Trade Quantity Information

PRESENTED AT THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS,

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

24-28 JUNE, 2019

BY

NIKE AIMOLA

NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS, NIGERIA

Table of Content

- Introduction
- Quantity Measurement Standards in International Trade
- Quantity Information Measurement Estimation Procedures
- Identification of Quantity data Outliers
- Uses of Quantity Information
- Challenges/Problems in Quantity Information
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Reported data on trade statistics provides information not only on monetary values but also on the quantity and net weight for exports and imports.
- Quantity (supplementary quantity) is a measure in number of units count or lots count.
- Net weight (Weight) or Volume refers to the weight/mass of an item excluding packaging.
- However, quantity and weight data are reported in two separate data fields

Quantity Measurement Standards in International Trade

To allow for comparability across countries:

- Supplementary quantity should be reported in the quantity units recommended by the World Customs Organization (WCO) for individual commodities
- Not reported quantity or net weight information is estimated, however, this is an option of last resort

Quantity Information Measurement Estimation Procedures

When information on quantity or net weight is not provided, the following estimation procedure is advised: Estimation of quantity and net weight is performed in two cases:

i. data has not been provided
ii. the quantity or net weight provided is considered ‘extreme’

Estimation procedures for quantity (and net weight) in UN Comtrade, using:

- Empirical conversion factors (Weighted Unit Value)
- Partially reported quantity and/or net weight
- Standard Unit Value (SUV)

Identification of Quantity Data Outliers

To identify extreme quantity/weight and value data, compiler's need to put in place the following checks:

- Historical Unit Value Check
- Standard Unit Value Check
- Historical Value Check

Uses of Quantity Information

Quantity information in trade statistics is useful in determining:

- Computation of export and import price indices and terms of trade
- Unit price of items and comparative analysis for goods and services
- Computation of quantity index
- To identify countries specialization along a ladder of vertically differentiated varieties

Challenges/Problems in Quantity Information

- The reliability of value and quantity is directly affecting the approximation of unit prices
- The use of different nomenclature and level of disaggregation does not allow for comparability of quantity information

Conclusion

Trade quantity and net weight are best reviewed during processing.

- **Conversion is best done at the national or even sub-national level. Conversion at international level are less accurate.**
- **Converting quantity e.g. volume or number into weight of a specific commodity can be problematic, since it is based on empirical rather than mathematical relationships.**

References

- Quantity and Weight Data in UN Comtrade; UN Comtrade background paper by Matthias Reister and Markie Muryawan

BYE FOR NOW

Thank you for your Attention

☺