Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Proposed NESWS Fee Exemptions

Q1: What is the purpose of the proposed NESWS fee exemption regulations?

A: Published in June 2025 by KenTrade and the National Treasury, the draft regulations aim to exempt users from NESWS fees where Kenyan laws already allow fee waivers for similar government services (e.g., customs charges). The goal is to reduce trade barriers, promote digital adoption, and enhance efficiency for government agencies, NGOs, and small-scale traders.

Q2: Who qualifies for the proposed fee exemptions?

A: Eligible groups include government entities, NGOs, small traders, and individuals already exempted from similar government service fees under Kenyan law. If you're already benefiting from fee waivers—such as for humanitarian aid shipments—you automatically qualify without needing to register separately for NESWS.

Q3: What fees are affected, and how much could stakeholders save?

A: The exemptions apply to NESWS transaction fees, which range from KSh 500 to KSh 5,000 per submission. For frequent users like NGOs and government departments, this could translate into significant annual savings.

Q4: What is the current status, and how can stakeholders provide feedback?

A: As of November 3, 2025, the draft regulations follow stakeholder meetings held in July, September, and October—including sessions in Nairobi (Oct 7), Taveta (Oct 22), and Mombasa (Oct 25). A final meeting is scheduled in Moyale. Public comments are open until November 15, and can be submitted via email or post. For updates, visit KenTrade's website or follow @KenTrade_G2B on social media.

Q5: How will this impact trade efficiency in Kenya?

A: By removing fees for those already exempt under law, the system becomes more inclusive and efficient. It encourages broader use of the single-window platform, supports small traders, and aligns with Kenya's digital trade goals—ultimately fostering fairer commerce and stronger global connections.

Q6: Why reduce or exempt fees, given they are a revenue source?

A: KenTrade's core mandate is to facilitate trade—not just generate revenue. Waiving fees for legally exempt groups promotes fairness and wider adoption of NESWS, with expected long-term gains in efficiency and economic growth outweighing short-term revenue reductions.

Q7: What is the projected revenue impact?

A: As of November 2025, no official revenue impact figures have been released. However, the exemptions apply to a limited group already covered by existing laws. For financial details, stakeholders can contact contactcentre@kentrade.go.ke.

Q8: What happens after public participation ends?

A: Following the final Moyale meeting and the November 15 feedback deadline, KenTrade will review submissions, revise the draft regulations, and forward them to Parliament for approval. Official publication is expected by late 2025 or early 2026. Stay tuned to KenTrade's platforms for updates.

Q9: Can KenTrade staff share their views?

A: Yes. Staff are encouraged to participate through stakeholder meetings, online forms, or by emailing contactcentre@kentrade.go.ke. Internal channels are also available to ensure transparency and inclusivity.

Q10: Why is KenTrade pursuing these changes?

A: KenTrade's mission under Kenyan law is to simplify and digitize trade processes. By exempting fees for groups already covered by legal provisions, the initiative supports Vision 2030, reduces costs for everyday users, and promotes a more equitable digital trade environment—boosting national and international trade activity.