



UNITED NATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
STATISTICS DIVISION



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**UN/DESA Development Account project for countries of South East Asia**

**Initial Assessment Questionnaire of the National Practices  
on International Merchandise Trade Statistics  
Compilation and Dissemination**

The Development Account project aims at strengthening the statistical capacity of five South East Asian countries, namely Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Timor Leste and Vietnam

This part of the overall project aims to improve the collection and compilation of statistics required for national development planning in the area of international merchandise trade. The expected accomplishment is the increased knowledge and capability of the national statistical office to compile international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS) within the national statistical system. The strategy for achieving this is through a workshop, country missions and frequent communications with the countries.

The purpose of this initial questionnaire, prepared by UNSD, is to consolidate the information available on national practices and to be used as an input for the creation of country action plans. The questionnaire consist of two parts: Part I focusing on the fundamental aspect of data compilation and Part II focusing on IMTS Methodology and Compilers Practices. The results of the questionnaire Part I will be presented on the Workshop and questionnaire Part II will be discussed during the Workshop.

**Therefore, we would like to request that you complete and return Part I of this questionnaire by 15 January 2010. As mentioned, Part II will be discussed during the workshop and if possible, please complete and return Part II before or at the workshop. There is only one questionnaire per country, thus if necessary, please make arrangement and coordination between agencies involved in the collection, compilation and dissemination of IMTS.**

Country: Lao PDR

***PART I. Fundamental Aspect of Data Compilation and Dissemination***

**Institutional Arrangements**

- Who is the responsible agency for the compilation and dissemination of international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS)?
  - National Statistical Office
  - Customs Administration
  - Central Bank
  - Ministry, *please provide the name:*
  - Others, *please specify:*

If no responsible agency or more than two agencies are selected, *please explain:*

- Who are the agencies providing detailed trade data for the responsible agency mentioned above?

	Frequency of data submission			
	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-Annual	Annual
Customs Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Free Zones Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Central Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Energy Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Does the responsible agency have any memorandum of understanding (MoU) or any similar working agreement with any of the agencies mentioned above?
  - Yes  No

**Data Sources**

4. What are the present
- <sup>1</sup>
- and potential
- <sup>2</sup>
- sources of data in your country?

	Present	Potential	Not Applicable
Customs Declarations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records from Free Zones Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Records of monetary authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reports of commodity boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foreign shipping manifests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parcel and letter post records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aircraft and ship registers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Administrative records associated with taxation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Enterprise surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others, <i>please specify</i> :	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If customs declarations are not main source of data, *please indicate the main data source*:

5. How does the responsible agency receive the data from providing agencies?  
*Please indicate data format and the frequency of data submission*: Recieve soft copy of Excell with all data that the Custom Department has/available

**Basic Data Quality Control**

6. Do *the providing agencies* validate data entries, i.e., proper coding for commodity, partner country, etc?  
 Yes  No  
 If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: Custom Department (CD) does the data entry and key coding such as the commodity and country code by using the Program "C2000"
7. Does *the compiling agency* validate data entries, i.e., proper coding for commodity, partner country, etc?  
 Yes  No  
 If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: Department of Statistics (DoS) does data checking after recieve trade raw data from the CD
8. Does the responsible agency check individual records, i.e., unit value checking?  
 Yes  No  
 If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: For DoS does check the individual all records by focusing on the data consistency
9. Does the responsible agency implement macro level checks, such as checking growth rates or checking against other statistics, e.g., domestic production?  
 Yes  No  
 If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: DoS does only for some main domestic products, etc

<sup>1</sup> Refers to data sources that are currently being used

<sup>2</sup> Refers to data source that may be used in the future to improve IMTS coverage

10. Does the responsible agency implement further check on the outputs, i.e., structure of trade?

Yes  No

If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: DoS divides two sections as agriculture and industry products since 2000

**Data and Metadata Dissemination**

11. In how many days after the closing of the reference period (exactly or approximately), data become available to public?

	No of days		
	Monthly Data	Quarterly Data	Annual Data
Printed or CD/DVD Publications			
Press Releases			
Web Sites			

If printed publications are available, *please indicate the name of publications*: Statistics Year Book

If web sites are available, *please provide the URL*: www.nsc.gov.la (on improving under the E-

government project)

12. What is the level of detail of publicly available monthly, quarterly and annual data?

	Level of detail	
	Aggregated Data <sup>3</sup>	Detailed Data <sup>4</sup>
Monthly Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Quarterly Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Annual Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Information Technology and Human Resources**

13. Does Customs Administration use a computerized system to register customs declarations?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please provide details about the system*: Custom 2000, "C2000"

14. Does the responsible agency use a specialized system for data processing and dissemination?

Yes  No

<sup>3</sup> Trade data by major trading partners or by commodity groups

<sup>4</sup> Trade data by detailed partners and by detailed commodities at least on HS 6-digit codes

If Yes, *please provide details about the system:*

15. Does the responsible agency have stable and reliable internet connectivity?

Yes  No

16. Does the responsible agency have enough knowledgeable human resources to collect, process, and disseminate trade data regularly?

Yes  No

If No, *please select the possible reasons:*

Not enough staffs dedicated to compilation of IMTS

Lack of knowledge about IMTS methodology

Others, *please specify:* Computer and IT system

17. Does the responsible agency have regular training activities to increase awareness of IMTS compilers on the recommendations outlined on IMTS Concepts and Definitions?

Yes  No

-----End of Part I-----

**PART I I. IMTS Methodology and Compilers Practices****Coverage and Time of Recording**

1. As general guidelines, do you record all goods which add to or subtract from the stock of material resources of a country by entering (imports) or leaving (exports) its economic territory?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*: Discuss with CD

2. Do you use date of lodgement (e.g., the date when goods are unloaded, presented at the customs office, or released) of the customs declaration as an approximation for the time when goods enter/leave your territory?

Yes  No

If No, *please indicate the date*: Discuss with CD

3. Do you use change of ownership (between residents and non-residents) as a basis for inclusion of certain goods in trade statistics (e.g.: ships and aircrafts)?

Yes  No

If necessary, *please provide additional explanation*: Discuss with CD

4. Do you INCLUDE in trade statistics the following:

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Non-monetary gold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods traded on government account	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humanitarian aid, including emergency aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods for military use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods on consignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media, whether or not recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods for processing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Returned goods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electricity, gas and water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods dispatched or received through postal or courier services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migrants' effects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods under financial lease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ships and aircrafts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bunkers, stores, ballast and dunnage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods in electronic commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used goods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste and scrap (positive commercial value)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details: All goods, except

electricity and mining (gold and copper)

5. Do you EXCLUDE in trade statistics the following:

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Goods simply being transported through a country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods temporarily admitted or dispatched	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monetary gold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods treated as part of trade in services <sup>5</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods under merchanting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods under operational lease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods functioning as means of transport <sup>6</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste and scrap (no commercial value)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content delivered electronically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goods for repair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you would like to highlight other related information, please provide details:

### Trade System

6. Does definition of statistical territory (the territory with respect to which trade data are being compiled) coincide with the economic territory<sup>7</sup>?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*:

7. Do you provide detailed definition of statistical territory as part of metadata to users?

Yes  No

8. Do you include in your trade statistics goods entering or leaving the following territorial elements from / to rest of the world?

	Yes <sup>8</sup>	No	Not Applicable
Premises for customs warehousing <sup>9</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>5</sup> Example: goods acquired by all categories of travelers, goods purchased by foreign governments through their embassies, media carrying customized software, etc

<sup>6</sup> This includes a wide range of items from ships and aircrafts to containers used to transport cargo in ship/rail/road supply chains to empty bottles which are returned to be refilled

<sup>7</sup> The economic territory is the area under the effective economic control of single government

<sup>8</sup> If you select "Yes" to all applicable territorial elements, then it implies that the general trade system is used, otherwise country uses the special trade system



Premises for inward processing <sup>10</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial free zones <sup>11</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercial free zones <sup>11</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the answer to any part of question 8 is no, *please explain how do you record transaction with these areas (i.e. as partner free zone<sup>12</sup>): Discuss with CD*

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<sup>9</sup> Premises where imported goods are stored under customs control (a customs warehouse) without payment of import duties and taxes

<sup>10</sup> Premises where goods can be placed conditionally relieved from payment of import duties and taxes. Such goods must be intended for re-exportation within a specific period after having undergone manufacturing or processing

<sup>11</sup> In commercial free zones the permitted operations are generally limited to those necessary for the preservation of the goods and the usual forms of handling to improve their packaging or marketable quality or to prepare them for shipment. In industrial free zones processing operations are authorized

<sup>12</sup> The recording of trade with its free zones clearly indicates that country does not use the general trade system

**Commodity Classification and Quantity Measurement**

9. Do you compile trade data based on the Harmonized System (HS) as the basis for detailed commodity trade database?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*: Only in group of 2 digits in aggregated level

10. Please specify the edition of Harmonized System currently used by Customs Administration:

AHTN2002, but nowadays the CD uses AHTN2007 for classifying products

11. Do you use HS chapter 00, 98 or 99 for special use?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please provide the description of chapter 00, 98 and 99*:

Chapter 00 Have to be discuss with CD

Chapter 98 Have to be discuss with CD

Chapter 99 Have to be discuss with CD

12. Do you publish / disseminate any data in terms of these following commodity classification:

	Yes	No
Harmonized System (HS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Common Product Classification (CPC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*From all of commodity classifications mentioned above, which one is the most widely requested by users? HS is requested from general users and some reseahers. However, the ISIC have been linked with the HS in DoS database for national accounts purpose*

13. Do you collect quantity data (net weight and supplementary quantity units)?

	Yes	No

Net weight	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplementary quantity units	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If No, *please explain*:

14. Do you compile World Customs Organization (WCO) recommended units of quantity for each of the sub-headings of HS (6-digit codes)?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*:

15. Do you compile net weight for quantity measurement of all commodities, where applicable?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*: because we compile this data only in aggregated level, not in detail so it is not suitable if we compile in total

### Valuation and Currency Conversion

16. Do you follow recommendation to use for imports CIF-type value and for exports FOB-type value?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*:

17. In addition of CIF-type value for imported goods, do you also compile FOB-type value?

Yes  No

18. In conversion of foreign currencies into national currency, do you use a rate published by the official authorities of your country?

Yes  No

If No, *please indicate the source of exchange rate*:

19. Do you use the exchange rate which is in effect at the date of exportation or importation?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain*: Discuss with CD

**Partner Country and Mode of Transport**

20. Do you compile import statistics by:

	Yes	No
Country of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country of Consignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Country of Purchase	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If country of origin is used, do you broadly follow the origin criteria outlined in the Revised Kyoto Convention?*

Yes  No

21. Do you compile export statistics by:

	Yes	No
Country of Last Known Destination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Country of Consignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Country of Sale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Others, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. Do you register trade with yourself? <sup>13</sup>

Yes, only for imports  Yes, both for imports and exports  Not at all

23. If you compile trade statistics by mode of transport, do you identify the following modes:

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
1. Air	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1 Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Inland Waterway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.1 Railway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Not elsewhere classified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.1 Pipelines and cables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2 Postal consignments, mail or courier shipments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3 Self-propelled goods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4 Others, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Data and Metadata Dissemination**

<sup>13</sup> It is possible that in the case of re-imports and the use of country of origin, a country registers trade (imports) with itself.

24. When confidentiality is applied to certain products, do you always report the full trading partner details at the next higher level of commodity aggregation, which adequately protects confidentiality?

Yes  No

If No, *please explain the current practice on handling confidential data*: not do since 2005

25. Do you publicly announce scheduled release dates?

Yes  No

26. Do you make documentation on your sources and methods publicly available?

Yes  No

If it's available online, *please provide the URL*: [www.nsc.gov.la](http://www.nsc.gov.la) (on improving under e-governance

project)

27. Do you regularly revise data (when additional information is available)?

Yes  No

28. Do you compile and disseminate trade indicators, index numbers or seasonally adjusted data?

Yes  No

29. If you have working agreements with other agencies, does your office regularly meet or consult with these agencies before release of the trade statistics?

Yes  No

30. If non-customs sources are used, are the users informed (as metadata) that non-customs data are merged and integrated with customs data?

Yes  No

#### **Data Quality Control at Customs Administration**

31. Do you use the Revised Kyoto Convention (the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs procedures) as the basis for the definitions of customs procedures?

Yes  No

32. Are all customs declarations stored electronically?

Yes  No

If No, please provide percentage of customs declarations (approximately) that are not stored

electronically: %

33. Do you use a threshold value below which customs declarations are not required to be filed?  
 Yes  No

If Yes, please specify the level of the threshold: and do you make estimates of trade below the

threshold and include them in your trade statistics?

Yes  No

34. At custom declaration form, are these information set as mandatory item?

	Yes	No	N/A
Transaction value	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insurance and freight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weight (Net)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplementary quantity and its unit of measurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If necessary, please explain:

35. Please select partner country attribution(s) that are available at custom declaration form.

	Partner Attribution(s)
For import declaration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Country of Origin <input type="checkbox"/> Country of Consignment  <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:
For export declaration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Country of Last Known Destination <input type="checkbox"/> Country of Consignment / Destination  <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify:

If necessary, please explain:

36. Do you verify the accuracy partner country declared by trader?  
 Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain how do you verify country of origin in case of imports and country of last*

*known destination in case of exports: Only export/import country codes*

37. Do you validate quantity declared by trader using commodity price?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain how do you compile and maintain the list of minimum and maximum*

*commodity prices:*

38. Do you regularly conduct outreach and education for customs officers and traders?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain:*

#### **Data Quality Control at Responsible Agency**

39. Do you compile customs procedures codes as part of data item submitted by Customs Administration?

Yes  No  Not Applicable (because the responsible agency is Customs Administration)

*Please explain who is responsible for mapping customs procedures codes into exports/imports:*

Custom Department

40. Do you use estimates to replace missing values or quantities at detailed record level?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain briefly about estimation methodology:*

41. Do you use estimates to replace missing values (for major commodities or partners) at macro level?

Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain briefly about estimation methodology:*

42. Have you conducted bilateral or multilateral reconciliation studies with your trading partners in recent years or do you plan to conduct such studies in the near future?  
 Yes  No

If applicable, *please share the result of the studies:*

43. If errors are detected, do you request clarification to the data providers and correct the errors?  
 Yes  No

If Yes, *please explain the correction process:* if we found any errors, we just remark and list them

then send back to the CD

44. Please provide the detailed list of validation checks done at the responsible agency:  
Commodity codes, country code, value vs quantity, national currency vs international currency (USD)

**General Questions/Comments**

45. What are the greatest obstacles you had to face in IMTS compilation and dissemination? Please specify.

consistency of the data and time lack

46. What are the plans for further improvement in IMTS compilation and dissemination?

47. In case you would like to highlight other related issues and information, please provide details.



-----End of Questionnaire -----

*Should you have any question or require further information on how to fill out the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Matthias Reister, Email: [reister@un.org](mailto:reister@un.org). Thank you!*