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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AE0  Authorized Economic Operator  EIF  Enhanced Integrated Framework
AO  Authorized Operator  e-Phyto  Electronic phytosanitary certification
AR  Advance ruling  eSW  electronic Single Window
AW  ASYCUDA World  EU  European Union
BAF  Biosecurity Authority of Fiji  FIAS  Facility for Investment Climate Advisory Services
BCP  Border control post  FPTL  Fiji Ports Terminal Limited
BiH  Bosnia and Herzegovina  FRCS  Fiji Revenue & Customs Service
BITC  Botswana Investment and Trade Centre  FTAP  Free Trade Agreement Portal
C4D  Collaboration for Development  FY  Fiscal year
CARICOM  The Caribbean Community  FYDUCA  Central American Invoice and Single Central American Declaration
CBM  Coordinated border management  GASI  General Agency for Specialized Inspections
CEFTA  Central European Free Trade Agreement  GDCE  General Department of Customs and Excise
CEPA  Autonomous Executive Port Commission  GIZ  Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
CLPs  Certificates, licenses, and permits  GRS  Georgia Revenue Service
COMIECO  Council of Ministers of Economic Integration  IATA  International Air Transport Association
CONAFAC  National Trade Facilitation Committee (Costa Rica)  IBRD  International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
CoP  Community of Practice  ICD  Inland container depot
CPTPP  Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership  ICP  Integrated check post
CREP  Customs Revenue Entry Processing  ICRP  Investment Climate Reform Program
DFAT  Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia  IDA  International Development Association
DFID  Department for International Development of the United Kingdom  IFC  International Finance Corporation
DG  Director generals  IPPC  International Plant Protection Convention
DPO  Development policy loan  ISO  International Standards Organization
ECA  Europe and Central Asia  EIF  Enhanced Integrated Framework

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>International Trade Center</td>
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<td>JCA</td>
<td>Jamaica Customs Agency</td>
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<td>JSWIFT</td>
<td>Jamaica Single Window for Trade</td>
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<td>JTIP</td>
<td>Jamaica Trade Information Portal</td>
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<td>KFVA</td>
<td>Kosovo Food and Veterinary Agency</td>
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<td>LCTP</td>
<td>Lao PDR Competitiveness Trade Project</td>
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<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Least developed countries</td>
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<td>LNSW</td>
<td>Lesotho National Single Window</td>
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<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lesotho Revenue Authority</td>
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<td>LTIP</td>
<td>Lesotho Trade Information Portal</td>
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<td>MBS</td>
<td>Malawi Bureau of Standards</td>
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<td>MCAE</td>
<td>Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs</td>
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<td>MCTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry (Timor-Leste)</td>
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<td>MCTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (Zambia)</td>
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<td>MDAs</td>
<td>Ministries, departments, and agencies</td>
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<td>MEF</td>
<td>Ministry of Economy and Finance (Cambodia)</td>
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<td>MOC</td>
<td>Ministry of Communications (Fiji)</td>
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<td>MOIT</td>
<td>Ministry of Industry and Trade (Vietnam)</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MRA</td>
<td>Malawi Revenue Authority</td>
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<td>MTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry (Lesotho)</td>
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<td>NAQIA</td>
<td>National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (Papua New Guinea)</td>
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<td>NCTF</td>
<td>National Committee on Trade Facilitation</td>
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<td>NIRTTTP</td>
<td>Nepal-India Regional Trade &amp; Transport Project</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
<td>National Single Window</td>
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<td>NTFC</td>
<td>National Trade Facilitation Committee</td>
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<td>OBFC</td>
<td>One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre</td>
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<td>OBRAs</td>
<td>Other border regulatory agencies</td>
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<td>OLM</td>
<td>Online licensing module</td>
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<td>OSBP</td>
<td>One-stop border post</td>
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<td>PIFS</td>
<td>Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat</td>
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<td>PR list</td>
<td>Prohibited and restricted list</td>
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<td>Private sector savings</td>
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<td>PTP</td>
<td>Preferred Trader Program</td>
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<td>SACU</td>
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<td>SAQ</td>
<td>State Agriculture Inspectorate</td>
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<td>SARTI</td>
<td>South Asia Regional Integration in Trade and Investment</td>
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<td>SECO</td>
<td>State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>SIECA</td>
<td>Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
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<td>Small and medium enterprises</td>
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<td>SOPs</td>
<td>Standard operating procedures</td>
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<td>SPECA</td>
<td>United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia</td>
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<td>SPS</td>
<td>Sanitary and phytosanitary</td>
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<td>STDF</td>
<td>Standards Trade Development Facility</td>
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<td>SW</td>
<td>Single Window</td>
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<td>TBL</td>
<td>Trade Board Limited (Jamaica)</td>
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<td>TCM</td>
<td>Moin Container Terminal</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Description</td>
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<td>TFAF</td>
<td>WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility</td>
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<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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<td>TRS</td>
<td>Time Release Study</td>
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<td>UN/CEFACT</td>
<td>United Nation’s Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business</td>
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<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<td>UNECE</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the highlights and progress of the Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) during the period of July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022, in accordance with the fiscal year 2022 (FY22) of the World Bank Group (WBG).

THE PROGRAM

TFSP was launched in June 2014 to support countries seeking assistance to improve their cross-border trade environments and better align their trade practices with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). The WTO TFA entered into force in February 2017 when two-thirds of the WTO Membership accepted the Agreement. The TFA contains measures to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods exported, imported, and in transit. It also contains measures related to cooperation between customs and other border agencies on trade facilitation and compliance issues. Uniquely, the Agreement includes special and differential treatment measures that allow developing and least developed countries (LDCs) to identify the measures requiring technical assistance and capacity building support for implementation.

Activities funded by TFSP are practical, demand-driven and are implemented through drawing on the expertise of both the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), bridging the important roles of the public and private sectors in ensuring the successful reform of trade facilitation laws, procedures, processes, and systems to improve their cross-border trade environments and align with the WTO TFA and other international standards.

A stocktaking exercise of TFSP undertaken in FY19 by external consultants found that the program was highly relevant and strongly aligned with the WTO TFA. It also found the program to be very efficiently managed, and activities are implemented through a whole-of-government approach (see Figure 3), which is critical to ensuring all border agencies (and not just customs) are involved and invested in implementing trade facilitation reforms. One recommendation made was to extend the range of interventions in existing countries to comprehensively support the implementation of the WTO TFA rather than supporting only one or two measures. Since the stocktaking, the WBG has continued to work on the expanded scope of activities funded by TFSP, including work related to trade facilitation and gender (see Section 1.3c), increasing engagement with the private sector (see Box 5), and strengthening coordination with donors.

Key areas of assistance include but are not limited to:

- Assisting with the design of risk-based approaches for border clearance
- Preparing for Trade Information Portal (TIP) and/or Single Window (SW) implementation
- Leveraging global and regional partnerships and knowledge sharing to ensure optimal delivery of support

Identify existing constraints and bottlenecks to cross-border trade
- Design and plan for implementation of practical reform strategies
- Increase the predictability, transparency, and harmonization of systems and procedures in line with international standards covering import, export, and transit activities

1 The WTO TFA entered into force in February 2017 when two-thirds of the WTO Membership accepted the Agreement. The TFA contains measures to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods exported, imported, and in transit. It also contains measures related to cooperation between customs and other border agencies on trade facilitation and compliance issues. Uniquely, the Agreement includes special and differential treatment measures that allow developing and least developed countries (LDCs) to identify the measures requiring technical assistance and capacity building support for implementation.
and other organizations at the global and country levels [see Section 1.4].

PARTNERS

TFSP is financed by nine development partners: Australia, Canada, the European Union, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

The WBG draws on its unique network of global and regional partners in delivering joint initiatives and activities to ensure a coordinated and complementary roll-out of technical assistance and capacity building. In this reporting period, for example, TFSP-supported experts increased collaboration with other organizations such as the Standards Trade Development Facility (STDF) to enhance knowledge on areas related to facilitating trade, e-certification, prioritization of SPS investments, public-private partnerships and more by ensuring complementarity inclusion of trade facilitation objectives in a coordinated manner. TFSP also collaborated with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility (TFAF) to co-host a virtual event to mark the fifth anniversary of the WTO TFA. See Section 1.4 for more information on collaboration with other donor partners and international organizations.

PORTFOLIO

Forty-eight countries have received financing for implementation of trade facilitation and other related reforms since inception of the program. Within the program’s portfolio, 28 (58 percent) are International Development Association (IDA) and Blend countries, and seven (15 percent) are countries on the WBG’s FY22 list of fragile and conflict-affected situations.

Near the end of FY22, TFSP funding to support five new countries and a regional project were approved or were under consideration by a selection committee that determined whether each of those met program criteria. The five countries are: Angola, Ghana, Indonesia, Mozambique, and Peru. The regional project centers on the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) region, with particular focus on Eswatini, Lesotho, and South Africa. Additional funding was also approved or is under consideration for activities in countries already in the TFSP portfolio—Cambodia, Jamaica and other select Caribbean countries, Malawi, Nepal, Bangladesh, select Western Balkans countries, and Zambia.

PROGRESS TOWARDS INCREASING ALIGNMENT WITH THE WTO TFA

Since 2014, the WBG team has conducted over 50 TFSP-supported TFA Gap Assessment missions to assess the alignment of a country’s processes and procedures with the WTO TFA measures—ranging from pre-border processes (e.g., transparency and availability of information, consultations, advance rulings and more), at the border controls (e.g., payment, test procedures, risk management, other areas), as well as post-border (e.g., post-clearance audit). The Gap Assessment feeds into the TFA Tracking Tool developed by the WBG to monitor progress towards meeting the TFSP’s objective of helping countries improve their cross-border trade processes and alignment with the 30+ measures covered in the WTO TFA. The TFA Gap Assessment covers legal/policy aspects, implementation procedures, and operational checks for each trade facilitation-related measure. The most recent data indicates that TFSP-funded activities have helped improve TFSP client countries’ alignment with the WTO TFA measures along the three dimensions, and the overall alignment score has risen from 41 percent to 51 percent. See Section 1.5 for more details on the TFA Tracking Tool.

MEASURING IMPACT THROUGH PRIVATE SECTOR SAVINGS

In addition to the TFA Tracking Tool, the impact of TFSP-supported interventions is also measured through assessing private sector savings (PSS) at the project level. The WBG developed the PSS methodology to estimate the benefit accrued to the private sector from

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2 IDA countries are those with low per capita incomes that lack the financial ability to borrow from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Blend countries are eligible for IDA loans but are also eligible for IBRD loans because they are financially creditworthy.

3 Based on the World Bank Group’s FY22 List of Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations, these are Burundi, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Lebanon, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste. FY22 classification is based on calendar year 2021 data.

4 Requests for technical assistance can be made directly to the TFSP Secretariat or through the World Bank Group offices and donors.

5 No new assessment or update of baselines could be undertaken in the reporting period due the ongoing travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in overall alignment score is reflective of 21 TFSP-supported countries with both baseline and update scores, which allows for a comparison over time. As travel restrictions continue to be lifted, the WBG team is expected to validate several additional TFA assessments in FY23.
increased efficiency in the cargo clearance process as a result of trade facilitation reforms. The methodology considers the estimation of impact based on two types of results: 1) impact savings as a result of a reduction in cargo clearance processing time⁶ and 2) impact savings as a result of reduction in direct trade-related fees and charges paid by the private sector.⁷

Two completed projects—the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) regional project and South Asia regional project, for example—generated approximately USD 6 million and USD 1 million in PSS respectively. The ECA project’s PSS is attributable to reforms made in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, including roll out of AEO programs, support on risk management, and establishment of a One Stop Border Post between Serbia and North Macedonia. In South Asia, TFSP supported Nepal and Bangladesh in a variety of areas, including implementation of an Online Licensing Module (OLM) in Bangladesh and improving risk management at the Biratnagar and Birgunj border crossing posts. For the completed TFSP-supported projects that have undergone PSS measurement, the projects were successful in meeting their project targets and helped to improve efficiency of trade processes for the private sector to varying degrees. Annex A contains more examples of PSS calculated for projects, including details on specific activities undertaken by country.

PROGRAM FINANCES

Between the program’s inception in 2014 and the end of this reporting period, USD 61 million was received in financial contributions, which equals to 99.6 percent of overall partner commitments. Cumulative disbursements plus commitments was at 79 percent at the close of FY22. The disbursement-only rate was at 76 percent at the end of FY22. Total disbursement amounts in the reporting period were somewhat lower than pre-pandemic levels, but it is expected to increase.

Leverage of TFSP support is achieved either by directly informing World Bank lending and IFC operations or by complementing ongoing operations through support for the trade facilitation components of larger lending and advisory projects. TFSP funds also inform and/or complement bilateral support from development partners for trade facilitation reforms (such as bilateral DFAT support in Sri Lanka). See Box 1 for more examples.

LOOKING FORWARD

For most of the reporting period, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to limit face-to-face interactions due to travel restrictions. To mitigate this, the TFSP country teams maintained regular contact with their in-country counterparts, increasing the use of virtual modalities, local staffing and consultants especially where technological capacity was limited. As countries gradually move towards recovery and restrictions are relaxed, the WBG team will resume in-person missions (where possible) to carry out activities that require physical presence in-country. Where in-person engagement is not possible, the team will continue to pursue virtual or hybrid modalities.

Overall, demand has increased for support on new capacity building or technical assistance as well as for re-engagement on trade facilitation reforms that will help with recovery and build resilience against emerging future crises. Going forward, the WBG will continue to implement ongoing activities and consider/commerce providing support to Angola, Ghana, Indonesia, Mozambique, Peru, and the SACU region. Consideration will also be given to support activities in Egypt. TFSP will continue to provide capacity building and technical assistance to accelerate implementation of trade facilitation-related reforms and the full and effective implementation of the WTO TFA. Within the area of knowledge management and learning, TFSP will

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⁶ This method allows for the estimation of impact of reduced clearance time through a tariff equivalent reduction based on the Trade Logistics Reform Impact Model. The central idea of this method is that a good estimate of a firm’s willingness to pay for border improvements is sufficient for understanding the economic value of the interventions. The Trade Logistics Reform Impact Model was designed by DECTI for the Global Trade unit, drawing on a paper by Hummels, D. L, and G. Shaur (2013) “Time as a Trade Barrier” study of American Economic Review, vol. 103, no. 7.

⁷ For any upstream and behind-the-border processes like the elimination or reduction in fees and charges imposed on imports or exports, a complementary direct cost savings method is applied that can be added to the PSS.
continue to support peer-to-peer learning and deliver innovative products to enhance understanding of trade and trade facilitation.

TFSP will continue to support accelerated TFA implementation and respond to emerging issues, including climate, cross-border emergency preparedness, e-commerce, and gender and inclusion. The current capacity of TFSP to provide support, however, is limited due to the remaining timeline of the program, which is set to expire in June 2023, and the low availability of funds. The TFSP Secretariat will explore options with each of the development partners both to continue and to build on the work supported by TFSP through the TFSP window under the Umbrella Facility for Trade.

Section 3.2 provides more details on TFSP’s vision looking forward.

BOX 1
Harnessing Leverage

Reforms supported by TFSP have complemented and informed larger WBG operations or other development partner activities, including:

In Jamaica, trade facilitation is an important theme in the government of Jamaica’s competitiveness agenda. Initiatives to improve border clearance were included in the Jamaica COVID-19 Response and Recovery Development Policy Financing. A prior action to that operation was the launch of the Jamaica Electronic Single Window for Trade platform for imports and exports.

In Nepal, the TFSP-financed advisory activities informed a World Bank Nepal–India Regional Trade and Transport Project, including supporting the creation of a National Single Window and the Nepal Trade Portal.

In Vanuatu, through the close partnership between the WBG and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), the EIF Tier 2 project provided funding for the establishment of an electronic Single Window system in Vanuatu, leveraging the work undertaken by the WBG that was financed under the TFSP.

Annex A provides more examples of complementarity and leverage of funds by country.

“Vanuatu is the first Pacific Island country to implement an electronic Single Window, setting an example for its Pacific Island neighbors.”

— MARK COULTON, ASSISTANT MINISTER OF TRADE, AUSTRALIA
Since inception, TFSP has supported implementation of trade facilitation reforms in 48 countries. The share of IDA Association and Blend countries remained high at 28 (58 percent) of the portfolio, and the share of countries with fragile situations was at seven (15 percent) at the end of the reporting period. Sub-Saharan Africa countries make up the biggest share of the TFSP portfolio (25 percent). Figures 1 and 2 provide details of the portfolio.

To receive support, countries are expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing trade facilitation reforms in the areas covered by the WTO TFA. TFSP prioritizes assistance to countries with limited access to other donor support. Assistance to IDA-eligible, low-income, and fragile and conflict-affected countries are prioritized, but middle-income countries that act as gateways for LDCs or whose performance significantly affects the performance of regional LDCs and small-island nations are also considered for support.

Sub-Saharan Africa countries make up 25 percent of the TFSP portfolio, and 10 of the 12 Sub-Saharan Africa countries that are receiving or have received capacity building and technical assistance from TFSP are IDA countries, which means they are among the world’s poorest countries in need of support. To help these countries along the development path, the WBG has provided trade facilitation support to help establish solid foundations and effective border processes and procedures for the countries to deepen their integration into the world economy. Examples of TFSP activities in Sub-Saharan Africa countries are highlighted throughout the report (see Box 3, 4, 9, 10, 11).

TFSP support is divided into two main components: (a) technical assistance and (b) knowledge management and learning activities.

Figure 6 provides an overview of TFSP support by TFA measure. Program highlights for FY22 are summarized for these two areas in the next sections, including a summary of key areas of engagement and examples of country-level outcomes. Annex A provides details on key TFSP-supported activities by country.

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8 Includes both active and inactive countries to demonstrate cumulative support since the inception of the TFSP.
FIGURE 1
Map of 48 Countries Where the Trade Facilitation Support Program Has Provided or Is Providing Multi-Year Implementation Assistance


FIGURE 2
Regional Breakdown of the Cumulative Trade Facilitation Support Program Portfolio

- Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)
- Europe and Central Asia (ECA)
- East Asia Pacific (EAP)
- Latin America and Caribbean (LAC)
- South Asia (SAR)
- Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
1.1 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Effectively improving border processes and procedures requires that every relevant agency is involved and coordinates closely with one another. TFSP-supported activities are uniquely grounded in the “whole-of-government” approach that takes into account the varied capacities of border agencies to implement trade facilitation reforms. To this end, the WBG engages with and brings together all relevant agencies, not just customs, that exercise border control functions within a country—e.g., standards, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS), food safety, animal health, and human health—to improve the efficiency of their respective control functions. This whole-of-government approach is encapsulated as the “Seven Cs” (Figure 3).

TFSP funding supports border-wide collaboration in developing solutions and improving capacity so that no key border agency is left behind, and the WBG also works with the private sector to promote the Seven Cs and maximize gains for traders.

FIGURE 3
Whole-of-Government Approach

- **Capacity Building**
  Designing practical reform strategies, including the development of detailed reform sequencing plans that match with country priorities, available resources, and local implementation capacities of each relevant border agency

- **Coordination**
  Coordinating different national border agencies in connection with import, export, or transit processes and procedures

- **Communication**
  Clearly communicating to ensure a successful reform process, especially on trade reforms where multiple agencies are involved in import and export processes. Communicating the benefits and possible savings from reforms minimizes resistance to change

- **Cooperation**
  Facilitating information exchange between national, regional border agencies, and private sector stakeholders

- **Connection**
  Designing ICT blueprints and platforms, e.g., Trade Information Portals and Single Windows, that improve transparency and efficiency

- **Consistency**
  Ensuring that border agencies are consistently applying laws, regulations, and procedures to build trust and promote compliance in the private sector, while enhancing transparency in trade processes

- **Commitment**
  Obtaining strong political and financial commitment from the highest level of the government to drive the reform process in partnership with private sector stakeholders
Generally, technical assistance activities funded by the TFSP progress along the following building blocks:

**FIGURE 4**
**Building Blocks**

- **Undertake and validate Gap Assessments in client countries**
  Conduct the Gap Assessment to assess the level of effective and efficient implementation of trade facilitation and other trade-related processes and procedures and undertake an in-country field validation.

- **Identify category commitments**
  Support countries in identifying, prioritizing, and finalizing Category A, B, and C (TAB) commitments.

- **Notify commitments and WTO TFA measures**
  Support countries in notifying commitments and other TFA notification requirements.

- **Finalize reform priorities**
  Provide support to develop a reform roadmap and timeline for implementation, including validation with all relevant public and private stakeholders.

- **Implement reforms**
  Once the reform roadmap is validated, the appropriate level of technical assistance and capacity building will be identified to help implement the reforms.
TFSP-supported technical assistance can include help with:

**FIGURE 5**
Types of Support Available

**Preparatory Activities**
- Prepare for ratification of the WTO TFA
- Schedule commitments and implementation timelines
- Revise and validate self-assessments and identify reform gaps
- Undertake diagnostic studies

**Technical Assistance**
- Revise or draft trade laws and implementing regulations
- Simplify, streamline, and harmonize trade procedures and documents to reduce time and cost to trade
- Review and establish inventories of fees and charges related to cross-border trade
- Improve transparency and accountability measures related to trade practices
- Establish/publish average release times
- Integrate risk-based management systems and other contemporary border management approaches into border inspections and clearance processes
- Design and implement automated and innovative technology to facilitate trade
- Assess gendered challenges in undertaking cross-border trade processes and procedures and make recommendations on how to address these challenges (Section 1.3c)

**Capacity Building**
- Support and strengthen National Trade Facilitation Committees (Box 2)
- Foster partnerships between the public and private sectors to catalyze trade
- Facilitate reforms through intense engagement and lobbying
- Revise inter-agency coordination and design of institutional capacity building plans
- Assist countries in tracking and reporting their progress in WTO TFA implementation (Section 1.5)

**Regional Activities**
- Implement policies and practices and support regional solutions to facilitate the recognition of agreed-upon standards for goods crossing borders
- Foster regional and external border agency coordination, collaboration, and cooperation

TFSP support is prioritized for clients’ needs identified through Gap Assessments as well as the specific request for assistance made by the government (often notified by governments as “Category C” measures to the WTO).

Figure 6 shows TFSP support by TFA measure since program inception. The top measures supported have been related to NTFCs, risk management, and formalities and documentation requirements, publication, information through the internet, establishment of average release times, and border agency cooperation while there has been less demand for technical assistance and capacity building for the TFA measures that are easier to implement.

Additionally, the WBG works collaboratively with international partners to ensure complementarity of support. The WBG is best placed to leverage and focus on certain measures (such as Trade Information Portals and National Single Windows), particularly where it connects to bilateral donor programs and WBG operations.
### FIGURE 6
**TFSP Support by TFA Measure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>FY22 Number of Countries Supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Publication</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Information Available Through Internet</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Enquiry Points</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Notification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Opportunity to Comment and Information Before Entry into Force</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Consultations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advance Rulings</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Procedures for Appeal and Review</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Notifications for Enhanced Controls or Inspections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Detention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Test Procedures</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Specific Disciplines on Fees and Charges for Customs Processing Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Penalty Disciplines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Pre-Arrival Processing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Electronic Payment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 Separation of Release from Final Determination of Customs Duties, Taxes, Fees and Charges</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 Risk Management</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5 Post-Clearance Audit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8 Expedited Shipments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.9 Perishable Goods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Border Agency Cooperation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Movement of Goods under Customs Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Acceptance of Copies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3 Use of International Standards</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4 Single Window</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5 Pre-Shipment Inspection</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6 Use of Customs Brokers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.7 Common Border Procedures and Uniform Documentation Requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.8 Rejected Goods</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.9 Temporary Admission of Goods and Inward and Outward Processing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Freedom of Transit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1 Measures Promoting Compliance and Cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2 Exchange of Information</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.3 Verification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4 Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5 Protection and Confidentiality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6 Provision of Information</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.7 Postponement or Refusal of a Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.8 Reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.9 Administrative Burden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.10 Limitations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.11 Unauthorized Use or Disclosure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.12 Bilateral and Regional Agreements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FY22 number of countries supported
Examples of TFSP-supported work include:

- **Support to National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC)** is a critical element of TFSP assistance. NTFCs are important mechanisms for institutional coordination and consultation with stakeholders through broad and active participation from both private and public sector representatives. They enable consensus on reform priorities, planning, and ultimately foster coordinated implementation of successful trade facilitation reforms. Since inception, TFSP has provided support to 34 countries in the establishment and/or operation of NTFCs (Albania, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Eswatini, Fiji, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Togo, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Zambia) [see Box 2].

- **Trade Information Portals (TIPs)** are digital platforms that make all cross-border trade information, such as regulatory information, easily available. TFSP has facilitated the establishment and design, or has assisted in the implementation, of 11 portals (Bangladesh, Botswana, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Eswatini [see Box 4], Jamaica, Lesotho, Malawi, Mongolia, Vietnam, and Zambia).

- **Time Release Study (TRS)** is a unique tool for measuring the performance of customs and other border agencies related to trade facilitation at the border. TFSP has assisted in completing TRSs in 18 countries (Albania, Bangladesh, Eswatini, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mongolia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vietnam, Zambia, and at the Corinto Border between Guatemala and Honduras). TRSs were also repeated in FY22 in Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and Eswatini (in addition to a repeat TRS in Zambia in FY21). In total, 24 TRS reports have been delivered with TFSP support.

- WTO Members are required to notify information on the implementation of six provisions of the WTO TFA covering publication, internet publication, enquiry points, use of customs brokers, Single Window, and customs cooperation (known as the transparency notifications). TFSP has supported seven TFSP countries in **preparing and submitting these notifications to the WTO** (Georgia, Eswatini, Montenegro, Myanmar, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu).

- The application of **risk management** is a critical element that underpins all modern cross-border

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**BOX 2**

**Supporting the National Trade Facilitation Committee**

How does TFSP provide support to NTFCs? The NTFC’s role is to streamline procedures and implement trade facilitation measures at the national level. It is an important mechanism for domestic coordination and stakeholder (public and private) engagement on trade facilitation and other trade-related matters. Given the importance of the NTFC for planning and implementing trade facilitation reforms, as well as for public-private consultations, TFSP financing is available for technical assistance and advocacy support to establish NTFCs where it does not exist in a client country. Where the NTFC already exists in the client country, the WBG is often engaged in capacity building efforts to strengthen and enhance the function of the NTFC to ensure that it is structured and operating according to international standards, as well as to increase awareness of the body among private sector stakeholders.

The government of Bolivia, for example, successfully established the NTFC in fall of 2021 with TFSP support. Prior to this, there was no strong mechanism in place to coordinate trade reforms or for dialogue with the private sector on cross-border trade issues. The creation of the NTFC, however, changed this. Importantly, there is now a committee in which the key agencies involved in cross-border trade are members and can work through a joint mandate. The next step is to effectively operate the NTFC, and several organizations (including WCO and UNCTAD) are involved in this capacity building effort, following on the work first undertaken through TFSP.
BOX 3
Launch and Leverage of the Lesotho National Single Window

The Lesotho National Single Window (LNSW) pilot became effective in June 2022, and it serves as an online portal to manage trade regulatory requirements—particularly licenses, permits, and certificates. It is operational with the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) for processing of duty exemption/VAT rebate certificates, as well as the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s (MTI) One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre for processing of permits for import of second-hand goods and vehicles. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a Service Level Agreement were drafted and signed between the LRA, MTI, and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security to define the responsibilities and cooperation of the parties in general. It is envisaged that two more agencies will join this pilot phase by the end of 2023.

The LNSW standardizes information, improves transparency and consistency, and promotes interconnectivity. It is expected to reduce costs and time to trade. TFSP supported the development of the LNSW beginning in 2017, including the blueprint, which comprised a business model, legal and regulatory framework, information technology infrastructure, and business process analysis. The Lesotho Coordinating Committee on Trade approved the adoption of the LNSW blueprint in February 2022, which now serves as overarching guidance on LNSW implementation. Early preparation for Single Window implementation was also provided to Ethiopia.

“The combination of electronic Single Window and coordinated border management will go a long way in improving the trade facilitation ranking of the country for the benefit of trade and the economy.”

— THABO KHASIPE, COMMISSIONER GENERAL, LESOTHO REVENUE AUTHORITY
TFSP-financed activities in the aforementioned areas of work (and other priority areas) have led to important improvements for public and private stakeholders. See Box 4 for select highlights of interventions to help the private sector.

**BOX 4**
Implementing and Designing Targeted Interventions to Help the Private Sector

**Making Trade More Transparent for the Private Sector in Eswatini**

After its launch in September 2020, a survey on the effectiveness of the Eswatini Trade Information Portal was conducted one year later. It confirmed that of those that have used the TIP, 70 percent of respondents found it useful and reported improved clarity of available trade-related information. The private sector respondents also reported the TIP had a very positive impact on causes of delay by improving the ease of access to information and time to obtain information. Further, the percentage of respondents that reported spending a day or more on collecting relevant trade information dropped from 75 percent in pre-implementation to 43 percent according to the survey.

The Eswatini TIP was developed with support from TFSP. It contains 430+ documents from over 22 different government agencies, including legal documents, procedures, measures, forms, trade agreements, and other key documents. The implementation of the TIP helps Eswatini move towards full compliance with the WTO TFA to make trade-related information accessible to the private sector.

**Making Trade by Land Faster for Importers in Kyrgyz Republic**

In the Kyrgyz Republic, a TRS conducted in 2018 with TFSP support suggested that the Customs Administration standardize procedures across locations and introduce a trusted traders regime. The Customs Administration initiated the implementation of these and other improvements while the WBG also trained the phytosanitary and veterinary agencies on how to develop risk-based controls to further reduce clearance times. Leveraging the earlier work supported by TFSP, a WBG advisory project conducted a second TRS in the fall of 2021, which revealed that road import times were reduced to under nine hours (compared to close to 20 hours in 2018).

**Expanding Exports of Maize from Malawi**

The Controls of Goods Act, of which TFSP supported the development and operationalization, became effective in July 2020. The Act regulates the administration of import and export restrictions on public interest grounds. As part of this effort, the WBG team also worked with the government agencies to review the export ban on maize that has been in place since 2011. While the ban was lifted in March 2021, it was reversed a month later, reflecting the complexity of the matter. Maize is a major food staple that is predominantly produced by smallholder farms. While it has a major role in Malawi’s food security, the maize export ban can result in lost revenue for the sector. A study by the International Food Policy Research Institute, for example, found that Malawian traders lost an estimated $34–95 million in export revenue due to the ban in 2016/17 when there were maize surplus conditions (IFPRI 2017).

Nonetheless, the team continued to engage with the government on this matter as effective administration of trade-restrictive measures in a transparent, predictable, and data-driven manner is critical for investment decisions in the country. Past ad hoc implementation of export bans has disincentivized investment, and it is expected that better administration of such measures will result in increased financing (particularly to the agricultural sector), investment, production, and trade, which will positively reinforce Malawi’s development trajectory. In this reporting period, TFSP supported the drafting of the Control of Goods (Export of Maize and Maize Products) order, which successfully lifted the ban once again. The Ministry of Trade and Industry resumed issuing licenses in January based on a surplus to national food requirements that had been determined.
1.2 COVID-19 RESPONSE AND OTHER EMERGING CRISES

TFSP continued to support trade facilitation reforms in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by helping and guiding countries to improve border processes and procedures to enable safe and fast flow of perishable food commodities, medical and personal protection equipment, and cargoes.

Vaccine Delivery in Tonga

Recognizing the need for a swift response—especially for vaccine delivery—TFSP provided assistance for the development of a formal procedure for the expedited release of medicines and medical supplies in Tonga in FY21 and FY22, including ensuring a simplified process was in place for the implementation of expedited clearance for COVID-19 vaccines.

The first step in implementing the expedited release of vaccines was establishing a small multi-agency lead team coordinated by the Ministry of Trade & Economic Development with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Customs, and Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Forests and Fisheries. In addition, all border organizations, public sector, and private sector representatives (for example, the Port Company, air cargo freight forwarders, and customs brokers) were invited to attend a briefing by the WBG to obtain an overview of expedited clearance and key messages to engage the private sector.

Next, observations from a physical walk-through to see the processes were shared with the public and private sector through a series of briefings where their feedback was obtained. Joint ideas and solutions were explored, enabling everyone to contribute to and be part of the solution to develop the Fact Sheets for Commercial Importers and Private Importers (i.e., expedited clearance procedures), which were published in September 2021, and have also been useful for donors of humanitarian aid.

Importantly, the WBG engages both the government and the private sector when providing support in the areas hereinabove outlined and on other priority matters. Box 5 elaborates on how TFSP-funded activities bring in the private sector.

**BOX 5**
Engaging with the Private Sector and Integrating Their Perspectives

The private sector plays a crucial role in effective development and implementation of trade facilitation reforms because buy-in from the private sector helps promote commitment and momentum to carry the reforms forward into success. With this in mind, TFSP actively promotes engagement with private sector entities—either directly, through the NTFC, or with industry associations—to gather feedback from all relevant stakeholders in order to deliver robust support. Their input is critical to validating information received from public sector representatives.

This is exemplified in the WBG’s engagements in Montenegro where the TFSP-supported project team works closely with the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, and a project representative participates in all meeting sessions of the Freight Forwarder Association. By doing this, private sector representatives are introduced—on a regular basis—to the plans, project activities, and results and can actively participate with their proposals and suggestions.

In Bolivia, the large majority of firms are small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and during the process of supporting Bolivia in the establishment of its NTFC, the TFSP-supported WBG team worked to ensure that the voice of the private sector would be considered in trade reforms. A consistent recommendation to the government was to include the private sector as part of the NTFC. To date, the private sector is represented as observers in the committee. Whereas the private sector was not invited in the past, the dialogue has been strengthened in that the private sector can now at least be in the same room during discussions.
Fostering this level of agency coordination and understanding of the regulatory requirements was beneficial for several reasons. In the immediate term, it enhanced and enabled quick mobilization for expedited clearance of the first consignment of COVID-19 vaccines during this reporting period. As of June 2022, 194,869 vaccine doses had been administered.10 Beneficial in the longer term and as a result of this reform, formal consultation between the private and public sectors was enhanced. Furthermore, the activity to expedite clearance of vaccines also contributed to and aligned with many other activities within Tonga’s TFA Roadmap. For example:

- The feedback provided by importers and the identification of importers eligible for expedited release processes contributes to a better understanding of risk, and therefore, it is expected to contribute to informing the risk management procedures more broadly.

- Formal consultations developed and enhanced between the private and public sectors will directly contribute to the follow-up work on an AO scheme for trusted importers and exporters.11

Because of the work on expedited release of vaccines, there is now momentum to explore and implement other complementary trade facilitation measures to expedite the release of cargo and consignments based on improved risk management procedures. This will further aid Tonga’s recovery efforts.

### Increasing Local Presence to Maintain Business Continuity in Light of the Pandemic and Crises

In addition, the WBG continued to adapt work programs to virtual modalities (e.g., increasing the use of online meetings and trainings) and increased local staffing to maintain business continuity and support recovery efforts. Where travel restrictions were eased, the WBG deployed hybrid modalities involving both virtual and in-person engagements.

In this reporting period, TFSP remained flexible to respond to any emerging crises. TFSP-supported activities are highly relevant to combatting these issues by helping countries embed efficient and effective trade facilitation-related measures that can strengthen resilience against future negative shocks that impact regional and global trade.

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10 Based on data from the World Health Organization.
11 The Lead Team identified a future activity to implement Authorized Operator for trusted importers and exporters.

### 1.3 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

TFSP supports knowledge management activities that aim to create knowledge, facilitate knowledge sharing, support peer-to-peer learning, and assist WBG teams and client countries in measuring activity progress and results.

#### 1.3a Participation in events, workshops, and conferences

Participation in events, workshops, and conferences that focus on trade facilitation and peer-to-peer learning is key for the trade facilitation reform agenda, TFSP visibility, and for the team to stay engaged at the forefront of the TFA agenda.

Examples of major events that took place this period are:

- From November 10-12, the WBG partnered with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)—an economic policy organization representing 18 countries—to develop a regional trade facilitation strategy. Stakeholders from member countries were invited to participate in the virtual workshop. The objective was to

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“Reducing the time and cost of moving goods across borders will pave the way for Pacific post-COVID economic recovery and promote closer integration in the FICS community. This is one of the main benefits of the development of a regional trade facilitation strategy. Aligning our national Trade Development Strategy with that of the region’s will also harmonize and strengthen intra-regional trade.”

— FALOA SIONE, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, TUVALU

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“Container ship crossing the Pacific” © Shutterstock/Lee Yiu Tung
illustrate the regional strategy concept, discuss common challenges, and share possible regional implementation approaches. The WBG team invited representatives from CARICOM—a similar organization in the Caribbean—to share experiences and lesson learned.

The main objective of the regional trade facilitation strategy is to reduce the time and cost to import and export by assisting Pacific Island countries to become better aligned with the requirements of the WTO TFA. The multi-year plan will promote closer integration of the Pacific Islands community through harmonized approaches to simplify and streamline regulation and border processes.

The regional meeting was followed by national virtual consultations in each country to collect and review the inputs and obtain national agreement before the regional strategy is fully adopted (expected in the next reporting period).

Throughout the reporting period, the WBG participated in a number of significant milestone meetings to mark the anniversary of the WTO TFA, demonstrating that the work of TFSP is helping shape practical implementation of the TFA and delivering real impact on the ground.

- On November 26, WTO Members conducted the first-ever review of the TFA, four years since the landmark deal entered into force in 2017. The meeting took stock of Members’ progress in implementing the Agreement as well as the implementation challenges encountered by Members. The experience-sharing sessions included the participation of the WBG as an “Annex D+ partner organization.” The WBG team presented on the trade facilitation response to the COVID-19 crisis, including the development and dissemination of guidance notes and experiences from client countries.

- On February 22, the WTO officially published the TFA review report, which showed that the Agreement has helped support global supply chain resilience since it entered into force. In the WTO report, the work of the WBG via TFSP was highlighted for contributing to this important result.

- On June 29, WTO Members met to mark the five-year anniversary of the TFA. The WBG team participated in two sessions and presented on “Measuring the Impact of TFA Implementation Beyond Notifications” and “Challenges and Opportunities of TFA Implementation, Experience from the World Bank Group’s Trade Facilitation Support Program.”

Annex B has a list of other global, regional, and country-level events that the WBG organized or presented at during the reporting period with support from TFSP.

1.3b Trade Facilitation & Border Management Community of Practice (CoP)

The WBG Global Trade Team launched a new Community of Practice on Trade Facilitation & Border Management in June 2022. This CoP was established to facilitate knowledge sharing across the WBG by providing a forum to discuss trends and issues in trade facilitation and border management as well as support WBG staff in the delivery of trade facilitation technical assistance. The CoP also aims to find links between trade facilitation and other areas of WBG work, such as the Transport Global Practice, IFC Investment Climate, and IFC Trade Finance, to ensure opportunities for synergies are pursued moving forward.

An initial survey administered among WBG staff to gather feedback regarding establishment of the CoP resulted in high interest from 167 staff across the institution. As of the end of the FY22, 184 WBG staff were part of the CoP. At this stage, the CoP is dedicated to WBG staff only, but the possibility for expansion to external colleagues will be considered in the future (for example, some events may be open to external participants). See Box 6 to read about the first event hosted by the CoP as part of its official launch.
“There are large number of MSMEs in small island developing states, and we are trade reliant in our economies. So, the JTIP [Jamaica Trade Information Portal] has made it very easy and less time-consuming for them to access all of Jamaica’s trade information on goods electronically in one location.”

— PATRICIA FRANCIS, CHAIRPERSON OF THE TRADE FACILITATION TASK FORCE, JAMAICA

1.3c Trade Facilitation and Gender Work

Research has shown that although women-owned SMEs represent 31 to 38 percent of all SMEs in emerging markets, the growth rates of these firms do not come close to matching that of their men counterparts [IFC and the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion 2011]. Moving goods across borders implies challenges for traders, and research has also shown that only one in five exporting firms are led by women (ITC 2015). What is preventing women-led firms from participating in trade? Do women-led firms face more challenging roadblocks to cross-border trade than men-led firms, and do specific roadblocks prevent women from growing their businesses?

Considering these questions, TFSP funded the design and implementation of the Trade and Gender Study in the previous reporting periods. The survey methodology seeks to identify and quantify gender gaps in cross-border trade processes and procedures by collecting data on the specific trade facilitation challenges faced by both women and men traders and customs clearing agents, challenges that impede women more acutely than men traders and customs clearing agents, and challenges that burden solely women traders and customs clearing agents at the firm level. The surveys are also supplemented by focus group discussions with traders and customs clearing service agents.

BOX 6
Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Lao PDR Trade Information Portal and the Launch of the Trade Facilitation & Border Management Community of Practice

On June 22, 2022, a virtual event was held to officially launch the CoP and celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the Lao PDR Trade Information Portal. The Lao PDR TIP was the first Trade Information Portal set-up with WBG support, and it has provided practical time-saving access to up-to-date information to millions of customers. The TIP has also become the template for publishing of trade-related information in developing economies.

The event also showcased two other TIPs from Botswana and Jamaica, which were supported by TFSP. Representatives from Lao PDR, Botswana, and Jamaica highlighted their experiences in establishing portals in the three countries. The launch event was attended by 63 internal and external viewers across regions, including representatives from TFSP donor partners.

In the next fiscal year, the WBG team aims to host similar knowledge-sharing events virtually and in-person when it becomes possible, some of which may also be open to external participants.

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In the next fiscal year, the WBG team aims to host similar knowledge-sharing events virtually and in-person when it becomes possible, some of which may also be open to external participants.
Since the publication of the Trade and Gender Study Report for Timor-Leste, the government of Timor-Leste has taken steps to improve the trading environment for women traders. For example, Timor-Leste’s NTFC had been inactive since 2016 and is in the process of being revitalized. As part of the revitalization, an amendment will be made to add the association of women entrepreneurs of Timor-Leste as a non-executive member of the NTFC. By having women entrepreneurs represented in the NTFC, it will contribute to better information sharing. The NTFC will also organize several talk shows on national TV to raise awareness about border processes and procedures for women traders (both formal and informal).

TFSP supported deployment of the Trade and Gender Study in five Pacific Island countries, and the methodology has since been replicated in several other countries under other funding sources (including in Brazil, the Philippines, and South Africa through the WBG’s Trade Facilitation Program in Middle Income Countries) and with more underway. The data collected in connection with the surveys and information from the analyses contribute to the field of literature on the trade facilitation and gender. This quantifiable data adds to the increasingly important dialogue on how to mainstream gender and inclusivity issues into trade policy, and it may be useful to the government, development organizations, and others in ensuring that trade facilitation interventions can benefit all traders equally. See Box 7 to read about how the government of Timor-Leste has taken action to help women traders in response to the findings from the study.

TFSP also supports the WBG’s participation in the WTO’s Gender Research Hub, which is a mechanism to knowledge-share on the impact of trade on women and gender equality. The WBG has leveraged the Hub, as well as other opportunities, to share its trade and gender-related research and to stay at the forefront of the trade and gender dialogue.

1.3d TFA Tracking Tool

There were 364 new visitors to the website in FY22. All countries with validated assessments are able to view their whole-of-government “alignment scores,” as well as individual scores by four proxy agencies, on the portal to assess their level of full and effective implementation for each measure of the WTO TFA. Only designated and approved users can see the country scores, and each country’s NTFC or equivalent assigns specific representatives to access their respective country profiles on the website. Section 1.5 provides more details on the Tracking Tool methodology along with a summary of alignment scores for the TFSP-supported countries.

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**BOX 7**

**Making Changes to Include More Women Traders**

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“**The WBG’s study in Timor-Leste on trade facilitation challenges faced by women traders and freight forwarders has provided us with valuable insights on the areas where improvements can be made to make cross-border trade more inclusive.**”

— DÁVIDA MESQUITA, MARKETING AND BRANDING SPECIALIST AT THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (MTCI), TIMOR-LESTE

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12 Over 1,500 firms were interviewed in the Pacific Islands region (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu). Individual country reports and one comparative regional report were published and disseminated broadly to governments, the private sector, and civil society in and beyond the surveyed countries. An animated video highlighting the main findings was also produced to publicize the study in an easily sharable and digestible media format.

13 The number of first-time users between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

14 The TFA Tracking Tool assesses alignment across 37 technical measures. The TFA Tracking Tool is not intended to be a ranking exercise. To preserve confidentiality, country-specific alignment scores can only be viewed by designated and vetted users of each client country represented on the website. The general public is able to view overall scores as well as other non-sensitive information.
1.4 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential for the optimal delivery of the program and a coordinated roll-out of technical assistance in participating countries. Over the past years, with support from TFSP, the WBG has delivered multiple workshops, undertaken missions, and worked on knowledge products and technical assistance jointly with the following organizations:

- World Trade Organization: Partnership on multiple fronts, including Annex D, knowledge management activities (including the Gender Research Hub) and peer-to-peer events, and an advance course for NTFC chairs in multiple regions

- International Trade Center (ITC): Joint activities in Sri Lanka and in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): Joint missions to Guatemala, Jamaica, Liberia, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Suriname; joint regional NTFC event in Ethiopia and global NTFC event in Geneva

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): Participation in TFA workshops in Tajikistan, Ukraine, and North Macedonia and participation in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) forums. In this reporting period, the WBG also worked with the UN on Recommendation 38 on TIPs (Box 8).

- HM’s Revenue and Customs (UK), UNCTAD, and the World Customs Organization: Joint missions to Bangladesh, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Tajikistan; Tonga on TRS

- United States Agency for International Development (USAID): Joint TFA assessments in Bangladesh, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia and participation in TFA workshops in Central America

- TradeMark East Africa: Burundi assessment

- Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF): Partnership with the European Commission in Cabo Verde, Myanmar, and Vanuatu

- International Air Transport Association (IATA): Partnership in Central America for air cargo, expedited shipments

- World Customs Organization (WCO): Joint activities in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Tonga, and in the Western Balkans

- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC): Initiation of joint electronic phytosanitary certification (e-Phytol) pilot implementation, joint TFA missions, exchange of knowledge, and joint SPS diagnostic work, supporting the development of an e-commerce guide, support the IPPC’s Sea Containers Task Force on practical management of sea containers

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15 The Annex D + group is comprised of the following organizations: IMF, ITC, OECD, UNCTAD, UNECE, WBG, and WCO

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**BOX 8**

**Recommendation No. 38 on Trade Information Portals**

With support from the WBG Global Trade Team, the United Nation’s Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) issued a Recommendation on Trade Information Portals in fall 2021. It addresses the importance of accessing accurate information about the rules governing international trade and how to achieve this through a TIP. The recommendation details the different types of information for such a portal, implementation considerations, and key success factors, as well as serves as a complete guide on setting up a TIP.

As a critical aspect of international trade, it is expected that many countries around the world have already or soon will implement a TIP. This recommendation will be accompanied by an e-business standard to help facilitate the exchange of such information. The UNECE working group on TIPs was led by the WBG, with funding from TFSP. The WBG will begin the upgrade of its software shortly to fully comply with the recommendation and take the solution to the next level.
Working in Coordination and Collaboration with Others

At the **global level**, the WBG recognizes the importance of working together with other development partners and international organizations to provide global advocacy for open markets, develop innovative knowledge products and toolkits, and share best practices. One area of this collaboration centers on advancing efficiencies in safe trade. TFSP-funded experts have supported and presented at numerous STDF webinars to discuss and advance solutions for SPS and trade issues. In July 2021, for example, the WBG co-hosted a side event at the SPS Committee meeting to discuss systems approaches in food safety and plant health. STDF and the WBG experts presented specific case stories that describe the challenges and opportunities of implementing a system, helping to inform SPS regulators of the potential of using systems approaches in a manner that improves regulatory control, increases the responsibility sharing for regulatory control between the public and private sector, and removes unnecessary border interventions to manage risk by refocusing regulatory resources along the chain of custody. There were 157 participants in this webinar. Such an approach is now being financed by the STDF under a project preparation grant to study the efficacy of systems approaches in better managing food safety risks in Uganda.

At the **country level**, the WBG recognizes the importance of coordinated development assistance to increase aid effectiveness, avoid duplication of work, and minimize client fatigue. Through information sharing, the WBG teams are able to develop work-plans that do not overlap with other projects ongoing in the countries. When needed and as appropriate, the WBG also collaborates with other donors to deliver projects and joint workshops and events. In Georgia, for example, the Georgia Revenue Service (GRS) had long-standing cooperation with USAID to develop an AEO program concept, and once the enabling regulatory framework was put in place, TFSP provided complementary assistance for the operation of the program. In Vietnam, TFSP support was provided in collaboration with DFAT’s bilateral support for the Vietnam Free Trade Agreement Portal, ensuring its complementarity with the TFSP-supported work on the Vietnam TIP. In Zambia, the WBG through TFSP support established a donor platform in collaboration with other donor partners (including the EU and FCDO) several years ago. It is constituted by representatives from around 25 donor partners and various ministries/departments of the government of Zambia. In a meeting held in July 2021, participants discussed their various activities in the country and recommendations were made to address concerns over overlap in donor support on trade facilitation reforms. To this end, an enhanced matrix was developed to show the exact activities each donor partner is supporting.

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**BOX 9**

**Working in Coordination and Collaboration with Others**

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**BOX 9** provides select examples of how the TFSP works in partnership with other development partners and organizations globally and at the country level.

- Standards Trade Development Facility (STDF): Ensuring synergies between STDF and WBG projects and that WTO TFA objectives are included in the projects, as well as participating in webinars on sanitary and phytosanitary and trade-related issues
- International Standards Organization (ISO): Presentation at events and co-writing a blog on managing organizational performance during a crisis like COVID-19
- United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT): Presentation at virtual forum
- Presentation of best practices to the EU member states regarding National Single Window implementation jointly with Taxaud

**Box 9** provides select examples of how the TFSP works in partnership with other development partners and organizations globally and at the country level.
1.5 **TFA TRACKING TOOL**

The WBG utilizes the TFA Tracking Tool methodology and website to better position itself in demonstrating and monitoring progress towards the TFSP’s objective of helping countries improve alignment with the WTO TFA. The tool also provides countries with a comprehensive data set of their individual alignment with the TFA, which will inform the design of an appropriate reform program and allow tracking of progress in a results-based manner. The TFA Tracking Tool helps demonstrate changes in TFA alignment over the following three dimensions:

(i) The legal/policy dimension measures the extent to which legal or administrative measures are in place that establish policies consistent with the TFA.

(ii) The implementing procedures dimension determines whether procedures consistent with the TFA have been developed to give effect to relevant policy prescriptions.

(iii) The operational check category measures the extent to which policies and procedures consistent with the TFA are applied in practice.

The TFA Tracking Tool takes two approaches to measure alignment with the WTO TFA:

1. A whole-of-government approach is utilized to evaluate a country as a whole, which means that all agencies relevant to the particular trade facilitation measure should be aligned with the TFA’s requirements in order for a country to receive full credit. For implementation to remain manageable, four agencies are defined per country as a proxy for the whole-of-government: (a) customs; (b) agency responsible for plant protection and quarantine; (c) agency responsible for standards; and (d) agency responsible for food safety and/or animal health.

2. The granular approach to the TFA Tracking Tool methodology allows for a further breakdown of scores by each of the aforementioned proxy agencies, which enhances the ability to track progress by each specific agency over time. The enhanced TFA Tracking Tool website integrates the granular aspects of the methodology into the alignment score visualizations.

Since the launch of the TFA Tracking Tool, baselines for 31 countries in the TFSP portfolio have been validated and more are in the process of being validated. The measurements behind those baseline scores were undertaken between 2015 and 2018. Baseline scores for 21 TFSP-supported countries have also been updated by the WBG, demonstrating an improvement in their overall alignment with the WTO TFA from 41 percent alignment in the baseline scores to 51 percent in their updates. Because validation requires in-country field visits, no new countries were added to the TFA Tracking Tool in this reporting period due to existing COVID-19 travel restrictions. As travel restrictions were lifted towards the end of FY22, the TFSP team started several country validations, which are expected to be completed in FY23. Figures 7–9 show breakdowns of the changes in baseline and updated scores of TFSP countries represented on the website.
FIGURE 7
Overall Alignment by Measure

1.1 Publication
1.2 Publication Online
1.3 Enquiry Point
2.1 Opportunity to Comment
2.2 Consultations
3 Advance Rulings
4 Right of Appeal
5.1 Notification
5.2 Detention
5.3 Test Procedures
6.1 General Disciplines
6.2 Specific Disciplines
6.3 Penalty Disciplines
7.1 Pre-Arrival Processing
7.2 Electronic Payment
7.3 Separation of Release
7.4 Risk Management
7.5 Post-Clearance Audit
7.6 Average Release Times
7.7 Authorized Operators
7.8 Expedited Shipments
7.9 Perishable Goods
8.1 Border Agency Coop Internal
8.2 Border Agency Coop External
9 Domestic Transit
10.1 Formalities & Doc Requirements
10.2 Acceptance of Copies
10.3 International Standards
10.4 Single Window
10.5 Pre-Shipments Inspection
10.6 Customs Brokers
10.7 Common Border Procedures
10.8 Rejected Goods
10.9 Temporary Admission
11 Freedom of Transit
12 Customs Cooperation
23 Institutional Arrangements

Note: Baselines are 2015–18; updates are 2018–20.
FIGURE 8
Changes in Overall Dimension Score

![Bar chart showing changes in overall dimension score for Legal/Policy, Implementing Procedures, and Operational Check.]

Note: Baselines are 2015–18; updates are 2018–20.

FIGURE 9
Changes in Alignment to Trade Facilitation Agreement

![Bar chart showing changes in alignment to TFA among 21 countries with baseline and update scores.]

Note: The figure shows the proportion of the 37 TFA measures that are either not aligned, partially aligned, substantially aligned, or fully aligned among the 21 countries with baseline and update scores. The objective is for the proportion of “not aligned” measures to decrease while the proportion of “partially,” “substantially,” and ultimately “fully aligned” measures to increase as assessments are updated. A score between 0–33 percent is categorized as “not aligned.” A score between 34–66 percent is categorized as “partially aligned.” A score of 67–99 percent is categorized as “substantially aligned.” A score of 100 percent is categorized as “fully aligned.” Baselines are 2015–18; updates are 2018–20.

1.6 SUSTAINABLE REFORMS

TFSP supports interventions that will create and maintain the momentum necessary for reforms to be successful in the longer term and continue to generate results and gains for stakeholders even after project closure. Sustainability can be fostered in many ways, including for example by:

- Providing extensive training on the use of any manuals, guidance, or standard operating procedures (SOPs) developed, as well as training on the use of new software applications developed and implemented.
- Fostering ownership and leadership by making sure that a core team from the lead agency is heavily involved and responsible for the development of
various tools/processes/materials related to a reform. WBG experts can guide the process, present international best practices, and provide comments and suggestions.

- Working with NTFC Secretariats to ensure they have the necessary skills to sustain themselves.
- Implementing reforms that are legally binding.

Box 10 provides two examples of how TFSP supported sustainable reforms.

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**BOX 10**

**Fostering Ownership and Leadership to Ensure the Sustainability of Reforms**

**A Champion NTFC**

Eswatini re-established its National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) and its Secretariat in November 2019, following recommendations from the TFSP-supported project team. The NCTF unites 25 government agencies under the same roof, enabling easier coordination of trade-related decisions and reforms. NCTF member agencies have benefited from development of the Committee’s Terms of Reference, conceptualization of its organizational structure, development of a roadmap and other analytical materials, as well as participation in a number of the project-organized events. Through this re-establishment, the Committee is now in good shape to continue operating after project completion, serving as a champion of the trade-related agenda and ensuring sustainability of reforms.

**Fostering Ownership**

Traders in Botswana once faced daunting challenges with accessing comprehensive trade-related information because there was no single point of reference for traders seeking advice on export and import. Traders had to look for information from various agencies, often resulting in an increase in the time required to trade.

Aiming to make trade easier, the Ministry of Trade and Industry requested support from the WBG to create the country’s Trade Information Portal on behalf of the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC). TFSP began providing support to Botswana in FY15 to develop a TIP, which would house all relevant information from all agencies involved in the trade supply chain (ranging from tariffs to non-tariff measures, procedures, and legislation related to import and export). The Botswana Trade Portal was launched in 2016, providing access to all relevant information from 16 agencies. Through the portal, traders can get information on all the regulatory requirements for carrying out trade transactions. The portal also contains downloadable copies of all the documentation the traders will need.

Since 2019, BITC has taken-on hosting, maintenance, and support of TIP themselves, absorbing all the costs and no longer requiring support from TFSP. TFSP was able to foster ownership of the project within the government of Botswana by building a culture of transparency, local capacity, and financial responsibility. This allowed BITC to take the TIP in-house and sustain its operations in the long term. BITC continues to regularly update the portal, providing timely information announcements, news updates, and publications.

“The Eswatini NCTF is emerging as a success story within the development partners’ community. One of the reasons behind this success is its strong organizational framework and the level of activity of its Secretariat… The Eswatini NCTF benefited significantly from having in-house full-time World Bank-sponsored experts working with the NCTF Secretariat.”

— STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (COMCEC)
2.1 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The administration of TFSP sits at the intersection of the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation, reflecting the importance of both institutions to improving trade processes and procedures. Global experts on trade and public and private sector development from both institutions work on the TFSP-supported interventions, together with field-based staff, and they are complemented by consultants worldwide. With the institutional re-organization effective July 1, 2020, all trade facilitation work is led by the World Bank.

2.2 DONOR ENGAGEMENT

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the TFSP Consultative Committee meetings that were held in the reporting period were virtual. The first meeting took place in July 2021 and the second in February 2022. The semi-annual consultations provide development partners with updates on the progress of the program and with the opportunity to discuss the strategic direction of TFSP.

2.3 COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Communications is an important element of TFSP and focuses on:

- Raising awareness of program activities, results, and effects
- Increasing the visibility of the program and donor partners
- Disseminating useful trade facilitation material to stakeholders

During the reporting period, TFSP continued to build on its foundation for communications and to embed it within project activities. The communications plan was updated in FY21–22 to guide the program’s approach to strategic
communications. It is supplemented with guidance for team members on how to incorporate communications into specific activities, including by meeting donor visibility requirements. The Secretariat and country teams have continued to build on virtual communication channels with clients—initially developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic—and many of which are now embedded in the everyday workings of the program. A significant development on this front was the launch of an online Community of Practice on Trade Facilitation & Border Management and the initiation of the “Trade Tips” podcast and animation on the National Single Window (see later sections for more detail).

In this reporting period, the TFSP-funded team also supported an innovative approach to strengthen communications in Zambia (Box 11).

Box C provides details of select communications efforts made in the reporting period. A return to more in-person communication, events, and missions started to resume in the latter half of the reporting period.

2.4 Financial Overview

At the end of the reporting period, USD 61 million had been received from the TFSP development partners since the program’s launch. This was 99.6 percent of overall partner commitments at the end of the reporting period. Figure 10 shows receipts and outstanding payments by donor.

The program disbursement-only percentage reduced slightly from the previous reporting period—from 78 percent in FY21 to 76 percent in FY22 (Figure 11). Cumulative disbursements since program inception plus activity commitments at the end of FY22 totaled 79 percent of cash receipts (Annex D has further financial details). The reduction in percentage disbursements is caused by lower disbursements due to the pandemic.

Box 11
Strengthening Communications on Trade Facilitation in Zambia

In September 2021, the TFSP-funded team in Zambia supported Zambia’s NTFC in hosting a media training workshop to educate the country’s media houses on trade facilitation. Welcome remarks were delivered by high-level Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI) representatives and the IFC Country Representative, and the agenda included presentations to introduce trade facilitation, the WTO TFA, and the NTFC Secretariat and roadmap; highlight the trade reforms that have been undertaken and are being implemented; and demonstration of the newly launched Zambia Trade Information Portal. A panel discussion was also hosted to discuss how trade reforms have enhanced trade in Zambia, including lessons learned from the border agencies (Zambia Revenue Authority/Customs; Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency; Ministry of Agriculture, Agribusiness and Trade; Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry).

Over 60 representatives from media houses, newspapers, radio, and TV, as well as border agencies, participated in the event. This event helped the media obtain a better understanding of trade facilitation and the WBG’s work in this area, and it provided exposure to the project, enabling “quality” reporting on the subject.

A number of media articles were published in local newspapers after the workshop (see Annex B, Item 2-D).
*US values reflect cash receipts after a 5 percent administrative fee is deducted. US values also include core and Zambia specific support. For all other donor receipts, the values include the 5 percent administrative fee.
3.1 LESSONS LEARNED

The WBG continues to learn lessons in relation to the design and execution of TFSP-supported activities. While some of the challenges are unique for each country, others are common across most countries. Below are some of the key challenges and lessons learned to implementation experienced most often across projects and countries:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Lesson Learned/Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 pandemic</td>
<td>• Pandemic-related restrictions delay work that requires in-country presence</td>
<td>• Support must be flexible to allow pivoting and adapting work streams as needed, such as working through WBG country offices, utilizing virtual modalities, and relying more on local staff and consultants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Preference for in-person engagements</td>
<td>• As restrictions are gradually being relaxed, take into consideration the cultural context where in-person meetings may be more effective than virtual engagements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>• NTFC is weak or inactive</td>
<td>• The NTFC is a good mechanism for obtaining buy-in and consensus on reform priorities, especially when it has participation from the private sector. Early set-up of an NTFC supports efficient use of resources by improving coordination among participants and reduces the risk of duplicating funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implementation capacity varies across border agencies, and customs agencies often have higher implementation capacity than other agencies</td>
<td>• Capacity building across all border agencies is vital to enhance their overall understanding of trade reforms and ensure that benefits of interventions are maximized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Smaller countries lack sufficient resources</td>
<td>• In smaller countries, it is important to develop a project implementation plan that will take into account their specific issues and capacities. The work plan should ensure there is a logical sequence in implementation and that staff is not exhausted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>• Unclear mandates or frequent changes at customs, border agencies, and the NTFC Secretariat affect the speed and sustainability of reforms</td>
<td>• Each NTFC Secretariat requires a legal framework that defines the Secretariat’s functions and its mandate. It should have an adequate structure with dedicated professionals to support the implementation process, including program and project management and strong communications capabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Countries with more stable administrative frameworks generally make faster progress because full and effective implementation of reforms requires clear legal mandates and legal foundations. From a legal standpoint, codifying interagency cooperation through an interagency agreement can establish the ground rules for how agencies will interact as well as how they will exchange trade data and handle import and export declarations. To mitigate issues related to reshuffling of staff or government changes, a broad distribution of contact points on the government side (across agencies) can be helpful in ensuring continuity of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Implementation of trade facilitation measures often requires new or revised legislation. As these legislative changes typically take a long time, they should be identified and acted upon as early as possible. Moreover, trade facilitation involves developing better procedures in areas considered crucial to national security, government revenue, and private sector development. It is, therefore, important that proposed changes are pilot-tested and implemented in phases to ensure no unintended adverse impact or system breakdown occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Lesson Learned/Solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritization and sequencing</td>
<td>• Some government agencies are not aware of the importance of prioritizing their border activities</td>
<td>• The NTFC can take the lead in making decisions to sequence reforms on the basis of identified priorities, ensure that there is sequential flow between technical assistance on a measure and its implementation, periodically take stock of the streams of technical assistance coming from different development partners, and take steps to achieve a balance between the requirements for technical assistance and the capacity of the beneficiary organization to receive it.</td>
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<td>• Initial general introductory “what this is all about” workshops and meetings followed by a quick transformation to action-based activities are helpful to set priorities. Failing to recognize where to set priorities may result in inefficient and ineffective allocation of resources, and thus data collection and analysis serve to help clients better identify, prioritize, and target reforms.</td>
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<td>• It is critical to obtain commitment at all levels. High-level political commitment may fast-track the legal reforms required and source financing for heavy-cost projects. Commitment by different government agencies and private sector entities is required for achieving results that benefit a wide range of stakeholders. At the same time, prioritization of reforms with the identification of deliverables and close attention to key milestones throughout the implementation process are relevant to sustaining political support and private sector engagement.</td>
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<td>Commitment</td>
<td>• Frequent delays or frustration with implementation goals hampers the trust among stakeholders and commitment to the reform agenda</td>
<td>• Develop targeted projects that the partners are requesting (i.e., they consider this a priority and plan to use it once developed) and are sufficiently scoped to be easily manageable by the partners.</td>
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<td>• It is not always possible to transfer overall accountability for complex multi-agency projects outside of the lead agency/agencies</td>
<td>• Make it explicit to the client that once the TFSP-supported project closes, they must be ready to take over responsibility with the appropriate structures and behaviors to enable that. Deeply involving the client in the development of activities from start to finish can help ensure that client has a good understanding of the process and feels ready to carry out the work on their own going forward.</td>
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<td>• Government elections may impact project delivery</td>
<td>• Project planning should better take into account the likely impact of national elections as they recur regularly. Government counterparts are likely to change drastically as a result of elections, impacting project implementation. The project should be structured to minimize impact, for example, by ensuring clients take ownership of the reform process. Anchoring projects in the respective ministries, departments, and agencies can help build solid foundations to carry out the project even as government administrations change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Lesson Learned/Solution</td>
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| Communication and coordination (internal)     | ▪ Lack of communication, regular consultations, or coordination between border agencies (for example, compliance data collected by customs or other border agencies is often not shared between them or inspections are undertaken separately) | ▪ Differing agency interests can spark resistance or lead to a push for alternate approaches, potentially derailing and delaying project implementation. Coordination can help anticipate resistance and disseminate benefits to stakeholders.  
▪ Political will is important for successful reforms. Prompt communication and messaging about trade facilitation initiatives is necessary in order to clarify any misconceptions on the possible outcomes of the initiatives and to garner whole-hearted support from the relevant agencies.  
▪ SPS agencies should cooperate with customs agencies and other border agencies to more effectively manage the risk of consignments. Developing more collaborative approaches for information sharing, conducting joint inspections, and transferring some activities between agencies could improve efficiency processes and procedures at the border and better allocate limited resources. |
| Public-private dialogue                        | ▪ Stakeholders are unaware of the benefits of reforms                        | ▪ Enhanced transparency and communication between the border agencies and private sector are critical to progress. Bringing stakeholders together, especially at the early stages, spurs reforms. Meetings among public and private stakeholders bring to light national, regional, and international best practices that can help motivate national and regional reform efforts and help identify common obstacles, solutions, and achievements.  
▪ Using a best practice approach (i.e., designing from the bottom up rather than top down) drives the development of a better solution contextualized for the local environment because the end beneficiaries’ needs are considered from the outset. Additionally, identification of an early achievable “fix” that will bring benefits to multiple work areas and industry sectors can spur commitment to reform plans.  
▪ Communicating the benefits of reforms is important to secure buy-in from the private sector, and a committed private sector increases sustainability of reforms. As such, consistent efforts should be made to have open dialogues with the private sector. The WBG can serve as a mediator between the government and the private sector to build mutual trust. |
| Impact                                         | ▪ Impact of reforms are unclear                                              | ▪ It is important to show results and improved alignment with the TFA over time by monitoring and measuring progress over time. Current tools for monitoring and measuring progress need to be strengthened, modified, and improved in many countries. |
| Connectivity and automation                    | ▪ Lack of automation and reliance on old paper-based systems                 | ▪ A base level of automation across trade facilitation agencies is needed given the exponential development of technology today. Ensuring an adequate level of automation will enable deployment of assistance to be more effective as all border agencies will be better positioned to implement reforms. |
| Cross-cutting issues                           | ▪ There is a global lack of data on how trade facilitation interventions impact traders by gender at the firm level | ▪ The lack of gender disaggregated data may reinforce biases against women in policymaking. Interventions must be designed inclusively—benefiting women as well as men—and strong data on the gender of those who participate actively in cross-border trade are needed in order to do this. |
3.2 LOOKING FORWARD

As COVID-19 pandemic-related restrictions continue to gradually ease, WBG offices around the world will re-engage with governments and/or increase their engagements depending on their different operating statuses based on local conditions. TFSP will accelerate implementation of trade facilitation measures in line with international standards to enable a global trading system that supports timely and efficient delivery and release of much-needed global goods. The WBG will continue to provide support to governments with their immediate needs to respond to the pandemic and move towards recovery (such as support to the NTFCs, risk management, and border agency cooperation) and will also support governments in effectively implementing trade facilitation measures (such as those in the WTO TFA and other cross-cutting areas, including gender) to improve trade competitiveness, enhance regional integration, promote trade flows, and bolster cross-border trade processes and procedures and supply chains against future crises.

The WBG will continue to assist countries where implementation has begun with TFSP support. The WBG also will consider/commence providing support to Angola, Ghana, Indonesia, Mozambique, Peru, and the SACU region. Consideration will also be given to support activities in Egypt. Within the area of knowledge management and learning, TFSP support will focus on innovative ways to share knowledge and best practices, including through the organization of two large-scale regional events for peer-to-peer learning and the launch of a “Trade Tips” podcast series to introduce and explain concepts related to trade facilitation reforms.

The criticality of scaling up work on trade facilitation and the full and effective implementation of the TFA has been especially relevant over the past few years during the pandemic. Demand for WBG support for trade facilitation is also expected to continue to grow. There is a great need for support to developing and least developed countries as 43 WTO Members have committed to implement 176 Category C measures between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023, alone and more complex notifications extend out to 2040.

New challenges—such as the Ukraine crisis and the related sanctions—have affected trade and logistics in the broader region, underpinning the relevance of TFSP and implementing global standards such as the WTO TFA for the cross-border movement of goods. Food and energy trade are the latest to be impacted by global crises. The challenges of the 21st century (e.g., climate change, food security, energy issues) require a global response to build a global trading system that supports timely delivery and release of much-needed global goods. Changes in climate, for example, impact how and where agricultural goods can be produced as growing environments and the distribution of pests and crop diseases shift. Proper risk management frameworks will be critical to help countries identify threats based on risk and continue the safe trade of agricultural goods in response to these variances. In light of these global challenges, there are opportunities now more than ever to further explore and strengthen the linkages between trade facilitation and other cross-cutting areas.

TFSP is well-positioned to help countries build solid trade foundations and architecture that strengthen their resilience against future negative shocks that impact trade, particularly through provision of technical assistance and capacity building that embed efficient and effective trade facilitation measures and solutions. The WBG recognizes that more engagement and leverage of complementary cross-cutting issues—such as re-positioning of global supply chains, smart climate at borders and ports, e-commerce, digitalization, gender, and other areas—is required to move the trade and trade facilitation agenda forward as the 21st century evolves. Trade facilitation will continue to play a critical role by removing administrative and regulatory bottlenecks at borders to reduce the time and cost to access global markets while improving transparency and predictability for traders, which is critical to relieving supply chain pressures and trade disruptions that impact the global economy.

Looking ahead, TFSP will continue to support accelerated TFA implementation while also continue to respond to emerging issues, including climate, cross-border emergency preparedness, e-commerce, and gender and inclusion. The current capacity of TFSP to provide support, however, is limited due to the remaining timeline of the program (set to expire in June 2023) and the low availability of funds. The WBG will explore options with each development partner to continue the work supported under TFSP, respond to the increasing demand for support, and to take the trade facilitation agenda to the next level.
FSP has provided support to 48 countries in aligning trade practices with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement across East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The following are summaries of activities by region.
Country-specific Activities: East Asia

Cambodia

TFSP support to Cambodia

In FY22, the government of Cambodia requested new support from the World Bank to assist with improving border agency collaboration, and funding through TFSP was approved at the end of FY22 to support this activity in the next fiscal year.

In prior years, TFSP provided support to Cambodia (see highlights of this work below) that complemented a World Bank project focusing primarily on implementing a national trade repository. TFSP financing— together with the Japan Trust Fund—focused on (A) supporting the government of Cambodia in the formation of a NTFC that meets TFA requirements to coordinate and implement trade facilitation reforms and commitments, (B) reviewing regulations on prohibitions, restrictions of goods, and risk management practices, and (C) advising on the removal of duplicate controls at the border.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.4 Risk Management
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- From January 2018 to March 2019, the TFSP-supported project team provided advisory services to the General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE) to review the list of prohibited and restricted import items
(Sub-decree 209) and provided recommendations on how to reduce the prohibited and restricted list (PR list) and simplify items, as necessary, to reduce time and costs for importers. The activities undertaken with TFSP support included:

- Recommended the government to set up an inter-ministerial working group to review the list and facilitated the establishment of the working group by organizing workshops to engage with relevant agencies in the process
- Provided advice on the methodology to be used by the working group for the review of the list, which followed the guillotine approach to assess items based on the three criteria of legality, necessity, and market friendliness/transparency
- Facilitated the review process, including organizing three technical workshops co-chaired by an IFC trade facilitation expert
- Reviewed the list and provided recommendations including: [1] removing commodities from the list that could be better managed through post-entry control, and [2] removing articles on the list that likely represent a very low risk and should be removed from the list

As a result of this review and based on the WBG recommendations, new Sub-decree 17 was issued in February 2020, to replace Sub-decree 209. The new sub-decree reduced the total number of tariff lines in the PR list from 2,050 tariff lines to 1,829 tariff lines (a total of 221 tariff lines reduced), in addition:

- The number of tariff lines that were previously controlled by two or more ministries decreased from 710 tariff lines to 334 tariff lines (a total of 376 tariff lines decreased).
- 369 tariff lines that previously required import permits were substantially changed to only require relevant certificates from the exporting country (e.g., phytosanitary, veterinary, or health certificates)
- 64 tariff lines that previously required both import and export permits were substantially changed to require import permits only

The TFSP-supported WBG team provided advice on the removal of Camcontrol at the border checkpoints. Camcontrol’s main activities are revenue collection and inspection at the border. The private sector raised concerns over duplication in the role of customs and Camcontrol (under the Ministry of Commerce), which resulted in higher costs and delays. The WBG team recommended that the government remove the presence of Camcontrol at the border in a Doing Business (DB) Reform memo prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) in December 2017 (the DB memo was officially requested by MEF). On January 28, 2019, the government issued Sub-decree 27 to terminate the roles of Camcontrol at all border checkpoints, and GDCE is now the only government agency working on inspection for import and export at all border checkpoints. This reform helped reduce the trade cost.

Both sub-decrees are effective. It was confirmed by GDCE that Camcontrol has been removed from border checkpoints effective from July 1, 2019, and the Sub-decree 17 is being implemented.

**Lao PDR**

**TFSP support to Lao PDR**

TFSP support to Lao PDR has focused on establishment and implementation of an AEO program, and it concluded in September 2021. Earlier support to Lao PDR focused on border agency cooperation.
Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
8 Border Agency Cooperation

FY22 update on key activities

Since the AEO program (developed with support from TFSP) was approved in 2019, customs continued to make enhancements on its implementation of the program by establishing AEO guidelines, a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) manual, SAQ template and procedures, an AEO brochure and demonstration video, as well as providing training to customs officers and interested traders. In this reporting period, the Customs Department also:

- Piloted some simplified procedures on taxation for 11 companies engaging in international trade on July 30, 2021.
- Continued to monitor the taxation pilot and will enhance the AEO procedures to ensure that they are suitable to the Lao PDR context.
- Began reviewing the AEO guideline developed in 2019, with an aim to revise it to remove some deficiencies and improve alignments with the revised Customs Law. Revision is being supported by the WBG-financed Lao PDR Competitiveness Trade Project (LCTP).

Leverage or complementarity of funds

Activities reported under this period are complementary to the WBG-financed LCTP that supports the government’s trade and integration priorities.

Mongolia

TFSP support to Mongolia

Activities supported through the current TFSP project in Mongolia were concluded in June 2021 (FY21), and discussions started with the government of Mongolia to provide additional assistance for implementation of an advance ruling regime. Prior to project closure, TFSP provided support to Mongolia for the development of a TIP, establishment of the NTFC, streamlining of trade and customs regulations, improvement of border inspection practices and authorized operators measures, implementation of risk-based inspections, and undertaking of a TRS. TFSP support complemented a World Bank project component aimed at improving trade facilitation through better access to trade information for all relevant stakeholders, including the government and traders.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- Preparatory work to undertake the TRS commenced in FY19. The TFSP-supported WBG team developed 11 questionnaires based on the business process maps agreed upon with both Customs and the General Agency for Specialized Inspections (GASI). The team collaborated with several stakeholders—including the NTFC, brokers association, customs, GASI, railway authority, and MIAT (a national airway company)—to communicate the TRS objectives and organizational matters and provide the necessary training on the data collection process. Data collection and training was supported in several locations, including Zamyn-Uud, Southern border control post (BCP), Altanbulag, Sukhbaatar, Tsagaannuur (Northern BCPs), the Buyant-Ukhaa international airport, and at inland terminals such as ABTEMA, Mongol-Trans, and Ulaanbaatar City Customs Office. The study also estimated the average time it took traders to obtain certificates and permits from relevant government and non-government organizations for the import and export of goods.

- The TRS report was finalized and submitted to customs and other key stakeholders, including GASI, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Prime Ministers office, and Ministry of Finance in October 2020 (FY21). The main finding was that no improvements had been made since the last TRS was undertaken by USAID in 2012. It was recommended that the government of Mongolia uses the TRS data to prioritize, set targets, and coordinate activities to implement the WTO TFA, including on mutual recognition of conformity certificates and accredited lab tests provided by different agencies; risk-based controls and sampling of goods; joint risk profiling; information sharing between border agencies; harmonization of different trade practices and procedures across border crossing posts and terminals to address inconsistency issues in control and clearance procedures of goods; taking consecutive actions to enable advanced submission of transaction information and supporting documents electronically; applying advanced registration, review, and verification processes for support documents that will also allow for information sharing between agencies to eliminate the need for applicants to submit the same information to multiple agencies; digitizing documentation submission and processing to improve data collection and management by border agencies.

The WBG team presented the main findings and recommendations to customs as well as to the private sector (including the American Chamber of Commerce, Business Council of Mongolia, National Chamber of Commerce) during online events dedicated to trade facilitation and investor protection in December 2020. Customs has published the TRS report on their website.

- A TIP advisory agreement draft was developed and shared with the customs authorities at the beginning of April 2019, and it was signed in mid-August 2019. The TIP, a central online depository of all foreign trade-related information that greatly benefits Mongolia’s SMEs, was launched on December 11, 2020. The TFSP-supported team officially handed over the TIP to customs and the lead agency on TIP on the same day. The TIP contains about 400 legal documents from seven ministries and a number of other agencies involved in foreign trade. The WBG team organized communication campaigns before and during the launch, aimed to increase awareness and use of the portal by the private sector.

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16 Visit the TIP at www.mongoliatradeportal.gov.mn
Leverage or complementarity of funds

Findings from the TRS on the time required for export preparation [e.g., obtaining permits] and its burdensome process involving border agencies and the General Agency for Veterinary Service will be considered for streamlining customs clearance process under IFC’s new project “Mongolia Meat” that started implementation on March 2022.

Myanmar (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Myanmar

TFSP did not provide support to Myanmar in the reporting period due to the political situation in the country. When the final TFA assessment was discussed with the government in 2015, the following implementation activities were agreed upon: (A) assistance with the establishment of a NTFC, which has been completed, (B) capacity building on risk management and early discussion on the establishment of a customs intelligence unit, (C) publication of the customs valuation procedures in the national gazette, and (D) review and redrafting of the customs law to reflect new challenges and needs of modern customs operations. Support for these priority areas is on hold.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
7.4 Risk Management
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.3 Use of International Standards
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP funding complements a World Bank trade facilitation project, and work under TFSP also helped leverage a lending operation currently in preparation [with a component focusing on modernizing customs and improving trade facilitation]. The TFSP-funded TFA Gap Assessment helped inform UK Aid/DFAT bilateral funding.

Vietnam

TFSP support to Vietnam

In FY22, TFSP continued to provide support on Vietnam Free Trade Agreement Portal (FTAP). Previously, TFSP supported the launch of the Vietnam Trade Information Portal (VTIP), which launched in July 2017. After its launch, TFSP provided regular support to update the VTIP, train the General Department of

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17 Currently on hold.
Vietnam Customs (the VTIP host agency), and support its integration with the FTAP. Previous support also included establishment of the NTFC and advice on analyzing the results of Vietnam’s Time Release Study. In FY19, TFSP financed focus group discussions with traders in Vietnam, as part of a larger regional initiative on women and cross-border trade.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- The TFSP-supported WBG team assisted Vietnam’s Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) with the development of the FTAP. MOIT was keen to launch the FTAP as soon as possible in order to maximize opportunities for Vietnamese and global traders following the recent coming into force of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) free trade agreement. As such, an early version of the FTAP launched in December 2020, at MOIT’s request. The final version of FTAP was launched in May 2022, at which point the system was officially handed over to MOIT through a signed agreement.

TFSP support was provided in collaboration with DFAT bilateral support for this portal, ensuring its complementarity with the TFSP-supported work on the Vietnam TIP also developed with TFSP support. Throughout the project, the WBG kept DFAT closely involved in the progress because DFAT was keen to support this initiative as it considered it to be of crucial importance for promoting and facilitating trade between Australia and Vietnam for their respective bilateral key markets. DFAT provided continuous support and encouragement.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

Early TFA engagement informed preparation of the National Logistic Action Plan and contributed to the content of a larger proposed World Bank lending project.

**Regional Activities: Pacific Islands**

**TFSP support to Pacific Islands**

Following the delivery of diagnostic and in-country TFA assessments to clients in six WTO Pacific Islands countries (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu), requests for further support for the implementation of TFA reform roadmaps were received.

Recommendations from the assessments were used as direct inputs for the preparation of a regional WBG project to support implementation of the TFA across the Pacific Islands of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

TFSP has also assisted with TFA needs assessments and reform roadmaps for non-WTO Pacific countries—the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and Palau—complementing the ones already produced for the WTO Pacific countries listed above. In this reporting period, ad hoc support was provided to Tuvalu.
FY22 update on key activities

- The concept note for the regional trade facilitation strategy was drafted jointly by PIFS and the TFSP-supported WBG team in the last reporting period, and it was discussed during a PIFS trade ministers meeting in July 2021. All national consultations were completed in FY22, and a draft document has been prepared and is currently under internal review prior to sharing it with members and partners for comments. The WBG (through TFSP) and PIFS is planning a validation workshop for October 2022.

- The WBG agreed to assist Tuvalu in reviewing its processes for the clearance of sea cargo arriving at the Funafuti port. Customs implemented the ASYCUDA World (AW) system for cargo clearance, and the review focused on the need to reduce clearance times for containers arriving in the port as delays were occurring due to the COVID-19 three-day quarantine restriction. There was also an identified need to change processes to take advantage of opportunities provided by the new AW system.

- Tuvalu border agencies, industry, and WBG experts convened in online working sessions and identified the need to improve the capacity of shipping companies to receive timely manifest information from the vessel’s last port and to upload the information into the AW inward manifest module to commence the cargo clearance process. The working group, to which the WBG is providing technical assistance, has commenced discussions with the local shipping company and Fiji-based shipping companies to seek solutions for implementation.

Country-specific Activities: Pacific Islands

Fiji

TFSP support to Fiji

Through TFSP, the WBG has assisted with the identification of new electronic initiatives and procedures that will enable border agencies to take further advantage of the recent upgrade of ASYCUDA World and installation of the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) GeNS. This will further enhance border collaboration. Additionally, TFSP previously supported the NTFC with the development of the Fiji TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan. Activities and priorities identified for implementation (for which the WBG is supporting) include: (A) assistance to harmonize multi-agency border processes, to streamline processes and requirements, and to harmonize data; (B) assistance in preparation to implement a Single Window system, including collaboration and coordination; and (C) assistance in developing the trusted trader program and related risk profiling.

In the previous reporting periods, TFSP also supported the Trade and Gender Survey in Fiji to identify the main challenges that cross-border traders face related to trade facilitation at the firm level.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
7.4 Risk Management
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.2 Acceptance of Copies

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

In May 2022, the WBG conducted an in-person mission to assist with the re-evaluation of all TFA-related changes that had been implemented swiftly during the response. The following activities were initiated through the NTFC working groups, and TFSP support was used to provide advice and guidance on these activities:

- The NTFC Secretariat requested support from TFSP to undertake a review of the status of border agencies’ capabilities to meet TFA requirements for “electronic reporting and clearance” of goods as well as the publication of information for the public and traders. This review’s objective was to ensure the Secretariat has a stock-take of all new initiatives implemented during 2019–2021 and would inform the NTFC’s considerations on options to implement a National Single Window and to focus its efforts.

- BAF continues to allow Fiji’s trade partners to send and receive SPS certificates electronically (i.e., email) to ensure timely clearance of consignments at the border (prior to full implementation of the GeNS and development of exchange agreements with some countries). This measure was implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic creating the need to reduce business office interactions and transfer of hard copies of documents. This process remains in place for trading partners that have yet to introduce the GeNS.

- BAF has continued to develop the GeNS platform for the transmission of digital phytosanitary certificates between trading partners. In June 2022, BAF and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation launched Phase 2 of the GeNS implementation project. This additional module allows exporters to commence the phytosanitary treatment and certification process within GeNS. Phase 2 also includes training for industry.

- BAF and the TFSP-supported team undertook a project to map BAF’s current seaport import and export cargo clearance processes to assist with planning for further enhancement of GeNS. Options were prepared for potential GeNS connectivity to the Customs ASYCUDA World cargo clearance system to enable digital certificates to be added to the “cargo declarations,” thereby removing the need to upload PDF copies of certificates and allowing for improved risk management. Options have been prepared and initial discussions commenced with AW provider.

- A NTFC Risk Management working group—which receives TFSP support—initiative to improve collaboration between port users resulted in Fiji Ports Terminal Limited (FPTL) providing Fiji Revenue & Customs Service (FRCS) and BAF with access to the port operators container delivery system to allow improved planning for inspections and container delivery.

- The Ministry of Communications (MOC) is implementing a project “DigitalFIJI,” which is the government’s digital transformation program aimed at creating the necessary infrastructure and applications to enable more government services to be conducted online and via apps. The NTFC Secretariat, with support from TFSP, is collaborating with MOC as some of these services intersect with services that also come under the scope of any future NSW developments.

- FRCS, BAF, and port users requested further training to develop a TRS for FY22, and TFSP provided support to commence preparations for the TRS with the intention to conduct a survey in late 2022.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

There was discussion of a lending project on digitization at the beginning of its concept stage. It is expected to develop more during a pre-appraisal mission by the end of 2022.
Papua New Guinea

TFSP support to Papua New Guinea

As COVID-19 pandemic-related constraints gradually eased in this reporting period, the TFSP-supported team was able to re-engage on some activities in the country. Previously, TFSP supported Papua New Guinea in (A) improving risk management in customs and the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA); (B) enhancing border coordination between customs and quarantine functions; (C) supporting operations of the National Trade Facilitation Committee; and (D) developing integrated processes for clearance by the Customs Service and NAQIA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.4 Risk Management
8 Border Agency Cooperation
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- TFSP continued providing support towards finalizing the development, update, and refinement of the NTFC roadmap.
- Input was provided help Papua New Guinea NTFC prepare its notifications to the WTO.

Samoa (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Samoa

TFSP was not able to provide active support to Samoa in this reporting period due to challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The TFSP-supported team, however, is committed to re-invigorating activities in the country in the next reporting period as constraints caused by the pandemic are gradually eased.

In the prior reporting period, TFSP did a stock-take of the TFA program in Samoa and progress to date along with the revised Action Plan going forward, which will constitute the basis for the TFA implementation in the next reporting period. The original National TFA Action Plan was developed with TFSP support, including provision of a WTO TFA awareness briefing and strategy and visioning workshop for the private sector and government officials. Activities and priorities identified in the original action plan for implementation included: (A) assistance to harmonize data and multiagency border processes and requirements; (B) support to coordinate border management; (C) support to improve risk management system; and (D) assistance with the assessment of preparedness to implement a national Single Window.

The TFSP-funded WBG team also assisted Samoa with categorization of the WTO TFA articles and has provided support for its ratification and notification process in the past.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
Timor-Leste

TFSP support to Timor-Leste

TFSP resumed support to Timor-Leste in this reporting period after the project under which initial TFSP support was channeled concluded in December 2019. With renewed support, the WBG discussed providing capacity building and technical assistance for re-developing the NTFC, undertaking a TFA Gap Assessment, conducting a new TRS, and implementing a National TIP going forward. Priority actions that were implemented prior to initial project closure in 2019 included: (A) simplifying procedures and enhancing the implementation of risk management; (B) conducting a targeted TRS and implementing key recommendations; and (C) aligning the sanitary and phytosanitary and customs legislation with the TFA and international best practice.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.4 Risk Management

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

10.2 Acceptance of Copies

10.3 Use of International Standards

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- The WBG conducted an in-person mission in May 2022 to discuss possible priority areas for support. Agreement was made to conduct a new TRS in September 2022, to provide support to assess options for integrating the TIP with the NSW’s current developments, and to support transition of the operations at the new Tibar Port.

- Ministry of Tourism, Commerce, and Industry (MCTI) is reconvening the NTFC, which was first initiated in FY16. The TFSP-supported WBG team started assisting with this process by providing briefings on NTFC membership, roles, responsibilities, and other matters to ministers and MCTI, which serves as the Secretariat.

- In collaboration with the Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs (MCAE) and MCTI, the WBG started updating the Gap Assessment.

- To better understand the broader risk management framework, TFSP supported discussions on this topic. In particular, customs and the new port operator commenced discussions to utilize the new x-ray unit planned for Tibar Port and are considering an option to x-ray all containers upon discharge and prior to placement in the container stack. This initiative will reduce release delays and provide customs with improved risk assessment opportunities.
Timor-Leste customs has instituted changes to the import cargo release process based on the 2019 TRS conducted by the WBG. These changes included the removal of the need for brokers to present paper copies of all declarations (and associated documents) to the customs’ front counter prior to the commencement of processing by the Customs Revenue Entry Processing (CREP) unit as well as the acceptance of copies. This has resulted in reduced paperwork as CREP only requires paperwork for goods selected for inspection through the red and yellow channels. Green channel declarations are no longer examined at customs house, and brokers pay the dues and can then arrange for release of their cargo at the port. The impact of this change will be assessed in the September 2022 TRS.

The Customs Law was assessed against WTO and ASEAN requirements, and a number of changes have been identified as requiring update to meet accession requirements. These include the removal of the need to retain paper copies, ability to consider electronic documents for archives, and the requirement to receive signed paper documents in some clearance activities, for which TFSP may provide support. Support to draft the new Customs Code was provided under a previous IFC project.

**Highlights of achievements of prior TFSP funded work**

The TFSP-supported reforms reduced import time from 15.06 to 6.54 days and generated USD 5.5 million in savings for the private sector. This was achieved by recommending that the Tariff Classifications and Valuation Section be eliminated from the customs clearance process; enabling legal foundations for the new customs management system (ASYCUDA World) by drafting the new Customs Code that entered into force in 2017, as well as creating risk profiles, import process maps, and sharing of other intellectual property with UNCTAD to enable ASYCUDA implementation; implementing interventions to improve risk-management practices in the Risk Management Unit of customs; updating Timor-Leste’s 2012 HS Tariff classification to a newer ASEAN-compliant 2017 version; and providing extensive trainings to customs brokers and government officials to increase their knowledge and minimize the number of errors in submitted documents, which respectively contributed to a smoother customs clearance process.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support to Timor-Leste complemented a USAID-funded customs project. There was also discussion of a lending project on digitization at the beginning its concept stage. It is expected to develop more during a pre-appraisal mission by the end of 2022.

**Tonga**

**TFSP support to Tonga**

In this reporting period, Tonga received support to implement expedited shipments of vaccines, as well as received support for border agency cooperation. The WBG, with TFSP support, also continued to provide assistance to the government of Tonga in its response to the pandemic.

In previous years, the WBG assisted with Tonga’s categorization and notification of Categories A, B, C measures and provided support towards Tonga’s efforts to submit its instrument of ratification in progress. Additionally, TFSP supported the delivery of a TRS on import sea cargo at the port of Nuku’alofa, and the National Trade Facilitation Committee received assistance with the development of the Tonga TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan. Activities and priorities identified for implementation included:
(A) assistance to harmonize data and multi-agency border processes and requirements; (B) assistance in preparation to implement a Single Window; and (C) assistance in developing the trusted trader program and related risk profiling.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.9 Perishable Goods
8 Border Agency Cooperation
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- Continued support was provided to finalize the trade facilitation reform priorities, which are included in the TFA Action Plan, and to streamline the TFA Roadmap.
- Preparatory work was started to update the TRS, which is planned to be undertaken after the implementation of ASYCUDA World in 2024.
- Support was provided to implement expedited shipments of perishable goods (including vaccines), and the work was completed in FY22. Specifically, TFSP continued to provide assistance for the development of a formal procedure for the expedited release of medicines and medical supplies, including ensuring a simplified process was in place for the implementation and expedited clearance of the COVID-19 vaccine. See Section 1.2 for more details on this activity.

This priority work is also reform actions in the TFA Roadmap and serves as a trigger in the emergency response development policy loan (DPO) that leveraged over USD 8 million. This has been vital to the country’s ability to withstand the recent disasters, including the eruption of the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga Ha’apai volcano that caused extensive damage and impacted 85 percent of the population.

- With continued assistance from the WBG, Tonga has embarked on the consistent program for trade facilitation implementation following the TFA Roadmap.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complemented the WBG DPO on the adoption and implementation of special regimes for expedited clearance of essential medical goods. It is providing critical input for meeting the triggers for the follow-up second DPO by supporting the implementation of a pilot AO program for exporters and follow-up reform to enhance trade facilitation based on the exports TRS of PACER Plus work (such as adoption of e-Phyto certificates). This work was and continues to be supported and coordinated by the NTFC.

Vanuatu

TFSP support to Vanuatu

The WBG is continuing to take stock of the TFA program in Vanuatu. During FY22, the WBG engaged with Vanuatu to provide support to the NTFC. Virtual missions were also conducted to assist with the NSW review, and agreement was made to undertake a TRS of cargo clearance.
The Vanuatu TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan, developed with TFSP assistance in prior years, identified the following activities and priorities for implementation: (A) assistance to harmonize data and multi-agency border processes and requirements; (B) support to the biosecurity agency to improve its biosecurity risk management system and compliance for imports and exports; (C) assistance to amend biosecurity regulations to align with customs pre-arrival processing; (D) coordinated advice to traders for biosecurity holds; and (E) assistance with the assessment of preparedness to implement a NSW, including drafting of a blueprint for implementation.

In the past, TFSP also supported Vanuatu with categorization of the WTO TFA articles and the ratification and notification process.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

7.4 Risk Management

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

10.4 Single Window

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- The NTFC Secretariat requested TFSP to provide assistance to undertake a review of the Vanuatu National Single Window (VNSW) activities to date with the goal of helping the NTFC understand the current impact of work to date, to plan for future upgrades, and to assist with government budget planning for future work.

- The TFSP-supported WBG team conducted a detailed series of online interviews, surveys, and discussions with port border agencies connected to the VNSW, agencies with a desire to be connected, and with cargo-related industry representatives. These discussions were pro-longed due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns in 2022.

- The WBG team identified the successful elements of the VNSW project and provided suggestions for the government of Vanuatu to consider regarding options for the future in its efforts to continue implementing the VNSW (such as including more activities like connectivity with industry port companies and workflow systems for permit agencies).

- Informed by prior TFSP work, the VNSW has connected the Environment, Energy and Biosecurity agencies to the VNSW, and the roll-out to other permit agencies has continued during FY22.

- Customs requested assistance for the development of a TRS to review changes made during the VNSW project and to identify blockages in sea cargo clearance; however, lockdowns stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic prevented further actions to develop the TRS in FY22.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

Through the close partnership between the WBG and the EIF, the EIF Tier 2 project provided USD 1.5 million funding for the establishment of an electronic Single Window system in Vanuatu, leveraging the work undertaken by the WBG that was financed under the TFSP.
Regional Activities: Europe and Central Asia

The current trade facilitation project in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. TFSP-supported activities in the Western Balkans are aligned with the trade facilitation objectives of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). Particularly, TFSP has supported several objectives of the “Common Regional Market” action plan for the Western Balkans, including on establishment of joint border controls, mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operators, review of fees and charges, a joint risk management approach, and fully electronic trade [including National Single Window].

FY22 update on key activities

- In December 2021, TFSP—in collaboration with the USAID EDGE project—supported a hybrid meeting for the CEFTA region countries on the establishment of joint border controls. There is currently one joint BCP in the CEFTA region, which is between North Macedonia and Serbia, but several other initiatives to establish other joint BCPs are under way in the region. At this event, the concept of and considerations for joint BCPs were presented by USAID, and best practice examples were presented by WBG experts. The meeting was attended by about 90 participants.

- In past years, WBG and IFC experts provided advice and guidance to help create roadmaps (called “blueprints”—see Box 12 for more information on the blueprints) for the development and implementation of the NSWs in the Western Balkans. The WBG trade facilitation support team’s deep technical knowledge and contacts in the trade facilitation community, both private and public, proved instrumental for project startup, information gathering and validation, and for quality assurance processes. Phase 1 of the blueprint preparation in Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia was completed in FY22 with financial support from UK/FCDO.

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18 CEFTA consists of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The main objectives of this comprehensive agreement are, inter alia, to expand trade in goods and services and foster investment by means of fair, stable, and predictable rules, as well as eliminating barriers to trade in the CEFTA region [see www.cefta.int]. The trade facilitation objectives were enshrined in Additional Protocol 5 on Trade Facilitation in 2018, of which measures are similar to those of the WTO TFA; however, they also go beyond them in their regional harmonization aspirations.

19 The “Common Regional Market” action plan for the Western Balkans [launched in 2020] is another steppingstone towards regional trade integration and harmonization. It was developed as part of the Berlin Process to support stronger integration of the region with the EU Single Market before EU accession [of which all countries in the region aspire].

20 During FY21/22, blueprints for Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia were developed. They were delivered at the end of calendar year 2021. Albania, North Macedonia, and Serbia signed lending agreements with the World Bank and are in the process of developing and implementing their NSWs using this funding.
Preparation work to commence Phase 2 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro with support from TFSP was undertaken in this reporting period. The blueprint work for Kosovo and Montenegro was launched in the beginning of 2022, and the process is planned to be completed the end of the year. WBG lending agreements are under discussion. The TFSP-supported team plans to hold consultations with the stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina in FY23, after the national elections in October.

Visioning workshops were held in Kosovo and Montenegro in March/April 2022, and consultations were held to identify the NSW operator, governance structure, financing, and the legal and regulatory framework. Both countries have established a formal body under their ministries of finance to serve as the WBG team’s counterparts. The WBG team has drafted reports covering the aforementioned topics, as well as provided an analysis of the current business processes applied by the government agencies involved in issuing trade-related licenses and permits and shared them with the stakeholders for review and feedback.

**Country-specific Activities: Europe**

**Albania**

**TFSP support to Albania**

In FY22, TFSP provided support for a second Time Release Study through the trade facilitation project in the ECA region. The project ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

**BOX 12**

The Importance of Starting with a Blueprint

The National Single Window (NSW) is a fully electronic single point of entry for all foreign trade-related regulatory requirements. The NSW blueprint is a preparatory document that lays out the key decisions to be made by stakeholders on who the operator of the NSW system should be, what features the NSW will have, how it will be funded and operated (i.e., what costs will be incurred as a result of operating and maintaining the system), and what changes are needed with regard to stakeholder processes (including legal changes to fully operationalize it). It is aligned with international standards, including the WCO Data Model, UNECE/UNCEFACT recommendations on SW, and EU requirements (such as the UCC and the CERTEX architecture and operational framework), which is important in the Western Balkans.

The blueprint serves as a complete guide to help national governments implement a NSW. They also cover business processes needed, necessary institutional and human resource changes, technical and functional architecture required (specifications, design features, built-in requirements), and how the risk management approaches of the different agencies should be integrated into the system or should be developed if not yet existing, as well as capacity building and change management measures that should be undertaken. These blueprints form the basis of procurement and implementation measures needed to establish and operate the NSW.
In previous reporting periods, support was provided to hold trainings on risk management, conduct a preliminary assessment of the customs’ electronic documents submission reform, and support the efforts to establish joint border crossing between Albania and North Macedonia. A study of fees and charges was conducted with TFSP support and provided to the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation

6.2 Specific Disciplines on Fees and Charges for Customs Processing Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation

7.4 Risk Management

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

8 Border Agency Cooperation

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

11 Freedom of Transit

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- In this reporting period, the NSW blueprint for Albania (for which FCDO provided financial support and WBG experts contributed guidance and advice) was completed and submitted to the Albanian Ministry of Finance and Economy. Preparations for the development, implementation, and launch of the NSW in Albania are now underway under the auspices of the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Integration Lending operation. Experience from Albania is helping to inform the TFSP-funded NSW blueprint work in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

- In the fall of 2021, the TFSP-supported team, jointly with the Albanian Customs Administration, carried out a Time Release Study. It was the second study within the framework of the project in Albania (the first one was carried out in 2018). As a result of the improvements made by customs and other border agencies in the interim period—including by following recommendations made in the first TRS report—the 2021 TRS recorded a much-improved performance. For example, there was a 25 percent reduction on import processing and clearance time and almost 50 percent reduction on export time in the seaport of Durres, a 20 percent reduction on import times at the BCPs, a 58 percent reduction on import times and 2.5 percent reduction on export times at the inland terminals. For the most part, these reductions were due to electronic document submission and processing, as well roll out of the AEO program and support with the implementation of risk management to the National Food Agency.

- The TRS report has been published on the Albanian customs website in accordance with the relevant WTO TFA measure.21

- Following project’s support of the implementation of risk management, customs data showed that percentage of goods routed to red channel has been declining since 2018 (from 9.78 percent to 7.38 percent in 2021).

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Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the Albania Investment Climate Competitiveness Project and the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation World Bank lending operation (a regional loan that Albania has signed on to). It also aligns with two regional trade facilitation projects supported by donor partners—the USAID project EDGE (Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced) and a project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

TFSP support to Bosnia and Herzegovina

In FY22, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) received capacity building support on joint border controls and the NSW through the trade facilitation project in the ECA region. The project ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

In previous reporting periods, the TFSP-supported WBGI team engaged with the SPS authorities on a risk management capacity building program. Additionally, in collaboration with USAID, TFSP supported BiH with the establishment and operation of an NTFC, which was created in FY18. The NTFC has adopted a work program for the period of 2020–2025 along with an action plan.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

8 Border Agency Cooperation
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- In December 2021, TFSP—in collaboration with the USAID EDGE project—held a hybrid meeting for the CEFTA region countries on the establishment of joint border controls. Representatives of trade facilitation-related agencies from Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in this meeting.

Kosovo

TFSP support to Kosovo

In FY22, TFSP re-activated support to Kosovo for the development of a National Single Window blueprint and undertaking of a second Time Release Study. TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of
the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia in the next reporting period.

To date, the agreed areas of TFSP assistance included helping to operate the NTFC working groups, implementing the Authorized Economic Operator program, supporting the Kosova Food and Veterinary Agency (KFVA) with the development and implementation of a risk management framework and an annual sampling plan, and the repeat of the Time Release Study.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation

7.4 Risk Management

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

10.4 Single Window

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- In late 2021, the Kosovo Customs Administration awarded two additional AEO certificates to local companies, bringing the total number of AEO companies to five since the program launched in 2019. This AEO certificate (AEO-Security), allows the eligible company to participate in the AEO Mutual Recognition Program envisaged in CEFTA. TFSP supported the Kosovo Customs Administration with the development of the AEO program, including with legal drafting and outreach to the private sector.

- In November 2021, with TFSP support, Kosovo customs carried out the second TRS in the country after having postponed it from 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant improvements were recorded on import through the border. The time for goods to be released was reduced from about 5 hours to 3.3 hours (by 34 percent). The TRS also clearly showed the benefits of the simplified procedures regime, which the TFSP team recommended to expand in Kosovo. Under this regime, trucks carrying cargo are processed at the border within minutes and released to finish the rest of the customs clearance procedures in the traders’ warehouses, while for “regular” cargo, the process at the border can take several hours.

- The TFSP-supported team is providing technical assistance to Kosovo for the development of a NSW blueprint. The multi-agency Kosovo NSW Working Group (co-chaired by the Customs Administration and the Ministry of Finance, Labor and Transfers) was set up as the formal counterpart for the WBG team. Since inception of the work in early 2022, a series of stakeholder meetings (including the private sector) were undertaken to present the blueprint, review local practices related to the issuance of foreign trade-related documents and the status of automatization in the relevant agencies. The TFSP team discussed the NSW legal, governance, operational, technical, and functional frameworks in on-line and in-person meetings and workshops. A number of technical reports have been drafted by the TFSP-supported team and have been submitted to the Working Group for review. The complete set of NSW blueprint reports is scheduled to be completed by the end of calendar year 2022.

- A World Bank lending operation, supporting trade and transport facilitation and integration in the region, may be tapped to fund the development and implementation of the National Single Window.

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22 See the report at https://dogana.rks-gov.net/per-media/publikimet/raportet/
Leverage or complementarity of funds.

TFSP support aligns with two regional trade facilitation projects supported by donor partners—the USAID project EDGE (Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced) and a project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). There are regular consultations among the project teams, and a number of workshops were organized.

Republic of North Macedonia

TFSP support to the Republic of North Macedonia

In FY22, North Macedonia continued to receive TFSP support for capacity building at the State Agriculture Inspectorate (SAI) as it related to risk-based border inspections. TFSP also provided support to implement a TRS. These activities were undertaken through the trade facilitation project in the ECA region. The project ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved for a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

In prior years, support was also provided on coordinated border management through joint border controls with Serbia.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times23
8 Border Agency Cooperation

FY22 update on key activities

- In this reporting period, the NSW blueprint for North Macedonia (for which FCDO provided financial support and WBG experts contributed guidance and advice), was completed and submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister’s office. Preparations for the development, implementation, and launch of the NSW in North Macedonia are now under way under the auspices of the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Lending Operation. Experience from North Macedonia is helping to inform the TFSP-funded NSW blueprint work in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

- Over the course of almost three years, TFSP worked with SAI on the development of SOPs for a risk-based border inspection regime for phytosanitary products. The SOPs were approved by SAI in June 2022. Inspection and sampling rates (currently close to 100 percent) are expected to decrease significantly upon application of these new procedures. SAI will deal more effectively with high-risk goods through targeted inspections and sampling and spend less time on low-risk commodities. For the trading community, this will mean faster passage across the border and faster release of their goods into the market, thereby lowering their costs and increasing their competitive position in the market.

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23 The TRS has not been published, though it has been completed and accepted by customs.
The TFSP-supported team worked with the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia and the other border agencies on the implementation of a TRS in early 2022 at three BCPs: Tabanovce, Kjafasan, and Bogorodica and the main inland terminal in the Macedonian capital Skopje. The results of the final report showed a reduction in the overall processing time for import procedures compared to 2015, when the first TRS was carried out. The most significant decline observed was for transiting cargo at the BCP Bogorodica at the border with Greece (by 34 minutes or 113 percent decline), followed by import clearance procedures at BCP Tabanovce at the border with Serbia (by 2 hours and 27 minutes or 25 percent decline), followed by time reduction in transit control by 50 minutes or 81 percent decline at the BCP Tabanovce, and finally reduction in import clearance procedures at Terminal Skopje by 2 hours and 27 minutes or 25 percent decline.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support complements the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation World Bank lending operation (a regional loan that North Macedonia has signed on to, which is now operational including with regard to the NSW). It also aligns with two regional trade facilitation projects supported by donor partners—the USAID project EDGE (Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced) and a project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ).

**Moldova (inactive in FY22)**

**TFSP support to Moldova**

TFSP did not provide active support to Moldova in this reporting period. In prior years, TFSP assisted the government of Moldova with amending its regulations on customs valuation of goods, updating its Category B and C notifications (the addendums were submitted to the WTO in 2019), drafting the National Trade Facilitation Committee Action Plan for implementation of Trade Facilitation Agreement, as well as assisted the National Food Safety Agency on risk assessment.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

7.4 Risk Management

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

While no active TFSP support was provided to Moldova in FY22, representatives from Moldova participated in a regional meeting (organized by TFSP and in collaboration with the USAID EDGE project) held in December 2021 for countries in the CEFTA region. The meeting was focused on the establishment of joint border controls.

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24 The report has been accepted by Customs but has not been published.
Montenegro

TFSP support to Montenegro

In FY22, Montenegro received TFSP support to conduct a second TRS and to develop the National Single Window blueprint through the trade facilitation project in the ECA region. The project ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

To date, TFSP support to Montenegro focused on the development of a service-oriented approach towards trade. Activities supported included refining the Montenegro Custom’s risk management approach, implementing a simplified procedures and AEO program, drafting a decree for the implementation of the Customs Law, carrying out the first TRS, supporting the NTFC, and conducting an inventory of all fees and charges imposed on the import and export of goods that are prescribed by regulation or applied in practice.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.3 Enquiry Points
6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
7.4 Risk Management
7.5 Post-Clearance Audit
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- The TFSP-supported team assisted in carrying out a second TRS in November and December 2021 to identify any changes to the time required to complete trade processes and procedures against the data collected from the first TRS completed in 2016. In all modes of transport, and in all measured regimes, a reduction in the total time required for the release of goods was recorded. Reductions are largest in the transit procedure at the Seaport of Bar (33 percent), in import by air (27 percent), export by air (24 percent), and export through the border crossing points (23 percent). These time reductions are primarily due roll out of the simplified procedure program, supported by the TFSP. In addition, express mail operators enabled electronic payment of duties, which additionally sped up the overall average customs clearance rate of express shipments. Finally, Montenegrin Customs also implemented a recommendation on electronic transit confirmation, which helps to close the transit process faster; rolled out an AEO program; and implemented risk management improvements as advised by the TFSP team.

- Apart from the improvements in time, the TRS 2021 report has also noted significant improvements in the risk management implementation by customs since 2016 in the Dobrakovo BCP, supported by TFSP. Study observations showed that the system of non-selective opening of each truck at the Dobrakovo BCP was abandoned and instead only targeted physical examinations were performed. In the TRS, observed cases of such targeted physical examinations were applied to 16 percent of cases, which is a significant improvement in comparison to previous 34 percent of physical examination.
The TRS report has been published on the Montenegrin Customs website in accordance with the relevant WTO TFA measure.25

The above-mentioned reforms have contributed to private sector savings from time reductions observed in FY22 in amount of USD 280,000. The roll-out of the simplified traders program, cumulative since mid-2017, has generated around USD 2.5 million in savings in various fees for both imports and exports. These savings will continue to accumulate in the coming years as more firms join the program and as existing firms continue to trade and use their benefits.

TFSP is assisting the trade facilitation stakeholders of Montenegro with the development of a NSW through the drafting of a blueprint for implementation of a NSW. The Montenegrin NSW Coordination Body, a multi-agency working group, was set up as the formal counterpart for the TFSP-supported team. The Coordination Body is organized at two levels, managerial and operational, and is jointly co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and the Customs Administration. Since inception of the work in early 2022, a series of stakeholder meetings (including the private sector) were undertaken to present the blueprint, review local practices related to the issuance of foreign trade-related documents, and the status of automatization in the relevant agencies. Several meetings and workshops were held to discuss NSW legal, governance, operational, technical, and functional frameworks. A number of technical reports have been drafted by the TFSP-supported team and have been submitted to the Coordinating Body for review. The full set of NSW blueprint reports is scheduled to be completed by December 2022.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

The government of Montenegro is about to join the Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Lending Operation, through which development and implementation of the National Single Window would be financed. TFSP support also aligns with two regional trade facilitation projects supported by donor partners—the USAID project EDGE (Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced) and a project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ). There are regular consultations among the project teams, and a number of workshops were organized jointly.

**Serbia**

**TFSP support to Serbia**

In FY22, Serbian customs and other border and regulatory agencies continued to receive support from TFSP to undertake the second TRS, as well as to further automate customs processes related to advance rulings on tariff classification. These activities were undertaken through the trade facilitation project in the ECA region. The project ended on March 31, 2022; however, TFSP funding has been approved to undertake a new phase of the project covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

In the past, the WBG (with TFSP funds) supported the Customs Administration of Serbia with the development of a pilot to electronically issue and sign EUR.1 movement certificates on origin of goods and to enable the online verification and authentication of these certificates; a series of risk management trainings for border agencies; the establishment and operationalization of the NTFC; development and maintenance of software for advance rulings on origin and post-clearance verification of origin as well as of advance rulings on tariff classifications; promotion of joint controls at the main border crossing point BCP between Serbia and North Macedonia on Corridor X; and compilation of a comprehensive list of foreign trade-related fees and charges to help improve transparency and fulfill mandatory notification requirements to the CEFTA secretariat.

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25 See report at https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/8eff2c32-e880-40e6-922f-4faedb8b99e1
Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

3 Advance Rulings
6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges
7.4 Risk Management
7.5 Post-Clearance Audit
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Document Requirements
10.4 Single Window
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- TFSP supported implementation of the second TRS in November 2021 involving air and road traffic and six of the largest and busiest BCPs and inland terminals in the country. The TRS scope, locations, timing, questionnaires, and subsequently the TRS report were closely coordinated with the TRS inter-ministerial working group led by the Serbian Customs Administration. The TRS report was presented to all border and regulatory agencies and to the private sector involved in TRS implementation in March 2022. The TRS report was also notified to the CEFTA Secretariat according to the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 requirements and publicized at the Customs Administration website.26

- During the past years, TFSP supported the Serbian Customs Administration with a new automation initiative that entailed adoption of new software for advance rulings (AR) for tariff classification. The TFSP team also developed user manuals for private sector users and customs officers engaged in issuing of ARs. It was officially launched for private sector use in February 2022. The software enables electronic submission of AR requests for tariff classification through the customs website,27 online request status tracking, information sharing on deficiencies in requests and supporting documentation, as well as electronic issuing of ARs. The software also integrates appropriate modules for reporting, advanced search, and automatic generation of documents, and it automatically populates the national electronic database of ARs once the new AR for tariff classification is issued. This initiative is in response to private sector demands presented to the NTFC to simplify and speed up the process of issuing ARs. Since the launch of the new AR software, the processing time of AR for tariff classification was reduced by 40 percent (from an average of 93 days in 2021 to 55.4 days in the first half of 2022) according to the software’s data records.

- The WBG team provided advice on the development of the NSW blueprint for Serbia, which was funded by FCDO. The blueprint reports were completed in late 2021 and provided to the stakeholders. Extensive consultations were held throughout the blueprint development. The Serbian Customs Administration will serve as the lead agency and future NSW operator established under the WBG lending operation to Serbia. The

26 Read the TRS report at https://www.carina.rs/privreda/studija-merenja-vremena.html
27 At https://eice.carina.rs/home
Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation lending operation, to which the Serbian Government has signed on, will cover, inter alia, NSW development and implementation. Experience from Serbia is helping to inform the TFSP-funded NSW blueprint work in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support complements the World Bank’s Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation lending operation (a regional loan that Serbia has signed on to, which is now operational including with regard to the national SW). It also aligns with two regional trade facilitation projects supported by donor partners—the USAID project EDGE (Enterprise Development and Growth Enhanced) and a project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ).

**Country-specific Activities: Caucuses**

**Georgia**

**TFSP support to Georgia**

TFSP support to Georgia concluded in December 2021. As the trade facilitation activities wound down to a close, focus was placed on supporting the implementation of Georgia’s AEO program. Previously, TFSP support was centered on assistance to develop a standard operating procedures manual for customs valuation and creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 7.7 Authorized Operators
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- Georgia Revenue Service (GRS) had long-standing cooperation with USAID to develop an AEO program concept, and once the enabling regulatory framework was put in place, TFSP provided complementary assistance related to the operation of the program. During the first half of FY22, TFSP support to GRS enabled the development of clear guidelines to effectively implement the AEO program, including by contracting a firm to support GRS with the development of a detailed AEO manual and training of GRS staff.
- The manual is expected to be adopted by GRS in FY23. It describes the governing rules of the program, which are established in Georgian legislation and based on the best practice approach, in a detailed but user-friendly manner. The manual and training provided equips GRS staff with the relevant skills to properly read, use, and implement the manual (including how to determine legislative infringements in the AEO program, evaluate companies against key requirements, record keep, and other key tasks).
- Upon request, the TFSP also provided advice to GRS on how to assess an applicant’s financial viability and specifically included a separate chapter on this in the manual.
- The TFSP-funded project team also worked closely with GRS to help with the implementation of the AEO regulation, which is a sub-law developed with help from USAID. It outlines general principles for the AEO concept, but GRS needed rules on how to implement it.
The AEO program is a risk management and trade facilitation tool that will provide benefits for companies meeting GRS standards. It is based on WCO standards and other recognized best practices. It is a partnership program between customs and traders that aims to foster and promote compliance and supply chain security. Through the AEO manual, customs will get insight and have the opportunity to support the participants with their management of compliance and security practices. For the private sector, companies authorized as AEO will benefit from simplified processes and procedures and improved trade facilitation provided by customs.

A workshop was held in December 2021, for the Georgia Revenue Service to train on AEO legislation.

Country-specific Activities: Central Asia

Kazakhstan (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Kazakhstan

With TFSP support, Kazakhstan’s NTFC is now fully operational and has not requested further support. As a result, the TFSP did not provide active support to Kazakhstan in this reporting period.

Previously, TFSP assisted the government with creating the National Trade Facilitation Committee, the development of the NTFC action plan and provided guidance on the notification process for Categories A, B, and C of the WTO TFA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

Kyrgyz Republic (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Kyrgyz Republic

Current trade facilitation assistance by the WBG to the Kyrgyz Republic (and Kyrgyz customs) is supported under a World Bank advisory project, which builds upon earlier work supported by the TFSP. For example, leveraging the first TRS completed in 2018 with TFSP support, a second TRS was implemented in the fall of 2021 with assistance from the WB advisory project. With the first TRS serving as a baseline for comparison with the second TRS, the processing times at the same locations were much-reduced. Times fell by 30 percent at border crossing points (BCPs) for import and by 55 percent at terminals for imports.

Previously, TFSP support in Kyrgyz Republic focused on reducing the number of documents required to trade, on simplifying procedures for clearing goods, and on harmonizing and standardizing procedures, as well as on the establishment of a National Trade Facilitation Committee, setting up a risk framework for trusted traders, and developing a risk-based import control system with the Kyrgyz State Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety Inspection Service.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**Tajikistan (inactive in FY22)**

**TFSP support to Tajikistan**

TFSP did not provide active support to Tajikistan during this reporting period because other sources of funding were available for activities in the country. Support provided by TFSP in the past, however, is informing ongoing work being undertaken through other channels, including follow-up work performed by the WBG under the Central Asia Regional Links Program (CARs-4). The Trade and Gender Study’s survey design and methodology developed by TFSP [see Section 1.3c](#) is also informing work financed by other sources in Tajikistan to enhance women cross-border traders’ access to information regarding border procedures.

Previously, TFSP provided support to customs in simplifying procedures for clearing goods, as well as both the customs administration and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade/National Trade Facilitation Committee on the development of an Authorized Operator scheme and expedited procedures for agricultural exports. With TFSP support, the WBG also reviewed the situation in Tajikistan related to risk-based border controls carried out by the SPS agencies. The WBG also collaborated with the customs administration and the NTFC on the implementation of a TRS. It also assisted the customs administration with the development of its national nomenclature for goods in line with the WCO standards.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
7.9 Perishable Goods
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support complements a transport loan for ASYCUDA World and a Development Policy Operation by the WBG. TFSP support also complements projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

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28 CARs-4 aims to enhance the efficiency of cross-border trade for participants of the regional economy. It assists the Customs Administration of Tajikistan to introduce UNCTAD’s ASYCUDA customs processing system and customs modernization activities and reforms related to trade facilitation. The program also recommends changes to customs’ human resources policies and practices to better reach out, recruit, and retain women in its workforce.
Regional Highlights of Achievements of TFSP Funded Work: Caribbean

The TFSP-supported project in the Caribbean region concluded in December 2019. Highlights of achievements made under the project are presented below. Additional funding to support trade facilitation-related activities in the Caribbean region in FY23 is under consideration.

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

In the Caribbean, TFSP support provided to Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Lucia generated a total of USD 5.7 million in savings for the private sector. USD 5.6 million of these savings is attributable to time reductions in all three countries from reforms in other border regulatory agencies (OBRAs). In Grenada and St. Lucia, support was provided to Bureaus of Standards, and in Jamaica, support was provided to the National Compliance and Regulatory Authority. The TFSP-supported WBG team assisted in the preparation of risk profiles and connection of these agencies to the ASYCUDA customs data management system. In addition, in St. Lucia and Grenada, a Trade Logistics Tool was rolled out in the Bureaus of Standards, facilitating electronic connection and data exchange with customs. Time to trade in St. Lucia and Grenada was reduced from three days to one day, and in Jamaica, time to trade fell from 7.4 to 1.6 days. An additional USD 96,000 in savings were generated in Jamaica and Grenada from the elimination of import/export licenses and fees for certain goods.

Country-specific Activities: Caribbean

Grenada (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Grenada

The regional project under which the team delivered advisory services concluded in December 2019, and TFSP did not provide active support to Grenada in this reporting period. Highlights of achievements made under that project are presented below.

Previously, TFSP supported assessments to determine the level of alignment of Grenada’s national policies with the WTO TFA in three areas prioritized by the government: [A] advanced rulings, [B] appeal procedures, and [C] Single Window. UNCTAD supported the government’s implementation of the Single Window, and the TFSP supported Grenada regarding rights of appeal and risk management.
Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

4 Procedures for Appeal or Review
7.4 Risk Management
10.3 Use of International Standards

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

TFSP shared best practices on appeals administration through peer-to-peer learning.

TFSP resources were used to support the roll-out of the tool to automate import approval processes at the Bureau of Standards. The automation tool allows the bureau to fully leverage data from ASYCUDA to apply risk management to its border clearance processes.

Jamaica (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Jamaica

The TFSP-supported project in the Caribbean region concluded in December 2019, and TFSP did not provide active support to Jamaica in FY22. Highlights of achievements made under that project are presented below. Additional funding to support trade facilitation-related activities in the Caribbean region (including Jamaica) in FY23 is under consideration.

Earlier, TFSP supported implementation of the Jamaica Trade Information Portal (JTIP), implementation of risk management and coordinated border management, and removal of duplicate and burdensome export and import licensing requirements. The TFSP has also supported a regulatory gap analysis related to the Customs Code.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
7.4 Risk Management
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.3 Use of International Standards

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

The JTIP was implemented and launched in 2019 with TFSP support. The Trade Board Limited (TBL) operates the JTIP, and signed MOUs with thirty ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in FY21 to contribute content to the portal.
At the end of FY20, and following recommendation by the WBG, the Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) migrated TBL’s services to the Jamaica Single Window for Trade (JSWIFT), mandating the use of these services for the export regime: online applications for licenses as an approved exporter of scrap metal, e-payment, and approval by the TBL. Applications for export permits are now submitted electronically and reviewed and approved by both the Customs Site Inspection Officer and the Trade Board Assessor in a sequential workflow. With effect from August 23, 2021, Certificates of Origin—which are issued by the TBL—are also now being processed through JSWIFT. Effective March 1, 2021, JCA migrated services for the issuance of import permits for the Ministry of Agriculture’s Plant Quarantine Branch.

The WBG worked with the JCA to support the passage of the new Customs Bill, which is expected to significantly modernize customs operations in Jamaica.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

Trade facilitation continues to be an important theme in government of Jamaica’s competitiveness agenda. Initiatives to improve border clearance were included in the Jamaica COVID-19 Response and Recovery Development Policy Financing of USD 150 million. A prior action to that operation was the launch of Trade Board Limited and the Jamaica Electronic Single Window for Trade platform for imports and exports.

St. Lucia (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to St. Lucia

The regional project under which the team delivered advisory services concluded in December 2019, and TFSP did not provide active support to St. Lucia in this reporting period. Highlights of achievements made under that project are presented below. Additional funding to support trade facilitation–related activities in the Caribbean region (including St. Lucia) in FY23 is under consideration.

Previously, the TFSP supported TFA assessments to determine St. Lucia’s level of alignment with WTO TFA measures on Single Window, electronic payment systems, and risk management.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- With TFSP support, the WBG facilitated a technical workshop on the design of an electronic Single Window and facilitated discussions between public and private sector stakeholders on a shared vision for the Single Window in St. Lucia.

- TFSP funding supported the deployment of the automation tool for import approval by the Bureau of Standards in St. Lucia. This initiative helps support the integration of border clearance processes through the ASYCUDA World platform.

Regional Activities: Central America

In this reporting period, the TFSP-supported team continued to assist with the preparation of a high-level event focused on trade facilitation in the region, which is scheduled to take place in the next FY. The WBG also continued to support work in other priority areas (including multimodal transport, expedited shipment, and e-commerce) as well as begun providing support on agile border crossings and deep integration (customs union-related).

In prior reporting periods, the WBG (through TFSP support) assisted the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration with the review of the regional Customs Code for Central America and its regulations to align them with the WTO TFA to reduce clearance times and required formalities and documentation to trade. In addition, Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) requested support to develop a data cube and calculation methodology to collect data to monitor time trade performance across the region. The data cube and the calculation methodology were both developed and are currently in use by SIECA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
3 Advance Rulings
4 Procedures for Appeal or Review
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.8 Expedited Shipments
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
11 Freedom of Transit

FY22 update on key activities

- In March 2022, a mission was carried out to Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and El Salvador to discuss the trade facilitation initiative promoted by the WBG and Council of Ministers of Economic Integration (COMIECO), including lowering air ticket costs in Central America, expediting passage at land border crossings, and expedited shipments. Meetings with national authorities from each of the countries were held in order to obtain political-technical support and to present short-term results. During the mission, the team also evaluated the need for assistance (at the national level) to support implementation of trade facilitation in Central America.

- TFSP continued to provide support to the presidency pro-tempore of the COMIECO, as well as with SIECA, for preparation and organization of a high-level event on trade facilitation in Washington DC. Initially scheduled for fall 2021, the “La facilitación de Comercio como Acelerador de la Recuperación en Centroamérica” (Trade Facilitation as an Accelerator for Recovery in Central America) event was postponed to FY23 in order to allow for in-person attendance as COVID-19 pandemic travel and gathering restrictions are relaxed.

- High-level authorities from the WBG and Central American countries want to use this event to push the trade facilitation agenda at the highest political level, and the topics that have been defined as priorities are:
  - Domestic treatment of regional flights to reduce cost of air transport
  - Pilot plan to facilitate crossing of borders, particularly through advance declaration between El Salvador and Guatemala
  - Expedited shipments to accelerated e-commerce
The WBG team made progress in preparing the following priority activities for the high-level event, in addition to others that had been discussed with the governments individually:

- The WBG team confirmed and reinvigorated Guatemala and El Salvador’s interest in facilitating agile border crossing (particularly through advance declaration between El Salvador and Guatemala) with support and leadership from the heads of customs of the two countries. During a mission to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras in March 2022, the customs authority of Guatemala suggested incorporating the advance declaration initiative with the government of El Salvador as a short-term measure to facilitate border crossing. The team prepared a video tutorial training program and began organizing for its dissemination, prior to the implementation of the advance declaration between Guatemala and El Salvador in the context of the deep integration and to ensure its success. The countries have agreed to start operations at the end of August 2022.

- TFSP provided support to El Salvador on expedited shipments to facilitate e-commerce by accompanying technical discussions at the level of the Central American Customs Committee. Because the draft regulation includes the major topic of “de minimis,” the WBG shared a World Customs Organization review of the practice of “de minimis” in various parts of the world and the rationale. Additionally, the team organized a workshop (scheduled to take place in the next fiscal year) to discuss the “de minimis” proposal in coordination with SIECA and with the participation of the Customs Directors of the Central American countries.

- To support deep integration (customs union), the WBG undertook an evaluation of the Corinto border between Guatemala and Honduras. The team updated the 2018 study to include border crossing times and processes for customs and operations with the Central American Invoice and Single Central American Declaration (FYDUCA) system at the Corinto border post. The team also provided assistance to identify the main bottlenecks preventing effective operations at the border, as well as proposed solutions to improve border crossing times in the short and medium term.

- Further on deep integration, the government of El Salvador agreed on a road map to join the deep integration initiative with Guatemala and Honduras in FY22. The government requested the WBG’s support to help implement the road map, and the project team and the General Directorate of Internal Taxes of El Salvador subsequently identified the requirements for implementation of FYDUCA within the deep integration framework for participating countries. The government expects to comply with conditions to initiate operation of FYDUCA in FY23.

- The project produced, published, and disseminated a bilingual (Spanish/English) brochure on the multimodal cargo ferry transport service between Costa Rica and El Salvador to promote the service.30 It is being used by investment promotion agencies and commercial attaché offices abroad, as well as with shipping companies. A technical/financial study was prepared to determine the economic viability of the ferry service, which is an important element in the promotion and identification of potential service providers (shipping companies).

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30 The ferry service is not yet operational.
Country-specific Activities: Central America

Costa Rica

TFSP support to Costa Rica

In FY22, TFSP supported Costa Rica’s efforts to establish Local Trade Facilitation Committees, implement advance rulings, and undertake a Time Release Study. With TFSP support, the WBG also continued to assist Costa Rica to prepare for joint inspections at the Peñas Blancas border as well as with the implementation and promotion of the multimodal ferry service between Costa Rica and El Salvador.

In the previous reporting period, TFSP supported the development of risk management procedures for phytosanitary products, the design and operationalization of a Trade Information Portal, and the development of an integrated procedure for the operation of a multimodal service between El Salvador and Costa Rica.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
3 Advance Rulings
7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- The TFSP-funded project continued to provide advice and support to the National Trade Facilitation Committee (CONAFAC) and its agenda by presenting proposals and providing technical assistance. Support provided during this period included the following:

- The WBG team conducted assessments of formalities and documentary requirements and prepared a technical report and proposal to improve customs procedures at the border. The report identified measures to reduce excessive requirements and time to trade at land border posts. Some of the proposed reforms were implemented in practice and even in legal changes during this reporting period, such as the self-rectification of customs declarations in the recent reform of the General Customs Law. The recommended reforms are expected to expedite movement, release, and clearance of goods by reducing documentary requirements and eliminating the need for printed copies. The results will include faster, more transparent, and easier trade processes, as well as savings for the private sector.

- With support from WBG experts, the “Regulations for the Organization and Functioning of the Local Trade Facilitation Committees and the Creation of the Border Coordinator” were published in the Official Gazette La Gaceta in August 2021, to raise awareness on the implementation of local committees at the ports, airports, and land border posts. The local committees are responsible for coordination actions between agencies at the local level. This regulation provides legal support to implement these commit-
tees as well as to the border coordinators that have been designated at the land border posts in the north and south of the country.

- A study to review the formalities and documentation requirements and to identify opportunities to improve the import, export, and transit regimes at select borders was undertaken with TFSP support in 2019, and it identified that the current process of advance rulings (AR) in Costa Rica discourages their application. It also found that AR management continues to be manual, and the use of ARs for tariff classification, origin of goods, and customs valuation has been practically non-existent.

In follow up to that study, the TFSP-supported WBG team drafted a report in September 2021 that includes a proposal to establish an electronic module to issue, update, register, and consult on advance rulings and includes the following:

- Chapter 1. Diagnosis of the status of ARs in Costa Rica
- Chapter 2. Analysis of international best practices on AR, with emphasis on countries that have digitized the process
- Chapter 3. Improvement proposals for Costa Rica’s AR system
- Chapter 4. Suggestions for an eventual digitization of the AR process

- Since November 2021, and as part of CONAFAC’s implementation of the Trade Facilitation Priority Agenda, WBG experts have been supporting the work aimed at undertaking a Time Release Study at the Moín Container Terminal (TCM), based on the WCO methodology. The WBG team carried out a mission to Costa Rica in March 2022, to review the import and export operations at TCM and the SISLOCAR bonded warehouse. The mission also mapped logistics processes as well as data and information flow, identified key events, and verified the existence of records in the computer systems to support the TRS. The team will present the process maps to the parties involved for validation and to agree on next steps for data collection and launch of the TRS in the next reporting period.

- In September 2021, the WBG drafted a model protocol for joint inspections at the Peñas Blancas customs point. Entitled the “Protocol of Interinstitutional Action for Joint Inspections at the Peñas Blancas Customs Point,” joint inspections will contribute to strengthening coordinated border management. The protocol is pending approval and implementation.

- With TFSP support, the WBG produced a bilingual (Spanish/English) brochure to promote the cargo ferry service between Costa Rica and El Salvador. It is being used by investment promotion agencies and commercial attaché offices abroad, as well as with shipping companies. TFSP provided support to Costa Rica and El Salvador in the previous reporting periods to develop an integrated procedure for the operation of this multi-modal service.

- Additionally, a technical and financial study was prepared with TFSP support to determine the economic viability of the ferry service, which is an important element in the promotion and identification of potential service providers (shipping companies).

- During this reporting period, the WBG team continued to hold periodic virtual meetings with authorities and technical counterparts from the Ministry of Economy, customs, and ports authorities of Costa Rica and El Salvador to follow up on the ferry service project for the transport of goods and merchandise between the two countries, define next steps, action plans, and other related areas needed for the successful implementation of the project.

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31 This tool can be accessed through [page 5]: https://www.imprentanacional.go.cr/pub/2021/08/11/comp_11_08_2021.pdf

32 The ferry service is not yet operational.
El Salvador

TFSP support to El Salvador

TFSP continues to provide support to the government of El Salvador on several activities, including: efforts to improve trade facilitation processes for air cargo trade, implementation and promotion of multi-modal transport operations between El Salvador and Costa Rica, and support for El Salvador on its deep integration process to join the Honduras-Guatemala customs union. In the past, support was provided to El Salvador for its effort to implement an e-signature program for the Ministry of Economy.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.8 Expedited Shipments
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.2 Acceptance of Copies

FY22 update on key activities

- In prior reporting periods, the TFSP-supported team engaged with the government of El Salvador on a pilot plan to improve air cargo. In this reporting period, follow-up meetings were held on an initiative to facilitate the exchange of air cargo manifests between the authorities of the Autonomous Executive Port Commission (CEPA) and the Directorate General of Customs (DGA). The objective was to complete and consolidate the exchange process with the addition of more electronic information on air cargo manifests and cargo controls.

  The scope of technical assistance needed was determined among the institutions, such as the need to hire a computer expert to complete the exchange of electronic messages, as well as to expand the information published on the websites to include real-time information of the goods received in the warehouses of the Port Authority. This work began in March 2021 and is expected to be completed in November 2022.

- In FY22, the Ministry of Economy requested technical assistance from TFSP for the deep integration process between El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras (i.e., joining the customs union). The deep integration process requires that the Acquisition and Transfer operations (equivalent to Importation and Exportation respectively) carried out between economic agents of the customs union member countries (namely El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) must be documented and controlled by FYDUCA.33

  To assist with this, the WBG and the General Directorate of Internal Taxes of El Salvador have identified the requirements needed in terms of developments and tests for the implementation of FYDUCA within the framework of deep integration for participating countries.

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33 FYDUCA is defined as the uniform legal document that constitutes the Invoice that supports operations of transfer and acquisition of movable goods or the rendering of services between VAT registered Taxpayers of the Party States. It constitutes the Declaration for withholding or liquidation and payment of taxes.
The WBG team confirmed and reinvigorated El Salvador’s interest in establishing agile border crossings with Guatemala. The WBG team prepared a video tutorial training program on the use of the IT application for advance goods declaration along with its dissemination, prior to its implementation between El Salvador and Guatemala in the context of the deep integration process and to ensure its success.

With TFSP support, the WBG produced a bilingual (Spanish/English) brochure to promote the cargo ferry service between El Salvador and Costa Rica. It is being used by investment promotion agencies and commercial attaché offices abroad, as well as with shipping companies. The TFSP provided support to Costa Rica and El Salvador in the previous reporting periods to develop an integrated procedure for the operation of this multi-modal service.

Additionally, a technical and financial study was prepared by with TFSP support to determine the economic viability of the ferry service, which is an important element in the promotion and identification of potential service providers (shipping companies).

During this reporting period, the WBG team continued to hold periodic virtual meetings with authorities and technical counterparts from the Ministry of Economy, customs, and ports authorities of El Salvador and Costa Rica to follow up on the ferry service project for the transport of goods and merchandise between the two countries, define next steps, action plans, and other related areas needed for the successful implementation of the project.

Guatemala

TFSP support to Guatemala

TFSP has continued to provide support to the customs union between Guatemala and Honduras with recommendations to implement risk management tools and advanced declarations and is also currently supporting the integration of El Salvador into the customs union. During this reporting period, TFSP also provided funding for technical assistance to reduce air transport costs in Guatemala and the region, especially in the context of the customs union between Guatemala and Honduras, as well as in its advance declaration process with El Salvador.

In the past, TFSP provided support on post-clearance audits and an Authorized Operator program. The team previously also provided support for the USD 500 million DPF “Crisis Response and Recovery in Guatemala Development Policy Loan” in which trade facilitation priority measures are included.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

34 The ferry service is not yet operational.
FY22 update on key activities

- The WBG team confirmed and reinvigorated Guatemala interest in establishing agile border crossings with El Salvador (particularly through advance declaration between the two countries). During a mission to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in March 2022, the customs authority of Guatemala suggested incorporating the advance declaration initiative with the government of El Salvador as a short-term measure to facilitate border crossing. The project team prepared a video tutorial training program and began organizing for its dissemination, prior to the implementation of the Advance Goods Declaration between Guatemala and El Salvador in the context of the deep integration and to ensure its success.

- To support deep integration, the project team updated the 2018 study to evaluate the Honduras-Guatemala Corinto border to include border crossing times and processes for customs and operations with the FYDUCA system between Guatemala and Honduras. The team also provided assistance to identify the main bottlenecks preventing effective operations at the border, as well as proposed solutions to improve bordering crossing times in the short and medium term.

- At the request of the Ministry of Economy, the WBG, with TFSP support, conducted a rapid assessment of the Foreign Trade Single Window. A final report on the Single Window will be prepared by the WBG team during FY23.

- During the mission carried out in March 2022, the WBG team held a meeting with the NTFC, which included participation of public and private sector representatives, encouraging public-private dialogue in Guatemala. During the meeting, the NTFC requested support for integrated risk management (for the Ministry of Agriculture, Police, DIPFRONT) that carry out border inspections. The customs authority also expressed and highlighted the convenience of supporting the development of a Risk Management Center (i.e., control tower) to centralize risk profiling at the central level rather than at border posts.

Honduras

TFSP support to Honduras

TFSP continued to provide support to the customs union between Honduras and Guatemala with recommendations to facilitate the movement of goods at the Corinto Border and is also currently supporting the integration of El Salvador into the customs union.

In the past, the TFSP provided support to the customs union between Honduras and Guatemala with recommendations to implement risk management tools, post-clearance audits, and an Authorized Operator program to facilitate the movement of goods.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

- **7.1** Pre-arrival Processing
- **7.6** Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- **8** Border Agency Cooperation
- **10.1** Formalities and Documentation Requirements
FY22 update on key activities

- To support the customs union between Honduras and Guatemala, TFSP support focused on updating the 2018 study to evaluate the Honduras-Guatemala Corinto border to include border crossing times and processes for customs and operations with FYDUCA system between Honduras and Guatemala. The team also provided assistance to identify the main preventing effective operations at the border, as well as proposed solutions to improve border crossing times in the short and medium term.

- During a mission to Honduras in March 2022, the WBG met with authorities to discuss the trade facilitation initiative prepared with COMIECO to lower air ticket costs in Central America, as well as to promote expedited passage at land border crossings and expedited shipments. The Minister of Economic Development requested assistance to prepare a proposal for the implementation of this reform within the framework of the customs union with Guatemala.

- The team also met with the Honduras NTFC (public and private sector), and it was agreed that the WBG will support a workshop to facilitate the review of the Committee’s agenda to agree on short- and medium-term activities.

Nicaragua (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Nicaragua

TFSP did not provide support to Nicaragua in FY22 due to having very little engagement with the government. In the previous reporting period, TFSP provided support to Nicaragua on publication of trade procedures and use of the Trámites Nicaragua website.35 This entailed continued support for the mapping of trade processes to ensure that the private sector has access to complete information on steps and documents required to trade through the website. TFSP also supported technical assistance at the Puerto of Corinto to enhance transparency as well as reduce clearance times in the past.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

Panama (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Panama

There was a change in government administration in the previous reporting period, and the new administration has not provided an official request for support to the TFSP Secretariat. As such, no trade facilitation-related support was provided to Panama in this reporting period.

35 http://www.tramitesnicaragua.gob.ni/?l=es
Previously, the TFSP provided support for the establishment and strengthening of the National Trade Facilitation Committee, integrated risk management for transshipments, and an e-payment module.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

- **7.2** Electronic Payment
- **7.4** Risk Management
- **23.2** National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**Country-specific Activities: South America**

**Bolivia (inactive in FY22)**

**TFSP support to Bolivia**

While no direct TFSP support was provided to Bolivia in the reporting period, the results of earlier assistance materialized when the NTFC was officially launched in the fall of 2021. The creation of the NTFC was supported by TFSP in previous years.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

- **23.2** National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years**

- Over the period of FY19-20, the TFSP-supported WBG team worked closely with the government to create the NTFC. To this end, the WBG helped the government develop and elaborate Terms of Reference (TORs) to set up the NTFC. A critical element to the success of this support was the ability of the WBG to bring all key border stakeholders together around a joint agenda and ensure that the voices of the private sector, and SMEs in particular, were also heard.

- Despite several delays (including numerous staff and leadership changes in the Bolivian government, difficulties in securing commitment from all the key border agencies and initial challenges in bringing these parties together around a common agenda, and the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic), a breakthrough of the establishment of the NTFC finally came in the fall of 2021. Months earlier, the WBG had informed the government that no further trade facilitation technical assistance could be provided unless the NTFC was officially established. The Supreme Decree 4600 was approved in October 2021 and officially created the NTFC. The WBG participated in the first meeting of the NTFC along with participants from UNCTAD and the Inter-American Development Bank and continues the dialogue around possible future support to the trade agenda.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support to Bolivia was complemented by the WCO’s support to customs in aligning border management processes and procedures with the WTO TFA.
Country-specific Activities: Middle East

Lebanon (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Lebanon

TFSP support to Lebanon ended in October 2020 due to political challenges. Prior to that, TFSP funds enabled the WB to identify priority areas for support, including (A) development of a customs strategy, (B) development of a risk management strategy, (C) development of a national electronic Single Window vision agreement leading to a holistic National Single Window framework, and (D) undertaking of a Time Release Study.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.4 Risk Management

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- A customs strategy, the first Annual Work Plan for 2019–2020, and a risk management strategy were developed and submitted to customs for consideration in FY20. The World Bank team also reviewed and provided comments on the draft Customs Law.
- Due to political challenges, which led to a governance vacuum, the planned TRS was postponed, preventing the development of a measurement tool for the effectiveness of border management processes in Lebanon.
- The development of an enabling environment to assist with a future electronic Single Window (eSW) was also postponed due to insufficient political support and long-term commitment, as well as the lack of a reliable platform for inter-agency collaboration.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP funds are complementary to financing received under the Umbrella Facility for Trade. Discussions are also ongoing about a larger lending project and involvement in the Port of Beirut disaster reconstruction.
Regional Highlights of Achievements of TFSP Funded Work

In South Asia, TFSP provided support to Bangladesh and Nepal to comprehensively train government officials on a variety of trade-related subjects, to improve risk-management at the border crossing posts of Biratnagar and Birgunj in Nepal, as well as to implement an Online Licensing Module (OLM) in Bangladesh. In 2018, time to import at Biratnagar and Birgunj both fell by 0.4 days each, and time to export was both reduced by 1 and 0.8 days each, leading to a total of USD 985,000 in savings for the private sector in Nepal. The OLM reform in Bangladesh is estimated to generate at least USD 71,000 in savings annually from the reduction of fees associated with documents that have been eliminated with the introduction of OLM. Total savings from TFSP-supported reforms is around USD 1 million for the private sector.

Country-specific Activities

Bangladesh (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Bangladesh

TFSP support in Bangladesh was inactive in FY22, but new activities are expected to start in FY23 with additional funding through TFSP under consideration. Previous support in Bangladesh complemented a larger WBG project, which ended in spring 2020, and was centered around strengthening Bangladesh’s border agency coordination, risk management, legal framework, and other trade processes.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation
 Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- An OLM was piloted in December 2018 and became fully operational in October 2019. It was launched in July 2019 with formal inauguration by the commerce minister. The full-fledged OLM includes new features per requirements of the Chief Controller of Imports & Exports. The OLM simplified the registration application process by providing online facilities to submit applications for import/export registration. This helped automate 55 services related to export and import, reduce the number of in-person visits and time associated with them, reduce documents, and deliver approximately USD 71,000 in savings in associated fees for the private sector.

- With TFSP support, the Ministry of Commerce launched a National Trade Portal to provide access to information in both English and Bangla for traders regarding the import and export processes.

- Time Release Studies were completed at the port of Chittagong, air cargo, inland container depot, Dhaka, and Benapole. Through technical assistance and simplification of procedures, import clearance time was reduced from 12.2 days to 9.6 days at the port of Chittagong.

- The reform initiatives helped the country prepare for the implementation of a Single Window program, which was financed by a WBG loan.

- With TFSP support, Bangladesh was also successful in establishing an NTFC, adopting a risk management framework, and undertaking a comprehensive revision of its customs code.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

World Bank investment project financing of USD 74 million was leveraged for the Single Window program, trade portal sustainability, and risk systems (as complementary activities).

 Nepal (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Nepal

TFSP support to Nepal was inactive in FY22, but new activities are expected to start in FY23 with additional funding through TFSP under consideration. Previous support in Nepal complemented a regional WBG project that was completed in spring 2020, and the work focused on risk management, post-clearance audit, and transit.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.4 Risk Management
7.5 Post-Clearance Audit
11 Freedom of Transit

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- One component of TFSP support under the South Asia Regional Integration in Trade and Investment (SARTI) project was preparation for the establishment of the Nepal National Single Window, which was taken-up under the Nepal-India Regional Trade & Transport Project (NIRTPP). While TFSP support to SARTI concluded in the FY20, the WBG is continuing to provide assistance to the National Single Window in order to further the efforts made under SARTI to streamline and harmonize trade-related processes and documentary requirements.
A stakeholder validation undertaken in 2019 suggested that the following improvements had taken place since the initial assessment was carried out in 2015: (A) increase in Category A measures from 2 to 9, (B) decrease in Category B measures from 15 to 13, and (C) decrease in Category C measures from 19 to 14.

TFSP began providing support on risk management to the Department of Customs in Nepal in 2013. The analysis of AW transaction data revealed that green channel clearance steadily rose from less than 1 percent at both Birgunj and Biratnagar [2013/14] to more than 45 percent and 27 percent respectively by 2018/19. In addition, cumulative import and export clearance times was reduced by approximately 47 percent at both border posts, bringing a total of TFSP-supported savings of USD 985,000 for the private sector. These results were validated by private sector surveys as well as stakeholder consultations. Another factor contributing to reduction in clearance time, in Birgunj in particular, was the operationalization of an integrated check post (ICP).

Inland container depot (ICD) operators at the borders in Birgunj and Biratnagar were tailored to enable interface with AW. As a result, when trucks enter Nepal from these land customs stations, all information (i.e., time, data, truck number, driver name, and commodity) is captured electronically to generate an entry gate/exit pass. From a control perspective, this entry and exit pass generation is a considerable improvement, because through AW, customs can now electronically account for all trucks and commodities that enter and exit the ICD. Also, clearance times can now be assessed using the entry and exit date and time in AW. This improved automated control will facilitate greater control of the border posts because of the reduced need to manually record data and to account for transactions, ultimately speeding up processing and enabling automated risk management.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP financed advisory activities informed a USD 99 million World Bank Nepal–India Regional Trade and Transport Project, including supporting the creation of a National Single Window and the Nepal Trade Portal.

**Sri Lanka (inactive in FY22)**

TFSP support to Sri Lanka

TFSP did not provide any active support to Sri Lanka in this reporting period due to the prevailing political atmosphere. TFSP, however, previously financed a TFA Gap Assessment, which helped secure additional funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1  Publication
1.2  Information Available through Internet
7.4  Risk Management
10.4  Single Window
23.2  National Committee on Trade Facilitation
FY22 update on key activities

- With the additional funding from DFAT, the WBG assisted the government of Sri Lanka in FY22 to commence the NSW implementation project (including assessing the need for a NSW at high levels in the government, setting up of various committees and advising them, preparing TORs, and preparing a “way forward” report); complete a needs assessment report related to WTO TFA articles 1.3, 5.1, 6.1, and 6.2; to start work on coordinated border management; as well as to provide ongoing NTFC capacity building and TIP support.
Country-specific Activities

**Botswana (inactive in FY22)**

**TFSP support to Botswana**

TFSP did not provide any support to Botswana in the reporting period. The WBG, with TFSP funding, supported Botswana in the launch of the TIP in March 2016 (see Box 10 for a feature story on this reform).

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

**Burundi (inactive in FY22)**

**TFSP support to Burundi**

The TFSP-funded project in Burundi closed several years ago; and thus, no support was provided to Burundi in the reporting period. Previous support complemented a larger investment climate project in the country.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

7.4 Risk Management

7.5 Post-Clearance Audit

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators (with the WCO)
Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- TFSP support focused on risk management capacity building, including identifying risk management gaps, training, and designing an implementation action plan jointly with the WCO around the customs intelligence function.
- The WBG and the WCO jointly helped Burundi roll out its AO program. Particularly, the WBG and WCO hosted workshops that helped develop a critical mass of Burundi customs officers possessing the necessary consultations skills to not only facilitate the rollout of the regional AO program but also to establish consultative committees in key customs posts (port, airport, border posts).

Eswatini

TFSP support to Eswatini

TFSP did not provide active support to Eswatini in this reporting period since project activities concluded at the end of the last reporting period (June 2021); however, one activity delivered was measurement of project results through a TRS+ to identify the change in time to export and import. Activities that TFSP provided support on include risk management and coordinated border management, as well as the development and launch of the Eswatini Trade Information Portal, preparation for roll-out of the national electronic trade Single Window, launch of the "No cash" initiative, establishment and operational support to the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF). These activities are in line with the National Trade Facilitation Roadmap that guides implementation of trade facilitation reforms and identifies a number of other strategic initiatives. Implementation of the Roadmap initiatives benefits the trading community, including small and medium enterprises and women who play significant roles in trade in the country.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.2 Electronic Payment
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.3 Use of International Standards
10.4 Single Window
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation
Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- The Eswatini TIP was launched in September 2020, which brought greater transparency of information for the private sector. Within one year of the launch, it has garnered around 20,414 pageviews and had 3,477 users. See Box 4 for more highlights on the Eswatini TIP.

- Eswatini reconfigured the previously non-operational NCTF and its Secretariat following Cabinet’s approval and Gazette announcement in November 2019. See Box 10 to read about how the project ensured the NCTF continues to lead on trade-related matters after project closure.

- The project laid the foundations to roll out the eSW for trade. Although it is a long and complex initiative that cannot be completed as part of this advisory project and requires extra funding, one of the visible outcomes already achieved under this project was the adoption of the national SW blueprint. Preparation of this document was supported by the project, and it outlined key components of the SW, serving as a government policy guiding multiple stakeholders in implementation of the SW. Further, some agencies have proceeded to implement some elements of automation and improvements in the internal process following the project team’s recommendations on the re-design of the SW “To-Be” Business Processes. See Box 13 for more details.

**BOX 13**

**Eswatini’s National Single Window**

Three border agencies (Dairy Board, National Agricultural Marketing Board [NamBoard], and Ministry of Agriculture—Plant Protection Unit) implemented electronic application for the trade-related certificates, licenses, and permits (CLPs) issued by them and receipt thereof. Implementation started in April 2020 and ended in December 2020, and it was particularly timely and valuable during the pandemic when the ability to interact face-to-face was limited. It gave traders requiring CLPs the opportunity to complete the whole process electronically without a need to go see someone at the responsible agency. Conversion of the process from manual to electronic also led to significant time savings for the applicants.

The above-mentioned border agencies have also simplified the process of internal permit approvals by removing the need for approval from the highest-level officer and delegating approval decisions to technical officers, who are more easily available and able to make faster decisions. This initiative is also expected to speed-up the time to obtain the CLPs issued by these agencies.

“In the past, I had to go to the agency in person to give us the permit. Now, I was allowed to send an electronic message to notify the agency about my goods, there would be a few requirements, but at the end of the day, the agency would issue me the permit, without a need to go there in person. The electronic process requires less work. It takes much less time now. In the past when I had to go there, sometimes there were queues and it could take a day or two, but now we are talking about getting permits within hours. So, I think there’s been a lot of improvement. I can also print the permit myself. I’m happy.”

— USER FEEDBACK ON THE EXPERIENCE WITH THE UPDATED SERVICES
The project supported two TRS+, one in 2018 and one in 2021, and for the first time included measuring processes in the other border agencies. These TRSs supported Eswatini in fulfilling the requirements of WTO TFA Article 7.6 on Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times. The reports made many valuable recommendations. For example, one of them advised in 2018 to remove cash payments at the border. Following this recommendation, as of April 2020, the Eswatini Revenue Services Agency mandated that all payments for commercial traffic at the border stations be done electronically. This substituted the mostly manual process of payments and helped to speed-up payment time. The 2021 TRS+ report estimated that the new initiative contributed to 1 hour time reduction at the border during the importing process.

Support was provided to improve risk management practices throughout the lifetime of the project in the form of workshops, recommendations, and support with implementation of those recommendations. As a result of project interventions, the Customs Risk Committee was established with a mandate to oversee this area of work. Further, SOPs for new customs selectivity rules were implemented, and as a result, release of green lane declarations in the system (which helped to reduce the queue time for about 70 percent of the green lane transactions and freed up two checking officers at the Ngwenya release counter) was automated. Additionally, an Exit Note (which enables the agent to receive an electronic release notification via email from the ERA and for the agent to print exit note at the border) was automated.

According to one retail outlet, improvements at the border enabled the firms to move faster through the gate (following the COVID-19 health controls, passport, and payment of road toll) and exit the border quickly. This simplification is applicable to the goods in non-red channel.

The project team also provided recommendations and inputs into a draft MOU between South Africa and Eswatini on the establishment of a one-stop border post (OSBP) at Oshoek-Ngwenya Border Post. This is the busiest border post between the two countries and given landlocked geography of Eswatini, it opens the gateway to trade not only with South Africa but also with the rest of the world. Establishing such OSBP is in line with the WTO TFA’s recommended best practices for coordinated border management; and once the MOU is signed, it would positively impact all exports and imports going through this route.

Finally, using the trade facilitation model to account for private sector savings (PSS) from observed time reductions, this project is estimated to have generated USD 285,569 in savings to the local importers. More time reductions and savings would materialize once Single Window is fully implemented.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

The TFSP-supported advisory services provided to Eswatini have laid the foundation for trade facilitation work and further work through a regional project is under consideration.
Ethiopia (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Ethiopia

TFSP did not provide support to Ethiopia in the reporting period. TFSP-supported activities in prior years were implemented alongside the Ethiopia Investment Climate Program, which aimed to streamline and simplify high priority regulations, processes, and practices that are burdensome for trade. The first phase of the program addressed investment climate issues that are preventing investments and productivity growth. The trade component of this program aimed to decrease the time to export and import by addressing legal and regulatory constraints and introducing risk management, process simplification, and increased transparency of trade processes.

TFSP-supported work contributed to the early preparations of the Single Window. Support provided to Ethiopia has resulted in USD 61.4 million in savings for the private sector. Recommendations to create separate windows for clearance of goods helped to reduce lines and waiting time; roll-out of a new customs data management system made documents submission faster; support for the launch of a new railway between the most commonly used seaport in Djibouti and Addis Ababa helped to decongest road traffic and reduce inland transportation time for imports; improved risk-based inspections; electronic issuance of Certificates of Origin for certain destinations; and extension of hours of operations of Ethiopian and Djibouti Customs at the main land border-crossing at Galafi contributed to these savings.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

3 Advance Rulings

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing

7.4 Risk Management

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

10.2 Acceptance of Copies

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- A key result of TFSP-supported work in Ethiopia was the assistance provided in reducing physical inspections of imports, which led to a reduction from 60 percent to 30 percent.

- Support was provided on revising and drafting new legislation on customs, e-commerce, and special economic zones affecting trade facilitation. This new legislation led to streamlined procedures, including a one-stop shop that was set up for customs clearance in industrial parks.

- The roll-out of an electronic certificate of origin has eliminated the need to physically interact with customs for approval because registered exporters can now get a certificate instantly from their own offices. Eight documents were eliminated for imports and three for export. ASYCUDA++, an older customs management system, was replaced with a new, more advanced customs management system that offers more convenient user features and allows Internet-based access from any location. Altogether, these initiatives have led to an import-time reduction of six days and an export-time reduction of five days since 2016.

- A consolidated, detailed customs guide was published and is the first of its kind in Ethiopia.
Eight commodity-based clearance windows were opened to facilitate import and export trade, enabling faster and prioritized clearance.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP contribution complemented the Ethiopia Trade Logistics Advisory Project, for which total bilateral financing (with UK Aid) was around USD 2 million, with ongoing implementation of a World Bank trade logistics investment loan of USD 150 million.

**Lesotho**

**TFSP support to Lesotho**

TFSP provides support to Lesotho to enhance trade-related legislation (including amendments to the Customs, Excise Act No. 10 of 1982), advise on incorporation of modern clauses into the Authorized Economic Operators program, legal framework for implementation of the Lesotho National Single Window (LNSW). TFSP has also provided support for developing coordinated border management, enhancing the implementation of ASYCUDA World and Lesotho National Trade Portal, and strengthening the National Trade Facilitation Committee Secretariat.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

1.1 Publication
1.2 Information Available through Internet
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.4 Single Window
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- The Customs and Excise (Amendment) Act 2021 was passed and enacted on September 30, 2021, by the Senate. It amends the old Customs and Excise Act No. 10 of 1982. This Amendment was based on IFC’s legal review and proposed draft changes to the broader Customs Act (which could not be passed in full at this time).
- Building on support initiated through TFSP, the pilot phase of the LNSW was rolled out on June 29, 2022 [see Box 3].
- The TFSP-funded team, as part of its overall risk management support, has focused specifically on supporting LRA Customs in reviving their Preferred Trader Program (PTP)36. The goal is to expand the pro-

36 This is the name of the program in Lesotho, which more generically is known under the WTO TFA as Authorized Operator.
gram into a holistic AEO program in alignment with WCO SAFE Framework of Standards and the South African AEO program. The program is envisaged to incorporate more benefits, including those to be provided by other government agencies and is expected to spark more interest among the firms.

- A TFSP-funded consultant worked on developing several analytical materials in this regard. For example, a Single-government Concept Paper and Action Plan envisages how to engage other government entities in providing benefits to the AEO companies. The consultant also prepared an External Guide on the Preferred Trader Program to communicate program qualification requirements more effectively to external audiences, the application process, benefits available, and other arrangements related to the operationalization of the program. These analytical materials were complemented by three events, all held in June 2022.

- The consultant has also engaged in legal work to update existing Customs Excise Amendment 2021 and incorporate AEO-related provisions. The work included drafting recommendations and providing comments on the law itself as well as its attachments (such as, for example, Self-assessment Questionnaire Explanatory Notes, System questionnaire). A Legal Notice is expected to be issued early next reporting period in the Lesotho Government Gazette on the passage of the Customs and Excise (Amendment) Regulations 2022, incorporating TFSP-supported AEO provisions into the law. The law will enter into force immediately, setting the stage for the AEO program updates.

- The NTFC endorsed the adoption of the TOR and appointment of the Working Group members to conduct the TRS+. This would be second study supported by the TFSP in Lesotho. A firm has been procured, and it commenced preparatory work in this reporting period, with the final report and recommendations to be delivered in the next reporting period.

- Between August and October 2021, the TFSP-supported team conducted a joint Lesotho Trade Information Portal (LTIP) and LNSW private sector survey to follow-up on the results of the LTIP re-launch in December 2020. The analysis has identified that LTIP is being regularly used and more than 100 visits per day are occasionally being reported by Google Analytics.\(^37\)

- Finally, in this reporting period, the team has carried-out an update of the assessment of Lesotho’s alignment with the WTO TFA. Results are being analyzed and discussed with the client.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support has complemented funding provided for the LNSW pilot as part of the WBG USD 15 million lending program “Second Private Sector Competitiveness and Economic Diversification Project” completed this fiscal year. The TFSP-supported advisory services in Lesotho has also paved the way for further advisory work under consideration through a Southern Africa Regional Trade Facilitation project.

**Liberia**

**TFSP support to Liberia**

In this reporting period, the WBG team provided assistance to the NTFC to prepare its notification of Category C measures to the WTO.\(^38\) TFSP also provided support on risk management, consultations, and simplification of formalities at the Monrovia Port.

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\(^37\) The overall usage of Internet to search for government-related information in Lesotho is still very low and hence, uptake of the information from LTIP could improve with the further expansion of Internet usage.

\(^38\) With TFSP support, Liberia officially submitted its ratification of the WTO TFA to the WTO in the last reporting period.
Previously, TFSP supported work on the modernized Customs Code, National Single Window vision, and pre-shipment inspection that contributed to more transparent and predictable cross-border trade for the private sector.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

- **7.4** Risk Management
- **10.1** Formalities and Documentation Requirements
- **10.3** Use of International Standards
- **10.4** Single Window
- **10.5** Pre-shipment Inspection
- **23.2** National Committee on Trade Facilitation

**FY22 update on key activities**

- Technical assistance was provided to the NTFC to prepare its notification to the WTO, which will include definitive implementation dates for Category C measures and technical assistance arrangements/needs.
- Technical assistance was provided to the Customs Administration’s to enhance institutional management of risk through development of a common, continuous, and systematic risk management framework that empowers officers at all levels of the administration to make risk-based decisions in a standard and structured manner. The framework will allow risk management activities to be aligned with the administration’s overall objectives, corporate focus, strategic direction, operating practices, and internal requirements. The WBG team worked in parallel with the Customs Administration’s risk management unit to develop a standard risk management process. The process is a cyclic methodology with well-defined steps that support better decision making by providing insights into risks and their impact, outlining a common foundation for management decisions regarding the allocation of resources, and prioritizing treatment actions. It is important that the risk management process be applied at all levels of the administration.
- Technical assistance was also provided to further encourage compliance with legal requirements through consultation and engagement with the private sector. Providing information to traders is a critical step in building informed compliance. Work is being done by the WBG team to develop ways to have a greater emphasis on the private sector providing information to customs. Risk-based compliance management aims to differentiate as much as possible between compliant, low-risk trade and higher risk, non-compliant trade.
- The WBG team worked with stakeholders at the Monrovia Port to review, map, and simplify its current export processes. The team worked with the stakeholders to consolidate agency-specific process maps into an overall export map that captures interfaces and interlinkages among the various agencies involved in the export process. This is important to understand who is doing what and for what purposes, as well as possibly arrange for a consolidated review of where discrepancies apply and where interfaces are not covered.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP support to Liberia is complementary to support from SIDA and USAID, among others, and regional activities under the West Africa Trade Facilitation Program.
Madagascar (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Madagascar

TFSP did not provide any support to Madagascar in the reporting period. TFSP-supported work in the previous reporting periods were part of the larger Investment Climate Reform Program (ICRP) in Madagascar, which closed in June 2020. After focusing primarily on the creation of an NTFC and on the review of fees and charges, the work consisted of technical assistance on the coordination of the execution of the NTFC’s roadmap.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work from prior years

- TFSP-supported work in Madagascar has generated USD 11.5 million in savings for the private sector by reversing the implementation of advanced cargo declarations. This recommendation prevented a duplicated process and averted additional unnecessary fees ranging from 50–80 euro per container.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP-supported roadmap allowed the committee to map, coordinate, and engage with other donors in Madagascar on priority activities. This is especially critical as other donors in the country mostly engage in targeted activities. For instance, proper delineation of trade portal and border risk management activities provided a proper scope of intervention for the African Development Bank to then provide support as the NTFC’s technical and financial partner on those priority activities.

Malawi

TFSP support to Malawi

TFSP provides support to Malawi to improve its cross-border trading environment and align the country’s facilitation systems and procedures with the WTO TFA. The WBG regularly engages with private sector stakeholders in Malawi to build understanding of and confidence in trade facilitation reforms.

In this reporting period, the WBG supported further implementation of the Control of Goods Act, risk management (including pilot projects on the Inland Examination Center and Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) usage of ASYCUDA World), expansion of the AEO program, coordinated border management, National Single Window, legal reform (including One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) and Coordinated Border Management (CBM) Bills), and conducting a TRS+.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet
2.1 Opportunity to Comment and Information before Entry into Force

2.2 Consultations

7.4 Risk Management

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

8 Border Agency Cooperation

10.4 Single Window

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- The project supported the drafting of a Control of Goods (Export of Maize and Maize Products) Order, which facilitated the export of maize under license by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, pursuant to the provisions of the Control of Goods Act.\(^{39}\) The law was published in the Gazette in December 2021, ending a ban on exports of maize that had been in place more or less continually since 2017. This Order was an important step in implementing the Act, which commenced a rules-based process for conducting reviews of measures implemented under the Act.

- The project took forward support towards risk management by facilitating the implementation of an Inland Examination Center pilot by Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA). Expert services for ICT development and functional configuration were provided, and various system changes were made to enable implementation of the pilot. The project team liaised closely through weekly meetings and successfully implemented the pilot at Mchinji border post in December 2021. The intervention is expected to improve the MRA’s risk-based control of imports, reduce smuggling of goods, and improve revenue collection.

- TFSP continued supporting preparations for implementation of a pilot on MBS’ usage of ASYCUDA World. Expert services for ICT development and functional configuration of MBS to start utilizing MRA’s system were provided, and system developments commenced for implementation. The exercise is expected to improve MBS’ facilitation of trade—in close cooperation with MRA—pursuant to its objectives of safeguarding health and quality standards while improving revenue collection.

- A validation workshop on the One-Stop Border Post Bill (which was drafted by the WBG team to enable operationalization of the Mchinji-Mwami OSBP between Malawi and Zambia) was conducted, and it positively considered the Bill for further processing through the government’s system. The Bill was approved by Cabinet in June 2022 for submission to Parliament, where it is expected to pass early next reporting period. Once the Mchinji-Mwami and other OSBPs are operational, the time it takes to complete clearance and release procedures at the border is expected to decrease as the number of stops when completing border clearance processes across the two countries is reduced.

- The project supported the procurement process for a firm to support the government with kickstarting preparations for the implementation of a CBM pilot project at the Mwanza border post. Various preparatory processes and meetings were held during the second half of FY22. The project team commenced drafting of a CBM Bill, which will provide the legal framework for implementation of the reform.

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\(^{39}\) TFSP also supported technical assistance on development of the Control of Goods Act and its associated regulations in the prior reporting period.
The TFSP-supported team delivered a TRS+ and submitted it to the government. It that documents the time taken to comply with documentary and border regulatory processes. This sets the basis for measurement of the impact of a number of trade facilitation activities that are being implemented in Malawi.

The project is supporting MRA with review and expansion of its AEO program. The project has provided support to conduct an analysis of program’s performance. This informed the development of a strategy for improvements to the program, review of manuals, and development of accreditation review governance TORs and templates as supported by the project.

The WBG supported the procurement process for a firm to supply the National Single Window system. The stage one bidding process was completed, and preparations for stage two bidding commenced.

**Leverage or complementarity of funds**

TFSP-funded work fed into the preparation of an USD 150 million Southern Africa Trade and Connectivity Project. The TFSP-supported work complements a larger World Bank Southern Africa Trade and Transport Facilitation Program, which funds the implementation of the National Single Window in Malawi. The IFC project secured additional funding from the Facility for Investment Climate Advisory Services (FIAS) to see through some outstanding activities as the project moves towards closure.

**São Tomé and Príncipe**

**TFSP support to São Tomé and Príncipe**

TFSP re-engaged its support to the government of São Tomé and Príncipe in the reporting period. In the fall of 2021, the government requested support in operationalizing the NTFC, establishing enquiry points, reviewing fees, charges, and documents related to international trade, and enhancing risk management through multi-agency collaboration.

Earlier support complemented a larger IFC advisory project to remove obstacles to sustainable tourism and to develop and facilitate trade internally and overseas. The private sector savings from the earlier TFSP-supported work in São Tomé and Príncipe is an estimated USD 1.3 million. These savings were achieved primarily from the introduction of electronic documents and a single payment for fees, as well as the elimination of the requirement for the port exit note and tax certificate.

**Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years**

1.3 Enquiry Points
7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
7.2 Electronic Payment
7.4 Risk Management
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.2 Acceptance of Copies
10.4 Single Window
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation
FY22 update on key activities:

- The TFSP-supported WBG team was initially limited to working virtually with the government in the fall because of COVID-19 pandemic-related restrictions, but the team was finally able to undertake the first in-country mission in February 2022. During this mission, the team secured border agencies’ commitment to the trade facilitation work requested by the government, obtained endorsement of the TORs to operationalize the NTFC, and laid the groundwork for progressing the work on enquiry points and review of fees, charges, and documents related to cross-border trade. The team is closely coordinating its support to the NTFC with UNCTAD.

- In addition, a WTO TFA alignment assessment was also carried out, covering all the TFA measures. The assessment was formally accepted by the NTFC in FY22.

- At the end of the reporting period, the team also completed a strategic note with options for the establishment of enquiry points, and it was shared with the government for consideration.

- Building on risk management support provided earlier, the team developed a draft updated risk management framework that was shared with the NTFC. This strategic document, along with the one for the establishment of enquiry points prepared by the team, will help the government develop a long-term trade facilitation strategy and help with the process of São Tomé and Príncipe’s integration into the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

Sierra Leone

TFSP support to Sierra Leone

In this reporting period, the WBG continued to support the NTFC to prepare for submission of Sierra Leon’s TFA notifications to the WTO; preparations for Sierra Leone’s first Time Release Study; and technical assistance on ASYCUDA. Support on border agency cooperation also began in this reporting period.

Previously, TFSP support was provided to undertake a WTO Gap Assessment jointly with the WCO and UNCTAD, evaluate ASYCUDA World reforms, and submit Category B notifications to the WTO.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
7.9 Perishable Goods
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

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40 The NTFC was set-up in FY18 with TFSP support.
FY22 update on key activities

- TFSP support was provided to the NTFC to co-host a two-day workshop with all international trade stakeholders (public and private). Participants discussed each of the WTO TFA measures, and Sierra Leone’s alignment with the agreement was analyzed. A detailed WTO TFA alignment report was prepared as an outcome of this workshop.

- Technical assistance was provided to the National Trade Facilitation Committee to prepare its notification to the WTO, which will include definitive dates for Category C measures and technical assistance arrangements/needs. Another notification was prepared that will include a request for extension of definitive deadline for certain Category B measures.

- Technical assistance was provided to advance the roll-out of the Time Release Study at the Port of Freetown (QEII Quay Port). A detailed implementation plan was agreed with the NTFC. It was agreed that additional technical assistance will be provided by the TFSP-funded WBG team to further review/update the TRS questionnaire, train all in the requirements for completing the study, and analyze the TRS results. It is planned for the TRS to be carried out in FY23.

- Technical assistance was provided to develop a system to keep the automated perishable goods list in the customs IT system ASYCUDA updated. It was agreed that the next step is to train the technical control agencies to use ASYCUDA so that they can directly update their agency-specific perishable lists and provide feedback on the declarations that have been assigned technical control agency responsibility, which is expected to take place in the next reporting period.

- The WBG, through TFSP, commenced work to establish a technical working group under the NTFC that will work on the development of a coordinated border management framework. It was agreed that an immediate next step for the WBG team should be to provide training in inter-agency coordination. WBG support on this activity will also include drafting of working group TOR, drafting working group priority actions, training staff, and co-chairing the working group during its initial meetings.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements a WBG lending project to implement ASYCUDA World in Sierra Leone.

Togo (inactive in FY22)

TFSP support to Togo

TFSP support to Togo has completed and informed a WBG lending project to strengthen customs processes and improve trucking areas. The TFSP previously supported two main initiatives: (A) the Trade Information Portal, and (B) efforts to further advance the capacity and effectiveness of the National Trade Facilitation Committee.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.1  Publication

1.2  Information Available through Internet

23.2  National Committee on Trade Facilitation
Zambia

TFSP support to Zambia

TFSP supports Zambia in improving trade facilitation and border management procedures, which will expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods by aligning trade procedures with select measures of the WTO TFA. This includes support to the NTFC and support on risk management, coordinated border management, and Single Window connectivity among other trade facilitation activities.

In this reporting period, trade facilitation activities largely continued to be affected by the pandemic; although, with the gradual decrease in infections, the project team had the opportunity to increase engagement with the client. Some program activities were also delayed because Zambia held its General Elections during this reporting period, which led to administrative changes within government agencies.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities) that have been provided over the years

1.3 Enquiry Points
7.2 Electronic Payment
7.4 Risk Management
7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
8 Border Agency Cooperation
10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
10.3 Use of International Standards
10.4 Single Window
10.5 Pre-shipment Inspection
23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY22 update on key activities

- Connectivity to the Single Window was expanded. First, two agencies in border towns (Chadiza District Council and Kazungula District Council) connected to the Single Payment Point, which was integrated within the National Electronic Single Window through TFSP support, during this reporting period. This has led to better accountability of revenues, as well as an increase in revenues, collected by the district councils.

  Second, five agencies (Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), National Sports Council, Ministry of Finance Authorizing Office, Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA), Examination Council of Zambia) connected to the Single Window Electronic Government Customs Duties Payment System.

  Third, Zambia Bureau of Standards and Zambia Civil Aviation connected to the Electronic Voucher Government Payment System.

- The NTFC Secretariat, which receives support from the TFSP-funded project, followed up on recommendations made in June 2021 related to the proliferation of police roadblocks on various transport corridors. This resulted in a decision to remove unnecessary/illegal roadblocks.
The Electronic Integrated Border Declaration Form was launched and made available on the Zambia Electronic Single Window. This has made it easier for declaration forms to be submitted without the need to physically submit documents at government offices.

The project team led and facilitated the development of the final draft of the Principles and Guidelines for an Integrated Risk Management Framework (Main Document) for Zambia Border Agencies. The final draft was discussed and approved during a Steering Committee of the National Risk Management Working Group workshop on December 9, 2021. The Principles were accepted with modifications.

During the workshop, the Steering Committee also sought the WBG’s help to develop an accompanying “Implementation Guide” (Accompanying Guide), which is a shortened version of the main document that provides concise guidance to the agencies. The guidelines were developed and presented to the NTFC and Steering Committee for approval, and the guidelines were approved during an NTFC meeting in March 2022. It is now undergoing further assessment by the legal department at ZRA.

The project team assisted and facilitated the finalization of MOUs between ZCSA, Zambia Metrology Agency (ZMA), and ZRA to allow for the expansion of the AEO program to ZCSA and ZMA. The MOUs were finalized under the Zambia National Risk Management Working Group, submitted to ZRA for final review, and finally to the Ministry of Justice for clearance before signing in line with procedure.

A preparatory workshop was held in October 2021 for the Technical Working Group (TWG) on TRS (comprising both public and private sector representatives) for the Mwami Border Post and Nakonde OSBP. Subsequently, the TWG on Time Release Study undertook the studies in Mwami and on Nakonde between January and June 2022. The TRSs will be validated by all stakeholders, and the final report will be launched and published in the next reporting period. The Mwami and Nakonde TRS is supported by EU/COMESA EDF 11 while TFSP provides support for the NTFC and the TWG and for their meetings, an example of how TFSP support works in partnership with other development partner activities.

As part of TFSP’s support to Zambia on CBM, a two week-long virtual workshop with government agencies (involving 24 institutions and 49 representatives) was delivered to raise awareness and validate the future CBM model. Adjustments were made, and a final workshop report with recommendations for implementation actions was approved for submission to the NTFC.

The NTFC Secretariat presented the CBM Blueprint at the National Trade Facilitation Meeting in March 2022 and Steering Committee meeting in April 2022 for endorsement. The Steering Committee advised that a brief be submitted, outlining fully the benefits and specifics of which agencies could be withdrawn from the border. Pronouncements on implementation of a process to reduce border agencies was made, and amendments to the Border Management and Trade Facilitation Act are underway.

TFSP supported a workshop for the media in September 2021 aimed at increasing awareness on the WTO TFA and related trade facilitation measures and enhancing coverage of the TFA activities and implementation.

TFSP funded a consultant to conduct an evaluation and assessment of the accomplishments under the project. A meeting was held with the Ministry of Commerce, NTFC Secretariat, ZRA, ZCSA, ZMA, Plant Quarantine and Phyto Sanitary Services, Seed Control and Certification Institute in June 2022. A visit to Kazungula OSBP was also undertaken at the same time. The findings will be presented in due course.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

Early TFSP-supported work in Zambia led to an additional USD 1.6 million USAID grant for the TFSP to support the Zambian government.

See https://zesw.gov.zm/zesw/lbd

The TRS in Mwami serves as a baseline study to prepare for OSBP operations. The Mwami OSBP is expected to be launched in September 2022, after a delay because Malawi, on the other side of the border, did not have legislation for OSBP operations.
I. Knowledge Management Products

A. ONLINE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT TRACKING TOOL

The TFA Tracking Tool website serves as a mechanism for countries to track their full and effective implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and report on their progress over time. Data for 31 TFSP-supported countries is currently available for viewing by approved users on the website. The overall average alignment score for these 31 TFSP-supported countries is 47 percent.

There were 364 new visitors43 to the website in FY22.

B. ONLINE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: TRADE FACILITATION AND BORDER MANAGEMENT

In May 2022, the WBG Global Trade Team, with TFSP support, launched a Community of Practice (CoP) on Trade Facilitation & Border Management. The aim of the CoP is to facilitate knowledge sharing across the WBG and provide a forum to discuss trends and issues, seek advice and support WBG staff in the delivery of advisory services and lending operations. The online platform is hosted on Microsoft Teams for easy collaboration across experts and consultants working in TFSP-supported countries and had 184 members across the WBG at the end of FY22. The CoP was launched via a virtual event to celebrate 10 years of WBG-supported implementation.

43 The number of first-time users between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.
support of Trade Information Portals and to reflect on experiences and lessons learned. Clients from Lao PDR, Jamaica, and Botswana were invited to share their experiences. The team will organize a series of virtual events on topics of interest once every 3–4 months — likely Breakfast Seminars — to accommodate for time zones.

C. ONLINE COLLABORATION PORTAL: TRADE INFORMATION PORTALS

The online collaboration website was launched for client countries to share experiences about TIPs. Over 46 members from client countries, WBG staff, and TIP experts use the platform, which leverages the WBG Collaboration for Development (C4D) online software. During the reporting period, the team shared experiences to inform the launch of new portals, including the following blogs:

- “Pakistan Trade Information Portal is live!”
- “The Lao Trade Portal is 10 years old!”
- “Launch of UN/CEFACT Recommendation No.38”

D. ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCES LIBRARY: TRADE INFORMATION PORTALS

Communication plays an important role in the launch of TIPs, as it helps raise awareness among exporters and importers about the existence of the online information source, its benefits, and ways to use it. During the last reporting period, the WBG team, with TFSP support, consolidated lessons learned on publicity from the launch of TIPs in various countries. The TIP communications library was created to house resources and materials for communications planning (implementation plan, project schedule, financial tracker, monthly report), examples of communications products (print, multimedia, press, launch event, images, mock-ups), guidance on branding, terms of reference and briefs for vendors, and search engine optimization for internal users. Cheat sheets were also developed to guide internal and external teams on the implementation of TIP communication campaigns. During this reporting period, the library was used by a WBG team to inform support for the launch of the Trade Information Portals in Somalia (August 2021) and Pakistan (March 2022).
II. Select Events Supported by the Trade Facilitation Support Program (Peer-to-Peer Learning, Policy Dialogue)

A. JOINT WBG/STDF WEBINAR: SYSTEMS APPROACHES FOR FOOD SAFETY AND PLANT HEALTH — SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), JULY 2021

On July 14, the WBG and STDF hosted a joint event on “Systems Approaches for Food Safety and Plant Health”. The webinar was attended by over 150 participants and highlighted new approaches to SPS management that have the potential to simplify food trade for developing countries and open new market opportunities for large and small producers. The session highlighted case stories from different countries, including a presentation by the trade team on a report that highlights a systems approach for aflatoxin management in East Africa. It also included an open dialogue with panelists to further explore the benefits and challenges of systems approaches and the implications for development.


Event recording: https://worldtradeorganization.zoom.us/rec/play/ThHlxV3K3YRxh2rqupUzEqlvewJxX3FoUbpxzzCriA1cLwV1rvQ0U1YyQ6qdR-q6ozvth1y04G6uW8.a1OnBThy12J9PRG?start=1626261922000&_x_zm_rtaid=Z-b36BzNQlhgAkYcOOh0FQ.1626274266910. 5ahc63d4f7a329fca2c9e94b44ee36&_x_zm_rhtaid=43


B. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), JULY 2021

From July 19–21, WTO Members met under the Trade Facilitation Committee to share experiences and information. The status of ratification and notification was shared, along with experience sharing from Madagascar and the USA.

TF Committee Meetings: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/comm_tradfa_e.htm

C. LAUNCH: SOMALIA TRADE INFORMATION PORTAL — MOGADISHU, SOMALIA, AUGUST 2021

To facilitate cross-border trade and provide more transparent trade information for businesses, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry launched the Somalia Trade Information Portal [stip.gov.so] on August 25. The new portal, supported by the WBG, aims to make import and export activity easier and less costly for Somali businesses. Existing materials and lessons learned from portals earlier launched in TFS P countries were used to support the launch of the new portal in Somalia.

Launch event, Somalia Trade Information Portal © World Bank Group
The web-based system provides a single source for all cross-border trade information. Over 90 laws, regulations, procedures, and other trade-related measures from over a dozen government agencies can now be accessed online. Businesses can also access licenses, permits, and applicable fees.

**Portal:** https://stip.gov.so

**Press release:** https://pressroom.ifc.org/All/Pages/PressDetail.aspx?ID=26602

**News article:** https://goobjoog.com/english/somalia-launches-trade-information-portal/

### D. ZAMBIA NTFC HOSTS MEDIA TRAINING WORKSHOP ON TRADE FACILITATION — LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, SEPTEMBER 2021

On September 16, the WBG supported Zambia’s NTFC to host a workshop for the media on trade facilitation. The workshop aimed to raise awareness about recent trade improvements, led by the NTFC. Over 60 representatives from the media and border agencies participated in the event. The workshop provided an introduction to trade facilitation and the WTO TFA; a demonstration of the newly launched Zambia Trade Information Portal; an introduction to the NTFC roadmap; and a panel discussion with border agencies on how trade facilitation has enhanced trade in Zambia. The WBG is supporting the NTFC to implement trade facilitation improvements to reduce the cost and time to trade and further align the country’s trade practices with the WTO TFA.

**News article:**
http://www.times.co.zm/?p=111475

### E. WEBINAR: UN/CEFACT FORUM ON TRADE INFORMATION PORTALS — VIRTUAL, OCTOBER 2021

With support from the WBG, UN/CEFACT published Recommendation 38 on Trade Information Portals at the 37th Forum held virtually from October 4–15.

**Event page:**
https://unece.org/trade/cefact/37th-uncefact-forum

**Recommendation 38:**
https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/ECE-TRADE-465E.pdf

### F. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), OCTOBER 2021

Between October 19–21, WTO Members met under the Trade Facilitation Committee to share information. The status of ratifications and notifications was shared, along with experience-sharing. Presentations were made by Members on different thematic areas, including Tonga (a TFSP-supported country) on “Expedited Clearance to Facilitate the Import of Vaccines.”

**Tonga presentation:**
https://tfadatabase.org/members/tonga/experience-sharing
G. STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), OCTOBER 2021

On November 3, the WBG participated in the STDF working group meeting, which brings together partners and donors to share experiences and take stock of the facility’s reach and results. The WBG team informed members of the trade facilitation projects and support to the implementation of e-Phyto. The group explored a number of synergies between the work of the STDF and WBG, particularly in Zambia, and will work together to deliver some initiatives, including analytical work.

Meeting notes:

H. PACIFIC REGIONAL TRADE FACILITATION WORKSHOP — SUVA, FIJI (VIRTUAL), NOVEMBER 2021

The WBG is working with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to develop a regional trade facilitation strategy. Stakeholders from member countries were invited to participate in a virtual workshop from November 10–12. The objective was to illustrate the regional strategy concept, discuss common challenges and possible regional implementation approaches. Representatives from CARICOM—a similar organization in the Caribbean—were invited to share experiences.

The key objective of the regional trade facilitation strategy is to reduce the time and cost to import and export by assisting Pacific Island countries to become aligned with the requirements of the WTO TFA. The multi-year plan will promote closer integration of the Pacific Islands community through harmonized approaches to simplifying and streamlining regulation and border processes and include related initiatives developed by PIFS for the region.

Opening ceremony:
https://fb.watch/9btiiNyTdG/

Opening remarks:

Keynote address:

I. LAUNCH: STDF GUIDE ON GOOD REGULATORY PRACTICES — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), NOVEMBER 2021

On November 21, the WBG was invited to participate in the launch of the STDF guide on good regulatory practices to improve SPS measures. The guide offers practical guidance to navigate and implement good regulatory practices when designing, developing, and reviewing SPS measures, such as internal coordination of regulation, international regulatory cooperation, stakeholder engagement, mechanisms to take stock of existing regulatory measures, forward-looking regulatory agendas, regulatory impact assessments, and monitoring and evaluation tools. It may also be used to support capacity development at the country level, including within technical assistance projects funded by the TFSP.

Guide:

Event recording:
https://worldtradeorganization.zoom.us/rec/play/o42nuvE9zxXDDhimjz90ndRmolqQNY9J7lnKdRY09ckYSRpvzwURj45Vt1RdvgYussqNDRrkv-x3.9PF462FSqFDN-BHd?startTime=1635942111000&_x_zm_rtaid=RaaU2vh5TeCvUGdLAJNGn.165901578989.03387576655d0337779957a835480c60&_x_zm_rhtaid=635
J. REVIEW OF TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT — SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), NOVEMBER 2021

On November 26, WTO Members completed the first-ever review of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, four years since the landmark deal entered into force in 2017. The review took stock of members’ progress in implementing the Agreement as well as the implementation challenges encountered by members.

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted members to intensify their experience sharing on the challenges faced by customs during 2020 and most of 2021. The experience-sharing sessions included the participation of the WBG as an “Annex D+ partner organization”. The WBG team presented on the trade facilitation response to the COVID-19 crisis, including the development and dissemination of guidance notes and experiences from client countries.

Event news:

Report and roadmap:
https://tfadatabase.org/four-year-review

K. CEFTA WEEK: 15 YEARS OF MAKING TRADE HAPPEN — SKOPJE, NORTH MACEDONIA, DECEMBER 2021

The Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) Week was held from December 13–16, under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Economy, North Macedonia. This year’s conference was themed “15 years making trade happen.” The annual event serves as an opportunity to take stock of results and achievements.

Being the first year of implementation of the Common Regional Market Action Plan, CEFTA focused its efforts on promoting the free movement of goods and services in the region. The event highlighted the important steps made towards bringing the region closer to the European Union Single Market. The WBG was invited participate in the event, which focused on three panel discussions: “Trade Facilitation through Recognition of Certificates and Procedures,” “Trade in Services and Licenses, Qualifications, Permits,” and “Intellectual Property Rights in Boosting Trade and Investment”. The discussions focused on recognition programs, which aim to integrate seven markets into one.

Event website:

Event recording:
https://worldtradeorganization.zoom.us/rec/play/AOYTmFCkjqljUdd3XxCe4sww6kmo-cieiftCMJzgCaxoC5yUH93sLVMantMlvwWeb_JFr5l3BGqR8j1d.WPeBLGt6e23gk?startTime=1638968352000&_x_zm_rtaid=RaaU2vh5TeCvUGdLAJNgNg.165901578989.03387576655d039779957a835480c60&_x_zm_rhtaid=635

L. STDF-WBG JOINT WEBINAR: FOOD SAFETY REFORM: LEARNING FROM THE BEST — VIRTUAL, DECEMBER 2021

During this joint-hosted webinar held on December 8, the WBG and the STDF highlighted the need for food safety reforms, emphasized the importance of learning from others, and examined what should be considered in seeking to replicate international experience. Views of national agencies and international organizations were shared on the importance of improving the role of the public and private sectors in the reform process.

M. REPORT LAUNCH: TRADE FACILITATION CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN TRADERS AND CUSTOMS BROKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES — MANILA, PHILIPPINES, JANUARY 2022

Building on the TFSP-supported Trade and Gender Study undertaken in the Pacific region, the WBG’s Trade Facilitation Program in Middle Income Countries (TFMICs) leveraged the study’s design and methodology to complete the Trade and Gender Study in the Philippines. The
A survey was launched on January 11. It aimed to identify the specific challenges that men and women face in cross-border trade (at the firm level) and determine where further reforms can be made. Over 2,000 traders and customs brokers were interviewed. This analysis along with those completed in the Pacific region can help governments and other development partners to better understand trade barriers and design policy that maximizes the benefits of trade for women, so that they can participate more fully in the economy.

Publication page:

N. UN/CEFACT 4TH TECHNICAL COOPERATION WORKSHOP FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS — SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), JANUARY 2022

From January 26–27, the WBG participated in the 4th Technical Cooperation Workshop for the Western Balkans on trade facilitation, Single Windows, and data sharing. The meeting was hosted by UN/CEFACT, in partnership with the WBG, the Customs Administration of North Macedonia, the European Commission, UNCTAD, CEFTA, and others. Over 80 participants from the customs sector and the business community participated in the event to discuss how digitization of trade is a top priority for the region’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Event page:
https://unece.org/info/Trade/events/364318

News article:

O. DHL GOTRADE SUMMIT 2022: PUSHING THE LIMITS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICY — GERMANY (VIRTUAL), JANUARY 2022

The WBG participated in DHL’s GoTrade Summit 2022 from January 27–28. Over 500 people from 40 countries participated in the two-day virtual event. The aim was to connect leading trade experts and trade policy makers to discuss how global trade supports creating sustainable and inclusive growth. Sessions focused on the growing relevant questions about the sustainability of global trade especially in emerging economies. The WBG team participated in a panel discussion on “Pushing the limits of international trade policy: How to gear up to the next level.”

Summary report:

P. GLOBAL FORUM FOR NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES — SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), FEBRUARY 2022

From February 1–4, the WBG participated in the UNCTAD global forum on National Trade Facilitation Committees, which brought together stakeholders to examine how measures to facilitate cross-border trade can contribute to strong and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The WBG team moderated a session on “The role of NTFCs in emerging issues: simplification of procedures, cross-border cooperation, and e-commerce”. The team also participated in a side event on regional integration in the Pacific region and how trade facilitation will play a key role in economic recovery efforts.
TRADE FACILITATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Event website:**

**Agenda:**

**Social media:**
https://twitter.com/UNCTAD/status/14895477276797721475?s=20&t=6wN_9Lgw1E9YWE4D6lH18w

**Video of the session:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlctM9IYQM4

**Side event on trade facilitation in the Pacific:**
https://www.facebook.com/events/3197836083785189/

**Q. REPORT LAUNCH: REPORT FOR THE FIRST-EVER REVIEW OF THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT — SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), FEBRUARY 2022**

In follow-up to the November 2021 review exercise, the WTO officially published its first-ever review report of the TFA on February 22. The review report showed that the agreement has helped support global supply chain resilience since it entered into force five years ago. In the WTO report, the work of the WBG (via TFSP) was highlighted for contributing to this important result.

**News article:**
https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news22_e/fac_22teb22_e.htm

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**R. REPORT LAUNCH: TRADE FACILITATION CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN TRADERS AND CUSTOMS BROKERS IN BRAZIL — SAO PAULO, BRAZIL, MARCH 2022**

Building on the TFSP-supported Trade and Gender Study undertaken in the Pacific region, the WBG’s Trade Facilitation Program in Middle Income Countries leveraged the study’s design and methodology to complete a Trade Facilitation and Gender Study in Brazil to identify the specific challenges that men and women face in cross-border trade (at the firm level). The report was launched with the government of Brazil on International Women’s Day on March 8. The study is the first of its kind for the country, provides a wealth of new data, and includes a summary of key findings, as well as recommendations on how to address the main obstacles identified. Over 1,500 traders and 300 customs brokers were interviewed.

**Publication:**

**CNN news article:**
On March 8, the WCO Network for Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs hosted a panel discussion on gender equality and inclusion in trade. The event was held to mark International Women’s Day and to officially launch the community of practice. The WBG participated in the discussion and highlighted findings from the WBG’s Trade Facilitation and Gender Surveys.

On March 9, the WTO launched a dedicated research database on trade and gender. The database compiles research studies on trade and gender issues. Data can be filtered by topics and regions. The database supports WTO Member’s efforts to consider their trade policies and agreements through a gender lens. Over 100 research papers are now housed on the database, including the WBG TFSP-funded Trade and Gender Studies.

The WBG held visioning workshops with the governments of Kosovo (March 28–29) and Montenegro (March 30–31) to build roadmaps for the implementation of National Single Windows in their respective countries. The Single Window will automate all import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements and enable traders to fulfil all trade procedures online. It is expected to significantly enhance the efficiency, speed, and transparency of trade-related procedures and documentation, thereby fostering the competitiveness of private sector firms. The Single Window initiative aligns with the vision of a common regional market across the Western Balkans.
On March 30, Kosovo Customs hosted a press conference to announce the results of the TRS carried out in 2021 with WBG support. The WBG presented the findings of the study that measured the time it took for goods to clear customs from the point of entry to the end of customs procedures for export and import. It was reported that Kosovo Customs has made significant improvements in the time it takes to clear goods. The first TRS was undertaken in 2016 with WBG support and provides a benchmark for the findings.

Watch the press conference live:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr449014TS4

News articles:
https://www.aa.com.tr/sq/balkani/dogana-e-kosov%C3%ABs-me-progres-n%C3%ABshkurtimin-e-koh%C3%ABs-s%C3%AB-hyrje-daljeve/2550155
and made recommendations for future reforms. Three specific areas were reviewed: trade information enquiry points; notifications of enhanced controls or inspections; and fees and charges related to cross-border trade. Stakeholder insights were canvassed from the government and the private sector. The report will provide the foundation for the NTFC’s next reform strategy.44

Y. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (VIRTUAL), MARCH & APRIL 2022

From April 4–5, WTO Members met under the Trade Facilitation Committee to present the status of ratification and the notification process. Presentations were also made from various Members on different thematic areas, including a dedicated session on transit issues of landlocked country members in line with the review’s recommendations.

TF Committee – April Meeting – News article: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news22_e/fac_05apr22_e.htm

TF Committee Meetings: https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/comm_tradfa_e.htm

Z. REPORT LAUNCH: TRADE FACILITATION AND GENDER DIMENSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA — JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, APRIL 2022

Building on the TFSP-supported Trade and Gender Study undertaken in the Pacific region, the WBG’s Trade Facilitation Program in Middle Income Countries leveraged the study’s design and methodology to complete a study on Trade Facilitation and Gender Dimensions in South Africa. The survey aimed to identify the specific challenges that men and women [at the firm level] face in cross-border trade and determine where further reforms can be made. Traders, customs brokers, and freight forwarders were interviewed. The report provides a wealth of new data on trade facilitation challenges in South Africa — including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic — as well as recommendations on how to address the main obstacles identified.


44 Support to Sri Lanka is currently funded by DFAT and leverages prior TFSP-supported diagnostics.
From May 3–6, the WBG was invited to participate in a webinar series hosted by the STDF. Four webinars were held and focused on:

- Climate change and animal health
- Climate change and plant health
- Climate change and food safety
- Climate change and SPS issues — looking ahead

The virtual sessions brought together representatives of STDF partners and stakeholders on the ground, to explore the challenges of climate change for food safety, animal and plant health, and identify opportunities to respond to emerging risks and facilitate safe trade.

**Event website:**

From January to May 2022, national consultations were held in 18 Pacific Island countries on the development of a Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy. The consultations were held in partnership with the WBG and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The aim was to discuss, review and validate the strategic goals and objectives to be included in the Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy.

**CC. STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2022**

On June 7–8, the WBG participated in the STDF working group meeting, which brings together partners and donors to share experiences and take stock of the facility’s reach and results. This was the first in-person meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic. The WBG team shared information on a joint STDF-WBG webinar held in December 2021, which focused on food safety reform and introduced a new WBG/IFC e-learning course to support and strengthen food safety systems in emerging markets. The WBG also updated the secretariat on the ongoing work with the IPPC on developing the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation tool.

**Meeting notes:**

From June 23–25, the WBG participated in the WCO Annual Meeting of Director Generals (DGs). The WBG team met with client country Customs DGs and representatives to advance dialogue and discuss opportunities for increasing project activities including investment lending and aligning project activities to upcoming development policy lending. Meetings were also held with WCO senior management to agree on next steps to advance the enhancements to the Time Release Study baseline tool being jointly developed by the WBG and the WCO.

**News article:**

On June 29, the government of Lesotho launched a National Single Window at an event in Maseru. The initiative is co-led by the Ministry of Trade and the Lesotho Revenue Authority and partly funded by the TFSP. The Lesotho National Single Window is an online portal for applications and issuance of cross-border permits, certificates, and licenses. This

**EE. LAUNCH OF THE LESOTHO NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW — MASERU, LESOTHO, JUNE 2022**

Dr. Thabiso Molapo, Minister of Trade and Industry at the launch of the Lesotho National Single Window
© World Bank Group
facility allows relevant stakeholders in trade and transport to lodge standardized information, mainly electronic with a single point to fulfil all import and export transit-related regulatory and transitional and logistical requirements.

**National Single Window:**
https://www.lnsw.gov.ls

**News article:**
http://www.gov.ls/trade-launches-lnsw/

**FF. TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT FIFTH ANNIVERSARY EVENT — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2022**

On June 29, WTO Members met to mark the five-year anniversary of the WTO’s Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) with a commemorative workshop to share experiences on impact. The TFSP participated in two sessions and presented on “Measuring the Impact of TFA Implementation Beyond Notifications” and “Challenges and Opportunities of TFA Implementation, Experience from the World Bank Group’s Trade Facilitation Support Program.”

**Event webpage:**
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/tafa_aniv22_e.htm

**News article:**
https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news22_e/fac_04jul22_e.htm

**WBG presentations:**
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/3_wiliam_gains.pdf

**Social media:**
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1541512047539720192
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1541814453309788160?s=20&t=xDC4uafiiTibLJemjMfSQ
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1541512047539720192?s=20&t=xDC4uafiiTibLJemjMfSQ

**GG. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2022**

On June 30, WTO Members met under the Trade Facilitation Committee. During the meeting, members reviewed a number of implementation and transparency notifications received since the last committee meeting in April 2022. In its regular update to the committee, the Secretariat indicated that at present, notifications submitted by WTO Members show that they have committed to implement 75.5 percent of TFA obligations. Among the developing members and LDC Members, the figure stands at 68 percent.

Presentations were made by member countries on different thematic areas, including the Kyrgyz Republic (TFSP-supported country) on “Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and Further Steps on Introduction of Electronic Document Processing in Foreign Trade”.

**TF Committee – June Meeting – News article:**
https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/fac_04jul22_e.htm
Communications is an important element of the Trade Facilitation Support Program mission and focuses on:

- Raising awareness of program activities, results, and effects
- Increasing the visibility of the program and donor partners
- Disseminating useful trade facilitation material to stakeholders

During the reporting period, the TFSP Secretariat continued to build a foundation for communications and to embed it within project activities. The communications plan for FY21-22 guides the program’s approach to strategic communications and is supplemented with guidance (including donor visibility requirements) for team members on how to incorporate communications into specific activities. The Secretariat stepped up communications support to specific projects in the reporting period and will continue this effort going forward to increase visibility of projects and ensure that the results reach target audiences.

The TFSP leveraged the following communications channels in FY21 (July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022):
I. Program Website

The TFSP website (www.worldbank.org/en/programs/trade-facilitation-support-program) is the main vehicle for program communication. It houses communication products, COVID-19 response-related resources, reform news, and blogs of interest to stakeholders and other users. The number of website visitors has continued to grow steadily since the launch of the website: from 1,500 page visitors at the end of FY17 to 14,224 on June 30, 2022.

II. Trade Post Blog

The WBG team has written a number of blog posts about the work and experiences of TFSP-funded activities. The posts have been published on the WBG Trade Post blog, a global platform to bring together observations from the field and reflections on research by the WBG’s experts on international trade, and IFC’s Impact Stories, which highlights how our work is making a difference in people’s lives. All blogs are cross-promoted on the TFSP website.

The following blog posts were developed during the reporting period (page views are from the date published up to June 30, 2022):

A. Public-private collaboration facilitates the import of vaccines in Tonga (data on page views not yet available—published in August 2022):


This blog highlighted Tonga’s focus on trade facilitation during the COVID-19 pandemic. It showcases how trade facilitation helped maintain trade flows during the pandemic and has been crucial in providing access to essential food and medical items, including vaccines for its citizens. The WBG supported a small multi-agency team established to lead the import of vaccines, comprised of government—Ministries of Trade, Customs, Health, Quarantine (Plant & Animal), Transport, and border organizations—port, airport, air cargo operators, customs brokers, freight forwarders.

This blog was promoted on social media:

https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1560054307856211968?s=20&t=gqGxie087of787I1p3f6og

https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1558332704114069504?s=20&t=gqGxie087of787I1p3f6og

https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1557790351406104577?s=20&t=gqGxie087of787I1p3f6og

https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1557517604191633987?s=20&t=gqGxie087of787I1p3f6og

B. New Clearance Procedures Save Time at North Macedonia Border (312 page views—published in June 2022):


This blog focused on WBG support to North Macedonia’s State Agriculture Inspectorate (SAI)—the country’s authority for phytosanitary measures—to tackle clearance issues for perishable goods at the border. The agency developed a more risk-based approach for the import of plants and plant products. The new and modernized process has led to smarter and more effective ways of working within SAI. Ultimately, it has resulted in faster, easier, and cheaper clearance procedures for traders.
This blog was promoted on social media:
https://twitter.com/IFC_ECA/status/15399131843666264320?s=20&t=VThzPT6As-nhDr-02981A
https://twitter.com/SvonFriedeburg/status/153989868645097717777?s=20&t=VThzPT6As-nhDr-02981A
https://www.facebook.com/1525081111500802/posts/pfbid02TCJNLE5BQHkg6iR4h6gkhjk19dmNYm-m44gi2FjAgijdZU3HwglYWq2Kz7fhP8R2k1hi/?d=n

C. Ten years old and growing strong—Happy Birthday to the Lao Trade Information Portal (124 page views, published in June 2022):

This blog focused on the Lao PDR Trade Portal — the first Trade Information Portal set up with support from the WBG ten years ago. The experience has helped shape the way the World Bank helps set up Trade Information Portals in other countries. The blog reflects on the process behind the Lao PDR portal and highlights the lessons learned when helping countries improve trade facilitation.

This blog was promoted on social media:
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/15461627378390548547?s=20&t=xDoC4uafiTibLFJemjMfISQ
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/15377368183423016967?s=20&t=NxZu6X68J078H05i4eZg
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/15397722841346375687?s=20&t=xDoC4uafiTibLFJemjMfISQ
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/15395491059529031687?s=20&t=xDoC4uafiTibLFJemjMfISQ


In Europe and Central Asia, the WBG has supported numerous TRS based on the World Customs Organization methodology. The blogs focused on how to implement such studies to further harmonize and streamline border control procedures in the region.
E. Helping women entrepreneurs break into global markets by overcoming challenges at the border (376 page views, published in May 2022):


This blog was part of a series related to the WBG surveys conducted to better understand the trade environment for women and identify opportunities to make it easier for women-led firms to trade. While trade can be an engine of growth that creates jobs, reduces poverty, and increases economic opportunity, traders often experience cumbersome and costly border processes and procedures that prevent them from growing their businesses. For women traders, evidence suggests the challenges are often bigger. This blog highlights some of these common challenges reported by over 6,500 traders and customs clearing agents surveyed across eight countries.

This blog was promoted on social media:
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/15350493602784215147?s=20&t=xDC4uafTibLjEmjMfsQ
https://twitter.com/WBG_Finance/status/1531123357420249088?s=20&t=xDC4uafTibLjEmjMfsQ

F. Keep on Truckin': How Trade Portals are Delivering for Africans (published on LinkedIn in October 2021, 42 engagements and 3 comments):

https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/keep-truckin-how-trade-portals-delivering-africans-william-gain/

This blog reflects on the recently launched Trade Information Portals in four countries in Africa—Somalia, Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zambia—and reflects on how they will facilitate trade and help the region bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This blog was promoted on social media:
https://twitter.com/IFCAfrica/status/1456559664552767488?s=20
https://twitter.com/IFCAfrica/status/1456197110215417856
6. Montenegro Cuts Import Clearance Time: 8 Hours to 30 Minutes (1,107 page views, published in July 2021):


This blog focused on the WBG support provided to the Montenegro Customs Administration to develop a streamlined and paperless clearance framework for traders that meet or exceed trade compliance standards. The new and simplified procedures for certified traders in Montenegro have reduced import clearance times and benefits those who need it most: traders. New standard operating procedures were developed, and the customs software system was upgraded to enable the clearance of goods 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This blog was promoted on social media:


The article was published in the local media in English and local languages:
https://makpress.mk/Home/PostDetails?PostId=411034
https://www.vecer.press/%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%B6%D0%B5-%D0%BC%D0%B0-%D0%BD/
III. Trade Publications

A Strategic Project to Facilitate Trade: New Ferry Between El Salvador and Costa Rica

The team supported the development and dissemination of a bilingual (Spanish/English) brochure on the new multi-modal cargo ferry transport service between Costa Rica and El Salvador. The ferry creates an alternative route to speed up imports and exports between the two countries. The brochure promotes the ferry service, which will eliminate overcrowding at the borders. The World Bank provided technical assistance to establish the regulatory, administrative, and procedural conditions to enable the operation of multi-modal transportation services between the port of La Unión in El Salvador and the port of Caldera in Costa Rica.

IV. Social Media

The program supports updates widely on the WBG social media platforms, including on Twitter (@WorldBank: 3.6M followers; @WBG_Finance: 9.5K followers; @WB_AsiaPacific: 106K followers; @IFCAfrica: 141.1K followers; @IFC_ECA: 3.5K followers) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/worldbank: 2.6M followers; World Pacific: 278K followers; IFC Africa: 62K followers; IFC Europe and Central Asia: 15K followers).

From time to time, the WBG senior leadership team co-promotes TFSP-supported initiatives (@Mari_Pangestu, 15.6K followers—Managing Director of Development Policy and Partnerships).

V. Brochure and Banners

The TFSP brochure (http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/11911561482785120/TFSP-Brochure-2019-web.pdf) and pop-up banners were created in previous reporting periods to increase the visibility of the program and donor support at key events. The brochures continue to be shared virtually at events, missions, and meetings and can also be downloaded from the TFSP website. Two program-wide banners are at the team’s disposal for use at key events.
VI. Factsheets

The factsheets developed in the previous reporting period provide a short summary of the program as well as an outline of its mandate, activities, and results. Regionally specific factsheets also have been created to provide more specific information about TFSP supported activities in the regions. In addition, thematic factsheets have been developed to promote certain project areas, such as our work in trade and gender and the TFA Tracking Tool. All have the logos of TFSP’s donors. In the reporting period, the factsheets were distributed to participants in virtual events and government clients.

VII. Presentations

Program-specific presentations have been developed for key events according to the specific thematic areas of focus. The aim is that the templates—with the latest program information and donor attribution—can be readily accessed by the program team and customized accordingly. This ensures that programs, activities, and key messages are communicated consistently, regardless of the location or event.

VIII. Media Engagement/Outreach

The program works in close consultation with the WBG global communications network to leverage greater coverage for TFSP activities. At the country level, this involves working closely with WBG communications coordinators on the ground who have an established network of local media contacts to reach target audiences in TFSP-supported countries. It may also involve working with the relevant authorities—customs, the NTFC, and others—in TFSP-supported countries to assist in media engagement.

Some recent examples published on the work TFSP directly supported or informed include Trade Information Portals in Pakistan and Somalia; the preparations and blueprint development for the National Single Window for trade in Kosovo and Montenegro; activities of the NTFCs in Zambia; Time Release Studies in Kosovo and Zambia; and the launch of the Single Window in Lesotho. Local media engagement at the country level is an effective way to engage the private sector through local press articles.

Here is a selection of other articles/media mentions throughout the reporting period:

August 26, 2021: Somalia Launches Trade Information Portal to Boost Cross-border Trade

August 26, 2021: Somalia launches cross-border trade portal
https://www.theeastfrican.co.ke/tea/business/somalia-launches-cross-border-trade-portal-3526010
https://africaarbitration.org/2021/08/30/somalia-launches-cross-border-trade-portal/

August 27, 2021: Somalia Traders to Benefit from New Trade Information Portal

September 2, 2021: Somalia Traders to Benefit from New Trade Information Portal
https://www.ftlsomalia.com/somalia-launches-portal-for-cross-border-trade/

September 17, 2021: Zambia in talks for trade corridors
http://www.times.co.zm/?p=111475
September 20, 2021: Somalia Launches Trade Portal to Boost Business
https://allafrica.com/stories/202109210126.html

December 17, 2021: CEFTA Week 2021 held in North Macedonia

January 24, 2022: Government to connect 74 departments with Pakistan Single Window

January 31, 2022: Western Balkans countries on the way towards accelerating digital channels of trade through Single Window and Data Sharing

February 7, 2022: Western Balkans countries on the way towards accelerating digital channels of trade through Single Window and Data Sharing

March 3, 2022: 87% dos comerciantes não participam de discussões sobre importação e exportação [87% of traders do not participate in import and export discussions]

March 26, 2022: Pakistan Single Window ready to launch trade info portal by March end

March 30, 2022: Kosovo Customs marks improvement in the time it takes to clear goods

Kosovo exports increased by 45 percent in the first two months of this year

Customs Marks Improvements in the Time it Takes to Clear Goods Through Customs

Customs Marks Improvements in the Time It Takes to Clear Goods Through Customs

Kosovo Customs is making strides toward reducing entry-exit times
https://www.aa.com.tr/sq/ballkani/dogana-e-kosov%C3%ABs-me-progres-n%C3%ABshkurtimin-e-koh%C3%ABs-s%C3%AB-hyrje-daljeve/2550155

April 1, 2022: A two-day workshop on visioning the national one-stop shop system was held in Serbia
https://www.gov.me/clanak/odrzana-dvodnevna-radionica-vizioniranja-nacionalnog-jednosalterskog-sistema

April 5, 2022: Liberia: US$40M Ready to Support SMEs
https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-us40m-ready-support-smes

April 5, 2022: Liberia, World Bank Sign $40m loan
https://thenewdawnliberia.com/liberia-world-bank-sign-us40m-loan/

July 5, 2022: Project to ease cross-border trade in Lesotho
https://www.africa-press.net/lesotho/all-news/project-to-ease-cross-border-trade

Lesotho National Single Window to reduce border cross trading
https://www.thereporter.co.ls/2022/07/05/lnsw-to-reduce-border-cross-trading/

46 The Lesotho NSW was launched in this reporting period.
IX. Communication Campaigns

In some cases, deeper communications support is required to ensure that the technical assistance provided and results supported by TFSP are disseminated locally and made known to the end beneficiaries (that is, the private sector) so that they can take advantage of reformed processes. This effort involves working with the relevant local authorities (such as the customs administration and the NTFC) to structure their communication around the reforms through dissemination plans and targeted media engagement.

For example, in the Pacific, the TFSP is working with the PIFS Secretariat to raise awareness of the progress related to the development of a Regional Trade Facilitation Strategy.

TFSP helped to drive awareness of the launch of the National Single Windows launched in Lesotho.

In North Macedonia, TFSP supported the development of a publicity campaign to support new risk management measures that were implemented by the phytosanitary agency.

The WBG supported the launch of Trade Information Portals in Pakistan and Somalia, which were informed by TFSP’s experience on TIPs

Communications support is currently planned for future studies that leverage the TFSP-developed study methodology, including for Tajikistan (to be completed in the next report period through another funding source).

X. Multimedia Products

The program has produced a number of videos, which are showcased on the TFSP website and hosted on the
WBG YouTube channel. During this reporting period, the program has embarked on some new and innovative approaches to reach audiences.

**New**

**Animation: Single Windows—A Trade Facilitation Tool**

The automation and digitization of border procedures has become increasingly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is an increased focus and demand from clients for digitization initiatives, like the Single Window. In order to manage client expectations and provide optimal technical assistance, there is a need to “educate” TFSP clients (governments, customs administrations, border agencies, NTFCs, etc.) about how to prepare for digitization initiatives and to better understand the requirements. The team is working to develop a short **animation** to introduce TFSP client countries to the benefits of digitization and the steps required for the implementation of a Single Window. Examples of good practice from client countries will also be highlighted. The animation does not intend to be too technical and academic in nature but provides a “lighter touch” in layperson’s terms. The animation will be finalized and disseminated in the next reporting period.

**Trade Tips Podcast**

The TFSP-supported team is working to launch a **podcast** series. Each podcast will be short (maximum 10 minutes each), focus on a specific theme, and have an operational “how to” on the specific subject matter. The podcast format will feature voices from the field (i.e., clients) and WBG experts. The aim is to help clients (non-economists) understand concepts related to trade reforms. Clients will have the opportunity to listen “on-the-go” at a time/platform that is convenient to them. The initiative will be piloted with six episodes, which will launch during the next reporting period.

**Ongoing**

In previous reporting periods, the TFSP produced two 360° virtual reality films aimed at transporting stakeholders to client countries to witness the effect of the program’s projects. The videos continue to be shared widely and watched (views are from the date published up to June 30, 2022):

- **Trading across borders in Guatemala and Honduras:**


Both videos were among the top 40 videos with the most views on the WBG YouTube channel, which has hundreds of videos (if not more). The videos are also showcased on partner websites, including the WTO TFAF.

The team continued to share the short **video** that was produced during the last reporting period, which enabled our experts to virtually connect with clients and share best practice on managing risk and facilitating trade during COVID-19 (680 views):


The team continued to share a short **animation** about the Pacific trade and gender surveys, which produced during the last reporting period (866 views):

Annex D
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW
All amounts are in USD thousands and as of end June 2022.

**CASH RECEIPTS**

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<td>581</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>4,942</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>3,563</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>3,217</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>2,539</td>
<td>1,335</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9,237</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US*</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>3,283</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total by year:</strong></td>
<td>2,771</td>
<td>7,569</td>
<td>7,614</td>
<td>5,567</td>
<td>10,028</td>
<td>8,640</td>
<td>4,689</td>
<td>6,662</td>
<td>7,530</td>
<td>61,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative:</strong></td>
<td>10,320</td>
<td>17,934</td>
<td>23,501</td>
<td>33,529</td>
<td>42,170</td>
<td>46,859</td>
<td>53,521</td>
<td>61,051</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* US values reflect cash receipts after a 5% administrative fee is deducted. For all other donor receipts, the values include the 5% administrative fee.

**OUTSTANDING DONOR PAYMENTS**

(in USD thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US*</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CASH RECEIPTS AS PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL DONOR COMMITMENTS**

(in USD thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total receipts and outstanding commitments</th>
<th>Percentage receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61,284</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OUTSTANDING DONOR PAYMENTS**

(in USD thousands)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>$</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>US*</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CASH RECEIPTS AS PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL DONOR COMMITMENTS**

(in USD thousands)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61,284</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## DISBURSEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
<th>FY19</th>
<th>FY20</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>2,191</td>
<td>5,307</td>
<td>7,467</td>
<td>6,867</td>
<td>7,367</td>
<td>6,237</td>
<td>4,358</td>
<td>4,211</td>
<td>44,229</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>2,415</td>
<td>7,722</td>
<td>15,189</td>
<td>22,056</td>
<td>29,423</td>
<td>35,660</td>
<td>40,018</td>
<td>44,229</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## DISBURSEMENTS RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
<th>FY19</th>
<th>FY20</th>
<th>FY21</th>
<th>FY22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including commitments</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>