

# EXPORT TO CANADA NEWS

INFORMATION · ADVICE · CONTACT

**40 YEARS OF IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

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**EXPORT**

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 2020 marked an important milestone in the life of TFO Canada. We celebrated 40 years of improving lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers.

When I reflect on the past 40 years of TFO Canada, the mission we had in 1980 is still relevant today. In fact, I would argue that, in this time of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic, facilitating trade is more important than ever. Consider that, while countries around the world had to implement measures of self-isolation, impose travel restrictions and close international borders, the flow of products remained an important exception – especially for essential goods such as medical supplies and agro-food products. As the World Trade Organization’s Director-General, Mr. Roberto Azevedo, stated in March, *“Trade is what allows for the efficient production and supply of basic goods and services, medical supplies and equipment, food and energy that we all need. Keeping trade open and investments open will be critical to keep shelves plentiful and prices affordable trade will allow countries to help each other, bringing faster and stronger economic recovery for us all.”*

During this pandemic, we have also witnessed businesses adapting their products and migrating towards the digital economy. Those who have been able to “weather the storm” credit their ability to diversifying their products to meet current market demands (e.g. moving from cosmetics to hand sanitizers) and applying digital strategies for greater customer engagement using platforms such as email, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

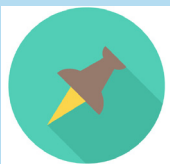
When looking at the movement towards digital technologies during COVID-19, we cannot ignore the importance that e-commerce is having on international trade, particularly when looking at empowering women-led businesses. In a September 2017 publication from the International Trade Centre, they stated that *“being online levels the playing field for women-owned firms: the share of women-owned firms doubles when moving from traditional offline trade to cross-border e-commerce.”* Given TFO Canada’s focus on gender equality, this presents an opportunity to provide greater support for women entrepreneurs.

While we reflect on the past 40 years of TFO Canada, we can be proud of what has been accomplished together. We look forward to continuing our work over the next several years.

I wish everyone to remain healthy and safe. Together, we will get through this!



**Steve Tipman**  
**Executive Director**  
**TFO Canada**



**Tipman’s Trade Tip:** *In some respects, the COVID-19 Pandemic has accelerated growing trends in international trade, particularly in the area of digitalization. Businesses should take advantage of this movement by leveraging digital tools that foster relationships and improve communications with partners and customers. These can be low-cost methods that deliver good results in the long run.*

# 40 YEARS WITH TFO CANADA

## MAY 1980

Founded by the Canadian government as Trade Facilitation Office Canada / Bureau du Promotion du Commerce du Canada (TFOC/BPCC) and until 1985 it was a part of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

## 1991-1999

**-1994:** TFO Canada released the first issue of ImportInfo which used a more targeted approach to providing importers with new product information  
**-1996:** Launched its first website

## 2006

-Searchable supplier database and online registration made available to the public on the website.  
 - TFO Canada receives the 14th Annual Canadian Award for International Cooperation in recognition for the ACCESS for African Businesswomen in International trade program.

## 2017-2018



**-2017:** As part of the Artisan Hub project, in collaboration with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), TFO Canada implemented a technical assistance project in the specialty textile and garment sectors in eight least developed countries.  
 - TFO Canada receives a recognition from FUNDER, in Honduras for its outstanding performance in the project: Strengthening Capacities of SMEs and Cooperatives  
**-2018:** TFO Canada was recognized as one of the International cooperation agencies that contributed to the development of the export sector in Peru.

## 1982-1990

**-1983:** First International mission to five ASEAN countries with a team of 3 TFO Canada staff.  
**-1985:** TFO Canada / BPCC was incorporated as not for profit  
**-1990:** Released our first feature movie called “doing business in Canada” as a marketing tool.

## 2003

Launched the ACCESS program in collaboration with ITC Programme for building African Capacity for Trade (PACT) to provide technical assistance to African SMEs under the new partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)



## 2007-2014



**-2007:** TFO Canada's performance in the Gone Rural project in Swaziland was recognized by the 15th Annual Canadian Awards for International Cooperation  
**-2014:** TFO Canada commenced a 5 -year Canadian Market Access and capacity building program funded by GAC (2014-2018) and a 4-year Tim Hortons' coffee partnership program.

## 2019

TFO Canada co-presents with Global Affairs Canada at the World Trade Organization's Aid for Trade Global Review.

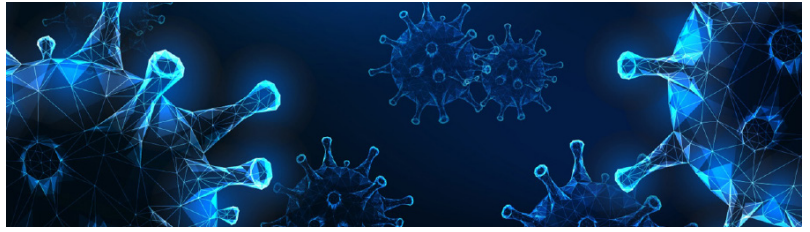


## 2020

TFO Canada participated in the Prime Minister's visit and B2B lunch in Senegal  
 - TFO Canada remains committed to providing important information and services in support of our stakeholders and beneficiaries during COVID-19 Pandemic.

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GLOBAL TRADE

The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the health and general wellbeing of people all over the world and further impacting economic activity and global trade, leaving the world's most vulnerable more susceptible to increased poverty, lack of access to sufficient health care systems, and deteriorating economic development.



COVID-19 is expected to decrease global trade between 13-32% in 2020. The long-term economic impacts of the pandemic are expected to exceed that of the 2008-2009 economic crisis. Part of the global strategy to slow down the spread of the virus is implementing rules that restrict movement and increase social distancing measures. This in turn takes a toll on labour supply, transportation, and travel.

Certain industries have had to shut down partially or completely to manage the current situation; sectors such as hospitality and tourism, restaurants, retail, and non-essential manufacturing companies have all been forced to slow down in some capacity. Global imports of key production items have already been interrupted by social distancing measures causing factories to temporarily close firstly in China at the onset of the pandemic and now globally. Trade is more likely to decline in sectors characterized by complex value chain linkages, particularly the manufacturing in electronics and automotive products.

The agriculture sector is also expected to be impacted which, in turn, will threaten the global attainment of Sustainable Development Goal #2 (Zero Hunger) as the pandemic threatens the agri-food supply chain.

The challenges the agri-food sector include the logistics involving the movement of food and the impact on the livestock sector due to reduced access to animal feed and the diminished capacity at slaughterhouses'. Transport restrictions and quarantine measures will impede farmers' access to markets, curbing their productive capacities and hindering them from selling their produce. Labour shortages are impacting producers, processors, traders, and trucking/logistics companies in food supply chains.

Developing countries are particularly at risk as the disease can lead to a reduction in labour force and affect labour intensive forms of production (agriculture) leaving famine prone countries even more vulnerable.

Although many sectors are impacted, we are also seeing the flexibility of manufacturing companies. Many companies are now shifting their production and are manufacturing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The World Health Organization estimates that the global production of PPE would need to increase by 40% to meet international demands.

Against the current background, trade is needed now more than ever especially in lower income countries. Trade plays an essential role in saving lives as well as improving livelihoods and stimulating the global economy. To keep the trade of essential medical supplies flowing barriers such as tariffs must be reduced or removed on medical supplies essential for combatting COVID-19.

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## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GLOBAL TRADE

Several countries retain tariffs of up to 10% on COVID test kits. Part of the solution is expediting certification procedures to allow new products to be traded, ensuring that technical requirements are science-based .

Another important factor in maintaining trade flows is ensuring that the food supply chains keep rolling. Reduced air and sea cargo possibilities have led to challenges related to food loss and waste . There is a need now more than ever to ensure that food supply reaches quarantined and vulnerable areas with the appropriate biosecurity arrangements are in place .

Enhanced trade facilitation to keep goods moving as quickly as possible is crucial. International organizations are shifting their priorities to support countries around the world especially the most vulnerable. At TFO Canada we have moved most of our services online to continue to support and meet the needs of SME's and partner TSIs globally. To find out about how we continue to run operations you can visit our website at [www.tfocanada.ca](http://www.tfocanada.ca)

## NEW STAFF

In the month of January 2020, TFO Canada welcomed new staff to our team to ensure we continue offering the quality services that you have become accustomed to receiving. We would like to introduce you all to the new staff members: Mahmud Hossain, Project Manager- Asia; Fatima Zahra Idrissi Project Officer-Asia; Olivier Musafiri, Project Manager- Africa; Yannick Cabassu, Project Manager- Africa; Hery Ramiarison. Project Officer-Africa; and Rose-Lynne Karlee Amoah Project Officer- Trade Support Services.

In October 2019, Marysabel Gonzalez became our new Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean/ Trade Support Services while Marta Recinos transferred to the position of Program Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean.

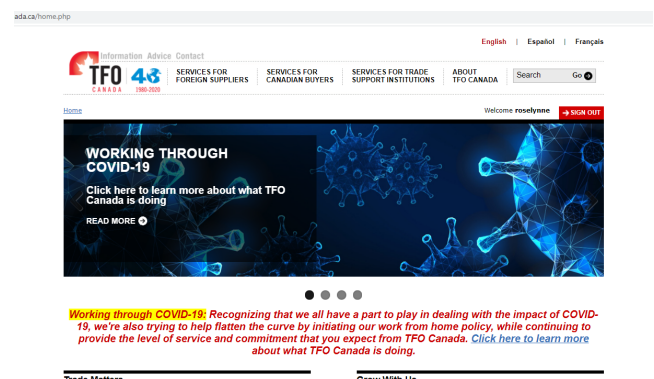
Rose Marie DeSousa became our new regional representative for Quebec in January 2020.

Find out more about our staff [here](#).

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Innovative online solutions as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, TFO Canada has adopted a new approach to some of our work. Areas of emphasis include training and coaching on digital marketing, leveraging e-commerce and how to make digital tools work towards your goals in international trade. We also launched the Working Through COVID page on our [website](#). Updated weekly, the webpage provides relevant news on trade issues and sectors that are important for developing country exporters and trade support institutions.



## PROGRAM UPDATES

### ASIA

The Asia team has been actively working with stakeholders and adapting program activities, as a result of COVID-19. To ensure effective implementation of all future activities, several of the initiatives have moved to an online delivery mechanism.

The Asia team is currently managing different projects: 2 projects under the Canadian Trade and Investment Facility for Development (CTIF), Export Launchpad Bangladesh, Women in Trade Knowledge Platform project, Canada Ukraine Trade and Investment Support (CUTIS), International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation and International Development Research Centre covering Bangladesh, Jordan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Ukraine.

Prior to the pandemic the Asia team conducted exploratory missions to Bangladesh, Jordan, Indonesia and Vietnam where they met local Trade Support Institutions/Trade Promotion Organizations/Business Support Organizations (TSIs/TPOs/BSOs), Canadian and other international donors (World Bank, USAID, AusAID, GIZ etc.) and women owned/led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through focus group discussions (FGDs) to discuss their challenges and inform all stakeholders about our project implementation plans.

Since Mid-March 2020, the Asia team has been closely monitoring the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic and documenting the different measures undertaken by respective countries to support SMEs during the pandemic in all project countries. They conducted online meetings with all stakeholders in the target countries and based on their inputs revised/validates workplans and deliverables to ensure effective implementation of all current and future activities. As a result, several projects, particularly in Vietnam, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Ukraine, have moved to virtual/online delivery mechanism. For other projects (esp. in Jordan, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Vietnam), the Asia team is in the process of finalizing the implementation agreements with options open for virtual and/or face-to-face delivery of services.



### AFRICA

The Africa team at TFO Canada has been closely monitoring the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in all project countries. We have been documenting the different measures undertaken by respective countries to support SMEs during the pandemic.

The team has been able to conduct online meetings with potential partners for “Making Trade Work for Women in Sub-Saharan Africa” Project in Lesotho, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Uganda. Currently we are in the process of finalizing the agreements to kick start the implementation of the project.

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## PROGRAM UPDATES



The team has collaborated with [Trade plus Impact](#) to conduct a survey of SMEs in the handcraft sector and to establish a portal to enable buyers and sellers in the handcraft and cosmetic sector to weather the pandemic in a socially responsible way.

Prior to the pandemic some of the team visited a few of our partner countries to learn from visiting Trade Support Institutions in each country. We met with women owned/ led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to discuss their challenges and inform stakeholders about our implementation plans for new projects. During our exploratory mission we organized Exporting to Canada Seminars for SMEs looking to tap into the Canadian market.

Currently we are initiating local gender-sensitive market research in our project countries. This research will cover all sectors involved in our projects on the continent and will provide a clear insight on how we can support women in exporting.

## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The team has been working in the planning of a new project we will be starting in the region. Thus, an exploratory mission was carried out in four Latin American Countries to identify main challenges faced by SMEs exporters, the capacity of TSIS to support these companies and potential implementing partners. Based on the findings country specific strategies were tailored by the team.

Between April and May, TFO Canada started assessing the impact of the pandemic in the region to adapt its programs to meet the needs of the SMEs exporters. The team conducted a consultation process with multiple Trade Support Institutions (TSIs) in partner countries and carried out a close follow up on the measures implemented as well as the potential impact forecasted by relevant multilateral organizations. As a result, the implementation strategies of current projects were adapted accordingly.



# SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES

**Jan 23 2020**

**Montreal, Quebec**



The following representatives Ms. Nilda Larsson – Commercial Representative - General Consulate of Argentina in Montreal, Mr. Juan Eugenio Sierra , Senior trade specialist PROCOLOMBIA, Hector Ramirez, Consul General Honduras, Mr. Oscar Arriagada - Trade and Investment Representative - ProChile attended a Farewell get together organised by the Latin American Trade representatives in Montreal to thank Marc Germain for his many years of service as TFO Canada’s Quebec Regional Representative.

## Exploratory Mission to Latin America

**January to February, 2020**

From January 25th to February 13th, 2020, the Latin American and Caribbean team carried out an exploratory mission to Honduras,

Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru to identify potential partners, assess the needs of SMEs exporters and present opportunities in the Canadian market. The team met with 45 stakeholders; delivered 4 Export to Canada seminars to 223 attendees; and conducted 4 focus groups with 52 women-led SMEs to identify key gender equality issues in the export process.



## Exploratory Mission to Asia

**January to February, 2020**

During November 2019 and February 2020, the Asia team carried out exploratory missions to Bangladesh, Jordan, Indonesia, and Vietnam to present opportunities in the Canadian market, identify potential partners and assess the



needs of SMEs exporters. The team met with 47 stakeholders; delivered 4 Export to Canada seminars to 183 attendees; and conducted 4 focus groups with 56 women-led SMEs to identify key gender equality issues in the export process.

## Exploratory Mission to Africa

**January to February, 2020**



During October and November 2019 and January - February 2020, TFO Canada conducted scoping missions to Lesotho, Uganda, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Benin, Cote D'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zambia.



The Africa Team met different stakeholders and women exporters, conducted Exporting to Canada seminars and learned about the challenges and policies related



# SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES

to supporting women exporters to inform two new initiatives that we will be undertaking. We look forward to forging partnerships with selected TSIs to implement these exciting projects.



within the plant-based market, and the rise of transparency from consumers as well as buyers from production process and facilities to ingredients.

## Senegal Mission

February, 2020



In February 2020, at the invitation of the Canadian Ambassador to Senegal, TFO Canada's Executive Director and Program Director of Africa attended a reception at the Canadian Ambassador's residence in Dakar attended by Canada's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. TFO Canada participated in a business lunch on the Climate Finance - International Business Opportunities organized in conjunction with the visit. TFO Canada's Executive Director presented opportunities for SMEs in the Canadian market and met with African companies during the B2B Meetings.

## Regional Update - Ontario

February- March 2020

In February and March 2020 our regional representative for Ontario attended the Restaurants Canada Show 2020 and Engineers Without Borders Global Xchange 2020 Conference on the behalf of TFO Canada.



The Restaurants Canada show covered the consumer trends, which were around convenience, the growing rise of veganism/vegetarianism and opportunities



## Regional Update - Quebec

February- March 2020

Our regional representative in Quebec attended the Algeria and Tunisia, promising markets for your business On February 27, 2020.

Algeria and Tunisia are a business destination worth considering for any Quebec company wishing to develop internationally.

It aims at the diversification and the competitiveness of the economy, geared towards replacing imports and the increase in exports and this, in order to succeed gradually to reducing the dependence on hydrocarbons and public expenditure, while ensuring the achievement growth targets and development of an emerging economy.

## CRAFTING HOPE

*Aling Nur Naluri Widianti is the founder of Salam Rancage a not for profit social enterprise that supports local women in Borgor, Indonesia, by providing them with trainings on how to produce handicrafts made from locally recycled materials. Salam Rancage sell their handmade craft online at [www.salamrancage.com](http://www.salamrancage.com); locally as well as to buyers from all over the world.*



*Under the Canadian Market Access and Capacity Building Services and Canada Indonesia Trade and Private Sector Assistance projects, Aling received online trainings, attended workshops on Exporting to Canada since 2014. According to Aling "Since 2014 I have received support from TFO Canada who have aided in the development of Salam Rancage. Through TFO Canada I learned to connect with buyers and exporters as a businesswoman. Learning about the Canadian and International export market, gives me an advantage in understanding the market and how to target items and export strategies. I also learned a lot on how to improve my business model and better target buyers.*

*Before Aling became an entrepreneur, and a bold figure in her community supporting in the environmental and social development of Bogor; In her community there were many challenges*

*Aling was deeply affected by this and wanted to support her community in finding sustainable solutions that would support the families as well as keep the community of Bogor clean. Upon discussion with her friends they decided that the best way to financially support the community and keep it clean would be to start a social business with a full staff of women.*

*Together Aling and a the women from the community have started an open farm, a community cleaning project, empowering the local women with village associations led by the women in the community, starting a zero waste market, increasing the income of the community and overall making her community more "green and clean".*

*Aling's business not only stimulates the economy, but it puts women and the environment first. Her hopes for the future are to continue to inspire women all over Indonesia, "I want to inspire them to create something for themselves and their communities I want to thank TFO Canada team for their support and motivation and especially. Keep up the good work and thank you for your continuous encouragement".*

TFO Canada improves lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers. We facilitate access to the Canadian marketplace and share Canadian trade expertise for the benefit of smaller male and female owned/managed exporters from developing countries and for the men and women they employ.

Founded in 1980, TFO Canada is a non-governmental, non profit organization.

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