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Capacity-building and technical cooperation activities

Report of capacity-building and technical assistance activities

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document provides an overview of capacity-building and technical assistance activities carried out under the UNECE subprogramme on Trade during the period 1 January 2014 – 30 June 2015. It includes activities carried out by the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6); the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7); and, the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). The document does not cover section 23 (Regional Advisory Services), which will be provided in document ECE/CTCS/2015/6/Add.1.

Sections implemented by the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) are for information only.

I. Introduction

1. The Trade subprogramme seeks to facilitate trade and trade-related economic cooperation among countries of the UNECE region and with the rest of the world by contributing to the establishment of an open, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory trading system, especially in the less economically developed and landlocked countries of the UNECE region. To be more specific, and drawing on the work of its intergovernmental bodies and expert groups, the subprogramme develops and promotes:

(a) Simple, transparent and effective processes for global commerce through the development and maintenance of international trade facilitation instruments, especially to support international supply chains and the integration of countries into the global economy. These instruments include global standards and best practices for moving from paper-based to automated electronic processes and for the harmonization and simplification of business practices used in international trade;

(b) A predictable, transparent and harmonized regulatory environment for commerce and business through strengthening of the convergence of regulations, as well as through the promotion of international standards and best practices in areas of regulatory cooperation, conformity assessment and market surveillance;

(c) Trade in agricultural produce through the development of up-to-date agricultural quality standards used by Governments for regulatory purposes and the private sector, as well as through explanatory brochures based on these standards in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Scheme for the Application of International Standards for Fruit and Vegetables, and the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

2. Technical assistance and capacity building activities seek to support UNECE member States, especially less economically developed and landlocked countries, in the national and regional adaptation and implementation of UNECE trade-related standards and recommendations, including their integration into national and regional trade facilitation strategies, trade policy and regulatory regimes. Activities also seek to support the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade caused by capacity shortfalls as well as by differences in trade-related procedures, regulatory approaches, and standards for manufactured and agricultural products.

3. Technical assistance and capacity building activities are delivered in close cooperation with development partners, which include: other United Nations organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations regional commissions; subregional groupings and organizations such as the European Commission, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Commission; and a wide variety of private sector organizations, including industry associations.

4. This document provides an overview of the Trade Subprogramme's capacity building and technical assistance activities for the period 1 January 2014-30 June 2015, highlighting the main objectives, achieved results, and development partners. Section two provides an overview of capacity-building activities, while section three provides an overview of technical assistance projects.

II. Capacity-building activities for the period January 2014 – June 2015 (primarily regular budget resources) ¹

<i>No.</i>	<i>Title, Venue, Dates</i>	<i>Objective(s)</i>	<i>Results</i>	<i>Project ID #²</i>	<i>Non-staff expenditures in USD</i>	<i>Partners</i>
1	Capacity-building for western Balkan countries on integration into cross-border meat supply chains Geneva, 29- 30 September 2014	Enhanced understanding and increased capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply agricultural standards and best practices for efficient regulation, improved information exchange and quality control, including national and sectoral strategies and, thereof, improve the producers' and farmers' access to international agricultural food supply chains and increase their export opportunities.	- For the first time, active involvement of the participants (meat trade experts from the public sector of the western Balkan target countries) in the standardization work of the UNECE Specialized Section of Meat. Participants joined working groups, expanded their networks and benefited from new learning opportunities provided by international experts. They now regularly contribute to proposals on meat standards. - Indications by several participating countries, expressing interest in using UNECE meat standards as the basis for national legislation for the cross-border trade. One country (Serbia) has already done so.	14/15AE	10,491	United Nations Development Account (UNDA) which is financing the project, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Codex-Alimentarius-Commission and bilateral donor agencies (with contributions in kind).
2	Agri-Food Supply Chains in Cross-Border Trade of Nuts and Dried Fruit in Central Asia, Izmir, Turkey 1 to 3 July 2015	Enhanced understanding and increased capacity among public and private sector stakeholders to apply agricultural standards and best practices for efficient regulation, improved information exchange and quality control, including national and sectoral strategies and, thereof, improve the	- Improved awareness of specialized agencies from transition and developing countries (including Central Asia, Albania, Ukraine, Tanzania, Afghanistan) of available instruments in the area of quality assurance, sampling and conformity assessment for nuts and dried fruit as well as food safety and export requirements (legal and commercial)	14/15AE	Around 52,000 (final numbers not available at the time of writing)	UNDA (project funder), UNESCAP, UNDP, FAO, Codex-Alimentarius-Commission, International Trade Centre (ITC) and bilateral donor agencies (with in kind contributions).

¹ Excludes section 23 (Regional Advisory Services) , which will be provided in document ECE/CTCS/2015/6/Add.1

² Project Id numbers as per the UNECE Project Monitoring Tool <http://www.unece.org/info/open-unece/pmt.html>.

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No.	Title, Venue, Dates	Objective(s)	Results	Project ID # ²	Non-staff expenditures in USD	Partners
		producers' and farmers' access to international agricultural food supply chains and increase their export opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased understanding among relevant agencies of inspection processes, associated technical requirements, and analytical skills - Improved understanding among participants from UNDP and GIZ, responsible for managing regional technical assistance projects on nuts and dried fruit, on available international instruments and their use for supporting national standardization policies and regional integration processes - Increased visibility of UNECE's standards, guides, practices through their integration into large-scale technical assistance projects and development plans in Central Asia, transition and developing countries. 			

III. Technical assistance projects for the period 1 January 2014 – 30 June 2015 (extra-budgetary resources)

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures		Partners
							Total	Project ID# ³	
1.	Capacity building for Trade Facilitation Implementation Project	1 Jan 2014 -31 Dec 2014	Meeting No. 4 (July 2006)	170,000	To support trade expansion and diversification in transition and developing economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide TFIG developed and made available online in English, Russian and French. A training kit for trainers on how to use the Guide developed. Training on the use of TFIG provided to policy makers in Central Asia, A set of case studies on good trade facilitation practices in the five regions of the world prepared 	160,897	E144	The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) as project funder; members of the Global Partnership for Trade and Transport Facilitation (consisting of all UN organizations working in this area)
2.	Support to the Implementation of the National Trade Facilitation Strategy of Greece	1 Jan 2014 – 31 Jan 2015	Meeting No. 56 (December 2012)	1,266,833	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the Greek authorities in steering and monitoring the overall Trade Facilitation roadmap. Provide managerial support in implementation of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The competitive position of Greece in the World Bank Logistic Performance Index improved by 25 positions. The concrete results for Customs are overwhelming with an 	879,433	E199	The European Commission (project funder).

³ Project Id numbers as per the UNECE Project Monitoring Tool <http://www.unece.org/info/open-unece/pmt.html>

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures		Partners
							Total	Project ID# ³	
					initiatives included in the Trade Facilitation Roadmap. 3. Provide specialist expertise in implementing high-impact reforms of the customs administration (implementation of the customs pilot and its extension to other customs offices, deployment of risk-assessment techniques in customs administration).	improvement by 52 positions, from 94 to 42. • Since 2012, Greece has improved its ranking in the World Bank Doing Business study by 39 positions from position 100 to 61. • The time to export and import has been reduced by 25% and 44%, respectively. • The cost to export and import has gone down by approximately 10%.			
3.	Removing Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Kyrgyzstan	October 2014- October 2015	Meeting No. 70 (27 June 2014)	100,000	To contribute to the successful implementation of the Kyrgyzstan's National Strategy for Sustainable Development by supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and supporting regional integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade, featuring an analysis of trade facilitation conditions and regulatory cooperation; Business Process Analysis of regulatory and procedural measures underpinning the exports of beans and dried apricot; an assessment of implications for regional integration and the utilization of the EU Generalized System of Preferences has been completed 	77,400	E219	The Government of Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation (project funder) Note: In previous years, project partners included the Governments of Belarus and Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation (project funder).

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures	Partners
							Total	Project ID#³
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common understanding among relevant public and private sector stakeholders of best practices for improving regulatory cooperation, standardization policies and trade facilitation conditions in Kyrgyzstan, and of best practices for deepening Kyrgyzstan's integration into regional and global value chains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft study was presented to relevant stakeholders in English and Russian during a stakeholder meeting in Bishkek (11 June 2015) The recommendations will be used as a reference framework for implementing the country's action plan for export promotion. 		
4.	Aid for Trade needs assessments in transition economies (Belarus, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan)	January 2010-December 2014	Meeting No. 33 (17 December 2009)	81,586	To help countries with economies in transition in the UNECE region integrate into their national development frameworks actions to reduce regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and improve the trading environment in their countries in a way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study on Regulatory and Procedural barriers to trade in Tajikistan, covering trade facilitation and regulatory cooperation and featuring Business process analysis of cotton fibre completed (English and Russian). 	81,586	E177

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures	Partners	
							Total	Project ID#³	
					that supports sustainable economic growth and a more rapid achievement of development objectives and the Millennium Development Goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendations emerging from the study were integrated into Tajikistan's post-World Trade Organization accession plan in line with the Presidential Decree No. 691 of 31 October 2014. At the request of the Government, UNECE also included the recommendations in the country's Aid-for-Trade (AFT) action matrix in order to facilitate the successful implementation of Tajikistan's regional integration efforts. The Government decided to integrate the recommendations into the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2016-2020. 			
5.	Support to Trade Facilitation and Single Window (SW) projects in the Customs Union of the Single Economic Area (CU)	Jun 2014 – Feb 2015	Meeting No. 70 (27 June 2014)	60,000	To improve understanding and planning for SW and trade facilitation (TF) related measures in support of existing projects in the CU (Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia) and their	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved national capacity of policy-makers and experts to create an enabling environment for TF and establishing SW Adoption of international norms, 	45,827	E217	Eurasian Economic Commission and the Russian Federation (project funder)

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures	Partners
							Total	Project ID# ³
					neighbouring countries	standards & recommendations for TF and SW Implementation • Improved interagency as well as public-private and international cooperation for TF and SW implementation Project is under implementation		
6.	Improved capacity of governmental trade control agencies in Albania to implement Single Window	May 2015 – Dec 2015	Meeting No.76 (31 March 2015)	49,500	To strengthen the capacity of governmental trade control agencies and the business community in Albania to simplify, harmonize, and automate trade information gathering and customs operations through the SW.			Albanian Government (Customs Authority, Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship; Ministry of Finance); representatives of the business community; UNDP and UNCTAD
7.	Strengthening national capacities of the CIS countries to implement ECE agricultural quality standards (Phase II of project E160)	October 2014- February 2015	Meeting No. 72 (3 October 2014)	291,600	To strengthen the capacity of the CIS countries to produce quality agricultural products, strengthen the implementation of UNECE quality standards in the region, and support the broader UN-wide goal of ensuring food security	Project is under implementation	E236	Lorkh Institute of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Russian Federation; All Russian research Institute for Poultry Processing of the Russian Academy of Agricultural

No.	Title	Duration: Start-End	EXCOM Approval	2014 -2015 Budget in US\$	Objective(s)	Results	Expenditures		Partners
					and nutrition for all.		Total	Project ID# ³	Sciences, Russian Federation; “Fat-Agro” Vladikavkaz, Russian Federation; Federal Research Centre “Agoscope Changins-Wädenswil”, Switzerland; and the Russian Federation (project funder).