

Enhancing Online National Trade Portals/Repositories

UNESCAP-ARTNeT-ITD Online Course on Trade Facilitation for Sustainable Development

Module 4 – Expected Contents

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The objective of this module

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To discuss about

- ▶ contents and their **quality attributes**
- ▶ how to assess/measure them by **benchmarking & peer review judgements**
- ▶ some initial ideas to generate recommendations

Key attributes of contents that **available** or should be available on the NTR*

1. Accessibility/Availability e.g. ease of access
 2. Relevancy/Understandability e.g. ease of understand
 3. Features/Functions/Performances e.g. ease of use
 4. Accuracy
 5. Timeliness (Up-to-Date)
 6. Consistency
 7. Completeness
- Note & Tips:**
- Most of these attributes are quality in nature.
 - These quality attributes are characteristics of the contents in different angles but may be overlapped in some senses.
 - Quality attributes should be somehow specified with a concrete scenario with quantitative measures

* A Data Governance Framework <https://www.dga.or.th/th/profile/2108/>,
<http://www.datagovernance.com/the-dgi-framework/>

* DGI Data Governance Framework <http://www.datagovernance.com/>

1. Accessibility – Ease of Access

- ▶ **Ease of Access** means how easy it is to access to the specific content e.g. taking a lot of time with so many mouse clicks, or very quick with just few clicks to find the expected content.
 - ▶ 0 means Extremely difficult or **not available** at all
 - ▶ 1 means Very difficult to find
 - ▶ 2 means Some difficult to find
 - ▶ 3 means Moderately easy to find
 - ▶ 4 means Very easy to find/access to
 - ▶ 5 means Extremely easy/very fast to find the things the user wants

2. Understandability – Ease of Understand

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- ▶ **Ease of Understand** means how easy it is for the user to read and understand the content, or **how friendly** the content presents itself.
 - ▶ 0 means Extremely difficult to understand
 - ▶ 1 means Very difficult to understand
 - ▶ 2 means Some difficult to understand
 - ▶ 3 means Moderately easy to understand
 - ▶ 4 means Very easy to understand
 - ▶ 5 means Extremely easy to understand

Topics of Contents to be accessible & understandable on an NTP/R (1/2)

As a minimum (as recommended in UN/CEFACT – ITP-PDA/SWD TIP – P1085 – draft Recommendation - Guidelines for establishing a Trade Information Portal, July 2020)

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As related to General Aspects*

- A1. Laws, regulations, decrees, instructions, notifications and any other legal instruments** relating to trade
- A2. Forms and/or electronic messages** used to apply for permits, licenses, Customs clearance, etc.
- A3. Information on how to connect to governmental electronic systems** related to international trade, i.e. Single Window, individual ministries, ...
- A4. Penalty provisions** for breach of formalities
- A5. Procedures** for appeal or review
- A6. Notifications** or guidance notes
- A7. Lists of codes** required in various documents, e.g. country codes, units of measurement, currency codes, etc.

* These general aspects are useful at the product level as well.

Topics of Contents to be accessible & understandable on an NTP/R (2/2)

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As related to generic and specific products

- B1. Procedures comprising the practical steps** for discharging regulatory obligations with Customs and other agencies including those required by a Single Window, where applicable
- B2. Commodity classification** in the format in use in each country (most countries have adopted the Harmonized System* format) and **associated tariff rates**
- B3. Fees and other charges** associated with each commodity or regime
- B4. Preferential tariffs or special requirements** for trading with countries that are parties to a Trade Agreement or Free Trade Agreement or other form of preference
- B5. Rules for classification** of products for **Customs valuation purposes**
- B6. Special measures** applicable to specific commodities or products, e.g. quotas, exemptions, prohibitions or restrictions for **Sanitary/Phytosanitary (SPS)** or other reasons
- B7. Non-tariff measures** such as requirements to obtain a license, permit, certification, registration, submit to an inspection or testing, or others
- B8. Technical standards** required for specific categories of products, either mandatory (technical regulations) or recommended
- B9. Information on advance rulings** that may be made publicly available.

How to assess/measure the quality of the contents?

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- ▶ **By benchmarking the contents' qualities (e.g. ease of access, ease of understand) of the assessed NTR with of other countries' good NTRs**
- ▶ **Using a scenario from the user's perspective, e.g**
 - ▶ Importing “organic fertilizers” to a country.
- ▶ Using peer review techniques, e.g. scoring by judgements of a group of domain experts/traders after navigating through the assessed NTR and other countries's NTRs, then arithmetic means shall be calculated.

Let's use a scenario "importing organic fertilizers" to Thailand?
 We'd like to assess Thailand's "<http://www.thailandntr.com/en>" (called NTR1 in the table)
 by benchmarking it with Tajikistan's "<https://tajtrade.tj/?l=en>" (say NTR2 in the table)

Each individual navigates into these web sites for each topic below, e.g. B1, B2, B3, B4 etc. For each topic, make a personal judgement by giving the score 0-5. After all individuals provide their scores in the table below, then the average can be calculated.

The ultimate purpose of this exercise to help each individual to generate improvement ideas for the NTR under the assessment, after capturing some pain points, some unavailable contents, difficulty to understand etc.

For example, procedures are only for general products, no flow diagrams or specific information about these products because more permits needed in which Tajtrade.tj is available, very easy to access,

Expected Contents	Assessed Aspects	NTR1	NTR2	NTR3	NTR4
B1. Procedures comprising the practical steps for discharging regulatory obligations with Customs and other agencies including those required by a Single Window, where applicable	Ease of Access				
	Ease to Understand				
B2. Commodity classification in the format in use in each country (most countries have adopted the Harmonized System* format) and associated tariff rates	Ease of Access				
	Ease to Understand				
B3. Fees and other charges associated with each commodity or regime	Ease of Access				
	Ease to Understand				
B4. Preferential tariffs or special requirements for trading with countries that are parties to a Trade Agreement or Free Trade Agreement or other form of preference	Ease of Access				
	Ease to Understand				

Information required by the user often inter-related

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Users (importers, exporters or an individual) normally want to look for

- ▶ **a specific commodity code** or product type and discover any tariffs and duties applicable,
- ▶ whether **any specific authorizations** are required to import or export goods,
- ▶ **what the procedure** is to obtain the authorizations, and
- ▶ **which legal instruments** provide the legal basis for these requirements

Conclusion for this module

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Topics that have been discussed

- ▶ contents and their **quality attributes**
- ▶ how to assess/measure them by **benchmarking & peer review judgements**

In the next module

We're going to discuss about recommended features and functions of an effective NTP/R.

Thank you.