

# **EVALUATION REPORT**

## **Independent Review of the UNECE Project: “Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic”**

**Final Report 19 February 2019**

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## **List of Acronyms**

<b>ASEAN</b>	<b>Association of South East Asian Nations</b>
<b>CCI</b>	<b>Chamber of Commerce and Industry</b>
<b>EAEU</b>	<b>EurAsian Economic Union</b>
<b>EU</b>	<b>European Union</b>
<b>FAO</b>	<b>Food and Agriculture Organisation</b>
<b>HS</b>	<b>Harmonised System</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>Information and Communication Technology</b>
<b>IT</b>	<b>Information Technology</b>
<b>MSME</b>	<b>Micro-, Small-, and Medium-sized Enterprise</b>
<b>MTS</b>	<b>Multi-lateral Trading System</b>
<b>NPTS</b>	<b>National Paperless Trading System</b>
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Sustainable Development Goal</b>
<b>TRAINS</b>	<b>Trade Analysis Information System</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>UN/CEFACT</b>	<b>United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business</b>
<b>UNCTAD</b>	<b>UN Conference on Trade and Development</b>
<b>UNDA</b>	<b>UN Development Account</b>
<b>UNECE</b>	<b>UN Economic Commission for Europe</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>WTO</b>	<b>World Trade Organisation</b>

### III. Executive summary

Consistent with its mandate on Trade and, upon the request of the Governments, the UNECE conducted national assessment studies of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Belarus (2011), Kazakhstan (2012) and Kyrgyzstan (2014). The studies identified major regulatory and procedural trade barriers in the respective countries and provided action-oriented recommendations, which were born out of discussions with public and private sector stakeholders.

This project “Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic” (“the Project”) was launched to assist the Governments of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in implementing key recommendations emerging from the studies. It was financed from the extrabudgetary financing by the Russian Federation to support UNECE technical cooperation in CIS countries, with a total amount of \$ 289,958 for the period 1 May 2016 to 1 April 2018.

The purpose of this evaluation is to review and assess the extent to which the project achieved its objectives. The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the project.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy and on the basis of a desk study, one field trip and interviews with key internal and external stakeholders. Overall the project was very relevant, moderately effective, very efficient and very sustainable. There are already early indicators that show the project has made an impact.

The key findings were:

The project output is relevant to supporting national trade reforms in the three beneficiary countries. Representatives from these countries also noted that the project feeds into their regional integration efforts under the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), in which the three countries are members. The project provided a tool for ensuring that national legislation outside of the EAEU harmonization exercise comply with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) administered multilateral trading system (MTS) and for assessing MTS compliance of national legislation for implementing the new EAEU Customs Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2018.

**Recommendation 1: The project will remain relevant as the three beneficiary countries continue their process of regulatory harmonisation and expanding their network of global trade partners. UNECE could consider this model to be a pilot project that could be rolled out to other countries in future.**

In terms of effectiveness the project achieved most of what it set out to accomplish. It leaves a legacy of eight highly-specialised national experts who have been trained in the use of the UN MAST classification system.

**Recommendation 2: Upon request from member states, UNECE should stand ready to review the content produced by the project and ensure it is both up to date and compliant with MTS requirements on a regular basis.**

It was difficult to establish whether all workshop participants took a recommended preparatory online course in February/ March 2018.

**Recommendation 3: UNECE or its trainers could check that trainees have submitted their certificates prior to travelling to workshops.**

The intention to establish a network of experts is still possible. Workshop participants see benefit in continued information sharing beyond the timeframe of the project.

**Recommendation 4: UNECE could assist organising trainees to set up a self-managed and closed social media group in 2019 and nominate a group administrator. This initiative requires no further financial input.**

The participants expressed an interest in the practical application of NTMs particularly in the development of legislative and administrative procedures; both of which should meet the twin objective of protecting humans, animals, plants and the environment without creating barriers to trade in goods. UNCTAD is open to further requests for support.

This project has highlighted the benefits of leveraging multiple funding sources and creating synergies between projects managed by UNECE. These synergies were created during the planning phase

**Recommendation 5: Sending the experts to UNCTAD training workshops will help them to share knowledge more widely on practical issues. Further cross-collaboration within the UN is an option that should be further explored by UNECE. UNECE should continue to create synergies between projects**

The high relevance of the project supports its longer-term sustainability. The project developed sustainable tools that are of use to the beneficiary countries. Wider communications abroad about the existence of the databases on the UNCTAD site may be of value. The engagement of business and civil society needs more careful attention in each country.

**Recommendation 6: The inclusion of business and the media before, during and after the policy reform process can lead to increased ownership of new policy regulations. More communications by the media in cooperation with market support institutions in future UNECE projects about its tools and output would increase use by MSMEs, women traders, for example.**

The project has made government authorities aware that the project is not an end, but a start. The data produced will need regular updating, within the context of regional and WTO global harmonisation processes.

Both UN agencies would be interested to see a statement or action plan from each beneficiary country that defines how they would each like to develop this work further. The experts trained have requested more practical knowledge dissemination either through mentoring, conferences, training or networks. Such papers could be presented to the next Steering Committee. As part of this knowledge sharing the Steering Committee could include regular agenda item that focuses on best practice, case studies or problem-solving issues that affect the member states. Case studies are viewed as valuable by the participating countries. An online training platform that includes such studies is worth considering.

**Recommendation 7: UNECE can continue to support governments by using annual progress reports, the Steering Committee or roundtables to document progress.**

The project is an example of an effective research collaboration between UNCTAD and UNECE. The joint training by the two agencies gave trainees a broader perspective on NTMs, expanded the trainees' network and helped the agencies to increase awareness of their complimentary skills and knowledge, according to the UNECE project manager and UNCTAD.

**Recommendation 8: This is the first collaboration of its kind between UNECE and UNCTAD and could be further developed.**

The project's objectives, justification and rationale do not include a gender analysis. No female owned enterprises or traders were directly involved in the project and interviewing business people was outside the remit of the review. Nonetheless there was an interest from UNECE, UNCTAD and ministry officials in Belarus to think about this element of the work.

**Recommendation 9: In late 2018, following the close of the project, a mandatory gender field has been added to all UNECE projects. Therefore, future projects should clearly present the gender perspective in both its planning and evaluation.**

## IV. Introduction

### A. Purpose

1. The purpose of this evaluation is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the project "*Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic*" (the project) achieved its intended objectives. The evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project in supporting the removal of major regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic (hereinafter "beneficiary countries"). The results of the evaluation will be used to inform decisions on improving technical cooperation projects and activities implemented by the UNECE, particularly under the UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards.

### B. Scope

2. The evaluation was guided by the objectives, indicators of achievement and means of verification established in the logical framework of the project document. The evaluation assessed the extent to which the project strengthened capacities of the beneficiary countries to remove regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. The evaluation covered the full period of the project's implementation from 1 May 2016 to 31 October 2018. The evaluation was also be gender-responsive and assessed the usefulness of the project results to female owned enterprises and traders.

### **C. Methodology**

3. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy and on the basis of:
  - i. Desk study: Background documents were made available to the evaluator by UNECE to ensure an understanding of the design and context of the project. All documents available on the UNECE website relating to the three countries were also studied, including the three UNECE country reports produced between 2011 and 2015 on barriers to trade.
  - ii. Interviews with key internal and external stakeholders, namely:
    - a. Representatives from the three Permanent Missions of the beneficiary countries based in Geneva (by phone/skype, in person where feasible)
    - b. Representatives of the donor, from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation in Geneva (by phone/skype, in person where feasible)
    - c. Government representatives involved in the project in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic, and UNDP in Kyrgyz Republic (by phone/skype)
    - d. All stakeholders in Belarus, through a field visit to conduct in-depth interviews (Belarus was chosen because activities covered additional components);
    - e. Relevant staff from UNCTAD (by phone/skype, in person where feasible).
4. A field trip to Belarus was organised to meet beneficiary organisations. The face-to-face meetings only occurred in Belarus and means this report contains more examples from Minsk, than other countries. The field trip to Belarus meant 30% of the direct and end beneficiaries were interviewed face to face. For Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic, all interviews were done by phone or online.
5. The overall number of direct beneficiaries is 20 people and therefore relatively small. The small sample meant that there is no need for a survey as the beneficiaries could be reached directly. Moreover, since Belarus accounted for the largest share of beneficiaries (given the nature of the outputs), a survey would have tilted the results to reflect the views of Belarus, rendering the results less accurate in terms of representation. UNECE agreed that there was no need for a survey for this review. The beneficiaries were interviewed over Skype (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and face-to face (Belarus). The field trip to Belarus provided greater information in the form of supporting documentation, and deeper discussion. Consequently, there were more examples from Belarus than Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This report has balanced out these examples through more desk research on the two Central Asian countries. In agreement with UNECE, the questions were grouped according to the five sets of stakeholders. Chambers of Commerce and businesswomen's associations were outside the remit of this review because the project focused exclusively on building the capacities of the State agencies drawing on the results of the assessment studies that were conducted following a participatory approach. Therefore, it has not been possible to

triangulate information and capture their views in terms of business engagement in the process

## V. Findings

### *Relevance*

6. The *Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic Project* ('the project') was **very relevant**<sup>1</sup> because it fed into global, regional and national strategies of the three beneficiary countries for removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade.
7. The project makes a direct contribution to two of the three targets of Goal 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal 17 relates to trade and has three specific targets. Target 17.10 aims to promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization. Target 17.11 aims to increase developing countries' exports.
8. On the regional level, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) harmonized laws, particularly the new Customs Code that came into force in January 2018, that have set standards for trade facilitation at the regional level. The new Code began the process of uniform customs regulations across the EAEU. Consequently, the three beneficiary countries have to ensure that their laws comply with the harmonized laws of the EAEU and the MTS requirements. The EAEU is open to other countries joining, therefore this project could be potentially relevant in the future.
9. EAEU trade with the rest of the world, particularly European Union (EU) is also significant. In 2015, the EU accounted for over 50% of total exports and over 40% of total imports to the bloc. Belarus borders the EU and therefore has much to gain from reducing barriers to trade with this trading bloc. Belarusian state bodies said that as the EU is already using paperless trade, and it is important that Belarusian companies can trade with the bloc. Belarus wishes to develop a single paperless trading system that is conducive to bolstering trade with the EAEU, EU and other countries in the long term.
10. In terms of the project's relevance to national economic strategies: In Belarus exports are one of the top three priorities of the national social and economic development programme for 2016-2020 enacted in December 2016.<sup>2</sup>
11. Belarus' development of a national paperless trading system will require a few years before it is completed. This project was able to highlight some of the challenges to establishing such a system and provide state authorities with issues and recommendations to consider. The recommendations address capacity needs and steps to be taken to ensure compliance

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<sup>1</sup> Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability have each been evaluated against a three criteria scale, for example: Very Relevant, Moderately Relevant, Not Relevant etc.

<sup>2</sup> eng.belta.by. <https://eng.belta.by/president/view/belarus-social-and-economic-development-program-for-2016-2020-enacted-97233-2016>



with internationally recognized recommendations and best practices, including those developed by The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) and the World Customs Organization

12. In addition, a new law on animal transport was implemented in 2018, and the Belarusian Ministry of Agriculture has been tasked with developing e-certificates. Therefore, the Ministry wants to optimize the business process in terms of paperless trade, so the policy paper and roadmap produced under the aegis of this project were highly relevant.
13. In Belarus the Law on Technical Regulations and Standards and The Law On The Conformity Of Technical Requirements And Accreditation Bodies were both signed in October 2016 and came into force in July 2017.
14. The timeliness and relevance of the project can be further evidenced by the engagement of other international multi-lateral organisations in Belarus. In September 2017, the World Bank approved a \$60 million loan to Belarus for a new Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Access to Finance Project to improve access to financing for private micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and enhancing the governance and the institutional capacity of the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus, which will enable these enterprises to increase their participation in international trade. The MSMEs will benefit from the policy paper and roadmap for supporting the establishment of the national paperless trading system.
15. The Kyrgyz Republic became a WTO member in 1998. Kazakhstan joined in 2015. As members both countries are required to meet the specific conditions set out in the WTO Agreements to ensure the application of NTMs do not result in barriers to trade.
16. In Kazakhstan an automated system for customs and tax administration (ASTANA-1) has been developed. Following the introduction of e-declaration, a Single Window principle will be introduced. The draft law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Standardization” has been developed, which envisages the establishment of a National Standardization Body.
17. The Kyrgyz Republic ratified the WTO agreement on the simplification of trade procedures in 2016. The government approved the formation of the Trade Facilitation Council in July 2017 to coordinate state bodies in simplifying foreign trade and foreign trade transport procedures. The government has a goal of reducing barriers to trade by up to 14% by 2022, and the council will oversee this work for 2017-2022. The country will also start a special programme in January 2019 to increase exports. This programme includes trade promotion and making internal trade more flexible.
18. The project also related directly to the UNECE Strategic Framework 2018-2019 programme of work<sup>3</sup>. The project directly relates to one of the elements of the strategy of the Sub-programme 6-Trade: *“To support Governments in their national and regional adaptation*

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<sup>3</sup> UNECE Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 Part two: biennial programme plan Programme 17 Economic development in Europe A/71/6/Rev.1 – Programme 17  
[http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/OPEN\\_UNECE/02\\_Programme\\_Planning\\_and\\_reporting/SF\\_2018-2019\\_-\\_reissued.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/OPEN_UNECE/02_Programme_Planning_and_reporting/SF_2018-2019_-_reissued.pdf)

*and implementation of ECE trade-related standards and recommendations in trade facilitation strategies, trade policy and regulatory regimes”.*

19. The project design and intervention were relevant for meeting its objective of further supporting Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic in removing regulatory and procedural barriers, especially in relation to some of the challenges that had been identified in three UNECE-funded studies between 2011 and 2014. The project provided tools in the form of databases that identified overlaps and gaps in regulation for the first time in a comprehensive way that was consistent with international norms. Moreover, the training and mentoring approach of the project ensured that the knowledge and expertise needed to update that data now resides inside each country.
20. Interviewed representatives from the beneficiary countries reported that the project is of high relevance to their regional integration efforts under the EAEU. This was reflected in the comments from government agency trainees who attended the NTM Classification training course, for example. In their feedback 75% requested further support in the practical application of those tools. This practical application was partially out the scope of this project but is now highly relevant to them. Looking beyond the project some experts said they would appreciate support in the practical application of those systems. They suggested that this could be done through a combination of mentoring with experts, online closed social media groups, sharing case studies, or further regional meetings, workshops or conferences.
21. To accommodate this need UNECE is planning a further interregional UNECE workshop (organized under the ECE UNDA funded regional project) for participants at a regional workshop in spring 2019 to discuss regional issues emerging from the studies, with a special focus on challenges that are common to Central Asia, Balkans and Eastern Europe. The workshop will bring together public and private sector stakeholders from the UNECE region and other countries with relevant experiences.
22. UNCTAD has also said that it is open to requests from the participating countries for further collaboration and training in relation to the practical application of those systems as well as NTM measures in general.
23. This need for more practical knowledge is also reflected in the work of the UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards. Participants attending the May 2018 Steering Committee said in a survey that the meetings would have greater relevance for them if they received more practical information, discussion and exchange across other countries' best practice.

### ***Effectiveness***

24. The project **was moderately effective** and achieved most of what it set out to accomplish (see Annex 2). The project was completed on budget. It was extended by the donor in consultation with the Secretariat due to unforeseen delays in implementation. The project was extended by six months to end of October 2018 to ensure delivery of outputs in a manner that corresponds to the Government's needs. The Government was keen on having

the roadmap on NPTS in September October 2018, the period during which national discussions on NPTS were to be held (see below section on roadmaps)

25. The project is also an example of an effective collaboration between UNCTAD and UNECE, who have shared trainers and expertise. UNCTAD said they saw the benefits of UNECE's research work and knowledge of the region being combined with UNCTAD's technical assistance work, and expertise knowledge on the classification of NTMs and global perspective. These mutual strengths made the project more effective, according to UNCTAD and ensured complementary. The training was delivered by UNCTAD, with UNECE assuming the role of the support agency (liaising with the Governments on issues related to the selection of national experts and taking care of logistical arrangements). UNECE and UNCTAD worked as a team in guiding the international consultant, with each drawing on its areas of strength. This collaboration also involved bringing these complementarities to the attention of UNCTAD and UNECE member States. UNCTAD participated in the SCTCS 2017 and 2018 annual sessions, while UNECE participated in UNCTAD NTM week late 2018. During these events the joint work was high-lighted and member States had the chance to familiarize themselves with the work of the two organizations. The collaboration also enabled the staff to discuss ideas for future collaboration.
26. The project's legacy is that it has trained eight highly-specialised national experts in three countries in the use of the UN MAST classification system followed by a "learning-by-doing" research approach.
27. The national expertise to continue this work remains in all three countries.
28. The project had two additional activities that were not specifically mentioned in the original project design. This included an online training course for workshop participants, an interregional UNECE workshop (organized under the ECE UNDA funded project) that combines beneficiary countries under this project with experts from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Caucasus in 2017
29. The main purpose of the online course was preparatory background reading and therefore production of certificates was not mandatory for eligibility to attend Geneva workshops in March 2018. Consequently, it is difficult to establish whether all workshop participants took online course.

## **Roadmaps**

30. The project prepared two roadmaps in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic for ensuring the compliance of national NTM outside of the EAEU with the MTS requirements and one roadmap on ensuring the successful implementation of the NPTS in Belarus. The roadmaps for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic were based on policy briefs, which were prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the national focal points (assigned by the two Government for the project) drawing on a technical report prepared by the international consultant who trained the national experts on the use of UN/MAST NTM classification system. The two policy briefs were reviewed and validated by the national stakeholders (through the focal points) and presented to member States during Steering Committee session in 2018. In the case of Kazakhstan, the policy brief did not contain a roadmap since national NTM legislation was

fully compliant with the WTO requirements. In the case of Kyrgyzstan, the policy brief involved a few recommendations. Thus, while the project foresaw the development of detailed roadmaps, the analysis revealed that Kazakhstan is fully compliant with the WTO requirements, while Kyrgyzstan is almost fully compliant.

31. The NPTS roadmap for Belarus was decided after discussions between UNECE and the Belarusian mission in Geneva, followed by a request from the Government of Belarus (dated 5 May 2017). The road map's focus was the successful implementation of the NPTS because the Government had resumed its WTO accession negotiations in January 2017.
32. A field visit was organized in 2018. Originally planned as a five-day on-site visit to Minsk in August 2018, the mission was extended to 10 days, to allow for sufficient time to grant access, meet and interview, the main state agencies and IT service providers. A second field mission was also organized in 13-14 September 2018 to participate in the workshop that was organized by the Government to discuss the findings of a World Bank report on NPTS implementation. The consultants, who compiled the results of the interviews, desk review and legislative analysis, took note of the World Bank findings as they prepared their technical report – the *Risk Management Approaches for A Successful and Sustainable National Paperless Trading System in Belarus* report. The report also included detailed analysis of the needs of each agency, attached in the form of annexes.
33. This report overlapped to some extent with the World Bank. The scope of the report included ICT enabling environment analysis, technical analysis, implementation plan, and economic analysis & project impact. The UNECE road map focussed on: “*strategic security gap analysis covering regulatory business processes, ICT infrastructure and legislation related to digital signature and e-documents*”.
34. The Belarusian officials involved in this work found it useful to have both reports. The two documents allowed Belarus to compare and triangulate where issues overlapped and establish an understanding of how best to address security gaps in a proactive manner. As Belarus intends to create its own system, the process was informative and constructive. The report produced under this project, along with the roadmap for supporting the implementation of the NTPS that was annexed to the report, was circulated to all State agencies involved (all of which were interviewed during the field visit) and presented on 26 October 2018 to 10 officials from the involved agencies, namely: the National Bank, the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Antimonopoly Regulation and Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Transport, the State Committee for Standardisation.

### **Network of Experts**

35. There was a technical mismatch in the project's logframe for this activity. Activity A1.3 was to “establish a collaborative network of experts to exchange views on the implementation of the project”. The budget breakdown for this activity however, relate to training activities. These workshops were designed to also support networking among experts from national agencies involved in the development and implementation of the NTMs. The experts were identified by the Governments. UNECE also included national experts from NGOs in the training activities.
36. This training has happened, and the same group of experts attended the training, which enabled them to network informally. Network development was not structured under the project. Such

an undertaking requires human resources, infrastructure and financial support. In the logframe the network development had no activities, human resources or a budget allocated, and as such was an anticipated outcome of the training. Therefore, a structured network has not been achieved, and has yet to function independently as a network.

37. Technically the project has delivered what it intended (i.e. training), but the use of the word network is open to interpretation. While forming a network was not the intention of the project and falls beyond its scope, a network is something which the trainees said was desirable in both their workshop feedback and during interviews for this review. Some of them suggested a social media closed group set up for the trainees may have satisfied this requirement. This may be something the trainees themselves should organize and may not be a role for UNECE to manage, but in future a self-managed, online group with a nominated administrator could be set up in the wings of a future workshop or steering committee meeting. As of December 2018, such a group had not been established by the trainees.

### **Workshops**

38. The two workshops in Geneva were planned and budgeted for 12 people in total, but in fact 20 experts attended.
39. The March 2017 workshop on Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) Classification and Data Collection organised in collaboration with UNCTAD was well received by the eight participants, who received comprehensive training on the use of the international system for NTM classification over the course of three days. The workshop aimed to help participants classify national trade-related legislation by measure and product and give them tools to work in their own jurisdiction. It is encouraging that the trainees requested more from the course. Over 60% of them requested more practical information on how to complete forms, answer questions. 50% said they would have liked more case studies from other countries. The experience of the attendees was broad, with 12% saying this was the first course they had attended on the topic, through to 25% of participants who said they had been working on NTMs for several years. The workshop was complemented by an extensive, on the job training exercise. The participants undertook the task of classifying NTMs over the course of four months with the support of an UNCTAD regional expert, who acted as a coach to enable the participants to learn by doing (see electronic databases below).
40. UNCTAD said their course content is generally seen as challenging by some member states, because the workshop also considers behind the border NTMs, which is not always something participants anticipate. Consequently, the workshop agenda builds in time to accommodate this.
41. The April 2017 workshop on the Economic Implications of Non-Tariff Measures organised also in collaboration with UNCTAD was a regional workshop financed by UNECE project funded by the United Nations Development Account (10<sup>th</sup> tranche.) It was attended by 12 people from the three beneficiary countries (Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan). They shared the workshop with 23 other participants from Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Caucasus. The feedback is not disaggregated by participant and therefore it is not possible to evaluate the responses from this project's participants,

but overall the satisfaction scores were high, and included only a few general comments. This workshop included a number of case studies.

### **Electronic databases**

42. Three NTM databases were produced by local experts who were mentored by an international trainer. Upon the request of the Governments, two databases have been published on the Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS) that is maintained by UNCTAD.<sup>4</sup>
43. Accessing information for the database was relatively straightforward for the two countries, thanks to open access and single source databases. The preparation of the databases for the countries proceeded in stages as in a few cases some of the published information on national websites was out of date and required further chasing up directly with the responsible state body. UNECE anticipated this and, in consultation with UNCTAD and the international consultant, broke the work of the national experts on the databases into stages. This allowed national experts to start work on new sections while awaiting confirmation or updates on their questions. This process prevented delays in the production process.
44. A further challenge was the size and complexity of the work. Reforms to remove non-tariff barriers to trade impacts a wide range of legislation and a large number of stakeholders. The comprehensive databases reflect the level and depth of information required to complete a full analysis.
45. In Kyrgyz Republic the experts said they had expected more short courses during the process of developing the database but added that the regular, long-distance mentoring provided by the international consultant was invaluable and the process worked well.
46. The Kyrgyz experts that were trained work for the Single Window agency which was set up by the Ministry of Economy to improve trade facilitation and exports promotion. These experts said the training and database development has provided Kyrgyz Republic with a methodology to analyze gaps in legislation around NTMs for the first time. This knowledge has been integrated into the systems in Kyrgyz Republic.
47. An additional electronic database of NTM best international practice was produced with six documents, including UNCTAD manual on NTMs which was translated into Russian. Each country's progress was highlighted at roundtables during the annual UNECE Steering Committee meeting in 2018 in Geneva.
48. The focal point for the Kazakh experts said that the rapidly changing legal landscape in relation to trade in Kazakhstan meant it would be useful to review the databases on an annual basis, potentially with UNECE experts.

### **Validation Workshops**

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<sup>4</sup> <https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures/NTMs-Data.aspx>

49. Three validation workshops were held in the three countries. A total of 72 senior experts from government agencies attended (46 in Kazakhstan, 17 in Kyrgyz Republic and 9 in Belarus).
50. Producing tools like databases and policy briefs leaves a legacy but also leaves challenges for the beneficiary governments, which are left with a large number of bodies to coordinate further. Therefore, more time and data are needed to inform them all of the benefits of the NTM databases and the proposed approach to paperless trade. The validation meetings begin this process and the UN's convening power validates this work. Lead national agencies will require further effort to implement recommendations on NPTS and to maintain the NTM databases.

### **Roundtables**

51. The roundtables took place during the annual steering committee meetings in Geneva in 2017 and 2018.
52. The feedback survey from the 2018 Steering Committee meeting suggested the representatives from the three states would appreciate a platform that allowed them to share questions, receive support and access information between meetings. This suggests participants would like an interactive platform in addition to the online databank of manuals provided by the project.
53. Steering Committee documents show a wide variance in attendance between the annual sessions in 2017 and 2018. The Steering Committee minutes are well written and publicly available and are supported by the work of the Bureau in the interim period. While the national experts under this project attended 2017 and 2018 meetings, this was not the case for the delegates from the other countries. There will be benefits in regular attendance by the same individuals on a consistent basis. This includes forming better contacts, deepening knowledge and forming a tighter network of experts around this relatively new area of work at UNECE.

### ***Efficiency***

54. The project **very efficient** and achieved its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources. UNCTAD believed the project had fulfilled its objectives efficiently.
55. The activities were initially planned to be implemented over 24 months (May 2016-April 2018). The project was extended by a further six months to end of October 2018 due to force majeure circumstances.
56. The budget totalled \$289,958. The budget was divided as follows into the activities: 29% Roadmap, 20% electronic database, 15%, workshops, 13% programme support costs, 8% Geneva roundtables, 6% validation workshops, 5.5% analysis of road maps, 2% evaluation (percentage figures are rounded up). This breakdown reflects the priorities of the project's objectives. The budget was very flexible, allowing for funds to be moved between lines to accommodate expenditure changes to the agreed activities. The project was managed by UNECE staff, estimated at around USD 30,000 (three working months). Overall the project underspent by \$26,886. The budget allocation for staff travel was not utilised as meetings were organised online. There were reduced costs for participants travel and reduced interpretation

costs thanks to using Russian-speaking consultants. Where interpreters were needed, which was the case of Belarus for the validation workshops, the Government provided the interpretation. These savings were used to increase the amount paid to the consultancy fees budget line to accommodate for the unforeseen additional expenditures. Costs here increased because of greater translation costs and force majeure circumstances (see financial analysis annexed to this report).

57. The overall investment into the 8 direct beneficiaries (the national experts recruited and trained to build the database under this project) is \$36,250 per professional expert over two years, although the electronic database will directly benefit an unquantifiable amount of people. The electronic database could be further analysed monthly or annually using data analytics to work out the cost benefit of the exercise, but this was outside the remit of this review. The database has a longer-term, but time-limited shelf-life and without additional translation costs will be out of date once any new major legislation is published in any other language than Russian.
58. Project implementation started 28 July 2018 once the funds were entered into the UNECE system. The first Annual Implementation Report written in December 2016 announced that 0% of the budget had been utilised due to the time required for establishing the focal points in the three countries and agreeing on the detailed steps for implementing the planned activities
59. This review interviewed nine consultants who were engaged by the project in the three countries. The human and financial resources were viewed as appropriate to the design of the project by 78% of these consultants. They said that the activities were sufficient to reach the standard and goals of the original project concept. Following discussions with UNECE, the two consultants hired for the -NPTS roadmap in Belarus received double the time originally planned for their field trip, but said they still needed more time to complete the work. The World Bank consultancy on NPTS allocated 550 days, the UNECE project allocated two years but the report was delivered in 50 days due to the force majeure circumstances. While the terms of reference and scope of work of the two projects were different, and the UNECE project was more limited in scope, the UNECE consultants said they would have preferred 100 days.
60. The project's stated desire to create a network was not supported with financial resources, activities or staff, and was an outcome rather than a project activity.

### ***Sustainability***

61. The project **very sustainable** because it was specifically designed to develop sustainable tools that would be used in the beneficiary countries after its completion. The tools include the three databases, two road maps for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan , one comprehensive road map for supporting the implementation of NPTS in Belarus , online databases of NTMs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and an online archive of best practice in removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade that will be maintained by UNECE. Sustainability was integral to the project design.
62. There is also potential to build a network of expertise with the experts who participated in the process. Their attendance at a final interregional training workshop for Eastern Europe, Balkans and Caucasus, which will be organized by UNECE in 2019 under the UNDA-funded



regional project (10<sup>th</sup> tranche), will allow the experts working on this project to make further presentations and share experience across other regions.

63. All three countries have a plan for further reductions in regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and this project has been a contributing factor in this process. The NTM database material is not just for the beneficiary countries, but also for governments and commercial partners who want to trade with the three countries. Therefore, the potential impact is wider than those countries that have been targeted.
64. The project is pertinent to national programmes in the participating countries. In Belarus exports are one of the top three priorities of the national social and economic development programme for 2016-2020 enacted in December 2016. In addition, the Belarus ministry responsible for managing the WTO membership process changed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was therefore well-timed because it supports a new ministry to gain in-depth knowledge on NTMs. In Kazakhstan an automated system for customs and tax administration (ASTANA-1) has been developed and a Single Window principle will be introduced. In Kyrgyz Republic the government has a goal of reducing barriers to trade by up to 14% by 2022.
65. Therefore, the participating government bodies are continuing to develop the work of the project. In Belarus the Ministry of Communications on behalf of the 18 participating state agencies will present their recommendations from this project for further steps to the Prime Minister.
66. In Kazakhstan the NTM database was validated during a National Stakeholder Meeting at the Ministry of National Economy in February 2018. The database will be used by the Government to strengthen its information dissemination function and has been integrated into UNCTAD's Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS).
67. In Kyrgyz Republic the database was reviewed by ministries and departments at a national meeting held at the Ministry of Economy in March 2018. The information was loaded onto the TRAINS database. The Ministry of Justice, which is the focal point for government data is interested in further developing the database. The state customs organization is running a risk assessment and the database is now included in their risk assessment process. There is a working group focussing on NTMs and, subject to approval, the Ministry of the Economy will put forward a draft law. The Single Window organization has made a recommendation to the Ministry of Economy to approve the database. Once approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, Single Window will publish the database on their company website. The integration of the database into national systems was made possible by the training of national experts and the fact that they undertook themselves the task of classifying the NTM legislation with the support of the international consultant.
68. UNECE organized a meeting for UNCTAD with the representatives from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic, who attended the SCTCS 2018 annual session, on how to maintain the database. UNCTAD and UNECE are discussing avenues for following up on the conclusions and outcomes of these meetings and the concrete action points, including in the context of a joint project.
69. UNCTAD is in the process of developing a system to enable member states to upload new/revised NTM legislation. The national counterparts can also do the classification of the

NTMs as well as do the coding themselves if they are trained on the use of the NTM classification system (which is the case for two of the countries). The services of UNCTAD's international consultant (who has worked extensively in delivering training workshops on the use of the NTM classification system and classifying and coding NTM legislation) would be then called upon for quality control.

70. The software is still being developed and UNCTAD would like to have the system pilot tested before the system's launch planned for April 2019, additionally UNCTAD needs to identify funds for implementing this work.
71. Therefore, UNCTAD informed the participants that they were working on a solution and plan to touch base with this project's partners during the first quarter of 2019 to update them on progress.
72. There is interest in continued collaboration between the project participants and the UN system.
73. In Belarus one national expert saw benefit in UNECE or UNCTAD holding a further one or two workshops with the relevant authorities.
74. In the Kyrgyz Republic the Single Window experts said further support beyond the project's remit and timeframe could improve its sustainability. The form of this support could be a communications and training programme for potential beneficiaries in government and business on the benefits of the TRAINS database and how to use it. They also pointed out that the availability of Kyrgyz data on the TRAINS system could be more widely communicated abroad, especially in those countries that trade with Kyrgyz Republic.
75. In addition, the Kyrgyz experts trained by this project would like to learn more about the positive or negative effects of the database in other countries in order to have a deeper understanding of whether they should be doing more. The experts said they would like more training on how to analyse and evaluate the NTMs and the impact on the economy.
76. The project fiche shows that in 2019 the experts will participate in an interregional UNECE workshop (organized under the ECE UNDA funded regional project) with experts from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Caucasus. This may resolve some of these issues. Kyrgyz Republic exports beans to the Balkans, so for example, it would be good case study to see how the beans cross several borders. The experts suggested this could be done through organizing further seminars and conferences.
77. UNCTAD pointed out that the purpose of the initial training in March 2017 was to raise the awareness of all participants from all three countries of the importance of the measures and ensure participants can identify different NTMs and how to categorise them. The national experts were then provided on the job training, as per the arrangements with UNECE. UNCTAD usually provides more specific training on practical advice in a second process, in cases where governments request practical support.
78. UNCTAD expressed an interest in continuing this work in collaboration with UNECE as a sustainable exercise and have a system installed so that participating countries could work more effectively and regularly update data, thereby developing a tool to help countries in the region and to also notify WTO on their notification requirements. As the publication of the

revised/new laws is centralized, the national experts could alert the national notification authorities responsible for registering/notifying the WTO on NTM changes (pursuant to their commitments under GATT, GATS and the Agreement on Trade Facilitation), thereby ensuring prompt registering of the changes with the WTO and broader publication through the WTO information dissemination mechanisms.

79. The beneficiary countries say they have acquired new expertise knowledge on best practice, particularly evidence-based methodologies, for monitoring regulatory and procedural barriers. They are appreciative that this knowledge and skill now resides inside the country thanks in a great part to this project. The workshops and on the job training exercise have helped the experts to complete their tasks.
80. Ownership of the project is multifaceted and works on a number of levels. The people trained on the project and who worked on the development of database have ownership of their new-found expertise. In each country there needs to be a follow-on process of evaluation and approval at higher levels of government. The regional integration efforts within the context of the EAEU is a positive impetus that forms an imperative for local ownership and sets deadlines for the three beneficiary countries. Local ownership is also guaranteed because the model proposed by the project is based on local regulations and suits government bodies and the manner in which they work.
81. Transparency was a clear driver for the introduction of the databases. There was recognition in the three countries that beyond the project life cycle there is a need to inform certain sectors further about the work of the project. This included chambers of commerce and business associations who should be informed about the database, especially those business sectors engaged in importing goods.
82. The three country studies that formed the basis of this project all made recommendations on ensuring institutional consultative mechanisms for the development and implementation of regulatory policies to ensure that the concerns of the business sector were taken into account. The role of the private sector is considered to be important, according to UNECE. It is especially important to feed in the opinions of SMEs, enterprises, freight forwarders, brokers and chambers of commerce in all three countries. Another aspect of transparency highlighted in the studies is the lack of up to date information on trade related regulatory and procedural requirements. It is this aspect of transparency that the project sought to support.
83. Business is an end beneficiary of the work of this project. Involving end users in some early stages of the research process can support transparency, increase engagement in and usage of the database materials. The international consultants hired by UNECE for developing the roadmap for supporting the implementation of the NPTS in Belarus therefore included business associations in their list of potential interviewees. They spoke to SMEs, enterprises, freight forwarders, and brokers to get their perspectives. Upon the request of the Government, and for reasons that are associated with the commercial sensitivities of the NPTS implementation, the business community was not involved in the validation workshop.
84. The business community was not involved in the development of the NTM databases, as these were developed using the international classification methodology that is too complicated and is of little use to the business community. Likewise, the validation workshops that were conducted in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan saw a limited participation from the private sector,

as these were meant to seek input on the comprehensiveness of the databases and the private sector is not an authoritative source on this information.

85. However, it is worth considering how to disseminate information between government and the business sector as widely as possible, and abroad as well as to home audiences. For example, a word search for “NTMs” and “non-tariff measures”, in English on the three national chambers of commerce produces no results. These websites would be ideal platforms for directing businesspeople to links on the UNCTAD databases.
86. The wider ownership in terms of the business community, therefore could be increased. Business were engaged to varying degrees in the three countries. In some cases, they are seen as end users of the product, but they can provide insight and input into how best to disseminate information on NTMs to national SMEs.
87. UNECE’s approach to project implementation did not differ significantly from other agencies, according to the direct beneficiaries. Fifty percent of the trainees appreciated that the project provided hands on training for the NTM database with a learning-by-doing method working directly with local experts, who remain in country at the end of the project. One expert in Belarus involved in database collection said the lack of local UNECE physical presence was viewed as more efficient than some other UN programmes. They said it meant the national experts could work directly with national state bodies rather than through a locally-based UN agency.
88. From UNCTAD’s perspective, UNECE works more closely with the region, and is a valuable partner, with expertise in working across Europe. UNCTAD would want to continue this relationship, as UNECE understands the details of working in the beneficiary countries.
89. In Belarus both the World Bank and UNECE have written reports on paperless trade. These reports had different focuses, but there was some overlap in topic. Therefore, the reports’ risk assessment evaluation conclusions on paperless trade are different. According to the Ministry of Communication this is seen as beneficial, because it allows Belarus to get more than one perspective and to set its own path.

## **Gender**

89. The project’s objectives, justification and rationale do not include a gender analysis, and gender issues were not identified in the project’s preparation or design. This is so because it focuses on areas where it is more difficult to identify a gender angle. (NTMs classification and roadmaps on NPTS).
90. No female owned enterprises or traders were directly involved in the project, since the focus was on building the national capacities within the Governments of the three beneficiary countries. However, female owned enterprises are indirect end beneficiaries if they are engaged in cross-border trade.
91. The publication of databases in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan has allowed for greater transparency around international trade regulations, and this will be useful to female-owned enterprises and traders. The Russian-language electronic database of NTM best international

practice manuals is also available to women entrepreneurs in all three countries. The other results of the project (the unpublished NTM database in Belarus, transfer of research knowledge to single window agencies, development of roadmaps and policy papers) are policy-focussed and of greater relevance to state bodies. Of the three validation workshops, Atameken, the Kazakhstan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI), was the only business body mentioned on the participants lists of the three validation workshops. This Kazakh organisation has an active businesswomen club while the remaining two CCIs are structured by geographical or sectoral sub-divisions. From the CCIs website it is not possible to determine the gender balance of membership. This limits this review's ability to evaluate further. Despite this each country does have a Business Club for Women<sup>5</sup>, and this may be a potential information partner in future along with chambers of commerce.

92. Therefore, it was difficult for all interviewees to see how the project activities could be more women-focused. Seven interviewees in Belarus and Kyrgyzstan said this was an interesting question that required further thought.
93. The item *Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade: A Gender Perspective* submitted to the second Steering Committee in May 2016 reviewed how the work of UNECE could be more women-focussed. The item called for more detailed evidence-based conclusions and recommendations for establishing the manner in which regulatory and procedural trade measures combine with other policy measures to set the limits to the prospects of women's empowerment and gender equality.
94. The item said both businesswomen and businessmen seemed to have the same issues with access to equipment, investment funds, information on trade regulations and opportunities and both faced the same challenges in relation to increased competition from imports.
95. The item noted that at issue is the limited participation of female owned enterprises in international trade but did not specifically consider approaches to gender-inclusive research approaches in its remit. At present, UNECE is undertaking a survey-based assessment of the factors that limit such a participation and the impact of NTMs therein using its evaluation methodology (that was expanded for this purpose). The assessment is being conducted in Armenia. The results will be published during the second half of 2019 as part of UNECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Armenia. In addition, steps could be taken to support the three beneficiary countries efforts to ensure the dissemination of information on NTMs and their implication among female enterprises.
96. The two workshops in Geneva trained a total of 20 people from the three beneficiary countries, of which 13 (65%) completed feedback forms. This sample group comprised 84 % men and 16% women. These two workshops had six trainers in total, of which 83% were men. The three national validation workshops were attended by 50 people of whom 72% were men and 28% women. The participants were nominated by Governments based on their areas of work.

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<sup>5</sup> **Kazakhstan:** <http://astana.atameken.kz/ru/pages/233-regional-nyj-sovet-delovyyh-zhenshin-as>; **Kyrgyzstan:** [https://www.facebook.com/pg/Женский-деловой-клуб-ISHKER-АЙЫМ-1729199527166418/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Женский-деловой-клуб-ISHKER-АЙЫМ-1729199527166418/about/?ref=page_internal), **Belarus:** <http://allminsk.biz/kluby/delovoj-klub-zhenshchin-belarusi-i-rossii>

## Impact

97. It is too early to assess precisely to what extent the regulatory and procedural barriers to trade have been reduced in each of the three countries as a result of this project. National and regional reforms, including the EAEU new common customs code, single the reduction of barriers to trade as a high regional priority and therefore the project needs to be seen in the context of one of several interventions. UNCTAD, the World Bank are also engaged in separate projects related to barriers to trade. But the representatives of the five government bodies interviewed for this review in Belarus, and the Single Window organisation in Kyrgyzstan agree that the project is playing a significant role in improving their governments' ability to remove regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. Between 2012 -2019 the three countries have significantly improved or maintained their rankings in the World Bank's annual Ease of Doing Business Index.
98. According to the interviews with the workshop trainees in all three countries, the training process has helped them realise that NTMs need to be constantly monitored, as their number will change over time.
99. In Belarus officials at the Ministry of Communications say the data gathered is useful for both the country's process of joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its membership requirements of the EAEU. The roadmap on the NPTS feeds directly into discussions on how to reduce regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the longer term.
100. As a result of the project the Ministry of Communications says Belarusian state bodies will be able to see the NTMs and which goods are affected by them. This means these bodies can now act with the government to improve regulations and meet international standards. In addition, the research done as part of consolidating the database shows clearly which state body is responsible for which issue as well as which authorities are working in the same goods group.
101. The trainees from the Kazakh government say the publication of the NTMs on the UNCTAD TRAINS database shows which products are most affected by export-related measures. Consequently, it is working on the NTMs to ensure a uniform interpretation of those products. This involves addressing instances where national (non-harmonized) regulations define those products using a previous version of HS codes.
102. According to Kazakhstan's follow-up to the UNECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the country presented to the Steering Committee in May 2018 two Kazakh regulations have changed: A tariff rate quota for raw cane imports<sup>6</sup> was updated and a new tax code was introduced in 2018<sup>7</sup>.
103. The Kyrgyz experts have developed a database that will input into changing regulations. In addition, the project has improved understanding about NTMs. This knowledge and expertise

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<sup>6</sup> Order of the Minister of national economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan of December 6, 2016 No. 498 "On establishment of tariff-rate quotas for duty free imports of cane raw sugar to the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017".

<sup>7</sup> Full text in English on the Kazakh Chamber of Commerce and Industry website:  
<http://atameken.kz/en/news/28487-polnyj-tekst-novogo-nalogovogo-kodeksa-rk>

now reside inside the country and Kyrgyz Republic is now able to know what direction it should go. The country has a good instrument for the future. According to the Single Window organisation the Ministry of the Economy is interested in the work of the project.

104. UNCTAD recommends a follow up process in two years' time in order to evaluate how the landscape has changed and look at the impact on increased trade across the region.
105. At UNCTAD's last NTM annual meeting in October 2018 UNECE presented a broad-brush analysis on how these measures work, particularly the manner in which NTM legislation impacts behind and on border administrative procedures and how these procedures along with secondary laws create non-tariff barriers.
106. The USA, Japan, ASEAN and the EU are the data users, so there was value in these countries learning what the beneficiary countries had achieved. The database material also means researchers can now take the information and calculate the number of trade barriers in each country and compare them on a global level. Beyond these countries, other important agencies like FAO also have been informed about this new dataset.
107. The EAEU Commission is also a user of this database, and officials in Moscow have expressed contentment with the programme to UNCTAD.

## VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall the project was very relevant, moderately effective, very efficient and very sustainable. There are already early indicators that show the project has made an impact.

The project output is relevant to supporting national trade reforms in the three beneficiary countries. Representatives from these countries also noted that the project was useful for supporting regional integration reforms within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), in which the three beneficiary countries are members. The project provided a tool for ensuring that national legislation outside of the EAEU harmonization exercise comply with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) administered multilateral trading system (MTS) and for assessing MTS compliance of national legislation for supporting the implementing the new EAEU Customs Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2018.

**Recommendation 1: The project will remain relevant as the three beneficiary countries continue their process of regulatory harmonisation and expanding their network of global partners. UNECE could consider this model to be a pilot project that could be rolled out to other countries in future.**

In terms of effectiveness the project achieved most of what it set out to accomplish. It leaves a legacy of eight highly-specialised national experts who have been trained in the use of the UN MAST classification system.

**Recommendation 2: Upon request from member states, UNECE should stand ready to review the content produced by the project and ensure it is both up to date and compliant with MTS requirements on a regular basis.**

It was difficult to establish whether all workshop participants took a recommended preparatory online course in February/ March 2018.

**Recommendation 3: UNECE could check that trainees have submitted their certificates prior to travelling to workshops.**

The intention to establish a network of experts is still possible. Workshop participants see benefit in continued information sharing beyond the project timeframe.

**Recommendation 4: UNECE could assist organising trainees to set up a self-managed and closed social media group in 2019 and nominate a group administrator. This initiative requires no further financial input.**

The participants expressed an interest in the practical application of NTMs particularly in the development of legislative and administrative procedures; both of which should meet the twin objective of protecting humans, animals, plants and the environment without creating barriers to trade in goods. UNCTAD is open to further requests for support. This project has therefore highlighted the benefits of leveraging multiple funding sources within the UN



**Recommendation 5: Sending the experts to UNCTAD training workshops will help them to share knowledge more widely on practical issues. Further cross-collaboration within the UN system is an option that should be further explored by UNECE.**

The high relevance of the project supports its longer-term sustainability. The project developed sustainable tools that are of use to the beneficiary countries. Wider communications abroad about the existence of the databases on the UNCTAD site may be of value. The engagement of business and civil society needs more careful attention in each country.

**Recommendation 6: The inclusion of business and the media before, during and after the policy reform process can lead to increased ownership of new policy regulations. More communications by the media in cooperation with market support institutions in future UNECE projects about its tools and output would increase use by MSMEs, women traders, for example.**

The project has made government authorities aware that the project is not an end, but a start. The data produced will need regular updating, within the context of regional and WTO global harmonization processes. Both UN agencies would be interested to see a statement or action plan from each beneficiary country that defines how they would each like to develop this work further. The experts trained have requested more practical knowledge dissemination either through mentoring, conferences, training or networks. Such papers could be presented to the next Steering Committee. As part of this knowledge sharing the Steering Committee could include regular agenda item that focuses on best practice, case studies or problem-solving issues that affect the member states. Case studies are viewed as valuable by the participating countries. An online training platform that includes such studies is worth considering.

**Recommendation 7: UNECE can continue to support governments by using annual progress reports, the Steering Committee or roundtables to document progress.**

The project is an example of an effective research collaboration between UNCTAD and UNECE. The joint training by the two agencies gave trainees a broader perspective on NTMs, expanded the trainees' network and helped the agencies to increase awareness of their complimentary skills and knowledge, according to the UNECE project manager.

**Recommendation 8: This is the first collaboration of its kind between UNECE and UNCTAD and could be further developed.**

The project's objectives, justification and rationale do not include a gender analysis. No female owned enterprises or traders were directly involved in the project and interviewing business people was outside the remit of the review. Nonetheless there was an interest from UNECE, UNCTAD and ministry officials in Belarus to think about this element of the work.

**Recommendation 9: In late 2018, following the close of the project, a mandatory gender field has been added to all UNECE projects. Therefore, future projects should clearly present the gender perspective in both its planning and evaluation.**

## VII. Annexes

### **Annex 1. Terms of Reference Evaluation of Extra-budgetary Project Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the project “Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic” (hereinafter “Project”) achieved its intended objectives. The evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project in supporting the removal of major regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic (hereinafter “beneficiary countries”). The results of the evaluation will be used to inform decisions on improving technical cooperation projects and activities implemented by the UNECE, particularly under the UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards.

#### **II. Scope**

The evaluation will be guided by the objectives, indicators of achievement and means of verification established in the logical framework of the project document. The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project strengthened capacities of the beneficiary countries to remove regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. The evaluation will cover the full period of the project’s implementation from 1 May 2016 to 31 October 2018. The evaluation should also be gender-responsive. It will, therefore, assess the usefulness of the project results to female owned enterprises and traders.

#### **III. Background**

Consistent with its mandate on Trade<sup>8</sup> and, upon the request of the Governments, the UNECE conducted national assessment studies of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Belarus (2011), Kazakhstan (2012) and Kyrgyz Republic (2014).<sup>9</sup> The studies identified major regulatory and procedural trade barriers in the respective countries and provided action-oriented recommendations, which were born out of discussions with public and private sector stakeholders.<sup>10</sup> This project was launched to assist the Governments of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic in implementing key recommendations emerging from the studies. It was financed from the extrabudgetary financing by the Russian Federation to support UNECE technical cooperation in CIS countries, and aimed at supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the three countries. Project activities and outputs were identified in consultation with the respective Governments.

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<sup>8</sup> In 2010, the UNECE inter-Governmental sectoral committee overseeing the Trade Sub-programme’s work (the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards, which succeeded the Committee on Trade in 2015 following EXCOM decision ECE/EX/2015/L.6 ) was tasked by EXCOM with carrying out demand-driven national trade needs assessment studies in countries with economies in transition, with a view to helping these countries address non-tariff trade barriers (Recommendation 6.a in document ECE/EX/5 dated 1 April 2010). The findings and recommendations emerging from the studies are also intended to serve as a basis for: (i) discussions among member states during the Steering Committee’s annual sessions; (ii) decisions by national governments concerned and their development partners on targeted interventions; and, (iii) decisions by member States on the Steering Committee’s programme of work.

<sup>9</sup> The studies are available at: <https://www.unece.org/tradewelcome/studies-on-regulatory-and-procedural-barriers-to-trade.html>

<sup>10</sup> The findings and recommendations are discussed during stakeholder meetings.

The project was implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme in Kyrgyz Republic. This evaluation is proposed following the conclusion of project activities to take stock of the deliverables and their contribution to supporting the removal of main regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the three countries. End of project evaluations are conducted for all projects in UNECE according to the UNECE Evaluation Policy.

#### **IV. Issues**

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

##### ***Relevance***

1. How relevant was the project to the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries in relation to removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade?
2. To what extent was the project related to the UNECE programme of work - under Sub-programme 6. "Trade"?
3. To what extent was the project development consistent with the beneficiary countries' national and regional priorities?
4. To what extent was the project design and intervention relevant for meeting the project objective?

##### ***Effectiveness***

5. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved?
6. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the project objective and expected accomplishments?
7. Has the project contributed to improving the beneficiary Government's ability to remove regulatory and procedural barriers to trade? To what extent have the regulatory and procedural barriers to trade been reduced in each of the three countries?
8. To what extent were the planned activities sufficient to achieve the expected accomplishment and project objective?

##### ***Efficiency***

9. Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
10. Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate to the design of the project?
11. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

##### ***Sustainability***

12. To what extent will the results of the project continue after completion of the project in the beneficiary countries? Do each of the three countries have a plan for further reductions in regulatory and procedural barriers to trade as a result of this project?
13. Have the beneficiary countries acquired new expertise knowledge on best practices, particularly evidence-based methodologies, for monitoring regulatory and procedural barriers?
14. To what extent has ownership of the project results by the beneficiary countries been achieved?

#### **V. Methodology**

The evaluation will be conducted on the basis of:

2. Desk study: background documents will be made available to the evaluator to ensure an understanding of the design and context of the project;
3. An electronic survey to solicit feedback from internal and external stakeholders in Russian and English;
4. Interviews with key internal and external stakeholders, namely:
  - a. Representatives from the Permanent Missions of the beneficiary countries based in Geneva (by phone/skype, in person where feasible)
  - b. Representatives of the donor, from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation in Geneva (by phone/skype, in person where feasible)

- c. Government representatives involved in the project in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic, and UNDP in Kyrgyz Republic (by phone/skype)
- d. All stakeholders in Belarus, through a field visit to conduct in-depth interviews (Belarus was chosen because activities covered additional components);
- e. Relevant staff from UNCTAD (by phone/skype, in person where feasible).

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy.

## **VI. Evaluation Schedule**

### **1. Preliminary research**

The Consultant will carry out preliminary research that includes a review of the background documents provided by the UNECE (October 2018)

### **2. Data Collection**

Following the desk review, the consultant will propose a methodology for the evaluation. This may include electronic questionnaires for different groups of beneficiaries, interviews with relevant internal and external stakeholders, and one field visit (October 2018).

### **3. Data Analysis & and Draft Report**

The Consultant will analyze the data collected and prepare a draft report for review by the evaluation manager and the Programme Management Unit. The report should comply with UNECE's template for evaluation reports (December 2018)

. (December 2018)

### **4. Final Report**

The final report, addressing the comments from UNECE will be and submitted to the evaluation manager (XX January 2019)

## Annex 2. Project Activity Progress Chart

No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
1.1	Establish a Network	March 2017 and April 2017 workshops as well as the Steering Committee sessions of 2017 and 2018	UNECE and UNCTAD	Network members are the participants who attended the training workshops and Steering Committee session.	List of members experts from the three countries who participated in the training workshops and Steering Committee sessions	National experts equipped with expertise knowledge of NTM classification and methods for measuring the economic impact of NTMs.	A common conceptual framework and approaches for understanding NTMs (in terms of what they consist of); measuring NTMs costs and problematizing their development impact	Activities Completed.  Members yet to network independently.
1.2	Workshop	10-11/04 /17	UNECE and UNCTAD (within the context of the UNECE – UNDA funded regional project)	Policy makers from line ministries involved in the implementation of NTMs (including those responsible for economy, trade, agriculture and health	Attendance list Workshop feedback Workshop agenda available online at: <a href="http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45622">http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45622</a>	A policy paper summarizing the core issues and messages delivered during the workshop.	1. Fostering the understanding on the key challenges associated with managing NTMs, the practices and policies that should be avoided in order to avoid the emergence of non-tariff barriers, and the disadvantages of one-size fits all solutions. 2. Special emphasis on stimulating the exchange of information and the forging of working relations between the	Completed

No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
							line ministries in the ECE region	
1.3	Regional roundtable discussion on appropriate systems for monitoring non-tariff barriers as part of the Steering Committee session under the High-Level Segment	3 May 2018	UNECE	List of participants (SC-4 <sup>th</sup> session 2018)	Speeches by the three countries, available online at: <a href="http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47988">http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47988</a> Attendance list Agenda	Country submissions from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic on NTM reform measures and reforms needed to ensure full compliance with the WTO requirements. These documents served as action plans/road maps on removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade.	Encourage the exchange of information and solicit feedback on common issues and concerns	Completed
1.4	Online Training Course in NTMS	2017	UNCTAD	National experts who participated in the March training	Certificates / Feedback was not sought. The online training prepared trainees for the 3-days training in March 2017. Online training course: <a href="https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-">https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-</a>	National experts equipped with a generic understanding of the UN MAST international classification NTM system	Create national sets of NTM based on the UNCTAD system	Completed

No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
					<a href="#">Measures/NTMs-Training.aspx</a> Attendance list			
1.5	3-Day Training Course	22-24 March 2017	UNCTAD and UNECE (support)	National experts	Feedback: evaluation forms Attendance list	Training materials: <a href="http://www.unecce.org/index.php?id=45726">http://www.unecce.org/index.php?id=45726</a> This includes UNCTAD manual on NTMs translated into Russian	Create national sets of NTM based on the UNCTAD system	Completed
1.6	Interregional Training course on Pitfalls in NTMS	April 2018 training	UNCTAD and UNECE (support)	National experts	Feedback: evaluation forms Attendance list		Create national sets of NTM based on the UNCTAD system	Completed
1.7	Develop A Database of common regulatory and procedural barriers to trade  (On the job training)	March training	National experts working closely with UNCTAD international consultant and the UNECE (support)	May 2018 Experts from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic met UNCTAD before their data went live to discuss updating their NTMs	Database: Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's national NTM legislation classified using the UN-MAST system is published online on the UNCTAD's international Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS) at: <a href="https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-">https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-</a>	Published Press release by UNCTAD: <a href="https://unctad.org/en/pages/news_details.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1750&amp;Sitemap_x0020Taxonomy=International%20Trade%20and%20Commodities">https://unctad.org/en/pages/news_details.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1750&amp;Sitemap_x0020Taxonomy=International%20Trade%20and%20Commodities</a>	Increased transparency. Create national sets of NTM based on the UNCTAD system	Completed

No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
					<a href="#">Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures.aspx</a> . The system includes all regulatory and procedural requirements and as such, is an authoritative source for finding out which measures create barriers (i.e., requiring extensive documentary requirements for customs clearance)			
1.8	Online compendium of international best practice and training materials	2018	UNECE	The three countries (as well as the remaining countries where the studies were undertaken)	Online compendium	<a href="https://unece.sati.scan.com/">https://unece.sati.scan.com/</a> (summarizes a development driven approach to assessing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade, and main barriers emerging from UNECE studies, as well as information sources. It will	Common understanding NTMs, their implementation and economic impact	Completed



No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
						<p>be updated regularly with additional information and case studies)</p> <p><a href="https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures.aspx">https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures.aspx</a></p>		
1.9	Validation Workshop at the Ministry of National Economy in Astana, Kazakhstan	21 February 2018	UNCTAD international consultant (lead) and UNECE (support)	23 members of Kazakh Line ministries, State authorities, Business support agencies, Business community.	<p>Attendance list</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>Speech</p> <p>Press release: <a href="https://www.unece.org/info/media/news/trade/2018/unece-and-unctad-pool-efforts-to-help-kazakhstan-consolidate-its-non-tariff-measures-according-to-the-international-classification-system/doc.html">https://www.unece.org/info/media/news/trade/2018/unece-and-unctad-pool-efforts-to-help-kazakhstan-consolidate-its-non-tariff-measures-according-to-the-international-classification-system/doc.html</a></p>	Statement; Declaration; Speech; Commitment; Action Plan	To strengthen the Government's information dissemination function, and integrate data into UNCTAD's Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS)	Completed

No.	Activity	Date	Implementer	Direct Beneficiaries	Means of Verification (Documents)	Output	Intended Outcome	Level of Completion
1.10	Validation Workshop at the Ministry of National Economy in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic	26 March 2018	UNCTAD international consultant (lead) and UNECE (support)	List of participants	Attendance list Notes Speech	Statement; Declaration; Speech; Commitment;	To consolidate a comprehensive database of NTMs and agree on the next steps for publishing the database online.	Completed
1.11	Validation Workshop at the Ministry of Communications, Minsk, Belarus	26 October 2018	UNECE	List of participants	Attendance list Notes	Statement; Declaration; Speech; Commitment;	To consolidate an approach to non-paperless trade.	Completed
2.1	Attend Steering Committee	12-13 April 2017	UNECE	Steering Committee members	Agenda, Minutes, Papers available at <a href="http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44925">http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44925</a>	Roundtable Presentations on Progress 2017, and Follow Up Report (ECE/CTCS/2018/7) 2018	To highlight progress made by the three countries Create a network; Share experience	Completed 2017 & 2018

## **Annex 3. List of Reviewed Documents**

### **UN Documents**

Guidelines to Collect Data on Official Non-Tariff Measures, UNCTAD, January 2016 Version

Guidelines to Collect Data on Official Non-Tariff Measures September 2014 Version

International Classification of Non-Tariff Measures, UNCTAD, 2012 Version

Assessing regulatory and procedural measures in trade: An Evaluation Methodology, UNECE

### **UNECE Steering Committee Trade Capacity and Standards Documents**

UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards meeting documents of 2017 and 2018 <https://www.unece.org/info/events/meetings-and-events.html?id=924#/0/0/0/39818/>

Draft Decision, Decision on the Establishment and Terms of Reference of the ECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards, Geneva 2015

UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards Fourth session. Item 5 of the provisional agenda. Country follow-up to ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. Follow-up on Economic Commission for Europe countries studies: Kazakhstan

UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards Fourth session. Item 5 of the provisional agenda. Country follow-up to ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. Follow-up on Economic Commission for Europe countries studies: Kyrgyz Republic

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards Second session, 26-27 May 2016 Item 3(c) of the provisional agenda. Regulatory and procedural barriers to trade: A gender perspective ECE/CTCS/2016/5

Online Evaluation of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards (Fourth Session) Geneva, 3-4 May 2018

List of Participants 4th session of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards 3-4 May 2018

### **Project Documents**

UNECE Technical Cooperation Form for the Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic 2016/36, 20 June 2016

Results-based budget for the Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic 2016/36, 20 June 2016

UNECE Technical Cooperation Project Proposal Form for the Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic 2016/36, 20 June 2016

Work Plan for the Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic 2016/36, 20 June 2016

UNCTAD NTM database (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic 2018) <https://unctad.org/en/Pages/DITC/Trade-Analysis/Non-Tariff-Measures.aspx>.

UNECE Project Annual Implementation Report for the period 1 May 2016 – 31 December 2016

UNECE Project Annual Implementation Report for the period 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017

Documents from the regional workshop: <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45622>

Documents from the NTM data classification training for the 3 countries: <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45726>

List of participants for the March and April Training

End of workshop evaluation of the Regional Workshop on the Classification of NTMs and databases, 22-24 March 2017, Geneva

End of workshop evaluation of the Regional Workshop on the Classification of NTMs and databases, 22-24 March 2017, Geneva

## **Belarus**

Country Report: NTMs database for Belarus

NTM Database Belarus

Sources of information on active non-tariff measures (NTMs) in Belarus and list of potential documents

List of participants of Belarus Validation Workshop 26 October 2018

Meetings schedule of the UNECE expert group with representatives of state institutions and enterprises of the Republic of Belarus from 06 to 16 August 2018 in Minsk

Analysis of The Existing It Infrastructure for The Establishment of The National Paperless Trade System in Belarus. Terms of Reference

Concept Note: Supporting the successful implementation of Belarus National Paperless Trading System, 26 October 2018

Belarus workshop on the formation of a national system of paper-free trade passed in Minsk, 29/10/2018, <http://www.ecopress.by/ru/news/8/detail/231129/back.html>

Risk Management Approaches For A Successful And Sustainable National Paperless Trading System In Belarus, Concept Note, June 2018

Risk management approaches for a successful and sustainable National Paperless Trading System in Belarus, November 2018

Risk Management Approaches for A Successful and Sustainable National Paperless Trading System in Belarus, UNECE, November 2018

Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Belarus, Needs Assessment, UNECE, 2011

World Bank Terms of Reference, ICT Strategy Support for Belarus, “Development of A Roadmap for National Paperless Trade System (NPTS) In Belarus”

## **Kazakhstan**

NTM Database Kazakhstan

Comments on the Template on NTMs Data Entry of Republic of Kazakhstan by Sergei Sudakov

Concept Note Summary Sheet Kazakhstan on Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Kazakhstan

Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Kazakhstan Needs Assessment, UNECE, 2014

Kazakh Chamber of Commerce, Atameken, website: <http://atameken.kz/en/>

## **Kyrgyz Republic**

Country Report: NTMs database for Kyrgyz Republic

NTM Database Kyrgyz Republic

Concept Note Summary Sheet Kyrgyz Republic on Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Kyrgyz Republic

Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Kyrgyz Republic Needs Assessment, UNECE, 2015

## **World Bank Documents**

Document of The World Bank Group, Report No. 123321- by International Bank for Reconstruction and Development International Finance Corporation Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency Country Partnership Framework for The Republic of Belarus for The Period FY 18–22, February, 2018

TRAINS / WITS database: <https://wits.worldbank.org/>

## Annex 4. Review Questions

The Key internal and external stakeholders were identified as:

1. Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation in Geneva
2. Three Permanent Missions of the beneficiary countries in Geneva
3. Government representatives involved in the project in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and UNDP in Kyrgyzstan
4. All stakeholders in Belarus
5. UNCTAD staff (including Consultants and Trainers)

### **Relevance**

- How relevant was the project to the specific needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries in relation to removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade? (*Groups 2, 3 & 5*)
- What are the trade reform strategies that project activities contribute to? (*Group 3*)
- To what extent was the project related to the UNECE programme of work - under Sub-programme 6. "Trade"? (*Groups 2, & 5*)
- To what extent was the project development consistent with the beneficiary countries' national and regional priorities? (*Groups 2, 3, 4 & 5*)
- How in your view do project activities support regional integration efforts under the EAEU? (*Groups 1,2,3,4, & 5*)
- How in your view will activities improve country's ability to increase trade with the EU and the rest of the world? (*Group3*)
- To what extent was the project design and intervention relevant for meeting the project objective? (*Groups 3, 4, 5*)
- To what extent can the recommendations from consultants be implemented in practice? (*3*)

### **Effectiveness**

- To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved? (*3*),
- What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the project objective and expected accomplishments? (*3,4,5*)
- How did UNECE help overcome these challenges? (*3,4,5*)
- How has the UNECE project contributed to improving the beneficiary Government's ability to remove regulatory and procedural barriers to trade? To what extent have the regulatory and procedural barriers to trade been reduced in each of the three countries? (*4,5*)
- Do you think that by publicizing the NTM database online, barriers facing your trade partners will be reduced due to increased transparency?

- Have the Governments taken measures to publicize the database locally? Have national enterprises been informed about it? If no, why? If yes, how? What were the processes?
- What additional steps should be taken to ensure removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and how can UNECE help
- To what extent were the planned activities sufficient to achieve the expected accomplishment and project objective? (3, 5)

### **Sustainability**

- To what extent will the results of the project continue after completion of the project in the beneficiary countries? Do each of the three countries have a plan for further reductions in regulatory and procedural barriers to trade as a result of this project? (3)
- Have the beneficiary countries acquired new expertise knowledge on best practices, particularly evidence-based methodologies, for monitoring regulatory and procedural barriers? (3,5)
- How will the country use the NTMs database for monitoring regulatory and procedural barriers? What are the challenges that the country face in using the NTMs for this purpose? (3,4)
- Did the training in April provide them better understanding of NTMs and new insights into how to evaluate/read studies that use econometric methodologies for evaluating the costs of NTMs? (3,4)
- To what extent has ownership of the project results by the beneficiary countries been achieved? (3,4, & 5)
- How does UNECE approach to project implementation differ from other agencies?
- What in your view were the aspects of the implementation that ensured national ownership?

### **General Questions (3,4 & 5)**

- What are the next steps in your organization, related to this project? Who will implement these steps and what is the deadlines for their completion?
- Who should know more about the work of this project?
- How will this work be rolled out to those end beneficiaries (commercial traders etc.)? What are the usual communication channels?
- How can the project activities be more women focused in their view? How can you make the activities more focused on women?
- Through this project you have met other NTM experts from your country and other EAEU countries. Are you still in touch with them? How/ When do you communicate?
- What is the one, most important outcome of this project in your opinion? (2,3,4&5)
- Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources? 5
- Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate to the design of the project? (5)
- Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe? (5)

## Annex 5. List of interviewees

### BELARUS

Evgeniy Babich	Head of IT Department Ministry of Agriculture and Food	Government representative involved in the project
Igor Kanash	Head of Department for Strategic Projects, Ministry of Communications and Information	Government representative involved in the project
Sergei Mazol	UNECE Consultant Belarus State Economic University	Consultant
Mikhail Metelski	Department of Foreign Economic Activity	Government representative involved in the project
Aleksandr Rodin	Head Assistant, Department for Strategic Projects, Ministry of Communications and Information	Government representative involved in the project
Aleksdandr G. Skuratov	Deputy Director for Technical Rating, Standardization and Informatization BelGISS, the State Institute for Standardization and Certification of the Republic of Belarus	Government representative involved in the project
Valery Stelmakh	Department for Automation of Customs Operations and Operational Monitoring	Government representative involved in the project

### KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Edil Kalmamatov	Engineer of technical support IT Department, State Enterprise Single Window Centre for Foreign Trade Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	Government representative involved in the project
Bekzhan Murzakmatov	Head of the IT department of the Single Window Centre for Foreign Trade Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	Government representative involved in the project



Rustam Sartkalchaev	Software solution administrator IT Department, State Enterprise Single Window Centre for Foreign Trade Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	Government representative involved in the project
Danilar Mukashev	Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations Office in Geneva	Permanent Mission in Geneva
<b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>		
Madi Sarsenov	Third Secretary; Trade in Goods, Market Access, Trade Remedies (Safeguards, Antidumping, Countervailing Measures), Regional Trade Agreements, Rules of Origin, Import Licensing, Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products	Permanent Mission in Geneva
Madina Makanova	Head of the Division Department for Development of Foreign Trade Activities Ministry of National Economy	Government representative involved in the project
<b>NON-REGION</b>		
Ralf Peters	Chief of UNCTAD's Trade Information Section	UNCTAD focal point
Hana Daoudi	Economic Affairs Officer UNECE, Market Access Section	Project Manager
Vladlen Tsikolenko	Technical Manager Cross Border Research Association (CBRA)	Consultant
<b>Sergei Sudakov</b>	Director, Head of DCM for CEE, Russia, CIS, Israel at BNP Paribas	Consultant
Eamonn Sheehy	Managing Partner Sheehy and Associates	Consultant

## Annex 6: Financial analysis

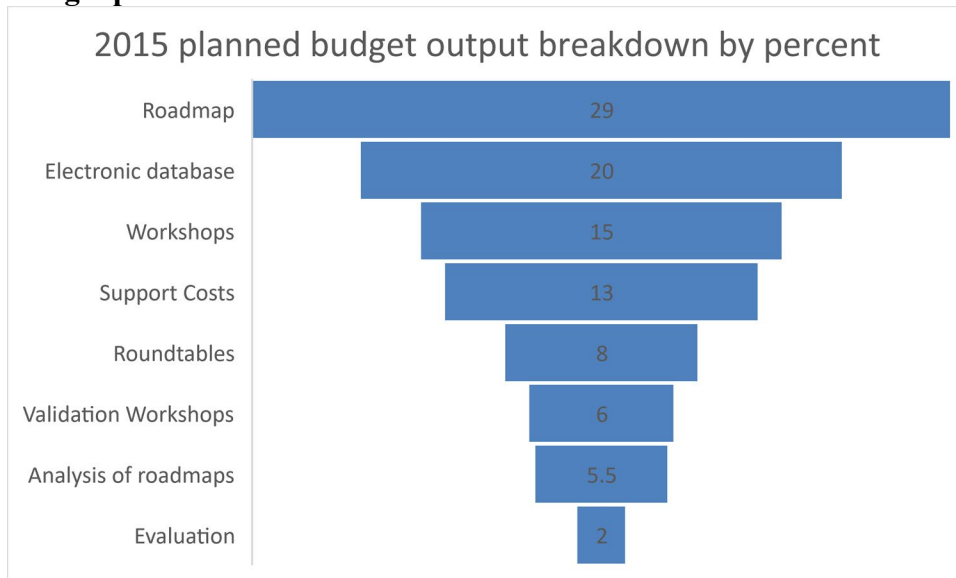
Object of Expenditure	Original plan	2016 Expenditure	2017 Expenditure	2018 Expenditure	Total Expenditure	Shares of Budget lines in total net expenditures	Specific Remarks (by Budget Line)	General Remarks
Contractual Services (Translation, hospitality, interpretation, renting of meeting rooms)	26,700	0	2,884	6,211	9,095	0.04	Meeting venue in the capitals for the validation workshops was provided by the Government. There was no need for interpretation since the regional consultants spoke Russian. In cases where interpretation was needed (Belarus), the Government provided the interpretation	No Expenditures were incurred during 2016 due to the following factors: (1)The project document, as presented to the EXCOM, specified the 1 ,ay 2016 as the start date. However, the project was approved on 20 June 2016 and the funds were entered into the system on 28 July 2016 (see attached). This means that the actual start date was 28 July 2016 (2) Delayed response from the capitals as to the cooperation arrangements (nomination of focal points to interface with the secretariat).
Staff and personnel costs - International Consultants fees/Institutional Consultants fees/national consultants and Consultants travel/Individual Contractors. Including project evaluation	147,000	0	108,124	96,594	204,718	0.88	Expenditures exceeded original allocation due to the force majeure event in Belarus early January 2018. The donor was aware of the event and responded positively to extending the project to allow for the delivery of activities in Belarus as per the Government's request Amounts were allocated from BL 160 (Travel) and BL 120 (contractual services) to this BL	

Travel-meeting participants	55,900	0	0	18,994	18,994	0.08	2017 participation in SCTCS was covered using UNDA project funds, since the regional workshop was held back to back with the SCTCS.
Travel - Official travel of staff - ECE	27,000	0	0	0	0	0.00	There was no need for ECE staff to travel. The validation workshops were delivered by the consultants and were more of working meetings to allow for discussion of technical details. ECE discussions with the Government took place during the SCTCS meetings in 2017 and 2018, and throughout the duration of the project (emails and skype) via the focal points
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>256,600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>111,008</b>	<b>121,799</b>	<b>232,807</b>		
UN-PSC: 13% Programme Support Costs of [2] .The amounts as reflected in the system	33,358	0	14,431	15,834	30,265		
<b>GRAND TOTAL: [1]+[2]+[3]</b>	<b>289,958</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125,439</b>	<b>137,633</b>	<b>263,072</b>		<b>Balance: 26,886</b>

## Annex 7 Research Findings

### Financial Planning

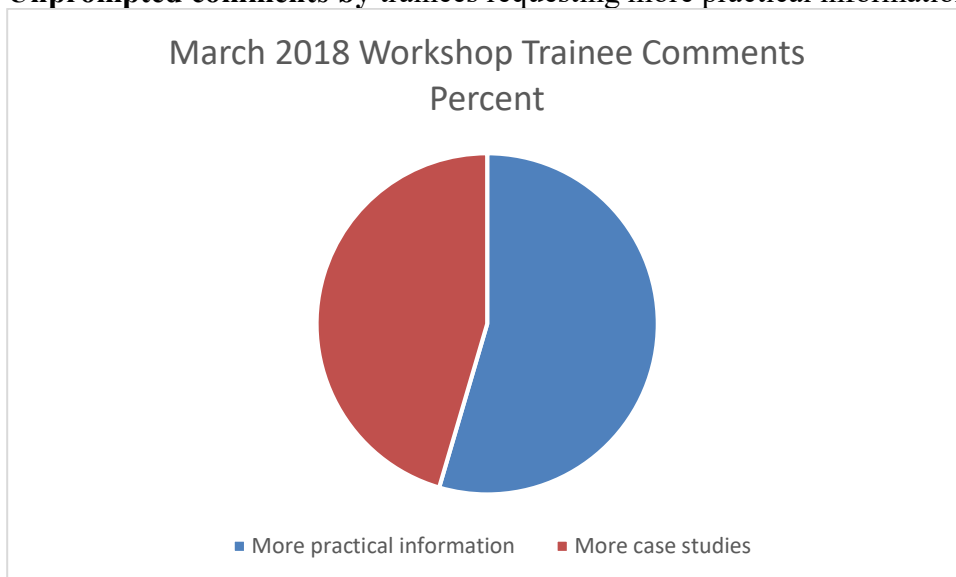
#### Budget prioritisation



Source: Results-based budget for the extrabudgetary project

### Workshop Comments

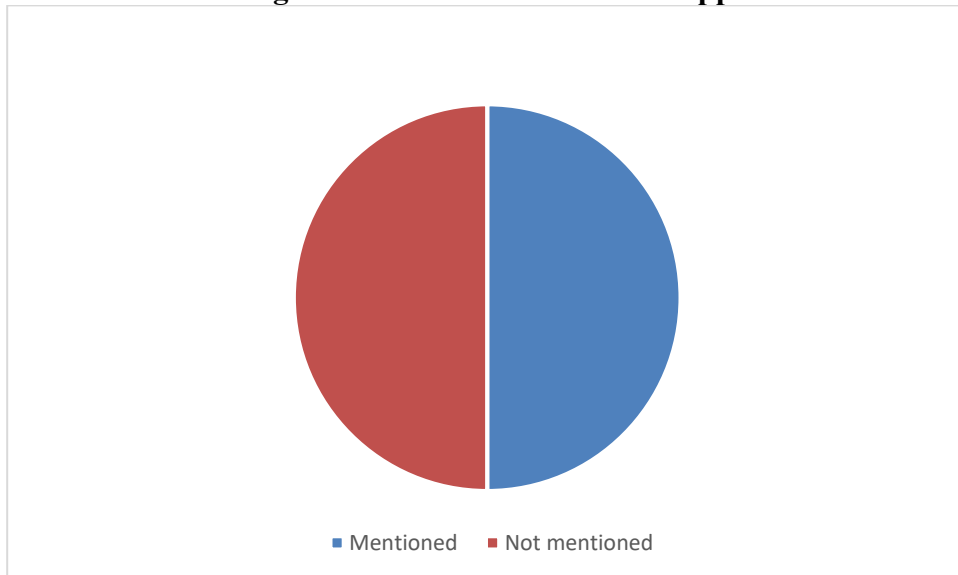
#### Unprompted comments by trainees requesting more practical information



Sample size: Eight people. Source: Workshop feedback forms

## Database development

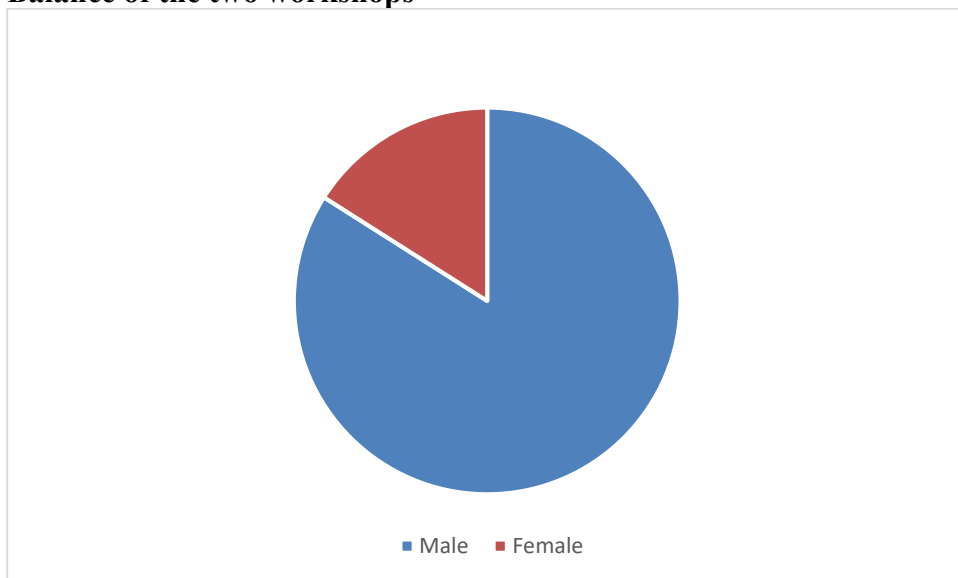
### Trainees mentioning the benefits of the hands-on approach of the work



Sample size: Eight people

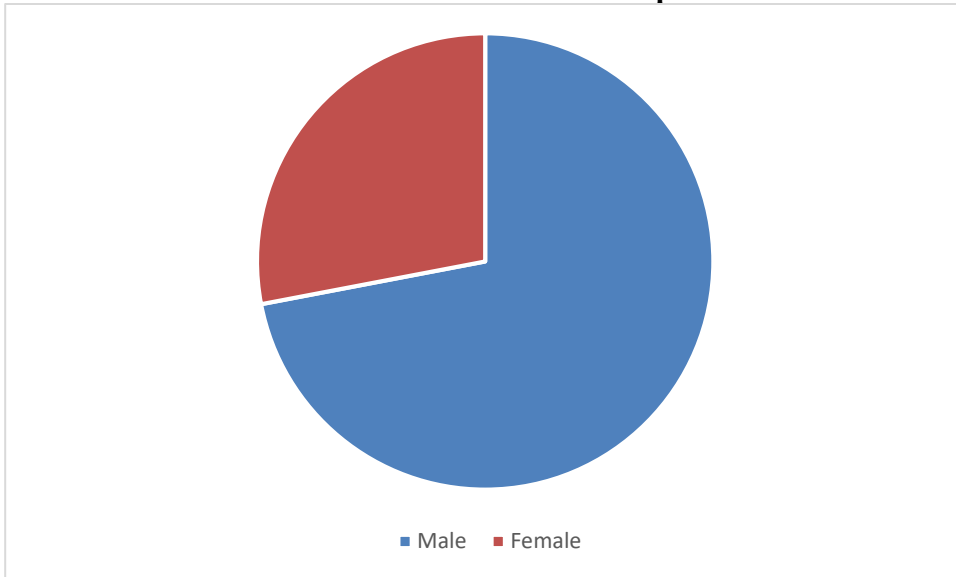
## Gender

### Balance of the two workshops



Sample size 13 out of 20 trainees (65%). Source: Attendance sheets.

### Gender balance of the three validation workshops



Sample size 50 people (100%). Source: Attendance sheets.