a Vanuatu Delegate to the General Council Meeting	25-26 July 2012	Geneva, Switzerland
Meeting on the DG's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton	22 June 2012	Geneva, Switzerland
Meeting of DG's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton and Relevant Bilaterals for some Selected Countries	5-7 December 2012	Geneva, Switzerland
Meeting of the DG's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton and relevant Bilaterals for some Selected Countries	19-21 June 2013	Geneva, Switzerland
Meeting of the DG's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton and relevant bilaterals for some selected countries	29-31 October 2013	Geneva, Switzerland
WTO TPR for Myanmar three Officials	11-13 March 2014	Geneva, Switzerland
Director-General Consultative Framework Mechanism on cotton for three invited African Countries	19-21 June 2014	Geneva, Switzerland
Director General Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton for four Invited African Countries	26-28 November 2014	Geneva, Switzerland
Director General Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton for four invited African Countries	7-9 July 2015	Geneva, Switzerland
Director General consultative framework mechanism on cotton for four invited African Countries	25-27 November 2015	Geneva, Switzerland
Conference on Post-Accession Support	18-19 July 2016	Nairobi, Kenya
ESCAP / WTO Post Accession - Training for Afghanistan	11-15 July 2016	Thailand, Bangkok
Post Accession Training for Liberia in Partnership with UNCTAD	27-29 June 2016	Monrovia, Liberia
Director-General consultative framework mechanism on cotton for four invited African Countries	29 June - 1 July 2016	Geneva, Switzerland
4th Ministerial coordination meeting of the C 4 Countries	26-28 October 2016	Bamako, Mali
Director-General Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton for four Invited African Countries	21-23 November 2016	Geneva, Switzerland
WTO 1st Cycle of Working Party Meetings on the Accession of Comoros	30 November - 7 December 2016	Geneva, Switzerland
Technical Working Sessions on the substantive provisions and round table on the Accession of Comoros	9-10 March 2017	Moroni, Comoros
Specialized Training on WTO Accession for Somalia	31 August - 01 September 2017	Nairobi, Kenya
WTO Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton: 28th Round of consultation on Cotton Development Assistance and bilateral meetings	15-17 November 2017	Geneva, Switzerland
1st Cycle of Working Party Meetings on the Accession of Comoros	29 May - 2 June 2017	Geneva, Switzerland
Director-General Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton for four invited African Countries	24-26 July 2017	Geneva, Switzerland
6th Ministerial Coordination Meeting of the C4 Countries	15-16 November 2018	Chad, N'Djamena

* Non-exhaustive

Activity*	Date	Location
Director-General 's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton 29th Round of consultation on Cotton Development Assistance and bilateral meetings	18-19 June 2018	Geneva, Switzerland
Trade Policy Review China Lao Attendees	11-13 July 2018	Geneva, Switzerland
Director-General's Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton 30th, Round of consultation on Cotton Development Assistance and bilateral meetings	26-29 November 2018	Geneva, Switzerland
Participation of the focal points of C4 countries in the meeting of the Director General's consultative framework on cotton mechanism	6-7 June 2019	Geneva, Switzerland
World Cotton Day	7 October 2019	Geneva, Switzerland
32nd round of MCCDGC Consultations on cotton development aid and 12th dedicated discussion on cotton	20-21 November 2019	Geneva, Switzerland
7th Ministerial meeting on the coordination of the C4	27-29 January 2020	Koudougou, Burkina Faso
Sixth Cycle of Accession Working Party meetings of Comoros	20-22 September 2021	Geneva, Switzerland
Total number of activities	**31**	

IV. South-South dialogue on LDCs and development		
South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development for Geneva-based Ambassadors and Mission staff	18-19 September 2016	Annecy, France
South-South dialogue on LDCs and Development for Geneva-based Ambassadors and mission staff	23-24 November 2017	Montreux, Switzerland
South-South Dialogue on LDCs and Development for Geneva based ambassadors and mission staff	7 December 2018	Chavannes, Switzerland
South-South dialogue on LDCs and Development "Reinforcing the multilateral trading system for development"	16-17 September 2021	Montreux, Switzerland
Total number of activities	**4**	

V. LDCs' Trade Policy Review follow-up Workshops		
Trade Policy Review Follow-up Workshop	18-21 April 2016	Antananarivo, Madagascar
National Follow-up to the Trade Policies Review of Chad	25 - 27 July 2017	Chad, N'Djamena
Regional Trade Policy Roundtable Workshop for the Five Asian LDCs	9-11 August 2017	Nya Pyi Taw, Myanmar
National TPR Follow-up Workshop	16-19 April 2018	Lome, Togo
National TPR Follow-up Workshop	20-23 March 2018	Benin, Cotonou
National TPR Follow-up Workshop	13-16 November 2018	Luanda, Angola
WTO National follow-up Workshop of the First Trade Policies Review of Vanuatu	26-28 June 2019	Port Vila, Vanuatu
Total number of activities	**6**	

