



ANNUAL REPORT

Trade Facilitation Support Program
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
CEFTA	Central European Trade Agreement
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
FY	Fiscal Year
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, United Kingdom
IDA	International Development Association
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ITC	International Trade Center
LDC	Least Developed Country
NTFC	National Trade Facilitation Committee
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
TFSP	Trade Facilitation Support Program
TRS	Time Release Study
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBG	World Bank Group
WCO	World Customs Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTO TFA	World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement

Executive Summary

This report presents the highlights and progress of the Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) in the period from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, in accordance with the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) of the World Bank Group (WBG).

THE PROGRAM

The TFSP was launched in June 2014 and provides support for countries seeking assistance in aligning their trade practices with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). Focused on supporting the full and effective implementation of the WTO TFA and related trade facilitation reforms, the TFSP is designed to provide practical and demand-driven assistance.

The TFSP helps client countries identify existing constraints and bottlenecks to cross-border trade; design and plan for the implementation of reforms; and increase the predictability, transparency, and harmonization of systems and procedures in line with international standards covering import, export, and transit activities.

Recognizing the important roles of both the public and private sectors in trade facilitation, the WBG implements the TFSP by drawing on the unique expertise of both the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

The TFSP comprises two main components:

(A) Provision of technical assistance in developing countries where the WBG helps reform trade facilitation laws, procedures, processes, systems, and consultative mechanisms within the context of the provisions of the WTO TFA.

(B) Facilitation of knowledge sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and the measurement of progress and results.

PARTNERS

The TFSP is financed by nine development partners: the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia (DFAT), Global Affairs Canada, the European Union, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs of Switzerland (SECO), the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID, UK aid), and the United States Agency for International Development (US-AID).

The TFSP works closely with global and regional partners in delivering joint initiatives and activities to ensure a coordinated rollout of technical assistance. Examples include partnerships with the WTO, the International Trade Center (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and many others.

PORTFOLIO

In response to formal requests for technical assistance in aligning trade practices to the TFA, the TFSP team has conducted over 50 TFA gap assessment missions since program inception. The objectives of TFA gap assessment missions are to assess the alignment of the country's processes and rules with the WTO TFA, identify gaps, and evaluate whether further technical assistance is warranted.

Since inception, the TFSP has provided TFA implementation support to 45 countries, up from 37 countries in the last report. With the WTO TFA's entry into force on February 22, 2017, demand for



TFSP support continues to be high. Within the program's portfolio, 58 percent are International Development Association countries, and 16 percent are countries on the WBG's FY18 list of fragile situations.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Through the development of the TFA Tracking Tool and restructuring of its program-level results framework, the TFSP is now able to better demonstrate and monitor progress toward meeting its objective of helping countries improve alignment with the WTO TFA. Measurement takes a whole of government approach and covers (i) legal/policy, (ii) implementation, and (iii) operational dimensions.

The team is in the process of updating the baseline data collection through the application of the Tracking Tool. At the end of the reporting period, updates from 12 client countries were added to the portal, and preliminary results indicate that TFSP funded activities have helped improve client countries' alignment with the WTO TFA. Improvements were recorded along all three dimensions and the overall alignment score has risen from 39 percent to 46 percent (section 1.4 has further details).

The overall TFA alignment score has risen from 39 percent to 46 percent.

PROGRAM FINANCES

TFSP donor commitments continue to be very strong. Two new funding partners joined the program in the reporting period, the Netherlands and Sweden. Australia, Switzerland, and the United States also increased their TFSP contributions.

At the end of the reporting period, US\$34.5 million had been received in financial contributions, which equals 75 percent of overall donor commitments. Cumulative disbursements and commitments were at 73 percent at the close of FY18. The disbursement only rate has increased substantively over the past few years, from 43 percent in FY16 to 64 percent in FY18.

TFSP activities are expected to catalyze between US\$500 million and \$700 million in bi-lateral donor partner contributions and WBG lending instruments. Leverage 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 (for instance in Albania, Malawi, Sierra Leone, and the western Balkans). Current donor partner bilateral financial support that is crucial for countries in implementing trade facilitation reforms include UK aid in Ethiopia, DFAT in Sri Lanka, and USAID in Zambia.

LOOKING FORWARD

In FY19, the TFSP will continue to implement ongoing activities and respond to emerging requests for support from new countries. Discussions on possible TFSP support in FY19 are under way with Belarus, Belize, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, Lebanon, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Tanzania, Uganda, and Uzbekistan. Within the area of knowledge management and learning, the TFSP team will focus on regional flagship events, launch of the Tracking Tool portal (section 1.4), and rollout of the trade and gender survey (box 1.6).



[Redacted]

1 Program Highlights

The Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) focuses on helping developing countries reform trade facilitation laws, procedures, processes, and systems to align with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). The program helps countries design practical reform strategies, including the development of detailed reform sequencing plans that match with country priorities, available resources, and local implementation capacities. The TFSP focuses on rapid-response interventions that will create and sustain the momentum necessary for reform. See **box 1.1** for simplified selection criteria to receive TFSP support.

Since inception, the TFSP has provided TFA implementation support to 45 countries, up from 37 countries in the last report with eight new countries added to the portfolio (Georgia, Kazakhstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mongolia, Panama, Samoa, St. Lucia, and Vanuatu).¹ The share of International Development Association (IDA) countries remains high at 58 percent of the portfolio and the share of countries with fragile situations was at 16 percent at the end of the reporting period.² Sub-Saharan African countries make up the biggest share of the TFSP portfolio (27 percent). **Figures 1.1** and **1.2** provide details of the portfolio.

TFSP support is divided into two main components: **(A)** technical assistance and **(B)** knowledge management and learning activities. Program highlights for FY18 are summarized for these two areas in the next sections.

BOX 1.1

Selection for the Trade Facilitation Support Program

To receive support, countries are expected to have demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing trade facilitation reforms in the areas covered by the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement. The TFSP prioritizes assistance to countries with limited access to other donor support. Requests for technical assistance can be made directly to the TFSP or through the World Bank Group offices and donor partners.

1.1 Technical Assistance

The TFSP has provided technical assistance to 45 countries since the program's inception (see **box 1.2**). Generally, technical assistance activities under the TFSP progress along the following building blocks:

- **Validate self-assessments of TFA alignment in client countries:** Support countries in updating the TFA self-assessment and in undertaking an in-country field validation.
- **Identify category commitments:** Support countries in finalizing category A, B, and C commitments.

¹ The FY17 report reviewed 36 active countries, excluding Botswana from the count due to inactivity in FY17. This FY18 report includes both active and inactive countries to demonstrate cumulative support since inception of the TFSP.

² As per the World Bank's Harmonized List of Fragile Situations FY18, these are Burundi, Kosovo, Liberia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Togo.



FIGURE 1.1
Map of 45 Countries where the Trade Facilitation Support Program has Provided or is Providing Multiyear Implementation Assistance

Note: The countries are Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, FYR Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Zambia.

- 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 will be identified to implement the reforms.

Annex A provides a summary of all TFSP-supported activities by country and following is a summary of key areas of TFSP engagement and examples of country-level outcomes. **Figure 1.3** provides an overview of TFSP support by TFA measure.

- Three countries (Bolivia, Malawi, and Papua New Guinea) were supported in **ratifying the TFA in the reporting period**. The TFSP team also supported 15 countries in **notifying the WTO of their category B and C timelines** (Albania, Bangladesh, Eswatini, Fiji, Jamaica, Lesotho, Madagascar, Moldova, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sierra Leona, Sri Lanka, Togo, and Vanuatu).

BOX 1.2

Technical Assistance

Trade Facilitation Support Program technical assistance can include help with:

- Scheduling commitments and implementation timelines;
- Revising and validating self-assessments and identifying reform gaps;
- Supporting and strengthening National Trade Facilitation Committees;
- Revising or drafting trade laws and implementing regulations to ensure alignment with the Trade Facilitation Agreement;
- Simplifying, streamlining, and harmonizing trade procedures and documents to reduce time and cost to trade;

- Improving transparency and accountability measures related to trade practices;
- Fostering partnerships between the public and private sectors to catalyze trade;
- Facilitating reforms;
- Integrating risk-based management systems and other contemporary border management approaches into border inspections and clearance processes;
- Revising interagency coordination and design of institutional capacity building plans;
- Implementing policies and practices and supporting regional solutions to facilitate the recognition of agreed upon standards for goods crossing borders; and
- Designing and implementing automated systems and innovative technologies to facilitate trade.

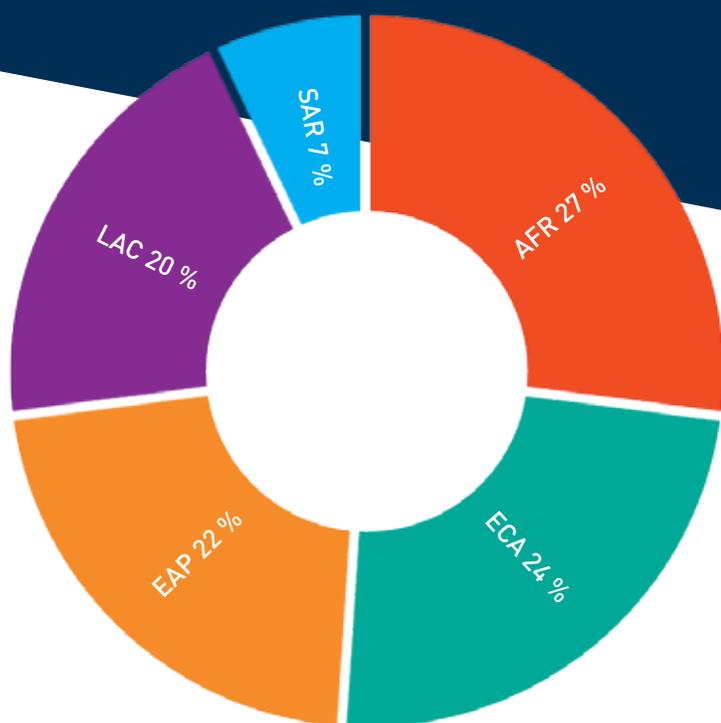
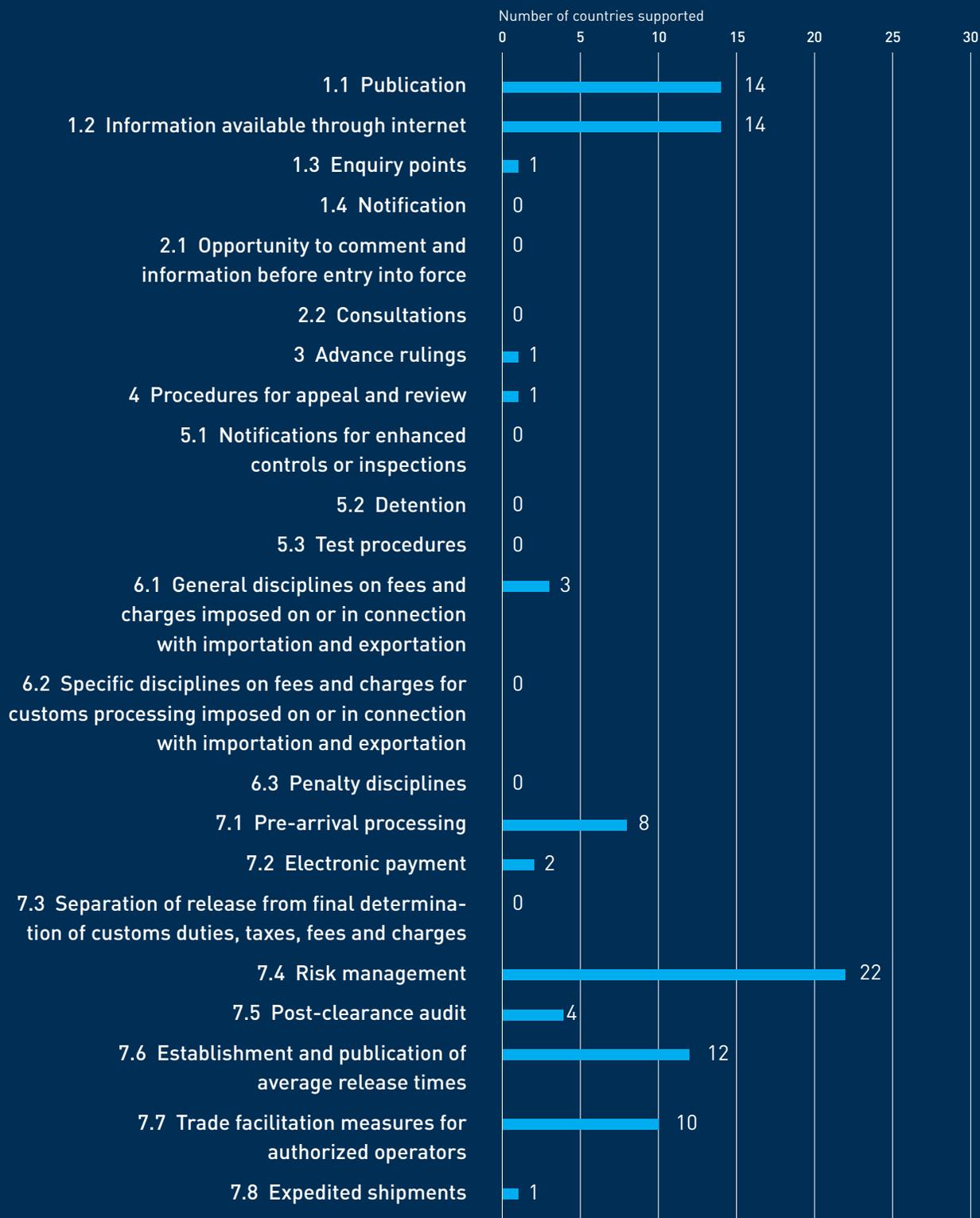
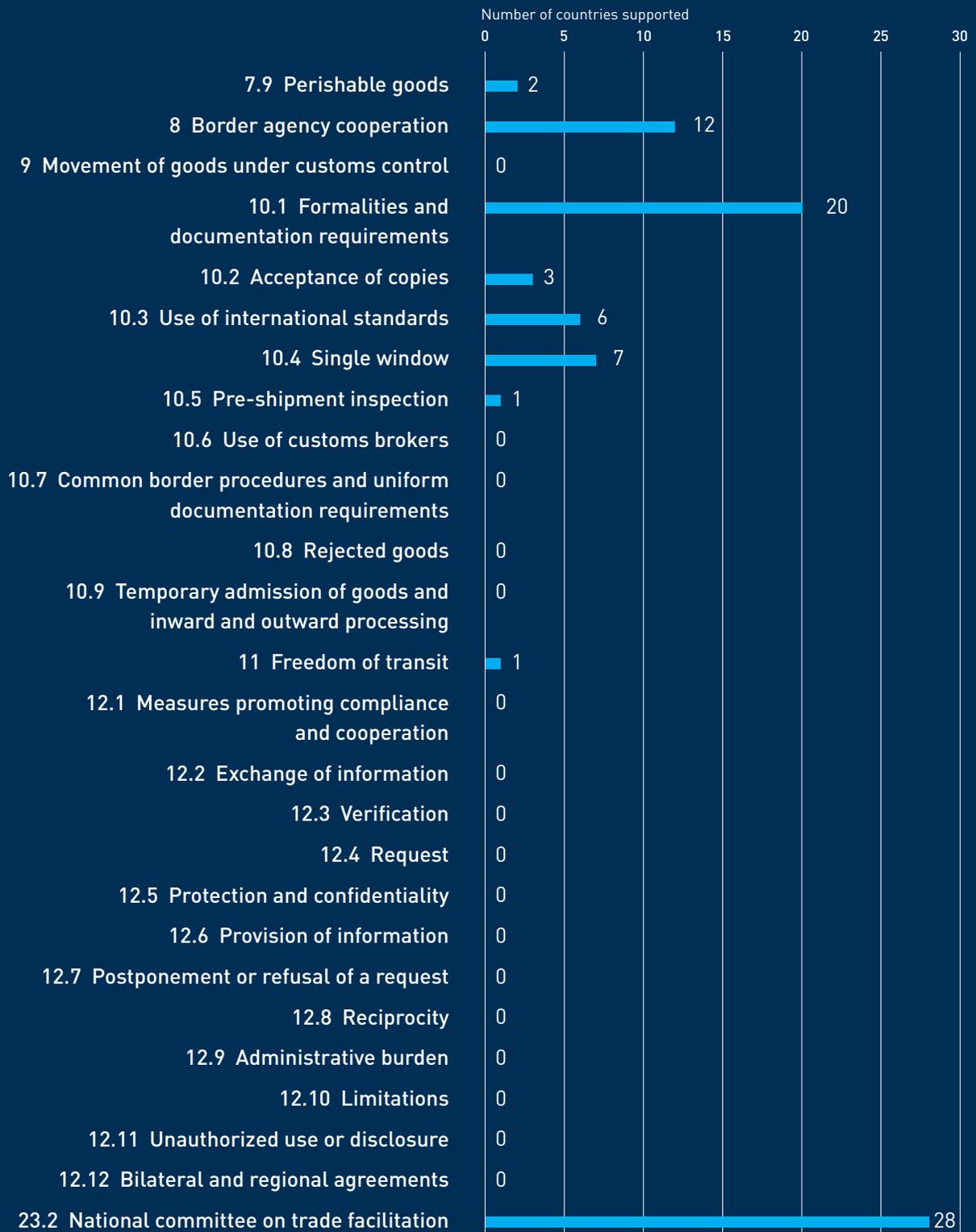


FIGURE 1.2
Regional Breakdown of the Active Trade Facilitation Support Program Portfolio

- Africa (AFR) 27 %
- Europe and Central Asia (ECA) 24 %
- East Asia Pacific (EAP) 22 %
- Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) 20 %
- South Asia (SAR) 7 %

FIGURE 1.3
TFSP Support by TFA Measure





■ Since inception of the TFSP, 28 countries have received support in the establishment and/or operations of their respective **National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC)** (Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Eswatini, Fiji, 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, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Zambia). NTFCs are important platforms for institutional coordination and consultation with stakeholders through broad and active participation from both private and public sector representatives. They enable planning and ultimately foster coordinated implementation of successful trade facilitation reforms.

■ **Trade Information Portals** are electronic portals that make all cross-border trade information, such as regulatory information, easily available. The TFSP has facilitated the establishment and design, or assisted in implementation of six portals (Bangladesh, Botswana, Cambodia, Lesotho, Malawi, and Vietnam).³

■ **Time Release Studies (TRS)** are a unique tool for measuring the performance of Customs and other border agencies related to trade facilitation at the border. The TFSP has assisted in completing or initiating TRSs in 10 countries (Bangladesh, Eswatini, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam). See **box 1.3**.

³ Support for Togo's trade information portal is continued through a WB project and is therefore no longer counted under the TFSP.

BOX 1.3

Going Beyond the Traditional Time Release Study

Gaining insight into the time it takes for goods to pass through a border and the time to undertake other regulatory requirements to either import or export is an important element in identifying key bottlenecks and areas for trade facilitation and modernization. The World Customs Organization Time Release Study (WCO TRS) is an approach to measure the time taken for goods to complete all the processes associated with clearance and release at the border for export and import as well as for goods in transit.

The WCO TRS, however, does not measure the regulatory processes that are undertaken away from the border. Businesses that import and export must meet a number of regulatory requirements before bringing the goods to the border, as well as at the border. These include obtaining the necessary certificates, licenses, and permits and meeting customs requirements to import and export. These processes take time, thus imposing a time cost on businesses.

To reflect these additional aspects, the TFSP developed a Time Release Study Plus (TRS plus) approach that looks at both clearance and release processes as well as the regulatory processes "away from the border." TRS plus was piloted in Eswatini and Lesotho in the reporting period. The TRS plus methodology will be shared with the WCO with the aim of collaborating on deploying this enhanced methodology in upcoming projects.

“The National Single Window will facilitate the import and export of trade in Sri Lanka. It is a single point for the submission of trade documents for the trade community and will reduce trading costs and increase transparency.”

Mangala Samaraweera,
Minister of Finance, Sri Lanka

■ The application of **risk management** is a critical element that underpins all modern cross-border administrations. In FY17 and FY18 alone, red channel physical inspections of imported cargo were reduced from 35 percent to 29.6 percent in Ethiopia. In São Tomé and Príncipe, risk-based inspections were activated in ASYCUDA World, resulting in a reduction of physical inspections from 99 percent to 45 percent of goods at the border. The TFSP is working to enhance risk management practices in 22 countries (Albania, Bangladesh, Burundi, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Jamaica, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Montenegro, Nepal, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, and Zambia) (box 1.4).

“Together with the World Bank Group team we implemented a more disciplined and structured approach to managing risk.”

Vladan Jokovic, Director General,
Customs Administration, Montenegro

BOX 1.4

Supporting Ethiopia in Reducing Export and Import Time to Gain Cost Savings for Traders

In Ethiopia, the TFSP supported work on reducing physical inspections of imports, as well as on revising and drafting new legislation in the areas of trade, increasing automation, and streamlining procedures. Through these efforts, a one-stop-shop was set up for customs clearance in industrial parks. Physical inspections of imported cargo have reduced from 35.0 percent just two years ago to 29.6 percent in June 2018, and the rollout of an electronic certificate of origin has eliminated the need to physically interact with Customs for approval because registered exporters are now able to obtain a certificate instantly from their own offices. 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. This result has yielded a total of US\$28.7 million in private sector savings.

“We now only have to go to a single customs post and carry out a single procedure to trade across the border in Guatemala and Honduras. This means less time and costs, which leads to more business opportunities with our clients and an increase in trade.”

Arturo García Castro, General Manager,
Grupo BIMBO Centroamérica

■ **Private sector engagement increased through the national single window (NSW) visioning workshops.** The NSWs enable traders to submit documentation, data, or both that are required for importation, exportation, or transit of goods to the participating authorities or agencies through a single entry point. The NSW visioning workshop concept was developed to facilitate informed decision making on the NSW, and on the critical issues for establishment of an NSW (box 1.5).

■ Seven countries have also received support in **preparation for implementation of single windows** (Eswatini, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sri Lanka, and Zambia).

■ **Improvements in regional cooperation can reduce time to trade significantly.** Central America’s Customs Union initiative reached a landmark milestone in the reporting period, when the time for traders to cross the border between Guatemala and Honduras was cut from 10 hours to 15 minutes as a result of the introduction of FYDUCA (box 1.6).

BOX 1.5 **National Single Window** **Visioning Workshops**

For the successful establishment of a national single window (NSW) that is fit for purpose and that supports the government’s vision, the WBG developed NSW Visioning Workshops to facilitate informed decision making on critical issues including the governance models, legal and regulatory framework, functional, operational & financing models and strategies, technical scope, and capacity building needs. At the core of the workshops are consultations with the various government agencies involved in the development and operation of the NSW and with the private sector representatives (traders). NSW Visioning Workshops have been undertaken in the Pacific, the Caribbean, and in several Asian countries.

BOX 1.6 **Customs Union between Guatemala** **and Honduras**

In 2015, the government of Guatemala, the government of Honduras, and the Secretariat of Economic Integration in Central America launched a Customs Union initiative. The two countries integrated their trade procedures and introduced “FYDUCA,” a single online instrument to eliminate duplicate customs procedures and paperwork at the border through use of a FYDUCA QR code that, when goods are scanned, will quickly certify whether an importer has paid the value added tax. FYDUCA cut the time for traders to cross the border between Guatemala and Honduras from 10 hours to 15 minutes.



Market woman, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Credit: World Bank Group

BOX 1.7

Addressing Gender Inequality in Trade

Gender equality is central to the WBG's goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner. No society can develop inclusively and sustainably without ensuring that the distribution of opportunities and resources to and the economic contributions made by males and females are equal.

Over the past three decades, research has shown that the expansion of international trade is essential for poverty reduction and provides opportunities particularly for women working in export-oriented sectors.

Trade openness, however, can affect men and women differently depending on the sector, price fluctuations, specific tariff rates, and income tax changes. Significant data gaps still exist on the exact nature of barriers women face in undertaking cross-border trade and on the gendered effect of improved customs and border procedures. Filling these gaps is essential to optimize the design and implementation of effective policy reforms and program interventions that maximize the gains from trade for all.

The TFSP has initiated work to help fill some of the knowledge gaps through the collection of data in face-to-face surveys. The work will be piloted in nine countries in East Asia and the Pacific, and the team initiated a competitive bid to identify a firm suited for this work in the reporting period.

1.2 Knowledge Management and Learning

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

Participation in events, workshops, and conferences that focus on trade facilitation and peer-to-peer learning is key for TFSP visibility and for the team to stay engaged at the forefront of the TFA agenda. **Annex B** has a list of select events that the TFSP organized or presented at during the reporting period. Two TFSP flagship events initially planned for FY18 were moved to FY19 given availability of key speakers and participants.

The team commenced an open competitive procurement process to identify a firm to assist with a comprehensive analysis of the specific constraints that women face in cross-border trade. The analysis is expected to determine the exact nature of the barriers that women face in complying with import and export procedures, starting with nine countries in East Asia and the Pacific (**box 1.7**).

Use of the TFA Tracking Tool and the development of a web portal to present country scores progressed in the reporting period. The tool 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 tracks progress in a results-based manner. The tool will also enable the TFSP to better monitor progress toward meeting its objective of helping countries improve alignment with the TFA. The web portal will be launched for client countries early in the next reporting period.

The TFSP team developed an enhanced time release study approach in the reporting period. The Time Release Study Plus (TRS plus) approach looks at both clearance and release processes, as well as the regulatory processes “away from the border.” TRS plus was developed and piloted in Eswatini and Lesotho in the reporting period. See **box 1.3** for details.

Finally, the TFSP team started exploring the possibility of using new technologies to convey the conditions and environment in which the TFSP projects operate, possibly through the development of a virtual reality film from one or more TFSP countries.

1.3 Working in Partnerships

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

■ World Trade Organization (WTO): Partnership on multiple fronts, including annex D, knowledge management activities, and an advance course for NTFC chairs in multiple regions.⁴

⁴ **Annex D:** Modalities for Negotiations on Trade Facilitation.

■ 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 host of the first international forum for NTFCs in Geneva.

■ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): Participation in TFA workshops in Tajikistan and Ukraine.

■ Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC), UNCTAD, and the World Customs Organization (WCO): Joint missions to Bangladesh, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Tajikistan.

■ United States Agency for International Development (USAID): Joint TFA assessments in Bangladesh, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia and participation in TFA workshops in Central America. Upcoming joint activities in Ghana and Zambia.

■ TradeMark East Africa: Burundi assessment.

■ Enhanced Integrated Framework: Partnership with the European Commission in Cabo Verde, Myanmar, and Vanuatu.

■ International Air Transport Association: Partnership in Central America for air cargo, expedited shipments.

■ World Customs Organization (WCO): Joint activities in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, and in the western Balkans.

■ International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC): Initiation of joint e-phyto pilot implementation, joint TFA missions, exchange of knowledge, and joint sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) diagnostic work.



1.4 Progress in Improving WTO TFA Alignment

With the development of the TFA Tracking Tool, TFSP is better positioned to demonstrate and monitor progress toward meeting its objective of helping countries improve alignment with the WTO TFA.

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; and
- 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 measurements take a whole of government approach, 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: **(1)** Customs; **(2)** Plant Protection and Quarantine; **(3)** the Bureau of Standards; and **(4)** the agency responsible for health.

By the end of the reporting period, baselines of 24 countries in the TFSP portfolio had been validated, and more are in the process of being validated. The measurements behind these baseline scores were undertaken between 2015-2017. Twelve TFSP supported countries updated their baseline scores in the reporting period, demonstrating an improvement in their overall alignment with the WTO TFA from 39 percent alignment in the baseline scores to 46 percent in the FY18 update.⁵ (See **figures 1.4-1.6** for further details.)

⁵ The percentage improvement is calculated based on 12 countries and may change up or down subject to additional countries being included in future calculations. The 12 countries included in the end FY18 calculations are Costa Rica, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Samoa, Sao & Tome & Principe, Sri Lanka, and Vanuatu.

FIGURE 1.4
Changes in TFA Alignment Scores

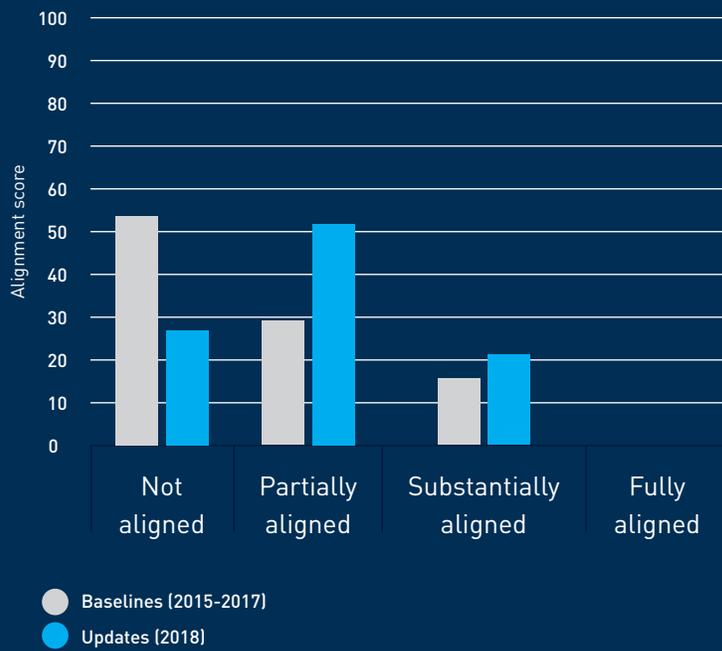
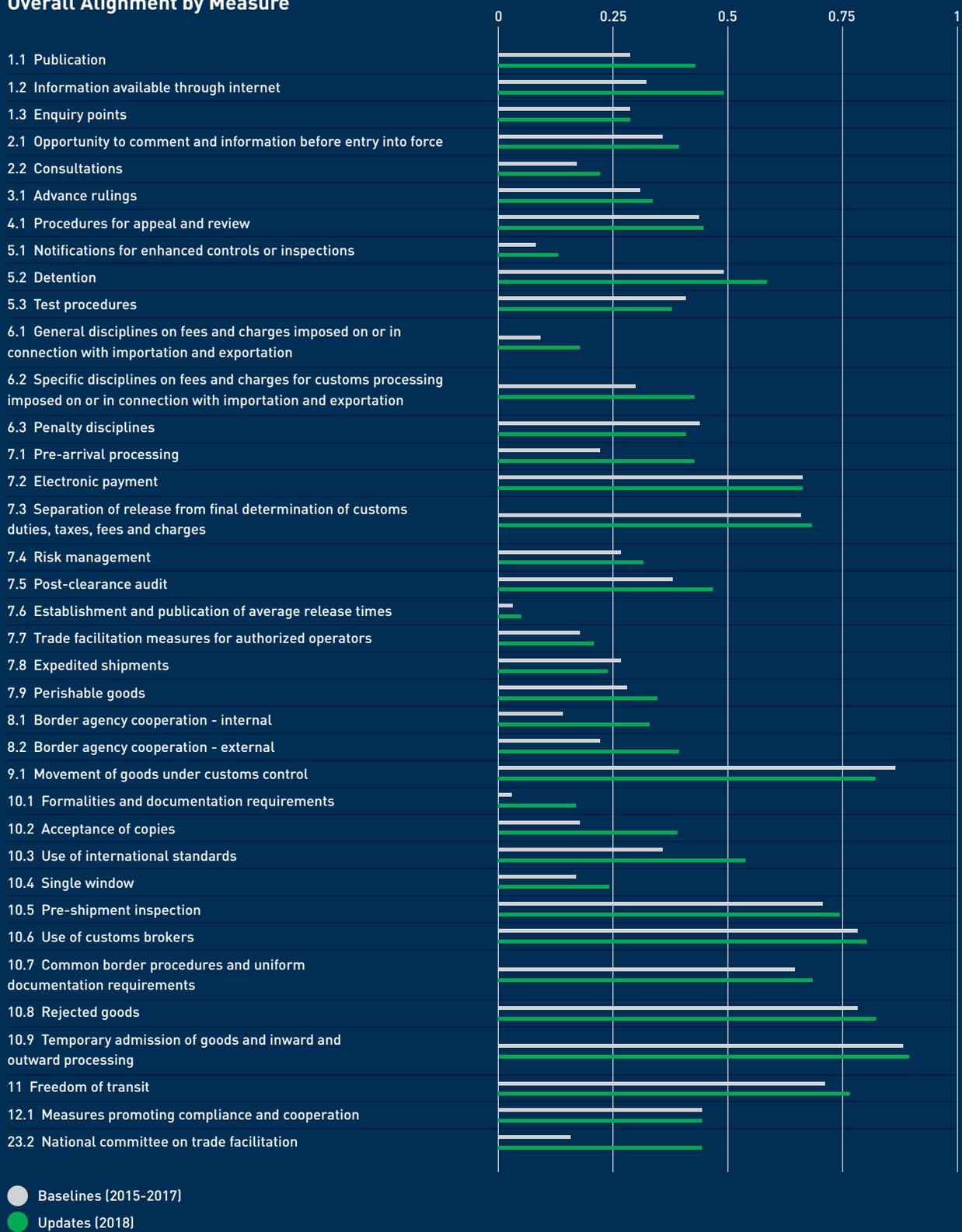


FIGURE 1.5
Changes in Overall Dimension Score



FIGURE 1.6
Overall Alignment by Measure





Ghana
Credit:
Periklis Saragiotis

2 Program Management and Financial Overview

2.1 Program Administration

The administration of the 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. Likewise, the TFSP core team consists of global experts on trade and public and private sector development from both institutions. The core team is supported by WBG staff and consultants in the field worldwide.

2.2 Donor Engagement

There were two TFSP Consultative Committee meetings in the reporting period. One meeting took place in November 2017 in connection with the Development Partners Forum in Washington, D.C., and another meeting took place in June 2018 and was hosted by DFID in London. The semiannual consultations provide development partners with updates on the progress of the program and with the opportunity to discuss the strategic directions of the TFSP. Many of the primary TFSP donor contacts remained in close communication with the TFSP throughout the reporting period between those meetings.

2.3 Communications and Outreach

In the reporting period, the TFSP revised its communications strategy to ensure more strategic outreach across the program, increase visibility, and disseminate useful trade facilitation material to development partners, clients, and other stakeholders. Donors to the TFSP are always recognized in publications and media engagement through mention and/or use of their logos. Examples of communication products produced in the reporting period are included in **Annex C**.

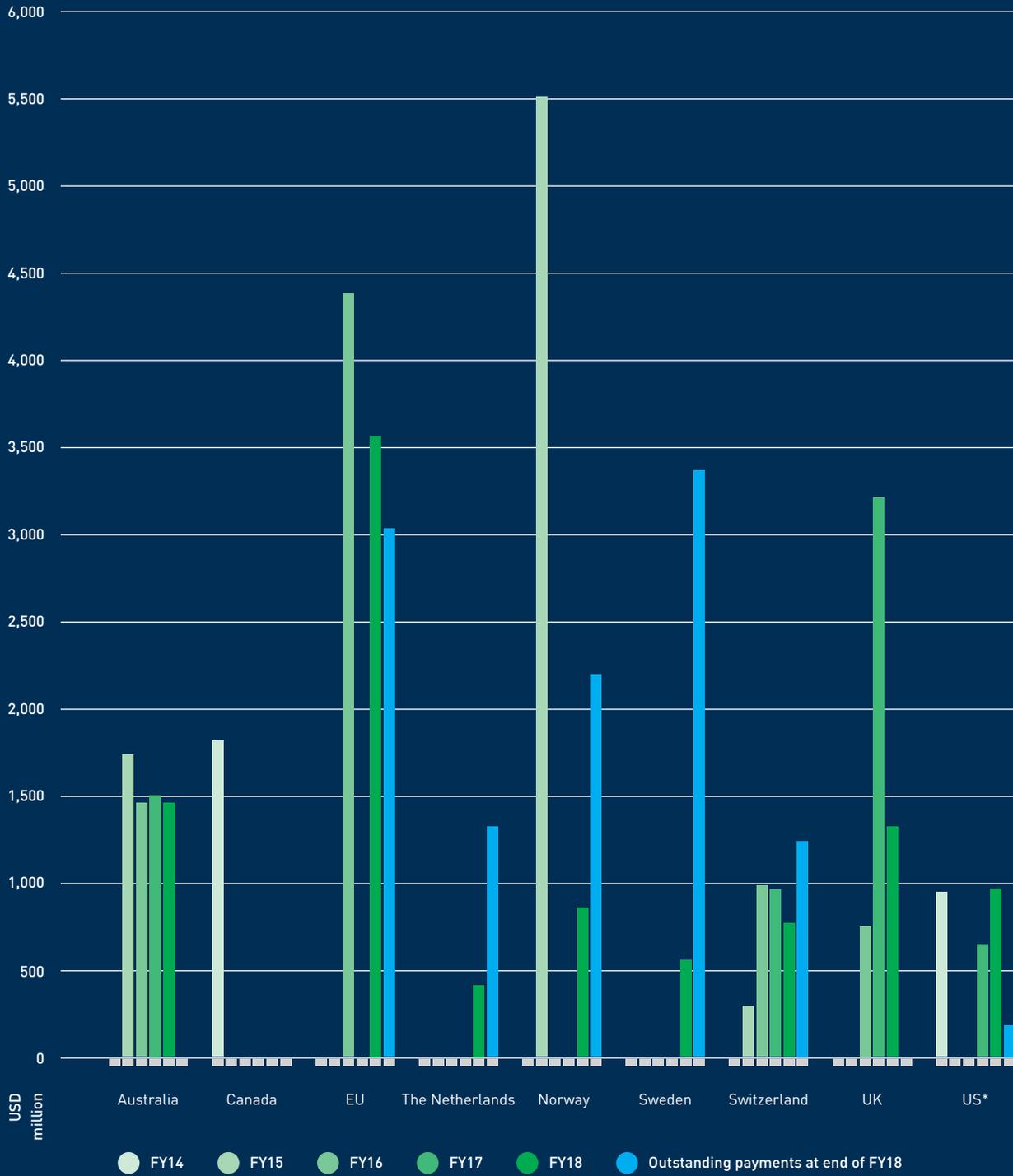
The TFSP website is the main vehicle for program communication and houses communications products, reform news, and blogs of interest to stakeholders and other users. During the reporting period, more than 2,500 users visited the website, a significant increase from 1,500 in the last reporting period. **Annex C** provides details on select communications efforts made in the reporting period.

2.4 Financial Overview

At the end of the reporting period, US\$34.5 million had been received from TFSP development partners since the program's launch. This is 75 percent of overall partner commitments and is in alignment with the agreed transfer schedules per individual administrative agreements.

Two new donors joined the TFSP in the reporting period; the Netherlands and Sweden. Australia, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States replenished their contribution to the TFSP. **Figure 2.1** shows receipts and outstanding payments by donor.

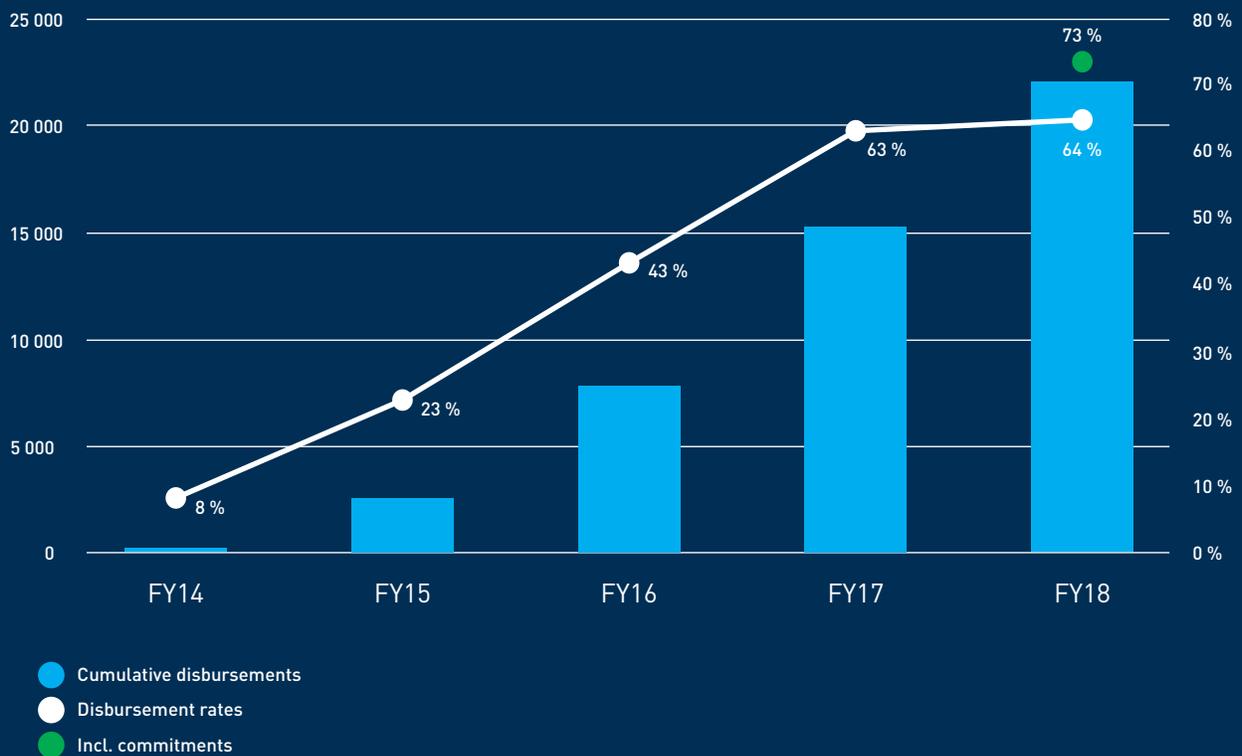
FIGURE 2.1
Receipts and Outstanding Payments (US\$)*



* Includes \$0.95 million to core TFSP and \$1.615 million to Zambia.

The program disbursement rate continued at a similar level as in the previous reporting period —from 63 percent in FY17 to 64 percent in FY18 (figure 2.2). Cumulative disbursements since program inception plus activity commitments at the end of FY18 remained at 73 percent of cash receipts (annex D has further financial details).

FIGURE 2.2
Cumulative Disbursements (US\$)





Customs, Corinto Border, Guatemala/Honduras
Credit: World Bank Group

3 Lessons Learned and Looking Forward

3.1 Lessons learned

The TFSP continues to learn lessons in relation to the design and execution of its activities. While some of the challenges are unique for each country, others are common across most countries. Below are some of the key lessons learned and challenges to implementation that the TFSP experiences most often across projects and countries:

■ **Commitment is needed at all levels.** Higher-level political commitment to the trade reform agenda is essential to success, but commitment at all levels, including by different government agencies and private sector entities, is required for achieving results.

■ **Capacity building is vital.** Building client capacity to enhance overall understanding of trade reforms and to ensure that benefits of interventions are maximized is critical, but capacity building is often also required to ensure client buy-in and cooperation in delivering the projects.

■ **Implementation capacity varies across border agencies.** Customs agencies often have higher implementation capacity than other agencies. Developing capacity across all border agencies is essential to ensure both buy-in across stakeholder groups and sustainability.

■ **Bringing stakeholders together spurs reforms.** Meetings among 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.

■ **Sequencing of reforms is critical.** A good mechanism for obtaining buy-in and consensus on reform implementation priorities is the creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the participation of the private sector. Early setup of an NTFC also supports the efficient use of resources because it improves coordination among participants and reduces the risk of duplicating funds.

■ **Coordination of activities between key border agencies involved in trade facilitation is essential.** Creation of NTFCs is critical to provide leadership across government entities and to provide a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effect of TFA reforms.

■ **Each NTFC Secretariat requires a legal framework.** Having a legal framework that defines the secretariat's functions is key in ensuring the NTFC can deliver its mandate effectively. A formal bill describing the role and powers of the secretariat will also provide the secretariat with legal authority to deliver its functions.

■ **Codify interagency cooperation.** From a legal standpoint, 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.

■ **Ensure that a base level of automation is available.** 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 TFA assistance to be more effective.

■ **Support should be synchronized.** There is a need to ensure that technical assistance is carried out simultaneously with capacity building and training, particularly in the case of border agencies other than Customs in lower-income countries.

■ **Monitor and measure progress over time.** It is important to show results and improved alignment with the TFA over time. Current tools for monitoring and measuring progress need to be strengthened, modified, and improved in many countries.

3.2 Looking forward

As demand for TFSP support continues to grow, assistance to International Development Association (IDA)-eligible, low-income, and fragile and conflict-affected countries will be prioritized. Additionally, middle-income countries that act as gateways to least developed countries (LDC) or whose performance significantly affects the performance of regional LDCs will be considered for support.

To date, the TFSP has concentrated on the following priority areas:

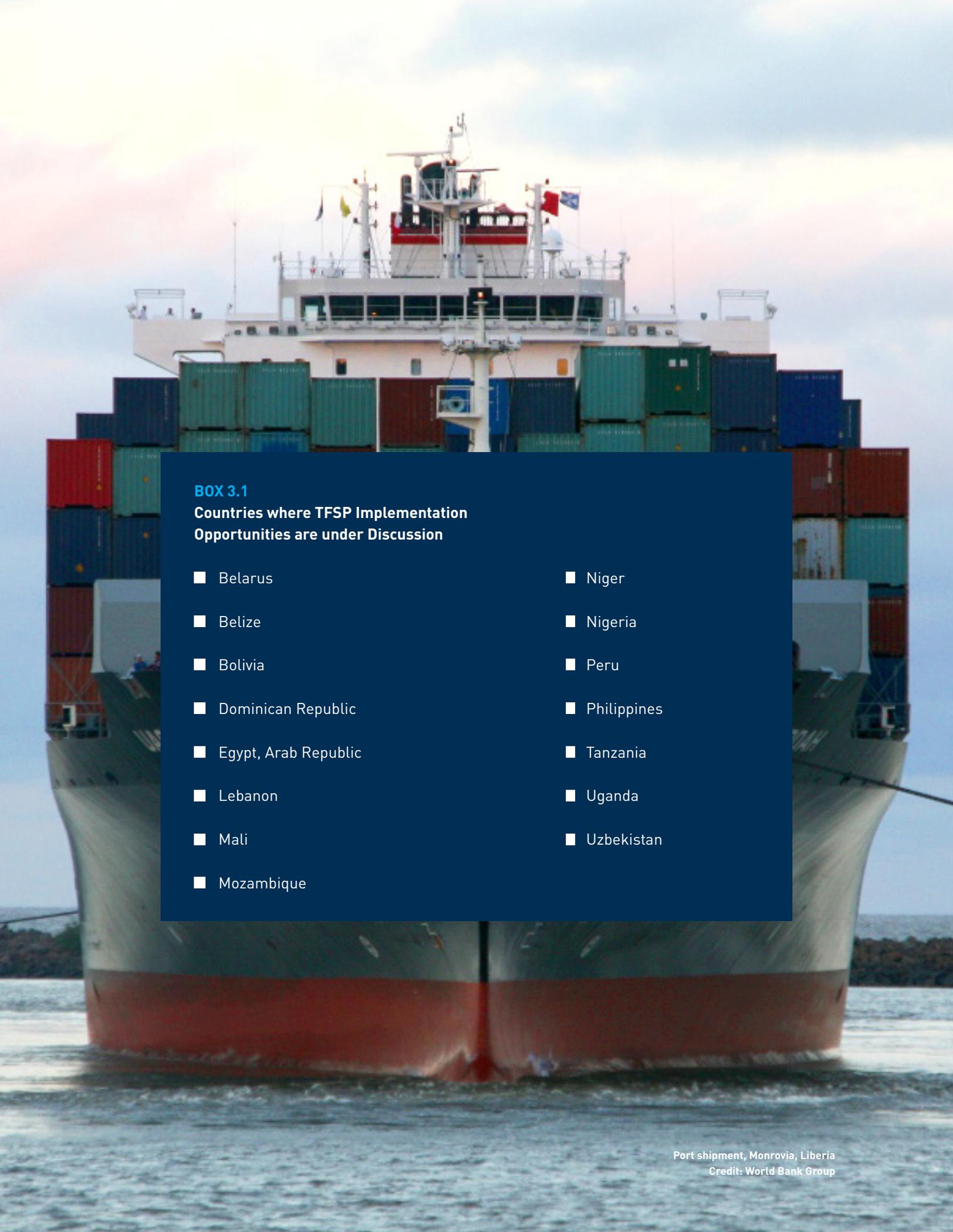
- National Trade Facilitation Committees
- Legal gap analysis and review
- Customs measures, including advance rulings, risk management, and post-clearance audit
- Time release studies
- Support to border management agencies other than Customs
- Trade information portals
- Preparation for electronic trade single windows
- Knowledge sharing

Going forward, the TFSP will continue to focus on these areas. Additionally, given that the TFSP has matured since its inception, greater emphasis on deepening support and establishing longer-term interventions will be explored.

The TFSP team will continue to support countries where implementation has begun. Additionally, discussions on possible new TFSP support in FY18 are under way for a number of countries (see **box 3.1**).

In the area of knowledge management, the TFSP will focus on a few key deliverables:

- A gender assessment will explore the specific constraints to cross-border trade that women are facing. The TFSP team will undertake a comprehensive analysis to determine the exact nature of barriers faced by women in complying with import-export procedures. The rollout of the survey will be piloted in East Asia and the Pacific (see **box 1.7**).
- The TFSP will launch the TFSP Tracking Tool portal to clients. Further baseline and updated validations will also be essential to continue demonstrating the progress of TFSP interventions toward improving alignment with the WTO TFA.
- Two regional conferences on collaboration and coordination will be implemented with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility and other international partners in the next reporting period. The first will take place in Cape Town in November, and the second will take place in the CARICOM region in early 2019. These two regional conferences were postponed in FY18 due to conflicting schedules.
- The TFSP team is in the early stages of planning a joint side event with WTO during the Aid for Trade Review in July 2019.



BOX 3.1

Countries where TFSP Implementation Opportunities are under Discussion

- Belarus
- Belize
- Bolivia
- Dominican Republic
- Egypt, Arab Republic
- Lebanon
- Mali
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Peru
- Philippines
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Uzbekistan



Border post in Malawi
Credit: World Bank Group

Annex A **Summary of Country-Specific and Regional Activities**

The Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) has provided support to 45 countries in aligning trade practices with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA) in countries across Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and South Asia. The following are summaries of activities by region.

AFRICA

Botswana (inactive in FY18)

TFSP support to Botswana

TFSP helped Botswana launch the Trade Information Portal (TIP) in March 2016 (<https://www.botswanatradeportal.org.bw>). The TIP provides access to all relevant information from 16 agencies involved in the trade supply chain. The portal is hosted by the Botswana Investment Trade Center on behalf of all the Government agencies involved in the import-export process. Through the portal, traders can get information about all the regulatory requirements needed to carry out trade transactions. The portal also contains soft, downloadable copies of all the necessary documentation that the trader will need.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1** Publication
- 1.2** Information Available through Internet

Burundi

TFSP support to Burundi

TFSP activities in Burundi have been hampered by economic volatility and limited capacity of government counterparts to undertake reform activities. In light of the ongoing political crisis, the WBG has decided to restructure its technical assistance engagement with the government. The restructuring is currently under way and TFSP

activities should resume upon completion of the WBG review and reengagement.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

7.5 Post-clearance Audit

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators (with the World Customs Organization, WCO)

FY18 update on key activities

■ Given the unstable and fragile environment in Burundi, only one activity was carried out in the reporting period under the TFSP. In September 2017, the team delivered a workshop on intelligence collection and data analysis with staff from the Burundi Revenue Authority (OBR). The main objective of the training was to improve the customs intelligence function within the OBR. The program trained 18 participants.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP is working on a risk management and authorized operator agenda with the WCO.

Eswatini

TFSP support to Eswatini

The TFSP is supporting government efforts to enhance its trade performance through an improved alignment of Eswatini's trade facilitation systems and processes with the WTO TFA. The TFSP focuses its support on the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) as well as the establishment or revival of three main committees related to trade facilitation—namely, the sanitary and phytosanitary, technical barriers to trade, and the non-tariff barriers committees. Eswatini has also requested assistance with the implementation of its Trade Information Portal. In an effort to better coordinate border management, the TFSP mapped the business processes of all cross-border trade regulatory agencies, and developed a roadmap for a trade single window. A time release study (TRS) was conducted to identify challenges and opportunities for reform at the following border posts: Ngwenya, Matsapha Inland Container Terminal, Lomahasha, and Lavumisa. The findings of the TRS will inform the government and the WBG of technical assistance needs going forward.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

8 Coordinated Border Management

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

10.3 Use of International Standards

10.4 Single Window

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ Upon request of the Commissioner General of the Eswatini Revenue Authority (SRA), on behalf of the NTFC, the project team developed a roadmap for the electronic trade single window.

■ The team also supported Eswatini border and cross-border trade regulatory agencies in the design of new simplified business processes for cross-border trade permits and certificates. The development of the detailed functional specifications for the electronic trade single window is currently under way.

■ A TRS was conducted in February 2018 to measure the actual performance of border agencies as they directly relate to trade facilitation at the border. In addition, the TRS methodology was extended to measure regulatory agencies with responsibility for cross-border trade permits and certificates (“TRS plus”). The TRS also contains specific recommendations on process changes to enhance the performance of agencies.

■ Other ongoing areas of support in Eswatini include support in creating a National Trade Facilitation Committee and, specifically, support for the secretariat of the committee, and advisory support on the trade portal. The Eswatini Cabinet recently approved the trade portal concept and planning is under way to initiate this activity.

■ In support of the electronic trade single window, the team is supporting the development of a draft consolidated list of prohibited and restricted goods. This list brings together all the commodities that are subject to regulatory control (that is, either prohibited or subject to a permit, a certificate, or both) and is linked to the internationally standardized system for the classification of goods (WCO Harmonized System Convention).

■ Finally, a review of the risk management strategy and system for Customs at the SRA was initiated and work has been started with relevant regulatory and border agencies to develop risk rules that will go in the ASYCUDA World selectivity control module under consideration.

Ethiopia

TFSP support to Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, TFSP activities are implemented alongside the Ethiopia Investment Climate Program, which aims to streamline and simplify high-priority regulations, processes, and practices that are burdensome for trade. The broader program also addresses investment climate issues that are preventing investments and productivity growth. The trade component of this program aims to decrease the time to export and import by addressing legal and regulatory constraints, introducing risk management, process simplification, and increased transparency of trade processes.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ A new customs data management system was rolled out in pilot mode in the Kaliti Customs branch in October 2017, and by end of June 2018 it became operational in most of the country's Customs branches. The system has replaced ASYCUDA++ and enables a more user-friendly interface and providing advanced features.

■ During FY18, the TFSP continued to work on improving the regulatory framework for trade. For example, Regulation on Industrial Parks no. 417/2017 introduced one-stop customs service in industrial parks and simplified several other areas for manufacturers to boost exports.

■ In January 2018, electronic Certificates of Origin were enabled. This development allows exporters to countries that use the generalized system of preferences (GSP) to prepare certificates of origin electronically in the exporters' premises and thus eliminate the need for physical interaction with Customs to verify this document. Within just three months of the system roll-out, 221 exporters had signed up to take advantage of the system. Currently, 16 percent of Ethiopian exports are to countries that use the GSP system, and as the number of users continue to grow, the system will have the potential to affect a significant amount of Ethiopian exports.

- A new railway connecting the busiest route from the seaport of Djibouti to Addis Ababa started operation in November 2017. The TFSP supported the preparation of the new railway transit procedure that is crucial to enabling the launch of railway operations. Some 95 percent of shipments are shipped via the seaport in Djibouti, and transit time by truck is time consuming, taking about three or four days. The new railway enables users to travel the same distance within 10 to 12 hours. Between January and May 2018, 5,465 import containers were carried by the new railway.

- Three workshops were held to raise awareness and improve understanding of the newly drafted directives, implementation of the Customs Proclamation, and other ongoing trade facilitation reforms. Of the 80 participants, 15 were female.

- The proportion of cargo inspected in the red channel was further reduced from 35.0 percent in June 2017 to 29.6 percent in June 2018.

- The work partly supported by the TFSP is estimated to yield US\$28.8 million in private sector savings. Import time was reduced by six days and export by five days.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP complements the Ethiopia Trade Logistics Advisory Project (through the International Finance Corporation, IFC), for which total bilateral financing (with UK aid) is around US\$2 million, with a World Bank trade logistics investment loan financing of US\$150 million.

Lesotho

**TFSP support
to Lesotho**

The TFSP is supporting Lesotho in revising legislation (customs and electronic legislation that will be affected by the creation of the single window) and developing legislation (electronic single window legislation), in enhancing the implementation of ASYCUDA World and of the Trade Information Portal, setting up a National Trade Facilitation Committee, and improving coordinated border management.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
- 10.4 Single Window
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

- The project team developed a vision and roadmap, as well as other supporting documents, for the creation of the electronic trade single window. This resulted in a decision by the Lesotho Coordinating Committee on Trade, chaired by the Minister of Trade and Industry to move forward on the single window.
- The team also supported Lesotho border and cross-border trade regulatory agencies (12 agencies that manage 30 types of permits and certificates) in efforts to design new simplified business processes for cross-border trade permits and certificates. This design phase was followed by the development of detailed functional specifications for the electronic trade single window.
- The project team developed a legal framework concept paper for the single window that will inform the preparation of a Lesotho single window draft law.
- The project supported consultations with stakeholders on the draft 2018 Customs Bill. The consultations will enable the finalization of the bill and its submission to the cabinet and Parliament for approval.
- Following a review of the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) customs processing system, the TFSP helped the Lesotho Revenue Authority develop technical terms of reference for the upgrade of the system and the development of a disaster recovery system and site.
- A time release study (TRS) was conducted in February 2018, to measure the performance of border agencies as they relate to trade facilitation at the border. In addition, the TRS methodology was extended to measure the actual performance of regulatory agencies responsible for cross-border trade permits and certificates (“TRS plus”). The TRS also contains specific recommendations on process changes to enhance the performance of agencies.
- Another area of support in Lesotho included assistance in creating a National Trade Facilitation Committee, which was formally launched in September 2017.
- On coordinated border management, and in support of the electronic trade single window, the team aided in the development of a draft consolidated list of prohibited and restricted goods. This list brings together all the commodities that are subject to regulatory control (that is, either prohibited or subject to a permit or certificate) and is linked to the internationally standardized system for the

classification of goods. Training was also provided to relevant agencies on the international nomenclature system for the classification of goods to enhance the implementation of risk management for border clearance.

■ During this reporting period, the team also provided advisory support and recommendations to the government of Lesotho on enhancing its trade portal (<https://www.lesothotradeportal.org.ls/>), and this resulted in a formal request by the government to upgrade the portal.

Liberia

TFSP support to Liberia

The TFSP supported the initial stages of single window preparation by helping stakeholders develop a shared national single window vision, a risk management program, process simplification, and pre-shipment inspection transition, to supplement a World Bank project that contributed to more transparent and predictable international trade in Liberia for the private sector. These improvements were achieved with efforts to simplify customs processes, including by **(A)** reducing the level of physical inspections of consignments of import declarations at the Freeport of Monrovia from 81 percent in 2013 to 57 percent in June 2016, **(B)** reducing the list of products that need an import permit from 32 to only 17 categories of products, **(C)** training to prepare for the transition to the WTO valuation system from the pre-shipment inspection system, **(D)** enhancing procedures through automation of the e-manifest and other documents needed for trade, and **(E)** reducing the cost to trade by US\$1.263 million through the elimination of the import/export permit fees.

The TFSP provided guidance and assistance to the various technical authorities in Liberia to meet international trade standards and to provide or obtain information they can use to further facilitate international trade for the private sector. Meeting these standards has helped Liberia improve rules related to customs valuation, risk management, automation of customs procedures, and access to information for the private sector. All this has enhanced the quality and effectiveness of the international trade process enough that Liberia became a member of the World Trade Organization in July 2016.

The TFSP will continue to support Liberia through a joint Liberia-Sierra Leone TFSP project expected to be launched early in the next reporting period.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

- An analysis and report on import procedures and associated costs was delivered in the reporting period. The objective of this study is to map out the various common costs and time associated with the import processes and to explain how they influence the final price of consumer goods sold at retail outlets. The report will be presented to the private sector early in the next reporting period with an opportunity for private stakeholders to provide comments and suggestions.
- The team developed a proposal on the structure of the Trade Facilitation Strategy, which is under consideration by the government.
- The team also advised the government on the creation of the National Committee on Trade Facilitation, and the decision to move forward on the committee's creation passed in January 2018.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP's FY18 activities in Liberia were complementary to a project funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to assist in improving the business environment in the country.

Madagascar

TFSP support to Madagascar

The TFSP's work is a component of a larger investment climate project in Madagascar and is intended to focus primarily on the creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) and on the review of fees and charges. However, following a recent validation of gaps assessment, additional support to the government is on hold while the government seeks cabinet approval for the validated action plan.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation and Penalties
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ In the reporting period, the TFSP delivered a workshop to discuss the findings and recommendations of the report for Madagascar's implementation of the WTO TFA, to finalize Madagascar's B and C categorization regarding TFA articles, and to hire a consultant to support the NTFC secretary.

■ Following the TFA workshop, the WBG received a detailed action plan from the permanent secretary summarizing the necessary assistance that is being considered.

Malawi

TFSP support to Malawi

The TFSP is supporting Malawi in improving its cross-border environment and aligning the country's facilitation systems and procedures with the WTO TFA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

8 Border Agency Cooperation

10.4 Single Window

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ A validation report was submitted to the government, and the report informed the review and adjustment of the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan.

■ It was agreed that the project team will support the government to develop a comprehensive legal framework to implement the TFA. Instead of only adjusting existing legislation, the government has decided on an "omnibus" legal framework that will give effect to key provisions of the TFA, including coordinated border management and the electronic trade single window.

■ Upon request of the Malawi Revenue Authority, the project team reviewed the implementation of the customs processing system and provided a set of recommendations. This included a proposal for a pilot project to connect one of the border agencies, the Malawi Bureau of Standards, with the customs processing system.

■ Assistance is also ongoing under the TFSP to provide advisory support on the design of one-stop border posts at three locations and to develop the strategic and operational framework to implement the

cabinet's decision to reduce the number of border agencies from 13 to 5.

■ The TFSP has also supported the NTFC with revisions and updates to the trade facilitation implementation plan.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP is complementing a larger World Bank trade and transport facilitation program in Malawi that initially focuses on stakeholder consultations, quality assurance, and coordination related to the one-stop border post infrastructure and building of a National Single Window.

São Tomé and Príncipe

**TFSP support to
São Tomé and Príncipe**

The TFSP is complementing a larger IFC advisory project to remove obstacles in sustainable tourism, and to develop and facilitate trade internally and overseas. In the areas of trade, the project seeks to support interagency risk management and to consolidate multiple border inspections, as well as to implement a phased single window for trade approach. The TFSP supports TFA implementation, including adopting risk management procedures, creating a National Trade Facilitation Committee jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and automating technical control agency systems in ASYCUDA World. TFSP support will likely be phased out in the next reporting period because the IFC project is closing.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ A rapid assessment of market opportunities to export high-value products (namely, cocoa, coffee, tropical flowers, and medicinal plants) was undertaken together with a detailed analysis of the requirements and costs to export these goods.

■ A draft set of procedures for transit and clearance at the island of Príncipe was developed; these procedures were accepted by the government and implemented in May 2018.

Sierra Leone

TFSP support to Sierra Leone

The TFSP team has undertaken a WTO TFA gap assessment jointly with the WCO and UNCTAD, delivered a validation report, and supported the government in creating terms of reference and an action plan for a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing

7.9 Perishable Goods

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ A final version of the Customs Code was drafted and sent to the House of Representatives for adoption.

■ The team advised the government on the creation of the NTFC (the decision on its creation was passed in late 2017).

■ The team also advised the NTFC and helped draft the Trade Facilitation Strategy.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

Based on the TFA gap assessment, the WCO is funding technical assistance in risk management and general staff development for Customs.

Togo

TFSP support to Togo

The TFSP has supported two main initiatives: (i) the trade information portal that the government of Togo wants to pursue and (ii) efforts to further advance the capacity and effectiveness of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The team continued to provide support to the government of Togo in strengthening the governance of the NTFC, including succession planning for its leadership necessitated by the retirement of the chairman during this reporting period. It was critical that the NTFC could continue to operate effectively using its workplan to avoid delays due to changes in representation.

■ Through the support of the TFSP, the NTFC submitted its categorization of the TFA articles to the WTO during this period, indicating that 43 percent of the articles are Category A, 33 percent are Category B, and 24 percent are Category C. Proposals for the assistance required were also developed.

■ Development of a framework that comprises an estimated budget, information technology requirements, and content needs for a Trade Information Portal was accomplished in FY18 in consultation with key stakeholders that included the Ministry of Trade, the single window for trade (SEGUCE), the Customs administration, and the Port of Lome promotion association.

■ Due to contract arrangements between the government and the current single window operator, and given the complexity that contractual relationship poses to development of either an add-on information portal or a separate stand-alone site, it was determined that the trade community of Togo would be better served at this point with a focus on the current donor assistance programs, including a WBG lending project to improve the customs, logistical, and trucking areas. Thus, the TFSP activities will be paused awaiting results from those activities.

Zambia

TFSP support to Zambia

The 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 selected measures of the WTO TFA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

1.3 Enquiry Points

7.2 Electronic Payment

7.4 Risk Management

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP facilitated a study tour to Zimbabwe by 16 government delegates from five Customs agencies. The lessons from the study tour were essential in the development and implementation of a Single Payment Point for the first time in Zambia.

■ Connection of the Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) to all 28 automated stations via ASYCUDA World increased visibility and allowed for screening of more products entering Zambia as part of the single window initiative.

■ The Coordinated Border Management and Trade Facilitation Bill has undergone final legal drafting at the Ministry of Justice and been presented to Parliament for enactment.

■ The TFSP supported the establishment of a Central Processing Centre at the ZCSA's head office, a development that enables better tracking of shipments at the different entry points and improved efficiencies.

■ The Risk Assessment Capacity was enhanced: With increased visibility to ZCSA-related products at the port entry points, ZCSA can segment the products into red, green, yellow, and blue risk-based channels and allow for improved movement of goods and products in and out of Zambia. The project is providing continued support to improve risk assessment and management capacity to include additional risk factors that would further reduce the processing times at the border in addition to improving product safety for Zambians.

■ A tool was developed to track consumer complaints and product incidents. By using this tool, the ZCSA inspectors will be able to identify the types of goods and products that pose a risk to Zambians and to use associated risk factors as additional filters at the port. This process would allow the port inspections to focus only on high-risk products using data and real evidence. Training on the use of the tool was provided to 10 senior management representatives and inspections staff.

■ An integrated inspection data collection tool is being developed in consultation with the inspection team. This tool will be integrated across international, domestic, and market surveillance inspections

to allow for the establishment of an integrated risk assessment process. The tool will enable data and evidence to be captured at the product or company level on a continued basis and allow for periodic review and update of risk factors on the ASYCUDA system. Several training workshops on the risk assessment and the inspection process were organized for 16 inspections staff and inputs were collected for development of the tool.

■ An Enquiry Point Report was submitted to the government that reviewed the current arrangements for information dissemination on requirements in cross-border trade in Zambia with recommendations for an enquiry point to be established as part of Zambia's implementation of the TFA.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

Early TFSP work in Zambia led to an additional US\$1.7 million USAID grant for the TFSP to support the Zambian government.



CARIBBEAN

Grenada

**TFSP support
to Grenada**

The WBG has been delivering advisory services to the government of Grenada to support trade facilitation reforms since 2013. In response to a request from the government, the TFSP supported assessments in April and June 2016 to determine the level of alignment of Grenada's national policies with the WTO TFA in three areas prioritized by the government: advanced rulings, appeal procedures, and

single window. The WBG was also asked to assess the implementation of the ASYCUDA World system to enhance alignment with the TFA in preparation to design and develop a national single window. The government has subsequently advised that UNCTAD will be supporting implementation of the single window and declined further support from the WBG on this and other prioritized measures.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

4 Procedures for Appeal or Review

FY18 update on key activities

■ Following the initial decision to decline technical assistance on the measures prioritized, the government requested WBG's assistance to facilitate a peer-to-peer (P2P) session on Procedures for Appeal and Review. The TFSP arranged the P2P session with the Jamaica Revenue Appeals Board to share best practices on appeals administration. TFSP resources also were used to support the rollout of the tool to automate import approval processes at the Bureau of Standards. The automation tool will allow the bureau to fully leverage data from ASYCUDA to apply risk management to its border clearance processes. Related to this, and to support the optimal deployment of the tool, the government has also requested advisory services to align the country's risk management procedures with the WTO TFA and other international standards. Three areas for support have been identified in discussion with Grenada Customs: risk analysis, data collection related to risk management, and additional support for a national risk management review group. The team will conduct a technical mission in FY19 to confirm the level of alignment of the procedures (using previous IFC assessments) and to deliver training on the topics identified.

Jamaica

TFSP support to Jamaica

The TFSP is supporting Jamaican border agencies in several areas that build on current lending and advisory activities conducted by the WBG and its development partners. The TFSP team recently concluded a review of the draft Customs Code and provided recommendations for revisions to help the government align the code with the TFA, WCO Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC), and other international standards. Other areas of support included **(A)** input into the development of the national project plan for trade facilitation reform (along with UNCTAD and the ITC); **(B)** a visioning workshop to begin the design of a national trade portal; **(C)** a visioning workshop on use of a single window for trade; **(D)** enhancements to the risk management framework for agencies other than Customs; and **(E)** review of the licenses and permits regime.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

- 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

FY18 update on key activities

■ Jamaica continues to emphasize trade facilitation as a key element of its growth strategy and TFSP funds continue to support several TFA measures, principally risk management and border agency coordination. Two key initiatives are being pursued by the government that are partially hinged on these measures—the electronic single window for trade (using ASYCUDA as the platform) and the national trade information portal. In December 2017, the government and IFC signed the advisory agreement to deliver the national trade information portal.

■ Advisory activities on risk management will contribute to the roll-out of the electronic single window and simplification of formalities and procedures. Advisory activities on risk management continue to contribute to building capacity in six agencies to develop and pilot risk profiles that will facilitate their integration with Customs through ASYCUDA and also reduce **(A)** dependence on manual, paper-based processes, **(B)** multiple inspections, and **(C)** the number of permits and licenses needed for export, import, and transit. In December 2017, the team put forward a review of the 31 measures administered in respect to export, import, and transit, including seven key recommendations to improve the existing system. Related to findings and recommendations of this report, best practices on fees and charges were also shared to assist the government in reviewing its current system. A report was also prepared specific to the Ministry of Health agencies, providing six recommendations for increasing trade facilitation.

■ The government has opted to repeal and replace its customs legislation. Following the review of the 2016 version of the draft Customs Bill, the government has continued the process of reviewing its customs legislation to modernize and better align with international standards (WTO, RKC, and so on). The TFSP has re-engaged with the government to support this process with advisory services to support the identification of best practice models that could be adopted or adapted for inclusion in the new customs legislation.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

Through complementary WBG investment loans, it is envisaged that the TFSP can leverage US\$20–25 million to deepen and extend its activities in Jamaica. In FY18Q2, TFSP funds were leveraged to support the preparation of a memo on Doing Business, based on the indicators of the World Bank’s Doing Business annual flagship report. The Doing Business memo underscored the recommendations made in previous advisory activities and the entire memo was presented to the Cabinet of Ministers in July 2018.

St. Lucia

**TFSP support
to St. Lucia**

WBG has been providing advisory support to the government to improve trade facilitation since 2013. With the support of the TFSP, TFA assessments were conducted in 2016 to determine the level of alignment with WTO TFA measures on the single window, electronic payment systems, and risk management. Of the measures prioritized by the government for the initial assessment, the government has requested additional support on an electronic single window (ESW).

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

FY18 update on key activities

■ With TFSP support, the WBG facilitated a technical workshop on the design of an ESW and facilitated discussions between public and private sector stakeholders on a shared vision for the single window in St. Lucia.

■ TFSP funding has also 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 and supports alignment with measure 10.4.



CENTRAL AMERICA

Regional Activities

As part of a regional project on Central American regional trade facilitation, the TFSP is helping the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration (COMIECO) review the regional Customs Code for Central America and its regulations (CAUCA and RECAUCA) to better align these instruments with the WTO TFA, speed up clearance times of goods, and reduce required formalities and documentation. The Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) requested support to develop a system to periodically collect data to monitor time to trade performance across the region. Other activities are being conducted at a national level in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama on various TFA measures.

Main areas of regional level technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1** Publication
- 3** Advance Rulings
- 4** Procedures for Appeal or Review
- 7.6** Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 8** Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1** Formalities and Documentation Requirements
- 11** Regulations for Freedom of Transit

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP delivered a full legal review and gap analysis of both CAUCA and RECAUCA against the TFA and the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention.

■ A regional workshop was held in Costa Rica to present and validate the results. It was agreed that a separate parallel resolution from the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration (COMIECO) should be issued to regulate non-Customs border agencies.

■ The TFSP has recommended conducting consultations with the private sector; SIECA has agreed to hold these in September 2018.

■ Terms of reference were drafted to develop a system to cross reference data from transit declarations and track time to trade in the region.

Country-specific Activities

Costa Rica

TFSP support to Costa Rica

The TFSP is supporting the government of Costa Rica in identifying measures to reduce excessive requirements and time to trade at land border posts. The government requested an analysis of procedures at Peñas Blancas, the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and has adopted most of the priorities identified by the TFSP. Advance declarations have been introduced at Peñas Blancas that reduce time to clear cargo by half for imports to Costa Rica. Early 2018 presidential elections slowed down project implementation, but in May 2018, the government asked the team to conduct an analysis of formalities and documentary requirements at Paso Canoas, the border between Costa Rica and Panama, for which planning has commenced.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing

8 Border Agency Cooperation

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

FY18 update on key activities

■ With support from the TFSP, the government rolled out an electronic payment software to issue temporary insurance for foreign vehicles importing goods.

■ At the request of the government, preparations started for an analysis of formalities and document requirements at Paso Canoas.

El Salvador

TFSP support to El Salvador

The TFSP supports the government of El Salvador in its efforts to improve trade facilitation processes for air cargo trade. The TFSP has undertaken a comprehensive mapping of processes of all agencies that deal with air cargo. In addition, support is being provided to El Salvador in its effort to implement an e-signature program.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 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

FY18 update on key activities

- The TFSP helped the government streamline air cargo clearance by harmonizing agencies' working hours, publishing procedures online, eliminating cargo reweighing procedures, and accepting printed copies of waybills instead of preprinted forms, which are difficult to obtain.
- The TFSP started the development of an information technology application to exchange electronic information on air cargo documents among agencies.
- The government established a consultative committee for the application of the electronic signature legal framework. The committee is reviewing the series of policies and procedures developed with support from TFSP to create and manage digital certificates.

Guatemala and Honduras

TFSP support to Guatemala and Honduras

To support the Customs Union being implemented between Guatemala and Honduras, the TFSP has helped develop and implement new processes and procedures, tested through pilots, and has promoted information exchange between border agencies. The government of Guatemala has also requested support to streamline border procedures at the border with Mexico, where 50 percent of imports that cross are in transit to the rest of Central America.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times

8 Border Agency Cooperation

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

FY18 update on key activities

■ The two countries have established a Customs Union for 80 percent of traded products and, with support from the TFSP, have applied a single electronic instrument called “FYDUCA” for use as both a customs declaration and invoice.

■ The TFSP developed and helped roll out six online modules for FYDUCA: data validation, VAT calculation, e-payment, tax adjustment, risk management reports, and return of empty containers. The TFSP trained 150 companies in the use of FYDUCA.

■ Measures of time and process required by three pilot companies after-reform saw a reduction from 10 hours to 15 minutes on average to cross the border from Honduras to import in Guatemala. A broader measurement will be conducted in 2018.

■ The TFSP provided input to improve the regulatory framework for the administration of the land border crossing at Tecun Uman. Once implemented, it could serve as a model for other posts at the border between Guatemala and Mexico.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP has provided advice that will feed into a World Bank lending operation for Guatemala to support the Superintendence of Tax Administration, pending approval by Parliament. The “strengthening customs services” subcomponent of this operation would implement a risk-based management model for merchandise controls and streamlined, automated customs procedures.

Nicaragua

TFSP support to Nicaragua

As part of a regional project on Central American regional trade facilitation, the TFSP team conducted a validation assessment of Nicaragua’s alignment with the TFA, which was accepted by the government. Achievements in Nicaragua include the implementation of pre-arrival processing for all types of imported goods by Customs authorities. As a result, clearance time has been reduced from five days to three days.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ The government and private sector validated 16 procedures for import and export, including pre-arrival declaration in the Port of Corinto, drafted by TFSP and published online.

■ In November 2017, TFSP conducted a workshop in Managua with both government and private sector representatives to present recommendations to (A) improve and digitize processes in the Port of Corinto, (B) link the customs goods classification with the licenses, fees, and permits required by IPSA (Agricultural Health and Protection Institute), and (C) publish all government fees and payments for import, export, and transit.

■ After April 2018, major civil unrest has prevented the TFSP from making further progress.

Panama

TFSP support to Panama

After accepting the TFA gap assessment produced by the TFSP, the government of Panama prioritized the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee; coordination of risk management between Customs and the food safety and agriculture border agencies; and the implementation of e-payment for the food safety border agency.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP submitted recommendations to close the TFA implementation gap in Panama.

■ The government asked the TFSP to support the development of an e-payment module for the food safety border agency. A phased approach was agreed to, and terms of reference drafted.

■ A scoping mission was conducted to support the establishment of a National Trade Facilitation Committee.

■ The TFSP partnered with the IMF CAPTAC-DR (International Monetary Fund Center for Technical Assistance for Central America, Panama and Dominican Republic) to conduct an assessment and

prepare an action plan to establish an integrated risk management framework for the transshipment process (transshipment represents 80 percent of trade in Panama).



EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Cambodia

TFSP support to Cambodia

The TFSP provided a small amount of financing to complement a World Bank project that has now closed and that focused primarily on implementing a national trade repository (NTR). In FY18, discussions were held with the government of Cambodia on the set of reforms needed to align the country's customs processes and procedures with the TFA. It was agreed that the TFSP will help create a roadmap for the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) as a first step, with additional support to be considered in the next reporting period.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet

FY18 update on key activities

■ A number of consultations were held with the government of Cambodia on possible future support under the TFSP. It was agreed to focus on the NTFC, and possibly enhance the national trade repository (NTR) to ensure it effectively meets traders' information needs.

LAO People's Democratic Republic (PDR)

TFSP support to Lao PDR

Building on previous support to Lao PDR, TFSP will focus its support to the country on border agency cooperation and the implementation of an AEO scheme.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

8 Border Agency Cooperation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP supported the government in drafting a border agency cooperation strategy. The work involved evaluation of current border agency cooperation practices and recommendations on how these should be improved. The strategy was presented to the government towards the end of the reporting period.

■ Discussions around the implementation of an AEO scheme were ongoing towards the end of the reporting period and work is likely to start in late 2018.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP efforts complement a World Bank lending project that supports the government's trade and integration priorities.

Mongolia

TFSP support to Mongolia

The TFSP is supporting the development of a trade information portal (TIP), establishing the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), streamlining trade and customs regulations, improving border inspection practices and authorized operators measures. The TFSP support complements a World Bank project component aiming to improve 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)

1.1 Publication

1.2 Information Available through Internet

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP conducted training on the authorized economic operator (AEO) program and risk management for Customs officials and relevant authorities and provided recommendations on a draft AEO bylaw.

■ An assessment on the operation of the NTFC was also undertaken and shared with the government for consideration at the end of the reporting period.

■ In April 2018, the team organized a video conference on the TIP with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Customs, and the General Agency for Specialized Inspection. The team presented the TIP concept and shared next steps to move forward with TIP creation.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP support to Mongolia complements a US\$2.3 million World Bank project to increase the competitiveness of export-oriented sectors (meat and dairy).

Myanmar

TFSP support to Myanmar

TFSP support, following the delivery of the final TFA assessment and discussions with clients in 2015, includes implementation activities in the following areas: (A) assistance with the establishment of a National Trade Facilitation Committee, (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.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.1 Pre-arrival Processing

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ As an important step for coordination in trade facilitation, a newly revamped National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) was organized to be co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Commerce and the Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning. The WBG team provided inputs for the first NTFC meeting in February 2018, which discussed the role of the NTFC and endorsed Myanmar's notification of commitments on the WTO TFA to the WTO Secretariat. As a result, Myanmar submitted its notification of categories to the WTO. Thus, the NTFC took an active role in the WTO TFA agenda, and it expressed interest

in having the WBG continue supporting the implementation of the TFA. During its most recent meeting, the NTFC also agreed on the creation of four working groups: (a) information, led by the Ministry of Commerce; (b) risk management, led by the Myanmar Customs Department; (c) national single window (NSW), led by Customs; and (d) test procedures, led by Commerce and coordinated by the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) staff members.

■ The review and redrafting of the new customs law is ongoing. The new customs law will reflect the new challenges and needs of modern customs operations and the alignment of practices for customs procedures along with international norms. Several chapters were drafted as part of the WBG technical assistance program and through intense discussions with members of the Legal Working Group of Myanmar Customs. These discussions provided opportunities for members of the Legal Working Group to learn about key concepts of modern customs legislation that have become commitments under the WTO Trade Facilitation and Customs Valuation Agreements and standardized by the World Customs Organization.

■ A second National Single Window Visioning Workshop took place in August 2017, following on the first workshop in FY17. Work on planning for the NSW blueprint is progressing. The workshops helped the government of Myanmar develop an overall stakeholder vision for the NSW and commence the process for developing an implementation strategy and parameters for the development and implementation of the NSW. A team of experts (NSW specialist, information and communication system specialist, customs expert, sanitary and phytosanitary expert, and legal expert) will travel to Myanmar over the coming months to begin work on the NSW blueprint document. The blueprint will set out the decisions required for the government to begin the implementation of the NSW. Two workshops are planned for the first half of FY19 to present options that emerge from the blueprint process and to seek feedback from the government and private sector on the implementation process.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

TFSP efforts complement a World Bank trade facilitation project. The TFSP funded a gap analysis that fed into UK aid/DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia) bilateral funding for implementation.

Vietnam

TFSP support to Vietnam

The TFSP's engagement has been focused on establishing the Vietnam Trade Information Portal and on providing advice to support the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee. The TFSP team also provided advice on analyzing the results of Vietnam's most recent Time Release Study. <http://www.vietnamtradeportal.gov.vn>

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 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

FY18 update on key activities

■ Following TFSP support during FY17, the Vietnam Trade Information Portal was launched in early FY18. The main objective of the portal is to increase transparency and predictability of trade related regulations and to make it easier for traders and investors to comply with these requirements. The trade portal is a web-based database system that makes all cross-border trade regulatory information easily available—all laws, prohibitions, restrictions, technical standards, the entire commodity classification and tariffs, all procedures for license and permit application and clearance, copies of all forms, and plain-language instructions are provided in the portal. The trade portal also enables traders to see, in response to a single query, all the obligations they need to comply with to import or export a specific good.

■ The team also provided advice on establishing the National Trade Facilitation Committee and on analyzing the results of Vietnam's last time release study.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFA engagement has informed the preparation of the National Logistic Action Plan and is contributing to the content of a larger proposed World Bank lending project.

Regional Activities: Pacific Islands

TFSP support to the Pacific Islands

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

management systems, simplification and harmonization of processes and procedures, coordinated border management, and a pilot project to implement electronic phytosanitary certification in Samoa.

The project team facilitated National Awareness and Strategy Visioning Workshops for the implementation of the TFA in Fiji, Samoa, and Vanuatu. Recommendations from the workshops were used as direct inputs for the preparation of a regional IFC advisory project to support the implementation of the TFA across the Pacific islands of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Vanuatu.

The TFSP has also assisted with TFA needs assessments and reform roadmaps for the non-WTO Pacific countries—the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, and Palau—complementing the ones already produced for the WTO Pacific countries, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Country-Specific Activities

Fiji

TFSP support to Fiji

The TFSP has assisted with categorization and provided support for the ratification and notification process. Following a WTO TFA awareness briefing and a strategy and visioning workshop for the private sector and public officials, the TFSP assisted the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the development of the Fiji TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan. Activities and priorities for implementation include **(A)** assistance to harmonize multiagency border processes, to streamline processes and requirements, and to harmonize data **(B)** assistance in a plan for a move toward a single window system; **(C)** help conducting a review of customs and biosecurity legislation to align with best practices; and **(D)** assistance in developing the trusted trader program and related risk profiling.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ At the request of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism for a TFA briefing for the members of the NTFC, TFSP support to the committee included:

- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement National Awareness and Strategy Visioning workshop. The results of the consultative workshop were used to develop a draft the Fiji National Action Plan and a refined Terms of Reference for the NTFC, which were then endorsed by the NTFC.

The NTFC also agreed to:

- Develop a Communications Strategy for core members and appointed members (engaging, consulting, informing, and receiving feedback);
 - Accept the initial sequencing timeline that prioritizes the high-level activities; and
 - Immediately create four national working groups regarding specific issues that will assist in the implementation of the overall Fiji National Action Plan.
- Ongoing technical assistance to the NTFC and to the four working groups, as well as the preparation of position papers, work that is critical to the successful outcome of the national implementation process.
 - The TFSP proposed and supported the NTFC Risk Management Working Group in creating a Single Submission of Manifests model for imported sea cargo. This activity is considered the critical first stage in the effort to create more efficiencies within the cargo clearance process and involves interventions by Fiji Revenue and Customs Service, the Ministry of Health (MOH), and Biosecurity Agency Fiji (BAF). The effort will initiate further changes in the BAF/MOH risk assessment processes and the development of an all-agency electronic clearance advice procedure for sea cargo. Under the TFSP, the WBG conducted workshops and meetings with the Fiji Risk Management Working Group, including industry and government agencies, to develop the model and prepare a draft four-phase implementation plan for consideration by the NTFC.

- Developed a time value survey to measure the current timelines regarding the movement of “hard-copy” inward shipping manifests to enable effective measuring of the future single submission project outcomes. The initial survey is planned for early FY19.
- A workshop on national single window visioning is planned for early FY19 and will include industry and government agencies. It is intended to provide all NTFC participants with a broad understanding of the different options and complexities to develop a single window in the Fiji environment. It will initiate internal discussion regarding specific Fiji requirements and resourcing.

Papua New Guinea

TFSP support to Papua New Guinea

The TFSP supports (A) programs to improve customs risk management and implement a single window system for trade; (B) efforts to enhance border coordination between customs and quarantine functions; (C) the formation and development of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), taking into account the existing intergovernmental committees and private sector-public sector forums; (D) review of the availability of trade-related information; and (E) development of parallel processes for clearance by the Customs Service and the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

8 Border Agency Cooperation

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP support has been related primarily to helping Papua New Guinea ratify the TFA and reestablish the NTFC. Support was provided to the Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry to finalize the documentation required for accession and notification to the WTO. A mission in March 2018 provided support to hold the first NTFC meeting in two years. The support included assisting the chair prior to the meeting and giving presentations on the TFA and the role and function of the NTFC. Progress was made during the meeting, but further progress is awaiting the review of the committee’s terms of reference and the TFA work plan. Further progress with the NTFC and TFA implementation is being hampered by the nation’s role as chair of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 2018. The key Trade Office personnel are heavily involved with coordination of the wide range of APEC meetings being held in Papua New Guinea.

- Work has commenced with reviewing NAQIA's clearance processes and application of risk management to cargo intervention. A TFSP-supported mission examined NAQIA's clearance processes in air cargo at Port Moresby and sea cargo in Lae. A report is being prepared to recommend improvements that can be made to reduce the current levels of documentary examination and physical inspection.

Samoa

TFSP support to Samoa

The TFSP has assisted with categorization and support for the ratification and notification process. Following a WTO TFA awareness briefing and a strategy and visioning workshop for the private sector and government officials, the TFSP assisted the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the development of the Samoa TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan. Activities and priorities for implementation include (A) assistance to harmonize multiagency border processes, to streamline processes and requirements, and to harmonize data; (B) support to coordinate border management; (C) support on improving the risk management system; and (D) assistance with the assessment of preparedness to implement a national single window (NSW).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

- At the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a TFA briefing for the members of the Working Committee on Trade Arrangements (WCTA), which fulfills the role of the NTFC in Samoa, TFSP support to the WCTA included:

- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement National Awareness and Strategy Visioning workshop. The results of the consultative workshop were used to develop a draft the Samoa National Action Plan, which was then endorsed by the WCTA.

- The WCTA also agreed to accept the initial sequencing timeline that prioritizes the high-level activities.
- Two workshops on (A) Publication and Availability of Information and (B) National Single Window (NSW) Visioning took place in Samoa in support of the long-term vision to implement a trade portal and NSW.
- Prepared biosecurity “current state” process maps for sea cargo and assessed the current information technology platform to identify potential areas for improvement and to initiate internal discussion on matters such as:
 - Manifest sharing with Customs via ASYCUDA to improve access to timely data
 - Areas of legal reform that may be required
 - Future requirements to integrate new biosecurity processes with EPhyto
 - Development of joint agencies publications to streamline and improve the government’s information dissemination to the public and business sectors.

Timor-Leste

TFSP support to Timor-Leste

Following a full gap analysis of alignment with the TFA, the government has identified the following actions for implementation: (A) simplify procedures and enhance the implementation of risk management; (B) conduct a targeted time release study and implement key recommendations; and (C) align the sanitary and phytosanitary and customs legislation with the TFA and international best practice. TFSP support to Timor-Leste is complementing a USAID funded Customs project.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 10.3 Use of International Standards
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ Efforts in FY18 concentrated on work with the Quarantine Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture to review the current plant and animal health protection laws and propose revisions. A review of the regulations indicated that a thorough revision of the law was required. Work in 2018 involved an intensive consultation process with government and stakeholders and development of new decree laws on plant health and quarantine, and animal health and quarantine, and the development of supporting regulations. The new animal health and plant health and quarantine protection laws will bring Timor-Leste into line with international standards and assist with WTO accession. By enabling more effective protection of Timor-Leste's biosecurity and potential agricultural sector, these laws will also support other work by IFC on economic diversification and reduction of reliance on the resource sector.

■ After a number of years of political stability, Timor-Leste entered a period of political uncertainty in 2018. Elections in July 2017 resulted in the creation of a minority government that was unable to secure the support of Parliament, and a political deadlock resulted. Thus, it was not possible to secure passage of the new quarantine legislation in 2018. New elections were held in May 2018 and produced a change of government; as of the end of June, the new government was still being formed.

Vanuatu

TFSP support to Vanuatu

The TFSP has assisted with categorization and support for the ratification and notification process. Following a WTO TFA awareness briefing and a strategy and visioning workshop for the private sector and government officials, the TFSP assisted the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the development of the Vanuatu TFA Roadmap and National TFA Action Plan. Activities and priorities for implementation include (A) assistance to harmonize multiagency border processes, to streamline processes and requirements, and to harmonize data; (B) support to the biosecurity agency to improve its biosecurity risk and compliance for import and export clearances and improve its risk management system; (C) assistance to amend biosecurity regulations to align with customs pre-arrival processing; (D) coordinated advice to traders for biosecurity holds; (E) assistance to develop the authorized operator and (F) assistance with the assessment of preparedness to implement a national single window (NSW).

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

7.4 Risk Management

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ At the request of the Department of External Trade for a TFA briefing for the members of the Trade Facilitation Steering Committee (TFSC), the TFSP support to the TFSC included:

- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement National Awareness and Strategy Visioning Workshop. The results of the consultative workshop were used to develop a draft Vanuatu National Action Plan and refined Terms of Reference for the TFSC, which were then endorsed by the TFSC.

The TFSC also agreed to the following:

- Acceptance of the initial sequencing timeline that prioritizes the high-level activities.
- The immediate creation of four national working groups regarding specific issues that assist the implementation of the overall Vanuatu National Action Plan.
- Ongoing technical assistance to the TFSC and to the four working groups and the preparation of position papers, work that is critical to the successful outcome of the national implementation process.
- A NSW Visioning workshop that set the stage for the preparation of the Vanuatu Fast Track NSW Blueprint and provided additional support to the government to obtain European Investment Fund funding for a Vanuatu National Single Window (VNSW).
- After a government decision to use ASYCUDA World for the VNSW, the team is finalizing a blueprint to assist the government's decisions on the specific requirements for the VNSW. The 2018 Blueprint includes an assessment of information technology issues, the development of detailed "current state" permit and licensing processes for all border agencies (except Customs), and assistance with internal communication processes. "Future state" process maps will be completed in early FY19.

- Assessment of biosecurity cargo processes, an effort undertaken to initiate workshops and the discussions that will be required for the significant workplace changes needed within the biosecurity agency to implement electronic procedures in a VNSW.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

Through the close partnership between WBG and the EIF, the EIF Tier 2 project is providing US\$1.5 mil funding for the establishment of an Electronic Single Window System in Vanuatu, leveraging the work undertaken by the WBG which was financed under the Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP).



SPS laboratory in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
Credit: World Bank Group

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Regional Activities

The Europe and Central Asia TFSP initiative helps countries in the region align their rules and regulations and their implementation capacity with the requirements of the WTO TFA.

■ The TFSP and the USAID Regional Economic Growth Project (USAID REG Project) have been collaborating since September 2015 to help the CEFTA parties establish National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs), as required by the WTO TFA. To date, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia—all CEFTA parties—have established NTFCs with support from the two partners.

■ The regional TFSP team has assisted the Western Balkan countries with the development of a Joint Trade and Transport Facilitation Action Plan demonstrating these countries' commitment to continued regional integration. The plan constitutes the underpinning of a loan program for the Western Balkans by the World Bank in support of trade and transport integration. A regional loan is now being prepared to help build interconnected national single windows in the region.

■ A high-level regional meeting of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agencies organized by the Europe and Central Asia TFSP, the USAID REG Project, and the CEFTA Secretariat took place in Pristina, Kosovo, in April 2018. The meeting sought to increase local SPS and other border agencies' awareness of their obligations arising from the implementation of the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5.

■ With support from the TFSP, a regional Conference on Border Collaboration and Coordination (BCC) was held in Budva, Montenegro, in September 2017. The conference brought together participating countries to discuss the concept of BCC, their level of implementation at the national and regional level, discuss ongoing initiatives to enhance cooperation at the border and identify the main challenges that constrain co-operation and co-ordination at the border.

Country-Specific Activities: Europe

Albania

TFSP support to Albania

The TFSP provides support to the Albanian General Directorate of Customs aiming to promote the authorized economic operators (AEO) program in the country. It also successfully organized a regional meeting of Customs directors general in Tirana, where ways to improve regional cooperation were discussed. The TFSP also provides support to the Albanian National Food Authority (NFA) for the development of risk-based import controls, including a communications strategy to help the agency effectively communicate this innovative approach.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ TFSP supported the Albania Customs Administration with two workshops (May 29 and 30, 2018) to raise awareness of the AEO program. The workshops were attended by 81 stakeholders, including from the private sector. During the workshops, high level customs officials were able to engage with private sector representatives and highlighted the benefits of being a licensed AEO company, the criteria to obtain the license, the legal framework, and the simplification of customs procedures. A senior WBG customs adviser presented international best practices of authorized operator regimes.

■ The TFSP prepared promotional materials such as brochures and posters that were distributed during the AEO awareness workshops and will be available at customs points.

■ An online media publication about the AEO program was posted on the Customs website, <http://www.dogana.gov.al/d/171/219/0/471/statusi-i-oea-ve-biznesi-duhet-te-perfitoje-nga-thjeshtimi-i-procedurave-doganore>.

■ A High-Level Regional Meeting of Customs DGs (directors general) was organized jointly by Albania Customs and the TFSP in June 2018, in Tirana. The meeting was chaired by Minister of Finance and Economy who called for the elimination of some of the more burdensome fees at the border and proposed that countries within the region should unilaterally recognize certain certificates. The meeting was attended by 42 participants, including from the CEFTA, the British Embassy, USAID, European Union Taxation and Customs Union (EU TAXUD), an adviser from the Prime Minister's office, System for Exchange of Excise Data (SEED), and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

■ TFSP is supporting NFA in developing a comprehensive risk-based inspection program for food and feed of animal and non-animal origin. The TFSP has provided capacity building support on risk management.

■ The TFSP team delivered technical workshops in September and December 2017, where risk management theories, EU legislative framework and risk categorization as well as the data to be collected to develop a risk-based inspection methodology for Albania were discussed.

■ In June 2018, TFSP team developed guidelines for a Risk-Based border inspection system. A training of border inspectors is scheduled for the fall of 2018 to complete this technical assistance.

The NFA, guided by the program's veterinary risk experts, developed risk criteria and an annual sampling plan for food and food products of animal and non-animal origin.

■ TFSP will also support awareness building and dissemination of this innovative risk management framework. An international communications expert has begun working with counterparts in Tirana to develop a communications strategy to assist the NFA in effectively communicating its new risk-based approach to the stakeholder community. The strategy will also provide guidelines on handling crisis situations. The proposed communications strategy has been delivered to the NFA and the team is awaiting feedback/ validation of the strategy. Once this is completed, the communications expert and NFA specialists will identify priority communications actions and begin planning training sessions for the relevant agency staff.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP support compliments the Albania Investment Climate Competitiveness Project and to a US\$70 million World Bank development policy loan on trade and transport facilitation. It also collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) project, both supporting trade facilitation initiatives.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

TFSP support to Bosnia and Herzegovina

In collaboration with USAID, the TFSP has been focusing its support to Bosnia and Herzegovina on the establishment and operation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC). The NTFC came into force in May 2018.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ Following last year's workshop on establishing and operating an NTFC jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MOFTER), USAID REG, and the TFSP, Bosnia and Herzegovina established its National Trade Facilitation Committee in May 2018. Now all seven members of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) have a NTFC. While Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a WTO member, as a member of CEFTA it is committed to the establishment of such a body under the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 on trade facilitation, which entered into force in the spring of 2018.

■ In June 2018, the TFSP team met with MOFTER and the Customs Administration to discuss the joint implementation of a time release study. It was tentatively agreed that the TRS could be carried out in the spring of 2019, provided it receives the Council of Ministers' approval.

■ The team also met with sanitary and phytosanitary agencies from the Federation and the Republic of Srpska to discuss assistance in risk management. The agencies have expressed interest in TFSP support to align their practices with WTO/TFA measures, technical missions are expected to commence in FY19.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support is complementary to the Bosnia Investment Climate Project and collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional GIZ project, both supporting trade facilitation initiatives.

Kosovo

TFSP support to Kosovo

The agreed areas of TFSP assistance in Kosovo include helping operate the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), operating the authorized operator program, and supporting the Kosovo Food and Veterinary Agency (KVFA) with the development and implementation of a risk management framework and an annual sampling plan.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ In support of risk-based border management, the ECA TFSP worked with KVFA to develop a risk-based sampling framework and guidelines for products of animal origin which has been in force in all terminals across Kosovo since January 2018. Border inspectors were also trained in risk management.

■ In April 2018, the project organized a fact-finding mission to assess the capacities of the phytosanitary branch of KFVA as a baseline for a planned training on phytosanitary risk-based inspections in the fall of 2018. In addition, the TFSP is supporting the agency with developing a strategic and crisis communication plan.

■ TFSP is also advising the Kosovo Customs Administration in the development of an Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program. The official guidelines for the AEO program were approved in

November 2017 and the Director General of Kosovo Customs has established a Commission to review applications from traders. In March 2018, the Director General officially approved the new certificate that will be issued to AEO clients. In May 2018, the TFSP organized a study visit to the United Kingdom for officials from Kosovo Customs and the Food and Veterinary Agency. The study visit provided an opportunity for Kosovo officials to discuss some of the practical challenges associated with establishing and maintaining an effective program with other practitioners. The TFSP has also been supporting Kosovo's National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC). In June 2018, the NTFC secretariat presented its trade facilitation action plan for the next six months, drafted with the support of the TFSP. The NTFC is currently reviewing all licenses, fees, and charges applied to trade transactions, as well as the drafting the regulation for Enquiry Point that is planned to be hosted within Customs. This regulation is currently in the process of government approval.

■ A TFSP team assessed the alignment level of Kosovo's trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the WTO TFA Tracking Tool methodology and scoring sheets. The assessment takes into account legal/policy alignment, existence of implementing procedures, as well as operational check in practice for each of the TFA measures.

■ In FY17, an experienced local consultant was hired to support the Ministry of Trade and Industry in its efforts to make the NTFC more functional, as well as to raise awareness with the private sector, to support the involvement of relevant industries, and to tackle remaining alignment work and issues raised by the business community. In support of these objectives, the consultant organized several intensive outreach meetings with the private sector. The consultant also provide support with work related to CEFTA AP5 and TFA, and helped facilitate the latest NTFC meeting that took place in June 2018.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional GIZ project, both of which support trade facilitation initiatives.

FYR Macedonia

TFSP support to FYR Macedonia

The TFSP supports coordinated border management through joint border controls between Serbia and Macedonia at the Serbian border control post of Tabanovce/Presevo, and more recently, support for the establishment of joint controls at the main border between Macedonia and Albania. Joint border control systems can reduce the

time, and cost of passenger and commercial cargo clearance for both traders and border authorities.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

8 Border Agency Cooperation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP has prepared an analysis with recommendations on implementation of joint controls for customs, border police, and the sanitary and phytosanitary authorities. An informal consultation meeting initiated by the Customs Administration of FYR Macedonia and facilitated by the TFSP was held in Skopje in May 2018, with Macedonian Customs, Border Police, Food and Veterinary Agency, State Sanitary and Health Inspectorate, and the State Agriculture (Phytosanitary) Inspectorate and representatives of the Serbian Customs Administration from Nis and the Border Post of Presevo.

■ A TFSP team assessed the alignment level of FYR Macedonia's trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the WTO TFA Tracking Tool methodology and scoring sheets. The assessment considers legal and policy alignment, the existence of implementing procedures, and an operational check in practice for each of the TFA measures.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional GIZ project, both supporting trade facilitation initiatives.

Moldova

TFSP support to Moldova

The TFSP provided support to the Government of Moldova to update its Category B and C notifications and supported the drafting of the NTFC Action Plan for Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) implementation.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), which is housed in the Prime Minister's Economic Council, was formally launched in June 2017 by the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, and the World Bank Trade and Competitiveness Global Practice's Senior Director. The TFSP supported the preparation of the NTFC Action Plan which was approved by Government Decree on December 2017.

■ During its consultations with development partners including the WBG, the NTFC requested technical assistance with electronic commerce, small parcel customs processing and upgrade of Customs Service IT systems.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP is aligned with the IFC Moldova Investment Climate Reform Project.

Montenegro

**TFSP support
to Montenegro**

The TFSP supports Montenegro in the development of an authorized economic operator (AEO) program, a time release study, and a comprehensive policy document (roadmap) for trade facilitation reforms.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP supports the development of an AEO/simplified procedures regime. The first phase of the program, involving “Simplified Import Procedures” (in-house clearance) for approved traders has been expanded and currently includes five companies. These companies have reported improvements in the clearance process, including time reduction (the average release time is reduced by 33 percent); reduction in the number of documents needed for customs clearance (from six, as reported by Doing Business, to one—the Single Administrative Document, or SAD, which is submitted electronically); cost reduction (a €21 terminal handling fee per consignment is eliminated because the goods are cleared in the trader’s premises, not at the customs inland terminal). The TFSP will support further improvements, including 24/7 clearance time, which should enable reduction in the average customs clearance time by 80 percent compared with the time measured in the time release study.

■ The TFSP also supported the second phase of “Simplified Export Procedures” for approved traders. A pilot has been completed with one company, which has obtained an authorization. The program is open to all traders that meet the qualification criteria. Instructions on the application of simplified procedures have been adopted and published on the Customs website.

■ The TFSP facilitated discussion between Customs and technical agencies (Administration for Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Affairs, Inspection Administration, Ecotoxicological Examination Centre, and the Environmental Protection Agency) to improve inter-agency coordination related to the authorization and post-clearance control of authorized traders. A decision has been adopted that establishes a working group for the implementation of simplified procedures and AEO; prescribes the goals, tasks, and composition of the interagency working group; and appoints the members.

■ At the request of the government of Montenegro, the TFSP team worked with public and private sector stakeholders to develop a National Trade Facilitation Strategy and a Trade Facilitation Action Plan for the period 2018–2022. Both documents were adopted by the government in March 2018.

■ The TFSP team assessed the alignment level of Montenegro’s trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the WTO TFA Tracking Tool methodology and scoring sheets.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional GIZ project, both of which support trade facilitation initiatives.

Serbia

**TFSP support
to Serbia**

The TFSP assisted in the formation and efficient operation of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation (NCBTF). Although Serbia is not yet a member of the WTO, as a member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement, it has agreed to abide by WTO requirements.

During the reporting period, the TFSP provided support with the publication of findings and recommendations from the time release study (TRS); provided trainings on post-clearance audit of complex transactions involving transfer prices, royalties, and license fees; and designed the framework for the development of a new information technology (IT) business process application that makes available an electronic application for advance rulings on the origin of goods for customs.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

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

10.1 Formalities and Document Requirements

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ At the request of the Customs Administration of Serbia, the TFSP team finalized the Terms of Reference for the development of an IT business process application with a related database to enable more efficient implementation of customs procedures related to the issuance of Advance Rulings Decisions. The selection of the IT company that will be responsible for the development, deployment, and setup of the IT software solution for the Serbian Customs Administration is ongoing. Deployment of the new IT application is planned for FY2019.

■ Following the successful completion of comprehensive time release studies during the last reporting period, the Customs Administration of Serbia, with the support of the TFSP, presented its findings and recommendations to other border agencies and line ministries and the private sector in a workshop held in December 2017. Experts from the Customs Administration and the TFSP presented the TRS findings and recommendations for reforms. The TRS Working Group approved the report, which is publicly available at the Customs Administration website.

■ Following the coordinated advocacy effort by the TFSP and the USAID REG Project, the government of Serbia adopted a decision that formally establishes the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation (NCBTF) in early November 2017 (Official Gazette of the RS No 98/2017). The NCBTF is chaired by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, while the Customs Administration holds the role of the deputy chair. The TFSP provided advisory support in designing legal framework and procedures of the NCBTF in coordination with USAID REG Project. TFSP experts took part in consultative sessions of the NCBTF held with the private sector on establishment and operation of specialized working groups. In May 2018, four specialized working groups of the NCBTF were formed with the participation of representatives from national private sector associations. Additionally, TFSP experts took part in the national conference “Public-Private Dialogue for Trade Facilitation” in November 2017, that was organized to mark the establishment of the NCBTF.

■ The TFSP team updated the assessment of the alignment level of Serbia’s trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the WTO TFA Tracking Tool.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

TFSP collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a regional GIZ project, both of which support trade facilitation initiatives.

Country-Specific Activities: Central Asia

Georgia

**TFSP support
to Georgia**

TFSP complemented WBG support in assisting the Customs Department of the Georgia Revenue Service in the development of a standard operating procedures manual for customs valuation. This manual is intended for Commodity Control Division officers at customs clearance offices to guide the implementation of risk management to select shipments for inspection.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

7.4 Risk Management

FY18 update on key activities

■ In the second half of FY18, the team finalized the manual and completed two workshops with the aim to review the manual and to train the Revenue Service officials on the best practice approach to customs valuation to enhance the risk selection of shipments for inspection.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

TFSP funds are complementing two WBG projects in Georgia.

Kazakhstan

**TFSP support
to Kazakhstan**

The focus of TFSP support in Kazakhstan working with the Ministry of National Economy in support of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), which was established in August 2017.

The TFSP has provided guidance on the notification process for Categories A, B, and C, which Kazakhstan notified the WTO in July 2018, and is now assisting the committee with the development of a work plan and the establishment of working groups.

**Main areas of
technical assistance
(TFA work priorities)**

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY18 update on key activities

■ The Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan (MNE) prepared the initial draft plan on the implementation of the WTO TFA in 2017. TFSP is now helping the MNE update the plan for government approval. The project team held meetings with the MNE and other trade facilitation stakeholders (Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Investment and Development, and representatives from the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs) to discuss the role of the NTFC and the development of the TFA implementation plan. The project's recommendations on the Kazakhstan TFA Implementation Plan were sent to the MNE in June for review and discussion. The TFSP will also provide the briefing papers on the WTO TFA and NTFC to the MNE and will assist in the preparation of the first meeting of the NTFC. It is expected that the draft TFA Implementation Plan will be reviewed and approved in the fall.

TFSP support to the Kyrgyz Republic

In the Kyrgyz Republic, the TFSP provided extensive support to the Ministry of Economy and other stakeholders as they deliberated on the modalities of setting up the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) and, since its establishment, with developing action plans and setting up working groups. The TFSP, GIZ, and Kyrgyz Customs carried out a time release study in the spring of 2018. The TFSP continued to work with Kyrgyz Customs to develop a risk framework for "trusted traders." The TFSP is also working with the Kyrgyz State Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety Inspection Service on the development of a risk-based import control system.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ Within the reporting period, the TFSP provided considerable expert support to the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic on the development of the legal and regulatory framework for the establishment and functioning of the Council on Trade Facilitation. In particular, TFSP supported the adoption of the following legal documents: **(A)** Resolution of the Government no. 435, dated July 18, 2017, which establishes and regulates the Trade Facilitation Council (TFC); **(B)** Resolution of the Prime Minister no. 639, dated September 25, 2017, which establishes the composition and frequency of the council; **(C)** the Order of the Minister of Economy no. 177, dated August 21,

2017, which forms the Secretariat of the council; and (D) Order of the Ministry of Economy no. 55, dated April 19, 2018, which establishes the working groups under the Council.

- The TFSP supported the Secretariat in holding the first meeting of the council in December 2017, at which the Action Plan on the Implementation of WTO TFA was approved.

- The TFSP provided guidance and supported the development of the draft WTO TFA implementation plan.

- Drawing from the TFSP's recommendations, the Kyrgyz Customs Administration's Risk Department drafted and approved a temporary order on the categorization of participants of foreign economic activities (trusted traders regime). The risk management division has started to pilot this scheme in one regional customs office.

- The TFSP is also working with the Latvian Food and Veterinary Service to build capacity in the Kyrgyz State Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety Inspection Service. Fact-finding visits to the agencies and border stations have been undertaken and the development of a scheme for risk-based import controls has begun.

- In February–March 2018, the TFSP, in collaboration with GIZ and Kyrgyz Customs, began the implementation of a time release study. The study was carried out at four border crossing points—Torugart with China, Kyzyl-Bel with Tajikistan, Dostuk and Kara-Suu with Uzbekistan—and the related terminals Bishkek Customs Warehouse (BTS), Kyrgyz-Mebel, Batken Bimi, and Osh Bimi. Data from about 1,500 collected questionnaires were evaluated using World Customs Organization software. The final report with recommendations is in draft and will be shared with Customs and other stakeholders in early fiscal year 2019.

- The TFSP team assessed the alignment level of Kyrgyz Republic's trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the TFA Tracking Tool methodology.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP collaborates with two regional trade facilitation projects, funded by USAID and GIZ.

Tajikistan

TFSP support to Tajikistan

The TFSP in Tajikistan works with border agencies, especially with Customs on simplifying the procedures for clearing goods, including through (A) more effective use of risk management, (B) reduction in the number of documents required to trade, and (C) closer border agency collaboration. More broadly, the program supports the country's alignment with the WTO TFA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP provides technical assistance in risk management to the Customs Administration of Tajikistan. During this reporting period, the TFSP risk management consultant, who is the head of the Risk Information Processing Unit of Latvia Customs, prepared a set of instructions for customs officers, which includes the requirement for field customs officers to complete reports on the results of their inspections. The consultant also developed risk profiles together with the risk management department officers and launched them in test mode in the Customs information technology system. The risk profiles will help identify high-risk goods and reduce the need for customs to check low-risk consignments.

■ The TFSP, together with the USAID Competitiveness, Trade and Jobs Project, carried out a time release study (TRS) at three border checkpoints (Tajik-Uzbek, Tajik-Kyrgyz, and Tajik-Afghan borders) and four inland terminals (Hujand, Dushanbe, Tursunzade, and Asht terminals) in June 2017. The analytical report was shared with Tajik Customs Service in the fall of 2017 and published on the Customs website. Presentations of the results of the TRS were made to other government agencies and private sector representatives at an advisory board meeting of the Customs Service.

■ The TFSP and Customs have discussed piloting an authorized economic operator (AEO) program for export. The legislation enabling the AEO program was drafted through the NTFC, and is planned to be incorporated into the Customs Code. This regulation is pending in the government. The TFSP and Customs also held an information

session for the private sector, where EU and Latvian practices were also discussed.

■ In 2017, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) requested support with the facilitation of exports of agricultural products, an initiative called the “Green Corridor.” The TFSP organized fact-finding missions with a customs expert and reviewed the current procedures at borders, terminals, and the bureaucratic requirements prior to export. The analysis and recommendations were presented to the donors’ Trade Facilitation Working Group and submitted to MEDT. The team recommended that the NTFC discuss the report and establish a working group for further deliberations.

■ In response to a request from Tajik Customs, the TFSP hired a local expert who developed analytical report queries on the customs clearance and control system—including on export and import trends, and changes in prices and volumes for individual groups of goods—and trained selected customs staff on how to develop such queries and analyze the reports.

■ The TFSP team assessed the alignment level of Tajikistan’s trade facilitation practice with the TFA using the WTO TFA Tracking Tool methodology.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP collaborates with two regional trade facilitation projects, funded by USAID and GIZ.



Port of Chittagong, Bangladesh
Credit: World Bank Group

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

TFSP support to Bangladesh

TFSP assistance builds on work that the WBG has previously completed (implemented since 2012) to strengthen Bangladesh's border agency coordination, risk management and legal framework. Through TFSP support, a national trade portal was launched by the Ministry of Commerce to provide access to information both English and Bangla for traders regarding the import and export process. Time release studies have also been completed in the Port of Chittagong, Air Cargo, Inland Container Depot, Dhaka, and Benapole. Through technical assistance and simplification of procedures, import clearance time has been reduced from 11.0 days to 8.5 days at the Port of Chittagong. The TFSP reform initiatives have helped the country prepare for the implementation of a single window program, which will be financed by a WBG loan. Bangladesh has also been successful in establishing a National Trade Facilitation Committee, adopting a risk management framework, and undertaking comprehensive revision of its customs code.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 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

FY18 update on key activities

■ The TFSP is supporting maintenance and updates of the trade information portal before it is transferred to a regional World Bank project in 2019. A revised version of the portal, with a sophisticated layout and interactive content, went live in the reporting period. The portal has received 61,435 page views by users from 143 countries since it was launched; it has received a considerable response from young entrepreneurs, with the highest hits on the Business Start-up Process and Export/Import Registration Certificate pages.

■ A Trade Portal Technical Committee was formed in FY18 and two workshops, one review meeting, and a technical committee meeting were organized.

■ The online licensing module (OLM) aims to offer a simplified way to apply for the Export and Import Registration Certificate issued by the Chief Controller of Imports & Exports (CCI&E). Under the OLM, traders will submit the online application with required documents to the CCI&E, which will check the documents and approve the application. The trader will then receive the auto-generated registration certificate by logging into the OLM. The software for automating and streamlining CCI&E's internal usage was set up with TFSP support, and a three-day comprehensive training was held for CCI&E officials.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

World Bank investment project financing of US\$74 million is being leveraged for the single window program, trade portal sustainability, and risk systems (as complementary activities).

Nepal

TFSP support to Nepal

TFSP support draws on the work that has been under way through WBG assistance in Nepal since 2012. Key activities in the reporting period have been focused on monitoring and evaluation as the ongoing support on risk management has concluded. The TFSP initiatives connect seamlessly to the WBG investment loan of US\$100 million to finance projects that include the trade portal and national single window.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

7.5 Post-Clearance Audit

11 Freedom of Transit

FY18 update on key activities

■ The Nepalese government developed a unique identifier code for importers and exporters (IE code) as a result of study visits to India Customs in Delhi (2011) and Kolkata (2015) to gain a practical understanding of the design, structure, and requirements for electronic data exchange between the two countries. Following the study event, Nepal Customs prepared a manual on developing an Importer/Exporter (IE) Code that is the basis for this data interchange in August 2015. The Electronic Cargo Tracking System modality, which was approved by the cabinet on January 13, 2018, is expected to significantly facilitate trade.

■ On the request of the director general of the Department of Customs, a detailed gap analysis for post-clearance audit was undertaken.

■ An end line study to assess the time reduction across key border posts targeted by the program is being undertaken: Birgunj–Raxaul and Biratnagar–Jogbani.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP informs a US\$23 million World Bank Nepal–India Regional Trade and Transport Project, including supporting the creation of a national single window, a trade portal and Inland Clearance Depot.

Sri Lanka (inactive in FY18)

TFSP support to Sri Lanka

There was no direct TFSP support in the reporting period. Before FY18, however, the TFSP undertook a TFA gap analysis in Sri Lanka. This helped secure additional funding from DFAT for an implementation project, as well as an action on the TFA in a US\$100 million development policy loan, and a component on trade facilitation (including national single window implementation) in a planned investment project (potentially also US\$100 million) for FY19–20.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet
- 10.4 Single Window



Quay crane on the docks in Sri Lanka
Credit: Dominic Sansoni / World Bank



WORLD BANK GROUP
IFC



ECA ANNUAL TRADE FACILITATION CONFERENCE ON COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT

September 19-20, 2017
Bečići, Montenegro

Annex B **Knowledge Management Activities**

I. Knowledge Management Products

A. ONLINE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT TRACKING TOOL

In the reporting period, significant effort was put into finalizing the TFA Tracking Tool website, which will provide a mechanism for countries to track their reform implementation and report on their progress regarding full and effective implementation alignment with the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The website will be launched in early FY19 and will provide client countries with access to details about their alignment to the TFA. The first iteration of scores that create a baseline for countries and additional updates for a dozen countries were completed and uploaded in the reporting period.

B. ONLINE COLLABORATION PORTAL: TRADE INFORMATION PORTALS

As a follow-up to a peer-to-peer event focused on trade and information portals held in Singapore in 2017, the team is working to create an online collaboration platform for client countries to continue the dialogue and share experiences. The platform development is under way and leverages the WBG Collaboration for Development (C4D) online software. It is expected that the portal will be launched the middle of FY19.

II. Select Events Supported by the Trade Facilitation Support Program (Peer-to-Peer Learning, Policy Dialogue)

1. PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EVENT: COORDINATED BORDER MANAGEMENT FOR THE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION —BUDVA, MONTENEGRO, SEPTEMBER 2017

In collaboration with the Ministry of Finance of Montenegro, the TFSP hosted a “Coordinated Border Management” learning event to improve collaboration between border agencies and the private sector.

More than 60 stakeholders from 16 countries in Europe and Central Asia attended the two-day, peer-to-peer event, including representatives from customs agencies; sanitary, phytosanitary, and veterinary agencies; ministries of economy and finance; and the private sector. Participants shared their experiences and challenges related to border management and agency coordination and discussed best practices and potential solutions.

With the growth in the number of countries implementing TFA measures, the event was an opportunity to take stock of the achievements so far and the challenges ahead—with the hope that the community of practice will help governments share experiences and support each other in this effort in the years ahead.

Border collaboration is a critical mechanism to achieve each country’s trade facilitation goals. As one event participant said, “Trade facilitation is not all about customs. It is also about the other border agencies and the business community coming together and working towards a shared common goal.” Better coordination, collaboration, and connectivity support aims to not only boost national and regional trade, but also to create jobs and economic growth. This is particularly important in the Western Balkans as the region works toward joining the European Union.

Ministry of Finance in Montenegro website (Montenegrin):

<http://www.mif.gov.me/vijesti/176456/Saopstenje-Godisnja-konferencija-o-trgovinskim-olaksicama-za-zemlje-Evroe-i-Centralne-Azije-Koordinisano-upravljanje-granicom.html>

National Trade Facilitation Committee of Montenegro website (Montenegrin):

<http://www.upravacarina.gov.me/rubrike/aktuelnosti/176474/Saopstenje-Konferencija-Koordinisano-upravljanje-granicom.html>

Press release from the World Bank Group (English):

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/09/19/cutting-costs-and-improving-trade-in-europe-and-central-asia-the-world-bank-group-brings-government-and-businesses-together-to-share-experiences-on-trade-facilitation-reforms-and-enhance-border-coordination>

Press release from the International Finance Corporation

English:

<https://ifcextapps.ifc.org/IFCExt/Pressroom/IFCPressRoom.nsf/0/B22E88712D3F03AD852581A000295F0E>

Montenegrin:

<https://ifcextapps.ifc.org/IFCExt/Pressroom/IFCPressRoom.nsf/0/EA3D0B611D8818E4852581A00029E75E>

Blog: “Coordination, Collaboration and Connectivity for Better Border Management” (English):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/coordination-collaboration-and-connectivity-better-border-management>

Local media examples:

TV Budva (Montenegrin):

<http://www.rtvbudva.me/vijesti/konferencija-u-budvi-posvecena-brzem-i-jeftinijem-kretanju-i-carinjenju-robe/15961>

<http://rtcg.me/vijesti/ekonomija/178877/omoguciti-ubrzani-promet-legalne-robe.html>

Online and news portal (English):

http://www.4-traders.com/news/IFC-International-Finance-Cutting-Costs-and-Improving-Trade-in-Europe-and-Central-AsiaThe-World-Ba--25138723/?utm_medium=RSS&utm_content=20170919

2. IPPC SEMINAR ON PLANT HEALTH AND TRADE FACILITATION —ROME, ITALY, OCTOBER 2017

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Seminar on Plant Health and Trade Facilitation – the seventh in a series - took place at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome on October 10, 2017. The seminar was attended by more than 100 participants from the WTO, the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), the WBG, and the FAO Trade and Markets Division.

Bill Gain, WBG global lead of the Trade Facilitation and Border Management Unit, presented on recent lessons on trade facilitation and plant health. He detailed current changes borders face, key aspects of a modern border management approach, the concept of the single window system and conditions enabling it, as well as the implementation lessons learned. He emphasized the need for a coordinated border management approach to address common challenges and outlined the benefits for each border and trade facilitation stakeholder.

News article on the IPPC website

(also promoted via the TFSP website and WBG social media):

<https://www.ippc.int/en/news/the-ippc-seminar-on-plant-health-and-trade-facilitation-held-at-the-fao-headquarters/>

Video recording of the seminar

<http://www.fao.org/webcast/home/en/item/4457/icode/>

Photos

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/ju5hY71ADQtDXH123>

Presentations

(files at the bottom of the page)

<https://www.ippc.int/en/themes/trade-facilitation/>

Twitter story

<https://twitter.com/i/moments/918123665039949824>



Year 2017
Why the T&E?



Panel of speakers seated at a long table on the stage. Each speaker has a nameplate and a microphone. The nameplates are partially legible and include names such as 'Miguel Ángel', 'Bill Linn', 'Mónica', and 'Eduardo'.

3. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERS EXCHANGE BEST PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT THE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT AT THE ELEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE —BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, DECEMBER 2017

The Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11), held December 10–13, 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, included a dedicated session on December 12. There, public sector and private sector leaders exchanged insights on implementing the WTO’s TFA to fully reap the benefits of swifter and less costly trade at the border.

Speakers at the “Trade Facilitation on Track” event highlighted the importance of local ownership of reform plans, multi-stakeholder cooperation, and capacity building to successfully implement the agreement. Representatives from TFSP client countries, Jamaica and Zambia, shared their experiences on the implementation of certain provisions of the agreement.

News article on the WTO website:

<http://www.tfafacility.org/public-and-private-sector-leaders-exchange-best-practices-implement-trade-facilitation-agreement>

4. REGIONAL MEETING OF CUSTOMS DIRECTORS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS—SKOPJE, FYR MACEDONIA, DECEMBER 2017

The Customs Administration of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, supported by USAID and the TFSP, organized a regional meeting for the directors general of Customs administrations in the Western Balkans. The event was held from November 30 to December 1, 2017, in Skopje and aimed to develop a common approach for customs in the region and to promote economic cooperation. Representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia in addition to those from FYR Macedonia attended the event.

The news was published on the Macedonia Customs Directorate website and covered by local media:

<http://carina.mk/index.php/en/2016-08-15-20-09-54/2016-08-15-15-05-6/1508-neformalen-regionalen-sostanok-na-direktorite-na-carinskite-upravi-od-zapaden-balkan-2>

5. JOINT MISSION WITH UNCTAD TO DEVELOP A TRADE FACILITATION ROADMAP—SÃO TOMÉ, SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE, JANUARY 2018

The TFSP and UNCTAD are jointly working with São Tomé and Príncipe to develop a Trade Facilitation Roadmap. The TFSP supported the country's NTFC to undertake a WTO TFA Gap Assessment, which provided the basis for the three-year action plan.

Links to news article on the UNCTAD website

(cross-promoted on the TFSP website and WBG social media):

<http://unctad.org/en/pages/MeetingDetails.aspx?meetingid=1664>

6. IPPC GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM SEMINAR ON ELECTRONIC PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION TO FACILITATE SAFER TRADE —KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, JANUARY 2018

The IPPC's third Global Symposium focused on using electronic phytosanitary certification (ePhyto) to facilitate the safer trade of plants and plant products. The symposium was held January 22–26, 2018, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It was jointly organized by the IPPC Secretariat, the Malaysian Department of Agriculture, the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission, and the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. Eighty-six participants from 36 countries and 20 international and regional associations attended the event.

The theme of the symposium was “ePhyto and Trade Facilitation.” The aim was to share practical information related to the ePhyto national system and how the implementation of the IPPC ePhyto solution can support the benefits of the TFA. EPhyto can play an important role in improving border efficiencies, increasing border agency coordination, and facilitating the implementation of risk-based measures. The TFSP shared its experiences on implementing ePhyto in developing countries and noted how it can benefit TFA measures.

Link to news article on the IPPC website

(cross-promoted on the TFSP website and WBG social media):

<https://www.ippc.int/en/news/the-3rd-ippc-global-symposium-on-ephyto-held-in-malaysia-with-the-theme-ephyto-and-trade-facilitation/>

7. TFA WORKING GROUP—BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, FEBRUARY 2018

The ninth TFA Working Group meeting brought together World Customs Organization (WCO) member nations, represented by Customs administrations and relevant ministries, as well as trade negotiators from Geneva, donors, and other relevant stakeholders such as other global standard-setting bodies and the private sector. The agenda included an update on developments in the WTO regarding the TFA. Breakout sessions discussed key TFA matters, including the importance of coordinated border management, public-private dialogue, and enhanced coordination with other governmental agencies, such as sanitary authorities, for the purpose of implementing the TFA.

8. A GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON SPS CAPACITY BUILDING SOLUTIONS—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, MARCH 2018

The Standards Trade and Development Facility (STDF) working group hosted a global dialogue on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures. The meeting brought together more than 40 trade, health, and agriculture experts along with STDF partners—FAO, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), World Bank Group, World Health Organization (WHO), and WTO—donors, and experts on developing countries joined by regional organizations and the private sector. The TFSP presented on trade facilitation and how to build a national single window.

Link to news item on the STDF website:

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=1dd65e410f4f874eaf3175abc&id=da3e3da0cf>

Links to presentations made by the TFSP team:

http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/Bill_Gain_WBG_WGMar18.pdf

http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/John_Keyser_WGMar18.pdf

9. STDF POLICY COMMITTEE: “DRIVING SAFE TRADE SOLUTIONS WORLDWIDE”—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, MARCH 2018

The TFSP participated in the STDF Policy Committee, which brings together partners and donors to take stock of the committee’s reach and results in helping small-scale farmers, processors, traders, and governments gain access to global markets. A new book was launched with 25 of these results stories—including work delivered with the support of the TFSP.

News article on the STDF website

(also promoted via the TFSP website and WBG social media):

<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/?u=1dd65e410f4f874eaf3175abc&id=246022cab>

STDF book:

http://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_Results_Booklet_EN.pdf

10. TFSP RECOGNIZED BY THE MACEDONIAN CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION—SKOPJE, FYR MACEDONIA, APRIL 2018

On April 11, 2018, an event was organized by the Macedonian Customs Administration to celebrate its 26th anniversary. Key stakeholders were invited to witness the reforms made throughout the life of the administration, including the recent digitalization of the agency.

Key partners were also acknowledged as part of the agency’s modernization and reform efforts. Violane Konar-Leacy, program manager of the TFSP projects in the Europe and Central Asia region, was recognized for her work with the administration. FYR Macedonia is a trade reform pioneer in the region. FYR Macedonia and Serbia are the first countries in the Europe and Central Asia region to reach an agreement on the transfer of goods and passengers at border crossings between both countries, including the establishment of a joint border post.

Related articles (cross promoted on the TFSP website and WBG social media) (English):

<http://www.customs.gov.mk/index.php/en/2016-08-15-20-09-54/2016-08-15-15-05-6/1650-26-5>

Recent reforms (Macedonian):

<https://kurir.mk/makedonija/vesti/makedonija-i-srbija-so-zaednichki-granichen-premin-na-tabanovce/>

11. WTO TFC COMMITTEE MEETING – GENEVA, MAY 2018

For the first time, the Annex D+ group was invited to attend the TFC Committee Meeting. The Annex D + group is comprised of the IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, the WBG and the WCO. The TFSP presented on capacity building efforts and lessons learned to the Committee members complementing interventions by TFSP donors.

12. AUTHORIZED ECONOMIC OPERATORS: LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE (KOSOVO AND THE UNITED KINGDOM) —LONDON, U.K., MAY 2018

The TFSP organized a study visit to the United Kingdom for a small group of officials from the Kosovo Customs Administration and the Food and Veterinary Agency on May 14–15, 2018. The purpose of the visit was for Kosovar officials to learn from the experience of a developed administration regarding the implementation of an authorized economic operator (AEO) program, and the challenges and the practical realities associated with creating and sustaining such a program.

13. WBG-SIDA TRADE SEMINAR —STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, MAY 2018

The TFSP was represented at the WBG-SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) trade seminar in Stockholm both through a dedicated trade facilitation session and in the trade and gender session. The trade facilitation session focused on lessons from TFSP implementation and on why trade facilitation reforms are critical for developing countries. The trade and gender session presented survey work to identify women's bottlenecks to trade (related to the TFA) that is partly funded under TFSP.

14. DFID KNOWLEDGE AND TRADE FORUM – LONDON, UK, JUNE 2018

DFID hosted a week of Trade Seminars on leading research and on-the-ground project examples on trade themes. The agenda included speakers from a number of international organizations in addition to the TFSP, including the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), the World Economic Forum, the International Trade Centre (ITC), and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD).

15. WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL CUSTOMS DIRECTORS: WORKING TOGETHER TO SIMPLIFY REGIONAL TRADE PROCEDURES (MEETING #2)—TIRANA, ALBANIA, JUNE 2018

The TFSP supported a second meeting with the Western Balkans Regional Customs Directors in Tirana on June 12, 2018. The meeting was attended by over 40 participants and jointly led by the Albanian Minister of Finance and Economy, the Albanian Director General of Customs, the British Ambassador in Albania, the Deputy Secretary General of the Regional Council, the CEFTA Secretariat Director, and the International Relations Officer at DG TAXUD of the European Commission.

The group discussed how to simplify trade procedures across the region. The Albanian Minister of Finance and Economy emphasized the need to eliminate fees that have become obstacles for trade procedures and urged countries to recognize each other's certificates. The importance of sharing information between countries in order to better manage risk was also highlighted.

16. IMO SPECIAL EVENT ON PORTS—LONDON, U.K., JUNE 2018

The TFSP participated in a special event jointly hosted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) at the IMO headquarters in London on June 11, 2018. The theme of the event was mutual cooperation and collaboration. The premise was that global trade by sea is dependent on the interconnection between ships, ports, and people—and that all parties need to be involved, from port operators to regulators, to maritime security experts and innovators in technology.

Across four sessions, 18 panelists, including from the TFSP, shared their views on port-related issues such as automation and digitalization, including Port Community Systems and the maritime single window; ways to improve facilitation; best practices to improve coordination at ports; improvement of efficiency of ports and implementation of measures to reduce emissions in ports; and the challenges of dealing with larger ships.

Related content:

TFSP presentation, “Ways to Improve the Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic: Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP)”

<http://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/Documents/porteventpresentations/Session%202-Bill%20Gain-World%20Bank%20Group.pdf>

Recording of the session

http://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/Documents/SpecialPortEvent_Recordings/2018-06-11_11h37m44s_Channel%201.mp3

Event photos

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/imo-un/sets/72157670041731048>

Associated news article published in Port Strategy on Aug 6, “A Real Aid to Frictionless Trade,” with quotes from Bill Gain, global lead of the TFSP:

<http://www.portstrategy.com/news101/port-operations/port-services/ports-can-benefit-from-customs-fast-tracking-and-priority-treatment-though-aeo-certification>

**17. WTO TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE MEETING
—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2018**

In June 2018, the Trade Facilitation Committee held a meeting under the new chair, Ambassador Dalia Kadišienė (Lithuania). At the request of the committee, the TFSP participated in the meeting and played a key role during the experience sharing and thematic discussions on TFA implementation.

**18. ANNUAL WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
COUNCIL SESSION—BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, JUNE 2018**

The 132nd Annual Session of the WCO Council—the organization’s highest decision-making body—took place in Belgium June 28–30, 2018. Discussions were held on six priority areas, including trade facilitation, with a focus on the WCO Mercator Program, which aims to assist the organization’s members in implementing the WTO TFA. The TFSP participated in the meeting and shared practical implementation experiences.



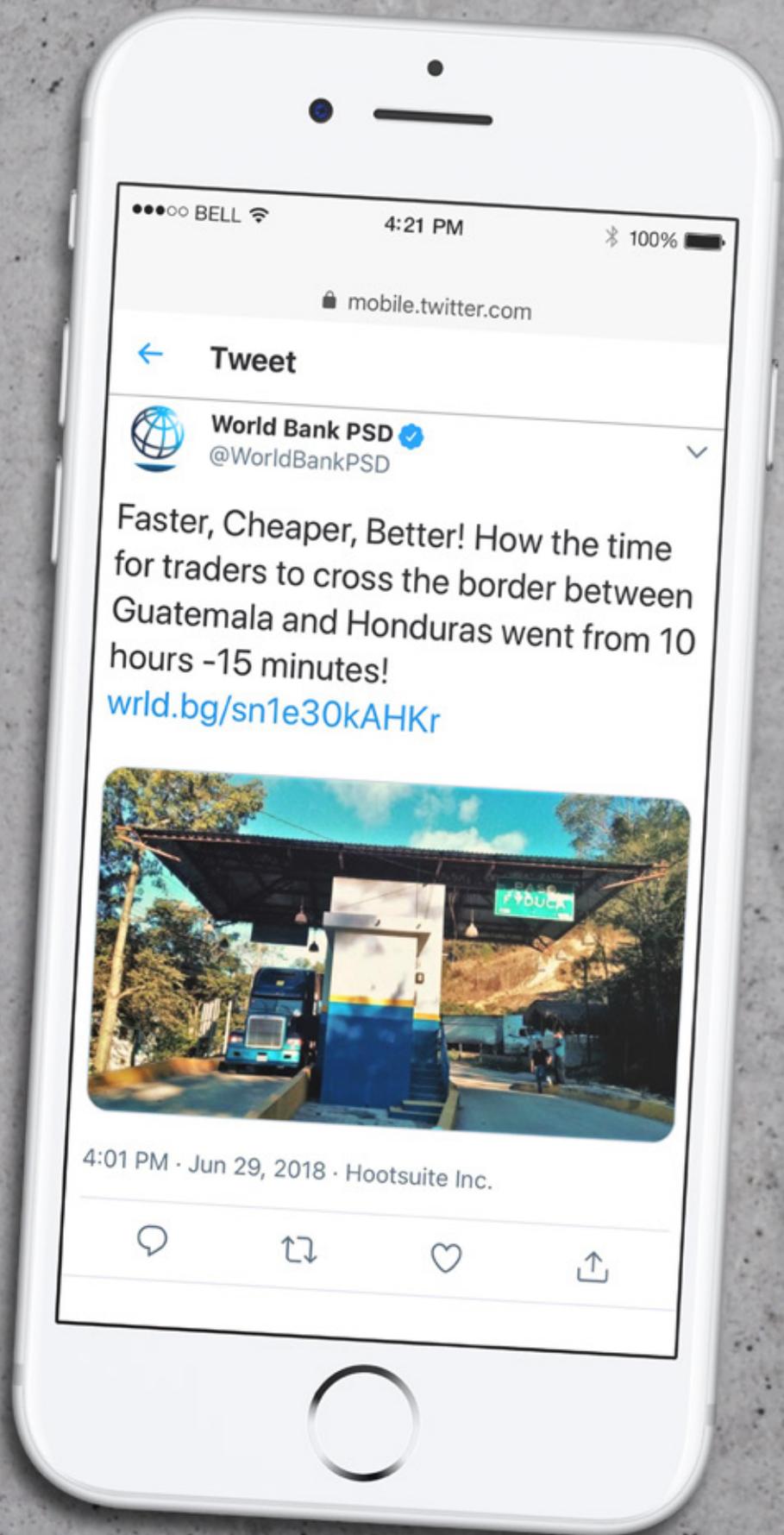
A4T Global Review 2017
AID FOR TRADE

Promoting Trade, Inclusion and Connectivity for Sustainable Development

Mr. Andrei Balan

Mr. Magotaamu Galanua
SAMOA

Ms. Tatjana
MONTENE



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← Tweet

 World Bank PSD 
@WorldBankPSD

Faster, Cheaper, Better! How the time for traders to cross the border between Guatemala and Honduras went from 10 hours -15 minutes!
wrlid.bg/sn1e30kAHKr



4:01 PM · Jun 29, 2018 · Hootsuite Inc.



Annex C **Communications**

Communications is an important element of the Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) 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 continued to build a foundation for communications and to embed it within project activities. The communications plan for FY18–20 was refined to guide the program’s approach to strategic communications and was supplemented by the development of guidance for team members on how to incorporate communications into specific activities, including donor visibility requirements.

The TFSP leveraged the following communications channels in FY18:

I. PROGRAM WEBSITE

The TFSP website (www.worldbank.org/en/programs/trade-facilitation-support-program) is the main vehicle for program communication and houses communication products, reform news, and blogs of interest to stakeholders and other users. The number of website visitors grew in the reporting period from 1,500+ page visitors at the end of FY17 to 2,500 at the end of FY18.

II. TRADE POST BLOG

The team has written a number of blog posts about the work and experiences of the TFSP. The posts have been published on the World Bank Group Trade Post blog, a global platform to bring observations from the field and reflections on research from the WBG’s experts on international trade.

Here is a list of selected blog posts developed during the reporting period:

“Can Blockchain Revolutionize Trade?” (67 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/can-blockchain-revolutionize-trade>

“Coordination, Collaboration and Connectivity for Better Border Management in Europe and Central Asia” (213 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/coordination-collaboration-and-connectivity-better-border-management>

“Customs Union between Guatemala and Honduras Reduces Trade Time from 10 Hours to 15 Minutes!” (659 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/latinamerica/customs-union-between-guatemala-and-honduras-10-hours-15-minutes>

These blog posts from the last reporting period continued to be viewed:

“WTO TFA Implementation: Learning from Early Results”

(120 page views this reporting period, a total of 720 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/wto-tfa-implementation-learning-early-results>

“Lowering Trade Costs through Transparency: The Importance of Trade Information Portals”

(88 page views this reporting period, total of 233 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/lowering-trade-costs-through-transparency-importance-trade-information-portals>

“Five Actions That Matter for the Future of Aid for Trade”

(32 page views this reporting period, total of 422 page views):

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/five-actions-matter-future-aid-trade>

“Now That the Trade Facilitation Agreement Has Entered into Force...” (total of 142 page views):

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/now-trade-facilitation-agreement-has-entered-force>

III. SOCIAL MEDIA

The program shares updates widely on the World Bank Group social media platforms, including on Twitter (@WorldBankPSD: 28,600 followers) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/worldbank>: 2,545,826 followers).

IV. BROCHURE AND BANNERS

The TFSP brochure (<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/425551499436097201/1708846-TFSP-Brochure-Single.pdf>) and pop-up banners were developed to raise the visibility of the program and donor support at key events. The brochure is available in two languages (English and French) and over 700 copies have been shared at events, missions, and meetings. The brochures can also be downloaded from the TFSP website. Two program-wide banners are at the program team's disposal for use at key events.

V. FACTSHEETS

A factsheet was developed to provide a short summary about the program and an outline of its mandate, activities, and results. Regionally specific factsheets also have been created to provide more specific information about TFSP activities in two regions and are available in English and local languages: Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Western Balkans. The easy-to-update factsheets are available in Word, printed locally, and distributed during key meetings and events. All have the logos of TFSP's donors.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

Program-specific presentations have been developed for key events according to the specific thematic areas of focus. The aim is that the templates can be obtained by the program team and customized accordingly—so that the program, activities, and key messages are communicated consistently, regardless of the location or event.

VII. 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 mission 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 National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), and so on—in TFSP-supported countries to assist in media engagement. Some recent examples include the launch of trade and information portals in Jamaica, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam and a peer-to-peer event on cross-border management in Europe and Central Asia. Local media engagement at the country level is an effective way to engage the private sector through local press articles.

VIII. REFORM COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

In some cases, deeper communications support is required to ensure that the technical assistance provided, and results achieved by the 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, the NTFC) to structure their communication around the reforms through dissemination plans and targeted media engagement.

For example, in Albania, the TFSP is providing communications advisory support to the National Food Authority (NFA). The NFA requested support with communications training and planning (communications strategy) to prepare for the implementation of risk-based import controls, which will likely result in lower inspection and sampling rates. Similar communications support is under way in Kosovo with the Food and Veterinary Agency.

In Sri Lanka, the TFSP helped the Department of Commerce draft a communications plan and campaign targeted at the private sector to raise awareness about the launch of the new Trade and Information Portal and the associated benefits (campaign tagline: “Export-Import Made Easy”).

Going forward, communications campaigns will also be considered to promote overarching TFSP products and initiatives, such as the TFSP Tracking Tool, gender study, and so on. These campaigns will leverage various communication channels (as previously outlined) and will involve targeted engagement at both the global and country levels. Messages and platforms will vary by audience need and thematic objectives.

IX. MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTS

The program has produced a number of videos, which are showcased on the TFSP website. During the reporting period, the program produced a short video to capture the views of our client and donor partners:

TFSP: Hear from Our Partners:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2017/11/09/the-trade-facilitation-support-program-hear-from-our-partners>

The other short videos about trade facilitation produced in 2016–17 continued to be promoted and viewed via World Bank Group communication channels (1,379 additional views during the reporting period):

The Trade Facilitation Agreement:

Increasing Trade, Boosting Investment (425 views):

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2017/07/17/the-trade-facilitation-agreement-increasing-trade-boosting-investment>

Driving Jobs and Global Income through Trade Facilitation

(732 views):

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2017/07/17/driving-jobs-global-income-through-trade-facilitation>

Facilitating Trade across Borders (2,424 views):

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2016/11/22/facilitating-trade-across-borders>

In the next reporting period, the team will continue to build a bank of stories and visuals that convey the human aspect of the program's work. A key focus will be to create tools that will enable our stakeholders to experience and see our work first hand.

Annex D Financial Overview

All amounts are in US\$ thousands and as of June 30, 2018.

CASH RECEIPTS:

Donor:	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	Total by donor:
Australia		1,745	1,472	1,500	1,559	6,276
Canada	1,821					1,821
EU			4,388		3,554	7,942
The Netherlands					443	443
Norway		5,504			900	6,404
Sweden					596	596
Switzerland		300	1,000	971	811	3,082
UK			754	3,217	1,350	5,321
US*	950			650	965	2,565
Total by year:	2,771	7,549	7,614	6,338	10,178	34,450
Cumulative	2,771	10,320	17,934	24,272	34,450	

*Includes \$.95 mill to core TFSP and \$1.615 mill to Zambia.

OUTSTANDING PAYMENTS AT END OF FY18:

Donor:	USD million
Australia	
Canada	
EU	3,040
The Netherlands	1,331
Norway	2,203
Sweden	1,247
Switzerland	3,370
UK	
US*	190
Total:	11,381

CASH RECEIPTS AS PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL DONOR COMMITMENTS:

Total receipts and outstanding commitments	45,831
Percentage receipts:	75 %

DISBURSEMENTS:

TF:	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	Total
Total	224	2,191	5,307	7,467	6,867	22,056
Cumulative	224	2,415	7,722	15,189	22,056	

DISBURSEMENTS RATES:

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
	8 %	23 %	43 %	63 %	64 %
Incl. commitments					73 %



For more information:

www.worldbank.org/tradefacilitation

TFSP@worldbankgroup.org

In partnership with:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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