

Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation

Project/Activity Report

UNECE Support to the Trade Working Group of SPECA - 1 October to 20 December 2013

In 2008, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan initiated work on the “Aid for Trade for SPECA Initiative” and Ministerial meeting. At this ministerial, the SPECA countries approved a SPECA Roadmap for Aid for Trade identifying the priority areas for Aid for Trade within the region. They also created the SPECA Council for Aid for Trade to monitor the Roadmap’s implementation. At the request of the SPECA Council and the SPECA Project Working Group on Trade, the secretariat is following up on these decisions, among other activities, through the development and maintenance of Aid for Trade (AfT) project matrices for SPECA countries.

One of the objectives of these meetings is to increase knowledge and capacity of the national SPECA Trade Coordinators to implement Aid for Trade. As part of this work in 2013, UNECE has the lead role for organizing the Aid for Trade sessions as part of the SPECA Trade Working Group meeting which was held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 8 and 9 October 2013.

The Aid for Trade meeting in 2013 reviewed the outcome of the WTO Global Review of Aid for Trade (8-10 July 2013) for the region. The meeting reviewed draft AfT project concept notes developed as follow-up to the SPECA seminar on implementing Aid for Trade Roadmaps (organized by UNECE on 10-11 July 2013). These include strengthened national and regional AfT processes for future activities such as a) Best practices at border crossings: A trade and transport facilitation perspective, b) National and regional AfT action plans for SPECA: An update, c) National and regional AfT monitoring and evaluation systems.

The workshop was organized for the delegations in SPECA countries participating in the work of the Trade Working Group including representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, as well as UNECE, ESCAP, UNDP, UNIDO, the World Bank, IFC, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Union Delegation to Tajikistan, and private business associations in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The SPECA member countries approved the report of the ECE’s contribution towards Fourth Global Review of the Aid for Trade Initiative that ECE had organized as a Side Event on 8-10 July 2013.; The Meeting also revised the draft AfT project concept notes that ECE was developing as follow-up to the SPECA seminar on implementing Aid for Trade Roadmaps and developing Aid-for-Trade projects that had been organized by ECE after the AfT Side Event on 10-11 July 2013. SPECA approved them for funding through the channels identified among others by the ECE’s Committee on Trade, the joint regional commission UN Development account project and other means; The meeting provided substantive comments on work done on ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan and their regional implications; the participants were trained in the use of the Russian language UNECE Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG) for supporting trade policy.

The workshop strengthened the capacity of the national officials (who are members of the National SPECA delegations participating in the work of the Trade Working Group) in carrying out analytical work related to

the Aid for Trade Initiative. The contribution of the national officials deepened the analysis of the relevant ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade that are being undertaken in the region.

The report of the event can be found on ECE's website at www.unece.org/speca/trade.html

Thematic focus	Venue of the conference/workshop	Date	Total participants/Female participants
Trade Development in the SPECA region	Dushanbe, Tajikistan	8 and 9 October 2013	30/12