

The United Kingdom announces two COVID-19 response services for eligible developing countries to help combat the impact of the virus on international trade.

World news story

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The UK has updated its aid-for-trade programme portfolio in order to better respond to COVID-19, resulting in 2 new offers that eligible developing countries are encouraged to take advantage of. The first is through the Trade and Investment Advocacy Fund (TAF2+), which is providing support to help eligible developing countries in three areas: to better understand the trade-related impacts of COVID-19 on developing country economies, to notify COVID-related measures to the WTO's monitoring exercise, and to engage on virtual WTO meeting platforms.

Secondly, through funding to the World Bank Trade Facilitation Support Programme (TFSP), the UK is also helping developing countries tackle the COVID crisis through better trade facilitation, helping to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. This is particularly important with regards to the movement of critical goods such as medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) in developing countries. Support also includes virtual training, workshops and support to National Trade Facilitation Committees.

Ambassador Julian Braithwaite announced at the General Council on Friday 15th

May, noting “We are keenly aware that many developing country partners, as well as small island states and other vulnerable economies, are experiencing a serious period of trade shock, as currency depreciations combine with sharp declines in important export sectors like tourism. This potentially jeopardises decades of hard-fought, trade-led prosperity. Today I’d like to announce that, through the UK’s Trade and Investment Advocacy Fund and our funding to the World Bank, we are providing support to eligible developing country Members to better understand the trade-related impacts of COVID-19 on their economies, notify COVID-related measures to the WTO’s monitoring exercise, and tackle the COVID crisis through better trade facilitation.”

Aid-for-trade will play a crucial role in responding to the various challenges of COVID-19 and the UK stands ready to play its part in supporting developing country governments during this unprecedented time in global trade.

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