

## Ready4Trade Central Asia

Supporting inclusive development  
through trade and digitalization



International  
Trade  
Centre



Funded by  
the European Union

KAZAKHSTAN

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### Dear Readers,

Thank you for your continued support! This is the fourth issue of the Ready4Trade newsletter. The Ready4Trade Central Asia project is implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and funded by the European Union (EU). Since our last publication, we have had plenty to report on from our various events. We've made a lot of progress and we're starting to see great results from some of our beneficiaries. Read on to see what we have been up to.

*Enjoy!*

#### NEWS

### Better data for women-inclusive trade policy: Ready4Trade Central Asia hosts workshops on gender-disaggregated data collection

How do we set benchmarks and gauge progress on topics like gender equality but through the gathering of relevant data? That is what Ready4Trade set out to do with its latest trainings in its five Central Asian project countries.

At the end of 2021, Ready4Trade conducted a set of workshops on gender-disaggregated data for trade policymaking. From 16 to 17 November 2021, a two-day training took place in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.

The workshops were comprised of four training modules and focused on demonstrating the importance of collecting data that not only accounts for the number of people present in a data set, but also considers how many women or men have been surveyed in order to assess differences and limitations and present more accurate data.

The sessions were geared towards national statistics agencies, policymakers, customs officers, border officials and other relevant stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of trade policies. They provided participants with an in-depth understanding of how collecting gender-disaggregated data can prove why the inclusion of women in trade is

important, what constraints women face when engaging in international trade, and how to enhance women's participation in trade through data collection and examination.

The Head of the Department of Statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals at the Bureau of National Statistics, Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Ainur Dossanova, reiterated the importance of data collection.

"There is no effective policy without quality data. Despite the fact that gender statistics are developed in Kazakhstan, there are gaps in data on the role of women in trade".

The workshops held group exercises, provided examples of existing trade policies crafted with a gender lens in mind and illustrated the different types of data sets that can be collected for better-informed policy design. Participants also learned about the limitations and biases to keep in mind while collecting and examining this data.

*Gender-Disaggregated Data  
Collection Training  
in Nur-Sultan.  
16 November 2021.  
Photo by ITC.*

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## Gender responsive trade facilitation in Central Asia: Workshop held for border officials and women entrepreneurs in Kazakhstan



On November 25-26th, the Ready4Trade conducted a 'Gender-responsive trade facilitation' workshop in Nur-Sultan. Unlike previous seminars, this workshop included women entrepreneurs among participants. The discussion benefitted from a rich exchange of ideas on cross-border trade related issues among customs officials and businesswomen.

The welcoming speech was presented by the EU representative, Ms. Tatiana Siegel-Rivera.

The national partners of the project – the Training and Methodological Center (TMC) of the State Revenue Committee of the



*Ms. Tatiana Siegel-Rivera at the Gender Training in Nur-Siltan. 25 November 2021. Photo made by ITC.*

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan helped to organize the seminars. The sessions were delivered by local customs experts from TMC, who previously completed International Trade Centre (ITC) trainings on the methodology and content of the workshop.

One of the participants of the workshop, Arai Nurmazanova, Chief Expert of Analysis, Statistics and Risk Management, Department of State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance, underlined the usefulness of the workshops.

“As a representative of the civil service, I would like to note that this training is useful both for state officials and the business community. I consider that conducting this type of training in the future is beneficial, as it can have a positive effect for doing business in cross-border trade,” she said.

In total, more than 25 local officials from state agencies and women entrepreneurs attended the seminars. The training enabled participants to increase their understanding of why inclusion of women in trade is important, what constraints women face when engaging in international trade and how to create conducive border environments through trade facilitation reforms.



*Participants of the Gender Training in Nur-Siltan. 25 November 2021. Photo made by ITC.*

## **Ready4Trade adopts digital approach in Trade Facilitation: Mission for Kyrgyzstan Info Trade Portal launch**

ITC supports countries to improve their business environment and facilitate cross-border



trade, including through the implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement. In this regard, the first component of the Ready4Trade project aims to address non-tariff barriers on selected intra and extra regional trade flows and involves mapping trade regulations and procedures. This information is published through online National Trade Facilitation Platforms. The 'Trade Facilitation Portal' (TFP) in Kazakhstan is currently in works and was included in the 'National Implementation Plan for B and C of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation'.

From 8-23 November 2021, the ITC Trade Portal coordination team and experts from Kazakhstan visited Kyrgyzstan in the framework of the expert level mission, as the Kyrgyzstan Info Trade Portal was recently launched on 11th November 2021. The experts convened at the Kazakhstan - Kyrgyzstan border, to witness first-hand the synergy between the TFP of Kazakhstan accurately reflect the real documentation process at the border crossing points. In the framework of the mission, ITC conducted six sensitization workshops on TFP at the border checkpoints of Kyrgyzstan - Kordai, and the customs training center in Bishkek, Kara-Balta. In Kazakhstan, the workshops were held in Merke, Almaty and Nur-Sultan. Meetings involved participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and freight-forwarding companies.



*Sensitization workshop on 16 November 2021. Photo made by ITC*

In Kazakhstan, the TFP is developed in collaboration with the JSC "Center for Trade Policy Development" QazTrade. During the mission, QazTrade and Ready4Trade representatives held a number of meetings to discuss further actions for the official launch of TFP in Kazakhstan, which is planned in the first half of 2022.

On 22 November, the second meeting of the Working group on Trade Facilitation portal took place in Nur-Sultan. The working group was established by the Government of Kazakhstan to support the implementation of the TFP. The meeting gathered around 20 representatives of administrative bodies, public and private stakeholders of Kazakhstan, as well as the team of the Kyrgyzstan Info Trade portal.



*Sensitization workshop on 18 November 2021. Photo made by ITC*

The sessions of the meeting included the brief review of TFP implementation and the discussion of the next-product groups that should be mapped on the portal presented by consultants from QazTrade. By the end of 2021 the TFP mapped 24 product groups including 11 for exports and 13 for imports. One of the sessions allowed participants to submit suggestions for a potential name of the portal. To conclude the meeting, the colleagues from Kyrgyzstan shared their experience in the launch and realization of the Trade Portal, which highlighted the progress made as well as to draw recommendations on the next steps for the local portal implementation.



*TFP Working Group meeting on 22 November 2021. Photo made by ITC.*

## **Expert level meetings held in Nur-Sultan to overcome major barriers in cross-border trade**

Over the past year of R4TCA implementation, ITC has worked closely with local partners to identify and prioritize the main trade barriers faced by businesses. These efforts culminated in

the organization of national validation meetings with representatives of the private and public sectors in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to review and validate the results of the survey and studies, as well as the holding of a regional expert-level meeting.

As a follow-up to this, on 26-28 October, the Ready4Trade international consultants Aizhan Beiseyeva and Alexei Bondarenko visited Nur-Sultan to hold expert level meetings with representatives of the public and private stakeholders of Kazakhstan.

The meetings were successfully conducted with state bodies including the State Inspection Committee in the Agroindustrial complex of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, The National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'Atameken', QazTrade, The Union of Transport workers of Kazakhstan 'KazLOGISTICS', KTZ EXPRESS to name a few.

The discussion covered major barriers and obstacles to trade, as well as simplification of trade formalities in cross border and international trade. As a result of these meetings, consultants managed to establish cooperation with all relevant partners to further engage in the implementation of initiatives aimed at simplifying trade procedures in Kazakhstan and the development of necessary reforms and streamline trade formalities across Central Asia region.

## Small businesses master e-commerce through trainings and individual coaching



*The e-commerce training. Photo made by ITC.*

In the last quarter of 2021, a series of webinars were held for SMEs along with their national advisors to learn about various e-commerce platforms. The 45 participating companies received offline training and individual consultations from 8 national advisors in Aktau, Almaty, Karaganda, Nur-Sultan and Shymkent.



The third module of the training was devoted to the marketplaces and internet stores in Kazakhstan, website creation, as well as online payment and logistics solutions. The webinars were conducted in partnership with the Flip.kz, Halyk Market, Kazpost, Satu, Payoneer, Qoovee and others. The in-person sessions included deep dives into online channels and how to select the ones most relevant to each business depending on their business model and target markets.

The fourth module will focus on wider exploration of logistics customer experience and digital marketing, which is tentatively scheduled for March 2022.

## **Ready4Trade and QazTrade launch online training platform for exporters**

ITC in partnership with QazTrade creates accessible export management training tools for novice and experienced exporters. The parties established Virtual Learning Space Platform (VLS) under the name 'QazTrade Academy' as a part of Ready4Trade project realization.

The VLS Platform contains online instructor-led trainings for SMEs in Kazakhstan that were developed by ITC. The international consultants developed 4 topics of training modules on cross-border trade that include 29 export management video instructions on 'Smart Export' as well as 8 practical courses. The four topics cover the Rules of Trade; Export Process; EU Market Requirements; and Quality and Conformity Standards.

The training modules were assessed and approved by QazTrade in order to ensure the high quality and the compliance with the issues faced by local exporters. The institutional partner QazTrade will be able to further customize and add their own training contents to the VLS.

Starting from the first half of 2022, the training program will be widely disseminated at the national level among SME exporters. It is expected that more than 200 users will be registered on the website [www.qaztradeacademy.kz](http://www.qaztradeacademy.kz) and will start training during the first year of launch.

## **Helping small businesses in Kazakhstan through the applied export management coaching initiative**



Throughout 2021, the Ready4Trade project has been implementing the Export Management Coaching Initiative (EMCI). The 5-day in-depth course gave an opportunity for small companies to learn from professionals with extensive experience.

Experts visited the production site of each company and delivered detailed instructions for beneficiaries to expand their businesses abroad. Each day of the training was devoted to a specific topic and covers all the relevant



*The EMCI Coach Ainur Tleuova at the premises of the beneficiary company. Photo by ITC.*

information needed for exporting.

The course covered areas including 'Packaging and labeling', 'Mandatory and voluntary certification and buyer's standards', 'Customs duties and fees', 'International transportation by road, rail and air transport', and 'Export planning and provisional invoices'.

In the 4th quarter of 2021, 11 out of 40 participating businesses completed the training. These SMEs – operating in the sectors of machinery, light manufacturing and food-processing – were drawn from the 2 largest cities – Almaty and Nur-Sultan, as well as the six regions of Kazakhstan - Aktobe, Karaganda, Kostanay, Kyzylorga, Pavlodar, and Zhambyl.

### Stay connected: #Ready4Trade #CentralAsia

With the project 'Ready4Trade Central Asia', the European Union (EU) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) are joining forces to contribute to the overall sustainable and inclusive economic development of Central Asia by boosting intra-regional and international trade in the region. Beneficiaries of the Ready4Trade Central Asia project include governments, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), in particular women-led enterprises, and Business Support Organizations (BSOs). The project operates in five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

## Ready4Trade Central Asia in a nutshell



**5 Central Asian Countries**  
Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan



### 4 Objectives

- ✓ Address **regulatory and procedural obstacles** to international trade
- ✓ Improve **SMEs capacities to comply with cross-border requirements**
- ✓ Improve SMEs readiness to **conduct cross-border e-commerce**
- ✓ Increase opportunities for **women-led enterprises to participate in international trade**



**3 types of Beneficiaries**

 Governments
  SMEs
  BSOs

**3 Sustainable Development Goals**

The project contributes to the realization of **SDGs**:





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