Online training on cross-border e-commerce for SMEs' export: opportunities, challenges and policy implications

28 March to 30 April 2024, Open meeting

Introduction

key challenges for SMEs' participation in international trade have been long recognized. For example, OECD (2008) singles out 47 key barriers which can be further divided into INTERNAL and EXTERNAL barriers. Internal barriers encompass challenges within a company that stem from its organizational resources, capabilities, and its approach to the export business. These include difficulties in accessing and processing information about international markets, inefficiencies in internal functions like human resources, production, and finance as they relate to exporting, and hurdles in adapting marketing strategies to fit overseas markets, encompassing product, pricing, distribution, logistics, and promotional activities.

Cross-border e-commerce has, to a degree, mitigated certain barriers. For example, it allows sellers to showcase their products on e-commerce platforms, reaching a vast audience of potential buyers. However, cross-border e-commerce is not a cure-all solution, and does not address all of the challenges encountered by SMEs. For instance, potential buyers might remain sceptical about product quality based solely on online reviews from these platforms.

Objectives

This training is designed to help policymakers in Asia and the Pacific gain a clearer understanding of cross-border e-commerce. It will enhance their knowledge of the opportunities cross-border e-commerce offers for SME exports and the challenges that persist. Additionally, the training will explore policy options available to these policymakers.

Key modules

This training will cover the following six topics

1. The nature of cross-border e-commerce
2. Key challenges for SMEs' export in traditional trade and opportunities brought by cross-border e-commerce
3. Cross cross-border e-commerce development, business models and its managerial implications

4. Case study: cross-border e-commerce policy of China
5. Complexity of each procedure of cross-border e-commerce
6. Policy implication

Online Training Delivery Plan

Self-Paced Learning Materials: The training materials will be accessible online, enabling learners to progress through the topics at their own pace. To access the videos, please visit the event webpage's video/photo tab or access through this YouTube playlist. (Please note that these videos serve as an introduction. For a comprehensive understanding, participants are encouraged to read the first four reports listed in the References.).

Kickoff Webinar: To initiate the training program, the selected experts will be invited to share their perspectives on the topic (28 March 12.00-13.30 hours Bangkok time). For further details and registration, please visit the event webpage.

Live Q&A Sessions: To further support the learners, live Q&A sessions will be scheduled. These sessions are designed to address any questions or clarifications the learners may have, facilitating a deeper understanding of the training content (25 April 2024, 1200-1300 hours Bangkok time).

Online Quiz and Certification: An online quiz will be administered towards the end of the training period. This assessment aims to evaluate the learners' understanding of the material. Participants who successfully pass the quiz will be awarded a certificate (29-30 April 2024)

References

1. A report titled “Cross-border e-commerce for SMEs’ export: opportunities, challenges and policy recommendations” (https://www.unescap.org/kp/2024/cross-border-e-commerce-sme-exports-opportunities-challenges-and-policy-recommendations)
2. Understanding Every Step of Cross-Border E-Commerce: Exporting Food Products from Chile to China, (https://www.unescap.org/kp/2024/understanding-every-step-cross-border-e-commerce-exporting-food-products-chile-china)
3. Understanding Every Step of Cross-Border E-Commerce: Exporting Electronic Products from China to Malaysia ((https://www.unescap.org/kp/2024/understanding-every-step-cross-border-e-commerce-exporting-electronic-products-china)
4. Materials on the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (https://www.unescap.org/projects/cpta)
5. E-Learning Series on Business Process Analysis for Trade Facilitation: https://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment-innovation/trade-facilitation/bpa-course.