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Potential next steps in the fight against illicit trade



Tackling illicit trade in medical products requires a global and multifaceted response, and the WTO offers a strong framework to anchor the trade-related features of that response.

The convening power of the WTO and the coordinated use of its tools and trade policy activities is thus crucial for members in addressing a host of pandemic-related and other challenges.

Future policy actions

The following is a set of policy actions that WTO members and other stakeholders may consider in developing and strengthening trade policy responses to combat illicit trade in medical products.

Promote recognition and understanding of how illicit trade in medical products threatens people's health and safety and undermines economic growth and development opportunities for people and societies.

Coordinate efforts with the public and private sectors to improve the quality and analysis of data on trade in medical products.

Raise awareness of the value of WTO rules and trade policy activities in the fight against illicit trade in medical products.



Strengthen data collection and encourage sharing to harness the full potential of risk management and other trade tools to limit opportunities for illicit trade in medical products.

Explore the use of modern digital tools in supporting efforts by border and regulatory authorities to tackle the particular challenges posed by e-commerce in the fight against illicit trade in medical products.

Use WTO rules and activities to bolster border and regulatory controls of medical goods to manage supply chain disruptions and to encourage the use of such measures – in addition to advanced technologies – to safeguard supply chain integrity and combat illicit trade.

Exploit existing WTO mechanisms, among others, to encourage greater cooperation on illicit trade in medical products within and between WTO members and among international organizations, from the micro level of sharing data and information on illicit trade activity to the macro level of sharing best practices and coordinating policy responses.



Strengthen dialogue and exchange of information on illicit trade in medical products across relevant WTO committees.

Support a coordinated, multilateral response to illicit trade in medical products by ensuring the delivery of training, resources and other technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of developing country and LDC members.

Consider the development of new training forums such as a dedicated mechanism for national quality infrastructure capacity building.

Abbreviations

CAP	conformity assessment procedure
CVA	Customs Valuation Agreement
IPR	intellectual property right
LDC	least-developed country
NCTF	national committee on trade facilitation
NQI	national quality infrastructure
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPS	sanitary and phytosanitary
TBT	technical barriers to trade
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TRIPS	trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights



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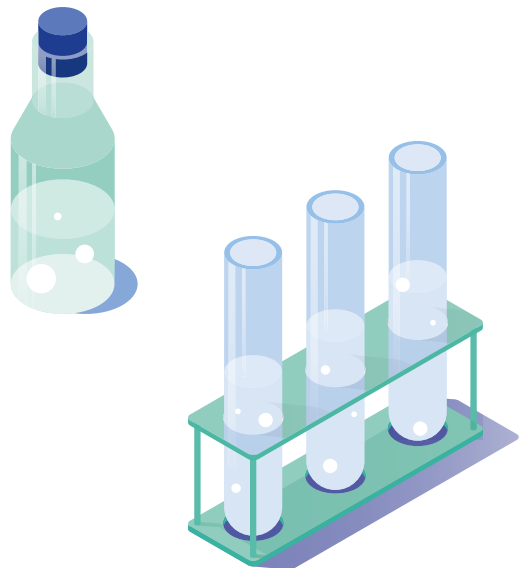


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Tackling illicit trade in medical products

Better international cooperation for better health

WTO rules support efforts to address the threat of illicit trade in medical products by promoting transparency and predictability and setting the foundation for strengthened border and regulatory controls and enhanced cooperation.

This publication explores WTO tools and activities that can help WTO members develop and strengthen their trade policy responses to combat illicit trade in medical products.

