During the COVID-19 crisis, trade facilitation has emerged as a key factor for promoting international trade efficiency and ensuring the unobstructed flow of goods in a period where restrictions on the movement of persons and goods have escalated for health-protection and disease prevention reasons. Mechanisms adopted to maintain the flow of safe cross border trade are being used as key policy tools by all the nations worldwide to address the challenges brought by the current global pandemic. The World Trade Organisation in 2014 created the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) at the request of developing countries (DCs) and least-developed countries (LDCs), to facilitate the receipt of assistance they need to effectively implement and reap the full benefits of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, approved by WTO members at the 2013 Bali Ministerial Conference and entered into force on 22 February 2017 following its ratification by two-thirds of the WTO membership. Operational since 27 November 2014, the TFAF has supported so far many DCs and LDCs to assess their specific needs and to identify possible development partners to help them meet those needs.

In synergy with other partner organisations, including WCO, ITC and UNCTAD, the TFAF recently developed the " COVID19 Trade Facilitation Repository ", a platform hosted on its website that consolidates into one single database all the actions and initiatives adopted by such organizations (and others, like WEF, ICC, IATA and Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation), as well as by some individual nations, on trade-facilitation measures adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This platform is intended to facilitate access to such actions and initiatives to both trade operators and policy makers, overcoming the problem of their current dispersion in different platforms.

All the initiatives are broken down by organization/type of measure, and include some case studies from the WCO (World Customs Organisation) member countries on measures adopted to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. In Africa, case studies are available for Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Eswatini Lesotho, Liberia, Namibia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zambia.