

## NTFCs IN ACTION

A closer look at how NTFC members are making a difference



**Mr. Aziz,**  
NTFC Burkina Faso Chair

*You have been leading Burkina Faso's NTFC, what are in your views the key enablers to ensure the NTFC is fulfilling its mandate? And what are the biggest challenges?*

The Ministry of Trade and International Affairs has led the NTFC since its creation on March 13, 2017 and the main catalysts for success would be that of inclusiveness by including all trade actors and considering transversal thematic such as gender and environmental questions. There still remains significant challenges but the NTFCs most pressing needs are to adopt trade facilitation instruments, improving the institutional framework to set up a permanent NTFC Secretariat, and resource mobilization to implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

New initiatives considered to improve the NTFC's efficiency are: elaborating a strategic plan for the NTFC, submitting project proposals for resource mobilization, setting up a sub-committee in charge of following up on the NTFC maturity model, setting up the trade and gender sub-committee, and continuing implementing the TFA measures.

*What are the practical steps you have been promoting to ensure that the NTFC is working for the benefit of all the Trade Facilitation stakeholders and all cross-border traders? Are there any current projects you lead to support the NTFC representativity as well as to ensure that trade facilitation reforms encompass the interests of all border users even the most vulnerable?*

We for example, regularly meet with Burkinabe partners for the Technical Assistance and capacity strengthening to implement TFA measures. We also hold thematic workshops training NTFC members to strengthen their capacity in implementing the TFA as well as consult with the private sector. We also plan to mainstream gender in trade facilitation reforms. We will be realizing studies on corridor efficiency, set up support centers for small-scale cross-border traders and women in particular as well as conduct technical assistance for SPS measures on rice and mango. Other projects are strengthening the SYLVIE platform, setting up an electronic single-window system, proofreading the Burkina Faso Customs Code to harmonize it with the ECOWAS Customs Code, etc.

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*Are there projects you are leading to increase inclusiveness within the NTFC and to guarantee that the trade facilitation reforms would factor the interests of all border users, even the most vulnerable?*

Yes, we plan on including the specific interests of small-scale cross-border traders and women in particular. We also plan to implement category C measures in partnership with the International Trade Centre, the national roadmap in particular for the TFA implementation and updating Burkina Faso's self-needs assessment for the implementation. We will also be working on setting up an online trade information portal based on article 1.2 of the TFA.

*You are the first NTFC Head being interviewed by the West Africa NTFC Bulletin, what would you like to see developed in the near future as cooperation initiatives between the NTFCs in the region?*

As a representative of the NTFC President, I would like to see stronger partnerships for the implementation of the TFA in order to have permanent monitoring of the implementation of the measures and efficient capacity strengthening of NTFCs. Having space for exchanges on shared experiences between NTFCs of the sub-region and bilateral, multilateral consultations to harmonize national NTFC initiatives.

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