



Independent Evaluation of the  
**Development Account Project 1617J**  
**“Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic  
development and regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa”**

Evaluation and Monitoring Unit  
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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EMU	Evaluation and Monitoring Unit	
ICBT	Informal cross-border trade	
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development	
MSME	Micro, medium and small enterprises	
KSI	Key stakeholder interview	
LCD	Least developed countries	
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	
EAC	East African Community	
STR	Simplified trade regime	
SADC	Southern African Development Community	
GDP	Gross domestic product	
GNI	Gross national income	
USD	United States dollars	
INGO	International non-government organization	
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals	
HRBA	Human rights-based approach	
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	
FGD	Focus group discussion	
TP	Training participant	Note that these acronyms pertain to interview data collected by the evaluator
T	Trainer	
CB	Customs and border officials	
TA	Trader associations	
RP	Regional participant	
PT	Project team	

## Executive Summary

Malawi, Zambia and the Republic of Tanzania are LDCs struggling with multi-faceted development challenges including wide-spread poverty, poor access to education and health care, and gender inequality. Diversifying and expanding export bases and sustainable job creation are at the fore of these countries' development agendas. To this end, governments have committed to more liberalized regional trade including through trade communities which offer, for example, duty exemptions, preferential tariffs and simplified trading processes. Despite these advantages, much of the cross-border trade takes place informally. The vast majority of these traders are women, who sell agricultural products and food staples, new and used clothing, and homewares. For these actors, ICBT is a lifeline; against limited work opportunities and poor access to essential public services, they are highly dependent on informal trade to pay for food, schooling and shelter. As a livelihood, however, small scale ICBT has low profit margins, is irregular and subject to shocks, and creates vulnerability to exploitation. Moreover, because women traders lack access to financial or physical assets, business skills and information, they are largely prevented from formalizing or expanding their businesses, trapping them in a 'hand-to-mouth' cycle of poverty and disempowerment.

In response, this project aimed to strengthen national capacities in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia to leverage ICBT for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration. Three sets of activities were undertaken. First, research and analysis identified the characteristics of ICBT, its drivers, and barriers to formalization and expansion. This information informed the development and execution of 5 x 6-day capacity development workshops reaching 142 traders. Finally, regional and national policy-makers were engaged in policy-dialogue aimed at identifying and reducing the obstacles currently dissuading women from using formal trading procedures, such as information barriers, bureaucracy, inadequate infrastructure and rent-seeking.

In December 2019, UNCTAD contracted an evaluator to objectively assess the project's design, management, implementation and overall performance during the execution period (March 2016-December 2019). Such evaluations make critical contributions to accountability, as well as identify constructive recommendations for future programming. The evaluation adopted a theory-driven approach, drawing on RBM principles, content analysis, outcome mapping and complex systems thinking. The methodological tools, data sources and analysis techniques employed are elaborated in the project evaluation matrix (annex IV), and included a literature review, project-specific document and data analysis, observation of project activities, and 72 key stakeholder interviews. While the main methodological constraints related to data availability, these were largely overcome by way of extensive scholarly research and additional interviews with key policy stakeholders. A further constraint was the limited time for and the context of beneficiary interviews, which prevented the collection of holistic data on knowledge retention and behavioral change. This said, the evaluator is satisfied that a complete and thorough assessment of the project was accomplished.

### Conclusions

**Relevance (EQ1):** Against the target countries' development challenges, the project's activities — building women's capacity to expand and develop their informal enterprises, and promoting regulatory reforms to facilitate cross-border trade — was highly strategic. On the one hand, it provides women traders with the tools to overcome the principal obstacles preventing business profitability i.e. their inability to exploit trade regime rules to their advantage, protect themselves from rent-seeking and harassment, make strategic business management decisions. On the other hand, it has increased the awareness of policy makers with respect to the constraints faced by women traders and complementary areas of regulatory reform. Strongly aligned with UNCTAD's broader goals around

poverty reduction and sustainable development, the project should be seen as utilizing the organization's core strengths to generate impact around a group of economic actors traditionally overlooked in programming.

**Outcomes achieved and changes produced by the project (EQ2 and EQ3):** Despite limitations in data collection, the Reports produced highlight important policy issues around women engaged in ICBT. It is unfortunate that national stakeholders requested a scaling back of this activity; particularly against the scant scholarship in this area, the project might have made a unique contribution by analysing and reporting primary data. With respect to the micro-schemes, there is strong evidence that participants acquired new knowledge, and that they will use their new skills towards constructive ends. It should be highlighted that the combination of skill sets targeted created mutually reinforcing gains; beneficiaries now have skills to accumulate profits and save, allowing them to diversify, expand or invest in value-adding elements, and thus edge closer to the formal economy. Finally, there is strong evidence that the knowledge and awareness of participants in the Regional Workshop improved, and that UNCTAD's recommendations to make CBT more beneficial to traders were valid. There was particular appreciation that the workshop (i) addressed an important but rarely discussed subject, (ii) was participatory and practical, and (iii) brought together government officials, technical staff, and CSO stakeholders on an equal playing field.

**Efficiency (EQ4):** Especially given their high impact and potential sustainability, the efficiency of the micro-schemes must be highlighted: using around 17 percent of the project budget, 142 persons received 6-days of high-quality training geared directly towards closing identified gaps in knowledge and capacity. These efficiency gains largely accrued from the project team's strategic use of the existing EMPRETEC methodology and pool of trained facilitators.

**Sustainability (EQ5):** Training participants will almost certainly exploit their new skills and knowledge towards positive ends. To consolidate their learning and exploit secondary spill overs, expansion and scale-up of the training is warranted. National stakeholders will need more sustained support to make progress in promoting CBT. In a scaled-up iteration of this project, activities to support policy-makers push through identified reforms should be prioritized.

**Gender and human rights (EQ6):** The project effectively adopted a gender mainstreaming and human rights-based approach. The needs of and constraints faced by women traders were central themes in the Reports, Trader's Guide, and training curricula; at the same time, they were appropriate for and appealing to a general trader audience.

**Partnerships and synergies (EQ7):** The project liaised closely with the World Bank (including through a staff cost-sharing agreement), TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) and COMESA. New collaborations were also forged, including with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Customs Union, both of whom indicated that they would be open to broader partnerships in the future.

## **Lessons learned**

**1. Overcoming the constraints of political economy in development programming:** The project was unique insofar as its aim (supporting women engaged in ICBT to develop, expand and regularise their enterprises) aligned with target governments' trade strategies and priorities (an expansion in MSME-driven economic activity and the growth of Pan-African trade). The momentum created when top-down (policy level) support is coupled with bottom-up (beneficiary) demand is a powerful recipe for impact and sustainability. This is especially the case for gender and economic empowerment projects, where political economy is often the most significant impediment to success.

**2. Supporting organizational innovation:** In contrast to UNCTAD's traditional entry points, this project principally targeted actors operating at the grassroots level. It should be seen as utilizing UNCTAD's core strengths to generate impact around a group of marginalized economic actors. This type of programmatic expansion – whereby an agency uses its experience and institutional knowledge to add value in new areas where other agencies are not active – should be encouraged.

**3. Targeting non-traditional actors for successful outcomes:** That informal traders operate outside the state legal and regulatory framework means that they are often overlooked in programming. This project's targeting of such women should be seen as both strategic and consistent with UN objectives (especially the SDG's bedrock principal of 'no one left behind'). The participation of customs and other border officials in day 1 of the training should likewise be showcased as an example of the positive ends that can follow the inclusion of a non-traditional group.

**4. Intra-agency partnership:** The cost-effectiveness of the micro-schemes principally accrued from the project's partnership with EMPRETEC, which allowed it to benefit from an existing training methodology on entrepreneurialism and pre-trained, field-based staff to implement the sessions. This partnership, although unusual within UNCTAD program streams, was found by the project team to be simple to organize and administer, highly congenial, and resulting in mutually beneficial gains.

## Recommendations

**1. Project teams need to be equipped to undertake risk assessments and set in place contingency strategies.** The project gave rise to certain Do No Harm concerns that — although not deemed high risk — were not identified and thus not (or not sufficiently) guarded against. The lesson is that when organizations branch into new areas of programmatic work, staff may not have the requisite skills to undertake risk assessments rigorously. Investing in these areas of staff capacity and creating opportunities for staff to enrich their skills should be prioritized.

**2. Programme managers need to ensure that effective and value-adding research methodology is developed to support evidence-based programming:** For agencies with strong research functions, staff skills in qualitative and quantitative methods need to be regularly updated and built upon to ensure that best practices in research and publication are followed. UNCTAD might consider peer-to-peer mentoring and creating opportunities for staff to participate in short courses in research methods, data reporting and simple statistical applications.

**3. Project managers need to ensure that deviations of project activities remain aligned with the project's intended results, whilst remaining responsive to stakeholder needs:** With respect to the scaling-back of the research activities, it is noted that while national stakeholder views must always be prioritised, project teams should feel empowered to advocate for programming goals, including a project's contribution to knowledge on aid effectiveness and broader development goals.

**4. Project managers should design monitoring and evaluation frameworks that support Results-Based Programming:** The project's results framework failed to reflect best practices in RBM programming. As noted above, especially when institutions expand into new areas of programming, it is important to ensure that staff skills in methodology design are regularly built upon and updated to reflect emerging best practices.

**5. Project managers need to rethink assumptions and gender relations and how women's empowerment is best supported:** Women-centred programming is not always the most effective way to achieve gender goals, and in certain cases, such targeting can create new vulnerabilities. While it may appear counterintuitive, there is some evidence that a more active inclusion of men in the project

may have had positive spill over effects, including by building a stronger community of informal traders to advocate for their rights.

**6. UNCTAD should scale up the training activity and/or consider other activities that further contribute to improving the enabling environment for informal cross border women traders.:** Given the high value-added and cost-efficiency of the training activity, scale-up is warranted. Other activities with high potential include facilitating access to capital; supporting trade fairs aimed at women small-scale and cross-border traders; on and offline tool development that provide information on trade and customs rules; and capacity-building aimed at improving compliance on the part of border officials.



## 1. Introduction

Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania are each categorized as least developed countries situated in Southern-East Africa. They exhibit high levels of poverty and inequality, and weak access to essential public goods. Diversifying and expanding export bases and sustainable job creation are at the fore of these countries' development agendas. To this end, each government has committed to more liberalized regional trade including through the development of trade communities: Malawi and Zambia belong to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), while all three belong to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Tanzania is a member of the East African Community (EAC). These arrangements mean that products traded between member countries are often either duty exempt or subject to preferential tariffs, and – in the case of COMESA members – traders can take advantage of a Simplified Trade Regime.

Despite these advantages, much of the trade between Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia takes place informally. The vast majority of those engaged in informal cross-border trade (ICBT) are women, who sell agricultural products and food staples, new and used clothing, and homewares. For these actors, ICBT is a lifeline; against limited work opportunities and poor access to essential public services, they are highly dependent on informal trade to pay for food, schooling and shelter. As a livelihood, however, small scale ICBT has low profit margins, is irregular and subject to shocks, and creates vulnerability to exploitation. Moreover, because women traders lack access to financial or physical assets, business skills and information, they are largely prevented from formalizing or expanding their businesses, trapping them in a 'hand-to-mouth' cycle of poverty and disempowerment.

In response, UNCTAD launched Development Account Project 1617J - "Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa". Its aim was to strengthen national capacities in Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia to leverage ICBT for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration. Three sets of activities were undertaken. First, research and analysis identified the characteristics of ICBT, its drivers, and barriers to formalization and expansion. This information informed the development and execution of 5 x 6-day capacity development workshops reaching 142 informal and small-scale traders. The objective was to transfer knowledge on the processes and requirements of formalized trade and the entrepreneurial skills needed for small business diversification, growth and formalization. Finally, policy-makers (regional and national) were engaged in policy-dialogue aimed at identifying and reducing the obstacles currently dissuading women from using formal trading procedures, such as information barriers, bureaucracy, inadequate infrastructure and rent-seeking.

In December 2019, UNCTAD contracted an independent evaluator to undertake an evidence-based assessment of the project. The objective was to systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation and overall project performance. As well as providing accountability to UNCTAD management, UN DESA and member States, the evaluation sought to identify practical and constructive recommendations for future programming as well as lessons that might be applied to topical development challenges, including gender equality (SDG 5) and access to decent work (SDG 8). Such insights are particularly relevant to project stakeholders at UNCTAD, including their contribution to results optimization, operational and administrative efficiency, and change model development.

## 2. Context of the evaluation

The economies of Malawi, Zambia and the Republic of Tanzania are disproportionately reliant on extractive industry (or other forms of rentierism) and/or low-productivity agriculture. This has led to

growth that is unevenly distributed, income streams that are highly vulnerable to shocks, and widespread poverty. Identifying sectors that can deliver more sustainable, resilient and employment-rich growth is a key priority. To this end, governments, International Financial Institutions and multilateral agencies have identified priority areas for investment and support. These include, inter alia, entrepreneurialism, particularly the expansion of MSMEs and women-led businesses, and intra-regional trade.

Against this backdrop, the principal aims of this project — augmenting the capacity of women engaged in ICBT to expand and develop their enterprises, and promoting regulatory reforms to facilitate cross-border trade — are highly strategic. The women engaged in ICBT predominately operate small-scale, low productivity, and low profit businesses, where entry barriers are low but price competition is high. Their lack of knowledge around trade rules leaves them highly vulnerable to corruption and harassment, while their weak entrepreneurial and business skills prevents them from expanding, diversifying and investing in value-adding dimensions. At the same time, the regulatory framework is cumbersome and inefficient, narrowing the scope for women traders to operate successful and profitable enterprises.

Supporting an economically empowered female populous is equally consistent with broader development imperatives. Employed women enjoy greater levels of protection and allocate resources in ways that favor human development priorities, including education, health, nutrition and social justice.<sup>1</sup> These gains are shared across society. More equal societies — where women work, enjoy property rights, and can access capital — grow faster and more consistently.<sup>2</sup> This is because gender inequality manifests as a labor market failure, preventing the accumulation of human capital and skewing the distribution of resources, thus diminishing an economy's capacity to grow.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, supporting a transition to formalized livelihoods mitigates the externalities stemming from informality, including distortions to economic strategy, a reduced tax base and compromised rule of law. It is also compatible with countries' respective UN Partnership Frameworks which prioritize expanding sustainable livelihoods opportunities for women, including by supporting female entrepreneurialism and female-led MSMEs, and by routing women away from low-productivity agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Subject of the evaluation

The project under evaluation was designed with the objectives of:

- Improving the capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women engaged in ICBT; and
- Improving the capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women engaged in ICBT.

Implementation details were refined during a fact-finding and data-collection mission carried out in October 2017 through the assistance of government stakeholders and the assistance of two cross-border trade associations. One important finding was that women who engaged in ICBT had very limited access to capital and lacked entrepreneurship skills. This prevented them from diversifying

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<sup>1</sup> A Sen *More than 100 Million Women are Missing* (1990).

<sup>2</sup> There is a robust negative correlation of 0.4 or higher across countries between the lack of rights and GDP per capita.

<sup>3</sup> See, the World Bank in *Gender at [www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/overview)*

<sup>4</sup> Across all three countries, commercialization in agriculture remains largely untapped. Productivity losses accrue through low levels of improved farm input use, limited private investment and low levels of mechanization.

and/or scaling up their micro-business activities, and thus from formalizing. It was also clear that women lacked knowledge on customs rules and procedures, and critically the exemptions and privileges that they were entitled to under relevant trade communities. These findings informed the development of low-literacy information resource kits designed for women, as well as an analytical report outlining the supply- and demand-side challenges faced by women ICBTs and policy recommendations targeting national and regional policy makers. In November-December 2019, five 6-day workshops were held reaching 142 individuals engaged in ICBT and small-scale cross border trade. The capacity building program focused on the relevant trade and customs rules and procedures (1 day) and business and entrepreneurial skills (5 days). The training was designed and delivered in collaboration with 4 members of UNCTAD’s Empretec team. Finally, a 1.5 day regional policy dialogue brought together 50 policy makers and practitioners from the three beneficiary countries in Dar es Salaam from 4-5 December 2019. The objectives were to share the findings of the capacity building program, and to launch the analytical report and policy recommendations. A further aim was to discuss the policy recommendations with a view to encouraging commitment to key reforms.

This combined set of activities was rolled out between March 2016-December 2019, with an approved budget of \$547,000 and supported by project team of 3 (working with an average time-allocation of 25 percent).

#### 4. Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

This evaluation examined and analyzed all activities, including project conceptualization, for the full duration of execution (March 2016-December 2019). The evaluation was structured along two general objectives: (i) To assess the degree to which the desired project results were realized; and (ii) To identify good practices and lessons learned that might feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions. Insights were moreover crafted taking into account the specific needs and expectations of project stakeholders at UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA.

The evaluation was structured to address six questions; these criteria were revised during the inception phase following the UNDA evaluation guidelines introduced in October 2019. The evaluation matrix can be found at Annex IV.

<b>Relevance</b>	EQ1. To what extent did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables consider and address the priorities and needs of participating countries; taking into account UNCTAD’s mandates and comparative advantages?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	EQ2. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document? EQ3. Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?
<b>Efficiency</b>	EQ4. Have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control, been adequate in ensuring the achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?
<b>Sustainability</b>	EQ5. Is there evidence that improved capacity from the project will allow project beneficiaries to sustain results beyond the end of the project and achieve the change required for the intended impact?
<b>Gender and human rights</b>	EQ6. How effectively were gender and human rights issues mainstreamed in the design and implementation of the intervention?

<b>Partnerships and synergies</b>	EQ7. To what extent did the project leverage partnerships with national and regional counterparts, international development partners, the civil society and/or the private sector in support of results, and sustainability of results?
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## 5. Methodology of the Evaluation

The evaluation adopts a theory-driven approach, drawing on Results-Based Management principles, content analysis, outcome mapping and complex systems thinking. To the extent possible, a mixed (qualitative and quantitative methods) methodology was employed. The matrix below sets out the methodological tools, data sources and analysis techniques employed. These are further elaborated in the project evaluation matrix. The use of multiple data sources allowed cross-verification and triangulation, and thereby the eliciting of reliable and comprehensive conclusions.

Practical constraints informed the sampling technique employed. Of the 142 female ICBT trained, the evaluator had direct access to only 60 (40 percent); indirect access (Skype, What's App or email) was not feasible due to the constraints of participants. It was determined that a sample of 40 participants present at 2 trainings would facilitate the most reliable conclusions. Interviewees were selected by the trainers in order not to interrupt sessions or flow or disadvantage individuals who were behind in their work or required additional support; to mitigate any bias, the evaluator added 5 additional participants selected randomly.<sup>5</sup> Sampling of participants at the regional dialogue was again dictated by practical considerations. Senior officials (some of whom who were expected to leave early) were targeted as priorities, followed by a representative sample of other attendees. References to interview data presented in this report is anonymized; acronyms used to classify groups of respondents can be found in the table below or list of acronyms at the beginning of this paper.

**Limitations.** The principal methodological constraint related to data availability. There is a lack of reliable data on informal trade and employment at both the regional and country levels. Attempts to control for this included scholarly research, as well as interviews with regional trade officials who were asked to independently estimate figures around informality. However, assertions about the extent and nature of informal trade should hence be interpreted with caution. Another constraint was the limited time for and the context of beneficiary interviews, which prevented the collection of data on medium-term knowledge retention and behavioral change.

Tool	Sources (not exhaustive)
<b>Literature review</b>	World Bank and Africa Development Bank country profiles, trade and demographic data; academic scholarship on economic development in LCDs, trade development strategy, MSMEs and micro-financing; UN and INGO policy analyses; data produced under the Observatory of Economic Complexity Tool, UN-country development frameworks.
<b>Project document review</b>	Project development documents, project results matrix, inception reports, mission reports and financial reporting; knowledge resources produced by the project (analytical report, policy report and information and knowledge tools for female ICBTs); raw data gleaned from online interviews.
<b>Project controls review</b>	Participation lists (training and regional policy dialogue), per diem distribution lists.
<b>Evaluation data collected by the project team</b>	Data collected by project team as per the results matrix targeting female ICBT training participants and regional dialogue participants.
<b>Evaluator Observation</b>	Training sessions (5 days, 2 sessions), regional dialogue (2 days)

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that it was not possible to interview participants before or after the training as they had to fulfil household responsibilities. It was decided not to interrupt lunch and refreshment breaks as practical exercises and/or networking were taking place.

<b>Key Stakeholder Interviews</b>	Training participants (TP, 40), trainers (T, 3), customs and border officials (CB, 10), trade associations (TA, 5), project team (PT, 3), policy makers (RP, 10).
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## 6. Findings

### Relevance (EQ1)

<b>EQ1 Relevance: To what extent did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables consider and address the priorities and needs of participating countries; taking into account UNCTAD's mandates and comparative advantages?</b>	
1.1 Alignment of the intervention with UNCTAD's mandate, and contribution and consistency with UNCTAD's programme of work	- Literature (scholarly and policy)
1.2 Was the intervention a logical, reasonable and complete means to pursue the ends women's empowerment, economic growth and regional integration vis-à-vis these countries' development challenges?	- Project documents (PDD, mission reports) - FGD notes and survey data - Reports and training curricula produced by project - KSI (all) - Observations of regional dialogue and training

#### **1.1 Assessment of alignment of the intervention with UNCTAD's mandate, and contribution and consistency with UNCTAD's programme of work**

The project falls in full alignment with UNCTAD objectives and within the scope and priorities set under sub-programme 3 (International Trade) of the organization's biennial programme budget (2016-2017) within the UN Strategic Framework.<sup>6</sup> The intervention builds on UNCTAD's work under the 7th tranche of the DA project 1011Q: Enhancing Capacities of Developing Countries to Mainstream Gender in Trade Policy.<sup>7</sup>

While the project sits within UNCTAD's mandate, it was an unusual intervention vis-à-vis the work normally undertaken by the organization, insofar as a core tranche of activities targeted actors at the grassroots level, based in more remote areas, and through partnerships with CSOs. In this regard, it should be seen as utilizing UNCTAD's core strength (policy engagement) to generate impact around a group of economic actors traditionally overlooked in UN programming and by government authorities more generally. The organization's limited experience programming at the grassroots level may explain some of the delays and missteps elaborated upon in this report. In this regard, it must be

<sup>6</sup> UNCTAD sub-programme 3 promotes inclusive and sustainable growth and development, and poverty alleviation based on the international trade in goods and services and commodities, the international trading system, and the linkages between trade and internationally agreed development goals. The sub-programme will address persistent and emerging development challenges (inter alia, women's economic empowerment, access to decent employment, food security and poverty alleviation) and assess their implications for the development prospects of developing countries, least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, including at the national policymaking level. It will continue to improve cooperation and enhance synergies with other international organizations and foster the coordination of system-wide United Nations activities in the area of international trade. It will also strengthen the communication and dissemination aspects of its work.

<sup>7</sup> Within this framework, UNCTAD conducted policy-relevant research on the complex gender ramifications of trade in selected LDCs and identified, among others, key challenges and opportunities for value chain creation and support that involves women in informal cross-border trade.

highlighted that organizations learn, grow expertise and improve efficiency, only through repeated engagement. This should be taken into account in assessing the project's overall achievement and value-added.

**1.2 Was the intervention a logical, reasonable and complete approach to promoting women's empowerment, economic growth and regional integration vis-à-vis these countries' development challenges?**

Malawi, Zambia and the Republic of Tanzania are LDCs struggling with multi-faceted development challenges including wide-spread poverty, poor access to education and health care, and gender inequality. A priority for each of these governments is to identify sectors of economic activity that are most likely to deliver sustainable growth — particularly given pressures of climate change, high population growth and the imperative of diversifying away from extractive industries and low-productivity agriculture. Toward these ends, each is committed to (i) liberalised, intra-regional trade,<sup>8</sup> and (ii) supporting entrepreneurialism as a vehicle for innovation and job creation. With respect to the latter, it is broadly accepted that women have untapped potential, but face impediments in the areas of capacity, mobility, access to resources, legal impediments<sup>9</sup> and cultural norms.

Against this backdrop, there is a strong rationale for supporting women engaged in ICBT to expand and develop their enterprises, and bring them within the auspices of the formal economy.<sup>10</sup> These women are predominately operating small-scale, low growth, and low profit businesses, where entry barriers are low but price competition is high. They lack entrepreneurial skills and trade regime knowledge, and are highly vulnerable to corruption and harassment. This prevents them from expanding, diversifying and investing in value-adding dimensions, trapping them in a 'hand-to-mouth' existence. In short, investing in the capacity of women engaged in ICBT is strategic, aligned with government strategy and has high poverty reduction potential, albeit on a localised scale.

Women in ICBT is also a strategic area for development programming from a gender and empowerment perspective. First, because they operate outside of the rule of law, and do not contribute to macro-level gains, these actors are often overlooked in government strategy and mainstream UN programming. Perhaps more significantly, efforts geared towards empowering marginalized groups — whether from an economic or political perspective — are often resisted by existing powerholders, who are better served by maintaining the status quo. That this project homes in on an objective where both development goals and government policy align gives it a unique value-added. Indeed, by avoiding spoilers and other political economy obstacles, such examples of programmatic synchronicity have high potential for impact and ripeness for scale-up.

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<sup>8</sup> Note that the validity/policy rationale of intra-regional trade as a vehicle for broad-based and inclusive economic growth in LDCs is considered to fall outside the scope of this evaluation. Relevant reading on this subject includes, for example P Collier *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About* (2007), N Mthuli, *Regional Integration and Trade in Africa* (2014) and L Signé *Unlocking Africa's Business Potential: Trends, Opportunities, Risks, and Strategies*.

<sup>9</sup> e.g. land ownership laws, inheritance laws, and business regulations (which are often designed for large projects and are therefore difficult for MSMEs to comply with).

<sup>10</sup> See also national and regional frameworks on gender equality, including the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the COMESA Gender Policy and the EAC Gender Strategic Plan.

Figure 1. Change model

The dynamic potential of women-led cross-border trade between Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia is hindered by obstacles including (i) the complexity and opacity of customs procedures and costs, coupled with a lack of awareness of rights and responsibilities, (ii) insecurity at the border, (iii) lack of entrepreneurial skills, (iv) poor access to capital.



The project tackles this by identifying the tariff and non-tariff barriers and supply-side obstacles that hinder ICBT



Developing recommendations and promoting reform of regimes that do not work to promote ICBT<sup>1</sup> through training and policy dialogue

Providing women with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge on trade rules and regulations

Beneficiary trade ministries and regional organizations.

Beneficiary small-scale traders and associations of small-scale and informal cross-border traders



Strengthen national capacity to identify and redress trade barriers to ICBT to leverage informal cross-border trade for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration

Increase efficiency, promote activity scaling up, reduce costs and time, and facilitate eventual formalization

## Achievement of project objectives and outcomes (EQ2 and EQ3)

This project undertook 10 activities that have been grouped into three ‘areas of intervention’ insofar as they were aligned under a common objective:

- Activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 outline a set of research interventions culminating in two analytical publications designed to promoting new knowledge and its uptake (note that a third ‘Trader Guide’ publication was prepared under activity 2.4);
- Activity 2.4 comprised a series of training sessions targeting women engaged in ICBT;
- Activities 1.4, 1.5 and 2.5 outline a regional workshop and set of training sessions targeting government stakeholders geared towards policy consensus and identifying steps towards reforms supporting ICBT.

For the purposes of the evaluation, these groups of activities were assessed together according to five sub-questions.<sup>11</sup> These sub-questions sought to verify and/or examine: the delivery of stated outputs, technical accuracy, relevance, knowledge uptake and contribution to behavioural/conceptual change, as set out below. Due to the sub-questions’ mutual relevance to EQ2 and EQ3, the project’s delivery against these two evaluation criteria was assessed and reported jointly.

EQ2 Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document? EQ3: Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?			
Sub-questions	Research activities Activities: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Training/micro-schemes Activity 2.4	Regional dialogue Activities 1.4, 1.5, 2.5
2.1 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved? If not, why not?	- KSI PT7 - Project documents (PDD, mission reports, survey and FDG data - Reports produced	- Audience/participation lists - KSI PT8 - Observation of training sessions	- Analytical reports and recommendations produced by project - Target participation list - Observation of regional dialogue - KSI project team PT9
2.2 Were the Reports/training curricula produced technically accurate?	KSI (PT1, T5, TA2)	- training curricula used by project - KSI PT1	
2.3 Were the Reports/training delivered/policy discourse relevant and useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?	- KSI (PT3, T1-T4, T7, T8, C1, C2, C5, TA1, TA3-6 P1, P2, P4-10, P12-14) - Evaluation data collected	- KSI (PT4, T1-T4, T7, T8, C2, C5, TA3-6, P1, P4-10, P12-14) - Review of training evaluation data - Observation of training sessions	KSI (PT2, R2)
2.4 Was there adequate dissemination/effective delivery of the Reports/training to	- KSI (PT3, PT5, T3, P2, P11, P12, C2, TA4) Dissemination records	- KSI (PT4, T3, P2, P11, P12, C2, TA4) - Inspection of attendance records	

<sup>11</sup> Note that the activity group A1.4-1.5-2.5 was not assessed against sub-questions 2.2 and 2.4 as the object of these questions (the Reports produced by the project) is discussed elsewhere.



achieve conceptual penetration?			
2.5 To what extent were the Reports/training/policy discourse effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?	KSI (T3, P11, P14, C4, TA4)	- KSI (T3, P11, P14, C4, TA4)	- KSI (PT4.1, R1, R2, R3) - Evaluation data collected

## ACTIVITY SET 1. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Summary of planned activities: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3		
<p>These activities set out a comprehensive research agenda (A1.1 and A2.1), to be rolled out during field missions to the three target countries (A.1.2 and A.2.2), culminating in the production of two reports (A.1.3 and A.2.3). These missions were to coincide with three kick-off workshops attended by border officers, representative of relevant ministries, associations of cross-border traders, and contracted NGOs. The workshops aimed to (i) support early engagement of national stakeholders, (ii) validate and fine-tune the results of the baseline assessment and (iii) facilitate a focused needs assessment exercise that would inform the format and content of the reports. The first report (A.1.3) was to be an analytical report on ICBT barriers, with recommendations on how to streamline requirements for cross-border traders while ensuring regulatory coherence, product-specific annexes and policy options disaggregated by product category and by typology of traders. The second report (A.2.3) was envisaged as a strategy report detailing sub-national (and where relevant national-level) policy and programming recommendations for streamlining ICBT in supply-side services.</p>		
Research activities (A.1.1 and A2.1)	Methodologies employed (A.1.2 and A.2.2)	Research products (A.1.3 and A.2.3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline assessment of informal cross-border traders, trade flows and border-crossing conditions</li> <li>• Mapping of tariff and non-tariff barriers by product category and typology of traders</li> <li>• Assessment of the trade regime (multiple RTAs and STRs), as exists on paper and as implemented in practice</li> <li>• Mapping and analysis of supply side obstacles that hinder the efficiency of and/or increase the cost and time incurred by (particularly women) traders;</li> <li>• Assessment of mechanisms and policy options to tackle the specific needs of traders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with e.g. trader associations, banks, micro-finance organizations, transport associations, local officials, NGOs.</li> <li>• 3 x Kick off workshops (stakeholder validation and needs assessment exercise)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analytical report on ICBT barriers, with recommendations on how to streamline requirements for cross-border traders.</li> <li>• Strategy report detailing national and sub-national policy and programming recommendations for streamlining ICBT in supply-side services.</li> </ul>

### **2.1 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved? If not, why not?**

In terms of activities A1.1 and A.2.1, the project envisaged research conducted “predominately through on the ground data collection and analytical activities through partnership with a relevant regional/local NGO, academic institution or firm”.<sup>12</sup> During stakeholder consultations in 2016, however, national authorities proposed a scaling down of the project’s research activities to allow for expanded programmatic work (A.1.4).<sup>13</sup> As a consequence, the report was drafted relying almost

<sup>12</sup> A.2.1, Prodoc.

<sup>13</sup> Progress report 1: “Preliminary consultations were held in July 2016 taking advantage of the presence of high-level representatives of the three beneficiary countries in Nairobi, Kenya on the occasion of UNCTAD 14 Ministerial Conference. Consultations were also held with

exclusively on secondary research. A key challenge was the dearth of existing material on the issue of ICBT (and informal trade generally), and that what did exist was often outdated and/or unreliable.<sup>14</sup> The draft report was then content-verified and supplemented by the results of an online survey of 17 trader associations and CSOs, 6 FGDs (approximately 200 women) and 18 KSIs. This primary data provided some useful insights, however, deficits in methodology (see below) meant that the overall value-added was limited vis-à-vis its potential.

In terms of the research outputs, it was decided that the reports 1.3 and 2.3 would be merged into a single publication.<sup>15</sup> This report *Borderline: Women in informal cross-border trade in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia* (UNCTAD/DITC/2018/3, hereafter *Borderline*) was finalized during Q3-Q4 of 2018 (English only). It was disseminated online in January 2019, and presented formally to national stakeholders during an April 2019 mission. The study describes: i) the characteristics of informal cross-border trade in the three countries; ii) an assessment of special trade regimes for small-scale traders as it exists on paper and as implemented in practice; and iii) the supply-side obstacles that limit the capacity of small scale traders, especially women, to benefit from trade activities and develop their business beyond subsistence. During the April 2019 mission, national stakeholders requested an additional document expanding on the recommendations identified in *Borderline* and identifying potential targets, indicators and responsible institutions at the national level. In response, *Gender-sensitive policy recommendations to support women cross-border traders in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia* (hereafter *Advocacy Report*) was finalized in Q2-Q3 2019 (English only).

Data collection tool	Evaluator assessment
An online survey was administered during Q3 2017 to a sample of 40 cross-border trade associations and civil society organizations identified through online searches, of which 17 responded. <sup>16</sup>	The survey, despite its limited sample size, gleaned some interesting information, including how frequently informal traders crossed borders and by what method, the types of goods traded, how traded goods were sourced, and from where traders received their information. Two particularly important insights concerned the inadequacy of border facilities (the absence of refrigeration facilities, bathrooms, sleeping areas etc.) and traders' knowledge deficits concerning the relevant trade rules and regulations. There was basic unanimity among respondents concerning questions on the obstacles hindering ICBT and the validity of UNCTAD's proposed solutions. The survey's main limitation was its small sample size (17 responses).
Stakeholder interviews (18) <sup>17</sup>	It is unfortunate that a comprehensive document detailing the profile of interviewees and data collected was not produced. <sup>18</sup>

regional organizations working on ICBT. As a result of consultations with beneficiary countries, the scope of the analytical report under A1.3 and A2.3 was scaled down by relying more on existing literature on the issue of cross-border trade to: i) ensure the development of an analytical output that covers key issues in an effective and concise manner; ii) allow to shift efforts towards the operational component (piloting of micro-level schemes under A2.4)".

<sup>14</sup> Annual Progress Report 2: "The baseline assessment of informal cross-border traders and of supply-side constraints has posed some challenges in that available literature is at times outdated and qualitative or quantitative data are not systematically available for the three targeted countries".

<sup>15</sup> This decision was made to enhance the practical utility and readability of the research content.

<sup>16</sup> The survey was designed to gather information about traders' profiles including among others the type of goods traded; how goods are sourced and what are the main outlets for resale; main challenges including border obstacles and supply-side constraints; level of awareness of trade facilitation measures. Respondents were asked to proffer their opinions on the behaviours, knowledge, opinions etc. of female traders. From a research methodology perspective, trader associations are considered well placed to speak on generalized trends given the volume and typology of traders they work with.

<sup>17</sup> The institutions contacted during the field mission included: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment of Tanzania; Tanzania Revenue Authority, Tanzania Immigration Department, Tanzania Bureau of Standards (Tunduma and Songwe borders); UNDP Tanzania; UN Women Tanzania, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism of Malawi; Ministry of Gender of Malawi; National Association of Business Women of Malawi ; Malawi Revenue Authority, Malawi Immigration Department, Malawi Bureau of Standards (Kasumulu and Mchinji borders); Cross-border Trade Association of Malawi; UN Resident Coordinator a.i. Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry of Zambia; Zambia Revenue Authority, Zambia Immigration Department, Zambia Bureau of Standards (Mwami and Nakonde borders); Cross border Trade Association, Zambia; WeCreate Zambia; COMESA Secretariat.

<sup>18</sup> The results of the FGDs and KSIs were documented in a 9-page summary of meeting notes.

Focus Group Discussions (6, covering approximately 200 women) at Tunduma/Nakonde (Zambia/Tanzania), Songwe/Kasumulu (Tanzania/Malawi) and Mwami/Mchinji (Zambia/Malawi)	The questionnaire guiding the FGDs was excellent, but there was no comprehensive document produced summarising responses, trends or themes and comparing them between different discussion groups. <sup>19</sup> At minimum, a document summarising the location, dates, participants (numbers, genders, locations and occupation), facilitators etc. should have been produced for quality control and audit purposes.
Kick off workshops	The kick-off workshops were intended to, inter alia, validate the data collected and, through a need assessment, guide the content and format of the reports. Again, it is unfortunate that no summary report of these kick-off workshops was produced, consolidating the information collected, listing number and typology of participants, confirming dates and locations etc. <sup>20</sup>

## **2.2 Were the Reports/training curricula produced technically accurate?**

Because only one respondent interviewed had read the Report and could speak to its accuracy,<sup>21</sup> questions concerning technical precision must rely on the evaluator's assessment and information provided by the project team. This said, the content of the report was largely presented at the Regional Workshop and no respondent or participant made reference to any inaccuracies, inconsistencies or omissions. Moreover, the draft report was sent to 50 national stakeholders by the team for review prior to publication.<sup>22</sup>

While the evaluator's appraisal did not detect problems with the technical accuracy of either Report, their content reflects the consequences of scaling down the research exercise. The general lack of research and data existing in this field resulted in an overreliance on sources that do not meet best practice standards in research and publication. Significant weight is attached on an unpublished draft report prepared for UN Women on Tanzanian female cross-border traders with Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi,<sup>23</sup> and a further unpublished report commissioned for a Cross-Border Trade Reform Project (2012).<sup>24</sup> While the sample sizes of these studies are quite large (188 and 64 persons respectively) they are largely unreferenced, it is not clear if they were peer reviewed or on what basis they were commissioned. There is likewise significant weight attached to the 'UNCTAD field findings' throughout the Report, which (as discussed above) comprised undocumented and non-analysed FGDs and KSIs.

From a quality control and best practices perspective, it is problematic for a report to cite findings from a study (particularly percentage or numeric data) without disclosing, or where the reader is unable to verify, the sample size, geographic target or veracity of the study. In short, while it is acceptable to draw upon secondary resources that may not meet best practice standards (especially when there are no better sources upon which to draw), authors must include caveats. This is particularly because UNCTAD carry significant authority and risk contributing to the problem of un-

<sup>19</sup> It was originally envisaged that the project team would conduct interviews at the border using a semi-random sampling method. On the advice of national stakeholder, this method was substituted for FGDs which were facilitated by Ministry of Trade staff, community-based trade organizations and local government officials.

<sup>20</sup> With the exception of the Tanzania meeting which was attended by 9 participants, these kickoff workshops might be better described as meetings attended by 2-3 government representatives.

<sup>21</sup> RP3.

<sup>22</sup> As the advocacy document was largely an excerpt from Borderline, peer review was not deemed necessary.

<sup>23</sup> Ndemanyswa Mbise 'First Draft Report on the Assessment of Women Traders Engaged in Cross Border to Support Formation of Networks in Tanzania' (prepared for UN Women, 2012).

<sup>24</sup> D Njiwa, T Nthambi and J Chirwa 'Reconnaissance Survey Report of Informal Cross Border Trade at STR Implementing Borders of Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe' (2012).

contextualised findings being repeatedly re-cited, and then potentially influencing regulations or policy.

These comments should not suggest that the research and writing process conducted by UNCTAD was neglectfully lacking in rigor. Instead, it reflects the paucity of available data, thus reiterating the missed opportunity that resulted from the scaling down of the research component in this project.

### ***2.3 Were the Reports/training delivered/policy discourse relevant and useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?***

The Reports contain interesting information and highlight important policy issues around women engaged in ICBT, in particular the difficulties they encounter using official borders and the obstacles they face in developing their enterprises. The overall premise — that ICBT enterprises should be supported to expand, become more productive and integrate into formal economy — is certainly accepted. The way the reports are structured and the content is presented, however, fails to present a compelling argument towards this end. The reports might be critiqued as a ‘collation of available information’, as opposed to a deliberate, analytical and logical presentation of facts in support of a central argument. Certain inclusions lacked direct relevance to the central objective, which detracted from their readability. This is not to say that any of the information canvassed was inaccurate or off-topic, but instead that the way it was brought together made it difficult for the reader to come away with a clear sense of the available evidence and its conclusion.

The Reports also reflected a set of unresolved tensions concerning the overall logic of engaging with/supporting female ICBT: Specifically, is the objective of supporting ICBT to provide a lifeline to female traders, or to support broader economic aims? Is it to promote better use and uptake of the trade regimes, or to reform them /eliminate inherent deficits? Is it to promote the formalization of informal trade, or affirm the obstacles that female traders face in formalising their businesses? It is conceded that these are not clear-cut questions, and that the Reports include an aim to draw attention to these incongruities. This said, leaving such tensions unresolved detracted from readability and the reports’ overall sense of purpose.

Two objectives of the reports listed in the Project Document were to highlight obstacles faced and to propose remedial policy options and recommendations. The recommendations listed were no doubt accurate, as confirmed by the Regional Workshop self-assessment, online survey and evaluation interviews. They were, however, perhaps too broad to be instructive. As one Regional Workshop participant noted “everyone agrees with this, no one cannot agree with this, but listing all the problems gets us no closer to an agenda that moves us forward”.<sup>25</sup> There were also several comments that the recommendations were simply the inverse of the identified obstacles, and did not take into account issues of budget, political economy, capacity and scale up.<sup>26</sup> In other words, users highlighted the need to move beyond a ‘wish list’ of items, to a tight ‘full circle’ agenda that might secure small but legitimate wins. To this end, the project team indicated that they have canvassed interest from the target countries in a second phase of the project that would focus on concrete practical measures in detail.

### ***2.4 Was there adequate dissemination/effective delivery of the Reports/training to achieve conceptual penetration?***

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<sup>25</sup> RPR3

<sup>26</sup> Responses RP2, RP4, RP5, RP6, RP8. A similar comment was that the recommendations were sound, but that they did not reflect government agendas, priorities and those of the donors RP7.

As a UN publication, responsibility for printing and dissemination of *Borderline* rested principally with the relevant UNCTAD division. The project team supplemented this by distributing the 200 copies made available to it to national stakeholders during the April 2019 mission, training sessions and the Regional Workshop. As the advocacy report was not classified as an official publication, publication and dissemination was managed solely by the project team; copies were distributed during training sessions and at the Regional Workshop. Both publications were also disseminated via the project team's email distribution list (approximately 1000 stakeholders), and through its twitter feed. *Borderline* is available for download from the project team's page on the UNCTAD website at: ([unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2348](http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2348))

*Borderline* was disseminated in January 2019, but at the Regional Workshop in December 2019, only one of the attendees interviewed reported that they had read it. Reasons for not reading were generic, including not having seen the publication, too many competing priorities, insufficient 'spare time' for reading etc. Given the dissemination efforts undertaken, this result may be indicative of a larger problem concerning research and its role in the UN and development system generally, than a lack of rigour in the dissemination process. The evidence is that the readership of technical reports of this nature within the development community of practice is extremely low.<sup>27</sup> There are several reasons for this; time scarcity, weak incentives, insufficient emphasis on evidence-based programming, and (particularly for technical experts and government stakeholders), a sense that they are already fully appraised and are unlikely to benefit. Indeed, the single respondent who had read the report noted that "everyone living in this country already knows these problems".<sup>28</sup> This phenomenon may indeed have been one of the drivers behind national stakeholders urging a scaling back of the research in lieu of more field-based activities.

## **2.5 To what extent were the Reports/training/policy discourse effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?**

Given the paucity of evidence on the issue of women engaged in ICBT, any raising of awareness should be regarded as a win. However, the deficits in the Reports' content coupled with the broader challenges associated with promoting knowledge uptake, mean that the scope for the Reports to have directly influenced thinking or behaviour is low. Readership, and a subsequent influencing of thinking and/or behaviour, might have been improved had the Reports been based more on primary evidence and thus more likely to contribute new knowledge. To this end, the scaling back of the research activity at the request of national stakeholders should be seen as a missed opportunity, albeit one that the project team perhaps could not have avoided. To reiterate, there is a dearth of evidence on this important topic and what is available is outdated and/or lacking in academic rigor. This project could thus have made an important contribution, especially with respect to setting a baseline which might have proved extremely useful to government actors, local stakeholders or other development agencies. Indeed, two respondents at the Regional Workshop, two trainers and one trader organization representative, cited the lack of reliable statistical information as a key obstacle to tackling ICBT issues;<sup>29</sup> one specifically commented that this project had the opportunity to make a valuable and unique contribution in this regard.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See e.g. GJ McGann, "2013 Global Go to Think Tanks Index Report." (2013). 33

<sup>28</sup> RP3

<sup>29</sup> T1, T2, TA2. This problem was underscored by the vastly varying statistical data cited by respondents with respect to e.g. the volume of informal trade, typology of traders etc.

<sup>30</sup> TA2.

## ACTIVITY SET 2. TRAINING/MICRO-SCHEMES

Summary of planned activities
Activity 2.4 was to design and pilot micro-level schemes to enhance the access of ICB traders to supply-side support services. Information gleaned from the desk research, needs assessment and consultation processes (A.1.1 and A.2.1), highlighted that the obstacles faced by traders centred around: i) Lack of knowledge about customs rules and procedures and difficulty of sourcing reliable and up-to-date information, including due to language barriers; ii) Lack of entrepreneurial skills, making it difficult for women traders to seize opportunities for scale-up or diversification; iii) Limited capital, making it difficult to overcome the informality of their micro business activities, and iv) Insecurity at the border, especially harassment, corruption and rent-seeking by some border officers. From this, it was determined that the micro-level schemes should take the form of a training programme geared towards awareness-raising on customs rules and procedures and knowledge generation around entrepreneurialism.

### **2.1 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved? If not, why not?**

Five x 6-day training sessions were rolled out reaching 142 individuals (128 females, 14 male), each administered by EMPRETEC master trainers working in pairs. The training comprised two components: i) developing entrepreneurial skills to help women traders run more successful businesses and explore opportunities for diversification (this component was based on EMPRETEC methodology, an UNCTAD capacity-building programme that assists small entrepreneurs across developing countries in building growth-oriented businesses); ii) strengthening traders' awareness of customs and trade procedures, regulations and documentation. Participants were selected based on recommendations from host institutions/government partners<sup>31</sup> and subsequent interviews by the EMPRETEC trainers. To receive a certificate, participants had to attend all six training days; all but one participant received a certificate. As per the languages used by participants, the trainers employed a combination of English, Bemba, Chichewa and/or Swahili to deliver the training.

Location	Dates	Participants recruited	Complete attendance and certification
Karonga, Malawi	21–23, 25–27 November 2019	26 (17 females, 9 male)	26
Kyela, Tanzania	14–16, 18–20 November 2019	26 (all female)	26
Nakonde, Zambia	11–16 November 2019	32 (all female)	31
Chipata, Zambia	26–30 November, 2 December 2019	28 (24 females, 4 male)	28
Chipata, Zambia	19– 23, 25th November 2019	30 (29 female and 1 male)	30
		142 (14 males, 128 female)	141 (14 males, 127 female)

The implementation of the micro-schemes suffered a delay of 12 months (from Q4 of 2018 to Q4 2019), due to (i) a key staff member taking a mandatory contract break from June-September 2018 (ii) additional time invested in the production of a 'Trader's Guide' as a key tool in the training program (iii) scheduling challenges with the EMPRETEC programme and their national offices.

The project also produced *Women in informal cross-border trade in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia: A small-scale trader's guide to trade rules and procedures* (hereafter *Trader's Guide*). This low-literacy guide (made available in English, and excerpts in Bemba, Chichewa and/or

<sup>31</sup> Tanzania: Trade Forum (Tan-Trade), Malawi: Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT) and Zambia: Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI).

Swahili) outlined existing procedures and requirements, rules of origin, differences between taxes and tariffs, trader rights and obligations, and provides a detailed explanation of the Simplified Trade Regime in COMESA and in the EAC as well as of the SADC Trade Protocol. In total, 270 English versions of the Trader's Guide were produced along with 90 in Bemba, 150 in Swahili and 60 in Chichewa, all of which were disseminated among participants, along with 130 English and 55 Swahili language versions of the EMPRETEC training modules.

## **2.2 Were the Reports/training curricula produced technically accurate?**

Based on the evaluator's assessment, the training materials and *Trader's Guide* were high quality, professionally devised and technically accurate. With respect to the training materials, it should be noted that the EMPRETEC methodology has been developed by a dedicated team over a 30-year period.<sup>32</sup> The *Trader's Guide*, which was developed by the project team, was presented to officials during the April 2019 mission, and circulated among 30 national stakeholders prior to publication for comment and editing; this peer review process resulted in substantive technical revisions, the inclusion of important local insights and a tweaking of content to reflect the issues of most relevance to traders.

## **2.3 Were the Reports/training delivered/policy discourse relevant and useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?**

To answer this question, it is necessary to provide some background on the training participants. Of the 142 individuals trained, 40 were interviewed for the purposes of this evaluation (all female). The profiles of these traders largely matched that described in the UNCTAD reports and other scholarship. Most were poor, lacking in education and literacy (only one had higher education and described herself as 'well off'). Interviewees ran mainly small enterprises, trading in processed and unprocessed foods, cosmetics, kitchenware's and clothing.<sup>33</sup> Most had 1-3 employees working for them and a small number were already registered or semi-registered with the relevant authorities.

*"No one does work on ICBT. The UN or USAID might train on exports, and big picture things. But they don't go down to the level of what actually happens or what concerns these women like this training has done". (trader association TAR1)*

Universally, respondents stated that their main business-related concern was sustainability and growth potential. They all described small-scale businesses that generated meagre profits. This 'hand-to-mouth' existence, coupled with their inability to secure credit, prevented them from accumulating assets, diversifying or investing in value-adding components. They found this economic insecurity deeply worrisome, particularly given that most had dependent children. Without insurance, support or savings, they particularly feared unforeseen events such as an accident, loss of stock or a currency collapse. The trainers and representatives of trader associations interviewed supported this assessment.<sup>34</sup>

It was clear from the interviews that training participants faced profound difficulties at the border, and that as a result, most training participants (although certainly not all) used informal border crossing points. These difficulties included:

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<sup>32</sup> The EMPRETEC program is an UNCTAD capacity-building initiative on entrepreneurship skills development. It has been implemented in different parts of the world for over 30 years to facilitate sustainable development and inclusive growth. It enables participants to benefit from different forms of support to help them to identify business opportunities: establish or improve their business, making them sustainable and generating income to lift the founders of the business out of poverty and to improve the quality of their lives. The day 1 curricula was based on the research conducted for the Trader's guide which (as noted above) included an extensive peer review process.

<sup>33</sup> Apart from processed foods no value-added products were being traded.

<sup>34</sup> One trainer highlighted that the participants were comparatively privileged insofar as they are engaged in livelihoods at all (most women are unemployed and many live a completely subsistence existence). Even if this is the case, it is still accurate to say that the female participants targeted in the training were poor, vulnerable and operate businesses that are highly secure.

- (i) Corruption on the part of border officials (mainly by imposing delays to extract a bribe). It is noteworthy that most respondents regarded rent-seeking as a cost or inconvenience of doing business.
- (ii) Process delays irrespective of corruption, which have the impact of de-valuing goods (e.g. in the case of fresh food) and reducing productivity (when traders are delayed at the border, they are not generating business).
- (iii) Lack of certainty around charges levied. Many noted that the fees imposed changed regularly and appeared to be arbitrarily imposed. Respondents felt that their lack of knowledge about trade rules and regulations leaves them at a disadvantage as they have no recourse when a border officer applies a certain fee structure.
- (iv) Amount of charges levied. Almost all traders stated that even with certainty around taxes and tariffs applied, their profits were so meagre that any fee made it impossible, or almost impossible, to break even. Some noted that fees are affordable only if they sell their goods; if business is slow or poor, they often encounter a loss.
- (v) An absence of banks at borders, which expose traders to accusations of money laundering or other illicit activity.
- (vi) While no respondent mentioned sexual assault or harassment, some noted that they would deliberately travel through the borders in groups and noted that it would be better if women officers were available to search women.
- (vii) Administrative burdens. Many respondents complained that there are too many confusing forms to be completed with no native language version available.

The interviews also confirmed that knowledge deficits around trade rules and regulations, as well as business management and entrepreneurial skills, were deep and consistent across the pool of training participants. Respondents regularly referenced their lack of knowledge, especially vis-à-vis what they had subsequently learned at the training. Trainers (3 of 3 interviewed), trade association representatives (5 of 5 interviewed) and customs officers (3 of 3 interviewed) agreed with this assessment.<sup>35</sup> Knowledge deficits were also reported in the self-assessment forms administered by the project<sup>36</sup> and regularly referenced by participants at the Regional Workshop.

Against this backdrop, focusing the micro-schemes on knowledge building around trade rules and regulations and entrepreneurial skills was relevant, value-adding and of potential high impact. Not having these skills diminishes traders' profit potential (as they cannot exploit the exemptions and reductions they are entitled to under regional trade schemes), leaves them vulnerable to corruption, and incentivises them to use illegal routes. Unable to lift themselves out of this situation, they remain trapped in a cycle of poverty. Building skill sets around trade rules and entrepreneurialism, however, creates mutually reinforcing gains; with knowledge in these areas, traders are more likely to be able to accumulate profits and saving, allowing them to diversify, expand or invest in value-adding elements, and thus edging closer to the formal economy.

The *Trader's Guide* was especially relevant and useful, with participants, customs officers, trade association representatives and the trainers all noting that such information was both critical and not available elsewhere.<sup>37</sup> Many training participants interviewed noted that they would carry it and refer

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<sup>35</sup> One trainer noted that trader awareness is so low that "they do not even know what questions to ask, and even if they did there are limited ways to obtain information" (there are no libraries, few have access to the internet and support services are difficult to access) T1.

<sup>36</sup> See Q1 and Q3, UNCTAD self-assessment training. Q1 asked Please indicate how familiar you were with the following topics prior to the training? Q 3 asked To what extent did the group exercises and discussions help you address the challenges you face in your trade activities and identify viable solutions for your business?. In both cases a Likert scale was used to assess answers: 1 – not at all, 5 – extremely. Q1 elicited an average response of 2.532 (438 responses), while Q3 elicited an average response of 4.066 (146 responses).

<sup>37</sup> Respondents noted that similar information might have been produced by CSOs in the past, but that it was now no longer available, not of the same quality, and/or not in local languages.



back to it, particularly when preparing to cross the border. They particularly noted the Guide’s simplicity, conciseness, and translation into local languages. One suggested that key information from the booklet might be printed in credit card size so that they could wear it on their person or store it in their money-wallet; another two suggested that the information be printed on caps or t-shirts that they could wear across the border.<sup>38</sup>

Bringing these findings together, there is strong reason to conclude that beneficiaries acquired new knowledge in relevant and important areas, including on trade rules and the regulatory framework. Moreover, they are likely to use their new skills to protect themselves from exploitation and rent-seeking, and exploit the advantages of the applicable trade regimes. By engaging customs officers and other border officials in the training sessions, it is reasonable to expect that the capacity of these actors to address tariff and non-tariff barriers has also increased.

**2.4 Was there adequate dissemination/effective delivery of the Reports/training to achieve conceptual penetration?**

There is strong evidence that the training significantly increased participants’ knowledge and awareness in key areas. When asked to cite an example of something beneficial they had learned, each (40 of 40 interviewed) was able to easily recall relevant points of information closely correlated to the aims of the training (PQ2, PQ12, see table 2). All participant respondents (40 of 40 interviewed) were also able to confidently and correctly answer a knowledge question around the specific documents they needed to cross the border (PQ3)<sup>39</sup>. The self-assessment forms administered by the project support these findings (see further table 1). Finally, the evaluator’s observation of the training supports comprehensive knowledge uptake. The sessions were consistently attended, with participants arriving well in advance, with all required supplies, staying until the end, and not delaying during breaks. The atmosphere was enthusiastic, learning-focused and supportive; participants and trainers seemed genuinely part of one team. The EMPRETEC trainers – who were highly knowledgeable and professional – should be credited for generating an environment that balanced seriousness and professionalism on the one hand, with familiarity and security, on the other.<sup>40</sup> Finally, the training was highly interactive, practical and outcome-focused, as per the micro-scheme goals. Indeed, the only negative comment (3 of 40 interviewed) was that the training was too short vis-à-vis participants’ knowledge gaps and the importance of the issue for them. In summary, it is the evaluator’s opinion that the training filled a gap, that this was an appropriate gap to focus on, and that the learning proffered has a high potential for long-term and tangible impact.

Table 1. Excerpt from UNCTAD-administered training self-evaluation questionnaire	
UNCTAD-administered training self-evaluation questionnaire	Scale response: 1 – Not at all, 5 - Extremely
Q1. Please indicate how familiar you were with the following topics prior to the training (the rights of cross-border traders, obligations of cross border traders, the main features of the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime and the SADC Trade Protocol and how to use them).	2.53
Q2. To what extent has the training improved your understanding of the following topics? (the rights of cross-border traders, obligations of cross border	4.52

<sup>38</sup> TP4, also TP7, TP12, TP13, TP17.

<sup>39</sup> P3: ‘What documentation do you need for your person and your goods when you cross border?’ Note that the methodology used by the evaluator was to ask a question – proposed by the trainers – that the participants could only answer having attended the training. It is acknowledged that the trainers could not accurately know participants’ pre-existing knowledge, but given their subject-matter expertise it was decided that they were in a reasonable position to make reasonable assumptions in this regard.

<sup>40</sup> In Q4 EMPTEC self-assessment ‘In general, how would you evaluate the Trainers?’, all 141 training participants rated the trainers as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’.

traders, the main features of the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime and the SADC Trade Protocol and how to use them).	
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Table 2: Selected responses PQ2 and PQ12	
PQ2. Please provide an example of something you learned about rules and procedures that you didn't know previously? (selected answers)	PQ12. Please provide an example of something you have learned from the training on entrepreneurialism that you did not know previously? (selected answers)
I used to hide so many goods, even when I didn't need to. I now know I don't have to hide them.	I learned how to register my business.
I thought the tariffs were so high, but they are actually not high. Some are free and some are very low.	How to make a profit and not misuse funds, for example by taking funds out of my business to buy food.
I can use the STR. If I use the STR I only pay USD1.	How to calculate my business costs – like fixed and variable costs - and how to then make a budget.
I used to be afraid what I would be charged but I do not have to pay if my goods are under the USD2000 threshold.	Strategies to diversify my business.
The STR is cheaper than I knew.	Record-keeping including invoices and stock prices.
So many goods are exempted under the STR. I will just switch to these goods now.	The need to be patient and persevere with my business.
Everything in the training was new. Before I knew nothing.	How I need to know my customers, build good relations with them and seek information on what they want.
I need to be treated like an STR member and use the trade privileges the that the STR allows.	How to conduct a SWOT analysis to exploit my advantages and defend against threats to my business.

Table 3. Selected quotes from UNCTAD-administered training self-evaluation questionnaire (Q12)
It was a wonderful experience to be part of the workshop, it opened my eyes to see ways to improve my small business.it has imparted in me skills and knowledge on how to run a business. I now understand the formalities of setting up a business (Chipata 1).
The workshop has helped me to learn how to set goals and objectives that are personally meaningful and measurable (Chipata 2).
Actually, from this workshop my mind set has changed from being an ordinary entrepreneur to a more professional one with great vision (Karonga).
Previously I have been doing business blindly, but after this training I am going to set my goals (Kyela).
I am 100 percent sure that am going to start doing well in my business so thank you for the knowledge that you have imparted in me and I am so glad to have this opportunity in my life (Nakonde).

### **2.5 To what extent were the Reports/training/policy discourse effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?**

There is strong evidence that the training was effective in influencing participants' thinking and behaviour in key areas. When asked to cite an example of something they would do differently in their business, each (40 of 40 interviewed) was easily able to note specific examples closely correlated to the aims of the training (PQ14, see table 5). When asked how they might handle a problem at the border, a significant majority (34 of 40 interviewed) was able to give evidence-based and pragmatic answers (PQ11, see table 6). This is also supported by the results of the EMPRETEC self-assessment (Q5). This questionnaire asked participants the extent to which the training increased their confidence to cross the border formally; on a 1-5 scale (where 1 = not at all and 5 = extremely), the average of all responses was 4.49 (number of responses: 130).

All three trainers interviewed agreed with the proposition that participants were ready and motivated to use their skills to make behavioural and conceptual changes that would assist their businesses

(TQ3).<sup>41</sup> One trainer emphasised the practical nature of the EMPRETEC methodology and its focus on experiential learning. He also noted that the trainers observe participants closely (including the questions they ask and how they act out scenarios) and this gave him great confidence that these particular groups would use their new skills proactively. Another trainer opined that the participants were likely to stand up to customs officials and to call on their supervisors if necessary; moreover, that if they asserted their knowledge, the officers would be less likely to engage in rent seeking them. A trade association representative noted that the female participants were very innovative and motivated, and have the potential to make businesses work where there is opportunity.<sup>42</sup> Only one trainer was more circumspect. He noted that while the participants were motivated, they were “coming from a base of nothing” and that “it is one thing to know one’s rights and another to assert them”.

These findings are particularly significant given the power imbalances in play and how these limits the potential for women to grow and diversify their businesses. The micro-schemes sought to empower women participants with skills and knowledge, *inter alia*, to exploit trade agreements and avoid rent-seeking behaviour on the part of border and customs officials. That women expressed confidence that they would seek to uphold their rights using their new knowledge at border crossings, a view affirmed by trainers, suggests that these power imbalances will at minimum be confronted, if not partially overcome. The conclusion is drawn with caution. The legal empowerment scholarship is divided on whether bottom-up training activities are sufficient to overcome issues of political economy. Some experts posit that such capacity building needs to be complemented by top-down measures to eliminate opportunities for corruption and exploitation. This said, it must be remembered that this was a small-scale intervention and working at multiple levels was not feasible.

Table 4. Selected responses PQ10
PQ10. Did having customs and immigration officials at the training help and how? (selected responses)
I believed the information because it came from the bosses
They will tell their people that ‘we know the rules’
They gave us their contacts, names and we will call them ... they are on their side
It was the best thing about the training as we were talking to them direct ... they will go back and discuss. Said they got the message, promised to work on it.
Now they understand why people use informal route ... they know that their employees scare people. They also know that the reason we have foreign currency is that there is no bank at the border and not that we are doing anything illegal.

Table 5. Selected responses PQ14
PQ14. Can you think of anything you might do differently since participating in the training on entrepreneurialism? (selected responses)
I have to just go direct to the customs officials and not try to hide. I will pay the fee and not be scared or run away.
I am not going to run away if the guards start to chase me.
I’m going to be more strategic and use STR rules; I have to take advantage on goods I take and take the ones that are duty free.
I am not going to pay duties on family stuff like snacks and soaps because this is completely free.
Now I would assert right to buy things for my home up to USD2000. Before I used to pay duty even if it was under 2000, but now I will separate the personal things and refuse to pay.
I will go through and use training manual.

<sup>41</sup> TQ3: ‘From their questions/body language/business plans, to what extent do you believe that participants have the skills, capacity, motivation and regulatory framework to formalize/expand/diversify their businesses?’

<sup>42</sup> Another respondent noted: “these women have never been to an office and there is so much misinformation so this training broke down a lot of those barriers”. He stated that he was confident they would now, at minimum, try. He also noted the confidence that was generated by the participants being connected to each other.

I am going to use marketing strategies and diversify. I will look at the seasons and learn to know what my customers want.
I will do better record keeping. I will not use my profits to buy food. Now I know I have to separate these things be disciplined.
I will set a goal for 2020, for profits and a plan to achieve them.
I will work on expanding my clientele and getting a relationship with them.
I will set goals for profits and make a plan to achieve my goals.
I will pass information to my fellow business people.
I will try to find customers to whom I can sell in bulk, then my business can move faster.
I will buy a receipt book and give receipts to my customers.
I will be more persistent with marketing. I will make a more attractive display and move around to look for customers.
I will try to do better customer care. We can put up information and lists so that it is clear. Now I will see someone running from the border I will not automatically think that they are running away without paying taxes. Maybe they have insufficient information. (Customs officer)

It must be noted that the presence of the customs and other border officials on day 1 of the training was key to its success, with 4 participants voluntarily describing this as the most enriching element of the training (PQ10, see table 4). They particularly attached value to the fact that information was being delivered by ‘official people’ and felt satisfaction in having aired their grievances. They also felt confident that the officials present would instruct their staff to modify their behaviour, and that customs officers being aware that female traders now knew the rules would make them more likely to apply them accurately.<sup>43</sup> One participant was subsequently recognized by border officials as a training participant; the impact of such experiential ‘wins’ should be understated, both for the individuals concerned and their peers.

Table 6. Selected responses PQ11
<b>PQ11. How would you deal with a problem at the border since participating in the training on rules and procedures? (selected responses)</b>
I would ask for the manager. I would complain and now I know who to ask for.
All they do is take advantage of people’s ignorance. They are not really a bad threat. So, if they say it isn’t on the list I would ask them to open their computer as the STR list will be there.
I will talk first, then ask to see the supervisor.
I will take the UNCTAD book ( <i>trader’s guide</i> ) and show the customs officer.
I would say ‘why do I pay this fee ... why?’ If they refuse, I would take their names.

In summary, the obstacles faced by women engaged in ICBT are multifaceted and mutually-reinforcing. Businesses are small and inefficient, and they are kept that way because women lack business skills, are exposed to corruption which reduces their profit potential, and they cannot access capital to expand, diversify or introduce value-adding elements. There are also macro-level challenges such as lack of economic opportunity, environmental impediments, pervasive gender discrimination and the small size and weak composition of domestic markets. Given that the micro-schemes were limited, both temporally and in terms of budget, the key question is whether they were sufficient to significantly ameliorate the position of the target beneficiaries. As noted above, the micro-schemes focus on knowledge building around trade rules and regulations and entrepreneurial skills was relevant, value-adding and of potential high impact. Given the budget and time allotted, it addressed the causal problem in a meaningful and

**Evaluator summary:**

- (i) The micro-schemes certainly increased participant capacity to overcome supply and demand-side obstacles faced.
- (ii) There is strong evidence that participants internalised the learning, and were empowered and motivated to use their new skills.
- (iii) It is reasonable to think that many will be able to better exploit the trade rules applicable to them, to avoid or reduce their vulnerability to exploitation at the border, to better protect themselves from physical harm or intimidation at the border, and to grow their businesses.

<sup>43</sup> Such an increase in confidence was also noted during interviews with the protect team (PTQ4).

tangible way. It should also be noted that while the project did not attempt to directly address the issue of insecurity at the border, there is, in the opinion of the evaluator, reasonable anecdotal evidence to suggest that training women traders alongside border officials will mitigate corruption, rent-seeking and harassment.

This said, there was a general feeling that the 6-day training session was insufficient to sustainably overcome the obstacles faced by women traders. Participants reiterated that this was the first training of this kind, that they were starting from a very low level of knowledge, and that they needed additional and follow up support.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, when respondents were asked to list specific areas in which such support should be directed (P13, C3), they did not list new topics, but noted that they needed more of the same support, only in greater depth. Trainers and trade association representatives offered largely the same comments. Trainers particularly emphasised that participants now needed to implement their new skills and that, given their capacity deficits, this would be very difficult to do successfully without follow-up training and/or ongoing mentoring.

Respondents also noted structural impediments that, unless resolved, would continue to thwart the growth and profitability of ICBT enterprises, including:

- The need for the tariff schedule and STR to be reformed.
- Credit being very difficult to access for women engaged in ICBT, making it more difficult to expand or diversify.
- Inadequate infrastructure to support ICBT, including at border points (shelter, refrigeration, banks, sanitary facilities and sleeping areas) and in trading areas (dedicated, affordable space for CBT).

This is not to detract in any way from the success of this element of the project, which (as noted) fully achieved its aims. The comments should instead be interpreted as a clear endorsement that follow up training and/or a scaling up of activities to reach a critical mass of women traders is warranted.

<b>TQ3. From their questions/body language/business plans, to what extent do you believe that participants have the skills, capacity, motivation and regulatory framework to formalize/expand/diversify their businesses? (Selected comments)</b>
Their confidence has increased, but one training cannot fill all the gaps.
For women who have never completed a form, used the official border, or entered a government office, it is unrealistic to expect them to do so after a week of training, no matter how sophisticated.
They may now have more knowledge and feel empowered but the system has not changed. The border guards will still ask for bribes and they will complicate the process. The training needs to be matched with sustained interaction with authorities, one session (with the customs officers) will not work.

<b>PTQ4 Can you provide any insight or anecdotes that speak to relevance/utility and conceptual penetration of the training provided (selected comments)</b>
In Kyela, Tanzania, there were no community-based trader associations operating. During the training, support was offered by a national association to establish a branch to serve the Kyela community.
The training partnered with EMPRETEC master trainers based at centres in Zambia and Tanzania. Malawi is now interested in setting up its on EMPRETEC Centre.

<sup>44</sup> Q10 UNCTAD self-assessment asked respondents to list additional topics for follow-up training; 77 responses were elicited.

## ACTIVITY SET 3. REGIONAL DIALOGUE

### Summary of planned activities: A.1.4, A.1.5, A.2.5

The project document note describes a regional workshop aimed at sharing the Report findings; promoting policy dialogue among regional stakeholders to raise awareness of and create capacity to address barriers to ICBT; share lessons that might be applied at other border crossings; encourage a scaling up of activities at other locations; and promote sustainability by increasing institutional knowledge. It should be noted that A.1.4 and A.2.4 these were always planned as one activity.

A.1.4 Describes training to be provided to Ministry of Trade officials through hands-on advisory activities in each country on how to redress trade barriers to ICBT, and in particular to engage key technical staff to develop concrete steps for pursuing the recommendations at the national level. The training will set action plans endorsed by the Government to implement the policy recommendations, with clear identification of steps to translate the recommendations into practice.

### **2.1 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved? If not, why not?**

A Regional Workshop was held 4-5 December 2019 in Dar es Salaam attended by 41 participants (day 1) and 37 (day 2). Attendance was consistent throughout the two days, there was active participation and all attendees appeared to support of the nature of the forum and discussion.

Activity 1.4 (focused training Ministry of Trade officials through hands-on advisory activities in the three countries on how to redress trade barriers to ICBT) was not implemented as a standalone activity. It was initially envisaged that a first round of training would take place during the April 2019 mission with further follow-up sessions. It was then proposed that the training would be combined with the regional workshop under A1.5, during which separate ad-hoc sessions would be held.<sup>45</sup> It was opined by the project team that the aim of the training, insofar as this was to raise awareness of ICBT issues among ministry-level officials, was achieved through the meetings that took place in April 2019 and the Regional Workshop. It should also be highlighted that the project — at the request of ministry staff — produced the *Advocacy Report* which elaborates on the bottlenecks and recommendations identified in *Borderline*, and identifies potential targets, indicators and responsible institutions at the national level. Thus, while the project may not have delivered fully on the training activity as planned, it did demonstrate a high level of reactivity to stakeholder needs and a willingness to reevaluate their assumptions, shift resources and realign project outputs around what was considered at the time to be a higher-value beneficiary need.

Nonetheless, as discussed below, the findings of this evaluation suggest that focused training dedicated to policy reform would have been value-adding, aligned with beneficiary needs and would have likely consolidated successes at the field level. This conclusion however is made with the benefit of hindsight and is equally possible that the project team made the best decision given the information available to it at the time.

Breakdown of participants at Regional Workshop, 4-5 December 2019		
	Day 1	Day 2
Government Malawi	11	11
Government Tanzania	10	8
Government Zambia	7	7

<sup>45</sup> Annual Progress Report 2: “Combining sessions with country-specific and region-specific focus respectively will enable the project to reach key technical national staff and ultimately facilitate a constructive dialogue on cross-border issues at the broader regional level. This will also provide significant savings that will allow strengthening the operational component under A2.4 (piloting of micro-level schemes).”

Trade organizations/chamber commerce etc.	4	3
COMESA/EAC	3	3
Other international organizations	2	2
UN	3	2
Government other (Uganda)	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>

**2.3 Were the Reports/training delivered/policy discourse relevant and useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?**

*“The presenters and UNCTAD officials presented simple but detailed findings, and concerns that are very important in facilitating women in cross border trade”. (RP 4)*

Participants in the regional dialogue were enthusiastic and engaged, and the content of the discussion stayed on point. The self-assessment strongly suggested that participants’ knowledge and awareness of the issues around women engaged in ICBT had improved. Moreover, from the plenary discussion, there appeared to be a general consensus that the recommendations and proposed interventions to make CBT more beneficial to traders were valid. The central themes were carefully unpacked, with participants adding depth and context to the obstacles faced by women engaged in ICBT and potential solutions. Likewise, from the evaluator’s observation of the discussion, there seemed to be an acknowledgment from the audience that the workshop homed in on real and substantive issues that were important but rarely discussed. There seemed to be a particular appreciation that the workshop was highly participatory and practical in nature, as opposed to a theory-based approach to the topic. There was also an appreciation, highlighted by two participants interviewed and one comment made in the plenary discussion, that the workshop brought together – on an equal playing field – high-level government officials, mid-level technical staff, and CSO stakeholders working at the grassroots level.

**2.5 To what extent were the Reports/training/policy discourse effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?**

As noted, there was a shared sense that the findings surrounding the obstacles faced by women engaged in ICBT, and the recommendations for overcoming these, were valid. However, findings suggest that for the participants, UNCTAD’s findings and the subsequent discussion lacked a sense of prioritization or structure towards an end. The self-assessment administered by the project is illuminating in this regard. Q2 and Q3 asked participants if they agreed with the proposed areas of intervention and policy recommendations respectively. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 = not at all and 5 = extremely), the average responses were 4.28 and 4.34 (29 responses). While this indicates a very high level of support, the comments section included an extremely wide variety of opinions and propositions, from the core issue being scale-up funding, to the importance of awareness raising, to the need to reform regional trade agreements.<sup>46</sup> While this should not be construed as negative, it does suggest that the group lacked consensus on the root problem(s), the way forward, or even on a set of priorities. This was made out specifically in some respondent comments.

*“Send me all the slides and the workshop report so then I can implement then for the EAC” (RP6)*

Selected comments, Regional Dialogue Evaluation Interviews
Everyone agrees that there is a lot of work going forward, but the discussion lacked a sense of who, what and how.

<sup>46</sup> Likewise, Q6 UNCTAD self-assessment (which asked respondents to list possible policy measures improving the situation of female engaged in ICBT at the border that they could help supporting) elicited 52 responses.

It is not easy to disagree with any of the proposals, the issue is whether this is the government's or the UN's priority and who is going to fund these proposals.

Someone got in touch with me at the beginning of the project but I didn't hear anything else until I got the invitation. The proposals are fine, but what we need is someone to work with us and push this stuff along. In Africa, nothing happens easily.

If UNCTAD wanted to make reforms, they needed to engage the media and start a working group with the EAC members; they needed to be urged along.

While it is acknowledged that this is not what the project principally set out to achieve, these participants seemed to suggest that it might have been useful for UNCTAD to identify a small number of critical proposals for reform that would have benefited women engaged in ICBT, and worked intensively on these for a small, but concrete, win. Examples proposed included a simplified trade regime specifically for women engaged in small and micro-enterprises, or broadening the list of goods to include what women trade in. Participants seemed disappointed that the project was at its conclusion as they felt ill-equipped to push through such reforms without support, mobilization and follow-through. While this indicates a missed opportunity that might have been plugged by the targeted training (A.1.4), it is the evaluator's opinion that this also speaks to the participants' trust in and respect for the UNCTAD team (especially in the Africa context), their willingness to entrust them to lead such a process, and their confidence that UNCTAD could do something that they alone were ill-equipped to do.

This said, bringing these findings together, it can be stated with a high degree of certainty that EA1 ((improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders in the beneficiary countries to identify and redress tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross-border traders) and EA2 (improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders in the beneficiary countries to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders) has been fulfilled. The self-assessment data collected by the project team strongly indicates that participants' knowledge and awareness of the issues around women engaged in ICBT had improved (see Q1, below table); and there was consensus around the proposed ways in which CBT could be made more beneficial to traders (see Q2 and Q3, below table); and there was agreement in the plenary discussion that these themes warranted further engagement.

<b>Selected self-evaluation questions from the Regional Workshop</b>	<b>(1 – Not at all, 5 - Extremely):</b>
Q1: To what extent did the workshop improve your understanding of the following topics? Role of women in ICBT Role of informal cross-border trade in the economy Supply-side and border obstacles faced by female informal cross-border traders EAC and COMESE STRs, SADC Trade Protocol: Uptake by cross-border traders	4.14 of 28 responses 4.17 of 29 responses 4.24 of 29 responses 3.86 of 29 responses
Q2: UNCTAD identified 8 areas of intervention to make cross-border trade more beneficial to traders, especially women traders, to countries and the whole region. Do you agree on the selection of areas of intervention?	4.28 of 29 responses
Q3. UNCTAD provided detailed policy recommendations to make cross-border trade more beneficial to traders, especially women traders, to countries and the whole region. Do you find the recommendations useful and pertinent?	4.34 of 29 responses

## Efficiency (EQ4)

EQ4 Efficiency: have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control been adequate in ensuring the achievement of expected outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?



4.1 Were implementation modalities, internal monitoring and control adequate to achieving expected outcomes?	- Financial reports and project documents (PDD, mission reports etc)
4.2 Was the intervention designed and delivered in the most efficient and expeditious way to achieve the desired ends and versus alternate delivery methods?	- KSI (PTQ10)

#### **4.1 Were implementation modalities, internal monitoring and control adequate to achieving expected outcomes?**

This project commenced March 2016 and was completed December 2019. Delays incurred in the initial stages of the project were connected to staffing recruitment delays, team members' commitments under other programs, a delay in funds transfer, and in-country logistical challenges. Delays heavily weighted the implementation of activities towards the final year, and the final weeks of the project. This mainly concerned the implementation of the micro-schemes (from Q4 of 2018 to Q4 2019) which was due to a combination of factors including (i) a key staff member taking a mandatory contract break from June-September 2018 (ii) additional time invested in the production of a 'Trader's Guide' as a key tool in the training program (iii) scheduling challenges with the EMPRETEC programme and their national offices. This created a subsequent delay in holding the Regional Workshop (also Q4 2019). The extended time taken to finalise the first tranche of research-related activities was due to factors including staffing limitations and project team commitments in other areas of UNCTAD work. It is noteworthy that the project team requested an extension until May 2020, which was denied in mid-September 2019. According to the team, this would not have changed their implementation strategy, deliverables or results, but would have allowed for greater time to plan the Regional Workshop.

		<b>Implement ation rate</b>	<b>Budget expenditure (cumulative)</b>	<b>Budget expenditure (annual)</b>
March-December 2016	10 months	11.3%	61,645.85	61,645.85
January-December 2017	12 months	28%	154,241.89	92,596.04
January-December 2018	12 months	38.4%	209,867.52	55,625.63
January-December 2019	12 months	89%	489,140	279,684.83
<b>Total</b>			<b>489'552.35</b>	<b>489'552.35</b>

Noteworthy changes to the work plan include:

- This project was originally to be implemented in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however deteriorating security conditions necessitated a change in country focus.<sup>47</sup>
- Activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 (research activities) were scaled back at the request of national stakeholders to allow for an expansion of activity 2.4 (micro-schemes from 3 to 5).

<sup>47</sup> Annual Progress Report 1: Originally, the DA project 1617J included three beneficiary countries in the Great Lakes Region, namely Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). However, following a deteriorating political situation and related growing insecurity in the target region, the project manager considered that it was not any longer feasible to carry out the project in the selected countries. New beneficiary countries were selected, namely Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. The new revisions were submitted to and approved by the DA Programme Management Team in July 2016.

- Activity 1.4 (Focused training to Ministry of Trade officials) was not implemented as a standalone activity.<sup>48</sup>

With regard to project monitoring, the evaluator observes that the project’s results framework (excerpts reproduced below) does not reflect best practices in RBM programming.

Intervention logic	Indicators	Means of verification
EA1: Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross-border traders in target countries	IA 1.1 70% of participating stakeholders confirm improved capacity to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross border traders	Workshop evaluation forms
	IA 1.2 2 out of the 3 target countries take on board recommendations addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers generated by the project activities	Programmatic documents, e.g. the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS), the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF), Governmental reports, including analytical studies
EA 2: Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders in the beneficiary countries to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders	IA 2.1 70% of participating stakeholders confirm improved capacity to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders.	Workshop evaluation forms
	IA 2.2 2 out of the 3 target countries take on board recommendations addressing gender-specific supply side obstacles generated by the project activities	Programmatic documents, for example, the DTIS, the UNDAF, Governmental reports, including analytical studies.

A first observation is that the objective of 70 percent of participants indicating improved capacity (i.e. 30 percent indicating no improvement), is arguably too modest. Self-assessment (in this case the use of a Likert scale) is also not a reliable means to test capacity gains. A far more rigorous and reliable method is pre- and post-training knowledge testing (at the commencement and conclusion of the intervention). Moreover, while it is important to measure output delivery, technical accuracy, relevance, and knowledge uptake as measures of quality control, outcome indicators to capture behavioural and conceptual change would also be useful for project managers.

Finally, it was noted that the logframe was not updated to reflect evolution in the project’s design. The outcomes relate only to assimilation and uptake of policy measures, whereas the most impactful element of this project was the micro-schemes. This poses problems vis-à-vis measuring the results of an intervention.

#### **4.2 Was the intervention designed and delivered in the most efficient and expeditious way to achieve the desired ends and versus alternate delivery methods?**

Due to limitations in UNTAD’s budgetary system, it was not possible to obtain final spending information broken down according to areas of project activity, preventing an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the program’s different areas of engagement. This is problematic given this

<sup>48</sup> It was first proposed (Annual Progress Report 2) that the training sessions would be wound into the Regional Workshop: The ad-hoc sessions will still bring together representatives from each target country and will cover issues of interest to each national context. Combining sessions that have country-specific and region-specific focus respectively in a single workshop will enable the project to reach key technical national staff and ultimately facilitate a constructive dialogue on cross-border issues at the broader regional level. This will also provide significant savings that will in turn allow the strengthening of the micro-level intervention under A2.4.

evaluation’s finding that these activities accrued markedly different levels of effectiveness and impact. For example, this evaluation finds that the micro-schemes have yielded demonstrated results vis-à-vis improved skills of the women traders to conduct their work. The project team estimates that expenditure on the delivery of the micro-schemes was about US\$ 92,000 or 17% of total budget. There were also efficiency gains in the delivery of this activity as the team collaborated with UNCTAD’s EMPRETEC team and were able to leverage off a well-established training methodology. However, without more comprehensive spending information by activity, no further conclusions can be drawn. Other questions that remain outstanding include how the funds earmarked to train Ministry of Trade officials (USD74,000) were reallocated, and how the amount spent on consultants, staffing and travel (USD310,595.28) contributed to different activity outcomes. Such details are critical, not only for accountability purposes, but also to help determine the types of activities that should be up-scaled or replicated elsewhere.

	Planned		Actual	
Other staff costs	30,000	5%	44'305.43	8%
Consultants and Experts	195,000	36%	217'354.21	40%
Staff travel	97,000	18%	48'935.64	9%
Contractual services	115,000	21%	110'063.93	20%
Grants and contributions	108,000	20%	66'637.14	12%
General operating expenses	2,000	0%	2'256.00	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>547,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>489'552.35</b>	<b>89%</b>

Research and reports (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)	272,000	49%
Micro-schemes (2.4)	36,000	7%
Regional Workshop (1.5, 2.5)	143,000	26%
Training for MoT (1.4)	74,000	14%
Other/evaluation	22,000	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>547,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Sustainability (EQ5)

<b>EQ5 Sustainability: Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project and achieve the change required for the intended impact?</b>	
5.1 Did the policy dialogue and recommendations developed promote reforming trade regime reform to facilitate CBT? (See 2.14) 5.2 To what extent are trained ICBT committed to continue working towards the project objectives? (See 2.10) 5.3 Future projects or other ways support to ICBT can be delivered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of information resources produced</li> <li>- Inspection of target audience/participation list</li> <li>- Review of regional dialogue evaluation data</li> </ul>

**5.1 Did the policy dialogue and recommendations developed promote reforming trade regime reform to facilitate CBT?**

As discussed above, policy-makers and other stakeholders were in basic agreement with the project’s policy recommendations and their awareness was undoubtedly raised, however, these recommendations were noted as too broad to chart a clear or practical way forward. Policy stakeholders will probably need more concrete and sustained support to make progress in this regard. This is especially the case given that women engaged in ICBT is not significant enough of a group from a political or spoiler perspective, or sufficiently critical to broader trade goals, for policy recommendation uptake or reform to happen naturally or spontaneously. The training to Ministry of Trade officials could have provided a solution in this regard.

As the partnerships relied upon in this project were more consultative than programmatic, there was not great scope for horizontal sustainability (i.e. project partners or similarly mandated agencies carrying on or building on the project’s achievements). Towards this end, grassroots contractual partners such as trade associations might be more actively and progressively engaged if a scaling up of activities takes place in the future.

**5.2 To what extent are trained ICBT committed to continue working towards the project objectives?**

As discussed above, the training participants will almost certainly exploit their new skills and knowledge towards positive ends. It is likely, however, that there will be a threshold limit to such benefit. To consolidate their learning and exploit secondary spill overs (such as improved professionalism on the part of customs officers), expansion and scale-up of the training will be needed (and is certainly warranted).

Gender and Human Rights (EQ7)

EQ6 Gender and human rights: To what extent was a human rights-based approach and a gender-mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the activity?	
6.1 Extent to which a HRBA was adopted in project design and activities implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project documents (PDD, mission reports etc.)</li> <li>- Audience/participation lists</li> <li>- Information guide and training curricula produced by project</li> <li>- Training evaluation data</li> <li>- KSI (PT11)</li> </ul>
6.2 Extent to which gender mainstreaming was taken into account in development of information resources and design and implementation training?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observation of training sessions</li> <li>- KSI (T9 T6, TA7, R7, C7)</li> </ul>

**6.1 Extent to which a HRBA was adopted in project design and activities implementation**

The operationalization of the project effectively adopted a HRBA, although stronger risk assessments with regard to “Do no harm” principles could have been considered. Otherwise, this evaluation finds that the project ensured that tools and activities took into account and responded to women’s needs, constraints and vulnerabilities, providing safe spaces for activity implementation, and ensuring that dialogue processes were empowering, respectful and protected the dignity of contributors.<sup>49</sup>

An extremely interesting finding of this evaluation relates to the difference in attitudes towards gender vulnerability between the regional and local audiences. The audience at the Regional Workshop (both interviewees and participants generally) were highly concerned about gender inequality, the disadvantages faced by women traders and the threat of sexual exploitation and abuse

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<sup>49</sup> With respect to the research activities, it is not possible to comment upon the extent to which women’s needs and vulnerabilities were taken into account as the reporting provided did not go into sufficient detail.

(SEA) at the borders. They spoke about culturally entrenched gender discrimination that manifests at the business community level (e.g. men dominating women in business relations and negotiations), and the family level (e.g. husbands not allowing women to engage in business, controlling their profits etc). There was also a general consensus that SEA was a severe and a daily occurrence. To this end, the regional audience was particularly supportive of the project's focus on and targeting of women.

Selected comments, Regional Dialogue Evaluation Interviews
A man will argue his case, whereas a woman will be harassed ... they are more vulnerable.
Culturally women do not argue with men. Women give in too easily.
Women are more vulnerable ... and far outweigh men in this sector. But they have less information and less competence.

This sat in contrast to interview findings and observations at the local level. Training participants, trainers, trader association representatives interviewed seemed less concerned about discrimination, gender-based vulnerability and SEA.<sup>50</sup> There was a sense that SEA was an issue, but that it more perfunctory and transactional, than pervasive, inescapable and violent.<sup>51</sup>

Likewise, while respondents acknowledged the disadvantages that women face in society, and their vulnerability as informal traders vis-à-vis men, this was not their largest constraint. Corruption and lack of knowledge were deemed more debilitating.<sup>52</sup> In this vein, many respondents questioned the project's focus on women. One training participant noted that the basis of trade was free competition, and while they needed to become more competent, she questioned why they needed to do this in isolation from men. More broadly, respondents seemed to believe that the ICBT community should grow and prosper together, and that there may have been positive spill overs had the training been gender-mixed, such as a stronger and more aligned group willing to stand up to border guards. More seriously, some highlighted that the training's gender focus might expose them to new vulnerabilities, risks of harassment or being isolated them from the mainstream trading community, if they were perceived as being favoured or their businesses proceeded to grow more quickly.

*"Maybe sexual harassment happens, but not their first priority ... they know it's bad but it's just a means to an end ... it's how they get their business done". (T2)*

Selected comments, Participants, Training participants and Trader Association Representatives Evaluation Interviews
It may be that there are vast gender inequalities, but that these do not extend to those involved in business, inequalities are overcome at this level and men and women are seen as existing on an equal playing field. (T9)
Why have only women? We are equally vulnerable as men, there was not much gained by having us alone. I can't imagine it would have been any different (T12).
It is good that the project helps women, but men are just as worthy. (TP9)
Young men are just drinking all the time. They need jobs too. (TP14)
Gender here means inclusivity. (TP21)
Men are also in the informal sector here, especially youth. There are no places to store goods if it rains and this is bad for them. It encourages them to use utes?? informally and they cannot drive well. (TP27)
The idea of the workshop is very good, especially how they included officials and traders together. But it's more important than just women. Maybe the UN thinks it's not as easy to put men and women together. But here it's also very important to target men. If you empower women only then it gets uneven and people do not understand. In our country, it is always women and men together, whether it is in business or in a family.

<sup>50</sup> CQ7: Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project? TQ9 Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project? TAQ7 Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project?

<sup>51</sup> The scholarship on the phenomena of women normalizing SEA is acknowledged and taken into account in this evaluation.

<sup>52</sup> Trainer "for girls in this country, it just doesn't matter if she doesn't do well. They don't go far in school because beyond primary you need to pay and families would rather pay for the boy. Girls do not have as much support in life. Their mothers never went to school, they have no role models. So, they lack confidence. Women who work in CBT are regarded as very courageous by society - men and women included".

The problem is that men may challenge women who are empowered. If women, for example, say 'let's formalise its great' ... but if men do not know they will discourage and as say no no ... bad idea. Then women will get worried and maybe not do it. (TA3)

### ***Risk assessments and Do No Harm***

A loose objective of the project was to promote formalization of informal cross-border trading enterprises and use of the official border.<sup>53</sup> The rationale is that participants within the informal economy do not contribute to public revenues, are exposed to violence and exploitation, risk detection and sanction by law enforcement, and are ineligible for insurance or other forms of social protection. While the results of the EMPRETEC self-assessment (which focused on the entrepreneurial skills component of the training program) were that participants were highly likely to formalise as a result of the training,<sup>54</sup> trainers and trainer association representatives consistently opined that participants would first need to grow and secure their enterprises before they would be in a position to formalize.<sup>55</sup> The evaluator's interviews confirmed this view, with most respondents indicating a desire to formalize, on the predication that their businesses became larger and more profitable.<sup>56</sup> Some, however, stated that even after learning about the costs, process and advantages of registration, it was still not in their interests to do so.<sup>57</sup> They argued that once legalized, they would be required to pay fees and taxes that would make their business less profitable and thus less competitive; moreover, that registration would not assist in overcoming inefficiency and corruption problems encountered at the border. In short, for some traders, registration and/or using of the official border is not in their interests, even though this places them outside the bounds of the rule of law and exposes them to associated risks.

The concern from a HRBA perspective, is that project arguably should have identified advocating for registration and use of the official border as a potential 'do no harm' issue insofar as entry into the formal economy (although this may confer some benefits) might also create a risk that an already poor and vulnerable trader loses their business, income or assets. In other words, it would be remiss of the project (through its training or information resources) to promote this end without ensuring that traders were in a position to objectively assess the risks and benefits.

Other 'do no harm' questions that the project may not have been sufficiently considered or guarded against include:

- The possibility that beneficiaries (who operate outside the law) might be targeted by authorities in the future.
- The possibility that beneficiaries might be targeted or excluded by (especially male) competitors who see them as having received 'special treatment'.
- A possible consolidation of discouragement and apathy if beneficiaries try, but are unsuccessful, in using their new knowledge and tools to overcome obstacles in their businesses and at the borders.
- Legal disclosures were not used in the making of the video.

## ***6.2 Extent to which gender mainstreaming was taken into account in development of information resources and design and implementation training?***

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<sup>53</sup> See e.g. training curricula and Trader's Guide.

<sup>54</sup> See EMPRETEC self-assessment Q7a and 7b respectively. The EMPRETEC self-assessment asked training participants if they intended to formalize in the next twelve months (137 respondents out of 144 answered affirmatively), and of those who did, the extent to which the training contributed to their decision (120 out of 134 participants responded 4 or 5 on a sliding scale where 1 = not at all, 5 = extremely).

<sup>55</sup> T4 and TA6. One respondent opined that traders might need further incentivizing such as a 'one stop shop' for registration.

<sup>56</sup> P7, P8, C5, TA5.

<sup>57</sup> "It is better for me not to register. It is too hard, and why pay that amount in fees when I can continue as things are?"; "For me, registration is just not profitable. If I sign up then my demand goes down or I have a problem and I need to pay the taxes then I'm broke. It is just not worth it". P10.

The Reports, Trader’s Guide, and training curricula dealt with women traders’ needs and the obstacles they face rigorously and in an inclusive manner insofar as they were also appropriate for and appealing to a general trader and male audience. This comprehensiveness extended to the training methodology. When asked to explain what special measures they adopt when working with women audiences, (T6)<sup>58</sup> trainers were able to provide detailed, sensitive and informed answers. They regarded empowerment as a core part of their responsibility as trainers, and understood what this meant in the business, cultural and broader socio-economic context. There was a consensus among them that this group of women (female informal traders) were assertive and able to use their power, but simply lacked information and knowledge. At the same time, they appreciated that women business owners had vulnerabilities vis-a-vis men that needed to be approached sensitively (they noted for example that many were divorced and single parents). One trainer gave the example of a visualisation exercise where participants were asked to look into the present and future. He noted that this exercise can conger up a variety of feelings in participants; as such, they sometimes delay this exercise to the backend of the training, and allocate more time to discussing the outcomes.<sup>59</sup> Another trainer noted that they invest extra effort into motivation and encouragement, and devote time to exercises about overcoming structural constraints such as access to credit, inter-household lending and household budget autonomy.<sup>60</sup>

## Partnership (EQ7)

<b>EQ7 Partnerships and Synergies: To what extent did the project leverage partnerships with national and regional counterparts, international development partners, the civil society and/or the private sector in support of results, and sustainability of results?</b>	
7.1 Were partnerships articulated in the project document realised? if not why not?	- Project documents (PDD, mission reports etc.) - KSI PT12
7.2 What partnership opportunities might have been pursued to create additional benefits, synergies or likelihood of sustainability?	- KSI PT12

According to the project document, the project was envisaged to be implemented in close coordination with the World Bank and TradeMark East Africa (TMEA). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNCTAD and TMEA to ensure collaboration and synergies between the two agencies, and the project funded a consultant with the World Bank to provide expert assistance on CBT issues. A Letter of Agreement was signed between UNCTAD and the COMESA secretariat. New collaborations were also forged, including with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Customs Union, both of whom indicated that they would be open to broader partnerships in the future.

It was observed that the UN agencies active in this area were not better engaged. Agencies including ILO, UNDP and UNHCR (all of which are running programs entrepreneurship, job creation and/or women’s empowerment) might have benefited from observing a training session, regularly attended briefing sessions, or used the learning resources produced in their own programs. The project team, however, encountered difficulty engaging in fruitful and two-way communication. Indeed, efforts by the evaluator to contact the UNCTs, and individual UN projects as part of this assessment were not responded to. It must be acknowledged that although partnership as model for efficiency and mutual learning is strongly encouraged by the UN system, this is not always easy, welcomed or practical. In

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<sup>58</sup> T6: How do you do things differently for women trainings?

<sup>59</sup> TR3

<sup>60</sup> TR2

reality, all project teams struggle with limited budgets, heavy schedules and accountability pressures. These constraints mean that ‘partnership activities’, while they would likely be beneficial, are often regarded as non-essential or not an efficient use of resources. There is also the reality that competition between agencies and for resources, results in some project managers simply not being interested in learning about another’s work or achievements.

## 7. Conclusions

**EQ1 Relevance: To what extent did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables consider and address the priorities and needs of participating countries; taking into account UNCTAD’s mandates and comparative advantages?**

The target countries — Malawi, Zambia and the Republic of Tanzania —each face multi-faceted development challenges. Their economies are disproportionately reliant on extractive industry (or other forms of rentierism) and/or low-productivity agriculture. This has led to growth that is unevenly distributed, income streams that are highly vulnerable to shocks, and wide-spread poverty. Identifying sectors that can deliver more sustainable, resilient and employment-rich growth is therefore a key priority. To this end, governments, International Financial Institutions and multilateral agencies have identified priority areas for investment and support. These include, inter alia, entrepreneurialism, particularly the expansion of MSMEs and women-led businesses, and intra-regional trade.

Against this backdrop, (i) augmenting the capacity of women engaged in ICBT to expand and develop their enterprises, and (ii) promoting regulatory reforms to facilitate cross-border trade, is highly strategic. The women engaged in ICBT are predominately operating small-scale, low productivity, and low profit businesses, where entry barriers are low but price competition is high. Their lack of knowledge around trade rules leaves them highly vulnerable to corruption and harassment, while their weak entrepreneurial and business skills prevents them from expanding, diversifying and investing in value-adding dimensions. At the same time, the regulatory framework is cumbersome and inefficient, narrowing the scope for women traders to operate successful and profitable enterprises.

By responding to both areas of deficit, this project has high poverty reduction potential, albeit on a localised scale. On the one hand, it provides women traders with the tools to overcome the principal obstacles preventing their businesses from becoming profitable: their inability to exploit trade regime rules to their advantage; their inability to protect themselves from rent-seeking and harassment on the part of border officials; and their inability to making strategic business management decisions. On the other hand, it has increased the awareness of policy makers with respect to the constraints faced by women traders, and the areas of regulatory reform necessary to ease these constraints.

This form of programmatic engagement is moreover aligned with and complements UNCTAD’s broader mandate, as well as the organization’s budgetary and sub-programmatic objectives and priorities. It should be seen as utilizing UNCTAD’s core strengths (policy engagement and trust) to generate impact around a group of economic actors traditionally overlooked in UN programming and by government authorities more generally.

**EQ2 Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document? EQ3: Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?**

As noted in the previous section, for the purpose of this evaluation, the project’s 10 activities were grouped into three areas of intervention that were assessed jointly against EQ2 and EQ3.



- **Research activities: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3.**

Informal traders' vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, coupled with their untapped contributions to the formal economy and public revenue, make them an important area for development policy and programming. Within both economic and development scholarship, however, the evidence on informal trade is scant and mostly qualitative. Principally, this is because informal traders operate outside of the state regulatory framework and are therefore passed over in terms of formal data collection and analysis. The countries targeted by this project are no exception. That lack of evidence and data has impeded the development of impactful policy and programs, was noted by several respondents, and further evidenced by the wide variance in estimates given with respect to e.g. the volume of informal trade, its composition and the typology of traders.

Against this background, while small positive gains may have accrued insofar as the Reports published through this project highlight important policy issues around women engaged in ICBT, the implementation of these activities constitutes a significant missed opportunity. Particularly against the limitations identified concerning the reports, including the scaling back of the research agenda, the project might have made a unique contribution by collecting and reporting primary data that could have enhanced the impact of the micro-schemes and policy discourse, and been used as a resource by other projects, partner CSOs and governments. This is admittedly a strong evaluation finding. However, given that UNCTAD has a think tank function and the strong authority attached to its publications, it should be expected to maintain the highest standards in methodological rigour, research reporting and knowledge uptake promotion.

- **Training sessions/micro-schemes: 2.4**

The training responded to identified knowledge and skill gaps that were preventing women traders from successfully growing their enterprises, protecting themselves from exploitation and rent-seeking, and fully exploiting the advantages of the applicable trade regimes. To this end, the evaluation found strong evidence that training participants acquired new knowledge in relevant and important areas, and moreover that they intended to use their new skills towards constructive ends. These findings were supported by trainers, trader organization representatives and others interviewed, as well as self-assessment data collected by the project.

Building the capacity of women traders around trade rules, the regulatory framework and entrepreneurialism was relevant, value-adding and of potential high impact. Not having these skills is diminishing traders' profit potential (as they cannot exploit the exemptions and reductions they are entitled to under regional trade schemes), leaves them vulnerable to corruption, and incentivises them to use illegal routes. Unable to lift themselves out of this situation, they remain trapped in a cycle of poverty. In addition to responding to these gaps, the combination of skill sets targeted created mutually reinforcing gains; with knowledge in these areas, traders are more likely to be able to accumulate profits and saving, allowing them to diversify, expand or invest in value-adding elements, and thus edging closer to the formal economy.

Finally, by engaging customs officers and other border officials in the training sessions, it is reasonable to expect secondary benefits in terms of reducing the scope for corruption, rent-seeking and harassment. While the overall impact of the training sessions was localised, and there is probably a threshold limit for how far forward the training participants will be able to employ their new skills without follow-up assistance, the outcomes of this pilot project must be considered highly successful and ripe for scale-up.

- **Regional dialogue: 1.4, 1.5, 2.5**

There was particular appreciation that (i) the Regional Workshop addressed an important but rarely discussed subject, (ii) it was participatory and practical as opposed to theoretical in nature, and (iii) it brought together high-level government officials, mid-level technical staff, and CSO stakeholders on an equal playing field.

UNCTAD's self-assessment strongly indicates that participants' knowledge and awareness of the issues around women engaged in ICBT had improved, and there was consensus that UNCTAD's recommendations and proposed interventions to make CBT more beneficial to traders were valid. However, there was a perception among those interviewed that the recommendations were too broad to be instructive, and that they lacked workability insofar as they did not take into account issues of central budget prioritization, political economy, capacity deficits and scale-up capacity.

It should also be highlighted that the project — at the request of ministry staff — produced the *Advocacy Report* which elaborates on the bottlenecks and recommendations identified in *Borderline*, and identifies potential targets, indicators and responsible institutions at the national level. Thus, while the project may not have delivered fully on the training activity as planned, it did demonstrate a high level of reactivity to stakeholder needs and a willingness to reevaluate their assumptions, shift resources and realign project outputs around what was considered at the time to be a higher-value beneficiary need.

**EQ4 Efficiency: have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control been adequate in ensuring the achievement of expected outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?**

Especially given their high impact and potential sustainability, it is unfortunate that the manner in which the budget is recorded and reported against did not allow for the efficiency of the micro-schemes to be accurately measured. According to the project team's calculation, this activity delivered 6-days of high-quality training to 142 persons using 17 percent of the project budget. It is likely that some of these efficiency gains accrued from the project team's use of the existing EMPRETEC methodology (for the second component of the training) and pool of trained facilitators; this should be kept in mind in the event of a scaling up of activities. These efficiency wins might only have been further consolidated had activity 1.4 been undertaken to secure institutional and regulatory reforms benefitting women traders. With regard to project monitoring, the project's results framework does not reflect best practices in RBM programming.

**EQ5 Sustainability: Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project and achieve the change required for the intended impact?**

While the project identified important and tangible recommendations and potential entry points for policy and institutional reform, national stakeholders will probably need more concrete and sustained support to make progress in this regard. If a scaled-up iteration of this project were to occur, a policy reform component geared towards support policy-makers push through identified reforms should be prioritized. Examples of priority reforms raised by interviewees include a simplified trade regime specifically for women engaged in small and micro-enterprises, or broadening the list of goods to include what women trade in.

Training participants, by contrast, will almost certainly exploit their new skills and knowledge towards positive ends. It is likely, however, that there will be a threshold limit to such benefit. To consolidate their learning and exploit secondary spill overs (such as improved professionalism on the part of

customs officers), expansion and scale-up of the training will be needed (and is certainly warranted). If this were to happen, the capacity of trader associations might be built in order for them to play a greater role in providing support to women traders. Other activities that might be considered include:

- Piloting traders' access to capital through micro-schemes or community-run pooled lending schemes
- Participation in trade fairs aimed at women small-scale and cross-border traders
- Exploring the viability of an on- or offline tool where traders could receive instant and up-to-date information on the requirements and estimated fees payable for transporting goods across the border.
- Training and other initiatives geared towards engendering a partnership relationship between informal traders and customs officials.

#### **EQ6 Gender and human rights: To what extent was a human rights-based approach and a gender-mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the activity?**

The operationalization of the project effectively adopted a HRBA. Examples include ensuring that tools and training took into account and responded to women's needs, constraints and vulnerabilities, providing safe spaces for activity implementation, and ensuring that dialogue processes were empowering, respectful and protected the dignity of contributors. The trainers were particularly effective in adapting their methodology to take account of the special constraints of their beneficiary audience. With respect to gender inclusion and mainstreaming, the needs of and constraints faced by women traders were central themes in the Reports, Trader's Guide, and training curricula; at the same time, they were appropriate for and appealing to a general trader and male audience. The project created risks associated with Do No Harm that were not adequately assessed or mitigated against; this is discussed in greater detail in part 10. There is also some evidence from respondents that a more active inclusion of men in the project may have had positive spill over effects, including by building a stronger community of informal traders to advocate for their rights.

#### **EQ7 Partnerships and Synergies: To what extent did the project leverage partnerships with national and regional counterparts, international development partners, the civil society and/or the private sector in support of results, and sustainability of results?**

The project liaised closely with the World Bank (including by funding a World Bank consultant to provide expert assistance on CBT issues), TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) and COMESA. New collaborations were also forged, including with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Customs Union, both of whom indicated that they would be open to broader partnerships in the future.

With the exception of UN Women, UN agencies active in this area were not better engaged. While agencies including ILO, UNDP and UNHCR were running programs on entrepreneurship, job creation and/or women's empowerment, the project team encountered difficulty engaging in fruitful and two-way communication. It must be acknowledged that although partnership as model for efficiency and mutual learning is strongly encouraged by the UN system, this is not always easy, welcomed or practical, also considering perceived competition amongst the agencies, particularly for resources. In reality, agencies struggle with limited budgets, heavy schedules and accountability pressures. These constraints mean that 'partnership activities', while they would likely be beneficial, are sometimes regarded as not an efficient use of resources.

## 8. Lessons learned and good practices

### 1. Overcoming the constraints of political economy in development programming

The intervention being evaluated is quite unique insofar as the aim of the project (supporting women engaged in ICBT to develop, expand and regularise their enterprises) aligns with these governments' trade strategies and priorities (an expansion in MSME-driven economic activity and particularly the growth of Pan-African trade). Even the project's concomitant aim of promoting women's economic empowerment is not incompatible with government interests and priorities; although gender discrimination and inequality is a significant problem in each country, this does not appear to extend into the economic realm with equal virulence (at least in the case of this project's beneficiaries). Even at the localised level, the power wielded by those whose interests are not aligned with the project (ICBT competitors and custom and other border officials whose scope for rent seeking may be narrowed) is probably insufficient to interrupt the project outcomes.

In short, the momentum created when top-down (policy level) support coupled with bottom-up (beneficiary) demand is a unique recipe for impact and sustainability, not often seen in the development sector. The potential gains that can accrue should not be underestimated and this alone should constitute grounds to strongly consider scale-up. This is especially the case for gender projects and projects aimed at increasing the economic power of a marginalized group, where political economy is generally the most significant impediment to success.

### 2. Supporting organizational innovation and experimentation in new entry points

Projects that combine research, training and policy dialogue cannot be considered 'innovative' within the development community of practice. This said, UNCTAD has almost exclusively concentrated its activities around advice analysis, consensus-building, and technical assistance. Training, where it does occur, generally involves government actors at the senior and middle-management level. This project, by contrast, targeted mainly actors operating at the grassroots level, through partnerships with CSOs. It should be seen as utilizing UNCTAD's core strength (policy engagement) to generate impact around a group of economic actors traditionally overlooked in both UN programming and by governments. This type of programmatic expansion – whereby an agency uses its strengths to add value in new areas where other agencies are not active – should be encouraged. Moreover, when project teams pursue new entry points in areas where an organization has little experience or accumulated institutional knowledge, some missteps are inevitable. These should be understood as part of the institutional learning process and evaluated as such. The managers of such projects should be supported to share their experiences – both positive and negative – widely to promote the uptake of lessons.

### 3. Targeting non-traditional actors for successful outcomes

That informal traders operate covertly and outside the rule of law, means that they are often overlooked or avoided in UN programming and by government authorities more generally. Indeed, no beneficiary of the training had previously participated in a capacity building activity, or received information resources from a government or non-government source. Trainers, trade association representatives and customs/border officials also confirmed that no donor, UN agency, INGO or government authority had worked with informal traders (male or female) in their geographic area. This lack of support provided/attention given to members of the informal economy is often criticised by scholars as lacking in logic; they argue that their disproportionate vulnerability and untapped economic potential makes them prime candidates for training, empowerment and up-scaling.

This project's targeting of women working outside (or partially outside) the state legal and regulatory framework, can thus be described as both strategic, and consistent with UN objectives (especially the principal underlying the SDGs of 'no one left behind'). It also sits in contrast to what is a common criticism of women's empowerment programs, namely that beneficiary groups are 'over-trained' by multiple, non-aligned agencies, but still lack tangible skills that they can use constructively to improve their lives.

The participation of customs and other border officials in day 1 of the training should likewise be showcased as an example of the positive ends that can follow the inclusion of a non-traditional group. The project enlisted these actors – who were largely perceived by training participants as an adversary – to lead the sessions on trade rules and regulations. Although unorthodox, this variant was noted consistently as one of the most successful aspects of the training. Participants appreciated the opportunity to air their grievances and felt that any 'trickling down' of information about the training among border officers would reduce the likelihood of corruption, rent-seeking and harassment.

#### **4. Intra-agency partnership**

As noted in the findings section, the activity that was most successfully implemented and yielded the greatest impact represented only 7 percent of the overall budget. This activity's efficiency gains principally accrued from the project team's partnership with the EMPRETEC, allowing them to benefit from the existing training methodology on entrepreneurialism and pre-trained, field-based staff to implement the sessions. According to the project team, this partnership (although perhaps unusual within UNCTAD program streams) was simple to organize and administer, highly congenial, and resulted in mutually beneficial gains. Indeed, an initiative is now commencing in Malawi to establish an EMPRETEC Centre as a result of the micro-schemes. Moreover, it was discovered that running a session on trade and customs rules alongside the existing entrepreneurship modules resulted in unexpected gains and value-added for participants. The EMPRETEC Master Trainers have suggested that these modules be run in parallel on a regular basis.

## **9. Recommendations**

### **1. Project teams engaging in unfamiliar areas need to be equipped to undertake risk assessments and set in place contingency strategies in accordance with 'Do No Harm' programming**

The project gave rise to certain concerns with respect to Do No Harm that — although not deemed high risk — were not identified and thus not (or not sufficiently) guarded against. These included:

- That beneficiaries may not have had the skills to make a balanced assessment between the benefits of business registration and use of the border (emphasised by the project) and the cost implications given the overall profitability of their enterprise, potentially resulting in a loss of business and greater overall vulnerability.
- The possibility that beneficiaries (who operate outside the law) might be targeted by authorities in the future.
- The possibility that beneficiaries might be targeted or excluded by (especially male) competitors who see them as having received 'special treatment'.
- A possible consolidation of discouragement and apathy if beneficiaries try, but are unsuccessful, in using their new knowledge and tools to overcome obstacles in their businesses and at the borders.
- That legal disclosures were not used in the making of the video which interviews women engaged in ICBT.

Especially when programming targets highly vulnerable groups, project teams must be equipped to comprehensively evaluate Do No Harm risks. In the case of this project, some of the risks could have been easily addressed, for example through better inclusion of men or slightly modifying the training materials. To this end, it is important to recognize that when an organization branches into a new area of programmatic work, staff may not have the skills to undertake such risk assessments rigorously. Investing in these areas of staff capacity and creating opportunities for staff to enrich their skills should always be prioritized. Teams may also need guidance on how to handle 'grey areas' of risk management. For example, it may not have been clear to the project team how they should balance advocating for formalisation and use of the official border (as per the law) with the reality that women may be better served by continuing to operate informally and outside of the law. These are complex questions and staff (and consultant trainers) need concrete and specific guidance on how to fulfil their obligations in terms of promoting UN norms and standards, and at the same time uphold their responsibilities towards vulnerable beneficiary groups.

## **2. Programme managers need to ensure that effective and value-adding research methodology is developed to support evidence-based programming**

Organizations such as UNCTAD should prioritize peer-to-peer mentoring and creating opportunities for staff to participate in short courses aimed at research methods, data reporting and simple statistical applications. That the KSIs and FDGs were not documented or content analysed was a missed opportunity. A rigorous analysis of the data collected would have made an important contribution to the scholarship, particularly given the lack of reliable primary research in this area and the large sample sizes involved (6 focus groups with more than 200 participants and 19 KSIs). Moreover, in the absence of proper documentation the project risks not fulfilling its reporting obligations and attracting criticism for lack of resource accountability, particularly in the case of an audit. Because the FGDs and KSIs were relied upon in the Reports, the project opens itself to criticism that best practices in research and reporting were not adhered to. At minimum, the project should have documented the location and date the data was collected, the facilitator, those interviewed (in the case of KSIs) and a general description of those participating in the FGDs (disaggregated for age, gender and profession). The best practice is to anonymise and make the raw data available to external audiences.

It would not have been difficult to record, code and apply a simple methodology such as a content analysis to a set of FGD AND KSI collected data. Greater efforts could also have been made to reach a statistically representative sample in the online survey and to avoid small errors in numeric data reporting and source disclosure.

An examination of the survey questionnaire also supports that staff may benefit from training in this regard. Certain questions posed were arguably redundant, and thus the information value limited. Think tanks and research institutions often apply checklists to surveys where each question is scrutinised in terms of 'what new information will this question deliver' or 'how will the answer to this question change programming'? Piloting is another highly useful tool in this regard. Again, these basic methodology techniques can be easily acquired, rapidly internalised and generally yield significant gains.

The lesson is that for agencies with strong research functions, managers should be mindful that staff skill sets in qualitative and quantitative methods need to be regularly updated and built upon. Such skills are critical if best practices in research and publication are to be followed. Moreover, they are fairly cost effective to acquire vis-à-vis the gains. To this end, organizations such as UNCTAD might

consider peer-to-peer mentoring and creating opportunities for staff to participate in short courses aimed at research methods, data reporting and simple statistical applications.

### **3. Project managers need to ensure that deviations of project activities remain aligned with the project's intended results, whilst remaining responsive to stakeholder needs**

As elaborated on in other sections of this evaluation, it is unfortunate that national stakeholders requested a scaling back of the research activities insofar as this resulted in reduced-quality outcomes. How such requests are dealt with is a complex question which cuts to key tensions in the aid effectiveness discourse. On the one hand, national stakeholder views and priorities need to be taken seriously; their unique insights and a relationship grounded in partnership are both critical to successful programming. On the other, requests to emphasize activities that directly benefit national institutions and actors, and that facilitate more in-country expenditures can represent a narrow conceptualisation of development programming goals or a prioritization of interests not aligned with the program.<sup>61</sup> In this case, the proposed reallocation of resources needed to be balanced against the importance of (i) UNCTAD maintaining quality control in its publications (ii) expanding knowledge to support more evidence-based programming in this field. The project is the only stakeholder available to advocate these positions and this role must be taken seriously.

This is not to say that the project team should not have endorsed the change. Indeed, these deliberations are never clear cut and benefit of the doubt should always rest with the project team. It is to say, however, that such discussions should proceed in a balanced way and taking into consideration both the views of national stakeholders as well as the project's obligations to promote aid effectiveness and broader development goals.

### **4. Project managers should design monitoring and evaluation frameworks that support Results-Based Programming**

First, project managers should ensure that the project logframe is updated to reflect evolution in the project's design. Second, rather than relying on self-assessment by training participants to capture performance results, a far more rigorous and reliable method is pre- and post-training knowledge testing (at the commencement and conclusion of the intervention). Not only is this extremely simple to administer and evaluate, it would have provided in-depth information that could have been used in early troubleshooting, for monitoring purposes and as reliable evidence of impact in later fundraising.

Moreover, in designing an evaluation framework, project teams should aim – not only to verify improved capacity – but to verify that such capacity was used in positive and constructive ways. This should be built into the timeframe of the project activities schedule. A suitable methodology would have been Outcome Mapping, which again is a relatively simple tool to apply to training projects and generally involves pre- and post-intervention testing which can be administered jointly with knowledge testing.

It follows, noted above, that especially when institutions are expanding into new areas of programming, it is important to ensure that staff skills in methodology design are regularly built upon and updated to reflect emerging best practices.

### **5. Project managers need to rethink assumptions and gender relations and how women's empowerment is best supported**

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<sup>61</sup> The obvious example in this case is that governments may not have been interested in production of a widely disseminated UN report that outlined the extent of their informal economies, the plight of women traders and corruption among border officers.

Women-centred programming is not always the most effective and efficient way to empower women. In certain cases, such targeting can expose them to new vulnerabilities. While it may appear counterintuitive, sometimes (although more often in business, trade and commercial settings), women's interests are best promoted by a project making absolutely no distinction between genders. The positive is that this is a problem that can easily be addressed in a subsequent phase of programming by allowing a slightly higher proportion of men to join the training sessions.

**6. UNCTAD should scale up the training activity and/or consider other activities that further contribute to improving the enabling environment for informal cross border women traders.**

The findings of this evaluation fully support the logic and cost-effectiveness of scaling up the training activity with a view to reaching a critical mass of women traders. With a view to promoting sustainability, the capacity of trader associations might be built in order for them to play a greater role in providing support to women traders. To maximise impact, scaled-up training should be complemented by a targeted and sustained effort to support policy-makers push through identified reforms. Examples of priority reforms raised by interviewees include a simplified trade regime specifically for women engaged in small and micro-enterprises, or broadening the list of goods to include what women trade in. Such a project would also provide an opportunity to roll out a rigorous research agenda and therefore contribute to the scant evidence base on the links between informal employment, women's empowerment and broader economic goals. Other activities that might be considered include:

- **Facilitating access to capital:** While greater research is needed to assess the economic viability of and market readiness for scaled-up women's enterprises, an expanded project might consider piloting credit facilities for women. Several innovative financing examples can be found in CK Prahalad and SL Hart's, *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid*, including women-run micro-credit lending schemes, pooled lending schemes and community-based credit funds.
- **Trade fairs aimed at women small-scale and cross-border traders:** Respondents noted that women entrepreneurs gain enormous benefit from participating in trade fairs and export promotion events, especially in terms of marketing tools, quality control systems and how to access international markets. An expanded project might consider partnering with another entity to facilitate participation in such events, or the organization of an event dedicated to female small and cross-border traders.
- **Online and offline tools:** An expanded project might explore the viability of an on- or offline tool where women could input information (such as the product being transported, quantity and border crossing) and receive instant and up-to-date information on the paperwork requirements and estimated fees payable.
- **Compliance:** This evaluation has noted that border officials benefit from women traders' ignorance of trade rules insofar as this broadens their scope to engage in rent-seeking. In this context, additional training on rules and how to apply them, billboards outlining official fee schedules or CCTV cameras (as proposed by some respondents) are unlikely to be effective. What might be more impactful, is interventions aimed at building a partnership-type relationship between border officials and small-traders. Border officials currently view themselves as exercising a policing function, whereas it would be more beneficial for them to perceive themselves as facilitators in a larger effort to expand cross-border trade for the benefit of the broader economy. Efforts might include joint capacity building, leadership initiatives and new incentives, coupled with increased oversight.



## Annexes

### i. Terms of Reference

#### **External Evaluation of Development Account Project 1617J - “Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa”**

##### I. Introduction and Purpose

1. This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the final independent project evaluation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded project titled “Informal cross-border trade for empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa”
2. The evaluation will provide accountability to UNCTAD management, the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.
3. The evaluation will provide assessments that are credible and useful, and also include practical and constructive recommendations. In particular, the evaluation will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation and overall project performance. On the basis of these assessments, the evaluation will formulate recommendations to project stakeholders, in particular to UNCTAD and/or the Capacity Development Office/Development Account of DESA with a view towards optimizing results of future projects, including on operational and administrative aspects.

##### II. Project background

4. This project aims to strengthen national capacities in Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia to leverage informal cross-border trade (ICBT) for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration.
5. ICBT has broad poverty alleviation and development ramifications in Eastern and Southern Africa. It constitutes a vital source of employment and livelihood for the poor in border districts. The trade also contributes importantly to food security, as food items and livestock account for the bulk of informal exports. There is a discernible gender component to ICBT: an estimated 70-80% of informal cross-border traders in Sub-Saharan Africa are women.
6. Informal cross-border traders, particularly women, face an array of daunting challenges when trading across the border: complex customs procedures and high transaction costs, coupled with lack of awareness of rights and responsibilities; harassment at the border; supply-side obstacles and lack of entrepreneurial skills. Authorities need to tackle this wide array of obstacles in a coherent and comprehensive fashion. A particularly thorny issue for national authorities is the effective implementation of a facilitated trade regime for cross-border traders consistent with their multiple regional and multilateral commitments.

7. Through new analyses and capacity-building activities, the intervention tackles two issue areas: (i) how to address the complexity and opacity of trade barriers to ICBT, in a context of multiple overlapping trade arrangements; and (ii) how to accommodate the specificities of ICBT, especially women, when designing and implementing suitable supply side services that support cross-border trade flows. It revolves around three sets of activities: analytical work, the piloting of micro-level schemes at selected border crossings, and policy dialogue. The project will build capacities to mainstream ICBT in national policies and to rationalize the regulatory regime for cross-border trade, in interplay and against the background of multiple overlapping regional trade agreements (RTAs).
8. The project targets three categories of beneficiaries: small-scale traders and associations of small-scale and informal cross-border traders, especially female traders, and women's associations; trade ministries; and regional organizations. Key entities involved in the project implementation are border agencies and trade ministries in Malawi, the United Republic Tanzania and Zambia, associations of small-scale and informal cross-border traders, especially female traders, and women's associations.
9. The expected accomplishments of the project are as follows:
  - a. Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross-border traders in target countries; and
  - b. Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders in the beneficiary countries to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders.
10. The fact-finding mission carried out in 2017 as part of the planned activities of the project, revealed that women who engage in informal cross-border trade have very limited capital and almost inexistent entrepreneurship skills, making it difficult for them to overcome the informality of their micro business activities, or to seize any opportunity for scale-up or diversification. These findings revealed the need to include, in addition to the capacity-building activities on cross-border trade, training on entrepreneurial skills.

In April 2019, UNCTAD carried out national workshops in the capitals of the beneficiary countries to introduce the findings of its analytical work to national policymakers and practitioners, and to discuss the planning of the capacity-building activities for women informal cross-border traders. During the workshops, country stakeholders agreed that the trainings should have two components, namely trade rules and customs procedures, and an entrepreneurial component. These activities were designed and will be provided in collaboration with UNCTAD's Empretec team and are part of the micro-level intervention activities planned as part of the project.

11. The main activities of the project include:
  - **A1.1** - Map tariff and non-tariff barriers to informal and small-scale cross-border trade between Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. The mapping exercise will include: a baseline assessment of informal cross-border traders, trade flows and border-crossing conditions at the three targeted border crossings; a mapping of tariff and non-tariff barriers (NTBs), by product category and typology of traders; an assessment of the trade regime (multiple RTAs and STRs), as it exists on paper and as implemented in practice
  - **A1.2** - Conduct field missions in the three countries to collect quantitative and qualitative information for the mapping exercise. The missions will cover the organization of three kick-off workshops. Through the use of participative and interactive approaches, the workshops will provide a forum for the early engagement of national stakeholders, the validation and fine-tuning of baseline assessment results by reference to actual conditions at the three crossing points, the conduct of a focused needs assessment exercise, in terms of the format and content of the studies/reports. Participants will include border officers, representative of relevant ministries, associations of cross-border traders, and contracted NGOs. A1.2 will be carried out jointly with A2.2.
  - **A1.3** - Building on the mapping exercise, prepare an analytical report on existing barriers to informal and small-scale cross-border trade between Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. The report will include recommendations on how to streamline requirements for cross-border traders while ensuring regulatory coherence in a context of multiple overlapping RTAs and STRs. It will include detailed product-specific annexes with analytical findings and policy options disaggregated by product category and by typology of traders
  - **A1.4** - Provide focused training to Ministry of Trade officials through hands-on advisory activities in the three countries (one per country) on how to redress trade barriers to ICBT. This will enable the project to reach key technical staff at the country level to review the outcomes of the analysis

(A1.3), enable a constructive dialogue on the outcomes at the country specific level, and develop concrete steps for pursuing the recommendations at the national level. The training will set action plans endorsed by the Government to implement the policy recommendations, with clear identification of steps to translate the recommendations into practice

- **A1.5** - Organize a regional workshop to share the report findings and promote policy dialogue among stakeholders. In contrast to A.1.4, this workshop aims not only at national issues, but those that must be addressed at the regional or cross-border levels, and in cooperation with multiple stakeholders. The workshop is addressed to the beneficiaries of the project, namely associations of small-scale and informal cross-border traders, especially female traders, and women's associations; trade ministries and regional organizations. Its objective is to raise awareness of and create capacity to address barriers to informal cross-border trade. Regional workshop is linked to A2.5.
- **A 2.1** - Map and analyse supply side obstacles/issues that hinder the efficiency of and/or increase the cost and time faced by informal and small-scale cross-border traders (lack of scale, finance, market information, insurance, exchange rate issues, transport logistics, access to storage and other facilities, etc.), particularly women traders, at targeted border crossings; assess mechanisms and policy options to tackle the specific needs of ICBTs. The activity will be conducted through desk-based analysis where feasible, but predominately through on the ground data collection (see A 2.2) and analytical activities through partnership with a relevant regional/local NGO, academic institution or firm. Outcomes of this activity link directly to A2.3.
- **A 2.2** - Conduct field missions in the three countries to collect information for the mapping exercise. This activity, carried out jointly with A1.2, will include three kick-off workshops, surveys, interviews, and focus groups with traders associations, and other stakeholders linked directly to the provisioning of supply-side trade support activities (e.g. banks, micro-finance organizations, transport associations, local officials, NGOs, etc.).
- **A 2.3** - Building upon the analysis (A2.1), prepare a strategy report that details ways to streamline ICBT in supply-side services, including concrete recommendations for policies and interventions that can address issues identified. Given that circumstances can be quite unique depending on the border crossing, and given the cross-border nature of the issues being addressed, in order for this activity to provide concrete recommendations it will require a sub-national focus, but at a localized border-crossing level. Determinations and inferences made through the analysis may, however, require action at the national level depending on the precise nature of the policy. The project is implemented by UNCTAD with collaboration of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Secretariat. Co-operating Entities within the UN system include the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- **A 2.4-** Design and pilot micro-level schemes, based on the recommendations and strategy developed in A2.3, to the extent of their relevance in the local context, that will enhance informal and small-size cross border traders' access to supply side support services (such as supporting traders organizations, improving access to transportation/logistics services, finance, etc.). This activity will be carried out at the border-crossing level and will be uniquely targeted to those border crossings and the needs identified in the analysis and strategy (see A2.1 and A2.3). It will be executed through an on the ground consultancy/NGO with participation of local organizations and traders' associations. Based on the findings of the fact-finding mission carried out in 2017 as part of the project, and the agreement of the country stakeholders on the contents of the trainings, the micro-level schemes will include components, namely trade rules and customs procedures, and an entrepreneurial component.
- **A2.5-** Organize a regional workshop (linked to A1.5) to share the report findings and promote policy dialogue between key stakeholders (e.g. regional, national and local officials, traders associations, women's associations, other relevant private sector stakeholders, relevant NGOs, etc.). The workshop will invite regional officials from, for instance, the East Africa Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as relevant officials from target countries and other countries in the region. The aim of involving the regional community is to share lessons learned through the process that can be applied to other border crossings, encourage building on the successes of the pilot schemes and scaling up activities at other locations in the region, and promote sustainability by increasing institutional knowledge and awareness beyond just the project countries. Thus, the project will support policy uptake at the regional level (through the regional economic communities) to support ongoing dialogue on the issues following the

conclusion of the project.

12. The project started in March 2016 with an approved budget of \$547,000 and is scheduled for completion by December 2019.

### III. Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

13. This final evaluation of the project has the following specific objectives:

- Assess the degree to which the desired project results have been realised; and
- Identify good practices and lessons learned from the project that could feed into and enhance the implementation of related interventions.

14. The evaluation will cover the duration of the project from March 2016 to December 2019.

15. The evaluation is expected to address the following questions under the below criteria (to be further developed in the inception report, as appropriate):

#### **a) Relevance**

- Did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables properly reflect and address the primary development needs of participating countries, taking into account UNCTAD's mandates?
- What is UNCTAD's comparative advantage in this area and to what extent did this project optimize it?

#### **b) Effectiveness**

- Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document?
- Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?
- Are there indications of potential impact, assessed against the SDG targets supported by the project?

#### **c) Efficiency**

- Have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control been adequate in ensuring the achievement of the expected outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?
- Has the project leveraged in-house expertise, previous research and technical cooperation outcomes, existing databases, and other internal resources of UNCTAD and/or external collaboration from international development partners and mechanisms?

#### **d) Sustainability**

- Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project and/or have there been catalytic effects from the project both at the national/regional levels?

#### **e) Gender and human rights**

- To what extent a human rights-based approach and a gender mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the intervention?
- To what extent does the project advance UNCTAD's efforts to promote equitable development?

#### **f) Partnerships and synergies**

- How has the project advanced partnerships with national and regional counterparts, international development partners, the civil society and/or the private sector in support of results, and sustainability of results?

### IV. Methodology

16. The evaluation will adopt a theory-driven approach, guided by the project-results framework, and ensure a participatory engagement with project stakeholders. The evaluator is required to use a mixed-method approach, including qualitative as well as quantitative data gathering and analysis as the basis for a triangulation exercise of all available data to draw conclusions and findings. Methods for data gathering for this evaluation include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Desk review of project documents and relevant materials;
  - Face-to-face interview and/ or telephone interviews with relevant UNCTAD staff;
  - Two field missions to Zambia and Tanzania respectively; to conduct focus groups and/or interviews with project beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders
  - Direct observation;
  - Online surveys of project stakeholders, as may be required; and follow-up interviews as may be necessary;
  - Telephone/skype interviews with a balanced sample of project participants, project partners and other relevant stakeholders.
17. Contribution analysis could be undertaken in particular to assess project results.
18. As part of the desk review, which will lead to an Inception Report, the evaluator will use the project document as well as additional documents such as mission reports; progress reports, financial reports, publications, studies - both produced under the project as well as received from national and regional counterparts. A list of project beneficiaries as well as other partners and counterparts involved in the project will be provided to the evaluator.
19. The evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology in an Inception Report, determining thereby the exact focus and approach for the exercise, including developing tailor-made questions that target different stakeholders (based on a stakeholder analysis), and developing the sampling strategy and identifying the sources and methods for data collection. The methodology should follow the UNCTAD and Development Account Inception Report Guidelines.
20. The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of those interviewed in the Annex of the evaluation report. The evaluator is to ensure a wide representation of stakeholders, bearing in mind the need to include those in a disadvantaged or minority position as appropriate.

## V. Organization of the evaluation

### **(i) Deliverables and Expected Outputs**

21. The evaluation, on the basis of its findings and assessments made on the above criteria, should draw conclusions, make recommendations and identify lessons learned from the implementation of the project.
22. More specifically, the evaluation should:
  - Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
  - Highlight, as appropriate, any specific achievements that provide additional value for money and/or relevant multiplier effects;
  - Indicate shortcomings and constraints in the implementation of the project while, at the same time, identifying the remaining challenges, gaps and needs for future courses of action;
  - Make pragmatic recommendations to suggest how UNCTAD's work in this area can be further strengthened in order to address beneficiaries' needs and create synergies through collaboration with other UNCTAD divisions, international organizations and development partners, and other international forums;
  - Draw lessons of wider application for the replication of the experience gained in this project in other projects/countries;
23. Three deliverables are expected out of this evaluation (following EMU templates):
  - i. An inception report<sup>62</sup>;
  - ii. A draft evaluation report; and
  - iii. The final evaluation report<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Quality of the inception report should meet those set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports: [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=608](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608)

<sup>63</sup> Quality of the evaluation report should meet those set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607>

24. The inception report should summarize the desk review and specify the evaluation methodology, determining thereby the exact focus and scope of the exercise, including the evaluation questions, the sampling strategy and the data collection instruments.
25. The final report of the evaluation must be composed of the following key elements:
  - i. Executive summary;
  - ii. Introduction of the evaluation, a brief description of the projects, the scope of the evaluation and a clear description of the methodology used;
  - iii. Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section IV of this ToR, with a comparison table of planned and implemented project activities and outputs; and
  - iv. Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.
26. All the evaluation assessments must be supported by facts and findings, direct or indirect evidence, and well-substantiated logic. It follows that proposed recommendations must be supported by the findings and be relevant, specific, practical, actionable, and time-bound recommendations.

### **(ii) Description of Duties**

27. The UNCTAD Evaluation and Monitoring Unit (EMU), in close collaboration with the Division on international trade and commodities (DITC), will facilitate the evaluation as undertaken by an independent evaluator.
28. The evaluator reports to the Chief of EMU. S/he will undertake the evaluation exercise under the guidance of the EMU and in coordination with the project manager. The evaluator is responsible for the evaluation design, data collection, analysis and reporting as provided in this TOR. The evaluator will submit a copy-edited final report to UNCTAD.
29. The evaluator shall act independently, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and in her/his capacities and not as a representative of any government or organisation that may present a conflict of interest. S/he will have no previous experience of working with the project or of working in any capacity linked with it.
30. The evaluator should observe the UNEG guidelines, standards<sup>64</sup>, and norms<sup>65</sup> for evaluations in the UN system, as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy<sup>66</sup>, in the conduct of this assignment. The evaluator needs to integrate human rights and gender equality in evaluations to the extent possible.<sup>67</sup> The evaluator needs to ensure a complete, fair, engaging, unreserved, and unbiased assessment. In case of difficulties, uncertainties or concern in the conduct of the evaluation, the evaluator needs to report immediately to the Chief of EMU to seek guidance or clarification.
31. The project team will support the evaluation, by providing desk review documents (following EMU desk review documents guidelines), contact details of project stakeholders as well as additional documents that the evaluator requests, depending on their availability. It is the responsibility of the project manager to ensure senior management engagement throughout the evaluation and timely feedback in the quality assurance and factual clarification process coordinated by the EMU. The project team will review and provide comments on the inception, draft and final reports with a view on quality assurance and factual accuracies.
32. The EMU acts as clearing entity during the main steps of this evaluation. It endorses the TOR and approves the selection of the proposed evaluator. EMU reviews the evaluation methodology, clears the draft report, performs quality assurance of the final report and participates in disseminating the final report to stakeholders within and outside of UNCTAD. EMU engages the project manager throughout the evaluation process in supporting the evaluation and validating the reports.

### **(iii) Timetable**

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<sup>64</sup> "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Standards (2005); [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=22](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22);

<sup>65</sup> "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System" by UNEG, UNEG/FN/Norms (2005); [http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\\_id=21](http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=21);

<sup>66</sup> "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), December 2011. December 2011, [http://unctad.org/Sections/edm\\_dir/docs/osg\\_EvaluationPolicy2011\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/Sections/edm_dir/docs/osg_EvaluationPolicy2011_en.pdf).

<sup>67</sup> "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2014): <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>. The UNEG Handbook on "Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations: Towards UNEG Guidance" by UNEG, UNEG Guidance Document (2011): <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/980>.

33. The total duration of the evaluation is equivalent to 30 days of work and will take place over the period 1 November 2019 to 30 April 2020.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Days</b>
Desk research and study of relevant documentation	4 days
Preparation of data collection tools and inception report	4 days
Interviews with UNCTAD staff and implementation partners	5 days
Other interviews with project participants, focal points and other stakeholders*	5 days
Data analysis and draft report write up	7 days
Final report write up	5 days

\*Note: The consultant is required to attend a project training workshop from 19-25 November 2019 at Chipata (Zambia/Malawi border) or 26 November – 2 December and the final regional workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to be held on 4-5 December 2019.

#### **(iv) Monitoring and Progress Control**

34. The evaluator must keep the EMU informed of the progress made in the evaluation on a regular basis.
35. The evaluator will submit a preliminary inception report by 20 November 2019 (prior to undertaking the field mission).
36. The evaluator will also present the draft report to the EMU and the project manager before the final submission, giving sufficient time for the verification of factual findings as well as its compliance with the ToR (approximately 2 weeks). The first draft of the report should be presented to the EMU by 01 March 2020 for quality assurance purposes. The draft report will then be shared with the project manager for factual clarification, before submission of the final report.
37. The deadline for submission of the final report will be 30 April 2020.
38. The contract concludes, and payment issued, upon satisfactory receipt of the final report.

#### **(v) Qualifications and Experience<sup>68</sup>**

- **Education:** Advanced university degree in economics, trade, development, public administration, rural development, or related field.
- **Experience:** At least 7 years of experience in conducting evaluations, preferably on interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. Demonstrated knowledge of issues of trade and gender related analysis is an advantage. Experience in gender mainstreaming is desirable.
- **Language:** Fluency in oral and written English.

#### **(vi) Conditions of Service**

39. The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

#### **(vii) Payment of the consultancy fee**

40. The Evaluation Consultant's fee will be paid in line with the following schedule and upon acceptance (part of the quality assurance process) by EMU of the key deliverables:
- Upon finalization of the inception report: 20%
  - Upon acceptance of the draft Evaluation Report: 40%
  - Upon acceptance of the final Evaluation Report: 40%.

#### **VI. Applying for the consultancy**

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<sup>68</sup> The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

41. Applicants are required to submit an expression of interest to undertake the assignment/consultancy and include the following:
  - Cover letter stating why you are suited for this work, your available start date and work experience, especially evaluation experience;
  - Detailed CV; and
  - A sample of a recent evaluation report.
42. Applications with the above details should be sent to [evaluation@unctad.org](mailto:evaluation@unctad.org)
43. **The deadline for submitting the applications is 20 October 2019.** UNCTAD reserves the right to close the application before the indicated date if a suitable candidate is found.



ii. Detailed results framework of the project

<b>Intervention logic</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Means of verification</b>
<b>Objective</b>		
To strengthen national capacities in selected African countries to leverage informal cross-border trade for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration		
<b>EA1</b> Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross-border traders in target countries	<b>IA 1.1</b> 70% of participating stakeholders confirm improved capacity to identify and address tariff and non-tariff barriers to women informal cross border traders	Workshop evaluation forms
	<b>IA 1.2</b> 2 out of the 3 target countries take on board recommendations addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers generated by the project activities	Programmatic documents, for example, the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies (DTIS), the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF), Governmental reports, including analytical studies
<b>A1.1</b> - Map tariff and non-tariff barriers to informal and small-scale cross-border trade between Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. The mapping exercise will include: a baseline assessment of informal cross-border traders, trade flows and border-crossing conditions at the three targeted border crossings; a mapping of tariff and non-tariff barriers (NTBs), by product category and typology of traders; an assessment of the trade regime (multiple RTAs and STRs), as it exists on paper and as implemented in practice		
<b>A1.2</b> - Conduct field missions in the three countries to collect quantitative and qualitative information for the mapping exercise. The missions will cover the organization of three kick-off workshops. Through the use of participative and interactive approaches, the workshops will provide a forum for the early engagement of national stakeholders, the validation and fine-tuning of baseline assessment results by reference to actual conditions at the three crossing points, the conduct of a focused needs assessment exercise, in terms of the format and content of the studies/reports. Participants will include border officers, representative of relevant ministries, associations of cross-border traders, and contracted NGOs. A1.2 will be carried out jointly with A2.2.		
<b>A1.3</b> - Building on the mapping exercise, prepare an analytical report on existing barriers to informal and small-scale cross-border trade between Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia. The report will include recommendations on how to streamline requirements for cross-border traders while ensuring regulatory coherence in a context of multiple overlapping RTAs and STRs. It will include detailed product-specific annexes with analytical findings and policy options disaggregated by product category and by typology of traders		
<b>A1.4</b> - Provide focused training to Ministry of Trade officials through hands-on advisory activities in the three countries (one per country) on how to redress trade barriers to ICBT. This will enable the project to reach key technical staff at the country level to review the outcomes of the analysis (A1.3), enable a constructive dialogue on the outcomes at the country specific level, and develop concrete steps for pursuing the recommendations at the national level. The training will set action plans endorsed by the Government to implement the policy recommendations, with clear identification of steps to translate the recommendations into practice.		
<b>A1.5</b> - Organize a regional workshop to share the report findings and promote policy dialogue among stakeholders. In contrast to A.1.4, this workshop aims not only at national issues, but those that must be addressed at the regional or cross-border levels, and in cooperation with multiple stakeholders. The workshop is addressed to the beneficiaries of the project, namely associations of small-scale and informal cross-border traders, especially female traders, and women's associations, trade ministries and regional organizations. Its objective is to raise awareness of and create capacity to address barriers to informal cross-border trade. Regional workshop is linked to A2.5.		
<b>EA 2</b> Improved capacity of policymakers and private stakeholders in the beneficiary countries to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders	<b>IA 2.1</b> 70% of participating stakeholders confirm improved capacity to identify and redress gender-specific supply-side obstacles faced by women informal cross-border traders	Workshop evaluation forms

	<p><b>IA 2.2</b> 2 out of the 3 target countries take on board recommendations addressing gender-specific supply side obstacles generated by the project activities</p>	<p>Programmatic documents, for example, the DTIS, the UNDAF, Governmental reports, including analytical studies</p>
<p><b>A 2.1</b> - Map and analyse supply side obstacles/issues that hinder the efficiency of and/or increase the cost and time faced by informal and small-scale cross-border traders (lack of scale, finance, market information, insurance, exchange rate issues, transport logistics, access to storage and other facilities, etc.), particularly women traders, at targeted border crossings; assess mechanisms and policy options to tackle the specific needs of ICBTs. The activity will be conducted through desk-based analysis where feasible, but predominately through on the ground data collection (see A 2.2) and analytical activities through partnership with a relevant regional/local NGO, academic institution or firm. Outcomes of this activity link directly to A2.3.</p>		
<p><b>A 2.2</b> - Conduct field missions in the three countries to collect information for the mapping exercise. This activity, carried out jointly with A1.2, will include three kick-off workshops, surveys, interviews, and focus groups with traders associations, and other stakeholders linked directly to the provisioning of supply-side trade support activities (e.g. banks, micro-finance organizations, transport associations, local officials, NGOs, etc.).</p>		
<p><b>A 2.3</b> - Building upon the analysis (A2.1), prepare a strategy report that details ways to streamline ICBT in supply-side services, including concrete recommendations for policies and interventions that can address issues identified. Given that circumstances can be quite unique depending on the border crossing, and given the cross-border nature of the issues being addressed, in order for this activity to provide concrete recommendations it will require a sub-national focus, but at a localized border-crossing level. Determinations and inferences made through the analysis may, however, require action at the national level depending on the precise nature of the policy.</p>		
<p><b>A 2.4</b>- Design and pilot micro-level schemes, based on the recommendations and strategy developed in A2.3, to the extent of their relevance in the local context, that will enhance informal and small-size cross border traders' access to supply side support services (such as supporting traders organizations, improving access to transportation/logistics services, finance, etc.). This activity will be carried out at the border-crossing level and will be uniquely targeted to those border crossings and the needs identified in the analysis and strategy (see A2.1 and A2.3). It will be executed through an on the ground consultancy/NGO with participation of local organizations and traders' associations.</p>		
<p><b>A2.5</b>-Organize a regional workshop (linked to A1.5) to share the report findings and promote policy dialogue between key stakeholders (e.g. regional, national and local officials, traders associations, women's associations, other relevant private sector stakeholders, relevant NGOs, etc.). The workshop will invite regional officials from, for instance, the East Africa Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well as relevant officials from target countries and other countries in the region. The aim of involving the regional community is to share lessons learned through the process that can be applied to other border crossings, encourage building on the successes of the pilot schemes and scaling up activities at other locations in the region, and promote sustainability by increasing institutional knowledge and awareness beyond just the project countries. Thus, the project will support policy uptake at the regional level (through the regional economic communities) to support ongoing dialogue on the issues following the conclusion of the project.</p>		

### iii. Stakeholder mapping / analysis

Stakeholder	Stake in the project and the topic that the project addresses	Level of influence over topic and project / Ways in which affected by topic and project	Expected use if the evaluation results	Way(s) to involve this stakeholder in the evaluation process
Cross-border Traders Associations of Malawi and Zambia (there is no CBTA in Tanzania)	Non-governmental bodies representing and defending the interests of small-scale traders.	Key role in project activities (sharing information, participating in online survey, facilitating the organization of focus group discussions etc). Their involvement in the project is key as they are established operators and knowledgeable about specific difficulties women face and credible counterparts for them. Participation in project activities, such as training programme, may have a catalytic effect on larger groups of traders	The evaluation results can provide evidence of the positive impacts of activities that directly benefit traders, and thus can support CBTA in advocating for the implementation/scale up of similar activities and strengthen their ability to pool resources.	Interviews with CBTA members (face-to-face during upcoming mission or either by telephone/mail)
Women traders	Ultimate beneficiaries of the project.	The micro-level pilot intervention has been designed in response to the challenges, knowledge gaps and skill development needs identified by women traders. As a result of the project women traders are expected to improve their knowledge of rules and regulations around cross-border trade, and to acquire entrepreneurship skills that will help their business thrive. It is expected that many women informal traders will consider formalization as they will have understood the risks of informal trade, the benefits of formalizing, and the actual procedures to conduct formal trade. It is also expected that thanks to new entrepreneurial skills acquired through the training, their business will grow.	The evaluation results can provide evidence of the positive impacts of activities that directly benefit traders, and can thus encourage the implementation of similar activities for other group of women traders or at other borders	Interviews with some women traders participating in the UNCTAD training (face-to-face during upcoming mission)
Trade ministries of Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania	Aware of the importance of ICBT and mandated to work on the issue. Involvement in the project as government counterparts (support and facilitation of project activities) and beneficiaries. Interest in supporting gender equality and encouraging formalization of trade.	Key role of Ministries of Trade to i) streamline ICBT in trade and trade-related policies; ii) implement further initiatives that respond to the needs of women traders, even at the bilateral level (e.g. bilateral simplified schemes); iii) advocate at the regional level for better tailoring of existing initiatives/schemes that support small-scale traders, and particularly women traders.	Understanding of the positive impacts that the implementation or scale-up of similar activities may have for broader gender equality and women's empowerment goals, trade promotion, public revenues and national economic growth.	Interviews with key government counterparts (face-to-face during upcoming mission or by telephone or mail)
Regional institutions (COMESA, EAC, SADC)	Engaged on the topic of ICBT. COMESA, EAC and SADC have set up frameworks for ICBT (COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR), EAC Simplified Trade Regime (STR) and SADC Trade Protocol (STP)).	Key role of regional institutions to improve the simplified trade regime consistently with multiple overlapping RTAs, and to promote further initiatives that support small-scale traders, and particularly women traders, at the regional level.	Understanding of the impacts that a better uptake and tailoring of existing simplified schemes may have on regional trade integration; promotion of new regional initiatives and policies that further support small-scale traders, particularly women.	Interviews with key counterparts from regional institutions (face-to-face during upcoming mission or by telephone or mail)

<p>Border Officials/Agencies (including Revenue Authorities, Immigration, Bureau of Standards, Police, etc.)</p>	<p>Overseeing CBT on the ground and having direct influence on facilitating trade flows</p>	<p>As a result of project activities, improved understanding of the challenges faced by informal traders, particularly women traders; improved relations with traders</p>	<p>The evaluation results can provide evidence of the positive impacts of activities that favour a dialogue between border authorities and traders, and can thus encourage the implementation of similar activities at other borders</p>	<p>Interviews with officers that have participated in training programme (face-to-face during upcoming mission or by telephone or email)</p>
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iv. Evaluation Matrix

Assumption to be tested	Indicators	Sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection	Methods and tools for data analysis
<b>EQ1 Relevance: To what extent did the project design, choice of activities and deliverables consider and address the priorities and needs of participating countries; taking into account UNCTAD's mandates and comparative advantages?</b>				
	1.3 Assessment of alignment of the intervention with UNCTAD's mandate, and contribution and consistency with UNCTAD Programme of Work	- Literature (scholarly and policy)	- Internet search (google scholar), documents provided by UNCTAD	- Content analysis
	1.4 Was the intervention a logical (matching problem and solution) reasonable (given institution/governance challenges) and complete (demand and supply) means to pursue the ends women's empowerment, economic growth and regional integration vis-à-vis these countries' development challenges?	- Project documents (PDD, mission reports) - Oct 17 FGD notes and survey data - Information resources and training curricula produced by project - KSI (all) - Observations of regional dialogue and training	- Provided by UNCTAD - Provided by UNCTAD - Provided by UNCTAD - KSI - Evaluator observation	- Content analysis - Content analysis - Content analysis - Content analysis - Observation analysis
<b>EQ2 Effectiveness: have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document?</b>				
<b>EQ3: Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?</b>				
	2.1 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved (A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3)? If not, why not?	- KSI project team PT7 - Project documents (PDD, mission reports, Oct 17 survey and FDG data etc) - Information resources produced by project	- KSI - Provided by UNCTAD - Provided by UNCTAD	- Content analysis - Content analysis - Content analysis
	2.2 Was the information guide produced technically accurate?	- KSI (project team PT1, trainers T5, trade associations TA2)	- KSI	- Content analysis
	2.3 Was the information guide produced relevant and useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?	- KSI (project team PT3, trainers T1-T4, T7, T8, customs officials C1, C2, C5, trade associations TA1, TA3-6 participants P1, P2, P4-10, P12-14) - Evaluation data collected	- KSI - Provided by UNCTAD	- Disaggregation and content analysis - Disaggregation and content analysis

	2.4 Was the information guide produced adequately disseminated and did they achieve conceptual penetration?	KSI (project team PT3, PT5 trainers T3, participants P2, P11, P12, customs officers C2, trade associations TA4)  Dissemination records	KSI  Provided by UNCTAD	Disaggregation and content analysis  Review of records
	2.5 To what extent was the information guide disseminated been effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?	KSI (trainers T3, participants P11, P14, customs officers C4, trade associations TA4)	KSI	Disaggregation and content analysis
<b>EQ2 Effectiveness: have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document?</b>				
<b>EQ3: Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?</b>				
	2.6 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved (A2.4)? If not, why not?	- Audience/participation lists  - KSI project team PT8  - Observation of training sessions	Provided by UNCTAD  KSI  Evaluator observation	- Content review  - Content analysis  - Observation analysis
	2.7 Were the training materials technically accurate (peer reviewed, pilot tested?)	- training curricula used by project  - KSI project team PT1	- Provided by UNCTAD  - KSI	- Content review  - Content analysis
	2.8 Was the training relevant vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?	- KSI (project team PT4, trainers T1-T4, T7, T8, customs officials C2, C5, trade associations TA3-6 participants P1, P4-10, P12-14)  - Review of training evaluation data  - Observation of training sessions	- KSI  - Provided by UNCTAD  - Evaluator observation	- Content analysis  - Content analysis  - Observation analysis
	2.9 Did the training achieve conceptual and population penetration? (how many trained out of how many, information recall, learn or likely to learn)?	KSI (project team PT4 trainers T3, participants P2, P11, P12, customs officers C2, trade associations TA4)  Inspection of attendance records	- KSI  Provided by UNCTAD	- Disaggregation and content analysis  - Content review
	2.10 To what extent has the training been effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?	KSI (trainers T3, participants P11, P14, customs officers C4, trade associations TA4)  Post-project survey?	- KSI  TBD	Disaggregation and content analysis  TBD
	2.11 Was the combination of the information guide and training sufficient to achieve the intended purpose of the project?	KSI (participants P8, 11, 13, 14, trainers T3 T4, customs officials C3 C6 C4, trade associations TA4, 6)	- KSI	- Content analysis

<b>EQ2 Effectiveness: have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives and outcomes as enunciated in the project document?</b>				
<b>EQ3: Is there evidence of any positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?</b>				
	2.12 Were project activities effectively delivered and expected accomplishments effectively achieved (A1.4, A1.5, A2.5)? If not, why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analytical reports and recommendations produced by project</li> <li>- Target participation list</li> <li>- Observation of regional dialogue</li> <li>- KSI project team PT9</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>- Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>- Evaluator observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content review</li> <li>- Content review</li> <li>- Observation analysis</li> </ul>
	2.13 Were the analytical reports and recommendations produced technically accurate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI (project team PT2, regional trade officials R2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content analysis</li> </ul>
	2.14 Were the analytical reports and recommendations produced relevant/useful vis-à-vis knowledge deficits and institutional/regulatory barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI (project team PT4.1, regional officials R1, R2, R3)</li> <li>- Evaluation data collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI</li> <li>- Provided by UNCTAD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disaggregation and content analysis</li> <li>- Content analysis</li> </ul>
	2.15 Were the analytical reports, recommendations and policy discourse produced adequately disseminated and did they achieve conceptual penetration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI (project team PT4.1, PT6, Regional officials R3).</li> <li>- Dissemination records</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI</li> <li>- Provided by UNCTAD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content analysis</li> <li>- Review of records</li> </ul>
	2 To what extent have the analytical reports, recommendations and policy discourse been effective in influencing thinking and or behaviour, immediately or in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI (Regional officials R4-6)</li> <li>- Post project survey?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KSI</li> <li>- TBD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content analysis</li> <li>- TBD</li> </ul>
<b>EQ4 Efficiency: have project implementation modalities, and internal monitoring and control been adequate in ensuring the achievement of expected outcomes in a timely and cost-effective manner?</b>				
	4.1 Were implementation modalities, internal monitoring and control adequate to achieving expected outcomes? (innovativeness) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation rate of the project</li> <li>• Planned versus actual allocation of expenses</li> <li>• Planned versus actual work plan</li> <li>• Extent to which the management of the project facilitated the implementation, including type of processes and/or procedures that were enacted to improve the implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial reports and project documents (PDD, mission reports etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provided by UNCTAD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Content review</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent to which the management of the project was based on results, including the existence of a RBM policy</li> <li>Innovation</li> </ul>			
	4.2 Was the intervention designed and delivered in the most efficient and expeditious way to achieve the desired ends and versus alternate delivery methods (innovativeness)?	- KSI (project team PT10)	- KSI	- Content analysis
<b>EQ5 Sustainability: Is there evidence that beneficiary countries are committed to continue working towards the project objectives beyond the end of the project and achieve the change required for the intended impact?</b>				
	<p>5.1 Did the policy dialogue and recommendations developed promote reforming trade regime reform to facilitate CBT? (See 2.14)</p> <p>5.2 To what extent are trained ICBT committed to continue working towards the project objectives? (See 2.10)</p> <p>5.3 Future projects or other ways support to ICBT can be delivered?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of information resources produced</li> <li>Inspection of target audience/participation list</li> <li>Review of regional dialogue evaluation data</li> </ul>		<p>Observation of regional dialogue</p> <p>KSIs senior trade officials</p>
<b>EQ6 Gender and human rights: To what extent was a human rights-based approach and a gender-mainstreaming strategy were incorporated in the design and implementation of the activity?</b>				
	6.1 Extent to which a HRBA was adopted in project design and activities implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents (PDD, mission reports etc)</li> <li>Audience/participation lists</li> <li>Information guide and training curricula produced by project</li> <li>Training evaluation data</li> <li>KSI project team (PT11)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>Provided by UNCTAD</li> <li>KSI</li> </ul>	<p>Content review</p> <p>Content analysis</p> <p>Content analysis</p> <p>Content analysis</p> <p>Content analysis</p>
	6.2 Extent to which gender mainstreaming was taken into account in development of information resources and design and implementation training (safe space)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation of training sessions</li> <li>KSI (trainers T9 T6, trade associations TA7, Regional officials R7, customs officials C7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluator observation</li> <li>KSI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation analysis</li> <li>Content analysis</li> </ul>
<b>EQ7 Partnerships and Synergies: To what extent did the project leverage partnerships with national and regional counterparts, international development partners, the civil society and/or the private sector in support of results, and sustainability of results?</b>				
	7.1 Were partnerships articulated in the project document realised? if not why?	- Project documents (PDD, mission reports etc)	- Provided by UNCTAD	- Content review



		- KSI project team PT12	- KSI	- Content analysis
	7.2 What partnership opportunities might have been pursued to create additional benefits, synergies or likelihood of sustainability?	- KSI project team PT12	- KSI	- Content analysis

v. List of persons interviewed for evaluation

1. Customs and border officials (10)
2. Trader associations (5)
3. Regional participants (10)
4. UNCTAD project team (3)
5. Training participants (40)

T	Trainer	Gabriel Musentekwa Theresah Chuula Benedict Lema	27/12/2019 27/12/2019 05/12/2019	M F M					
CB	Customs and border officials	CB1	21/12/2019	M					
		CB2	21/12/2019	F					
		CB3	25/12/2019	M					
		CB4	25/12/2019	M					
		CB5	25/12/2019	M					
		CB6	25/12/2019	M					
		CB7	26/12/2019	M					
		CB8	26/12/2019	M					
		CB9	26/12/2019	F					
		CB10	26/12/2019	M					
TA	Trader associations	TA1	25/12/2019	M					
		TA2	25/12/2019	M					
		TA3	26/12/2019	F					
		TA4	26/12/2019	M					
		TA5	26/12/2019	M					
RP	Regional participant	RP1	04/12/2019	M					
		RP2	04/12/2019	M					
		RP3	04/12/2019	M					
		RP4	04/12/2019	F					
		RP5	04/12/2019	F					
		RP6	05/12/2019	F					
		RP7	05/12/2019	M					
		RP8	05/12/2019	M					
		RP9	05/12/2019	F					
		RP10	05/12/2019	F					
PT	Project team	Simonetta Zarrilli Katerina Joklova Mariangela Linoci	30/01/2020						

		Code	Date	Gender	Income status	Employees	Type bus.	Legalized	Uses border crossing
TP	Training participant	TP 1	20/12/2019	F	Poor	1	Food		Yes
		TP2	20/12/2019	F	Poor	2	clothing		No
		TP3	20/12/2019	F	Poor	0	Raw products		No
		TP4	20/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Clothing		No
		TP5	20/12/2019	F	Poor	0	kitchenware		No
		TP6	20/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		Sometimes
		TP7	20/12/2019	M	Very poor	0	Food		Sometimes
		TP8	21/12/2019	F	Not poor	5	Electronics	Yes	Yes
		TP9	21/12/2019	F	Poor	0	Homeware		No
		TP10	21/12/2019	F	Not poor	15	clothing		No
		TP11	21/12/2019	F	Very poor	2	kitchenware		No
		TP12	22/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		Yes
		TP13	22/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	clothing		Yes
		TP14	22/12/2019	F	Poor	2	shoes	Registered only	Yes
		TP15	22/12/2019	F	Very poor	1	Make up		No
		TP16	22/12/2019	F	Very poor	NA	Food		No
		TP17	23/12/2019	F	Poor	0	kitchenware		Yes
		TP18	23/12/2019	F	Not poor	5	Food		Sometimes
		TP19	23/12/2019	F	Not poor	2	Food		Sometimes
		TP20	23/12/2019	F	Poor	2	kitchenware		Sometimes
		TP21	23/12/2019	F	Poor	0	various		Sometimes
		TP22	23/12/2019	F	Very poor	1	Make up		No
		TP23	23/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Raw products		Yes
		TP24	23/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		Yes
		TP25	23/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		No
		TP26	23/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	various		Yes
		TP27	25/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	homeware		No
		TP28	25/12/2019	F	Poor	2	various		No
		TP29	25/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		No
		TP30	26/12/2019	F	Poor	2	Food		Yes
		TP31	26/12/2019	F	Poor	1	homeware		No
		TP32	26/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	kitchenware		Sometimes
		TP34	26/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Make up		Sometimes
		TP35	26/12/2019	F	Poor	2	jewelry		Yes
		TP36	26/12/2019	F	Poor	1	various		Yes
		TP37	26/12/2019	F	Poor	3	various		Sometimes
		TP38	27/12/2019	F	Poor	NA	underware		No
		TP39	27/12/2019	F	Very poor	0	Food		No
		TP40	27/12/2019	F	Poor	0	Raw products		No



## vi. References to secondary information sources

### UN Documents

- Zambia–United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (2016-2021)
- UN Development Assistance Framework Malawi 2019-2023
- United Nations Development Assistance Plan for Tanzania 2016–2021 (UNDAP II)

### Policy documents and working papers

- K Mbekeani, Regional Integration Policy Papers, African Development Bank Group NEPAD (2014)
- World Bank country profiles: Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia
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- N Mori, Women’s entrepreneurship: Developments in Tanzania, Institute of Management and Entrepreneurship Development and ILO (2014)
- M Cali and D Willem te Velde, Is Zambia contracting Dutch Disease? ODI Working Paper 279, (2007)
- The challenges of implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement, World Trade Report (2015)
- Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III): Building a Productive, Competitive and Resilient Nation
- African Economic Outlook 2019, African Development Bank
- Country Profile, Republic of Zambia, Africa Development Bank (2016)  
[https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/Zambia\\_Country\\_Profile.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/Zambia_Country_Profile.pdf)
- Tanzania Economic Update: Human Capital, the Real Wealth of Nations, World Bank (2019) at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/873031563454513018/pdf/Tanzania-Economic-Update-Human-Capital-The-Real-Wealth-of-Nations.pdf>

### Books

- P Collier, The Bottom Billion Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About (2007)
- P Collier, Plundered Planet (2010)
- CK Prahalad and SL Hart, The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid
- N Mthuli, Regional Integration and Trade in Africa (2014)
- L Signé Unlocking Africa’s Business Potential: Trends, Opportunities, Risks, and Strategies
- D Moyo, Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There is Another Way for Africa (2009)

vii. Open-ended interview questionnaires

<b>viii. TRAINING PARTICIPANTS</b>
<b>Information resources /training on rules and procedures</b>
<i>Interview objectives and ethics</i>
<i>Background information: type of business, employees, formalized or not, participated in similar trainings?</i>
P1 Do you think you will refer back to the guide in the future?
P2 Please provide an example of something you learned about rules and procedures that you didn't know previously?
P3 What documentation do you need for your person and your goods when you cross border?
<b>Relevance</b>
<i>Bias control question</i>
P4 What's the biggest worry/challenge in your life?
P5 What's the biggest worry/challenge in your business?
P6 In the video, the principal challenge appeared to be high taxes, what do you think about that?
<b>Behavioral/Conceptual changes</b>
P7 What has prevented/discouraged you from formalizing your business?
P8 What would need to change for you to formalize?
P9 What are the challenges/problems posed by crossing the border?
P10 Did having customs and immigration officials at the training help and how?
P11 How would you deal with a problem at the border since participating in the training on rules and procedures?
<b>Training</b>
P12 Please provide an example of you have learned from the training on entrepreneurialism that you did not know previously?
P13 Can you name any issues/challenges that the training, either on rules and procedures or entrepreneurialism, left unaddressed?
P14 Can you think of anything you might do differently since participating in the training on entrepreneurialism?
<b>TRAINERS</b>
<i>Interview objectives and ethics</i>
<i>Bias control question</i>
T1 What is the biggest problem/challenge in training participants' lives?
T2 What is the biggest problem/challenge in their business?
T3 From their questions/body language/business plans, to what extent do you believe that participants have the skills, capacity, motivation and regulatory framework to formalize/expand/diversify their businesses?
T4 What would need to happen for them to formalize/regularize their business practices?
T5 Were the information resources produced by the project accurate and complete?
T6 How do you do things differently for women trainings?
T7 What are the principal risks at border for female ICBTs?
T8 What would have to happen for these risks to be eliminated/mitigated?
T9 Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project?
<b>CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS</b>
<i>Interview objectives and ethics</i>
C1 Do you think you will refer back to the guide in the future?
C2 Please provide an example of something you learned from the workshop on rules and procedures that you didn't know previously?
C3 Can you name any issues/challenges that the workshop left unaddressed?
C4 Can you think of anything you might do differently as a result of participating in the workshop?
C5 What are the primary reasons that ICBT do not formalise/regularize their businesses?
C6 What would need to happen/change for them to formalise/regularize?
C7 Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project?
<b>TRADE ASSOCIATIONS</b>
<i>Interview objectives and ethics</i>
<i>Background info: services provided,</i>
TA1 Do you think you will refer back to the guide in the future?
TA2 Can you comment on the accuracy of the guide produced?
TA3 What is the biggest problem/challenge for ICBTs in their businesses?
TA4 From their questions/body language/business plans, to what extent do you believe that participants have the skills, capacity, motivation and regulatory framework to formalize/expand/diversify their businesses?
TA5 What are the primary reasons that ICBT do not formalise/regularize* their businesses?
TA6 What would need to happen/change for them to formalise/regularize?
TA7 Do you have any thoughts about the targeting of female ICBTs in this project?
<b>REGIONAL/TRADE OFFICIALS</b>
<i>Interview objectives and ethics</i>
R1 Do you think you will refer back to the analytical guide and recommendations in the future??
R2 Can you comment on the accuracy and relevance of the recommendations produced?
R3 From the reports/discussion, can you give an example of any fact or insight that you didn't know previously?

R4	Against other priorities, what is the likelihood that steps will be taken to better support the needs of female ICBTs will be introduced in the next 12 months? How does this complement other or ongoing initiatives?
R5	Against other priorities, what is the likelihood that steps will be taken to better facilitate/promote/reform CBT in the next 12 months? How does this complement other or ongoing initiatives?
R6	Can you think of anything else you might do or do differently as a result of participating in the dialogue?
R7	Can you comment on the utility of training female ICBTs under this project?
<b>PROJECT TEAM</b>	
PT1	Were the information resources produced and training materials peer reviewed, pilot tested? By whom? If not, why not?
PT2	Were the analytical reports and recommendations peer reviewed, pilot tested? By whom? If not, why not?
PT 3	Can you provide any insight or anecdotes that speak to relevance/utility and conceptual penetration of the information guide produced?
PT 4	Can you provide any insight or anecdotes that speak to relevance/utility and conceptual penetration of the training provided?
PT 4.1	Can you provide any insight or anecdotes that speak to relevance/utility and conceptual penetration of the analytical papers at the regional dialogue?
PT 5	Was a dissemination strategy prepared for info booklet? Electronic? Local language formats?
PT6	Was a dissemination strategy prepared for analytical documents? Electronic? Local language formats?
PT 7	Explain implementation of A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, explain any changes or bottlenecks?
PT8	Explain implementation of A2.4 explain any changes or bottlenecks?
PT9	Explain implementation of A1.4, A1.5, A2.5, explain any changes or bottlenecks?
PT10	In retrospect, can you speak to the efficiency and expeditiousness with which the project was implemented?
PT11	How and in what specific ways was a HRBA adopted?
PT12	Were the partnerships set out in the PDD realised? In retrospect, what missed opportunities for greater cooperation/partnership can you identify?