ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Promoting cross-border electronic information exchange for efficient railway transport and transit in East and North-East Asia



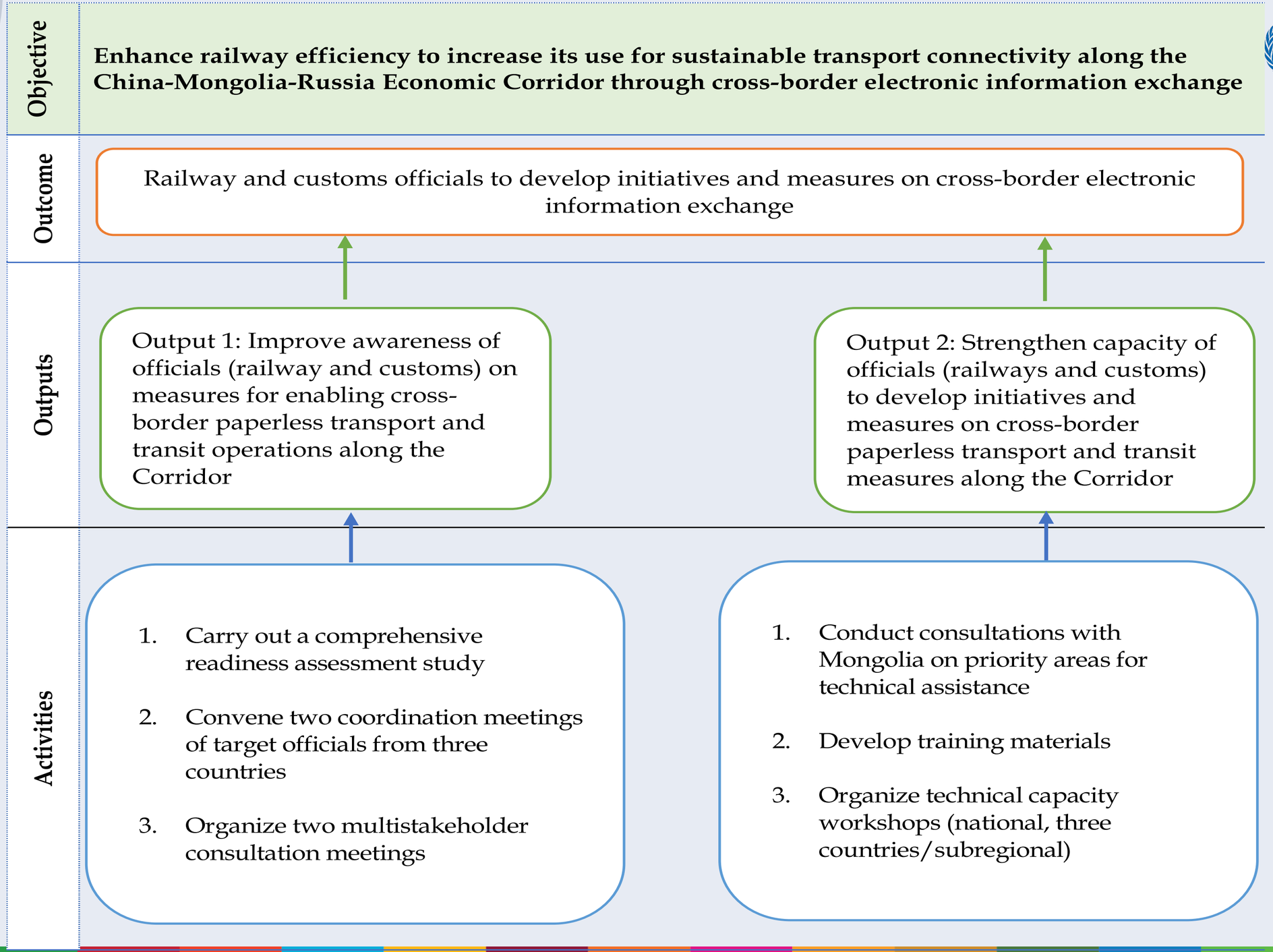
CONTEXT OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- Notwithstanding the rise in rail traffic volume along the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, gaps on operational connectivity related to trade and transport facilitation have reined in the full potential of the corridor

Table 1 Trade facilitation implementation rate of target countries (2021)

	China	Mongolia	Russian Federation
Overall trade facilitation	91.4%	50.54%	84.95%
Paperless trade	96.3%	37.04%	81.48%
Cross-border paperless trade	72.22%	11.11%	55.56%

Source: https://www.untfsurvey.org/


Objective
Enhance railway efficiency to increase its use for sustainable transport connectivity along the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor through cross-border electronic information exchange
Outcome
Railway and customs officials to develop initiatives and measures on cross-border electronic information exchange
Outputs
Output 1: Improve awareness of officials (railway and customs) on measures for enabling cross-border paperless transport and transit operations along the Corridor
Output 2: Strengthen capacity of officials (railways and customs) to develop initiatives and measures on cross-border paperless transport and transit measures along the Corridor
Activities
1. Carry out a comprehensive readiness assessment study
2. Convene two coordination meetings of target officials from three countries
3. Organize two multistakeholder consultation meetings
1. Conduct consultations with Mongolia on priority areas for technical assistance
2. Develop training materials
3. Organize technical capacity workshops (national, three countries/subregional)

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- Stronger cross-sectoral coordination on trade and transport facilitation, facilitated through ESCAP's subregional programme of work on sustainable connectivity
    - in partnership with GTI Secretariat

- Trade facilitation: Subregional member States Parties to the *Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA)*
    - a UN treaty which aims at accelerating the implementation of digital trade facilitation measures for trade and development and designed as an inclusive instrument accessible to countries at all levels of development to develop their capacity to engage in cross-border paperless trade
    - Agreement entered into force on 20 February 2021
    - China ratified in November 2020; Mongolia acceded in 2022; the Russian Federation acceded in 2023
- Transport facilitation (railway): China and Russian Federation signaled early support to enhance railway efficiency through a stronger railway-customs interface.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

01

Enriched knowledge resources

- Comprehensive readiness assessment study
- Action plan to enable cross-border paperless transit railway operations
- Study on the feasibility of developing an electronic database of rolling stock along the Trans-Asian Railway Network
- Business Process Analysis for rail transport

02

Deepened stakeholder engagements and cross-sectoral linkages

- National focal points' engagements (customs and railways officials)
- Stakeholders' consultations (officials, logistics/freight operators, railway companies, custom brokers)

https://www.unescap.org/events/2023/first-focal-points-meeting-promoting-cross-border-electronic-information-exchange
https://www.unescap.org/events/2024/promoting-cross-border-electronic-information-exchange-efficient-railway-transport-and
https://www.unescap.org/events/2024/stakeholders-consultation-meeting-promoting-cross-border-electronic-information

03

Strengthened capacity

Participants' engagements and evaluation/feedback from workshops

- Subregional workshop on railway sector's developments and prospects (through the Greater Tumen Initiative platform)
- National workshop: Strengthening Mongolia's readiness to undertake paperless transit transport operations

https://www.unescap.org/events/2024/promoting-cross-border-electronic-information-exchange-efficient-railway-transport-0

04

Broadened outreach and built partnerships

Sharing of project outputs and outcomes in regional and subregional events

- Associated events at the 11th Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum
- ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues

Partnership with GTI and Global Sustainable Transport Innovation and Knowledge Center to deliver joint activities

LESSONS LEARNED

During Project Implementation

Post-Project Phase

Engagements of officials and stakeholders

- Changes in focal points and in government units assigned in overseeing the work
- Linkages and interactions between customs and railways within each country

Momentum from regional and subregional developments

- Implementation of supporting regional agreements (i.e., Trans-Asian Railway Network - Annex III)

Sustaining project impact

- Linking with work plan of subregional platform (e.g., Greater Tumen Initiative under the GTI Transport Board)
- Through relevant working groups under the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor Programme