

CHINA WTO ACCESSION INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ALUMNI STORY

Chidinma, please tell us...



Where are you from, and what have you studied before joining the China Programme?

I am Nigerian, with a strong legal background. I studied Law at the University of Lagos with a Distinction, and after qualifying as a legal practitioner in Nigeria, I furthered my training at the University of Cambridge, graduating with an LLM in International Law.

I also worked in international public health as part of the Legal, Trade and Protocol Team, WHO FCTC and on diplomacy-related training programmes as a Trainee at the Multilateral Diplomacy Programme Unit, UNITAR.

Why did you apply?

I was recommended to the program by the late Dr Chiedu Osakwe, having worked at the Nigerian Office of Trade Negotiations. It was a great opportunity to dive into the world of international trade and the role the WTO played in it, and also to meet practitioners in the field, so I applied to gain more experience.

What kind of work were you assigned to during your internship?

My work at the Division spanned across programmatic support to Secretaries of Working Parties/acceding governments in the process of integrating into the global economy, including technical assistance and capacity building activities organised to facilitate this, including tasks such as;

- General organizational support for Secretaries of Accession Working Parties and related assistance to the acceding governments (Sudan, Curacao);
- AfCFTA Regional Trade Integration research;
- Co-Secretary, Informal Group of Acceding Government Meetings, Co-editor, Monthly Accessions Newsletter;

- Collating and organizing data on best practice communication strategies from various acceding governments;
- Supporting the planning, implementation and follow-up of Capacity Building and technical assistance meetings in Geneva and beyond (Regional Dialogue, China Round Tables), Goods Training, Memorial, etc);
- Accessions Webinar Week- proposed the inclusion of a wider audience in the conversation beyond the conventional audience, then designed communication materials for the Week, and gave logistical support;
- Co-organising and Moderating Session 10 on Public-Private Dialogue in WTO Accessions;
- Collating summary points raised in DDG Wolff's speeches;
- Covering some meetings including the Trade Negotiation Committee and the General Council etc.;
- Working on the African Perspectives Book Project proposal.

Looking back, what do you think of your work experience at the WTO, and as participant of the China Programme?

Working at the WTO gave me a clearer insight into the accession process and the making of international trade policies at the WTO, especially as it discusses reforms to its structures and processes. It was a great opportunity to learn from experts and observe the relationship between trade policies and development and how they interact in the current economic order. This expanded worldview gained through the support of the China Programme has enhanced my ability to impact policies for inclusive development and economic progress.

What have you done since?

I am excited to take on new opportunities in policy-making and socio-economic development in the international sphere. I look forward to applying my skills for a more direct impact to lives through my work.

Thank you Chidinma!