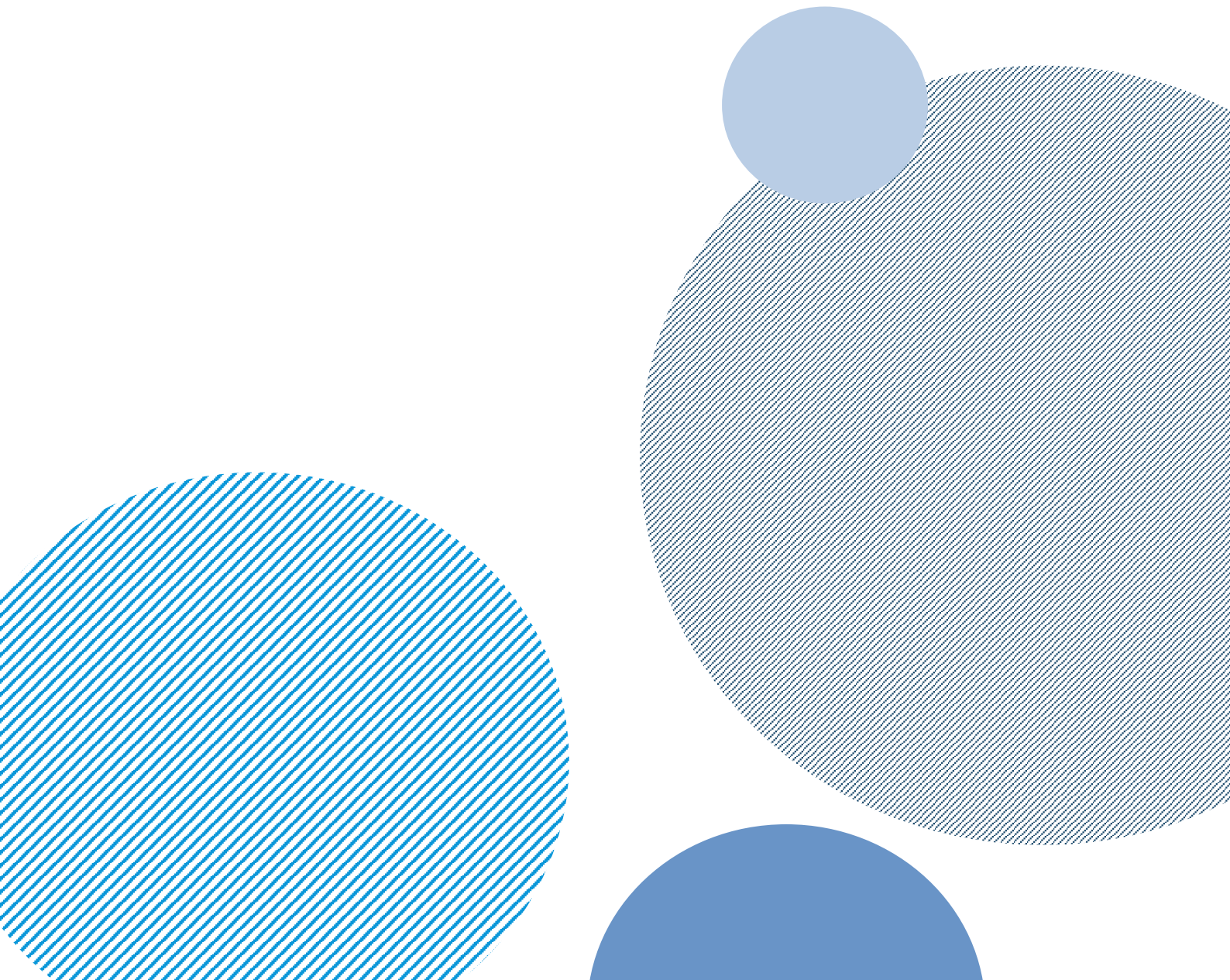


# Enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements to inclusive and equitable trade



Project Evaluation Report | April 2018



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Development Account  
Project Evaluation Report  
April 2018

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Commissioned by  
Trade, Investment and Innovation Division,  
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## List of Acronyms

AfCTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
APTIAD	Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Agreements Database
APTIP	Asia-Pacific Trade Indicators Portal
ARTNeT	The Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade
ATPC	African Trade Policy Centre
CAN	Andean Community of Nations (CAN)
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
IDEP	African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
ILO	International Labour Organization
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
LAIA	Latin American Integration Association
LDC	Least developed country
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SDD	Social Development Division, ESCAP
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TIID	Trade, Innovation and Investment Division, ESCAP
UNNEXt	United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WB	World Bank

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# Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction

This evaluation reviewed the DA9 Project "Enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements to inclusive and equitable trade", a project funded under the 9<sup>th</sup> tranche of the UN Development Account. It was executed by the ESCAP secretariat, as the project lead, in association with the ECLAC secretariat and ECA secretariat between mid 2014 and December 2017.

## 2. Purpose and Scope

The project seeks to enhance the capacity of selected developing countries in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean in order to help countries formulate and implement trade policies, as well as complementary policies, for more inclusive and equitable outcomes.

The objective of the capacity building project is to increase the awareness of government officials and trade negotiators of the potential social and economic impacts of preferential trade agreements, as well deepen their understanding on how to manage such impacts through ex-ante and ex-post adjustments.

The evaluation sought to:

- Determine the level of achievement of the project objectives and expected project accomplishments by examining the results chain, processes and contextual factors;
- Assess the performance and intervention against ESCAP's evaluation criteria of: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;
- Formulate specific and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project/programme design and implementation.

## 3. Methodology

The evaluation used a mix of data sources and multiple methods which included:

- A desk review of relevant project-related documents and reports;
- Consultations and interviews with consultants and staff of the Commission secretariats;
- Stakeholder and key-informant interviews/focus group discussions with project participants at the final project symposium in December 2017 in Bangkok;
- Two surveys: (i) A survey was administered immediately following the December, 2017 ARTNeT Symposium in Bangkok, the final global meeting of the project; (ii) an on-line, survey to relevant stakeholders and workshop participants, designed to supplement other sources of information and check the ongoing value and sustainability of the project;
- Face to face, telephone or skype interviews were conducted with advisory group members, country expert group members, government officials, private sector actors, presenters, partners and workshop participants;

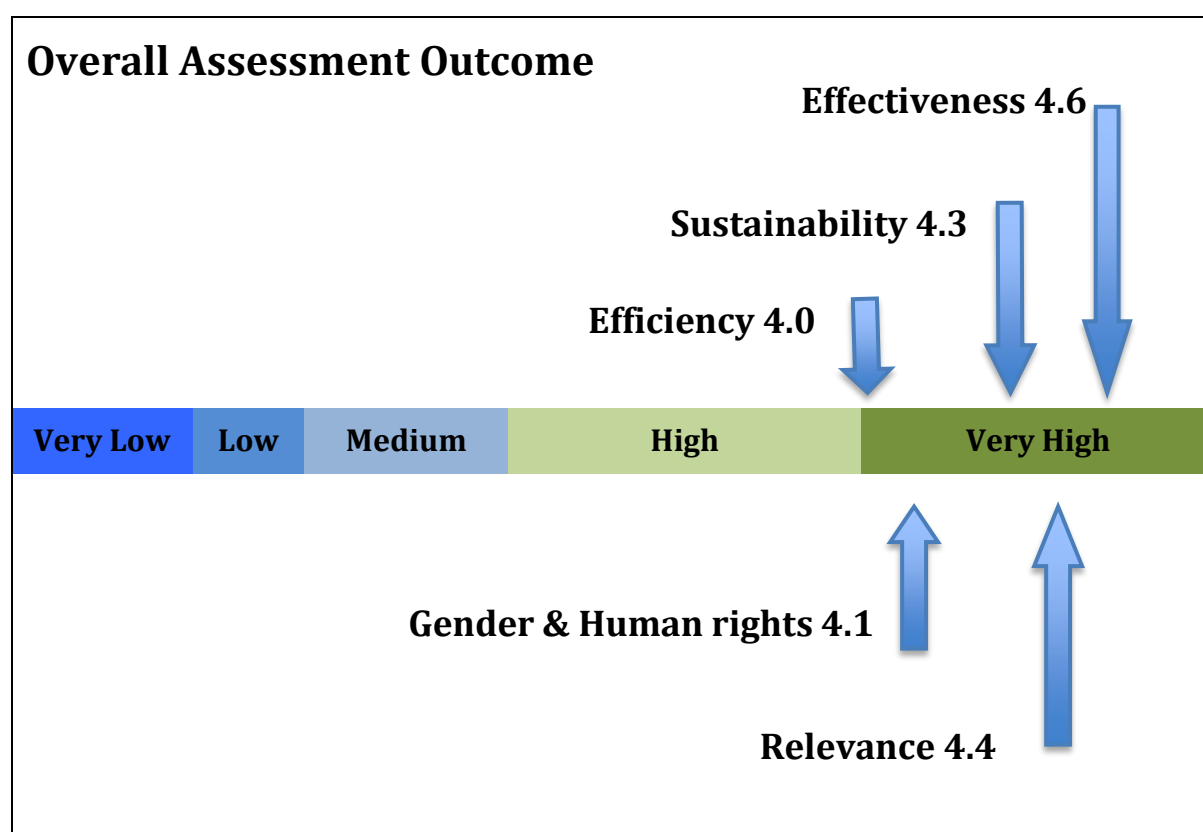
- There were visits to Mongolia and Guinea as two of the project pilot countries, to gain feedback and data through interviews and consultations. Guinea was of specific interest for the evaluation because of the role of the private sector in the project. <sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Conclusions

This project has been found to be very successful and has delivered a strong outcome consistent with the overall objective.

Nineteen country, regional and global workshops and events were conducted. More than 20 country case studies, customized research studies and knowledge products were produced. These include a handbook on sustainability and preferential trade agreements which is a new, key baseline resource and the creation of the on-line, Asia-Pacific Trade Indicators Portal (APTIP).<sup>2</sup> APTIP provides easy access to indicators of inclusivity and information on preferential trade agreements in Asia and the Pacific.

The project ranks very highly with stakeholders and participants. <sup>3</sup>



There are concrete examples of immediately used project learning by several countries in each of the three regions.<sup>4</sup> For example Mongolia and Ecuador used new knowledge to improve their trade negotiations. Guinea private sector businesses, armed with information about trade agreements, expanded their exports, in association with government. In Viet Nam,

<sup>1</sup> A planned visit to Bangladesh was canceled for safety reasons

<sup>2</sup> Launched at the December 2017 ARNTeT Symposium in Bangkok – the final project event

<sup>3</sup> Based on the December 2017 survey and cross-checked with a review of workshop evaluations and interviews

<sup>4</sup> Interview feedback confirmed the high overall ranking and provided several concrete examples of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.

country trade policies were directly influenced within three months of the country-based workshop. Bangladesh immediately incorporated knowledge gained in the project on more inclusive trade agreements into research and policy advice.

Intra and inter-regional capacity was further strengthened through six regional and global sessions in Bangkok, Geneva, Yaounde and Lima. These forged a stronger set of connections between knowledge, ideas and participants, and contributed to greater systems-wide capacity strengthening. The December 2017 ARTNeT Symposium was the final project meeting and brought together the three Commissions, participants from each of the three regions and expert contributors.

The key characteristics of the project 's success were about (i) linking (people, resources, data and skills), (ii) creating opportunities for learning, development and impact, and (iii) leveraging relationships, partnerships, knowledge and networks to increase capacity, capability and results.

#### **4.1 Effectiveness**

The project has been found to be highly effective in achieving objectives. Ninety eight per cent of survey respondents learned new information and 90% still use that knowledge.

In each of the regions (eg Mongolia, Costa Rica, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mauritius and Ecuador) new knowledge has been used directly and immediately for trade agreement preparation, in trade negotiations, in undertaking trade policy research and in briefings to Ministers. It has been incorporated immediately into the curriculum for university students in Mongolia and Bangladesh. As well as Guinea, private sector participants in Mongolia have used their new knowledge to understand business exports and to inform the wider private sector of trade agreements. Again, a Guinea participant, running a business for women, used her new-found knowledge to treble employment through new exports to the United States of America.

New, informal networks have been created by participants within and across countries, for example among African country participants, and within Viet Nam and Guinea. Social media and face to face meetings are used to share information. Existing country-based formal and informal networks have been strengthened, for example in Mongolia through the Chamber of Commerce and government/university networks.

ARTNeT, as an established formal network in the Asia Pacific region, has actively incorporated project products. Download usage is high. During the course of the project the website has been accessed and viewed more than 1,800 times, with specific resources downloaded. In its first three months, APTIP was viewed or downloaded 427 times. The ARTNeT e-forum on trade advocacy has been accessed over 300 times and the specific country workshop resources for Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been accessed more than 750 times.<sup>5</sup>

Both ARTNeT and UNNExT (UN Network of Experts for Paperless Trade) experts contributed their services to the project advisory board.

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<sup>5</sup> To put this in context there were 199 participants in the 5 ESCAP-led country workshops



## 4.2 Relevance

The project material has been found to be highly relevant with relevant support provided to countries through workshops, products, web-based resources and workshop follow up from consultants and Commission staff. A range of relevant methodologies for understanding, preparing for and undertaking more inclusive trade negotiations for trade agreements were provided in workshops and on-line. These included technical methodologies such as the general equilibrium model; intellectual property analytical approaches; gender integration approaches and labour rights rules.

The DA9 project enabled immediate use of information in trade negotiation preparations, advice and research as well as immediate use of existing trade agreements for improving outcomes from trade related to inclusivity:

- eighty seven per cent of respondents found the project workshops, regional and global sessions, and resources relevant for their work
- there were high levels of participant engagement in events, workshops and use of on-line material after events which are indicators of relevance

The relevance of the project was noted by other, eligible countries. Four countries -Mongolia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Guinea and Senegal - became additional participants. Honduras and Guatemala requested and received assistance to help deepen their customs union.

## 4.3 Efficiency

The project implementation has been found to be highly efficient, operated in a partnership-based manner and within budget while being responsive and adaptive to issues and unexpected circumstances, such as political unrest.<sup>6</sup> Specific products and materials were created to reflect and support country needs and inclusivity issues. They were a hallmark of the project and contributed to efficient utilization of project resources.

The project maximized the different strengths of each of the Commissions enabling the three Commissions to work effectively as a team and enhancing project implementation efficiency.

The project also created and utilized synergies and cost-efficiencies through partnering arrangements and attracting additional resources (such as US\$80,000 from Global Affairs Canada<sup>7</sup>) as well as tapping into existing and fostering new networks in each region. These partnering arrangements reduced the planned costs of workshops and allowed the additional countries to be included. Consultants were used when relevant in order to increase country capacity through research, specific knowledge products being created and providing informed advice. The project utilized internal capacity whenever possible and the dedication of skilled staff was frequently noted by project participants.

The only question related to efficiency was a delay in ESCAP being able to get their part of the project underway. An earlier start would have allowed for greater customization of workshops and country studies. But this is a minor issue and was compensated by highly efficient implementation in 2017 made possible, to a large extent, by the high quality, trust-based relationships between TIID staff and country key stakeholders and partners.

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<sup>6</sup> Political and civic unrest in Burkina Faso is an example

<sup>7</sup> for ECA to ensure participation from all 5 African regions

#### **4.4 Sustainability**

The project has been found to be highly sustainable with sustainability built into initial planning and design, and integrated into the project implementation.

The project has built a legacy of relevant products which can be used for training and capacity building. On-line training modules and project products are available through ARTNeT. APTIP is a specifically useful project product that can be updated as information becomes available.

Existing networks of like-minded professionals and experts such as ARTNeT and UNNExT have been strengthened through the project. New, more informal, networks have been formed within countries and regions by project participants, thereby enhancing project sustainability through participant 'ownership'.

Sustainability is also increased through the project's partnering approach. Co-design has been used for workshops through country expert groups and through co-produced products in Latin America and the Caribbean. This supports ongoing country leadership.

The project has provided a substantial contribution to the emerging field of sustainable/inclusive/equitable trade agreements, particularly through the 'Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements'.

Relevant new projects will be undertaken jointly through ECA and ESCAP<sup>8</sup> and by ECLAC. ARTNeT acts as a significant network and resource for countries in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Commission staff will continue relationships with countries through other work priorities. Combined, these steps contribute to a multi-layered, systemic sustainability.

#### **4.5 Gender and human rights mainstreaming**

Because this project was about inclusive and equitable PTAs, gender and human rights issues were integrated in design and implementation. Reinforcing the importance of the project focus are the SDGs - the key, internationally agreed, drivers for addressing gender and human rights issues.

The evaluation found that inclusive and equitable PTAs is an emerging field, described by a key expert as being at the stage of 'best endeavors' and at the beginning of a 10 year process of development. The issues are complex, reflected in the wide range of terms used - inclusivity, gender, labour and human rights, indigenous knowledge protection and sustainability.

The project has noticeably advanced recognition and understanding of the importance of the issues, has increased knowledge, helped identify the stage of development of the field and contributed baseline information and tools.

All project workshops and country case studies and other studies included gender, human rights, inclusivity knowledge and analysis. There were panels in some workshops focusing on the role and impact of trade agreements on women. Although female/male workshop participation varied<sup>9</sup> it was 40%:60% female/male, on average.

The project has produced substantive new reports on the integration of labour provisions into trade agreements and the handbook on 'Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in PTAs'.

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<sup>8</sup> DA11 Project

<sup>9</sup>Were usually, but not always, recorded

The overall findings of this evaluation are that more work is needed to (i) understand how trade agreements and their implementation are helping/hindering gender, human and labour rights; (ii) promote the importance of gender-based analysis of trade policies and agreements; (iii) develop further tools for gender and sustainability issues to be integrated into trade agreements; (iv) strengthen the usable data on gender and sustainability issues for use in trade agreements.

## **5. Recommendations**

There are three recommendations to build on the gains from this highly effective project:

- Continue and further strengthen knowledge and capacity building around Inclusivity and equity (sustainability) in trade agreements
- Further develop capacity building techniques to maximise effectiveness and sustainability - for use in future workshop-based, capacity building projects
- Leverage and support project sustainability gains

### **(i) Continue and further strengthen knowledge and capacity building around Inclusivity and equity (sustainability) in trade agreements**

The project was focused and deliberate in planning and incorporating inclusivity and equity (sustainability) issues. The evaluation has confirmed that it is a developing area in relation to trade agreements. Further development is consistent with meeting SDGs.

Momentum has been built and should be maintained through further development with (i) ECLAC, ECA and ESCWA, (ii) within TIID/ESCAP and with other ESCAP divisions such as the Social Development Division(SDD), and (iii) through ARTNeT and other networks.

There are two specific opportunities that could be explored:

- the DA11 project focusing on regional integration index (ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA)
- ‘The Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements’ provides an ideal baseline for (i) monitoring relevance; (ii) adapting and updating; and (iii) using as a basis for capacity building and influencing the practice of trade agreements.

It may be appropriate for ESCAP to take the lead on this in the first instance, ideally with TIID working with the SDD<sup>10</sup>.

Additionally, the knowledge on indicators of inclusivity as related to trade could further be expanded upon through cooperation with other initiatives such as the Hinrich Foundation Sustainable Trade Index.

### **(ii) Further develop capacity building techniques for future projects**

The project has rated highly in terms of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. There is an opportunity to enhance capacity building processes and techniques for future similar projects. These include straightforward steps for pre-workshop planning, greater use of participatory learning techniques in the workshops/sessions, and post workshop follow-up.

Specific suggestions include:

*To strengthen relevance – Workshop planning and design:*

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<sup>10</sup> Perhaps connecting with current SDD initiatives such as the pending major report on Women’s Transformative Leadership, and Gender based Budgeting

- pre-workshop knowledge and expectations assessment of participants in order to further customize the workshops
- design cross-sector groups, within the workshops to analyse and create solutions for specific issues
- greater use of case examples
- create the time for each participant to identify key 'take-away learning' and how they intend to use the learning

*To strengthen effectiveness and sustainability:*

- adapt the usual post-workshop surveys to focus on participants' intended use of material
- post-workshop (within three months) follow up and check progress on use of new learning, knowledge and use of tools

The Commissions' engaging professional advice on process design, and on facilitation of learning events could be a beneficial and practical step.

**(iii) To further enhance sustainability**

Several steps have been taken to ensure project sustainability. Additional suggestions are: Continue to make project material available through ARTNeT and Commission websites, and assess and encourage its use and being updated (3 Commissions)

- (i) Leverage the learning and impact from DA9 as part of the DA11 project (ECA, ESCAP, ESCWA)
- (ii) Provide low key support to participant countries/regions new networks (3 Commissions)

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Evaluation

This project was funded under the 9<sup>th</sup> tranche of the UN Development Account. Its implementation was led by ESCAP through TIID in association with ECA and ECLAC with the involvement of UNCTAD.

The project was implemented in the context of the expanding trade and investment that has driven growth in many developing countries and contributed to major reductions in poverty, and improvements in overall welfare in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean. Substantial variations in performance among countries persist however and, as a consequence, not all countries - and much less all groups and individuals within countries - have been able to benefit equally from opening to trade. In particular, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and other countries with special needs, have not benefited from trade as much as some other developing countries.

In order for these countries to foster further economic and social development, they need better access to markets alongside further development of productive and supply capacity.

Preferential trade agreements (PTAs) have the potential to promote growth, employment and social welfare. Enhanced access to markets may create trade opportunities, boost trade volumes and facilitate regional integration. Larger, more competitive markets can also benefit consumers by providing more varied and cheaper goods and services. PTAs may offer developing countries opportunities to modernize and upgrade their domestic regulation in particular for the services sector, investment and competition with a view to greater economic efficiency.

## 1.2 Project purpose, objectives and scope

The objective of the DA9 capacity building project was to increase the awareness of government officials and trade negotiators of the potential social and economic impacts of preferential trade agreements, and deepen their understanding on how to manage such impacts through ex-ante and ex-post adjustments. Capacity building of government officials and trade negotiators in these areas was seen as helping developing countries formulate and implement trade policies, as well as complementary policies, for more inclusive and equitable outcomes.

Intended project outcomes were:

- (i) Increased capacity of governments in selected member States to engage in internal and external dialogue and in negotiations, at both regional and international levels, to enhance the contribution of preferential trade policies and agreements to the inclusive development of each member State.
- (ii) Increased capacity of governments in selected member States to expand South-South trade through preferential trade policies and agreements in order to generate productive employment and promote inclusive development.

The budget for the total project was \$742,000 with \$475,500 allocated to ESCAP as the lead implementing commission, and ECA and ECLAC each being allocated \$133,250. The project opened in 2014 and closed in December 2017.

## 1.3 Objectives of evaluation

The evaluation took place from late December 2017 through to mid-April 2018. It was undertaken in Bangkok, Thailand; Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; Conakry, Guinea; and Wellington, New Zealand. The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Determine the level of achievement of project objective and expected accomplishments by examining the results chain, processes and contextual factors;
- Assess the performance and intervention against evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;
- Formulate specific and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project/programme design and implementation.

The target users of the evaluation results include the United Nations General Assembly, Development Account Fund Manager and donors, ESCAP, ECA and ECLAC management and staff, and stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Description of methodology

The evaluation adopted the ESCAP evaluation framework with the criteria of: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender mainstreaming and human rights.

**Table 1**

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
<p><b>Effectiveness</b>  <i>The extent to which the project objective and expected accomplishments have been achieved. A project is considered effective when its activities produce the desired results</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project has achieved its objective and expected accomplishments?</li> <li>• What were the key factors that contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of project objectives and expected accomplishments?</li> <li>• What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project in achieving its results?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relevance</b>  <i>The extent to which the project results are in line with the priorities and policies of the target groups. Relevance assesses the usefulness of activities and outputs delivered to the target group</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project's products and services were used by the target countries?</li> <li>• How were the needs and requirements of the target groups assessed or identified?</li> <li>• What are/will be the key obstacles for the target groups to utilize the project's products and services?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Efficiency</b>  <i>The extent to which human and financial resources were used in the best possible way to implement activities, deliver outputs and achieve objectives/outcomes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the resources (human and financial) effectively utilized to deliver outputs and achieve results?</li> <li>• How was the project managed in terms of timeliness?</li> <li>• Did the synergies gained from partnership with other organizations result in cost-efficiency and savings?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability</b>  <i>The likelihood that the benefits of the project will continue in the future</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Gender mainstreaming and human rights</b>  <i>This criterion assesses the extent to which gender and human rights considerations have been incorporated into the project design and implementation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project design and implementation?</li> </ul>
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The evaluation questions developed were based on these key parameters. They were used to guide interviews with participants and stakeholders, and in assessing project outputs and survey results.

## 2.2 Data collection and analysis

The evaluation used a mix of data sources with quantitative and qualitative methods including:

- A desk review of relevant documents, including the project document, progress and terminal reports, activity reports, results of survey questionnaires, relevant official correspondence with stakeholders, any strategic documents related to the project and resource documents created through the project; (Annex III)
- Missions to ESCAP in Bangkok to conduct face-to-face key-informant interviews/focus group discussions with male and female stakeholders and observe the final event, the ARTNeT Symposium in December 2017;
- Two surveys: (i) a survey was administered immediately following the December, 2017 Bangkok Symposium, the final global meeting of the project; (ii) an on-line, survey to relevant stakeholders and workshop participants, designed to supplement other sources of information and check the ongoing value and sustainability of the project, with a 30% response rate from the ESCAP-led survey;<sup>11</sup> (in Annex V)
- 45 face to face, telephone or skype interviews were conducted with project staff, presenters, partners and participants and current and past relevant ESCAP staff. These took place in Bangkok with participants in the December 2017 symposium; with staff in the ESCAP office; with participants and stakeholders in Mongolia and Guinea and by skype with Bangladesh participants and stakeholders, and with specific experts and advisers; (in Annex IV)
- There were two visits to project pilot countries - Mongolia and Guinea - to collect data through interviews and consultations. Guinea developments have also become a case study for the evaluation because of the specific learning about the role of the private sector.<sup>12</sup> (Annex VI)

### 2.2.1 Gender and human rights mainstreaming approach

ESCAP guidelines specify that gender and human rights mainstreaming are essential components of all ESCAP evaluations and take place on three levels: 1) intervention design; 2) intervention conduct; 3) intervention outcomes. This importance of gender and human rights was central to the DA9 project with its focus on capacity building for more inclusive preferential trade agreements.

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<sup>11</sup> 30% response rate is considered to be an average to good response rate for on-line surveys.

<sup>12</sup> A planned visit to Bangladesh was canceled for safety reasons

The evaluation looked at the manner in which gender and human rights mainstreaming approaches were incorporated into:

- the framework of thinking and planning from the initial stages of the project, and
- assessed how this was integrated as the project was implemented.

## 2.3 Risk and limitations

Four main potential risks and limitations were identified for the evaluation:

- the availability and accessibility of needed written and web-based material, for example: – plans, reports, case studies and data (including website data)
- the willingness and availability of key people: - workshop participants, country representatives, reference group members and other stakeholders - to both participate and to form a representative sample
- an acceptable response rate from both surveys with sufficient information to be valid, robust and meaningful for the evaluation
- the ability to travel successfully to key countries – expected to be Mongolia, Bangladesh. Guinea was added during the course of the evaluation

The four potential risk and limitations did not materialize – aside from planned travel to Bangladesh. There was ready access to written and on-line material. The project had managed information effectively and efficiently. When there were language problems the ECA and ECLAC staff were helpful.

Key people made themselves available for the evaluation either in person, through skype and telephone interviews or through email contact. There were very few non-responses. The large majority were spontaneously explicit that this was due to the focus and relevance of the project and the quality of the work undertaken by the Commissions and their key staff.

Initial concerns about not achieving an acceptable response rate to the on-line survey also did not materialize. The concerns lay around busy people not responding to a survey about a workshop they had participated in some months, and at times, more than a year earlier. The response rates were pleasing and ranged from average to very good. People from about 30 countries responded and the large majority took the time to make specific comments and suggestions. The results are meaningful.

Travel to Mongolia and Guinea was undertaken. Unrest in Bangladesh prevented travel to Dhaka and the planned interviews were undertaken by skype and phone.

## 3. General Findings

### 3.1 Context

The mandate of ESCAP, ECA and ECLAC to work on trade policy, including PTAs arises from a number of resolutions, declarations and other United Nations documents. This mandate was clearly established in the project proposal.

The original pilot countries of Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Colombia, Ecuador, Jamaica, Myanmar, Viet Nam and Bangladesh were identified as having the most urgent demand for assistance and support, and the potential to benefit the most from the project and the PTAs. Participant countries were extended to include Mongolia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Guinea and



Senegal following the assessment of requests. In addition, Honduras and Guatemala and the Central American Integration Secretariat (SIECA) requested, and received, ECLAC's assistance around deepening their Customs Union.

Informed ownership of the project was created through the establishment of a reference group of 24 members from the three Commissions, UNCTAD and the pilot countries. As well, a network of scholars in trade and inclusivity development practitioners from each region participated in regional and global project events.

## 3.2 Overall Findings

The project implemented a total of 21 workshops, and produced more than 20 knowledge products - country case studies, customized research studies, and on-line training modules and data-base resources. (Annex 2)

### Country training workshops

Capacity building workshops were the key tool for learning involving about 865 participants.<sup>13</sup> Nineteen country, regional and global workshops were held between November 2015 and December 2017 and two specialist workshops through ECLAC. These included:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| • ECA-IORA, November 2015, Ebene, Mauritius                        | 31 participants  |
| • ECA-IDEP, May 2016, Dakar, Senegal                               | 35 participants  |
| • Ecuador, December 2015, Guayaquil                                | 27 participants  |
| • Colombia, February 2016, Medellin                                | 125 participants |
| • Jamaica, June 2016, Kingston                                     | 20 participants  |
| • Ecuador (follow-up Workshop), April 2017,<br>Quito and Guayaquil | 44 participants  |
| • Colombia (follow-up Workshop,) May 2017, Bogota                  | 24 participants  |
| • Jamaica (follow-up Workshop), December 2017,<br>Kingston         | 25 participants  |
| • Viet Nam, March 2017, Hanoi                                      | 43 participants  |
| • Bangladesh, March 2017, Dhaka                                    | 38 participants  |
| • Mongolia, April 2017, Ulaanbaatar                                | 38 participants  |
| • Myanmar, June 2017, Nay Pyi Taw                                  | 45 participants  |
| • Islamic Republic of Iran, August 2017, Tehran                    | 36 participants  |

Guatemala and Honduras workshops strengthening customs union 35 participants

Presenters and Commission staff made themselves available to participants for follow-up.

### Regional and global sessions

- ESCAP Regional Dialogue, 21-22 June 2017, Bangkok 33 participants
- Expert Meeting developed basis for Trade Indicators Portal (APTIP),

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<sup>13</sup> (i) This total included expert advisers and country based participants who participated in several workshops

- and with UNCTAD participants, June 2017, Bangkok 23 participants
- Global Meeting (in conjunction with WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade),  
and with UNCTAD 14 July 2017, Geneva approx 70 participants<sup>14</sup>
- ECA Regional Dialogue (before ECCAS High Level Dialogue),  
23-24 Oct 2017, Yaounde 64 participants
- ECLAC Regional Dialogue, 7-8 November 2017, Lima 80 participants
- ARTNeT Symposium on PTAs and Inclusive Trade,  
14-15 December 2017, Bangkok 29 participants

These sessions brought together key people from UNCTAD, and participants from the three regions including government, private sector, academics and trade specialists. The second June 2017 workshop assisted with the design of APTIP.

#### Resource materials, knowledge products and data-bases

A range of country-based studies, and topic-focused training materials and technical assistance resources were produced during the project. (Annex 2)

Examples include: ESCAP Country Studies and ECLAC desk studies, technical assistance, as well as specific studies such as the Analytical Approaches to Evaluating Preferential Trade Agreements (<http://www.unescap.org/resources/analytical-approaches-evaluating-preferential-trade-agreements>) and Handbook on Negotiating Development Oriented Intellectual Property Provisions in Trade and Investment Agreements (<http://www.unescap.org/resources/handbook-negotiating-development-oriented-intellectual-property-provisions-trade-and>)

The Asia-Pacific Trade Indicators Portal (APTIP) is another specific project product. It was launched at the project's December 2017, final symposium. APTIP is designed to assist researchers, policymakers, students and other interested individuals to visualize the link between indicators of inclusive trade and preferential trade agreements, that have been signed in Asia and the Pacific, in an intuitive and user-friendly manner.

Resources were made available through Commission websites and more specifically through a special link on the ESCAP-connected ARTNeT. Resources accessible through ARTNeT included: (i) workshop resources such as country case studies; (ii) knowledge products such as technical studies; (iii) on-line training and (iv) APTIP

#### **Respondents' Participation in Various Activities**

Forty-five percent of respondents to the on-line survey participated in national workshops, 33% in regional and 22% in global forums.

<b>Global Forums</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>National Workshops</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Regional Workshops</b>	<b>33%</b>

<sup>14</sup> Numbers are difficult to assess accurately because this was a side event at WTO forum

### 3.3 Performance assessment

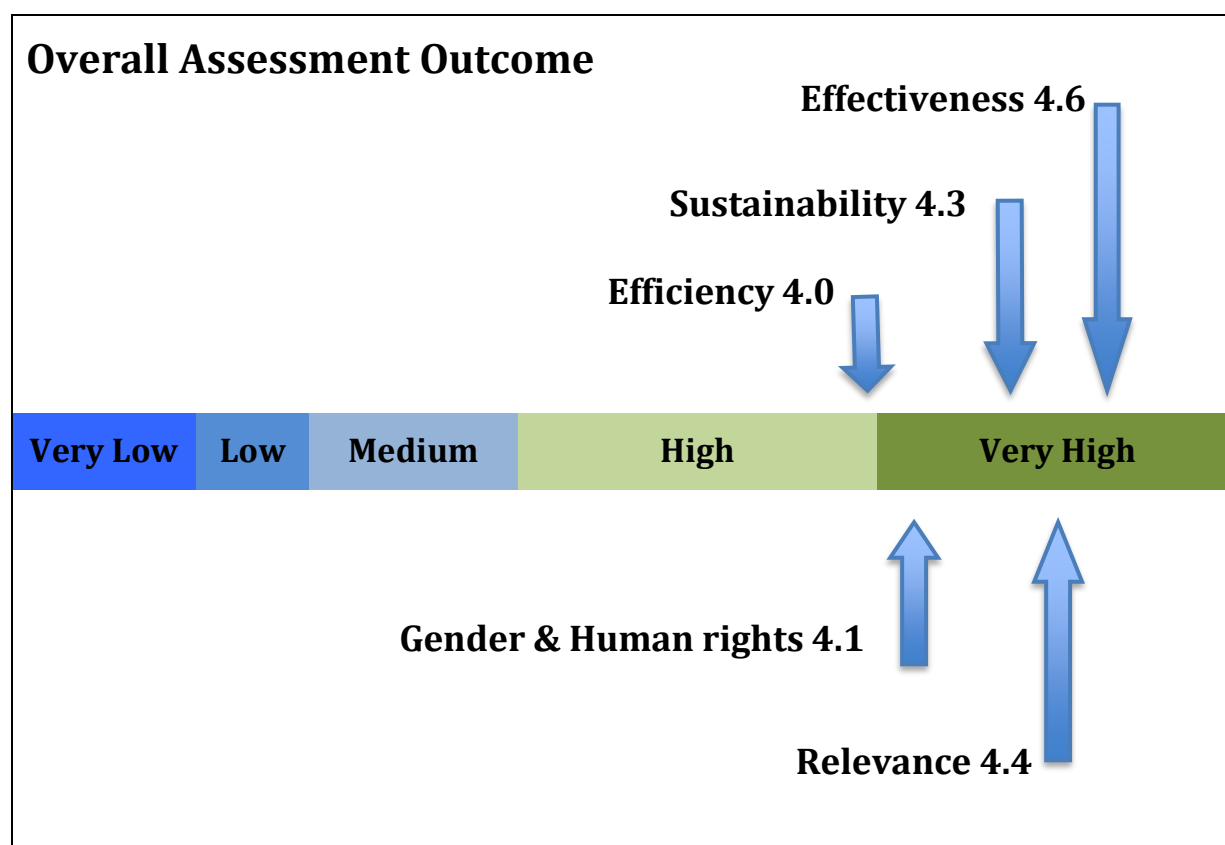
This section assesses the overall performance of the project and combines the specific findings of the five key evaluation criteria which are assessed on a continuum of: ‘very low’ (1 point), ‘low’ (2 points), ‘medium’ (3 points), ‘high’ (4 points) and through to ‘very high’ (5 points).

There are three sources of data for the assessment:

- a survey immediately after the final project workshop – the December 2017, Bangkok Symposium
- responses to the on-line survey undertaken in February-March 2018 which explored effectiveness and relevance in more depth
- interviews with participants from selected countries and regional/international experts in inclusivity and trade agreements

In addition, the evaluations of all workshops were reviewed and assessed.

The overall ratings of the project from the December 2017 survey are ‘high to very high’ . These ratings were consistent with the post workshop assessments.



#### **Interview rankings**

About 50% of those interviewed gave quantitative ratings and rated the project activities as ‘very high’ for relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Inclusivity - gender, human rights (including labour rights) were considered as ‘medium-high’ and efficiency was considered to be ‘high’. These findings are discussed more fully in the assessment of each of the criteria in Section 4.

The qualitative assessments from interviews also provided specific examples and deeper insights. As one example, in each of the regions (eg Mongolia, Costa Rica, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mauritius and Ecuador) new knowledge has been used directly and immediately for trade agreement preparation, in trade negotiations, in undertaking Trade Agreement policy research and in briefings to Ministers.

### ***On-line survey***

The on-line survey shows high effectiveness and relevance, with 98% of respondents learning new information, and 90% continuing to use this new information in their work. Eighty seven percent of respondents found the content of the project events highly relevant.

### ***Use of on-line resources***

The use of on-line resources has been high.

<b>ARTNeT Resources and products</b>	<b>Downloads/views (number of times)</b>
ARTNeT project website accessed, viewed and specific resources downloaded	1,813
Workshop resources/pages ESCAP/global	1,639
Country workshop pages/resources Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar and Iran <sup>15</sup>	750
APTIP – in first three months	427
ARTNeT e-forum on trade advocacy	306
On-line training	295
Knowledge products	173

### **Comment**

- (i) There is specific evidence that the project goals have been met. There are examples of: (a) an increase in the capacity of officials, advisers and private sector actors to formulate and implement trade agreements, (b) increased awareness of inclusivity issues and (c) understanding of the place, rules and process of negotiation of PTAs.
- (ii) There was genuine openness from participants and stakeholders taking part in the evaluation. Participants appreciated the practical information the project provided and actively talked about their immediate and planned application of learning. A typical comment was that *“DA9 was a highly relevant, well-executed and effective project made possible because of the skills and networks of Commission staff.”*
- (iii) UNCTAD, as a project partner, was positive about their involvement in two global meetings. They appreciated the synergy arising from the different expertise of

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<sup>15</sup> There were 199 participants in the ESCAP-led workshops in the 5 countries

- regional commissions compared with UNCTAD and the specific issues for participating countries.
- (iv) Participants considered that the regional and global meetings helped (i) deepen their knowledge of more inclusive and equitable PTAs and (ii) broaden and strengthen networks and access to advisers and resources.
  - (v) The project adapted and was responsive, for example learning about the importance of private sector engagement and digital technology in trade. Examples include:
    - Guinea participants (from government and the private sector) were involved in four national, regional and global project events. The private sector participants immediately used their new found knowledge of existing pan-African and US trade agreements to export, and worked with government officials to inform other private sector members and influence government policy implementation.
    - when the importance of digital technology became evident the project engaged experts in digital trade and e-commerce to contribute to later events such as the Dhaka workshop.
    - ECA started working with Burkina Faso and Mauritius and then expanded to incorporate others in regional sessions as a result of growing interest. They used networks and partnerships, for example the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and ECA sub-regional office for Central Africa, to enable this to be resourced.
  - (vi) The project maximised the different strengths of each of the Commissions. ESCAP as the largest, with networking and expertise leadership was the project's coordinating backbone; ECLAC's research expertise was capitalised on by the project and ECA's wide reach and advocacy function within Africa enabled it to work closely with key Pan-African organizations and spread the reach and impact of the project.
  - (vii) The key characteristics of the project 's success were about (i) linking (people, resources, data and skills), (ii) creating opportunities for learning, development and impact, and (iii) leveraging relationships, partnerships, knowledge and networks to increase capacity, capability and results. Much of this was achieved through partnering arrangements and networks in each region.

### 3.4 Constraints and Challenges

Project challenges and constraints are discussed more fully in each section of the conclusions. For the purposes of key findings they are:

- Delays in ESCAP coordination role for first year of project
- In-country government officials can have high turnover reducing institutional knowledge
- In-country trade negotiation capacity is variable and takes a long time to develop
- Out of date data, and highly aggregated data excludes gender, human rights and other more detailed inclusivity issues, captured in micro-level data

## 4. Specific findings and conclusions

### 4.1 Introduction

This is a highly effective, relevant, efficient and sustainable project. There were significant achievements in relation to all five evaluation categories. While there were also areas for improvement these need to be seen within the context of a positive and productive project.

Effectiveness				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
				↑ 4.6

### 4.2 Effectiveness

The key evaluation questions for effectiveness are:

- What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project has achieved its objective and expected accomplishments?
- What were the key factors that contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of project objective and expected accomplishments?
- What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project in achieving its results?

(i) Project objective and accomplishments

The project objective was to increase awareness of government officials and trade negotiators of the potential social and economic impacts of PTAs and how to manage such impacts. The December 2017 survey shows very high project effectiveness. This is reinforced by the on-line survey with 98% of respondents having learned new information and 90% continuing to use this in their work.

Interviews and the on-line survey identified that project learning was immediately used in several instances, a clear sign of the effectiveness of the project approach and processes.

For example, Mongolia and Ecuador have used project learning in their negotiations for, and decision-making about, trade agreements. In Mongolia five of the workshop participants were part of a working group preparing for trade negotiations between the Republic of Korea and Mongolia. *“The week after the workshop we used the workshop information in our discussions in Korea”*. These negotiations were still in process at the time of the evaluation. Material from the project country case study and the workshop content was still being actively used. It was enhanced by the ongoing technical back up from ESCAP TIID staff.

Ecuador had lagged behind in the negotiation of trade agreements.<sup>16</sup> In 2015 it was about to lose its status with the EU as part of the Generalised System of Preferences, which would have meant an average tariff increase from 5% to 16%. Information from the project’s Ecuadorian

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<sup>16</sup> ECLAC Final project report

technical assistance study<sup>17</sup> assisted the government to understand the risk of losing competitiveness in the export of a number of products, and assisted the government's decision to sign a FTA with the EU in late 2016.

Similarly, an analysis on the economic and social impacts of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) regional arrangement, undertaken through the project, helped Ecuador's decision to remain as part of CAN, indicating the value of customizing assistance to Ecuador and focusing on technical assistance studies with Ecuador.<sup>18</sup>

Guinean government and private sector project participants in the Africa-based and global workshops identified the existence and value of regional trade agreements. This new knowledge immediately translated into increased regional exports for their businesses and Guinea.

For several countries the project assisted them improve their research, and technical and policy advice capacity (Bangladesh, Mongolia, Costa Rica, Colombia). Bangladesh participants immediately used new knowledge gained about inclusivity issues such as labour rights and the impacts on women, to inform their research and policy advice on the implications for Bangladesh trade and trade agreements of Brexit.

In Costa Rica, the combined resources of the project and the Costa Rican Ministry of Commerce (COMEX)<sup>19</sup> provided training to improve the technical capacity of COMEX officials to understand and use a multi-country general equilibrium model. This enabled officials to analyze trade policy changes in Costa Rica and supported their trade negotiations and redesign of trade policies.

Information on the technicalities and opportunities of trade agreements and the importance of understanding gender and equity issues were new learning for the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce who took part in ECA organised workshops. The Chamber shared the information with members and discussed the implications with government, beginning the process of changing government trade policies.

A Viet Nameese interviewee noted: *"From the workshop information and the use of resources on ARTNeT we are seeing the gap narrowing in Trade Agreement knowledge among academics and government ministry staff. This is very valuable because it means different actors are working together more effectively."*

(ii) Key factors that contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of project objective and expected accomplishments?

#### Enabling Factors

There were a number of enabling factors that contributed to project effectiveness.

#### *Trusted relationships*

The value of long term, trusted relationships between the three Commissions and their member countries was a key contributor to the project effectiveness. Local country leaders

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<sup>17</sup> Evaluacion de los posibles impacts de un acuerdo commercial entrel Ecuador y la Union Europa (2015)

<sup>18</sup> Integracion Productiva en la Comunidad Andina de Naciones: Cadenas de Valor entre Colombia y Ecuador (2015)

<sup>19</sup> An example of partnerships on greater efficiency and project reach

and experts worked closely with Commission staff.

Back up after workshops from the United Nations staff, who were workshop presenters, was specifically mentioned and appreciated. Within the workshops, the skilled presenters were able to adapt information to new local priorities and circumstances identified during the workshop.

The relationship among the relevant staff of the three Commissions was collegial, respectful and productive, reducing time, transaction cost and contributing to effectiveness.

Specific interviewee comments included:

*“ESCAP’s role is very positive – their main asset is knowledge and relevance - a focus on understanding the specific needs of countries. We have projects with other international institutions some of which will be successful. But the outstanding feature of this relatively small DA9 project is the high quality relationship with ESCAP TIID staff and their excellent technical trade and economic expertise” (Mongolia)*

*Costa Rica: “We have a very positive working relationship with ECLAC. Their support through this project has contributed to tangible change. While it is not yet public, quantitative analysis (described above) for preparing for trade negotiations was strengthened especially around employment/unemployment. Fruitful joint work produced a robust study on competition in domestic markets. This project has been practical and helpful for decision-making. ECLAC are collaborators not just consultants and this is important”*

#### Partnering

Each Commission built on other partnerships, activities and networks to amplify the value and usefulness of the project.

- For ESCAP the connection with ARTNeT was intentionally and productively utilised, strengthening the relationships between pilot countries and regional and global expert researchers and academics.
- ECLAC held their 2017 regional dialogue in conjunction with the 6<sup>th</sup> regional meeting on public policy analysis which had a focus on social effects of trade policy using GCE modeling. ECLAC also combined project resources with country resources to undertake technical studies, for example in Costa Rica
- ECA organised their 2017 regional dialogue to precede a high level dialogue of the ECCAS. This ensured participation from 23 African countries and from all 5 main African regions
- The three Commissions worked well together, sharing learning from their workshops and bringing together regional participants in to global events in Bangkok and Geneva. This enabled information about PTAs to be shared, relationships and informal networks to develop between country officials and technical experts in trade and inclusivity.

#### Adapting and Customizing

The project implementation was customized. While workshop formats looked similar they were tailored to each country’s priorities and needs to the extent possible.

ECLAC used debriefing results from the project’s first series of workshops in 2015/2016 to (i) customize the design of 2017 workshops specifically to meet the needs of middle level government officials across statistics, customs, trade and foreign affairs ministries – as well as bringing in the private sector and (ii) to brainstorm the focus of country technical case studies.



ECA expanded country participants in workshops to include the private sector. Here, Guinea took the lead - modeling public/private sector relationships. About the time the project started, the government of Guinea established a new policy of involving the private sector in trade and business development. As a result, they involved private sector business leaders, including a woman entrepreneur, along with senior government officials and the Chamber of Commerce, as participants in the Dakar workshop. This increased the use of workshop information between sectors in Guinea, contributed to a new network of information sharing and increased connections with sub-regional African countries.

Connecting with the contextual country and technical knowledge of key local partners and authors of country papers was an important contributor to the project effectiveness for ESCAP as well. In Mongolia the Deputy Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had a long term, positive relationship with ESCAP's TIID. He was sufficiently senior and well networked to provide leadership for the country expert group and to help select and invite Mongolia's workshop participants. The author of the country case study, was sufficiently experienced with Mongolia's social and economic issues and their connection with trade, to introduce the gender, human rights and inclusivity issues for workshop participants.

### Obstacles and challenges

There were a number of challenges and obstacles influencing effectiveness. Some were beyond the control and influence of project managers, others fall into the category of learning.

Unavoidable country specific examples included a lack of suitable in-country consultants in Myanmar and Islamic Republic of Iran to prepare case studies. Security issues arose in Burkina Faso and a planned workshop event could not be held there.

In some countries there were issues to do with public service staff turnover. For example, in Bangladesh the turnover is designed to be high with staff moving quickly from one Ministry to another. This diminishes individual staff knowledge and institutional memory and capacity. One interviewee from Bangladesh noted that for the Bangladesh workshop *"Commerce Ministry officials were not well informed or ready to absorb information."*

Workshop participant selection was overall seen to be highly relevant and suitable for maximum participation. There were a few exceptions. With Bangladesh, the local partner organiser mentioned that he had not fully considered that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs be invited. His emphasis was on Ministry of Commerce because of their trade preparation role. In hindsight, he saw this as an error because of Foreign Affairs key role in trade negotiations.

In many ways the project team also turned challenges into opportunities. For example, when the workshop could not be held in Burkina Faso, following unforeseen circumstances and, simultaneously Guinea expressed an interest in becoming involved, additional funds were found to relocate and expand through linking the project with other relevant projects. As the December 2017 Annual Progress Report noted: *"... (this) further resulted in greater visibility and outreach for the project as the regional event involved Minister-level participants and representation from each of the African regions"*.

### (iii) What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project in achieving its results?

Within the context of a highly successful project an earlier start by ESCAP in organising Asia-Pacific region workshops would have been desirable. This partially reduced (but did not remove) the ability to actively learn from experience because the focus was on activity

delivery in 2017.

Project leaders consider that slightly better quality country case studies would have been prepared, at least in the Asia-Pacific region, if more time had been available. These in turn, could have been more closely connected to the workshop planning.

The detail of workshop session style of presentation and learning was the area that received the most feedback and suggestions, as an area for improvement. *“Too jam packed”* was a typical comment from interviews. Participants were keen to see more case studies in workshops, approaches that encouraged greater participant engagement with fewer teacher dominant sessions, better participant preparation for, and follow up of, workshops with participants. Many of the post-workshop surveys mentioned poor time management.

Those interviewed made several practical suggestions such as *“ ... small group work with people from all sectors in the workshop debating practical implications of information from presenters through case studies or scenarios would have ben very helpful.”*

### 4.3 Relevance

The evaluation questions dealing with relevance are:

- (i) What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project's products and services were used by the target countries?
- (ii) How were the needs and requirements of the target groups assessed or identified?
- (iii) What are/will be the key obstacles for the target groups to utilize the project's products and services?

Relevance				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
				↑ 4.4

The material provided by the project was highly relevant and was evidenced by:

- High levels of participant engagement in events, workshops and the high use of on-line material
- Requests for the additional countries – Iran, Mongolia, Guinea and Senegal. As well Honduras and Guatemala in relation to their Customs Union
- The commitment and interest of academics and trade specialists contributing their knowledge to the project
- The wish for more projects of this type
- The responses in interviews and the on-line survey clarifying the ongoing relevance of the project information and knowledge to country, agency and individual's work
- At a country level the work and role of the Commissions themselves is relevant to countries and for the project value. There were several examples given during the evaluation. A few included here relate to the high demand from countries for learning methodologies for negotiating TAs. ECLAC was approached for information and data by Ecuador and Colombia, ESCAP was approached for assistance for the practical and trade negotiation experience of their staff, and ECA was approached

for their economic skills and their ability to maximise value through working alongside other African regional institutions.

(i) Use of project material

The project-related components of the ARTNeT website have been well used:

- accessed and viewed more than 1,800 times with specific resources downloaded
- in its first three months the new APTIP resource was viewed or downloaded 427 times
- the ARTNeT e-forum on trade advocacy has been accessed over 300 times, and
- the specific country workshop resources in Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar and the Republic of Iran were accessed more than 750 times.<sup>20</sup>

There are clear examples of learning from the workshops being used both immediately and at later more relevant times. Examples have been referred to in the previous section 4.2 on effectiveness. Typical interviewees comments included:

The workshop was highly valuable and *“(Ecuador) has used modeling information to negotiate an FTA with the EU. The information was also used in direct discussions and briefings with the country’s President and Cabinet”*

For Viet Nam: *‘The workshop was important for policymakers learning about PTAs and negotiations. The information was fresh and new to participants eg about labour provisions, environment and intellectual property. The material for the workshop has been integrated into a session chaired by Viet Nam’s Vice-President on economic integration in December 2017. The Vice-President is chief of Viet Nam’s economic integration leadership committee. Staff of the Ministry drafted his speech. Material from the workshop has been incorporated into the speech, publicly broadcast and then inevitably will be incorporated into policy.’*

For a Guinea, private sector leader who participated in the Dakar workshop. *“It was very useful gaining an understanding of trade agreements. This was new knowledge. For example, I didn’t know about the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme. I took this new information back to Guinea and discussed it with government officials. As a result, together, we ran workshops for others in the private sector. For my own business I have used this new knowledge and expanded exports. After the Dakar workshop I also created a network of workshop participants.”*

Another Guinea participant used new found knowledge about trade agreements with the US to build exports to the US and treble her employment of staff.

In Bangladesh a senior researcher said: *“I have used the workshop inclusivity information, especially about labour conditions and gender perspectives, in preparing a paper on trade and social implications of Brexit for Bangladesh.”*

Representatives of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce raised questions about operationalisation of SDGs (particularly around labour provisions) with the private sector and with government, using this information to influence government policy.

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<sup>20</sup> This is high given that there were 199 participants in the ESCAP-led workshops in the 5 countries.

(ii) Identification of needs

Needs were identified formally as part of the project preparation and then updated more informally and iteratively through discussions with pilot countries. Because of their role, each of the project managers, and their teams, from the three Commissions was very familiar with country strengths and gaps in terms of inclusive trade agreement knowledge and experience. This was evident (i) in the project proposal preparation especially around country development status, involvement with PTAs and country demand and recognition of capacity gaps, (ii) from comments made by country partners in proposal re-drafting, and (iii) from project participant feedback.

The country case studies and expert advisory groups provided an ideal opportunity for adaption and fine-tuning, and to more realistically 'ground' the delivery of the workshop material within the context of country need. Workshop case examples were based on the 'real world' situation where possible. Country expert advisory group members who were interviewed appreciated this opportunity for customizing the workshops and considered themselves to be actively involved in ensuring needs were understood and acknowledged.

In the context of country need and customization, a few additional, straightforward steps could have been taken to bolster, widen and update the needs assessment. It would have been useful to have:

- a strengthened Terms of Reference for the country case studies to ensure inclusive trade agreement needs were specifically assessed, including country knowledge gaps and strengths
- a simple needs analysis and expectations assessment of workshop participants prior to each workshop may have influenced the final design of workshop content and workshop delivery style. It would also have provided an informal baseline for comparison with the post-workshop survey.

(iii) Obstacles for using project knowledge

There are big picture issues that contribute obstacles for a project that is focused, short-term and is addressing a complex question. One highly experienced trade specialist and adviser noted, *"It takes a long time for skill, capability and competence to develop and be embedded."* Others commented that Intensive trade negotiation training is needed.

Those interviewed talked about the complex nature of trade agreements, the changing country and global political environment and the shift from old, poorly written treaties which can be exploited by more dominant countries. They also talked about different countries having different requirements; eg *"Myanmar... requires 'progressive liberalization' and the ability to learn from those countries, such as Latin American countries, who are leading on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge concepts included in full agreements."*

A respected trade adviser talked about *'Big issues around gaps in the ability of countries to undertake Research & Development'*. Another comment was that Free Trade Areas (and associated trade agreement information) are not well known by Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) especially compared with the knowledge of large companies and corporations. Guinea, Mauritius and Mongolia private sector participants, including their Chambers of Commerce, confirmed this assessment.

Challenging issues in relationship to the inclusivity side of Trade Agreements are discussed more fully under the gender and human rights section. But the emerging state of understanding in this field is both a challenge and an opportunity.

At the smaller-scale, organizational level, the turnover of government staff in some countries reduces ongoing use of workshop material and sustainability.

Other potential obstacles for ongoing use of project knowledge and learning disappearing include: newly formed networks no longer functioning; momentum being lost with the project coordination function ceasing; and not having the opportunity to immediately use the learning – ‘if you don’t use it you lose it’

## 4.4 Efficiency

The three questions framing this part of the evaluation are:

- Were the resources (human and financial) effectively utilized to deliver outputs and achieve results?
- How was the project managed in terms of timeliness?
- Did synergies gained from partnership with others organizations result in cost-efficiency and savings?

Efficiency				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
			↑	
			4.0	

- (i) Were the resources (human and financial) effectively utilized to deliver outputs and achieve results?

The project delivered more activities and products than originally planned and within the existing budget. The budget for the project has been carefully managed, adapted when needed and fully requested and documented in budget variation requests. It is to be expected with this type of multi-dimensional project that there will be changes needed once implementation starts in order for the project to be meaningful, responsive, effective and efficient.

There were five requests for budget reallocations. The majority of these reflected savings in workshop costs (under the Grants and Contribution budget class) which arose because of reduced travel and hosting costs. This was largely possible through effective working relationships with country and regional partners by all three Commissions. Some of the transfers were ‘book entries’ because of reporting system changes after the project document had been prepared and approved. These savings enabled a number of project enhancements:

- improved ability to develop data sets and indicators
- additional information on e-commerce and digital trade, considered an important aspect of trade inclusivity
- the addition of new countries to the project as a result of country requests and crisis situations in some countries, eg Burkina Faso
- a meeting between beneficiary country representatives from different regions as part of the Global Review of Aid for Trade in Geneva. This was a joint collaboration between the three commissions and UNCTAD. It allowed representatives of the pilot

countries to share knowledge and experience and explore ways to enhance the effectiveness of PTAs through Aid for Trade

- the preparation of training materials, research and additional studies which provided resources available long-term and therefore contributing to sustainability, eg through ARTNeT, and contributed to supporting and extending local capability

Another change in the budget was requested for the addition of a case study to the Project Evaluation. This explored a Guinea private sector business expanding as a result of learning about trade agreements through the project - and providing a concrete example of a project outcome.

While each application for the transfer of funds was approved, there was internal frustration at the limitations on project budget management, with a sense of unnecessary micro-management. This was particularly true for smaller budget reallocation approvals.<sup>21</sup>

(ii) How was the project managed in terms of timeliness?

The project completed and over-delivered within the project timeframe. The main issue with project management was a delay by ESCAP getting the project underway largely because TIID staff were already extended with existing workloads.

(iii) Did synergies gained from partnership with other organizations result in cost-efficiency and savings?

Internal and external partnering approaches were actively pursued throughout the project. As already noted, it is evident that the ability to enter partnerships reflected established relationships and previous partnering. These turned out to be beneficial for the project in terms of cost savings, project reach and project influence and sustainability. Starting with 68 participants in the first three workshops, ECLAC assess that their component of the project will have reached 585 people through additional workshops, other outreach and spin-off activities.

There are several specific examples of partnering and working alongside other events to maximise input, participation and project value and include:

- ESCAP's relationships with members of ARTNeT eased the process of project implementation as ESCAP was able to build on trust from previous experiences, and bring in experts from across the region.
- ESCAP's TIID worked with ESCAP's Social Development Division on a complementary project and with UNCTAD as an internal project partner
- The organization of the global meeting around the WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade was coordinated with UNCTAD. This meeting created greater engagement, and high-level discussions with experts – experts that the project would have been hard pressed to bring to Asia-Pacific
- ECA partnered with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to run the Mauritius workshop and ECA organised their regional dialogue to precede the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) high level dialogue. This helped increasing participation at both events. The African Trade Policy Centre of ECA also obtained

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<sup>21</sup> eg for purchasing of the Highcharts javascript library which was integral for the development of APTIP and raises the issue of hindering efficient project implementation

\$80,000 from Global Affairs Canada to ensure participation from all five African regions enabling scaled-up participation from private sector and civil society members

- ECLAC organised their regional dialogue in conjunction a regional meeting on public policy analysis and CGE modeling.

## 4.5 Sustainability

**To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?**

Sustainability				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
				↑ 43

The project ranks very highly in terms of sustainability. It is well positioned for results to continue because sustainability was intentionally incorporated from project inception.

Specific contributions to maintaining project gains include:

- (i) ARTNeT<sup>22</sup> is a well-established network on trade issues which, while being independent of ESCAP, is supported by ESCAP. All the workshop materials, reports and knowledge products from the project are now available through ARTNeT and have been accessed multiple times during the course of the project. An interviewee from Viet Nam said: 'ARTNeT is proving to be very useful for students. People are keen to improve their knowledge because the issues and trade agreements/negotiations matter so much.'
- (ii) Several of the professional advisers, academics and consultants who contributed to the project are also actively involved with ARTNeT and through this, are helping to strengthen the network of support for new learners who participated in country workshops. As well, there are on-line training modules about trade, including an introductory course on trade and the SDGs.
- (iii) APTIP is designed to assist researchers, policymakers, students and other interested individuals to visualize the link between indicators of inclusive trade and preferential trade agreements that have been signed in Asia and the Pacific. A constraint for APTIP, in terms of inclusivity, are data sources (for example from the World Bank) which tend to include macro-level information and not include micro-level data and activity, especially around gender and human rights. On the other hand, APTIP is a dynamic resource and indicators can be updated.
- (iv) The importance of sustainability was addressed at the December 2017 ARTNeT Symposium in Bangkok where relevant future projects from ECLAC and ECA were announced. ECA's next project focuses on a regional integration index in collaboration with ESCAP and ESCWA. This is part of the Development Account 11th tranche.

<sup>22</sup> ARTNeT is a network which connects researchers on trade and development across the Asia-Pacific region, it is also an information repository and a platform for dissemination providing a linkage to international organizations such as the International Trade Centre, UNCTAD, and the WTO, which in turn facilitate researchers' access to trade data and trade analysis tools. One of the main objectives of ARTNeT, through its research programmes, is to build trade research and policy formulating capacity through trainings, publications, and facilitating access to relevant trade and investment related databases

Following the symposium, ECLAC is planning to provide (i) technical assistance in trade facilitation, analysis of trade agreements and impact assessments with Ecuador and El Salvador, (ii) on the evaluation of a large regional integration agreement, similar to Africa, with CAN and the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA), and (iii) support to Costa Rica on value chains, gender and institutional strengthening.<sup>23</sup> These are all components of project sustainability.

- (v) Specific pieces of research around inclusivity that have been produced through the project are particularly helpful for sustainability because they provide baseline analysis and tools. They are:
- Background paper on Labour Provisions in Asia Pacific Free Trade Agreements<sup>24</sup>
  - Background paper on Preferential Trade Agreements with Labour Provisions and Labour Market Outcomes: Evidence from Asia and the Pacific<sup>25</sup>
  - the handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in PTAs, by Paul Baker
- (vi) While this project will not be continued, there will be ongoing contact and support between participants, countries and the Commissions which will fall into the 'Business as Usual' role of the Commissions. This may include 1:1 technical assistance or institutional partnering and working relationships within regions or between allied, but distinctively different, United Nations institutions.
- (vii) A less direct but important form of learning and an opportunity for information remaining 'alive' is through the use of materials and insights by academics in their teaching. Those interviewed from Viet Nam, Mongolia and Bangladesh all mentioned the ongoing use of information in research papers, in Master theses and PhDs.
- (viii) Implementing the project through partnerships is itself another contributor to sustainability. Wider ownership and investment in the project goals and implementation are likely to encourage partners to ensure longer lasting use of resources, materials, networks and ideas – especially in such a relevant area.
- (ix) New networks have been established in Guinea, and Ecuadorian interviewees were keen to support a network for connected and dynamic learning.
- (x) 90% of on-line survey respondents continue to use information and 72% maintain contact with workshop colleagues. When asked specifically to comment on how they had kept in touch with workshop or project colleagues there were several responses. They ranged from pro-active initiatives such as Viet Nameese participants setting up a facebook page sharing information between government, business and university participants, and others actively seeking workshop participants as peer reviewers of their work. These new networks could be supported.

*I can see the footprint of the project in many places (Bangladesh interviewee)*

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<sup>23</sup> ECLAC Final Project Report: 15.03.2018

<sup>24</sup> Engen, L. BACKGROUND PAPER NO.1/2017

<sup>25</sup> Posso, A. BACKGROUND PAPER NO.2/2017



## 4.6 Gender and human rights - inclusivity

### To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project?

ESCAP guidelines specify that gender and human rights mainstreaming are essential components in all ESCAP evaluations and that mainstreaming takes place on three levels: 1) intervention design; 2) intervention conduct; 3) intervention outcomes.

Gender and human rights mainstreaming				
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
				↑ 4.1

The project goal is to help governments understand how PTAs can be used to foster economic and social development, with the aim of contributing to better policymaking. The project deliberately focused attention on inclusivity in the design and the implementation in order to achieve project goals and objectives. The high ranking of 4.1 by survey respondents recognises this deliberate planning and implementation.

This was not always easy. It was the most challenging component for the project to address, largely because of the stage of development of the field. The use of a wide range of terms - inclusivity, gender, labour and human rights, indigenous knowledge protection and sustainability - also reflects the complexity of issues.<sup>26</sup>

The project has developed a number of accessible, analytical knowledge products:

- a series of indicators for inclusivity from a workshop held in June 2017
- country case studies and other studies actively integrated inclusivity, gender and labour rights issues, for example ECLAC's *Evaluation of the economic and social impact of possible trade negotiation between Jamaica and Central America, México and the countries of the Northern Caribbean* and the country case studies of Bangladesh and Mongolia
- the significant reports on the integration of labour provisions into TAs referred to in the section on sustainability
- the handbook by Paul Baker on *Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in PTAs*
- several project workshops had specific sessions on gender and human rights (including labour rights), including the Bangkok Symposium

These sessions universally recognised the emergent nature of inclusive TAs.

At the Mauritius workshop Dr Verma, in her presentation, said that '*... the study of gender and trade policies nexus is still in its infancy and that there is a growing opinion that there is a direct conflict between trade rules and human rights of women. Trade norms often undermine the livelihoods and the well-being of women*' She noted that *trade policies are generally concerned with the macro-economic aggregates such as price stability, employment*

<sup>26</sup> Sustainability is the broadest and most inclusive of the terms. It is used in the handbook prepared for the project by Paul Baker

*generation, economic growth, external balance, fiscal policy, monetary policy and exchange rate policy.*

Presenters at the Bangkok Symposium reinforced Dr Verma’s assessment with comments such as ‘*standard models do not include sustainability*’ (Badri). Paul Baker, who presented at the Bangkok Symposium, sees the field as being at the stage of ‘best endeavors’ and at the beginning of a 10 year process of development.

*Interview comments*

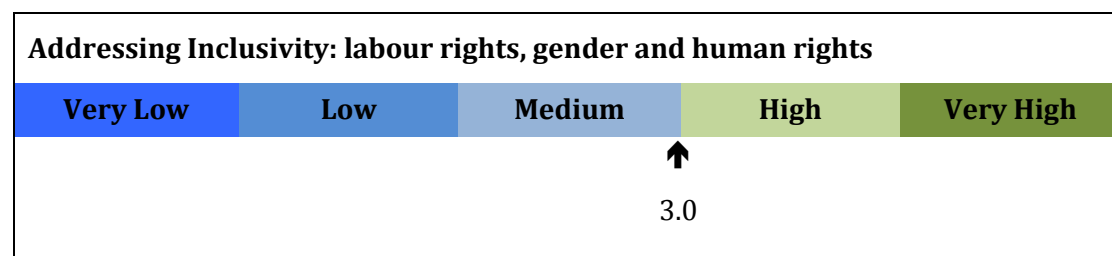
One interviewee talked about siloed thinking between trade and social and environmental issues. Another commented on the lack of connection between international commitments to women and human rights and economics and trade.

Overall, those interviewed noted that this is seen as a new area by economists and those involved with trade agreements. This includes some skepticism<sup>27</sup> from those who see trade issues as being about trade only while others acknowledged the reality of trade, and associated agreements, being a contributing factor affecting, among other things, women’s employment, worker conditions and pay levels.

More specifically the Viet Nameese participants at the Bangkok Symposium were clear about the value of international instruments to improve domestic business behaviour through relevant regulations as a result of labour condition requirements in FTAs/PTAs.

A consistent comment from those interviewed is that the strongest TAs for gender and human rights inclusion are North-South agreements, especially through the inclusion of labour rights.

This developmental stage is reflected in the ‘medium’ ranking of 3.0 from the on-line survey answers to questions about how adequately inclusivity issues were addressed by the project. Just over 70% considered that gender issues and labour and human rights were covered and 15% considered they were not covered completely.



There were multiple comments from respondents and interviews about the mixed nature of how effectively inclusivity issues are understood, are incorporated into TAs, and, if incorporated, are acted on in practice. Interviewees and presenters mentioned the lack of data and the difficulty of connecting case study and micro-data with the usual macro-economic aggregated data.

At a data and resource level the valuable APTIP data-base, with trade agreements and inclusivity conditions, is constrained by lack of source data on gender and human rights, reflecting the difficulty in making connections between the micro and the macro.

At a country level, African workshop participants talked about how in the Cameroon (as just

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<sup>27</sup> Most clearly by Dr David Vanzetti at Bangkok Symposium

one example) most informal traders are women operating in often very difficult situations, including being harassed. The question is how to make trade more accessible and profitable for these women, including capacity building for women to be involved in trade negotiations, and using their lived experience<sup>28</sup>. In the Congo, it was mentioned that women's issues are sidelined. There were also comments that in a range of other countries, for example those of Central and Latin America, the cultural perception is that gender is not as important as quality of life issues.

Some interviewees were very thoughtful about how gender, human rights and sustainability could have been incorporated into project design in simple ways, for example built into log frame milestones with agreed joint achievements by all three Commission secretariats, on inclusivity, gender, labour and human rights. Others saw the opportunity for connecting the general focus on gender issues by the UN in a more meaningful way with trade policies and agreements, with DESA itself providing more guidance and information.

The overall feedback from the survey and interviews indicates that more work is needed to (i) understand how trade agreements are helping/hindering labour rights; (ii) gain greater understanding of the importance of gender-based analysis of trade policies and agreements; and (iii) develop further tools for gender and sustainability issues to be integrated into TAs.

The project leaders are aware of these issues and deliberately addressed, explored and contributed to the development of the field.

#### *Next steps*

These issues are not the preserve of this project only. A recent (March 2018) speech by Annette Dixon, the Vice President of the World Bank(WB) for South Asia noted similar issues and steps needed to connect local activity with macro change for improving women's participation in the economy. In this instance she was talking about the Indian economy. She commented on an increasingly focused approach being adopted by the WB to authentically and effectively integrate gender analysis in order to affect real and lasting change. She noted (using practical policy, planning and project examples in India to illustrate) that:

*'It is an opportune time to revisit and reform outdated legislation and policies that act as deterrents to women entering or staying in the labour market. Fostering the creation of better jobs, providing support for child and elder care, and ensuring mobility to and from work can remove significant structural barriers for women to access employment .... Gender-focused planning is more effective when it's incorporated into everything that we do.'*<sup>29</sup>

Her comments are consistent with Dr Verma's recommendations that PTAs should include the following to ensure they are gender oriented or gender sensitive:

- *Putting women at the center of trade policy analysis and deliberations so that trade policy change may not be made at the expense of the quality of the lives of women*
- *Making policy-review gender-oriented*
- *Giving easy access to women to social safety net schemes*
- *Enhancing trade related capacity building among women*

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<sup>28</sup> Simone Assah Kuete, Ministry of Trade 2017 Symposium

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2018/03/17/women-indias-economic-growth?Twitter=SAR\\_TT\\_India\\_EN\\_EXT](https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2018/03/17/women-indias-economic-growth?Twitter=SAR_TT_India_EN_EXT)

- *Providing necessary resources to ensure gender equality (in the region)*

This and other allied initiatives being undertaken by ESCAP's SDD such as the pending major report of 'Women's Transformational Leadership', and gender-based budgeting may collectively be useful contributions to accelerate the 10 year journey Paul Baker identifies. **5.**

## 5. Recommendations

There are three recommendations to build on the gains from this highly effective project:

- Continue and further strengthen knowledge and capacity building around Inclusivity and equity (sustainability) in trade agreements
- Further develop capacity building techniques to maximise effectiveness and sustainability - for use in future workshop-based, capacity building projects
- Leverage and support project sustainability gains

### **(i) Continue and further strengthen knowledge and capacity building around Inclusivity and equity (sustainability) in trade agreements**

The project was focused and deliberate in planning and incorporating inclusivity and equity (sustainability) issues. The evaluation has confirmed that this is a developing area in relation to trade agreements. Further development is consistent with meeting SDGs.

Momentum has been built and should be maintained through further development with (i) ECLAC, ECA and ESCWA, (ii) within TIID/ESCAP and with other ESCAP divisions such as the Social Development Division(SDD), and (iii) through ARTNeT and other networks.

There are two specific opportunities that could be explored:

- the DA11 project focusing on regional integration index (ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA)
- 'The Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements' provides an ideal baseline for (i) monitoring relevance; (ii) adapting and updating; and (iii) using as a basis for capacity building and influencing the practice of trade agreements.

It may be appropriate for ESCAP to take the lead on this in the first instance, ideally with TIID working with the SDD<sup>30</sup>.

Additionally, the knowledge on indicators of inclusivity as related to trade could further be expanded upon through cooperation with other initiatives such as the Hinrich Foundation Sustainable Trade Index.

### **(ii) Further develop capacity building techniques for future projects**

The project has rated highly in terms of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. There is an opportunity to enhance capacity building processes and techniques for future similar projects. These include straightforward steps for pre-workshop planning, greater use of participatory learning techniques in the workshops/sessions, and post workshop follow-up.

Specific suggestions include:

*To strengthen relevance – Workshop planning and design:*

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<sup>30</sup> Perhaps connecting with current SDD initiatives such as the pending major report on Women's Transformative Leadership, and Gender based Budgeting

- pre-workshop knowledge and expectations assessment of participants in order to further customize the workshops
- design cross-sector groups, within the workshops to analyse and create solutions for specific issues
- greater use of case examples
- create the time for each participant to identify key 'take-away learning' and how they intend to use the learning

*To strengthen effectiveness and sustainability:*

- adapt the usual post-workshop surveys to focus on participants' intended use of material
- post-workshop (within three months) follow up and check progress on use of new learning, knowledge and use of tools

The Commissions' engaging professional advice on process design, and on facilitation of learning events could be a beneficial and practical step.

**(ii) To further enhance sustainability**

Several steps have been taken to ensure project sustainability. Additional suggestions include:

- Continue to make project material available through ARTNeT and Commission websites, and assess and encourage its use and being updated (3 Commissions)
- Leverage the learning and impact from DA9 as part of the DA11 project (ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA)
- Provide low key support to participant countries/regions new networks (3 Commission)

# ANNEXES

## Annex I: Terms of Reference

### Terms of Reference

#### Development Account Project “Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade”

##### 1. BACKGROUND

This is the terms of reference of the evaluation of the Development Account project “Enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements to inclusive and equitable trade” (henceforth “the project”) that is to be conducted from October 2017 to December 2017.

The project was implemented in the context of the expanding trade and investment that has driven growth in many developing countries and contributed to major reductions in poverty and improvements in overall welfare in the Asia-Pacific as in other regions. However, substantial variations in performance among countries persist and, as a consequence, not all countries - and much less all groups and individuals within countries - have been able to benefit equally from trade. In particular, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and other countries with special needs, have not benefited from trade as much as some other developing countries.

In order for these countries to foster further economic and social development, they need better access to markets alongside further development of productive and supply capacity.

Preferential trade agreements (PTAs) have the potential to promote growth, employment and social welfare. Enhanced access to markets may create trade opportunities, boost trade volumes and facilitate regional integration. Larger, more competitive markets can also benefit consumers by providing more varied and cheaper goods and services. PTAs may offer developing countries opportunities to modernize and upgrade their domestic regulation in particular for the services sector, investment and competition with a view to greater economic efficiency.

Thus, the objective of this project is to increase the awareness of government officials and trade negotiators of the potential social and economic impacts of preferential trade agreements, as well deepen their understanding as to how to manage such impacts through ex-ante and ex-post adjustments. The building of capacity in these areas will help developing countries in formulating and implementing trade policies, as well as complementary policies, which will lead to more inclusive and equitable outcomes.

The main capacity building efforts were implemented through national training workshops in pilot countries in each of the three regions of the project: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The lessons learnt and best practices which came out of these national training workshops were then shared at regional and global meetings. To ensure lasting sustainability of the project, all these gathered materials, in addition to training materials, background documents and other research, will be made available to all users through an online knowledge sharing platform. The platform will also feature a repository of indexes and statistics which will assist developing countries in their capabilities to form evidence-based policies.

The budget for the total project is \$778,675 with \$512,175 allocated to ESCAP as the lead implementing commission, and ECA and ECLAC each being allocated \$133,250. The project opened in 2014 and will close in December 2017.

## 2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to promote accountability and learning, and support results-based management at United Nations entities. It analyses the level of achievement of project results at the level of objectives and expected accomplishments by examining the results framework, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria. It also assesses the design, strategy and implementation of the project to inform future programming and implementation. It is conducted in line with ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines<sup>31</sup> and the norms and standards for evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The target users of the evaluation results include UN General Assembly (donor), Development Account Fund Manager at DESA, ESCAP management and staff and target beneficiaries of the project.

### 2.2 Objectives and scope

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

1. Determine the level of achievement of project objective and expected accomplishments by examining the results chain, processes and contextual factors;
2. Assess the performance an intervention against evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and gender and human rights mainstreaming;
3. Formulate specific and action-oriented recommendations to inform management decision-making and improve future project/programme design and implementation.

The evaluation will be undertaken from 15 November 2017 to 15 March 2018.

The following evaluation criteria and questions to assess the results of an intervention will be addressed:

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
<p><b>Effectiveness</b>  <i>The extent to which the project objective and expected accomplishments have been achieved. A project is considered effective when its activities produce the desired results.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project has achieved its objective and expected accomplishments?</li> <li>• What were the key factors that contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of project objective and expected accomplishments?</li> <li>• What could have been done better to improve the effectiveness of the project in achieving its results?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relevance</b>  <i>The extent to which the project results are in line with the priorities and policies of the target groups. Relevance</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What evidence exists to demonstrate that the project's products and services were used by the target countries?</li> <li>• How were the needs and requirements of the target groups assessed or identified?</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> Available on the ESCAP webpage at <http://www.unescap.org/partners/monitoring-and-evaluation/evaluation>

<i>assesses the usefulness of activities and outputs delivered to the target group.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are/will be the key obstacles for the target groups to utilize the project's products and services?</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b> <i>The extent to which human and financial resources were used in the best possible way to implement activities, deliver outputs and achieve objectives/ outcomes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the resources (human and financial) effectively utilized to deliver outputs and achieve results?</li> <li>• How was the project managed in terms of timeliness?</li> <li>• Were synergies gained from partnership with other organizations resulted in cost-efficiency and savings?</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b> <i>The likelihood that the benefits of the project will continue in the future.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent can results of the project be continued without ESCAP's further involvement?</li> </ul>
<b>Gender and human rights mainstreaming</b> <i>This criterion assesses the extent to which gender considerations have been incorporated in the project design and implementation.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent were gender and human rights integrated into the design and implementation of the project?</li> </ul>

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overall approach and data collection

The evaluation will use a mix of data sources collected through multiple methods, with analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Results will be triangulated where possible.

Data collection will include but not be limited to the following:

1. A desk review of relevant documents, including the project document, progress and terminal reports, activity reports, results of survey questionnaires, relevant official correspondences with stakeholders, any strategic documents related to the project;
2. Missions to ESCAP in Bangkok to conduct face-to-face key-informant interviews/focus group discussions with male and female stakeholders;
3. An on-line survey to relevant male and female stakeholders and other relevant groups;
4. Follow-up telephone interviews as may be required to clarify responses provided through the on-line questionnaire;
5. Subject to availability of funds, visits to the participating countries to collect data through interviews and consultations with male and female project beneficiaries and partners subject to the availability of funds.

Data will be disaggregated by sex and other relevant social categories. The evaluation will undertake a transparent and participatory evaluation process that will involve male and female stakeholders identified in the stakeholder analysis, including: the reference group, development partners and target beneficiaries in all key evaluation tasks.

In analyzing the data, the evaluation will use qualitative and quantitative approaches, and provide charts and direct quotations. Using the data to assess evaluation against the selected criteria. Gender and human rights mainstreaming are essential components of data analysis in



all ESCAP evaluations and take place on three levels: 1) intervention design; 2) intervention conduct; 3) intervention outcomes. Data analysis will enable useful, evidence based findings, the conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation will be conducted within the period from 1 October 2017 to 31 December 2017, including travel of the evaluator to pilot countries. The project administered questionnaires at each training events to obtain feedback from participations, the results of which will be made available to the evaluator.

## **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 Evaluation manager**

The evaluation will be directly managed by the Trade Policy and Facilitation Section, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division.

### **4.2 Reference group**

ESCAP uses an evaluation reference group to enhance stakeholder participation. Members of the reference group include the project manager at TIID, an evaluation officer from the Evaluation Unit of ESCAP and focal points from implementation partners, including ECA, ECLAC and UNCTAD. The group provides technical and methodological guidance to the evaluation process; reviews and approves the selection of the consultant, terms of reference and inception report; provides quality control of the evaluation report and validation of recommendations; and ensures adherence to ESCAP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines and the use of evaluation outputs, including the formulation of the evaluation management response and follow-up action plan.

### **4.3 Evaluator**

The evaluator will assume overall responsibility for carrying out the evaluation. This includes, among other activities, managing the work, ensuring the quality of interviews and data collection, preparing the draft report, presenting the draft report and producing the final report after comments have been received in line with standard templates provided by ESCAP. The evaluator must have:

- Knowledge of the United Nations System; principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, cultural values, the Sustainable Development Goals and results-based management;
- Professional and technical experience in evaluation (application of evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines and the relevant organizational evaluation policy and promotion of evaluation and evidence based learning).<sup>32</sup>
- They should also have a good technical knowledge in the Asia-Pacific region, including major development trends and issues, particularly in the areas of international trade and sustainable development.

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<sup>32</sup> See Standard 3.1. Competencies, UNEG. 2016. *Norms and standards for evaluation*.

ESCAP adheres to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct in evaluation and all staff and consultants engaged in evaluation are required to uphold these standards. To this end, ESCAP has developed a Consultants Agreement form that evaluators are required to sign as part of the contracting process.

## 5. OUTPUTS

The following outputs will be delivered to the project manager at ESCAP:

1. Inception report detailing the approach of the evaluator, workplan and evaluation logical framework (see Annex 1)
2. Results of data collection exercise
3. First draft of evaluation report (see Annex 2)
4. Presentation (ppt) on findings, conclusions and recommendations
5. Final evaluation report
6. An ESCAP evaluation brief

The draft evaluation report will be shared with key stakeholders prior to finalization. The final report will be submitted to DESA in the correct format. The final evaluation report will also be circulated within the ESCAP secretariat and posted on ESCAP's public website.

## 6. WORKPLAN

The evaluation will commence in October 2017. The evaluation budget includes a consultancy fee to be determined based on professional qualifications and duration of contract plus the cost of airfares and daily subsistence allowance.

TASKS	Schedule
Preliminary consultations and desk review	15 Nov
Develop an inception report, including an evaluation plan, for circulation among Reference Group	1 Dec
Attending the Symposium on PTAs and Inclusive Trade	11 Dec
Data collection, including mission to Bangkok, survey questionnaires, interviews with stakeholders (including ECA and ECLAC)	12 Dec
Travel to selected pilot countries for additional data collection, including interviews	18 Dec
Prepare a draft evaluation report and obtain preliminary feedback from the evaluation reference group	31 Jan
Presentation of preliminary findings to ESCAP and key stakeholders	15 Feb
Incorporate final comments and finalize the evaluation report	1 Mar
<b>TOTAL</b>	

## Annex II: List of Documents Reviewed and Project Products

### Project Documents reviewed:

#### Workshop evaluations, reports and presentations:

1. ECA-IORA Training-Workshop on Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade
2. Ebene, Mauritius, November 2015
3. ECA - Continental Dialogue Evaluation Report, Yaoundé, Cameroon, October 2017
4. ECLAC Project report Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade (Development Account) March 2018
5. ESCAP Mission reports:
  - Geneva, January 2017
  - Bangladesh, March 2017
  - Viet Nam, March 2017
  - Mongolia, April 2017
  - Myanmar, June 2017
  - Iran, August 2017
6. Progress Reports of the DA9 Project: Jan - Dec 2016, and Jan – Dec 2017

### Project Products

Accessed through: <https://artnet.unescap.org/trade/da9-project/knowledge-products>

7. Studies and Reports
  - Background paper No.1/2017 - Labour Provisions in Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreements [English only]
  - Background paper No.2/2017 - Labour Provisions in Asia-Pacific Free Trade Agreements Part II: Preferential Trade Agreements with labour provisions and labour market outcomes: Evidence from Asia and the Pacific [English only]
  - El aporte del comercio justo al desarrollo sostenible [Spanish only]
  - Report – Public perception survey on “Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade” [English only]
8. Country Studies
  - Country study No.1 - Review of Bangladesh's Engagement in Preferential Trading Arrangements [English only]
  - Country study No.2 - The Economic and Social Impact of Liberalisation through Preferential Trading Agreements in Bangladesh: The case of the Ready-Made Garments and the Leather & Leathergoods Sectors [English only]
  - Country study No.3 - Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trading Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade: The case of Mongolia [English only]
  - Country study No.4 - Gendering in Garment Factories: Lives of Women in Economic Development: the case of Myanmar[English only]
  - Posibles efectos económicos y sociales de la profundización de la Unión Aduanera entre Guatemala y Honduras [Spanish only]
  - Evaluación de los posibles impactos de un acuerdo comercial entre el Ecuador y la Unión Europea [Spanish only]

- Efectos de un choque exógeno en el comercio sobre el empleo y los salarios de las empresas manufactureras en Colombia[Spanish only]
9. Books, Handbooks and Manuals
- Analytical Approaches to Evaluating Preferential Trade Agreements [English only]
  - Handbook on Policies, Promotion and Facilitation of Foreign Direct Investment for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific [English only]
  - A Handbook on Negotiating Development Oriented Intellectual Property Provisions in Trade and Investment Agreements[English only]
  - Latin America and the Caribbean in the World Economy 2016: The region amid the tensions of globalization [English][Spanish] [Portugese]
  - Manual on foreign trade and trade policy: Basics, classifications and indicators of trade patterns and trade dynamics[English only]
  - Deepening Africa-India Trade and Investment Partnership [English] [French]
  - Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements [forthcoming]
10. Web: [APTIP – Asia Pacific Trade Indicators Portal](#)

## Annex III: People Interviewed

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Country</b>
1	Mia Mikic	Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP	Thailand
2	Witada Anukoonwattaka	Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Policy and Facilitation Section, TIID, ESCAP	Thailand
3	Rajan Ratna	Economic Affairs Officer, Trade, Policy and Facilitation Section, TIID, ESCAP	Thailand
4	Panit Buranawijarn,	Consultant, TIID, ESCAP	Thailand
5	Alexey Kravchencko	Associate Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Policy and Facilitation Section, TIID, ESCAP	Thailand
6	Jose Elias Duran Lima	Chief, Regional Integration Unit, International Trade and Integration Division, ECLAC	Chile
7	Simon Mevel -Bidaux	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC), Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD)	Ethiopia
8	Don Clarke	Consultant, former Director of SMPD, ESCAP	New Zealand
9	Vorshilov Enkhbold	Director General, Department of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mongolia
10	Bayarsaikhan Nerugi	Third Secretary, Department of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mongolia
11	Batnasan Namsrai	Professor, National University of Mongolia	Mongolia
12	Lakshmi Boojoo	Director, Economic Policy and Competitiveness Research Centre, Mongolia	Mongolia
13	Chuluunbat Tsetsegmaa	Senior Officer of Foreign Relations and Trade, Investment Department, Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Mongolia
14	Ts Baatar	Institute of International Studies, Mongolian Academy of Sciences	Mongolia
15	Ali Ahmed	CEO, Bangladesh Foreign Trade Institute	Bangladesh
16	Fayeza Ashraf	Research Associate, South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM)	Bangladesh
17	Estiaque Bari	Senior Research Associate, Centre for Policy Dialogue	Bangladesh
18	Sherajum Monira Farin	Research Associate, Centre for Policy Dialogue	Bangladesh
19	Mustafizur Rahman	Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue	Bangladesh
20	Mahtab Uddin	Lecturer, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka	Bangladesh
21	Savane Soumaila	Assistant General Director, Topaz Multi-Industries Sa, Conakry, Commune de Matoto	Guinea

22 + 4	5 Senior staff	Topaz Multi-Industries Sa, Guinée Conakry, Commune de Matoto	Guinea
27	Saran Keita Kouruma	Directrice General, Societe Amidjor Agro Business	Guinea
28	Alexis Tounkara	Directuer Administratif et Financier, Societe Amidjor Agro Business	Guinea
29	Boubacar Barry	Minsitere de L'Industrie, des Pme et de la Promotion du Secteur Privee	Guinea
30	Mark Yombouno	Minsitre du Commerce	Guinea
31	Camara Salematou Bangoura	Directrice Nationale du Commerce Exterieur et d la competitivite	Guinea
32	Djene Sougoule	Depute Directrice Nationale du Commerce Exterieur et d la competitivite	
33	Joelle Bile Schetter	Vice-president de la Commission Nationale des Femmes Entpreneures	Congo
34	Rooma Pillay Narrainen	Manager, Trade Division, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce	Mauritius
35	Paul Baker	Consultant, International Economics	Mauritius
36	David Michael Vanzetti	Consultant, Professor, Economic, Australia National University	Australia
37	Taisuke Ito	Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, UNCTAD	Switzerland
38	T. Alexander Puutio	Former consultant to TIID, ESCAP	New York, USA
39	Daniel Cracau	Consultant and former adviser, ECLAC	Germany
40	Nia Cherrett	Programme Officer, Capacity Development and Partnerships Section, Strategy and Programme Management Division, ESCAP	Thailand
41	Milica Markovic	Human Resources Section, ESCAP	Thailand
42	Luis Adalberto Aquino	Assesor Economico de la Presidencia, Banco Central de Reserva de El Salvador	El Salvador
43	Fancisco Monge	Director, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Costa Rica (COMEX)	Costa Rica
44	Francisco Rivadeneira	Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the International Monetary	USA
45	Pham Thi Hong Yen	Deputy director, General economic Department, Central Economic Commission	Vietnam
46	Thi Xuan Thuy Nguyen	Director, Industrial Policy and Strategy Institute	Vietnam
47	Biswajit Dar	Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	India
48	Sufian Jusoh	Senior Fellow, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, Univerisiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
49	Jonas Flake	Consultant, TIID, ESCAP for APTIP	Thailand

## Annex IV: Surveys

### Survey 1: Post December 2017 Symposium – on overall project

#### EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

ARTNeT Symposium on Preferential Trade Agreements and Inclusive Trade		You are representative of: Government <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector <input type="checkbox"/> Academic/research <input type="checkbox"/> Media <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Date and venue:	14-15 December 2017, Bangkok	Your home country:
Is your institution an ARTNeT Member?:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Gender:	M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	

Please tick one box for each item in the following series of evaluation statements.

This set of questions covers the evaluation of the whole project. We are interested to receive your views on the effectiveness, relevance and efficiency of the project.

We are keen also to receive your views on sustainability of the project and how you consider gender and human rights issues to have been addressed by the Project.

- 1. Effectiveness** – ie the extent to which the project objective and expected accomplishments have been achieved. Do you consider the project has been effective?

Not at all      Completely

Comment

(i) Can you identify any specific examples of achievements and what has contributed to this success?

(ii) Please identify what you consider could have been done for the project to be more effective

- 2. Relevance** – ie the extent to which the project and the project results are in line with participant priorities. Has the project been relevant for you?

Not at all      Completely

Comment

(i) Please describe in what way the project has been relevant to participant priorities:

(ii) Were there any obstacles for participants to utilize the activities and services of the project?

**3. Efficiency** – ie the extent to which human and financial resources were used in the best possible for implementing the project. How efficient have you found the project to be?

Inefficient      Very efficient

Comment

Please comment on your experience of the project's efficiency

**4. Sustainability** – ie the likelihood that benefits will continue after the completion of the project in December 2017.

4.1 How likely are you to use knowledge products from the project in your future work?

Not likely      Very likely

4.2a Can you describe what skills you have gained from the project, if any

4.2b How likely are you to use skills gained from the project in your future work?

Not likely      Very likely

Comment

Please describe in what ways you consider achievements made through the project can be sustained after the project is completed:

**5. Gender and human rights** – ie the extent to which gender and human rights have been incorporated into the project

Not at all      Completely

Comment

Please describe:

- (i) in what ways you have seen gender and human rights being incorporated into the design and implementation of the project
- (ii) any obstacles you have noticed preventing their inclusion

**6. Any other comment you would like to make about the project?**

***Thank you!***

***Your evaluation, comments and suggestions are  
of great value for the improvement of our activities.***



## Survey 2: On-line survey (qualitative answers included)

Dear friends of ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP,

Last year you participated in the United Nations Development Account 9<sup>th</sup> tranche Project – *Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade*. This project was implemented by ESCAP, ECLAC and ECA under the management of ESCAP. <https://artnet.unescap.org/trade/da9-project>

There were a number of activities held during this project: country workshops, regional dialogues and a symposium. In the course of the project, materials and tools were also prepared and uploaded on the ARTNeT website <https://artnet.unescap.org/>

Project participants are an integral part of this project, and play a key role in enabling the capacity building outcomes for you, your country and the three regions which encompass the work of ESCAP, ECLAC and ECA.

Evaluation is a critical part of the UN Development Account activities and we are keen to hear your perspectives on your involvement with this project. All projects are required to undergo an evaluation to collect information on the workshop or event that you participated in, and how you have used your skills or the information since the end of the project. This survey is part of the evaluation.

We are also keen to receive your views on sustainability of the project and how effectively you consider the project addressed inclusivity, labour rights, gender and human rights issues.

Please help us collect essential feedback by taking the time to complete this survey. To access the survey click on the button below, and it should take around 10 minutes to complete. The deadline is 26 February 2018.

### 1. Please identify which project events you have been involved with (select all that apply):

- ESCAP national training workshops (Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Myanmar, Islamic Republic of Iran)
- ESCAP regional event (Bangkok)
- ECA national training workshops (Mauritius, Senegal)
- ECA regional event (Cameroon)
- ECLAC national training workshops (Ecuador, Colombia, Jamaica)
- ECLAC regional event (Peru)
- Global Meeting on 14 July 2017 (Geneva)
- Symposium on 14-15 December 2017 (Bangkok)

### 2. Background Information

Home Country

Gender:

Male

Female

**Representative of:**

Government

NGO

Private Sector

Academic/Research

Media

Other

**3. Did you find the event(s) relevant for your work?**

Not at all      Completely

Comment

Please identify specific examples of how the project event(s) have been relevant for your work:

*In my work for Trade and Investment Facilitation as well as regional integration in IORA. The participation in the regional workshop in December, 2017 has been highly relevant.*

*Bilateral Trade Agreement and commenting in Free Trade Area*

*(This was relevant because ) I am involved in impact assessment of FTAs and providing advice on negotiating strategies, to national Governments and via UNCTAD.*

*Labour issues and RTAs Sustainability and RTAs Trade and Investment Report 2017 Indicators of sustainability Trade Indicators Portal - relevant*

*After the workshop, I have completed one study on WTO issues. On that study, I have mentioned about the importance of PTAs and FTAs at an era when countries are shifting their priorities from multilateral rule based trade negotiations.*

*The group of experts and ESCAP staff exhibit in-depth knowledge of issues that I work on. Sharing time with them was invaluable to my research.*

*Project was helpful for academic research and teaching We've participated inter-government joint study group on EPA*

*Learning about the experiences of other countries in terms of trade policy and the effort that is being made to get more women involved in international trade*

*As a journalist I have been covering trade issues for my newspaper over the last 10 years. The discussions on regional trade barriers, prospects and challenges were very important issues for me. I really benefited from the training*

**4. Did you learn new information in the event(s) you participated in?**

Yes

No

If yes, can you please give examples:

*How PTAs and FTAs can benefit a smaller country albeit with an absolute increase of trade deficit in the short-run*

*IP, Government procurement, progress of CFTA in Africa*

*Understood Inclusive and Equitable Trade better - interpreted the causality of Inclusive and Equitable trade and growth - Gained some practical examples re Vietnam Garment labor and tariff.*

*In Western Africa, the knowledge about regional free trade agreements in the private sector is limited. This information was new to me*

*The 9th tranche Workshop helped me clarify the working of multilateral trading systems in connection with inclusive growth on which I had a misperception before. The workshop also highlights complementary policies as long as a country wants to be part of the inclusive growth gained from international trading system*

**5. Have you continued to use information or knowledge products from the event(s)?**

Yes

No

If yes, can you please give examples:

**6. Can you describe any specific skills you have gained from the project?**

Comment:

*How PTAs and FTAs can benefit a smaller country albeit with an absolute increase of trade deficit in the short-run*

*IP, Government procurement, progress of CFTA in Africa*

*Understood Inclusive and Equitable Trade better - interpreted the causality of Inclusive and Equitable trade and growth - Gained some practical examples re Vietnam Garment labor and tariff.*

*In Western Africa, the knowledge about regional free trade agreements in the private sector is limited. This information was new to me*

*The 9th tranche Workshop helped me clarify the working of multilateral trading systems in connection with inclusive growth on which I had a misperception before. The workshop also highlights complementary policies as long as a country wants to be part of the inclusive growth gained from international trading system*

*Compare our study on the presence of women in international trade in Chile with the works seen in the panel of commerce and women*

**7. Are you currently using the skills gained from the project event(s) in your work?**

Not at all      Completely

Comment on use of skills:

*I used information on countervailing duty issues in trade between Bangladesh and India.*

*In our on-going research on trade and connectivity in South Asia/BBIN region/sub-region*

*In interacting with other countries where we export. We use (the information) to check if some specific trade agreements have been signed and what are the benefits we can get from it*

*Assess how Mauritius can improve its trade policies*

*The knowledge gained from the workshop is directly contributed to class room lecture in international trade and regional integration given at the University I am working for*

*The implications of PTA on economic and more cross-cutting areas*

*Analysis of Jamaica's market share in trade in goods.*

*The Trade Indicator Portal (APTIP) allows accessing various information easily*

*Compare our study on the presence of women in international trade in Chile with the works seen in the panel of commerce and women*

**8. Have you maintained contact with the group of colleagues who were part of the event you participated in?**

Yes

No

If yes, in what way has this been helpful to your work on more inclusive trade agreements?

Please comment:

**9. Inclusivity and labour rights – to what extent did the project promote greater inclusion in the formal economy and incorporate issues of labour rights?**

Not at all      Completely

Please describe in what ways you have seen inclusivity and labour rights being incorporated into the design and implementation of the project?

Comment:

**10. Gender and human rights – to what extent were gender and human rights incorporated into the project event(s) you participated in**

Not at all      Completely

Please describe in what ways you have seen gender and human rights being incorporated into the design and implementation of the project?

Comments for Qs 7&8:

*Women should understand their labor (rights), especially maternity leaves. However, companies seem not to favor women because of their leaves and lower labor capacity than men*

*Modern FTAs have the relevant chapters but implementation is another matter.*

*I looked at gender equity as part of my project. I used international (country-level) indicators.*

*Due to data (un) availability the final version of the study did not have gender issues.*

*What is inclusive and equitable trade?*

*Difficult to say. I find these concepts vague and difficult to measure in practice. For example, countries sign up to ILO conventions but don't implement them.*

*Organizers (have tried) to associate as many stakeholders as they could. Presenters insisted on the fact that PTAs shall not oversight (overlook) labour rights and some works need to be done to use PTAs as (for) labour inclusiveness*

*Since, I participated from Bangladesh and the country is the second largest garment exporter worldwide after China, I also know (learned) about the labour rights from the (project) training. The labour rights*

*like formation of trade unions at factory level and protection of workers' rights were widely discussed. I also gave (gained) a lot of insights as I have been writing on labour issues for my newspaper.*

*Vietnam exports labor - intensive products, thus workers should know their rights and trade union should actively demonstrate to protect labor rights and eliminate child labor.*

*Legislative framework with the all Labour laws are key in ensuring inclusive trade*

*Inclusivity and labour rights can be achieved quicker in the country with improved educational attainment, etc. RoO (Rules of Origin) can also support the development of SMEs but it is still far reached (a long way to go to achieve this). NTMs (Non-tariff measures) can help achieve the inclusivity*

*The project emphasizes on minorities and how they can benefit from trade agreements*

*Inclusivity and labour rights can be ensured through complementary policies such as education and social protection policies*

*We were able to compare our measurements of women's economic empowerment in international trade. Thanks to the experience of the other countries we can improve our studies*

*Women's issues are highlighted but require better fit to the topic.*

*More work is needed to understand how trade agreements are helping/hindering labour rights*

**11. Please identify what you consider could have been done for the project to be more effective for you.**

Comment:

**12. Is there any other comment you would like to make about the project?**

Comment:

***Thank you!***

***Your evaluation, comments and suggestions are  
of great value for ongoing learning and improvement.***

## Annex V: Guinea Case Study

### **Inclusive and equitable preferential trade agreements - Guinea**

Expanding trade and investment has driven growth in many developing countries, contributed to major reductions in poverty, and improvements in overall welfare in Asia-Pacific, Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean. Africa has been particularly active between 2014 and 2016 with the establishment of a Customs Union for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the launch of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area, and the official launch of the negotiations to create a Continental Free Trade Area. The WTO Ministerial Conference was held for the first time on African soil in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2015.<sup>33</sup> This rapid growth of trade flows and trade agreements has not maximized benefits for all countries - much less all groups and individuals within.

With the support of the Development Account (DA9) ESCAP, ECA and ECLAC took steps to address these issues and implemented the project: *"Enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) to inclusive and equitable trade"* between 2014 and 2017.

### **ECA and Guinea**

ECA invited the Guinea government to participate in the second African project workshop in Dakar, Senegal (May 2016). The government responded positively and asked to bring a group of five - not just government officials but a mix of private sector business people and government officials. This reflected the government's recently adopted policy of actively engaging Guinea's private sector in business and trade development.<sup>34</sup>

Those five participants - two from government, two from different businesses and one from the Chamber of Commerce – learned a great deal of new information about PTAs from the workshop and made practical use of the information immediately after the workshop. They have kept in touch with each other, shared information with their existing networks and advised Government officials and Ministers on TA issues. As a group, and with the support of government, they also decided that at least some of them would represent Guinea in other relevant project workshops - global and regional - to increase their own and the country's knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> There are further recent developments in TAs in Africa. On 21 March 2018, 44 African Union Member States signed the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. The Agreement will enter into force once 22 countries have ratified. Guinea has signed AfCFTA and ECA is currently providing support around tariff issues through ECOWAS.

<sup>34</sup> This policy is supported by the World Bank and IMF and has several components including an inter-ministerial committee to monitor progress of removing obstacles for private sector development and – export/imports obstacles and opportunities – TAs tariffs etc.

<sup>35</sup> Guinea representatives later participated in three other workshops (i) Continental Dialogue for Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade, October 2017 organised jointly by ECA's Regional Integration & Trade Division (RITD) and African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC), and two global meetings in Geneva in July 2017 and in Bangkok, December 2017, both organised by ESCAP

## **Project Impact for Guinea**

### ***Individual businesses***

One of the business leaders from a large Guinea plastics product manufacturer<sup>36</sup> won a contract in Burkina Faso for the company after participating in the Dakar workshop (2016) through networking with other participants. He capitalised on what he had learned, and the business immediately assessed opportunities, developed new ways of thinking and started exporting to neighbouring countries who were Trade Agreement partners and manufacturing new products for sales within Guinea, which had previously been imported. The next workshop in Youande provided very useful new information about trade barriers faced by, and opportunities for, Guinea in Europe.<sup>37</sup> At the same time the business leader was introduced to the Tony Blair Foundation<sup>38</sup> which provided relevant help and advice.

The other Guinea business participant was the president of the Guinea Women Entrepreneurs Association<sup>39</sup> who runs a, community-connected, small business processing ginger, couscous and other Guinea-grown food products.<sup>40</sup> The business employs local women in a suburb of Conakry, the capital of Guinea, and supports 400 of Guinea's small-scale farmers through sourcing their products. Her business works with rural farmers on product quality, getting goods to market, training in drying fruit and in financial management. Drying mangoes and other fruits is important for marketability because the state of roads means that fresh fruit is spoiled by the time it gets from the farm to market. At the Dakar workshop she learned for the first time about trade agreements with the US that provided opportunities for Guinea.<sup>41</sup> Armed with this information and her existing US contacts, through the Women Entrepreneurs Association, she started exporting to the US.

Through this she trebled the number of Conakry staff from six to 18 young women and increased farmers' profits within two years. And both businesses worked together, with the plastics business supplying containers to the food business. They hadn't known about each other before the Dakar workshop.

### ***Guinea development***

All of the Dakar workshop participants from Guinea became more actively involved in sharing information. They reported to the government, supplied information to their networks such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Private Sector Organisations of Guinea, and

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<sup>36</sup> TOPAZ Multi-industries, Guinea

<sup>37</sup> Which are primarily through bi-lateral trade agreements: <https://gn.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/218/2017/04/Guinea-CCG-2016-.pdf>, p18

<sup>38</sup> Now the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change <https://institute.global/>

<sup>39</sup> Supported by a US development agency

<sup>40</sup> Societe Amidjor Agro Business, Guinea

<sup>41</sup> The US Africa Growth and Opportunity Act

the Women Entrepreneurs Association, and ran workshops for others in the private sector about the ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme and Customs Union.<sup>42</sup>

The business leader from the plastics business was chosen to represent Guinea on trade remedy technical working groups for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) negotiations because of his increased understanding of PTAs through the project. This strengthened the government's platform of stronger private-public partnering in Guinea's trade, economic and business development, and highlighted the value of private sector involvement.<sup>43</sup> He now contributes to an inter-Ministerial committee that is monitoring pro-business developments. In April 2018 he was also part of Guinea's delegation to a Senior Technical Committee meeting on Rules of Origin under the ongoing AfCFTA processes.

This increased use of workshop information between sectors in Guinea has contributed to a new local network and increased connections with other sub-regional African countries.

### **Summary, next steps and lessons**

The project has clearly produced immediate benefits for participants, for the government and for businesses – as well as better information for networks in Guinea and stronger connections with region-wide initiatives. Participants identified Guinea-based challenges such as little, if any, financial support for small businesses. They also identified that there would be considerable value for all in expanding and formalizing networks to create a wider, Western African network to share information, strengthen expertise in trade agreement preparation and negotiations, and develop trade.

The importance of incorporating private sector participation was a key learning for the Project, one they acted on as the Project progressed, and one that can be adopted in other relevant projects – improving project effectiveness and sustainability.

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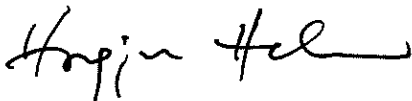


<sup>42</sup> As well as ECOWAS, Guinea benefits from a wide range of market access eg the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the African Union

<sup>43</sup> The project had identified that Free Trade Areas (and associated trade agreement information) are not well known by Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) especially compared with the knowledge of large companies and corporations. This was true for Guinea



## Annex VI: Management Response

## Management Response and follow-up Action Plan

Title of Evaluation/ Date of completion	Development Account project: Enhancing the Contribution of Preferential Trade Agreements to Inclusive and Equitable Trade (April 2018)	
	Signature	Date
Hongjoo Hahm Officer-in-Charge and Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP		6/11/18
Adnan Aliani Director, Strategy and Programme Management Division		5/11/18
Mia Mikic Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division		31 October 2018
<b>General Remarks by Management</b>		
<p>Management welcomes the overall positive assessment of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and gender and human rights mainstreaming of the DA9 project. This capacity building project has effectively increased the capacity of selected governments to engage in trade dialogues and negotiations, expand South-South trade through preferential trade agreements and policies, and enhance the contribution of these agreements and policies to employment and inclusive development. As the assessment pointed out, the project's success in linking stakeholders to resources, leveraging knowledge, partnerships, and networks, and creating opportunities for information exchange and development can be well attributed to the active involvement of participants and project partners. Meanwhile, management acknowledges the constraints and challenges that caused delays in coordination and data, sometimes outdated, not being able to reflect gender, human rights, and other inclusivity concerns in detail. In addition, management concurs with the observation that</p>		

the effectiveness and sustainability of knowledge and capacity building were subject to objective limitations such as turnover among government officials and gaps in the abilities of countries to undertake R&D.

Management finds the recommendations relevant and appreciate the areas for improvement. This includes: maintaining and strengthening the momentum among partner divisions and offices in promoting sustainability aspects in trade agreements, improving capacity and knowledge building techniques, and promoting project sustainability. Management supports these recommendations and identified concrete follow-up actions as outlined below to make improvements.

Report Recommendation	Management Response	Follow-up Action	Lead Unit / Collaborating Units	Expected completion date	Indicator of completion of follow-up action <sup>1</sup>
1.Continue and further strengthen knowledge and capacity building around inclusivity and equity (sustainability) in trade agreements.	Management agrees that further opportunities exist to align trade agreements with inclusivity and sustainability by building stronger partnerships with other UN offices and divisions, leveraging the resources of ARTNeT and other networks, and exploring cooperation opportunities with other initiatives. Incorporating inclusivity and sustainability aspects into trade agreements is important to ESCAP and TIID's future work and	Internally, ESCAP plans to seek new opportunities for partnership among different divisions. Specifically, TIID will collaborate with ESCAP divisions (such as SDD and EDD) and other organizations (such as ILO, UNEP, ECLAC) and ARTNeT partners (Hinrich Foundation, APRU) to convene meetings and discuss next steps to initiate new projects on sustainability and trade agreements. At the same time, ESCAP will explore existing projects that are	TIID	Dec 2019	Launching of at least 2 studies / initiatives/ projects related to trade agreements and labour standards and/or sustainable development (for example, one with ILO and one with other ESCAP or ARTNeT - linked partner). These collaborations will further explore potential areas where joint actions can be taken to promote knowledge and capacity building around sustainability dimensions, including gender, in trade agreements.

<sup>1</sup> \* This information provides evidence of completion of action. Examples include issuance of an official memo, completion of a study or report, launching of a website, etc.

	requires additional and particular attention.	<p>already related to sustainability provisions or trade agreements negotiation. ESCAP will move on to identify overlapping areas between these related projects and the current project, and seek opportunities for cooperation.</p> <p>ESCAP will set a timeline and request assistance from various sources to put in place training based on the Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements.</p> <p>In addition, ESCAP will explore the potential of ARTNeT in contributing to the knowledge about and strategies to the promotion of sustainability dimensions in trade agreements.</p>	<p>TIID</p> <p>TIID</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>Dec 2019</p>	<p>An action plan that sets out strategies to mobilize resources for dissemination through online or other training (and possible expansion) of the Handbook on Negotiating Sustainability Development Provisions in Preferential Trade Agreements.</p> <p>Knowledge products on this topic created by ARTNeT members are distributed for discussion, and studied to be used for future knowledge and capacity building purposes.</p>
2. Further develop capacity building	Management agrees with the recommendation as	ESCAP will review current procedures for preparing	TIID	March 2019	Selected capacity building workshop participants are

<p>techniques for future projects – to strengthen relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.</p>	<p>there are obvious room for improvement in the design, implementation, and follow-up of capacity building activities.</p>	<p>capacity building workshops and identify further improvement opportunities through stakeholder consultation to customize capacity building to respond to the needs.</p> <p>Online post-workshops surveys to be introduced as appropriate in new projects and conducted in accordance with the Guidelines for assessment of ESCAP capacity building activities.</p>			<p>interviewed and their feedbacks are compiled and information shared with relevant staff with recommendation to incorporate these findings into future capacity building design.</p> <p>As an example, an online survey to be implemented by the end of 2018 to verify recognition and use of materials by the original workshop participants and contributors to the project.</p>
<p>3. Further enhance sustainability.</p>	<p>Management agrees that ensuring and enhancing project sustainability is crucial to maintain the impact and benefits of capacity building.</p>	<p>ESCAP will ensure all project material and knowledge products are available on ARTNeT or ESCAP website and are updated as needed.</p> <p>ESCAP will explore ways of applying DA9 knowledge products to new development account projects especially the DA11 (Measuring Regional Integration)</p>	<p>TIID</p>	<p>March 2019</p>	<p>Material is produced and posted, regularly updated and made available via open access web.</p> <p>When applicable, project - related material will be used as a stepping stone in a development of new ideas and project.</p>