

AID FOR TRADE  
SYMPOSIUM ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION  
(15-16 September 2008)

**"Identifying Indicators for Monitoring Aid for Trade"**

Opening Session

Speaking Note for the Director-General

Welcome to this Symposium on Aid for Trade.

Our purpose over the next two days is to identify suitable indicators for monitoring our Ministerial work programme on Aid for Trade. As you know, more effective monitoring of Aid for Trade was one of the main recommendations of the Aid for Trade Task Force in 2006, and it is an important part of our Aid for Trade Roadmap for this year. The recommendations we make at this symposium will be sent to the Committee on Trade and Development, so that it can factor them into the preparations it is making for the next Global Review of Aid for Trade, which is scheduled to take place in late spring of next year.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the preparation of this symposium and who will be making presentations to help guide our discussions today and tomorrow. Our speakers have a great deal of experience on Aid for Trade

- at the practical level in developing countries of implementing national and regional Aid for Trade projects
- at the policy level of mainstreaming Aid for Trade into development programmes and managing donor-recipient partnerships
- at the technical level of the activities of intergovernmental agencies
- and from the perspective of development NGOs.

All of these different perspectives are relevant if we are to make a success of our Aid for Trade work programme on the ground in developing countries, where it really counts, and it is important that they are captured in the indicators we select for monitoring our progress along the way.

The symposium is structured around the three key themes of our Aid for Trade mandate.

- First, Aid for Trade flows. This is about numbering the ODA resources being made available to allow developing countries to boost their investment in trade-related capacity-building? We already have had good experience from the first Global Review of working with the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database to monitor the overall numbers for Aid for Trade flows. We need to consider to what extent we might usefully supplement the OECD numbers, as the core indicator, with more *ad hoc* numbers from individual donors and recipients, and from the development banks, to round out the picture on resource flows. This is especially important as A4T is not a new, or a specific channel of ODA delivery but a crosscutting approach, hence inevitable nomenclature or definitional issues.
- The second theme is resource use and trade performance. Are Aid for Trade resources being used efficiently and effectively, and are they having the impact that we want them to have on trade performance? Here, I believe, we can all learn a lot from best practice, as well as by looking empirically at the evidence of what works and what doesn't when it comes to building trade capacity. The international development agencies have all done work in this area, and there are several databases

that they have created which might provide us with useful "macro" indicators to monitor trade capacity and trade performance. However, the relationship between trade capacity and trade performance is extremely complex, and a great deal of the richness of that relationship can too easily become lost in the broad aggregated indicators that we have available. So let us not neglect the "micro" level experience of individual countries and regions as a possible supplementary source of information for the monitoring exercise.

- The third theme is assessing trade development needs of developing countries, integrating them into their national development strategies such as PRSPs, and constructing pro-active donor partnerships and responses. The 2006 Aid for Trade Task Force provided us with guidance on what needs to be monitored here, and the Accra Agenda for Action that was agreed on two weeks ago in Ghana can also help us focus on key points. The challenge in this area is to identify the right indicators with which to monitor progress, since we shall need to rely heavily on individual country and regional experiences. The OECD is working hard to provide us with the raw material we shall need in the form of the responses to their donor and partner country questionnaires. Do we need to supplement this material, and how should we present it for monitoring purposes in the next Global Review?

I wish you all a rich and fruitful two days of discussions on these issues. The work of this symposium is very important for the success of the Aid for Trade work programme in the WTO as I believe it is for aid effectiveness and ownership as we saw it in Accra I already mentioned. What we are looking for are indicators of progress in our area, and I look forward to seeing the results tomorrow afternoon.