



Programme

for the

***“Two-Day National Workshop on ATR/NTR/NTMs and
Notification Procedures under the ATIGA”***

to be held in

Vientiane, Lao PDR

on

20 – 21 October 2014

(ARISE)

Project No. DCI-ASIE/2010/021-657

Service Contract No. DCI6ASIE/2012/297-069



1. Introduction

Activity 1.1.2.2 (on “Assisting in the development of regional capacity to classify and notify NTMs”) of the programme of technical assistance of ASEAN Regional Integration Supported by the European Union (hereinafter, ARISE) falls within ARISE’s Sub-Project 1.1.2 on the “Support to ATIGA Implementation” and aims at supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreements (hereinafter, ATIGA), with particular focus on enhanced transparency and non-tariff measures (hereinafter, NTMs).

The strengthening of the institutional arrangements and management of the regional economic integration process will occur through the creation and operationalization of the ASEAN Trade Repository (hereinafter, ATR) and the National Trade Repositories (hereinafter, NTRs). ARISE’s engagement, as endorsed by ASEAN in its Overall Work-Plan, aims at strengthening the institutional framework within the ASEAN Member States (hereinafter, AMSs) and the ASEAN Secretariat (hereinafter, ASEC) in relation to regulatory transparency, classification and notification of NTMs, and the related reporting processes. The ultimate goal of this technical assistance and capacity building is to enable AMSs to operate NTRs and to use them as a stepping stone to feed information, in a standardised and systematic manner, to the ATR, which is a mandated facility under the ATIGA and an agreed objective by 2015.

Regulatory transparency is a fundamental catalyst for economic development, cross-border investment and trade, and ASEAN regional integration. The ATIGA requires that an ATR be established by 2015 and be made accessible to the public through the internet. The ATR must contain the trade and customs laws and procedures of all AMSs and trade-related information such as: (i) tariff nomenclature; (ii) MFN tariffs, preferential tariffs offered under this Agreement and other Agreements of ASEAN with its Dialogue Partners; (iii) rules of origin; (iv) non-tariff measures; (v) national trade and customs laws and rules; (vi) procedures and documentary requirements; (vii) administrative rulings; (viii) best practices in trade facilitation applied by each Member State; and (ix) list of authorised traders of AMSs.

The initial ‘Mapping Exercise’, conducted by ARISE within Activity 1.1.2.1 and the related Activity Reports with the Conclusions and Recommendations, as circulated to the ASEC and AMSs and presented at the 13th Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on the ATIGA of 11-14 November 2013 in Yangon, Myanmar, indicated a number of actions that need to be considered by AMSs for purposes of moving forward the process of establishment and operationalisation of the NTRs/ATR.

In line with those conclusions and recommendations, and according to the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of Activity 1.1.2.2, the next area of intervention of ARISE then focused on building the skills on NTRs/ATR content development, the reporting processes, and the templates and common classification language, especially in relation to NTMs (in cooperation/coordination with other international donors active in this area of technical assistance, such as UNCTAD and/or the World Bank), in order to ensure that a standardised and harmonious notification process occurs regionally and in each AMS.

The first task of this activity, reflected in the Report by ARISE on the “Definition of the ATR’s ‘Shell’ Architecture”, concerned the development of the ATR’s ‘shell’ architecture (i.e., its substantive structure and outlay), which is to dictate the structure of the IT interface and the requirements for both the hardware and software development, as well as informing the



adjustments to be brought to the currently-operating individual NTRs so that all 10 AMSs' repositories will have the same outer structure, scope, look and searchability functions.

The second task, which resulted in the Report by ARISE on the "*Definition of Key Concepts and of a Standard Classification System for the ATR*", concerned the formulation of the definitions of key ATR/NTRs' concepts for AMSs' consideration and of a standard classification system that is to provide the framework for the notification and the storage on the NTRs/ATR of the trade-related measures in all areas of notification under Article 13 of the ATIGA.

The third task, which resulted in the Report by ARISE on the "*Standard notification procedures and forms*", focussed on the development of the standard notification forms under Article 11 of the ATIGA, to be considered for adoption by AMSs and then systematically used. These notification forms were developed so as to be easy to fill-in, as much as possible based on similar templates used by AMSs when notifying their measures to the WTO, based on the classification language and definitions developed for the ATR/NTRs, and geared to seamlessly feed the information into the storage matrix that will provide the framework of the ATR/NTRs.

These three Reports (*i.e.*, Reports on the "*Definition of the ATR's 'Shell' Architecture*", on the "*Definition of Key Concepts and of a Standard Classification System for the ATR*", and on the "*Standard notification procedures and forms*"), together with their supporting materials and annexes, have been circulated by the ASEC to all AMSs. In part, they have been discussed in general terms at the 14th CCA meeting held in Lombok, Indonesia 5-7 March 2014.

A two-day regional workshop was then held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 31 April and 1 May 2014, for the benefit of the senior AMSs' officials that play a key role in the functioning of the respective NTRs and/or in the inter-agency or inter-ministerial coordination bodies that have been or are being set-up in order to meet the transparency requirements under the ATIGA, both vis-à-vis the functioning of the ATR/NTRs under Article 13 of the ATIGA and in light of the notifications to be made under Articles 11 and 40 of the ATIGA.

The 15th CCA meeting held in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 12-13 June 2014 endorsed in principle the ATR's '*Shell*' Architecture proposed by ARISE and technical assistance is now necessary and being provided in order to ensure that the ATR's structure can be properly understood at AMSs' level, the NTRs be adequately adjusted or synchronized to the regional needs and architecture, and the NTRs/ATR framework ultimately deliver the expected degree of transparency and information, as mandated under the ATIGA.

This National Workshop aims at achieving this objective of capacity building. Ideally, at least one senior representative from each ministry or agency or body that plays a key role in the functioning of the NTR or that sits in the inter-agency or inter-ministerial coordination body that have been or are being set-up in order to meet the transparency requirements, should participate to the two-day National Workshop.

These senior-level officials should be responsible for the NTR and proficient with the NTR's operational mechanisms, structures and needs. They should also be well-acquainted with the functioning of the current trade repository or portal managed in the country, including if possible with the related IT requirements. All attendees should be familiar with the three Reports indicated above in that the two-day National Workshop will review in detail each document and the definitions, mechanisms and procedures described therein.



2. Programme of the Two-Day National Workshop

20 October 2014

- 08:30-09:00 Registration
- 09:00-09:15 Introduction / Presentation by ARISE
- 09:15-09:30 Key Note Address by Host Country's High-Level Government Official
- 09:30-09:45 Photo Opportunity
- 09:45-10:00 Presentation by ASEAN Secretariat
- 10:00-10:15 Coffee/Tea Break
- 10:15-11:15 *"ATR's 'Shell' Architecture and Implications for Laos PDR's NTR"* (by ARISE)
- 11:15-11:45 *"NTM Database" and "Standard Notification Procedures and Forms"* (by ARISE)
- 11:45-12:00 Q&A and Technical Discussion
- 12:00-13:30 Lunch Break
- 13:30-15:00 *"Definition of Key Concepts and of a Standard Classification System for the ATR"* (by ARISE)
- 15:00-15:15 Coffee/Tea Break
- 15:15-16:30 Q&A and Technical Discussion with the Use of Case Studies and Simulations

21 October 2014

- 08:30-09:00 Registration
- 09:00-10:15 Review and Training on the *"UNCTAD 2012 NTM Classification"* (by ARISE)
- 10:30-10:45 Coffee/Tea Break
- 10:45-12:00 Review and Training on the *"UNCTAD 2012 NTM Classification"* (by ARISE)
- 12:00-13:30 Lunch Break
- 13:30-15:00 *"Review of Laos PDR's Trade Portal in Light of ATR/NTR"* (Laos PDR's Trade Portal Official)
- 15:00-15:15 Coffee/Tea Break
- 15:15-16:15 *"Technical Training on Laos PDR's NTR"* (ARISE)
- 16:15-16:30 Conclusions and Definition of an Action Plan for NTR Implementation and Related Technical Assistance Needs

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