



SECTION

4

**The diagnostic and  
reform planning tool**

## Introduction

The Diagnostic and Reform Planning Tool (the Tool) is a new instrument developed to assist policymakers and regulators in mapping their domestic regulatory frameworks against the 14 GRPs set out in this Handbook.

The Tool builds on the extensive information contained in the WTO-World Bank STPD. With more than 130 additional questions targeting the various aspects and features of GRPs, the Tool makes it possible to collect a large amount of information on their implementation in domestic regimes.

The Tool is designed to capture the practical implementation of GRPs, whether implementation is grounded in legal obligations or reflects day-to-day administrative practice without an explicit legal basis. It therefore goes beyond the scope of the WTO-World Bank STPD, which records only formal legal requirements.

The data collected through the Tool can be used to assess the implementation of GRPs, identify areas of regulatory strength and weakness, and prioritize areas for reform to improve the business environment for the supply of services.

The data can also be used to evaluate the alignment of domestic regulatory regimes with the SDR Disciplines. Such analysis can inform domestic discussions on adopting the SDR Disciplines at the WTO, including identifying issues for transitional periods as well as priority areas of technical assistance and capacity building needs.

A visualization board is being developed to present the data collected through the Tool in a user-friendly and concise manner.

## The Diagnostic and Reform Planning Tool

For each GRP, the Tool offers two sets of questions – baseline and additional questions – enabling comparisons within and across sectors.

- **Baseline questions** are taken from the WTO-World Bank regulatory survey used for the STPD. Information on the baseline questions is available for 138 jurisdictions from all regions of the world. It covers 34 core subsectors, which account for approximately two thirds of the services economy (e.g. business, professional, computer, communication, construction, distribution, financial, health, tourism and transport services).
- **Additional questions** are designed to complement the baseline questions to enable a more detailed and nuanced mapping. They also aim to assess existing administrative practices, even in instances where these are not underpinned by legal requirements. The purpose of the additional questions is to allow governments to gain deeper insights into how regulatory processes function both legally and in practice and to identify areas where improvements may be needed.

The current version of the Tool will be progressively refined on the basis of field testing and experience gained in its use with governments.

## The visualization board

The visualization board is being developed and has been designed with three key objectives: (i) summarizing in a user-friendly manner the results of the data collected through the Tool; (ii) highlighting strengths and weaknesses in terms of implementation of specific GRPs and in different sectors; and (iii) where needed, providing a detailed overview of the alignment of domestic regulatory frameworks with the SDR Disciplines.

Interested governments may seek practical support from the WTO and the World Bank to deploy the Tool, including in partnership with other cooperation partners. Subject to demand and resources, WTO assistance includes preparatory sessions, methodological planning and quality assurance, as well as data validation with relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, upon data collection, the WTO can assist in the preparation of the visualization board, including by adapting it to specific areas of interest identified.