



WORLD BANK GROUP

Annual Report

Trade Facilitation Support Program
July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019



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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
OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
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) during the period of July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019, in accordance with the fiscal year 2019 (FY19) of the World Bank Group (WBG).

THE PROGRAM

The TFSP was launched in June 2014 to support 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 funding 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).

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 (USAID).

In implementing the TFSP, the WBG 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 World Trade Organization (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 WBG team has conducted over 50 TFA gap assessment missions with TFSP support 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 financed TFA implementation support to 47 countries, up from 45 countries since 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, 62 percent are International Development Association (IDA) countries, and 17 percent are countries on the WBG's FY19 list of fragile situations.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

Through the development of the TFA Tracking Tool, the TFSP is able to monitor progress toward meeting its objective of helping countries improve alignment with the WTO TFA. Measurement takes a whole-of-government approach and covers legal/policy aspects, implementation procedures, and operational checks.

At the end of the reporting period, baseline and updated measurements 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 44 percent to 53 percent (**section 1.4** has further details). Further improvements to the methodology to allow for a more granular review of relevant individual border agencies are under development.

PROGRAM FINANCES

At the end of the reporting period, US\$42.6 million had been received in financial contributions, which equals 84 percent of overall partner commitments. Cumulative disbursements and commitments were at 74 percent at the close of FY19. The disbursement-only rate has increased substantively over the past few years, from 43 percent in FY16 to 69 percent in FY19.

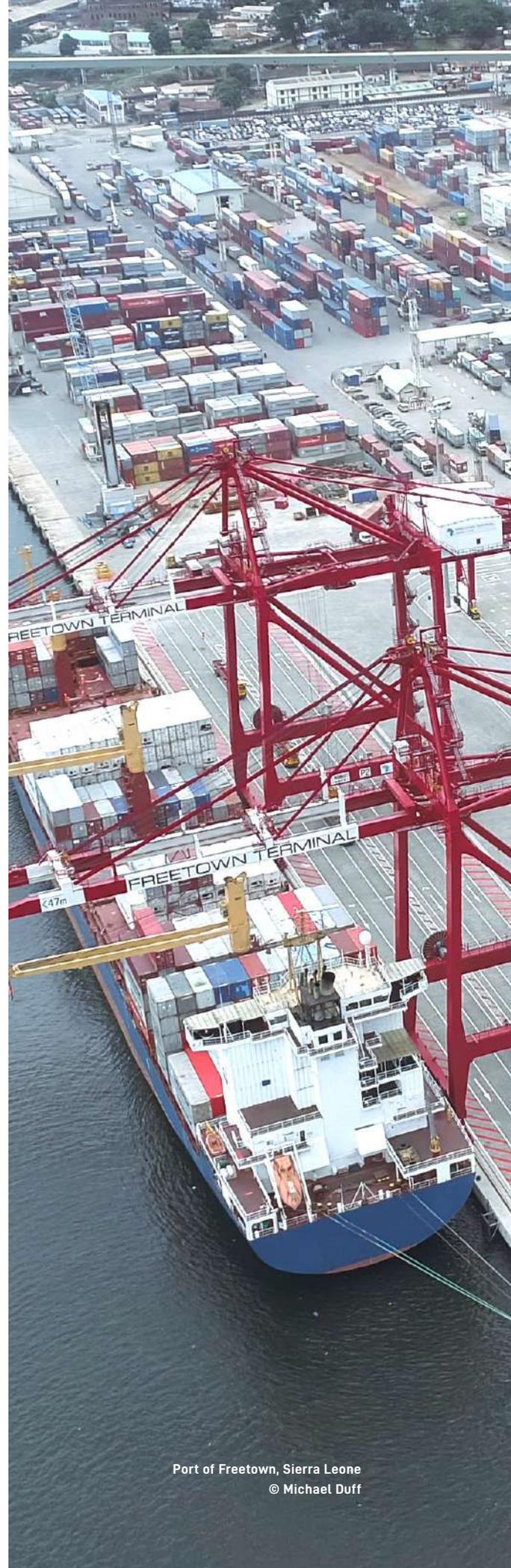
TFSP activities are expected to catalyze over US\$600 million in bilateral donor partner contributions and WBG lending instruments. Leverage is achieved either by directly informing World Bank lending and IFC operations or by complementing ongoing operations through support for the trade facilitation 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 the Pacific Islands, and USAID in Zambia.

PROGRAM STOCKTAKING

In an effort to confirm the relevance and effectiveness of the TFSP, and to identify possible room for improvements in the program over coming years, a “midterm” stocktaking was undertaken by external consultants in the reporting period. Overall, the report’s findings were very positive. Discussions with donors confirmed no desire to change the scope of the TFSP but stressed that increased focus going forward should be placed on integrating gender in the design of the projects, ensuring that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the private sector overall are better targeted, and ensuring stronger coordination among donor agencies at the country level (see **Box 1.3**).

LOOKING FORWARD

In FY20, the WBG will continue to implement ongoing activities and respond to emerging requests for support from new countries through the TFSP. Discussions on possible TFSP support in FY20 are under way with Belize, Burkina Faso, the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Peru, the Solomon Islands, Somalia, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Uzbekistan. Within the area of knowledge management and learning, TFSP support will focus on delivering two flagship events, enhancing the TFA Tracking Tool methodology, and completing the trade and gender work in East Asia and the Pacific.



Port of Freetown, Sierra Leone
© Michael Duff



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 Secretariat or through the World Bank Group offices and donor partners.

1 Program Highlights

The Trade Facilitation Support Program focuses on helping developing countries reform trade facilitation laws, procedures, processes, and systems to align with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement. 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 financing for TFA implementation to 47 countries, up from 45 countries in the last report with two new countries added to the portfolio (Bolivia and Lebanon).¹ The share of International Development Association countries remains high at 62 percent of the portfolio, and the share of countries with fragile situations was at 17 percent at the end of the reporting period.² With the addition of Lebanon to the portfolio, the TFSP now also provides support to the Middle East region. Sub-Saharan African countries make up the biggest share of the TFSP portfolio (26 percent). **Figures 1.1** and **1.2** provide details of the portfolio.

¹ Includes both active and inactive countries to demonstrate cumulative support since the inception of the TFSP.

² As per the World Bank's Harmonized List of Fragile Situations FY19, these are Burundi, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

TFSP support is divided into two main components: **(A)** technical assistance and **(B)** knowledge management and learning activities. Program highlights for FY19 are summarized for these two areas in the next sections.

1.1 Technical Assistance

The TFSP has financed technical assistance to 47 countries since the program's inception (see **figure 1.1** and **box 1.2**). Generally, technical assistance activities funded by 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.
- **Finalize reform priorities:** Provide support to develop a reform roadmap and timeline for implementation, including validation with all relevant public and private stakeholders (see **box 1.4**).
- **Implement reforms:** Once the reform roadmap is validated, the appropriate level of technical assistance will be identified to implement the reforms.

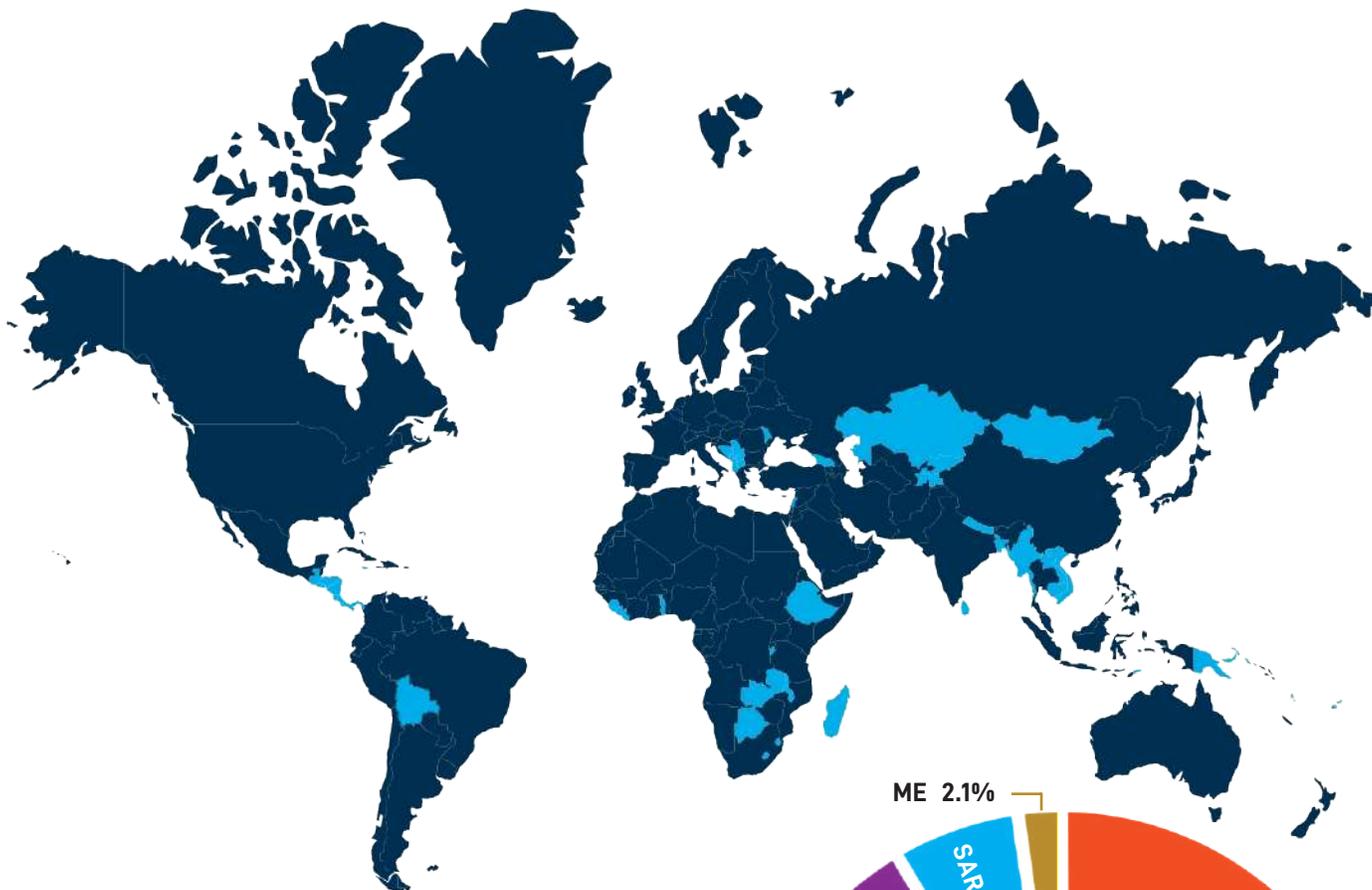


FIGURE 1.1
Map of 47 Countries Where the Trade Facilitation Support Program Has Provided or Is Providing Multi-year Implementation Assistance

Note: The countries are Albania, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Republic of North 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.

Annex A provides a summary of all TFSP-supported activities by country. 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.

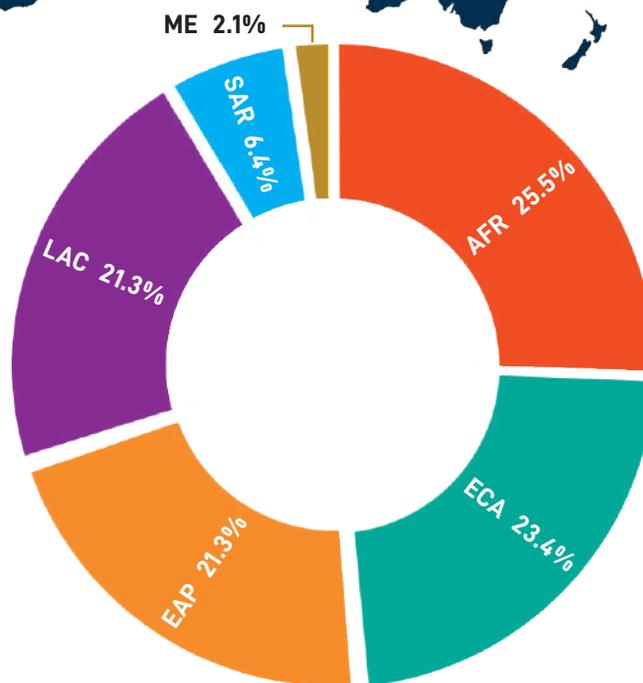


FIGURE 1.2
Regional Breakdown of the Cumulative Trade Facilitation Support Program Portfolio

- Sub-Saharan Africa (AFR) 25.5%
- Europe and Central Asia (ECA) 23.4%
- East Asia Pacific (EAP) 21.3%
- Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) 21.3%
- South Asia (SAR) 6.4%
- Middle East and North Africa (ME) 2.1%

BOX 1.2

Technical Assistance Supported by the TFSP

TFSP 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.

BOX 1.3

A Midterm Stocktaking of the TFSP

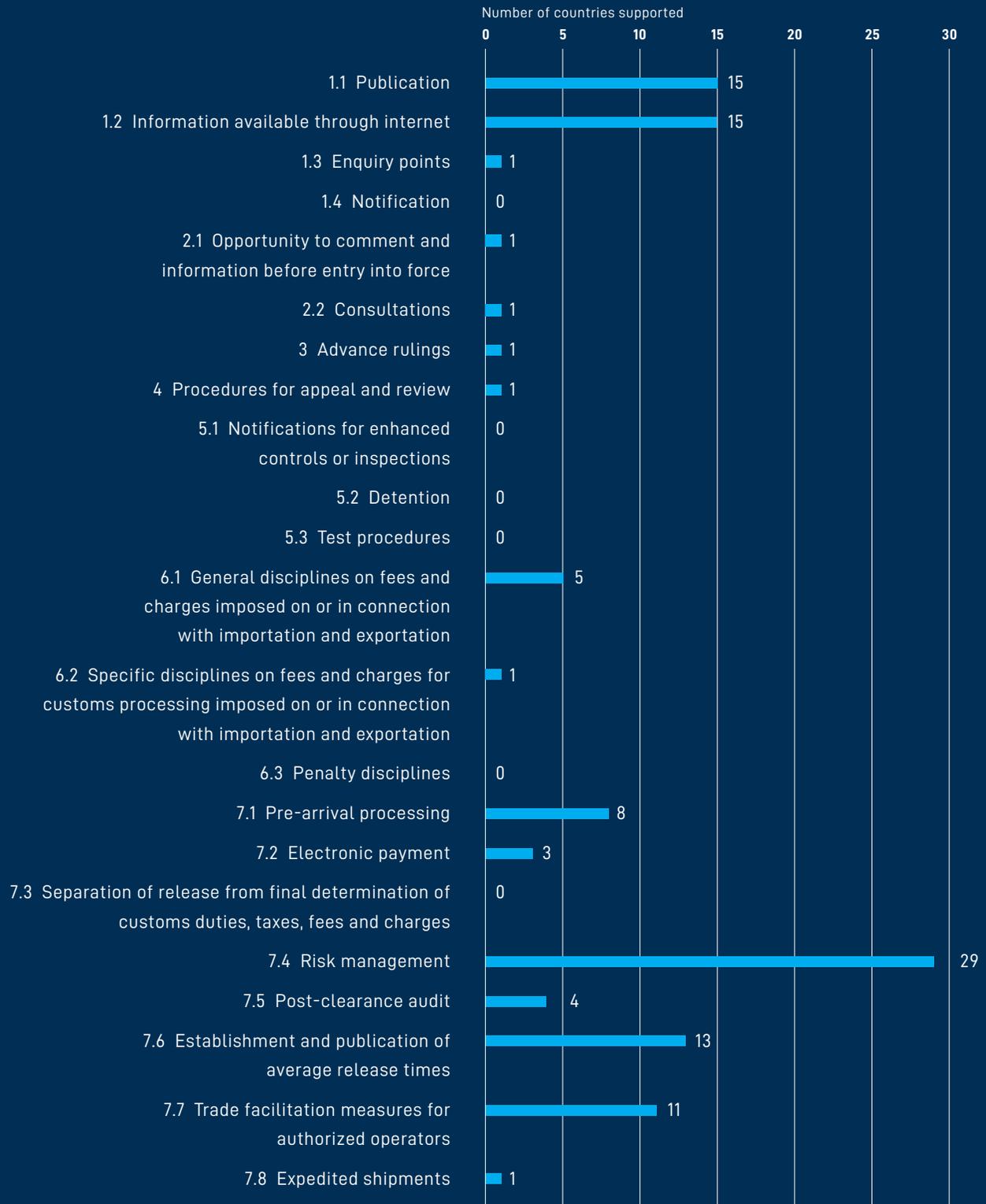
In an effort to confirm the relevance and effectiveness of the TFSP, and to identify possible room for improvements over the coming years, a "midterm" stocktaking of the program was undertaken by external consultants in the reporting period. Overall, the report's findings were very positive, and the consultants highlighted the following:

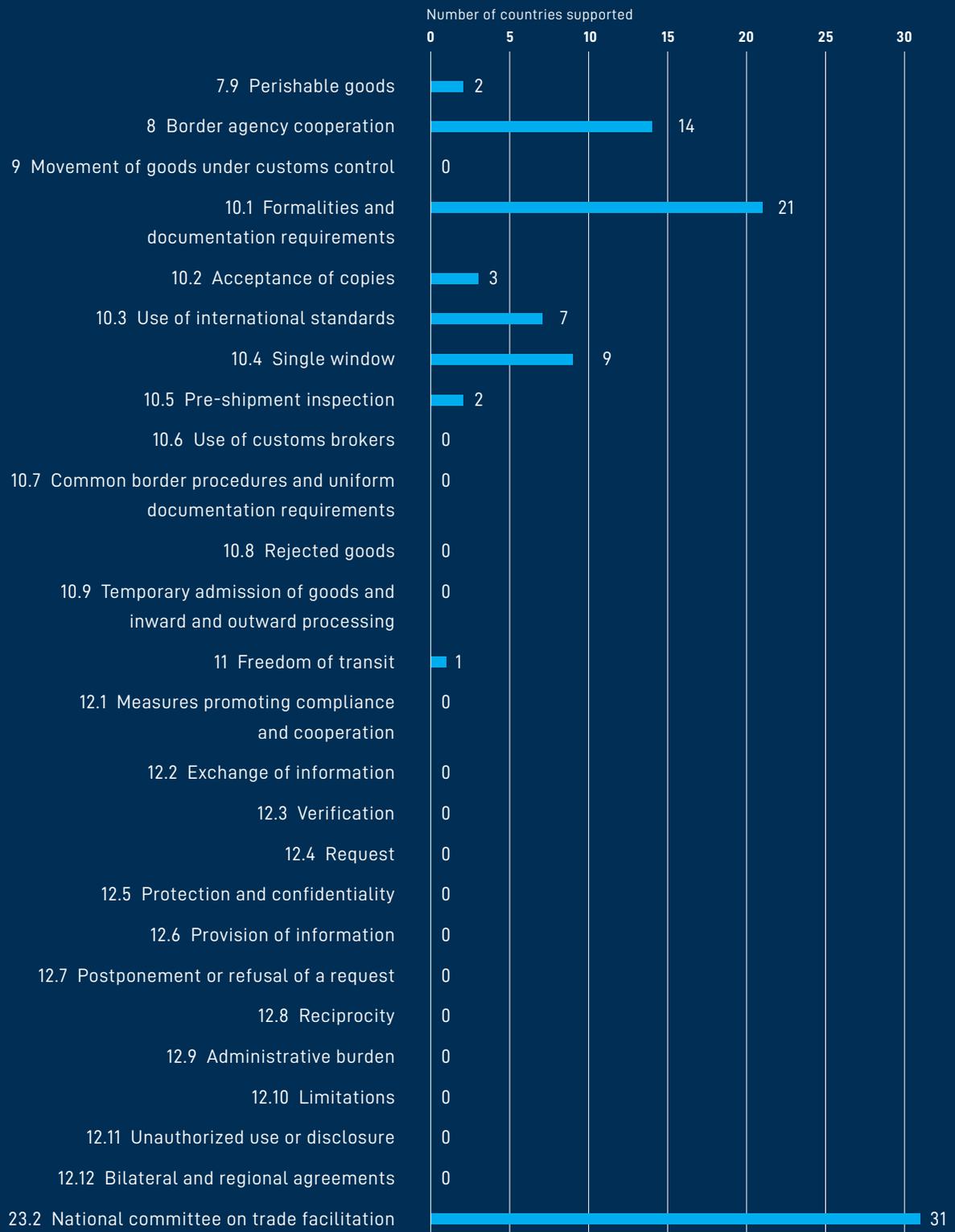
- The TFSP is considered to be highly relevant. Demand for TFSP services has grown significantly, demonstrating strong relevance of the support offered to national governments. Activities carried out under the TFSP are strongly aligned to implementation of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement and are therefore highly relevant to achieving its objectives.
- In terms of effectiveness, the consulted stakeholders and the stocktaking team all consider the TFSP to be well on track toward achieving its objectives.
- The TFSP is efficiently managed.
- One of the great strengths of the TFSP in its initial period has been its clear, narrow, and tangible focus. The program has clearly defined and tangible deliverables, thereby making measurement of achievement relatively simple.
- International partner organizations commented very favorably on coordination with the TFSP.

The report was circulated to donors for comments and presented in a video conference in May 2019; it was also discussed in the Consultative Committee in July 2019. There was broad consensus that the scope of the TFSP should not be changed, but that increased focus going forward should be placed on:

- Integrating gender in the design of the projects.
- Ensuring that small and medium-sized enterprises and the private sector overall are better targeted.
- Ensuring stronger coordination among donor agencies at the country level.

FIGURE 1.3
TFSP Support by TFA Measure





BOX 1.4

Taking a Whole-of-Government Approach

The TFSP supports a whole-of-government approach. Improving border processes and procedures requires that every agency is involved and coordinates closely with the other agencies. Capacity often varies among border agencies, a disparity may hinder the ability to make significant coordinated changes. TFSP funding supports border-wide collaboration in developing solutions and improving capacity so that changes cover all key border agencies and maximize gains to traders.

Examples of TFSP-supported work include:

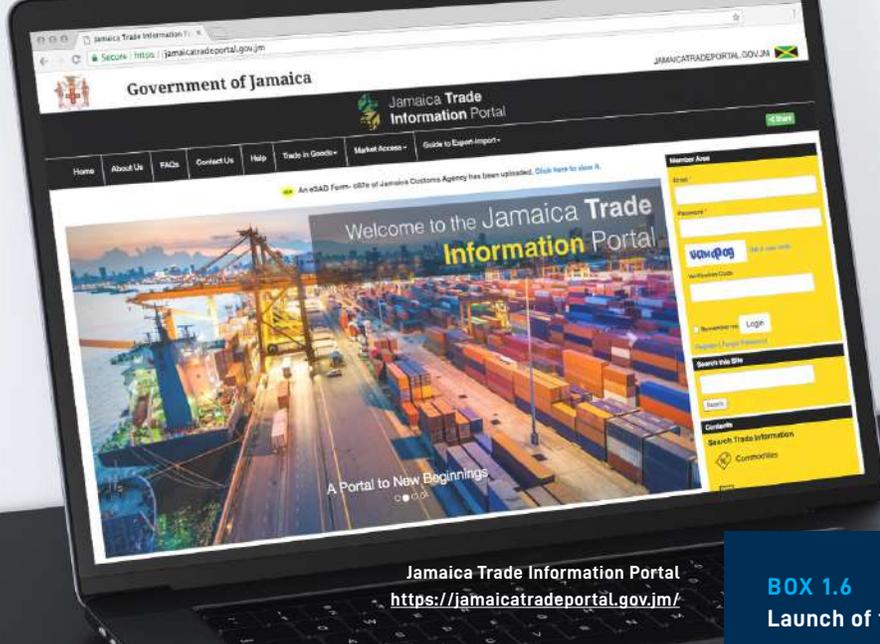
- Support to **National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFC)** is a critical element of TFSP assistance. NTFCs are important platforms for institutional coordination and consultation with stakeholders through broad and active participation from both private and public sector representatives. They enable planning and ultimately foster coordinated implementation of successful trade facilitation reforms. Since inception, the TFSP has provided support to 31 countries in the establishment and/or operation of NTFCs (Albania, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Eswatini, Fiji, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Vanuatu, Vietnam, and Zambia) (see **box 1.5**).
- **Trade Information Portals** are electronic portals that make all cross-border trade information, such as regulatory information, easily available. With the establishment of a trade information portal in Jamaica in the reporting period (see **box 1.6**), the TFSP has now facilitated the establishment and design, or has assisted in implementation of seven portals (Bangladesh, Botswana, Cambodia, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malawi, and Vietnam).
- **Time Release Studies (TRSs)** 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 TRSs in 11 countries (Albania, Bangladesh, Eswatini, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam).

- Several countries made progress in their TFA notifications to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the reporting period. The TFSP supported 7 countries in **notifying the WTO of their Category B and C timelines** (Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Montenegro, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa).
- The application of **risk management** is a critical element that underpins all modern cross-border administrations and agencies. The TFSP supports improvements in risk management practices, and it has supported 29 countries in the establishment of risk management frameworks (Albania, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, North Macedonia, Malawi, Moldova, Montenegro, Nepal, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, and Zambia).
- Nine countries have also received support in **preparation for implementation of single windows** (Eswatini, Kosovo, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu, and Zambia). Support to Kosovo and Vanuatu was initiated in the reporting period.

“This (ASYCUDA World) system allows importing entrepreneurs to carry out the declaration of merchandise, the review of documents at the window, and electronic payment on a single platform. This is a reduction of at least 10 business hours in waiting time.”

Victor Morales,
head of department, SIDUNEA World



Jamaica Trade Information Portal
<https://jamaicatradeportal.gov.jm/>

BOX 1.5

National Trade Facilitation Committee Capacity Building

The TFSP has provided assistance in the establishment and/or operation of 31 National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) since the TFSP's inception. As part of this activity, the TFSP is engaged in capacity building efforts to enhance the function of NTFCs in various countries. A few examples of capacity building efforts include:

- Providing advisory assistance to establish specialized working groups that formally engage in NTFC work, including engagement of the private sector or review of fees and charges (such as in Kosovo and Serbia).
- Providing administrative and technical input in updating NTFC action plans, along with the action plans of associated working groups (such as in the Kyrgyz Republic).
- Providing recommendations for more effective cooperation between Customs and other border agencies (such as in Panama).
- Advice and support to the Secretariat of the NTFC in effective management of the committee (such as in Zambia).
- Regional and global peer-to-peer events to share lessons learned and best practices on NTFCs (such as the joint event with the World Trade Organization in St. Lucia).

BOX 1.6

Launch of the Trade Information Portal in Jamaica

The Trade Information Portal in Jamaica (JTIP) officially went live in May 2019 after much anticipation from the government of Jamaica and traders. The JTIP — the first of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean— makes it easier for traders and investors to comply with regulatory requirements associated with the import and export of goods because it offers easy access to more than 530 procedures and forms online.

Having access to a one-stop portal for all information related to trade is critical for businesses in Jamaica, especially for more than 300,000 small businesses, for which even minor improvements make big a difference. "Persons with entrepreneurial interest now know they don't need to be the size of a conglomerate that can hire a whole battalion of regulatory experts and legal experts to guide them on how to trade in Jamaica. They can now go on the Jamaica Trade Portal, where all of this is now available at your fingertips," said Senator Kamina Johnson Smith, foreign affairs and foreign trade minister.

"The Portal will bring export and import-related regulatory information and step-by-step guidance on a single platform to allow traders, investors, and consumers a smoother interface with the regulatory and procedural steps needed to facilitate their businesses. This will ultimately drive Jamaica's collective economic growth," said Audley Shaw, minister of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries in Jamaica.

Box 1.7 provides examples of improvements that have resulted from TFSP activities. **Box 1.8** elaborates on the TFSP's efforts to help small and medium-sized enter-

prises, an area of emphasis highlighted in the TFSP's midterm review during the period.

“ The support of the World Bank Group enabled the Food and Veterinary Agency to establish a risk-based approach and to streamline inspection procedures. This improved our oversight of import shipments and increased the percentage of identified noncompliant shipments. This approach also had a positive impact on the private sector by reducing the number of shipments to be sampled for laboratory testing. ”

Zoran Atanasov,
director, Food and Veterinary Agency,
Republic of North Macedonia

BOX 1.7 **Achieving Results through Trade Facilitation Reforms**

TFSP reforms have produced tangible results for importers and exporters in client countries. Here is a selection of results achieved:

In **Nepal**, support on risk management at the Department of Customs has led to a steady increase in green channel clearance from less than 1 percent in 2013/14 at both Birgunj and Biratnagar to more than 45 percent and 27 percent by 2018/19 respectively. In addition, cumulative import and export clearance times have reduced by approximately 47 percent at both border posts.

In **El Salvador**, import times for general air cargo processes decreased from 78 to 36 hours as a result of TFSP support to streamline air cargo processes.

In **Nicaragua**, Customs authorities have applied pre-arrival processing to all imported goods (while previously this was possible only for select products), which has helped reduce clearance times from eight to four days.

In **Montenegro**, TFSP support to Customs for a simplified procedures regime has reduced time required for the clearance process by 40 percent and the number of documents required from five to one, and it has reduced money spent on terminal handling fees for companies

that have been authorized to use the simplified procedures. Further, an upgrade of a software module in the Montenegro Customs Information System (to handle clearance 24/7 and improve risk profiling) has reduced the time needed for importers to complete all customs formalities by 87 percent.

In **Malawi**, engagement with stakeholders—including scoping meetings, workshops, and presentation of a road map on reducing the number of border agencies operating at borders from 14 to 5—have instilled confidence in the process, and the project has seen noticeable readiness and plans to take the reform forward. This outlook is contrasted with the beginning of the process when there were very high levels of pushback, resistance, and lack of drive to implement the reform from some agencies.

In **Zambia**, the program supported the enactment of the Border Management Bill 2018 (which has reduced the time to import/export by 57 percent), the integration of risk management into border inspections (which reduced mandatory processing time from 48 to 12 hours for border agencies and has led to an increase in Zambia Revenue Authority revenue by 41 percent), and the launch of the Single Payment Point System.



Traders in the central business district of Freetown, Sierra Leone
© Michael Duff

BOX 1.8 Bringing the Private Sector into the Discussion

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) play a major role in most economies, particularly in developing countries. SMEs account for the majority of businesses worldwide and are important contributors to job creation and global economic development. They represent about 90 percent of businesses and more than 50 percent of employment worldwide. However, in OECD countries, SMEs account for less than 40 percent of direct exports (OECD 2018), and in developing countries particularly, direct exports from SMEs represent only about 7.6 percent of total manufacturing sales, whereas the figure is double for large firms (WTO 2016). Hence, it is important to include them as stakeholders when undertaking policy discussions and reforms related to cross-border trade.

Projects supported by the TFSP actively involve SMEs and the larger private sector entities. For example,

■ In **Eswatini, Lesotho, and Zambia**, the private sector was involved through extensive consultations during the drafting of the time release study. SMEs were represented by the civil society organizations in which they hold membership, and organizations drew input and feedback from their membership to provide comments on the study as well as to convey the SMEs' needs and recommendations. Separately,

the private sector makes up about 30 percent of the delegates in Zambia's National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

■ In **Malawi**, the TFSP project involves the private sector in the trade facilitation policy design and implementation process through the country's NTFC. Private sector stakeholders include, among others, executives and members of the Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Clearing and Forwarding Agents Association, and Road Transport Operators Association. The project also meets and solicits input from stakeholders, including producers, traders and clearing and forwarding agents, during its engagements on activities that affect the private sector.

■ In **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, small and medium traders expressed strong interest in participating in the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program. As such, before the AEO guideline was enacted, the TFSP supported consultations on the draft guideline that involved both private and public stakeholders. Small and medium traders, customs brokers, freight forwarders, and logistics operators provided insightful comments to the draft guideline on AEO.

1.2 Knowledge Management and Learning

The TFSP supports knowledge management activities that 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 WBG organized or presented at during the reporting period with support from TFSP.

Three major regional events were delivered in collaboration with the WTO and other international partners in this period.

First, a trade facilitation learning event was jointly hosted with the WTO for countries in southern Africa. The event focused on improving border agency cooperation at the national and regional levels (see **box 1.9**).

Second, the WBG, the WTO, and the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat cohosted a Pacific Islands workshop in Geneva in October 2018. The workshop focused on the state-of-play of implementation of the WTO TFA by

Pacific Island countries and on transit. Countries presented on their trade facilitation situations and needs, and the TFSP and other experts offered advice on possible solutions.

Third, a trade facilitation learning event was jointly hosted in St. Lucia by the WBG and the WTO for member states in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) region. The event aimed to increase compliance of CARICOM WTO members with the TFA notification obligations; assist policy makers in designing, implementing, and monitoring regional trade facilitation reforms; enhance awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the national and regional committees on trade facilitation; assist members to improve border agency cooperation; enhance participation of the private sector in the implementation of the TFA; and support full and effective implementation and ownership of the TFA and trade facilitation reforms by CARICOM member states. Participants included the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), Global Express Association (GEA)/Latin America Express Delivery (CLADEC), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), International Trade Center (ITC), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

Significant work also went into preparing for a larger peer-to-peer event during Aid for Trade in Geneva in July 2019.³

The team continued the work on gender and trade facilitation. Numerous focus group discussions in Fiji and Vietnam were held to help finalize the questionnaire and ensure its suitability for a global audience. The survey was rolled out in Fiji at the end of the reporting period, with results to be published in the coming period (see **box 1.10**).

The web portal of the TFA Tracking Tool was launched for client countries in the reporting period. All countries with validated scores now have access to their respective scores through the portal and can track progress as scores are updated. 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 also enables the TFSP to

BOX 1.9

Regional Border Agency Cooperation Workshop

The WBG and the WTO cohosted a trade facilitation workshop for countries in southern African in November 2018 in Cape Town, South Africa. More than 75 participants from 12 Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states—representing the ministries of trade, agriculture, health, transport, and others—participated in the workshop. Partner organizations included the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Codex, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), World Customs Organization (WCO), and others. The three-day workshop included sessions focused on improving border agency cooperation, particularly among border agencies in transit countries, at the national and regional levels.

³ To be reported on in the next annual report since the event took place in July 2019.

better monitor progress toward meeting the objective of helping countries improve alignment with the TFA. The team is working on an enhancement of the tracking tool methodology that includes a more granular approach to scores, with a more detailed breakdown of scores by border agency.

Finally, the WBG team started using a new technology to convey the conditions and environment in which the TFSP-financed projects operate. With great success, a virtual reality film was produced to focus on the border between Guatemala and Honduras (see **box 1.11**).



Market vendor,
Guatemala City

BOX 1.10

Improving Gender Equality through Trade

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

The work to improve trade conditions, especially relating to women cross-border traders, has been progressing over the years. Yet, only limited efforts have focused on trade facilitation initiatives and trade competitiveness interventions aimed at women that are not strictly linked to tariffs or policies. There is a data gap on the nature of barriers that women traders face related to trade facilitation at the firm level. In fact, there is a general lack of knowledge about women cross-border traders. To start with, no country can easily confirm the number of women in their respective countries who undertake cross-border trade.

Designing interventions that benefit all traders is difficult without knowledge of the exact challenges faced

by both genders and the respective numbers of traders by gender that the interventions would affect.

Thanks to TFSP support, the WBG continued work in FY19 to ascertain the nature of barriers that women face when undertaking cross-border trade at the firm level. This work aims to pinpoint where barriers occur in import and export processes and procedures. A parallel goal is also to identify the exact universe of cross-border traders broken down by gender in select countries.

After initiating a bid to select a firm suited for this research in FY18, in this reporting period the team finalized the questionnaire and methodology to collect data on the constraints that women-led firms may face when conducting cross-border trade. The team held focus group discussions in Fiji and Vietnam that helped finalize the questionnaire and ensure its suitability for a global audience. The survey was rolled out in Fiji at the end of the reporting period, and the results will be published in the coming period. The next stage of the work envisages rolling out the survey in four more Pacific Island countries.

The team's experience in Vietnam has been summarized in a recent blog: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/whats-it-women-trade-across-borders>.

BOX 1.11

Using Virtual Reality to Showcase TFSP-supported Work

In an innovative effort to showcase TFSP-funded work, the team produced its first virtual reality film at the Corinto border between Guatemala and Honduras. The film showcases a recently signed Customs Union between the two countries, which helped reduce time to trade from 10 hours to just 15 minutes. Customs workers, truck drivers, and businesses were interviewed at the border to find out what trade looks like on the ground. The video was showcased at the WBG's Development Partners Forum in November 2018 and launched via an innovative media campaign on the WBG's social media channels (garnering more than 800,000 views). A Spanish version of the film has also been posted online.

The English-language version of the film is available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2019/02/06/360-video-trading-across-borders-in-guatemala-and-honduras>. The film and information about the film are available in Spanish at <http://blogs.worldbank.org/es/latinamerica/uni-n-aduanera-entre-guatemala-y-honduras-de-10-horas-15-minutos>.

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, with support from the TFSP, the WBG has delivered multiple workshops, undertaken missions, and worked on knowledge products and technical assistance jointly with the following organizations:

- World Trade Organization (WTO): Partnership on multiple fronts, including annex D, knowledge management activities, and an advance course for NTFC chairs in multiple regions.⁴
- International Trade Center (ITC): Joint activities in Sri Lanka and in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries.

⁴ Annex D: Modalities for Negotiations on Trade Facilitation.

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): Joint missions to Guatemala, Jamaica, Liberia, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Suriname; joint regional NTFC event in Ethiopia.
- 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, the WBG is better positioned to demonstrate and monitor progress toward the 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:

- A. The legal/policy dimension measures the extent to

which legal or administrative measures are in place that establish policies consistent with the TFA.

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

C. 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: **(A)** Customs; **(B)** Plant Protection and Quarantine; **(C)** the Bureau of Standards; and **(D)** the agency responsible for health.

A more granular approach to the TFA Tracking Tool methodology is under development. The granular approach will allow for further breakdown of scores by agency and enhance the ability to track progress over time by each specific agency.

By the end of the reporting period, baselines for 28 countries in the TFSP portfolio had been validated, and more are in the process of being validated. The measurements behind those baseline scores were undertaken between 2015 and 2018. Baseline scores for nineteen TFSP-supported countries have also been updated by the WBG, demonstrating an improvement in their overall alignment with the WTO TFA from 44 percent alignment in the baseline scores to 53 percent in the FY19 updates.⁵ **Figures 1.4–1.6** show further breakdowns of the changes in baseline and updated scores.

⁵ The percentage improvement is calculated on the basis of 19 countries and may change up or down subject to additional countries being included in future calculations. (For example, the baseline score reported in FY18 was 39 percent, given that other (fewer) countries were included in the calculations.) The 19 countries included in the end FY19 calculations are Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, Honduras, Kosovo, Liberia, Montenegro, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Republic of North Macedonia, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Serbia, Sri Lanka, and Vanuatu.



Customs controls on the border
of Armenia and Georgia
© Vigen Sargsyan/World Bank



FIGURE 1.4
Changes in TFA Alignment Scores

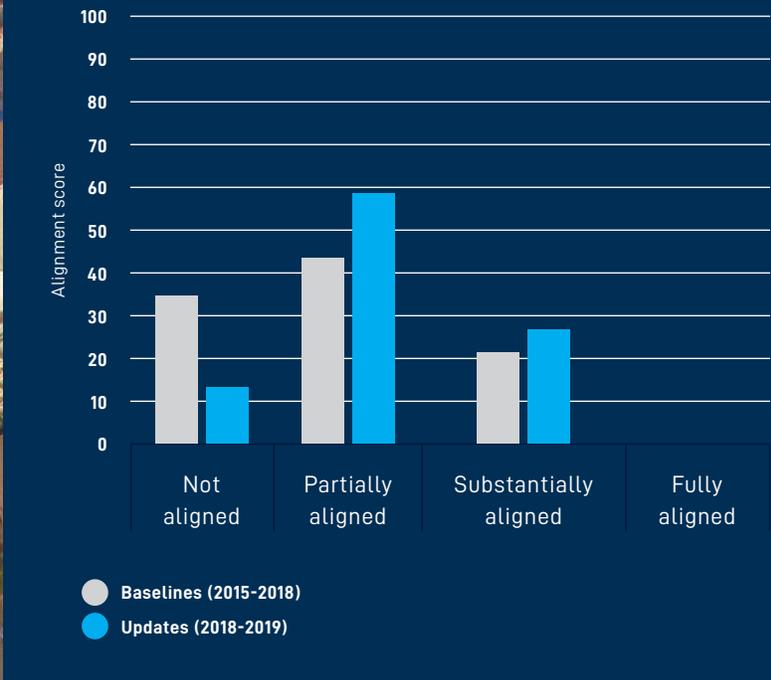


FIGURE 1.5
Changes in Overall Dimension Score

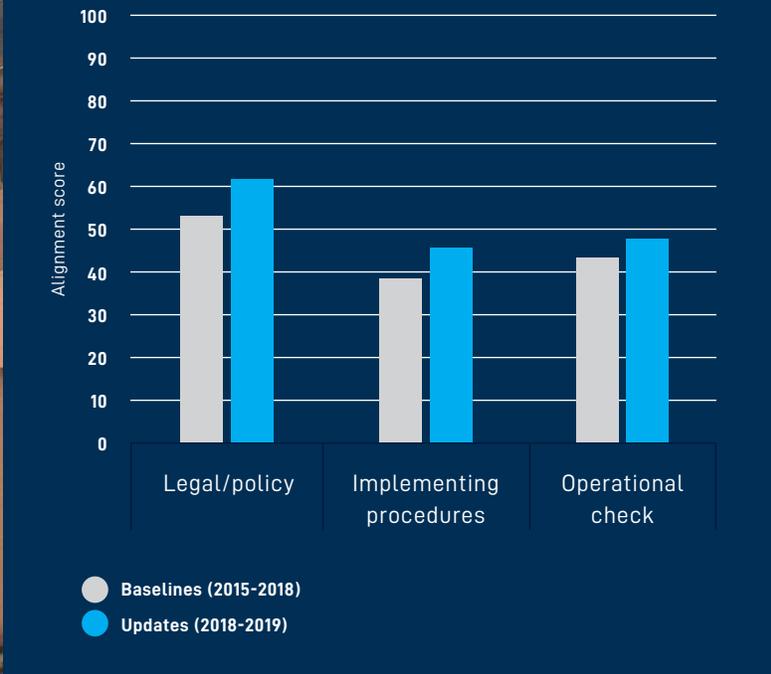
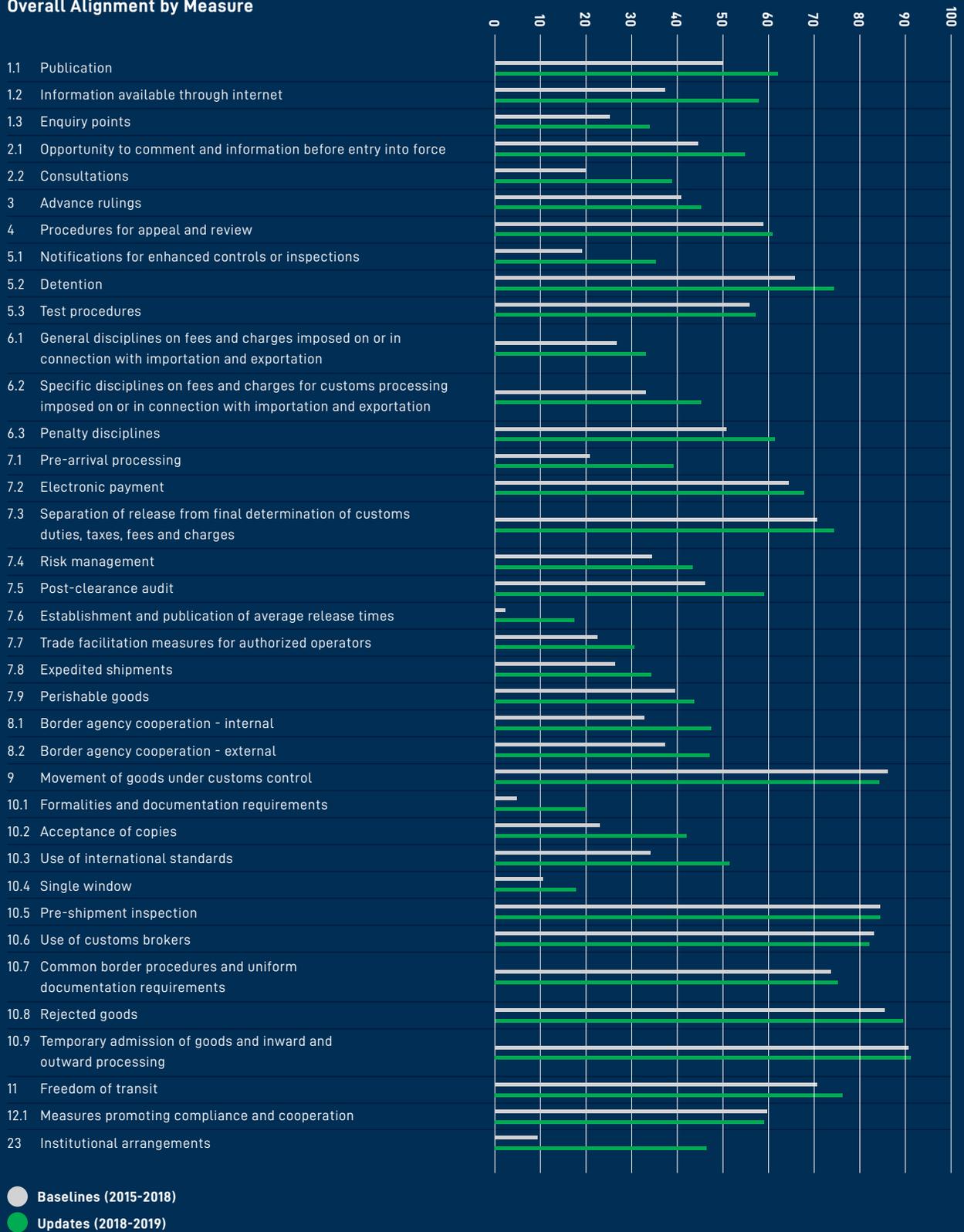


FIGURE 1.6
Overall Alignment by Measure





Workers at the container terminal at the Port of Freetown, which employs hundreds of Sierra Leoneans

© Michael Duff

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. Global experts on trade and public and private sector development from both institutions work on TFSP-supported interventions, together with field-based staff, and they are complemented by consultants worldwide.

2.2 Donor Engagement

There was active engagement throughout the year with all donors to TFSP. Two TFSP Consultative Committee meetings were held: the first meeting took place in November 2018 in connection with the Development Partners Forum in Washington, D.C., and another meeting took place in July 2019 in connection with the Global Review of Aid for Trade in Geneva. The semiannual consultations provide development partners with updates on the progress of the program and with the opportunity to discuss the strategic direction of the TFSP.

Additionally, the Secretariat facilitated a donor visit to Zambia in the reporting period to offer an opportunity to witness TFSP-supported work firsthand and interact with key stakeholders (see **box 2.1**). A videoconference also was facilitated in May 2019 to present and discuss the findings of the TFSP midterm stocktaking.

2.3 Communications and Outreach

Communications is an important element of the TFSP mission and focuses on:

- Raising awareness of program activities, results, and effects.



Officer from the Zambia Customs Administration

BOX 2.1 Donor Mission to Zambia

Donor partners from Canada, the European Union, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom visited Zambia in April 2019 to witness the work of the TFSP firsthand and interact with key stakeholders. The mission was jointly organized by the TFSP and Zambia's National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the aim to increase donors' understanding of the impact of TFSP support and enhance understanding of the government's future needs and commitments.

A series of information sessions were held in Lusaka with high-level government stakeholders, including the chair of the NTFC, the permanent secretaries at the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of National Development Planning, and the Commissioner of Modernization at the Zambia Revenue Authority. The donor partners also traveled to the Chirundu border between Zambia and Zimbabwe to observe the recent progress made with the establishment of a one-stop border post (launched in 2009) and additional trade reforms supported by the TFSP. The visit to the border post was well received by the donor participants. One partner stated that "the visit to the border was very interesting and really helped with understanding how support worked in practice."

- 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 FY19–20 guides the program's approach to strategic communications and is supplemented with guidance for team members on how to incorporate communications into specific activities, including by meeting donor visibility requirements. The Secretariat stepped-up communications support to specific projects in the reporting period and will continue this effort in the future.

Annex C provides details of select communications efforts made in the reporting period.

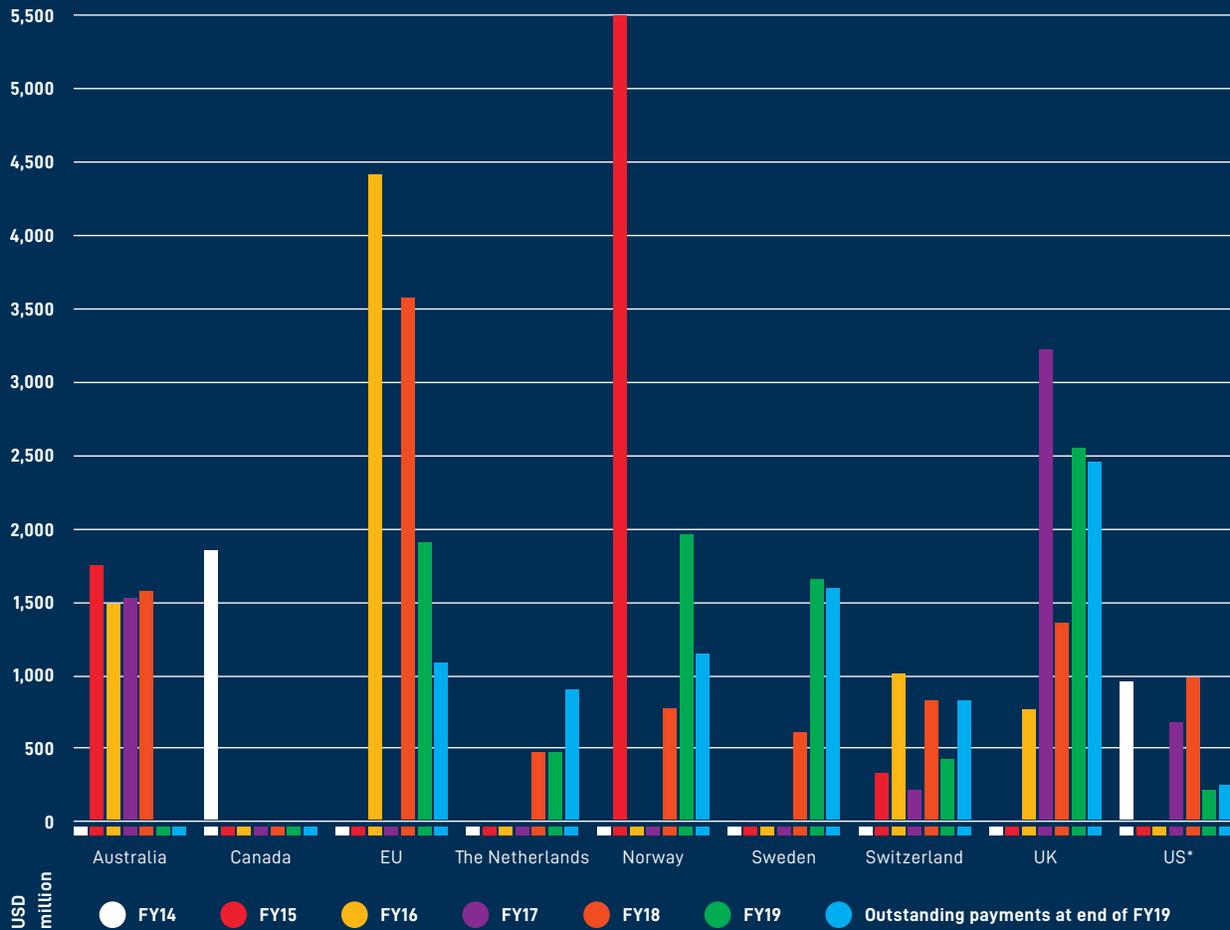
2.4 Financial Overview

At the end of the reporting period, US\$42.6 million had been received from TFSP development partners since the program's launch. This is 84 percent of overall partner commitments and is in alignment with the agreed transfer schedules per individual administrative agreements. The United Kingdom replenished its contribution to the TFSP in the reporting period. **Figure 2.1** shows receipts and outstanding payments by donor.

The program disbursement rate continued at a similar level as in the previous reporting period—from 66 percent in FY18 to 69 percent in FY19 (**figure 2.2**). Cumulative disbursements since program inception plus activity commitments at the end of FY19 totaled 74 percent of cash receipts (**annex D** has further financial details).

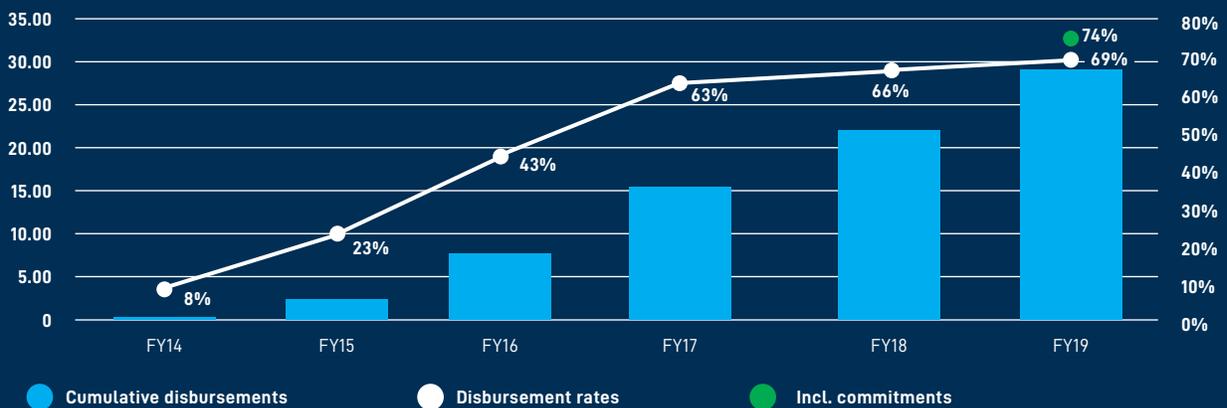


FIGURE 2.1
Receipts and Outstanding Payments (US\$ thousands)



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

FIGURE 2.2
Cumulative Disbursements (US\$, millions)





Customs officers at
the border between
Kosovo and Albania

3 Lessons Learned and Looking Forward

3.1 Lessons Learned

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

- **Commitment is needed at all levels.** High-level political commitment to the trade reform agenda is essential to successful implementation of interventions; commitment at all levels, including by different government agencies and private sector entities, is required for achieving results that benefit a wide range of stakeholders.
- **Prioritization of reforms with identification of deliverables and close attention to key milestones throughout the implementation process are relevant to sustaining political support and private sector engagement.** Frequent delays or frustration with implementation goals hampers the trust among stakeholders and commitment to the reform agenda.
- **Capacity building is vital.** Building clients' capacity to enhance their overall understanding of trade reforms and to ensure that benefits of interventions are maximized is critical; capacity building is often also required to ensure client buy-in and cooperation in delivering the projects.
- **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.
- **Improved donor coordination and collaboration between relevant international organizations on the ground can enhance implementation.** The establishment of donor coordination committees has proved beneficial to TFA implementation and to the trade reform process.
- **Data collection and analysis are an important component in identifying and prioritizing trade reforms.** Some government agencies are not aware of the importance of prioritizing their border activities, such as inspection or sampling of imports or exports based on **(A)** risk of the commodity's origin; **(B)** the historical compliance information of the importer and exporter; **(C)** the further processing that may be done to minimize risks upon entry; and so on. Failing to recognize where to set priorities may result in inefficient and ineffective allocation of resources, and thus data collection and analysis serve to help clients better target reforms.
- **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.
- **Sequencing of reforms is critical.** A good mechanism for obtaining buy-in and consensus on reform implementation priorities is the creation of an 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. More important, the NTFC can take the lead in making decisions to sequence reforms on the basis of identified priorities and can ensure that there is sequential flow between technical assistance on a measure and its implementation. Leaving a large time gap between assistance and implementation might jeopardize the effort. Programs for technical assistance should be linked to an agreed implementation plan, preferably endorsed by the NTFC.
- **Each NTFC Secretariat requires a legal framework.** Having a legal framework that defines the secretariat's functions is key in ensuring that 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.
- **The NTFC Secretariat should have an adequate structure with dedicated professionals to support**

the implementation process, including program and project management and strong communications capabilities.

■ **NTFCs should periodically take stock of the streams of technical assistance coming from different development partners** and take steps to achieve a balance between the requirements for technical assistance and the capacity of the beneficiary organization to receive it. Some clients report having "workshop fatigue," which should be avoided.

■ **The implementation process requires resilience to consolidate changes and adequate communication to enable private sector awareness and adherence to a new operational framework and services.** Frequent changes at Customs, border agencies, and NTFC Secretariat leadership affect the speed and sustainability of reforms. Countries with more stable administrative frameworks generally make faster progress.

■ **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.

■ **Coordination of activities between key border agencies involved in trade facilitation is essential.** The NTFC can play a key role in coordination among border agencies and leadership across relevant government entities.

■ **SPS agencies should cooperate with Customs agencies and other border agencies to more effectively manage the risk of consignments.** Compliance data collected by Customs or other border agencies is often not shared between them. Similarly, inspection or documentary review is undertaken independently by each border agency, resulting in each agency working in its own space. Developing more collaborative approaches for information sharing, conducting joint inspections, and transferring some activities between agencies could improve efficiency processes and procedures at the border and better allocate limited resources.

■ **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 across agencies.** 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 as all border agencies will be better positioned to implement reforms.

3.2 Looking Forward

As demand for TFSP support continues to grow, assistance to International Development Association - 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

The WBG will continue to support countries where implementation has begun with TFSP support. Additionally, several countries have expressed a need for technical assistance and could be supported by the TFSP subject to availability of funds in FY20 (see **box 3.1**).

In the area of knowledge management, the TFSP will support the following activities:

■ **Trade facilitation and gender survey.** Building on the work undertaken in the reporting period (see



box 1.10), the survey will be rolled out in the Pacific Islands. The team will also complete the work to identify the universe of traders by gender in TFSP countries in East Asia. Rollout in select African countries in FY20 will be subject to completion of the work in East Asia and the Pacific.

- **TFA Alignment Tracking Tool.** The team will continue to add baselines and updated scores to the portal. An enhancement of methodology will be undertaken, including the possibility of disaggregating individual country scores by the four proxy border agencies to enable the WBG and the client governments to measure baselines and improvements over time by each agency separately.
- **Integrated impact assessment methodology** for WBG transport and trade facilitation initiatives. The methodology will be completed and a pilot initiated.
- **Aid for Trade Peer-to-Peer event.** The WBG and WTO will jointly organize a peer-to-peer event on the legal and regulatory environment necessary for effective implementation of the TFA. The workshop will provide a forum for participants to share their experiences related to undertaking legislative reforms to implement the TFA, as well as to discuss monitoring and evaluation of implementation efforts. Around 40 participants from TFSP client countries will be targeted.
- **One regional conference on border collaboration and coordination** is expected to be undertaken jointly with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility and other international partners in the next reporting period. The conference is expected to target Asia-Pacific clients in particular, building on the success of the Caribbean and Southern Africa regional conferences last year.

BOX 3.1 **Countries where TFSP Implementation Opportunities are under Discussion**

- Belize
- Burkina Faso
- Egypt, Arab Republic
- Mali
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Peru
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- Tonga
- Tuvalu
- Uzbekistan



Cargo ship at the Port of
Monrovia, Liberia

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

The Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) has provided support to 47 countries in aligning trade practices with the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA) across Africa, Central America and the Caribbean, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia. The following are summaries of activities by region.

AFRICA

Botswana (inactive in FY19)

TFSP support to Botswana

The TFSP helped Botswana launch the Trade Information Portal (TIP) in March 2016. 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 for carrying out trade transactions. The portal also contains downloadable copies of all the documentation the trader will need.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet

Burundi (inactive in FY19)

TFSP support to Burundi

TFSP-supported activities in Burundi have been hampered by economic volatility and limited capacity of government counterparts to undertake reform activities. The TFSP did not provide any support to Burundi in the reporting period, and previous support complemented a larger investment climate project in the country. Previous work focused on risk management capacity building (training and implementation action plan jointly with the World Customs Organization [WCO]) around the customs intelligence function. The WBG and the WCO jointly helped Burundi roll out its authorized economic operator (AEO) program.

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 WCO)

Eswatini

TFSP support to Eswatini

The TFSP is supporting government efforts to enhance Eswatini's trade performance through an improved alignment of trade facilitation systems and processes with the WTO TFA. Support includes assistance with the National Trade Information Portal, the National Electronic Trade Single Window, and the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), as well as risk management—all of which are part of the National Trade Facilitation Roadmap.

The roadmap guides implementation of trade facilitation reform and identifies a number of other strategic initiatives, such as trade facilitation performance measurement, coordinated border management, customs-to-customs cooperation, and regional integration. These are priority areas of support for the next three years (ending in March 2022). The implementation of the National Trade Facilitation Roadmap initiatives is targeted to benefit the trading community, including small and medium enterprises and women who play significant roles in trade in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

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 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

FY19 update on key activities

- Following the receipt of the final 2018 time release study (TRS) report in January 2019, drafting of the implementation plan for recommendations began. A meeting of the TRS working group was convened to unpack the action plan and agree on the delivery approach and timelines. The NTFC has directed the institutionalization of the TRS as part of the National Trade Facilitation Performance Measurement Tool in the Kingdom of Eswatini. The TRS recommendations were used to inform the National Trade Facilitation Roadmap (2019–2022).
- The TFSP supported the development of a National Trade Facilitation Roadmap and a detailed plan for the implementation of the WTO TFA as part of the roadmap. The roadmap was adopted by the NTFC and has been presented to the Cabinet for awareness and support.
- In preparation for the implementation of the national trade information portal (TIP), the Kingdom of Eswatini signed an advisory agreement with the World Bank. It is expected that the implementation will be initiated in the first quarter of 2019/2020. A draft TIP implementation plan was developed by the NTFC Secretariat, and a national project team for the TIP has been set up.
- In preparation for the future National Electronic Trade Single Window (NETSW), the TFSP supported the validation and finalization of the national single window (NSW) functional specifications. The TFSP also supported the development of a detailed

blueprint for the NETSW, as well as a comprehensive information and communication technology (ICT) assessment for the NETSW.

- The TFSP continued to support the formalization of the NTFC with its Secretariat (approved by the Cabinet through a gazette in February 2019). The NTFC is cochaired by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade; the Eswatini Revenue Authority; and Business Eswatini (private sector representative). The NTFC successfully met in all the planned quarterly meetings, and key decisions were taken accordingly.

Ethiopia (inactive in FY19)

TFSP support to Ethiopia

The TFSP was not active in Ethiopia in the reporting period. Prior to the reporting period, TFSP supported activities were implemented alongside the Ethiopia Investment Climate Program, which aimed to streamline and simplify high-priority regulations, processes, and practices that are burdensome for trade. The first phase of the program, which has closed, addressed investment climate issues that are preventing investments and productivity growth. The trade component of this program aimed to decrease the time to export and import by addressing legal and regulatory constraints and introducing risk management, process simplification, and increased transparency of trade processes. The World Bank Group (WBG) has begun the second phase of the Investment Climate Program in Ethiopia.

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

Highlights of achievements of TFSP funded work

- A key result of TFSP-supported work in Ethiopia was the assistance provided in reducing physical inspections of imports, which led to a reduction from 60 percent to 30 percent.
- Support was provided on revising and drafting new legislation on customs, e-commerce, and special economic zones affecting trade facilitation. This new legislation led to streamlined procedures, including a one-stop shop that was set up for customs clearance in industrial parks.
- The rollout of an electronic certificate of origin has eliminated the need to physically interact with Customs for approval because registered exporters can now get a certificate instantly from their own offices. Eight documents were eliminated for imports and three for export. ASYCUDA++, an older customs management system, was replaced with a new, more advanced customs management system that offers more convenient user features and allows Internet-based access from any location. Altogether, these initiatives have led to an import-time reduction of six days and an export-time reduction of five days since 2016.

- A consolidated, detailed Customs guide was published and is the first of its kind in Ethiopia.
- Eight commodity-based clearance windows were opened to facilitate import and export trade, enabling faster and prioritized clearance.
- The work partly supported by the TFSP is estimated to yield US\$64 million in private sector savings.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

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

Lesotho

**TFSP support
to Lesotho**

The TFSP provides support to Lesotho in revising legislation, developing blueprints and frameworks, enhancing the implementation of ASYCUDA World and the Trade Information Portal, strengthening the National Trade Facilitation Committee Secretariat, 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

**FY19 update on
key activities**

- The WBG reviewed and made recommendations on amending the Customs Bill with TFSP support. The recommendations were accepted and incorporated, and the Customs Amendment Bill (2019) is currently in Parliament awaiting enactment. The bill ensures alignment with the WTO TFA, which will enable Customs to implement TFA measures under the legislative framework.
- The WBG assisted in the drafting of the National E-Single Window Legal Framework and the NSW Blueprint, which are currently awaiting approval by the NTFC. The Technical Working Group can be established to start working on the legal framework once approved.
- To facilitate the availability of information through the Internet, the project has assisted in upgrading the Lesotho Trade Portal (LTP) so that it has up-to-date information on legislation and procedures. The upgrades also establish links between the LTP and functional websites of other relevant agencies.
- The NTFC, through TFSP support, developed operations protocols and terms of reference for the NTFC Secretariat. These documents contribute to the effective functioning of the Secretariat through a clear mandate on its support to the NTFC.

- The NTFC Secretariat held a workshop to develop the Trade Facilitation Reform Vision Statement and Goals to facilitate the development of a roadmap. With the existence of those tools, the roadmap will pave the way with clear timelines for implementation of trade facilitation reforms.
- Through TFSP assistance, Lesotho conducted a national single window information and communication technology (ICT) needs assessment in March 2019. The findings were validated by more than 20 stakeholders (consisting of government agencies and the private sector) during a workshop in May. The assessment was carried out to identify existing ICT gaps that might hinder the implementation of the Lesotho national single window and to provide recommendations to pave the way for smooth implementation.
- Upgrade of the payment system to be compatible with the latest version 4.3.2 of the Automated System for Customs Data has been developed and tested. The portal has been developed and is functional, and the Performance Indicator Project team has been given access to the prototype to work on performance indicators.
- The ASYCUDA World Redundancy/Disaster Recovery project is complete. All the deliverables were met successfully, which means that data stored on ASYCUDA World can now be fully recovered in case of any disaster leading to data loss.
- The LRA-SARS Connect project, through which the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA) and the South African Revenue Service (SARS) will share information on import- and export-related matters, was kick-started in May 2019. The project will assist the LRA in ensuring compliance and being able to conduct risk-related inspections.
- The Lesotho List of Prohibited and Restricted Goods, as developed under the Preferred Trader Accreditation Scheme, has been finalized.

Liberia

TFSP support to Liberia

In the first phase of 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 preshipment 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 categories of products to only 17, **(C)** training to prepare for transition to the WTO valuation system from the preshipment 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 WBG 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, resulting in enhanced quality and effectiveness of the international trade process enough that Liberia became a member of the World Trade Organization in July 2016. The TFSP has also

provided support to Liberia to ratify the WTO TFA.

The second stage of support to Liberia is through a joint Liberia–Sierra Leone TFSP-financed project that was launched in the 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** Pre-shipment Inspection
- 23.2** National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- The team helped prepare the government of Liberia for the ratification of the TFA; the instrument to ratify the agreement was submitted to the national legislature for consideration in August 2019.
- A formal decision to create the NTFC was made in 2018; however, the committee has been struggling to gain traction. Through TFSP support, the WBG is helping the NTFC lobby key government agencies to gain support for the NTFC.
- The team continued to push for the legislature to pass the new Customs Code along with other relevant instruments, and it is positive, despite the years in the making, that passage will occur in the next reporting period.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP-supported FY19 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-supported work is a component of a larger investment climate project in Madagascar. The work is intended to focus primarily on the creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) and on the review of fees and charges.

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
- 23.2** National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- With the change in government, the NTFC implementation plan was delayed this reporting period due to the nonappointment of a new director general at the Ministry of Trade. However, the new director general of Customs has recently been appointed and has engaged with the team to advance the implementation of the roadmap.
- The team helped facilitate a donor meeting toward the end of the reporting period, during which the NTFC presented its roadmap action plan. Seven government officials and nine donor representatives attended the meeting.
- The team held technical discussions with the NTFC to provide guidance on the creation of a trade portal.

Malawi

TFSP support to Malawi

The TFSP is supporting Malawi in improving its cross-border trading environment and aligning the country's facilitation systems and procedures with the WTO TFA. The WBG regularly engages with private sector stakeholders in Malawi to build understanding of and confidence in trade facilitation reforms.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet
- 2.1 Opportunity to comment and information before entry into force
- 2.2 Consultations
- 7.4 Risk Management
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.4 Single Window
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- In the previous reporting period, a validation report was submitted to the government. The report informed the review and adjustment of the National Trade Facilitation Action Plan (NTFAP). The NTFAP was subsequently launched in March 2019.
- The project team has agreed to support the government in developing a comprehensive legal framework to implement the TFA. To do this, the government has decided to use an "omnibus" legal framework that will give effect to key provisions of the TFA, including coordinated border management and the electronic trade single window. A background study is being conducted on the overall legal framework. Work has also begun on a legal framework for the single window that will be included in this omnibus law. The work is expected to be completed in Q3 of 2020.
- Building on the review of recommendations to implement ASYCUDA World in the previous reporting period, efforts to operationalize the use of ASYCUDA World by the Malawi Bureau of Standards continued in the reporting period.
- Assistance is ongoing under the TFSP to provide advisory support on the design of one-stop border posts at four locations and to reduce the number of border agencies from 14 to 5 (for which TFSP has assisted in developing a business process reengineering report and roadmap). Three one-stop border posts are now nearing procurement for construction. A roadmap for the reduction of border agencies has been submitted to the government and is awaiting endorsement before a pilot is implemented at one of the key border posts. In April 2019, the project also commenced with advisory support on risk management to the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA) and the Malawi Bureau of Standards. A roadmap has been developed to strengthen risk management capacity in the two institutions and enable the Malawi Bureau of Standards to utilize the MRA's ASYCUDA World system for coordinated clearance of goods and joint inspections with the MRA.
- The TFSP has supported enactment of a new Control of Goods Act that regulates imports and exports on public interest grounds in a transparent and predictable manner. The new law was drafted in line with standards under the TFA, particularly

with regard to opportunity to comment, consultations, and publication before measures are enacted. The new regulation has been submitted to the government. Once these regulations are published in the gazette, the new act will take effect.

- TFSP provides coordination support on rail transit matters through the Rail Transit Working Group.
- The TFSP is partly funding a study to undertake an integrated impact analysis of two ongoing trade programs in Malawi. Stakeholder consultations on the design of the impact evaluation were undertaken in April 2019 and launched a collaboration with the government of Malawi for generating rigorous evidence to guide the work. The impact work is a long-term process and will only be finalized once program components are completed. The team will facilitate an expert brainstorming in the next reporting period with internal World Bank staff and external participants to determine the way forward of this work.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP is complementing a larger World Bank Southern Africa Trade and Transport Facilitation Program (SATTFP) in Malawi that initially focuses on stakeholder consultations, quality assurance, reduction and streamlining of border agencies, construction of one-stop border post infrastructure, and building of a national single window. The project is also supporting preparation of a Nacala Regional Trade Project, in which some of the activities under the SATTFP will be further built on and other interventions will be made to improve trade facilitation and logistics and enhance regional value chains.

São Tomé and Príncipe (inactive in FY19)

TFSP support to São Tomé and Príncipe

TFSP did not provide support to São Tomé and Príncipe in the reporting period. Earlier support complemented a larger International Finance Corporation (IFC) advisory project to remove obstacles to sustainable tourism and to develop and facilitate trade internally and overseas. In the area of trade, the project supported interagency risk management and helped consolidate multiple border inspections, in addition to implementing a phased single window for trade approach. The TFSP supported 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.

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

Sierra Leone

TFSP support to Sierra Leone

With TFSP support, the WBG has undertaken a WTO TFA gap assessment jointly with the WCO and UNCTAD, has delivered a validation report, and has supported the government in creating terms of reference (ToR) and an action plan for a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), including creation of subcommittees. The team has also assisted in the drafting and finalization of the Sierra Leone Trade Facilitation Strategy 2019–2024.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
- 7.9 Perishable Goods
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- The WBG assisted the Ministry of Trade and Industry in requesting Cabinet approval for the formal establishment of the NTFC to strengthen its status. The Cabinet approved establishment of the NTFC, its Secretariat, and its Supervisory Board (of Ministers) in June 2019.
- The WBG developed ToRs for the establishment of three NTFC technical subcommittees: **(A)** Sanitary and Phytosanitary and Technical Barriers to Trade Issues, **(B)** Automation and Electronic Exchange of Information, and **(C)** Strengthening of Governance. The ToR will be presented to the NTFC for adoption at the next meeting of the committee. The subcommittees will coordinate implementation of specialized areas in the strategy after adoption by the NTFC.
- Coordinating closely with the NTFC, the WBG helped draft the Sierra Leone Trade Facilitation Strategy 2019–2024, which was finalized in May 2019. The final version will be presented to the NTFC for adoption in the next reporting period.
- A 360° virtual reality video titled "Making Trade Faster, Cheaper and Easier in Sierra Leone," which drew in participation of the NTFC and other stakeholders, was produced toward the end of the reporting period; it was launched during Aid for Trade in Geneva in July 2019.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

On the basis of the TFA gap assessment, the WCO is committed to providing technical assistance in risk management and general staff development for Customs.

Togo (inactive in FY19)

TFSP support to Togo

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

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

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. The WBG also engages the private sector, including small and medium enterprises, in discussions on how to better improve the trading environment in Zambia.

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
- 10.5 Pre-shipment inspection
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- With support from the program, the government enacted a border management bill into law in December 2018. This bill will help to reduce the number of government agencies operating at the border from 16 to 2. Inspections can now be performed at all 28 border posts on behalf of other agencies, even on weekends and holidays. With the enactment of the border management bill, an integrated border declaration form legislated under Statutory Instrument 4 of 2019 was initiated. The form combines the controls of three authorities regarding personal motor vehicles traveling through Zambia into one document. This change also ensures that any payments due to any agency are collected through the Single Payment Point.
- Through project support, the government has improved its capacity and capabilities with the ASYCUDA World system, allowing for improved information sharing among institutions within the public and private sectors.
- The project held a risk management workshop for trade facilitation and streamlining port inspections for other agencies participating in trade facilitation. Seven agencies involved in trade facilitation participated, and the Zambia Metrology Agency (ZMA) has begun developing a risk assessment and management framework based on the training provided. Training also led to the development a multi-agency risk management framework and a risk management subcommittee.
- The ZMA was connected to the Zambia Electronic Single Window and the Single Payment Point.
- ZMA connectivity to the Single Payment Point has led to an increase in the agency's revenue. From May to December 2018, revenue increased by US\$320k above the budgeted expected collection for the period. From January to June 2019, on average, the inspection fees collection per month amounted to US\$40k.
- Through work on the Single Window, the ZMA discovered that 60 of the 255 imported prepack products that ZMA currently regulates have overlapping legislation with the

Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA). The ZMA and the ZCSA began joint pilot inspection on destination inspections for all overlapping products to reduce time and cost for industry.

- The program developed a risk management policy, including governing principles, roles, and responsibilities for the ZMA.
- The program designed a risk assessment tool to help government agencies rate non-compliance, which is found and recorded as part of the inspection process. This tool will support risk management inspections at the border to ensure faster clearance of goods.
- Through project intervention and guidance, the proposed preshipment inspection (PSI) of all imports and exports into the country has been stopped. PSI would have been carried out on all products imported into Zambia, resulting in additional costs to the private sector, estimated to be around US\$200 million a year. Following intensive project consultations with the government, this has now been limited to cooking oil to protect Zambian small-scale growers of soybeans and sunflowers.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

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



CARIBBEAN

Grenada

**TFSP support
to Grenada**

Since 2013, the WBG has been delivering advisory services to the government of Grenada to support trade facilitation reforms. 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: **(A)** advanced rulings, **(B)** appeal procedures, and

(C) single window. UNCTAD will be supporting the government's implementation of the single window, and the TFSP has been supporting Grenada regarding rights of appeal and risk management.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY19 update on key activities

■ The TFSP facilitated a peer-to-peer session between the Grenada Customs and Excise Division (CED) and Jamaica Customs on procedures for appeal and review. The TFSP subsequently supported a reform memo with recommendations for advancing the implementation of TFA Article 4 on right of appeal in December 2018. A guidance document, which further elaborated the procedures for review and appeal of CED decisions, was also prepared and shared with Grenada CED. The proposed guidance note was based on the Customs Act and the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention, and it includes relevant provisions of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

■ The WBG through the TFSP continued to support strengthening of the risk management function in Grenada CED. The team shared best practice examples of ASYCUDA World Inspection Act procedures, as well as risk analytical procedures and tools that were used to establish and train risk management units. The importance of establishing and using a risk registry was emphasized, as was having standard operating procedures for the risk analysts to adhere to when managing the ASYCUDA World selectivity criteria and performing risk analysis.

Jamaica

TFSP support to Jamaica

The TFSP supported implementation of the Jamaica Trade Information Portal (JTIP), implementation of risk management and coordinated border management, and streamlining of border clearance processes, as well as a regulatory gap analysis related to the Customs Code.

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

FY19 update on key activities

■ The TFSP supported the implementation of the JTIP, which was officially launched in May 2019. The JTIP is a comprehensive electronic web-based platform, and it attracted strong political and private sector support during its implementation, including endorsement by the Hon. Prime Minister and the ministers of Trade and Commerce as well as private sector leaders (micro, small and medium enterprises; exporters; and manufacturers).

- With support from the TFSP, the team led a technical mission to advance implementation of risk management and coordinated border management in July 2019.
- Following initial support by the TFSP to undertake capacity building on risk management for six border agencies in FY18, the government of Jamaica has identified additional funding for a consultancy to implement an enterprise risk management framework for trade facilitation. This action is consistent with WBG recommendations, and it leverages the training provided under the TFSP. The consultancy is expected to start in September 2019. The WBG has provided technical assistance to review the terms of reference for this consultancy and has hosted a workshop with the National Trade Facilitation Taskforce (NTFTF) on enterprise risk management for trade facilitation to further guide execution of the consultancy.
- The TFSP supported the government's implementation of a more streamlined border clearance process, including reduction in the scope/prevalence of multiagency inspections and transition to a primary agency inspection model. The team delivered documentation to support the implementation of the new inspection model, which the NTFTF formally agreed to during the period under review. Key implementing documents for the new regime, including an inspections instruction checklist and referral document, were delivered to the NTFTF.
- The TFSP continued its support for implementation of TFA Article 10.1 on Formalities and Documentation Requirements. TFSP resources were used to undertake an assessment of trade licenses and permits and to provide recommendations to eliminate duplicative and distortive trade licenses. The recommendation to eliminate some import permits issued by the trade board was adopted by the government of Jamaica in April 2019 (14 items were approved for delicensing). To date, only six import and export permits have been eliminated. The majority of permits identified for elimination have remained in effect. The WBG will continue to advocate for removal of these license requirements.
- In June 2019, the government tabled the revised Jamaica Customs Bill to repeal and replace the existing Customs Act. The TFSP supported a review of the draft bill for alignment with the WTO TFA and other international standards and provided guidance on the treatment of penalties and charges under the new legislation. The WBG team participated in stakeholder consultations with the private sector to present and review the key provisions of the new legislation. An assessment of the Customs Bill and a gap analysis of the regulations required to give effect to the bill was also conducted in July 2019. The regulatory gap analysis will give the government a roadmap to scope and prioritize the regulations to be developed.
- A Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Technical Committee for Legislative Review has commenced work on reviewing trade related fees, charges and penalties. The team also developed a draft operational roadmap for the TWG which was subsequently accepted. The WBG team through TFSP provided guidance on best practice for cost recovery of fees and charges, and the TWG has asked for continued support in developing a survey instrument to document existing fees and charges. The WBG has provided an initial list of questions for the survey which is to be finalized by the TWG.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The tabling of the Jamaica Customs Bill (2019) was included as a prior action in a World Bank loan on economic resilience. An indicative trigger related to the development of regulations to give effect to the act has been proposed and is being discussed with the government. The government has requested technical assistance to develop Customs regulations.

St. Lucia

**TFSP support
to St. Lucia**

The 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.

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

10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

**FY19 update on
key activities**

■ The WBG and the WTO cohosted a regional workshop on TFA implementation for Caribbean Community member states. The workshop provided an opportunity to assess the level of alignment of national trade facilitation frameworks with TFA measures and facilitated the sharing of best practices among member states.



CENTRAL AMERICA

Regional Activities

As part of a regional Central American project on trade facilitation, the WBG, through TFSP support, is helping the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration review

the regional Customs Code for Central America and its regulations to align those instruments with the WTO TFA, to reduce clearance times, and to reduce required formalities and documentation to trade. Since the last fiscal year, the WBG has followed up with regional and national authorities to support their implementation of reforms. The Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) requested support to develop a data cube and calculation methodology to collect data to monitor time trade performance across the region. The data cube and the calculation methodology were both developed and are currently in use by SIECA. National activities on various TFA measures are underway in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. The TFA Tracking Tool shows that all six participating countries have improved their alignment with the WTO TFA since they started receiving TFSP support.

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

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

FY19 update on key activities

- On the basis of the WBG's recommendation in the previous reporting period, SIECA agreed to hold consultations with the private sector. A workshop with private sector representatives was held in September 2018, in which the WBG hired experts with TFSP funding to identify and present short-term measures that could accelerate the implementation of the TFA. These measures were then discussed in smaller groups made up of private sector representatives and decision makers. The Consultative Council for Economic Integration of Central America (CCIE) emphasized the importance of promoting the reforms with high-level government representatives at the presidential summit and with the support of the secretary of integration for Central America.
- TFSP support helped SIECA develop a tool to measure the average time for transit, export, and import through the Pacific corridor. An online analytical processing (OLAP) cube was developed by the WBG with TFSP support, and has been in use by SIECA since March 2019. The measurements occur in real time, extracting and processing data from multiple sources that SIECA manages, including customs declarations.
- The WBG finished reviewing the Central American Customs Code and its regulations with TFSP support. The new legal and regulatory framework will adapt Customs to modern trade practices once completion negotiation between participating countries, public consultation and approval by the Council of Ministers of Economy of Central America.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

WBG advice will inform a World Bank potential lending operation for the region. The World Bank presented the idea for the operation during the 2019 Spring Meetings, and Guatemala is interested in exploring this further. Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras have also expressed interest.

Country-specific Activities

Costa Rica

TFSP support to Costa Rica

In the previous reporting period, the TFSP began preparations to support the government of Costa Rica in identifying measures to reduce excessive requirements and time to trade at land border posts. In the current reporting period, assessments of formalities and documentary requirements were undertaken, and recommendations were made. The recommended reforms are expected to expedite movement, release, and clearance of goods by reducing documentary requirements and eliminating printed copies as a requirement. The results will include faster, more transparent, and easier trade processes, as well as savings for the private sector.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

FY19 update on key activities

■ In this reporting period, TFSP support helped reduce documentary requirements, which in turn decreased times and costs for the private sector. Specifically, Costa Rica Customs made the decision that paper copies of all documents submitted online for border clearance are no longer required, and Costa Rica implemented measures to receive required information, including manifests, before the arrival of the goods.

■ Additional achievements are expected through the implementation of other WBG recommendations, including the elimination of the cargo manifest as a requirement for transit (as indicated officially by the customs director).

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP-supported advisory activity will inform a World Bank potential lending operation for the region. The World Bank presented the idea during the 2019 Spring Meetings, and Costa Rica is interested in exploring this further.

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 provided support to undertake a comprehensive process mapping of all agencies that are responsible for air cargo. In addition, the TFSP is providing support to El Salvador in its effort to implement an e-signature program for the Ministry of Economy.

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

FY19 update on key activities

- The TFSP supported the streamlining of air cargo processes, which decreased import times for general air cargo processing in El Salvador by 50 percent—from 78 to 36 hours.
- The TFSP provided support in mapping air cargo processes and made recommendations for improvement on the basis of the mapping. With the process maps, El Salvador published easily accessible information on import, export, and transit procedures; fees; regulations; and other details relevant to trade.
- El Salvador joined the Honduras-Guatemala Customs Union in November 2018 with technical assistance from the TFSP. The TFSP helped assess the time required to cross the borders with Honduras and Guatemala. Further, the project supported pilot exercises with the private sector to test and adjust the Central American Single Invoice and Declaration (FYDUCA), which helped to create a baseline of times for the private sector to cross the border during import-export processes. Once FYDUCA is fully implemented, time reductions will be calculated. In addition, as private sector firms participate in this process through pilot projects, they will become familiar with FYDUCA before its mandatory implementation.
- The assessment indicated that some borders could reduce crossing time substantially by implementing FYDUCA, complemented with process reengineering and infrastructure improvements to facilitate passage of cargo within the Customs Union. With proven time reductions through the pilot project, the TFSP has supported Customs from both countries to help implement FYDUCA and has made recommendations for improvements to facilitate trade. All this information is shared with the governments of both countries.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP-supported advisory activities will inform a World Bank potential lending operation for the region. The World Bank presented the idea during the 2019 Spring Meetings, and El Salvador is interested in exploring this further.

Guatemala and Honduras

TFSP support to Guatemala and Honduras

The TFSP supports the Customs Union between Guatemala and Honduras with recommendations to implement risk management tools, post-clearance audits, and an authorized operator program to facilitate the movement of goods.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.1 Pre-arrival Processing
- 7.4 Risk management⁶
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements

FY19 update on key activities

- El Salvador recently joined the Guatemala-Honduras Customs Union. As such, in this reporting period, the TFSP supported Guatemala and Honduras in implementing a Customs Union that allows the electronic submission of trade documents between the three countries using FYDUCA.

⁶ Measure 7.4 only applies to Guatemala.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

- The project also helped Guatemala implement measures to receive information, including manifests, before the arrival of the goods.
- In Guatemala, the TFSP provided support in holding an interinstitutional risk management workshop in February 2019 whereby all relevant institutions participated and drafted specific workplans and courses of action.
- Further, the TFSP supported Customs in Guatemala with recommendations to implement risk management tools, post-clearance audits, and an authorized operator program to facilitate the movement of goods. Guatemalan Customs is in the process of implementing all these measures through its Integral Customs Modernization Program 2019–2023, which was approved this year.
- The estimated reduction in average time required to cross the border was from 10 hours to 7 minutes.

TFSP-supported advisory activities will inform a World Bank potential lending operation for the region. The World Bank presented the idea during the 2019 Spring Meetings, and Guatemala is interested in exploring this further.

TFSP support to Nicaragua

In FY19, the TFSP continued providing support on the Port of Corinto to enhance transparency as well as to reduce clearance times. The TFSP continued to support the mapping of trade processes during FY19 to ensure that the private sector has access to complete information on steps and documents required to trade through the Trámites Nicaragua website (<http://www.tramitesnicaragua.gob.ni/?l=es>).

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

FY19 update on key activities

- Following a period of civil unrest, TFSP support to Nicaragua picked up again in this reporting period.
- Nicaragua implemented measures to receive information, including manifests, before the arrival of the goods. This action has resulted in the reduction of clearance times from eight days to four days.
- During FY19, the project continued work on the Port of Corinto. Despite political instability during most of the activity, the following steps were taken:
 - Customs authorities applied prearrival processing to all imported goods. Previously, only certain products had this benefit. The reform helped reduce clearance times by 50 percent—from eight days to four days according to several Customs agents.

- On the Trámites Nicaragua website, the government published fees and payments for import, export, and transit at the Port of Corinto. This reform improved transparency.

■ Additionally, the project helped IPSA (Agricultural Health and Protection Institute) consolidate a list of products linked to its required licenses, fees, and permits, simplifying access to information. The WBG delivered the final document to the government of Nicaragua for subsequent publishing.

Panama

TFSP support to Panama

After agreeing to a phased approach and terms of reference to develop an e-payment module for the food safety border agency in FY18, the TFSP supported the delivery of technical specifications for the module in FY19. The TFSP continued to support the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee and continued to support Panama in adopting integrated risk management for transshipments.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.2 Electronic Payment

7.4 Risk Management

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

■ The TFSP helped strengthen institutions such as the National Committee for Trade Facilitation in Panama by providing recommendations to facilitate more effective cooperation between Customs and other border agencies. The team provided the Gabinete Logístico and the Ministry of Industry and Trade with a regulatory proposal for creating a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) to guide reforms in the country. The NTFC was implemented via government decree at the start of 2019.

■ The project delivered technical specifications for an e-payment module for Panama's food safety border agency, the Autoridad Panameña de Seguridad de Alimentos (AUPSA). The e-payment module will be delivered by the authorities and result in significant time savings for importers and will speed up the general flow of commerce.

■ The project delivered an integrated risk management action plan to border agencies. It is particularly aimed at the transshipment process. Also, a mission was carried out in February 2019 to provide support and recommendations to border agencies in terms of risk management. During this mission, technical workshops were held with representatives of Customs, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, AUPSA, and MIDA (Ministry of Agricultural Development).



Central business district
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EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Country-specific Activities: East Asia

Cambodia

TFSP support to Cambodia

Early TFSP support to Cambodia complemented a World Bank project focusing primarily on implementing a national trade repository. In FY19, the TFSP financing focused on **(A)** supporting the government of Cambodia in the formation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) that meets TFA requirements to coordinate and implement trade facilitation reforms and commitments, and **(B)** reviewing regulations on prohibitions, restrictions of goods, and risk management practices.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 1.1 Publication
- 1.2 Information Available through Internet
- 7.4 Risk Management
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- The TFSP supported the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) team in preparing a proposal for establishment of the NTFC, including rationale, structure, mandate, functions, and modalities of the committee. The proposal was submitted to and is pending approval from MOC leadership. As part of the process, a workshop was held to gather inputs from relevant government agencies and representatives of private sector/business associations.
- The TFSP supported the government of Cambodia in reviewing and streamlining regulations on prohibitions, restrictions of goods stipulated in Sub-Decree 209, and risk management practices to facilitate trade. Following the WBG's recommendation, the government formally established a task force to review the regulations.
- The TFSP supported the introduction of a risk management methodology, helped facilitate a series of consultation workshops, and provided recommendations,

including (A) better management of commodities through post-entry controls and therefore removal of low-risk commodities from the list of restricted and prohibited goods, and (B) reassessment of the need for multiple documentary requirements for imports and exports. The task force is incorporating these recommendations into the revised list of restricted and prohibited goods for submission to the government for final approval.

LAO People's Democratic Republic (PDR)

TFSP support to Lao PDR	TFSP support to Lao PDR has focused on establishment and implementation of an authorized economic operator (AEO) program. Earlier support to Lao PDR focused on border agency cooperation.
Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)	<p>7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators</p> <p>8 Border Agency Cooperation</p>
FY19 update on key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Through TFSP support, a Guideline on Management of Authorized Economic Operator was approved by the minister of finance (MOF) on April 18, 2019. This guideline is a stepping stone for Lao PDR to promote implementation of the AEO in the country. Based on the country's limited absorptive capacity, AEO implementation will follow multiple phases. The Lao Customs Department also will be training Customs officers to ensure their understanding of the program. ■ The TFSP-supported consultations on AEO guidelines were also closely linked to the MOF's efforts to establish a formal guideline on customs brokers. The MOF is now reviewing the guideline on customs brokers, and approval is pending.
Leverage or complementarity of funds	TFSP financing complements a World Bank lending project that supports the government's trade and integration priorities.

Mongolia

TFSP support to Mongolia	The TFSP currently supports the development of a trade information portal (TIP) and the undertaking of the time release study (TRS), and has supported work on risk-based inspections and authorized operators in the past.
Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)	<p>1.1 Publication</p> <p>1.2 Information Available through Internet</p> <p>7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators</p> <p>23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation</p>
FY19 update on key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The NTFC approved the TRS implementation work plan in mid-May 2019, and TRS working subgroups were established in April 2019 by order of the NTFC secretary. The TRS is planned to start on October 8 (with a formal request to assist), and the final report is to be produced in the first quarter of 2020. ■ Upon endorsement by the NTFC, a TRS mission was organized between May and June 2019. The mission covered field trips to the southern (Zamyn Uud) and northern

(Altanbulag, Sukhbaatar) border crossing points as well as visits to the Ulaanbaatar city land terminals and cargo terminal at the international airport. Interactions with Customs, the General Agency for Specialized Inspection, and railway and air authorities provided a strong understanding of the business processes related to clearance, and written descriptions of the process from the visited points were shared by authorities with the project team. A draft terms of reference document has been developed for a local vendor to implement TRS data collection and data submission into the WCO software.

- A Trade Information Portal (TIP) advisory agreement draft was developed and shared with the Customs authorities at the beginning of April 2019. The agreement is scheduled to be signed in the next reporting period.
- The project team met with the largest meat producers and exporters in April to learn about their experiences dealing with Customs and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agencies during the export process. The meeting gave good insights on potential reform areas such as cutting down unnecessary steps, reviewing requirements on import and export of animal originated products, and the necessity of using information and communications technology solutions in data exchange between Customs and SPS agencies. It also revealed a large need for information transparency and easy access to trade information by the private sector, which confirms demand by the wider public in tools such as the TIP.

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
- 10.3 Use of International Standards
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- TFSP supported a legal working group of the Myanmar Customs Department (MCD) in completing a draft of a new customs law to provide the MCD with the legal basis to develop and implement trade-facilitative, risk-based procedures and controls consistent with modernized customs principles, including the WTO TFA and the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention.
- Myanmar submitted its WTO notification on indicative timelines for TFA implementation. It was confirmed and published by the WTO. Category B lead agencies and Category C potential donors were identified.

- On the basis of WBG advice, the national coordination committee for the TFA was renamed the National Committee for Trade Facilitation to avoid confusion with the Transport Facilitation Committee.
 - A TFA Awareness Session and Workshop was delivered at Customs House Yangon for MCD and Ministry of Commerce (MoC) staff, which resulted in better understanding for working group members.
 - A workshop facilitated by the WBG helped develop draft terms of reference (ToRs) for the TFA working groups. The NTFC Working Group Secretariat submitted the ToR drafts for comment and approval by the NTFC.
 - The TFSP financed work with Customs on the benefits of accession and on merging that work with TFA compliance, particularly on procedural issues.
 - Two outcomes from the Customs Senior Management seminars facilitated by the WBG have been positive changes in the behavioral leadership and reforms in the approach to TFA implementation.
 - The government of Myanmar, Customs, and the WBG have agreed on a Customs reform and modernization program, and work has started on the establishment of a training center.
- Leverage or complementarity of funds** TFSP funding 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** Before the reporting period, TFSP support focused on establishing the Vietnam Trade Information Portal, on providing advice to support the establishment of the National Trade Facilitation Committee, and on providing advice on analyzing the results of Vietnam's time release study. In the reporting period, the TFSP financed focus group discussions with traders in Vietnam, as part of a larger regional initiative on women and cross-border trade.
- Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)**
- 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
- FY19 update on key activities** ■ As part of the broader trade facilitation and gender work under the TFSP, focus group discussions were held with the private sector, including women and men traders and industry associations in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in May 2019. A number of bilateral meetings were also held with government ministries and non-governmental organizations. The purpose of these discussions and meetings was to gauge the suitability of the designed survey across a wide audience of traders. At the end of the reporting period, work was still ongoing to try to identify the universe of women traders across the country.

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

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

Regional Activities: Pacific Islands

Following the 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 TFA reform road maps 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, and coordinated border management.

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.

**FY19 update on
key activities**

- A national single window (NSW) workshop was conducted in the Solomon Islands at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (MFAET). Industry stakeholders and government agency representatives attended the workshop. A Solomon Islands NSW concept note outlining a commencement strategy for consideration by the government was prepared with TFSP support for MFAET. Industry and government agency single window awareness sessions were conducted individually to promote further understanding of the NSW concept and overall TFA arrangements.
- A combined WCO and IFC program to support Tonga in conducting a time release study for imported cargo through the Port of Nuku'alofa was undertaken in December 2018 and March 2019. Technical assistance was provided to map the sea freight import and export clearance processes, to draft terms of reference for the Time Release Study Working Group, and to prepare a time release study work plan. The study is to take place in early 2020.

Country-specific Activities: Pacific Islands

Fiji

**TFSP support
to Fiji**

The TFSP has assisted with categorization and has 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

FY19 update on key activities

- A single window visioning workshop was conducted to assist the government of Fiji with considerations for future automation of the single window. The NTFC decided to form a Single Window Board comprising of the heads of relevant agencies to develop a cabinet brief for evaluating single window future options. It was agreed that the brief would include a three- to five-year timeline for implementation, considerations of funding options through internal government arrangements and donor support, and a request for a Fiji single window blueprint to be developed.
- A Single Submission of Cargo Manifest Pilot Program was conducted by the Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS), the Ministry of Health (MOH), and Biosecurity Agency Fiji (BAF) in cooperation with shipping companies, brokers, and ports. A range of positive results include the following:
 - The MOH successfully implemented the pilot and is now accessing 100 percent of sea cargo manifests for food safety screening. Previously in the paper-based model, only about 50 percent of sea cargo manifests were received.
 - The MOH is also now able to access all consignment details via the Electronic SAD (Declaration) lodged by brokers, resulting in improved targeting.
 - Shipping companies have reduced paperwork because there is no longer a requirement to submit paper manifests to the MOH/BAF.
 - Brokers have experienced reduced travel time because there is no longer a requirement to bring paper manifests from shipping companies to the MOH and BAF.
 - The pilot program has brought about a behavioral change within NTFC working groups, and industry and government agency teams have initiated new efforts to change the manifest processing model beyond the terms of the initial pilot. A further trial of the pilot program within BAF is anticipated for next fiscal year.
 - A baseline for current activity was developed to enable analysis of future change in the program. The Fiji Ports Corporation Limited has used this process to plan for better connectivity between FRCS and the port operating system, with the intention to improve cargo release information transfer.
- A time value survey on the paper sea cargo manifest processes for the MOH and BAF was conducted and assessed in the reporting period.
- Assistance was provided to the shipping industry to work with FRCS to enable automated upload of shipping manifests to ASYCUDA. Ninety percent of automated transfer of manifest data has been achieved.

- Initial assistance to BAF has been provided to prepare for analysis of the current state of Fiji testing procedures for the NTFC. Assistance will be ongoing in the next fiscal year.

Papua New Guinea

TFSP support to Papua New Guinea

The TFSP has supported Papua New Guinea (A) in improving customs risk management in Customs and the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA); (B) in efforts to enhance border coordination between customs and quarantine functions; (C) in the formation and development of the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC); (D) in reviewing the availability of trade-related information; and (E) in developing parallel processes for clearance by the Customs Service and NAQIA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY19 update on key activities

- NAQIA's clearance processes and application of risk management to cargo intervention were reviewed in August 2018. A TFSP-supported mission examined NAQIA's clearance processes in air cargo at Port Moresby and in sea cargo in Lae. A report was prepared recommending improvements that can be made to reduce the current levels of documentary examination and physical inspection, but NAQIA has not yet acted on any of the proposals.
- Support was provided in 2018 to the Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry to finalize the documentation required for accession and notification to the WTO; Papua New Guinea ratified the TFA in March 2018. A key achievement was Papua New Guinea's notification to the WTO of the Category B and C articles of the TFA with indicative dates (May 2019).

Samoa

TFSP support to Samoa

The TFSP has assisted Samoa with categorization and support for its 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.

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

FY19 update on key activities

- TFSP support to Samoa in the reporting period focused on providing guidance on Category B's that were notified with definitive dates for completion in 2019.
- Building on previous TFSP support in Samoa, the Samoa Quarantine Service and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (Australia) are now preparing to pilot electronic phytosanitary certificates (not funded by the TFSP).

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 (TRS) and implement key recommendations; and **(C)** align the sanitary and phytosanitary and customs legislation with the TFA and international best practice.

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

FY19 update on key activities

- The TFSP funded technical assistance toward the establishment of a time release study (TRS) working group, which includes representatives from Customs, Quarantine, and Port, as well as two customs brokers. The TRS Working Group was tasked with planning, undertaking, and reporting on the results of the TRS, particularly on the import of containerized cargo through the Port of Dili. The TRS was undertaken in June 2019. The TFSP supported training and technical assistance toward the TRS methodology, approach, and online software; about 30 percent of the participants were women.
- The TFSP funded technical advice to align the Plant Health Decree Law and the draft Animal Health Decree Law with the draft Organic Law for the structure of the Ministry of Agriculture. All drafts were developed in consultation with the government and private sector stakeholders.
- The WBG made technical recommendations to draft import regulations for plants and plant products, biosecurity risk, and animals and animal products.
- The WBG also made technical recommendations to draft export regulations for plants and plant products.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support to Timor-Leste is complementing a USAID-funded Customs project.

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 to improve its risk management system; **(C)** assistance to amend biosecurity regulations to align with customs prearrival 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), including drafting of a blueprint for implementation.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
- 10.4 Single Window
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- A blueprint for the NSW was completed in the previous reporting period. The blueprint included recommendations on specifications of a future NSW, particularly associated with permit-issuing government agencies.
- Vanuatu signed the NSW agreement in August 2018. Assistance was provided to set up a specific NSW working group to provide project oversight.
- The TFSP will continue to provide assistance to NTFC management and to Quarantine to develop new permit issuing models.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

Through the close partnership between the WBG and the European Investment Fund (EIF), the EIF Tier 2 project is providing US\$1.5 million funding for the establishment of an electronic single window system in Vanuatu, leveraging the work undertaken by the WBG that was financed under the TFSP.



EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Regional Activities

In Europe and Central Asia, the TFSP helps countries align their rules and regulations and their implementation capacity with the requirements of the WTO TFA.

- The WBG has developed tracking tool assessments for five countries in the Western Balkans as well as for the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan with TFSP support. (These are the countries where the most activities have taken place in recent years.) Compared with early WTO TFA assessments carried out after the finalization of the agreement in 2013, alignment has improved by 10 percentage points overall.
- The TFSP continued to finance technical assistance (TA) to sanitary and phytosanitary agencies in the region by initiating contacts and collaboration with phytosanitary agencies in North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. This work follows TA to regional food and veterinary agencies. The objective is for these agencies to use a risk-based approach to inspections and sampling, which would reduce the level of inspections performed at the present time and thereby speed up border/terminal processing of cargo and in turn continue to protect the safety and health of consumers.
- The WBG and the USAID Regional Economic Growth Project (USAID REG Project) have been collaborating since September 2015 to help the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) parties establish National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs). By now, all CEFTA countries (i.e., Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia) have established NTFCs with support from the two partners. USAID REG and the WBG have provided operational assistance (for example, work plan development in Kazakhstan this past year) and expert guidance to selected working groups of the NTFCs.
- The WBG cohosted and participated in a number of regional events, meetings, and conferences in FY19 with TFSP support. Among those events were meetings focused

on NTFCs, authorized economic operators, technical assistance requests, public/private dialogue mechanisms, performance management, and best practices. A meeting also took place to share the CEFTA work plan priorities with donors in order to garner support.

Country-specific Activities: Europe

Albania

TFSP support to Albania

During this reporting period, the WBG worked with the Albanian General Directorate of Customs. The time release study (TRS) report was finalized, and the country's authorized economic operator (AEO) program was promoted. The WBG has also continued its engagement with the Albanian National Food Authority on the development of risk-based import controls, and drafted a communications strategy to help the agency effectively communicate this innovative approach.

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
- 6.2 Specific Disciplines on Fees and Charges for Customs Processing Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
- 7.4 Risk Management
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1 Formalities and Documentation Requirements
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- The TFSP is supporting North Macedonia and Albania Customs with the establishment of joint controls at their joint border crossing point (BCP) Qafe Thane/Kjafasan. The TFSP financed the preparation of a report on procedures mapping at the border on both sides. Similar support is being provided to the border authorities of Serbia and of the Republic of North Macedonia regarding joint controls at the Tabanovce/Presevo BCP.
- The WBG team assessed the full and effective alignment level of Albania's trade facilitation practice with the TFA. The assessment, which was funded by the TFSP, considers legal/policy compliance and existence of implementing procedures, as well as operational check-in practice for each of the TFA measures.
- The TFSP financed a two-day workshop on authorized economic operators for Albania and Kosovo Customs in May 2019. Customs representatives from both countries shared details on their respective authorized operator regimes and discussed their outreach efforts. Both customs administrations are trying to attract firms to their authorized operator programs.
- The TFSP supported Albania's commitments to publish all fees and charges imposed at the importation or exportation of goods by (A) preparing a comprehensive inventory

of trade-related fees and charges in Albania and identifying fees and charges that are redundant or not in proportion to the services offered, and (B) identifying cases in which harmonization of practices is required between other agencies and Central European Free Trade Agreement parties, leading to appropriate elimination, reduction, and harmonization actions. The report will be shared with the authorities in the next reporting period.

- In November 2018, the WBG and the Albanian Customs Administration carried out a time release study (TRS) at three BCPs, three related inland terminals, and a seaport. This study is the first TRS carried out in Albania. The results report was developed and finalized during this period, and it is expected to be published by Customs in the next reporting period.
- In line with the recommendations provided by the TRS, a new online "Customs without paper" service was launched, allowing companies to file customs declarations electronically. About 90 percent of all traders will benefit from this service, which will save the private sector time and money (only a small number of operators that are considered high risk will need to continue to submit paper files).
- The WBG engaged an international communications specialist to develop a communications strategy and tool kit for appropriate messaging related to the introduction of the risk-based border inspections by the Albanian National Food Authority.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP support complements the Albania Investment Climate Competitiveness Project and a World Bank development policy loan on trade and transport facilitation. It also collaborates closely with the USAID REG Project and a Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) trade facilitation 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) that came into force in FY18 and on risk management.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- Building on last year's scoping visit, the team engaged with the SPS (sanitary and phytosanitary) Agency of the Republika Srpska that subsequently completed a detailed questionnaire regarding its activities, focused on border controls. Agreement was reached for an expert mission for July 2019 to meet with agency management, inspectors, and private sector representatives and to visit border facilities in both the Republika Srpska and the Federation and with the BiH Plant Protection Administration.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support is complementary to the IFC's Bosnia Investment Climate Project. TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Kosovo

TFSP support to Kosovo

The agreed areas of TFSP assistance in Kosovo include helping operate the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) working groups, implementing 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)

- 6.1 General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation
- 7.4 Risk Management
- 7.6 Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times
- 7.7 Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators
- 10.4 Single Window
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- In support of risk-based border management, the WBG continued to work with the KVFA to develop a risk-based sampling framework and guidelines for the phytosanitary department. During this period, TSFP helped the KVFA amend its internal regulation to include provisions on establishing a risk unit. A final review of the regulation took place in April 2019, and it is currently pending final approval from the chief executive of the KVFA.
- The WBG also agreed to collaborate with the KVFA on developing and implementing a risk management approach for border controls with the Phytosanitary Department. The first mission will take place in July 2019.
- The TFSP has been supporting the Kosovo Customs Administration with the development of an authorized economic operator (AEO) program and with outreach to the private sector. Customs recently established a committee to review and approve applications for the AEO program. In May 2019, a World Bank senior consultant facilitated a joint workshop in Tirana with Customs and Albania that was targeted at addressing some of the application and compliance issues of the AEO program.
- Four working groups have been established under the NTFC, and all working groups are assisted by the TFSP-financed consultant. The working groups are set up within the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Food and Veterinary Agency, and the Medical Products Agency. One working group has reviewed licenses, fees, and charges applied to trade transactions. As a result, a final list of fees and charges has been completed. From the collected data, it is concluded that there are 11 different government institutions that issue licenses and permits and apply fees and charges on import, export, and transit of goods in Kosovo.
- The TFSP funded an assessment for the implementation of a single window project by meeting with representatives of all border agencies and other stakeholders to assess the current environment for implementation of the single window concept. A report with the team's findings and recommendations was shared with the stakeholders.

■ A WBG 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, and operational check-in practice for each of the TFA measures.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Republic of North Macedonia

TFSP support to North Macedonia

The TFSP supports coordinated border management through joint border controls between North Macedonia and Serbia at the border control post of Tabanovce/Presevo. Assistance provided has included analysis and reporting on the feasibility of introducing a joint border crossing control zone, as well as organizing workshops and meetings with stakeholders. The TFSP also supports the establishment of risk management and a risk assessment system with the State Agriculture Inspectorate by reviewing information and helping to develop guidance. In addition, it supports efforts to implement a national single window.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation

FY19 update on key activities

■ As part of the preparatory work toward the first phase of the multiphase Western Balkans Trade and Transport Facilitation Project, the TFSP helped facilitate a national single window workshop for key government agencies. The purpose of the workshop was to appraise the state of readiness of the Customs Administration and other government agencies to implement a national single window.

■ TFSP supported the Customs Administration of the Republic of North Macedonia by organizing workshops and meetings with different stakeholders and by sharing international best practice materials, all of which assisted the Customs Administration in the process of establishing joint border controls at the Tabanovce/Presevo BCP. Fully established and operational, the joint controls procedures at the Tabanovce/Presevo BCP are expected to start in September 2019.

■ The TFSP supported the State Agriculture Inspectorate–Phytosanitary Inspection in reviewing its data collection methodology, existing information on imported commodities, general information on compliance information, pest distributions, domestic production, and so forth and in developing a prioritized listing of commodities. In addition, the TFSP supported the State Agriculture Inspectorate in developing documented guidance on inspection of high-risk, middle-risk, and low-risk commodities. The implementation should result in more targeted sampling and will be more risk-based than before, which would mean reducing the number of samples taken but increasing the identified noncompliant ("positive") samples.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Moldova

TFSP support to Moldova

The TFSP is providing support to the National Food Safety Agency (ANSA) in risk assessment and is also supporting the government of Moldova with amending its regulations on customs valuation of goods. The TFSP previously provided support to Moldova to update its Category B and C notifications and supported the drafting of the National Trade Facilitation Committee Action Plan for Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) implementation.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- The project continued to help ANSA build capacities for its new risk assessment unit in the context of strengthening country's food safety systems and institutions to support the trade facilitation agenda. The project carried out a three-day workshop in May 2019. The workshop offered practical examples of different types of risk assessments and detailed guidance on carrying out the respective assessments. It was attended by approximately 20 ANSA staff that are routinely involved in risk assessment and risk management activities.

- The project reviewed the amendments to the Regulations on Customs Valuation of Goods in an effort to reduce the frequency of indicative price valuation applied by Customs. The WBG provided recommendations toward this effort earlier in FY18. Draft amendments are being reviewed by the government before adoption.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

The TFSP support 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, including a simplified procedures regime. In the past, TFSP supported 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

FY19 update on key activities

- The TFSP is providing support to Customs in the development of an AEO program. Training on the establishment of an AEO scheme in accordance with European Union (EU) requirements has been provided. The training also provided expert insights into international rules and EU best practices in dealing with AEOs, relevant to Montenegro's harmonization process in the course of EU accession.

- The WBG has initiated discussions with the Institute of Certified Accountants to provide targeted audit training to selected staff of Montenegro Customs. The training will be given in relation to preauthorization and post-authorization audits of authorized operators. The objective of the activity is to strengthen the efficiency of audits of the assessment of an authorized operator's financial solvency and its compliance with customs and taxation rules.
- During the reporting period, the TFSP and USAID supported a study visit of the administration team of the Trade Facilitation Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Montenegrin National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) to present effective practices related to NTFC operations.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Serbia

TFSP support to Serbia

The TFSP supports the Customs Administration of Serbia in enhancing transparency and predictability for the business community by developing a new IT application and introducing new electronic services for the private sector, which enable quick generation of documents, reports, and statistics in relation to origin of goods.

The TFSP has also supported the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) with the establishment of permanent specialized working groups and the development of action plans of NTFC working groups. It has provided training and capacity building on post-clearance audit practices regarding complex transactions involving transfer prices, royalties, and license fees. It has promoted the concept of joint controls at the main road BCP between Serbia and North Macedonia, and it has supported the visioning of single window introduction to Serbia.

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
- 8 Border Agency Cooperation
- 10.1 Formalities and Document Requirements
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- At the request of the Customs Administration of Serbia, the TFSP supported the development of a new user friendly and sophisticated information technology (IT) application in June 2019, enabling efficient management of business processes related to the origin of goods. The application enables quick generation of documents, reports, and statistics in relation to the origin of goods.
- Additionally, two new electronic services were enabled for the business community, and the TFSP supported development of user manuals for the business community to enable the easy use of the systems, as well as a user manual for customs officials.

Extensive training of customs officials on the new IT tool has also been provided. A promotional launch event for the new IT application on the origin of goods was jointly organized by WBG and Serbian Customs. The event, which took place in June 2019, was attended by about 60 public and private sector representatives.

- The TFSP financed advisory assistance to the Serbian NTFC regarding the establishment of specialized working groups, providing for formal engagement of the private sector in the NTFC work. The TFSP also supported the NTFC in consultative processes with the private sector representatives to design the action plan of working groups until end of 2019. Additionally, the TFSP supports the NTFC with compiling mandatory annual reports to the government of Serbia on NTFC work.
- The TFSP financed post-clearance audit training on customs valuation, transfer pricing, royalties, and license fees to over 20 officials from the Customs and Tax Administrations of Serbia in July 2018. The training was designed to strengthen capacities of auditors in Serbian Customs and enhance their practical knowledge and skills for controlling customs value in relation to more complex transactions.
- The WBG advocated for establishment of joint (juxtaposed) controls between Serbia and North Macedonia at the road traffic border crossing point of Presevo/Tabanovce. With TFSP support, the WBG prepared the draft roadmap of activities to be undertaken by line institutions of both countries to establish joint controls for cargo traffic. In addition, the WBG provided information on the types of activities and indicative timelines for implementation that could be supported by the TFSP in the coming period.
- The WBG 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 support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Country-specific Activities: Caucasus

Georgia

TFSP support to Georgia

TFSP support to Georgia has been centered on assistance in developing a standard operating procedures manual for customs valuation and on creation of a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

- 7.4 Risk Management
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- In the reporting period, the TFSP supported team discussions with the government about different options for organizing the NTFC in Georgia. Recommendations were made to involve all relevant agencies and representatives of the business community. The government recognizes the effect the NTFC may have on a wide range of businesses, as well as the impact on the effective expansion of Georgia's international trade. As a result of the TFSP-supported efforts, the government of Georgia adopted

a decree to create the NTFC on May 1, 2019. The decree set forth the members of the committee (including public institution representatives and business associations), its functions and responsibilities, and decision-making role, as well as organizational and technical support of its activities.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Country-specific Activities: Central Asia

Kazakhstan

TFSP support to Kazakhstan

In Kazakhstan, the TFSP has assisted the government in creating the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) and has provided guidance on the notification process for Categories A, B, and C of the WTO TFA.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

■ TFSP assisted the Kazakh Ministry of National Economy (MNE) with the finalization of the National Trade Facilitation Committee's work plan. The plan was approved in January 2019.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Kyrgyz Republic

TFSP support to the Kyrgyz Republic

In the Kyrgyz Republic, the TFSP has provided support to the government in setting up the National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), including developing its action plan and setting up working groups. Support has also been provided in undertaking a time release study.

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
- 23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

■ In December 2018, the results of the time release study carried out in the spring of 2018 were presented by Kyrgyz Customs and WBG representatives at the second NTFC meeting. The report was finalized during the reporting period, and Customs has pledged to publish a summary of the report on its website.

- The TFSP funded administrative support and technical input to the NTFC in the reporting period. The NTFC decided to update its action plan and the action plans of its working groups for 2019; it also tasked the Secretariat with the preparation of an activity report for 2018 that was submitted to the government office of the Kyrgyz Republic.
- The TFSP funded a mission to Kyrgyz Customs to develop risk criteria and a trusted traders' regime concept. These concepts were accepted by Kyrgyz Customs and incorporated into the new Customs Code, which was approved in mid-2019.
- The TFSP continued to finance risk management capacity building at the State Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety Inspection Service and the Department of Disease Prevention and State Sanitary and Epidemiological Surveillance within the Ministry of Health. The WBG team worked with agency staff on the development of risk categorization for products under their jurisdiction, on the development of a monitoring sampling plan, and on the development of a handbook detailing the needed implementing procedures. Applying these tools, agencies should be able to carry out import controls at the border in a uniform and structured manner that is based on scientific principles, resulting in fewer inspections and less sampling. The documents have now been developed and are to be finalized during the second half of 2019.
- The WBG responded to a request by Kyrgyz Customs for assistance with developing a more informative and user-friendly website for traders, including a feedback mechanism. A website designer was engaged through a competitive selection process and began work in June 2019.
- The TFSP has financed a series of missions to Kyrgyz Customs to develop risk criteria and a trusted traders' regime. The risk concepts were accepted by Kyrgyz Customs and incorporated into the new Customs Code, which was approved in mid-2019. A follow-on mission in the fall will assess the effect of these changes, which can now be applied.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.

Tajikistan

TFSP support to Tajikistan

The TFSP in Tajikistan has supported Customs on simplifying procedures for clearing goods. In the reporting period, the TFSP supported both the Customs Administration and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT)/National Trade Facilitation Committee on the development of an authorized operator scheme and expedited procedures for agricultural exports.

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

FY19 update on key activities

■ At the request of the Customs Administration of Tajikistan, TFSP-financed experts reviewed Customs' draft action plan on risk management and provided detailed comments for the implementation process.

■ Also at the request of the Customs Administration, the WBG reviewed proposed amendments to the Customs Code of Tajikistan related to the implementation of an authorized economic operator (AEO) program. The team proposed several improvements aimed at a successful introduction of the program, specifically related to tangible benefits offered to traders that would join such a program. The improvements were included in the amendment.

■ During 2017, the WBG, at the request of the MEDT, reviewed the processes of agricultural exports and developed recommendations for an expedited "green corridor." Upon recommendation from the WBG team, the government established a working group of interested ministries and agencies in November 2018 under the National Trade Facilitation Committee to work through options on how to implement an expedited corridor.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support complements the work of two regional trade facilitation projects funded by USAID and GIZ.



MIDDLE EAST

Lebanon

TFSP support to Lebanon

The TFSP assists the Lebanese government in adopting best practice trade facilitation policies and strategies, including through **(A)** the development of a customs strategy, **(B)** the development of a risk management strategy, **(C)** the development a national electronic single window vision agreement leading to a holistic national single window framework, and **(D)** the undertaking of a time release study.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

7.4 Risk Management

FY19 update on key activities

■ A customs strategy and a risk management strategy were developed and submitted to Customs of the government of Lebanon for consideration.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP funding sources are complementary to financing received via the Umbrella Facility for Trade Trust Fund (US\$70k). Discussions are ongoing about a larger lending project on creating opportunities in support of the national jobs program.



The Port of Salvador in All Saints Bay, Bahia, handles both cargo and cruise ships
© Mariana Ceratti/World Bank Group

SOUTH AMERICA

Bolivia

TFSP support to Bolivia

Support to Bolivia was initiated in this reporting period and is focusing on assistance to create a functioning National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

23.2 National Committee on Trade Facilitation

FY19 update on key activities

- In the reporting period, the TFSP provided support to the government of Bolivia in preparing for the establishment of the country's NTFC. The team drafted terms of reference and held various consultations with all the relevant border management agencies to reach consensus on the decree that would establish the NTFC. At the end of the reporting period, the Cabinet had not yet adopted the decree, and some delays are expected because of elections in October 2019.
- Building on the joint World Bank-IFC expertise, a number of meetings with representatives from the private sector—including several import, export, and trade chambers and associations—were held in Santa Cruz and La Paz. Recommendations were made to the Bolivian government to include the private sector in the NTFC.
- The WBG team coordinated closely with the WCO to ensure complementarity in support to the Bolivian government. A June 2019 mission was undertaken jointly with the WCO. The WCO is providing support exclusively to Customs and is fully aligned with the WBG in the view that the establishment of the NTFC should be done by a decree with the participation of all cross-border regulatory agencies.

Leverage or complementarity of funds

TFSP support to Bolivia is complemented by the WCO's support to Customs in aligning border management process and procedures with the WTO TFA.



SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

TFSP support to Bangladesh

TFSP support 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, the Ministry of Commerce launched a national trade portal to provide access to information in both English and Bangla for traders regarding the import and export processes. Time release studies 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 12.2 days to 9.6 days at the Port of Chittagong. The TFSP reform initiatives helped the country prepare for the implementation of a single window program, which was financed by a WBG loan. Bangladesh has also been successful in establishing a National Trade Facilitation Committee and an online licensing module (OLM), adopting a risk management framework, and undertaking comprehensive revision of its customs code. The OLM helped simplify the registration application process by providing online facilities to submit applications for import/export registration. This helped automate 55 services related to export and import, resulting in processing times falling to 1 hour and 45 minutes (approximately 0.07 days) from at least 7 days prior to the launch of OLM.

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

FY19 update on key activities

■ The online licensing module (OLM) was piloted in December 2018 and became fully operational in May 2019. It was officially launched in July 2019 with formal inauguration from the Commerce Minister. The full-fledged OLM includes new features per requirements of the Chief Controller of Imports & Exports. A seven-day reregistration fair was organized to ensure the inclusion of old registration certificate holders under the OLM database. OLM brochures, instruction manuals, and promotional videos were developed and disseminated in the outreach campaign.

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 in Nepal draws on work that has been underway through broader WBG assistance since 2012. Key activities in this reporting period have been focused on taking stock of program results and improvements in relation to implementation of the WTO TFA measures through the TFA alignment indicator. The TFSP supported initiatives connect seamlessly to the WBG investment loan of US\$99 million to finance projects that include the Nepal Trade Portal and a national single window.

Main areas of technical assistance (TFA work priorities)

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

FY19 update on key activities

■ Stakeholder validation undertaken in 2019 suggests that the following improvements have taken place since the initial assessment was carried out in 2015: **(A)** increase in Category A measures from 2 to 9, **(B)** decrease in Category B measures from 15 to 13, and **(C)** decrease in Category C measures from 19 to 14.

■ The TFSP has provided support to risk management at the Department of Customs in Nepal since 2013. Recent analysis of ASYCUDA World (AW) transaction data revealed that green channel clearance has steadily risen from less than 1 percent at both Birgunj and Biratnagar (2013/14) to more than 45 percent and 27 percent respectively by 2018/19. In addition, cumulative import and export clearance times have reduced by approximately 47 percent at both border posts. These results have been validated by private sector surveys as well as stakeholder consultations. Other factors contributing to reduction in clearance time, in Birgunj in particular, is the operationalization of a new integrated check post (ICP).

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

**Leverage or
complementarity
of funds**

The TFSP financed advisory activities inform a US\$99 million World Bank Nepal-India Regional Trade and Transport Project, including supporting the creation of a national single window and the Nepal Trade Portal.

Sri Lanka (inactive in FY19)

**TFSP support
to Sri Lanka**

There was no direct TFSP support in the reporting period. Before FY18, however, the TFSP financed a TFA gap analysis in Sri Lanka. This helped secure additional funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 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 the Internet
- 10.4** Single Window



Quay crane on docks, Sri Lanka
© Dominic Sansoni / World Bank



TFSP Peer-to-Peer
Learning Event in
Geneva, Switzerland

Annex B Knowledge Management Activities

I. Knowledge Management Products

A. ONLINE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT TRACKING TOOL

The TFA Tracking Tool website was launched in the reporting period and now serves as a mechanism for countries to track their full and effective implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and to report on their progress over time. Twenty-eight Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP)-supported countries are currently tracked by the tool; 19 have both baselines and updates.

B. ONLINE COLLABORATION PORTAL: TRADE INFORMATION PORTALS

An online collaboration website was launched in April 2019 for client countries to share experiences about trade information portals. Over 40 members from client countries, World Bank Group (WBG) staff, and trade information portal (TIP) experts have joined the platform, which leverages the WBG Collaboration for Development (C4D) online software.

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

1. STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, OCTOBER 2018

The WBG participated in the Standards Trade and Development Facility (STDF) working group meeting, which brings together partners and donors to take stock of the facility's reach and results. The TFSP team informed participants of upcoming activities, including a brainstorming session on the development of the SPS/Trade Facilitation Diagnostic Toolkit as well as upcoming learning events in South Africa and the Caribbean.

Summary report of the meeting

http://standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_WG_Summary_Report_Oct18_FINAL.pdf

2. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, OCTOBER 2018

World Trade Organization (WTO) members met under the Trade Facilitation Committee and participated in additional workshops on TFA-related topics. The workshops were open to all WTO members and observers and featured speakers from member

countries and partner organizations. At the request of the committee, the WBG made presentations on two topics: **(A)** project formulation and best practice to attract donors, and **(B)** sequencing and monitoring.

October 2018 meeting agenda and related meeting materials

<http://www.tfafacility.org/trade-facilitation-committee-meeting-and-workshops-be-held-oct-9-12th>

Presentations made by the WBG team with TFSP support

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14P4mjr5Tp3vzxkk_Kgllz3RMRau5Ke2D/view
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_ZtBA5dYZDqYWYj3k5Nik0Z97ZVeEMs2/view

Committee on Trade Facilitation webpage

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

3. PACIFIC ISLANDS WORKSHOPS—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, OCTOBER 2018

The WBG, WTO, and PIFS co-coordinated the Pacific Islands Workshops on the margins of the WTO Committee on Trade Facilitation meeting. This meeting provided an opportunity for match-making of donors and beneficiaries whereby non-WTO members could benefit. The workshops were focused on the state-of-play of implementation of the WTO TFA by Pacific Islands countries and on transit. Countries presented on their trade facilitation situations and needs, and donor and international organizations were given an opportunity to respond and propose solutions.

4. WCO TFA WORKING GROUP—BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, OCTOBER 2018

The WBG participated in the tenth TFA Working Group (TFAWG) meeting and shared practical implementation experiences. The meeting brought together World Customs Organization (WCO) member nations as well as trade negotiators from Geneva, donors, and other relevant stakeholders such as other global standard-setting bodies, the private sector, and academia. The agenda included an update on developments in the WTO regarding the TFA, with breakout sessions focused on key TFA matters.

Press release regarding the TFAWG Meeting

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/october/10th-tfa-working-group-meeting-agrees-on-its-monitoring-role-for-the-future.aspx>

5. PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EVENT: BORDER AGENCY COOPERATION—CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, NOVEMBER 2018

A trade facilitation learning event was jointly hosted by the WBG TFSP and the WTO TFAF for Southern African countries. The event focused on improving border agency cooperation at the national and regional levels as required in Articles 8, 10, and 11 of the WTO TFA. Over 77 participants from 12 Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states—from the ministries of trade, agriculture, health, transport, and others—participated in the event. Partner organizations included the World Organisation for Animal Health, Codex, the International Plant Protection Convention the WCO, and other partners. The workshop raised awareness about the linkages between the TFA and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and explored ways in which coordinating border clearance processes can facilitate trade while ensuring human, animal, or plant life and health. Attention was also given to improving cooperation among border agencies in transit countries. The event was promoted on the TFSP

website (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/11/07/southern-africa-border-agency-cooperation-workshop>).

Event agenda and presentations

<https://www.tfafacility.org/border-agency-cooperation-workshop-presentations>

Presentation made by the team

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HMW7kFqMzsL-XtrecY0AY2anbtp_n0WW/view

Event photo gallery

<http://www.tfafacility.org/galleries?topic=63>

6. FIRST AFRICAN FORUM FOR NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES —ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, NOVEMBER 2018

The first-ever African Forum for National Trade Facilitation Committees: Empowering Public-Private Partnership for Trade Facilitation was held in Addis Ababa (November 27–29). More than 300 participants from the public sector, business community, donors, and regional and international organizations attended the event. The forum offered a platform for stakeholders from the public and private sectors to work together toward the implementation of trade facilitation reforms, including the WTO TFA. In a follow-up survey after the event, 91 percent of participant respondents confirmed that their knowledge increased as a result of this event, and 100 percent of those respondents found this knowledge directly relevant to their job. The WBG organized the event with TFSP support in conjunction with UNCTAD and a number of international organizations. The team participated in many of the technical discussions and panel sessions and shared experiences from working in TFSP-supported countries on the continent. The event was promoted on the TFSP website (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2018/11/01/first-african-forum-for-national-trade-facilitation-committees>).

Event program and forum details

<https://unctad.org/en/conferences/NTFC-Forum-Africa/Pages/default.aspx>

7. REGIONAL MEETING OF CEFTA NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEES —VIENNA, AUSTRIA, NOVEMBER 2018

A regional meeting for the NTFCs in the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) region was hosted by the WBG and USAID in Vienna in November 2018. Representatives of the CEFTA Secretariat, member states, the WBG, USAID, the WTO, the European Union (EU) Commission, and Sweden participated in the meeting. The WBG team outlined the opportunities available through the introduction of single window software and the processes for streamlining, speeding up, and reducing costs in cross-border transactions.

8. CEFTA WEEK—KOSOVO, DECEMBER 2018

Chaired by Kosovo's Ministry of Trade and Industry, a conference named CEFTA Week was held during the first week in December and marked the final activity of the Kosovo chairmanship of CEFTA for 2018. The event was attended by over 100 representatives from Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo. The WBG gave presentations on relevant trade topics, including lessons learned and examples from the WBG's trade facilitation advisory work over the past years as well as the project's support to the authorized economic operation (AEO) program in the region.



Delegates at the first ever African Forum for National Trade Facilitation Committees
© UNCTAD

9. PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EVENT: SUPPORTING STRATEGIC AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF WTO TFA IN CARICOM—SAINT LUCIA, JANUARY 2019

A trade facilitation learning event was jointly hosted by the WBG TFSP and the WTO TFAF for member states in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) region. The event aimed to **(A)** increase compliance of CARICOM WTO members with the TFA notification obligations; **(B)** assist policy makers in designing, implementing, and monitoring regional trade facilitation reforms; **(C)** enhance awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the national and regional committees on trade facilitation; **(D)** assist members to improve border agency cooperation; **(E)** enhance participation of the private sector in the implementation of the TFA; and **(F)** support full and effective implementation and ownership of the TFA and TF reforms by CARICOM member states. Participants included the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), Global Express Association (GEA) / Latin America Express Delivery (CLADEC), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), UNCTAD, and the WCO.

Event program and other resources

<http://www.tfafacility.org/workshops/caricom>

Event photo gallery

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wRBvw5FKQzdLLdrgCv-YTMhf88rUZT62>

10. WTO TF COMMITTEE MEETING—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, FEBRUARY 2019

WTO members conducted a meeting under the Trade Facilitation (TF) Committee and held additional workshops on TFA-related topics. The Annex D+ group was invited to attend the TF Committee meeting. The Annex D+ group is made up of the IMF, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UNCTAD, the WBG, and the WCO. WTO members took stock of progress in implementing the TFA.

Event agenda and presentations

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

11. STDF WORKING GROUP MEETING — GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, MARCH 2019

The WBG participated in the Standards Trade and Development Facility (STDF) working group meeting, which brings together partners and donors to take stock of the facility's reach and results. The WBG participated in the meeting, outlined various events scheduled in FY19, highlighted work with sanitary and phytosanitary border agencies with regard to risk management, and shared practical implementation experiences.

Summary report of the working group meeting

https://www.standardsfacility.org/sites/default/files/STDF_WG_Summary_Report_Mar19_FNL.pdf

12. TFA WORKING GROUP—BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, MARCH 2019

The eleventh TFA Working Group (TFAWG) meeting brought together over 100 delegates from 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, the private sector, and academia. The agenda included an update on TFA ratifications/notifications. Breakout sessions

focused on key TFA matters, including new opportunities for the time release study—a key strategic tool used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administrations, other government agencies, and private sector stakeholders in relation to the international movement of cargo, and more recently, as a means of tracking progress in the implementation of the WTO TFA. The TFAWG's annual work plan for 2019/20 was also agreed on. The WBG participated in the meeting and shared practical implementation experiences.

Press release on the working group meeting

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2019/march/11th-tfa-working-group-explores-new-opportunities-for-the-time-release-study.aspx>

**13. IPPC COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES
— ROME, ITALY, MARCH 2019**

The fourteenth session of the International Plant Protection Convention Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-14) was held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome. Over 500 participants attended the meeting. Discussions highlighted successes and the future of plant health. The WBG participated in the meeting and shared practical implementation experiences.

Press release on the opening session

<https://www.ippc.int/en/news/the-fourteenth-commission-on-phytosanitary-measures-cpm-14-opening-session-highlights-successes-and-the-future-of-plant-health/>

**14. COORDINATING TRADE FACILITATION POLICIES IN THE OSCE REGION
—VIENNA, AUSTRIA, MARCH 2019**

The Office of the Coordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities hosted a workshop to discuss economic connectivity, trade facilitation, and cooperation between state bodies and the private sector in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) region, which comprise 57 states that span North America, Europe, and Asia. The aim was to find ways to reduce costs and burdens on trade transactions, to improve and harmonize information flows within and between countries, and to enhance alignment with international standards. Over 50 participants from Central Asia, Moldova, and Belarus, as well as from OSCE participating states, exchanged best practices in coordinating trade facilitation policies. The WBG gave a presentation on the importance of a high-level focus and structured coordination by all stakeholders in moving the trade facilitation agenda forward in order to reap maximum benefits from its implementation.

15. TFSP DONOR MISSION—ZAMBIA, APRIL 2019

Donor partners from Canada, the EU, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK visited Zambia (April 2–4) to witness the work of the TFSP firsthand and to interact with key stakeholders. The mission was jointly organized by the WBG and Zambia's National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC), which coordinates the country's trade reform agenda and comprises both the public and private sectors. In Lusaka, a series of information sessions were held with high-level government stakeholders, including the chair of the NTFC, the permanent secretaries at the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, and Industry and the Ministry of National Development Planning, and the Commissioner of Modernization at the Zambia Revenue Authority. The aim was to increase donors' understanding of the effect of TFSP support and to help donors better understand the



government's future needs and commitments. The donor partners also traveled to the Chirundu border between Zambia and Zimbabwe to witness the recent progress made with the establishment of a one-stop border post (launched in 2009) and additional trade reforms supported by the TFSP.

Note from the mission on the TFSP website

<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/256861556201224173/TFSP-Zambia-tradeimprovements.pdf>

16. IMO FAL COMMITTEE SESSION—LONDON, UK, APRIL 2019

The Facilitation Committee (FAL) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) met for its 43rd session (April 8–12), which coincided with the entry into effect of new requirements for all public authorities to introduce electronic exchange of information between ships and ports under the FAL Convention. Alongside other agenda items, the Committee continued its ongoing work on harmonization and standardization of electronic messages and the development of guidelines for setting up a single window system in maritime transport. The WBG participated in the meeting and shared practical implementation experiences.

Press release on the session

<http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/MeetingSummaries/FAL/Pages/FAL-43rd-Session.aspx>

Photos from the session

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/imo-un/albums/72157679772989168>

17. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FOR BORDER AGENCIES IN THE CEFTA REGION—VIENNA, AUSTRIA, MAY 2019

The WBG convened over 40 stakeholders from the seven economies in the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) region for a two-day TFSP-funded peer-to-peer learning event on performance measurement cohosted with the Austrian Ministry of Finance and Customs Administration. Participants shared their experiences and discussed best practices such as tools that can be used to measure and improve performance. Many stakeholders agreed that performance measurement is an effective way to show the quality of border agency trade facilitation reforms and to reduce the time and cost for the private sector.

18. EUROPEAN UNION CLUSTER CONFERENCE—BUCHAREST, ROMANIA, MAY 2019

The WBG participated in the sixth edition of the European Cluster Conference, which brought together over 400 cluster policy makers, cluster managers, practitioners, and other stakeholders. The event was organized by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs together with Romania, under the Romanian presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU). The EU's Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD) hosted a high-level summit at which the WBG gave a presentation on its approach to designing and developing a national single window.

Conference program and related materials

<https://www.eucluster2019.eu/en>

19. PRESENTATIONS OF TRADE FACILITATION CHAPTER —PARIS, FRANCE AND GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2019

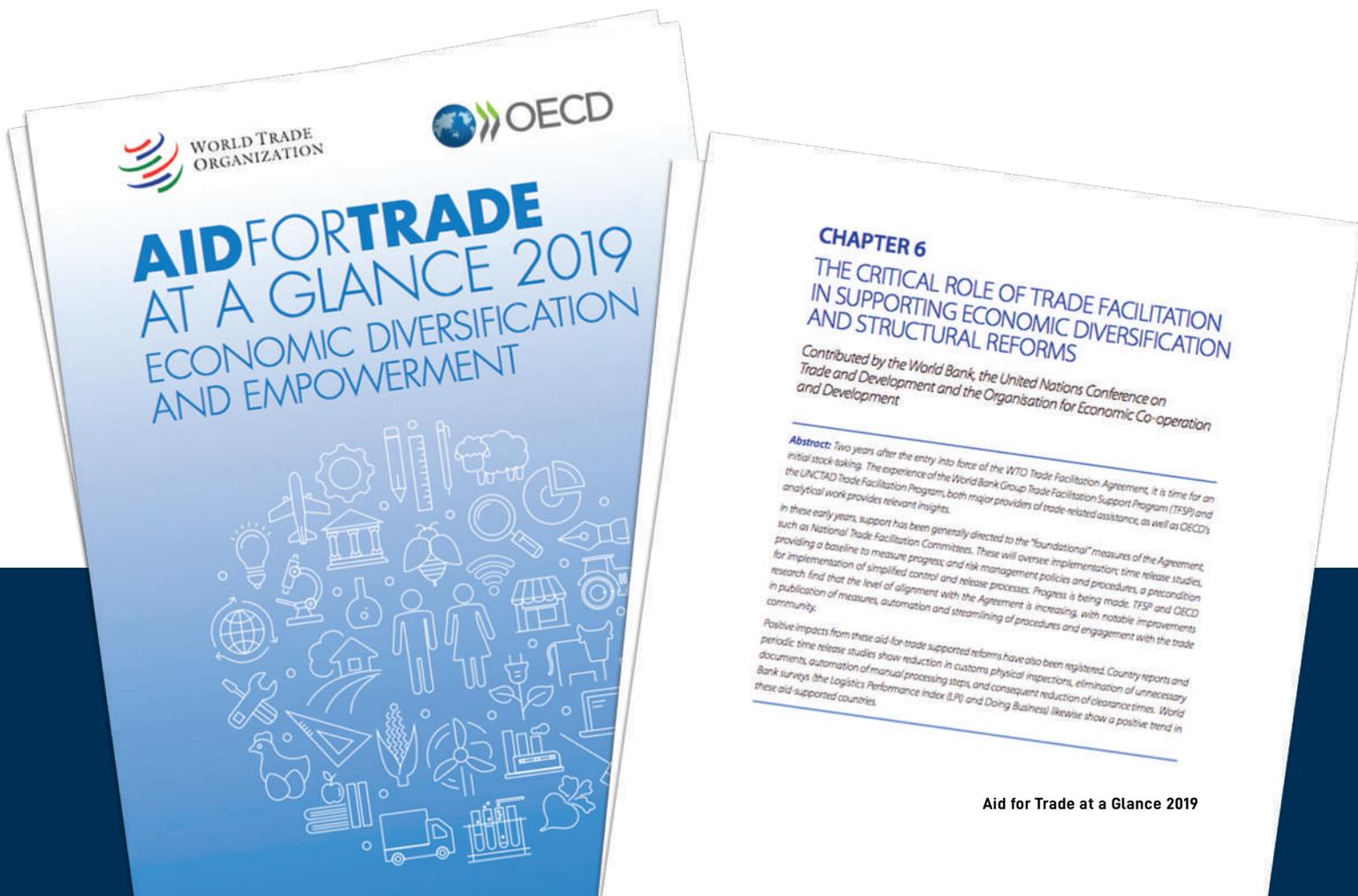
The WBG provided critical inputs to the WTO's Aid for Trade 2019 publication on economic diversification and empowerment. The team coauthored Chapter 6, "The Critical Role of Trade Facilitation in Supporting Economic Diversification and Structural Reforms," which highlights the experiences of the TFSP and other trade-related assistance programs and the progress being made to increase countries' levels of alignment with the TFA. The WBG made presentations at both the OECD and the WTO in advance of the publication's official launch at the Aid for Trade Global Review 2019.

Final publication

https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/aid4trade19_e.pdf#page=162

20. ANNUAL MEETING OF GLOBAL NETWORK OF EXPORT-IMPORT BANKS AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTIONS—GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, JUNE 2019

The Global Network of Export-Import Banks and Development Finance Institutions hosted a meeting on south-south collaboration and development. The event featured presentations from the WTO TFAF on the establishment and operational sustainability of the National Trade Facilitation Committees; the role of public/private partnerships in trade facilitation; and standards and technology in trade. The WBG gave a presentation on the global reach of the TFSP and its contribution to increasing the alignment of developing and least-developed countries to the WTO TFA.





Sharing virtual reality films
with stakeholders

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 secretariat continued to build a foundation for communications and to embed it within project activities. The communications plan for FY19-20 guides the program's approach to strategic communications and is supplemented with guidance (including donor visibility requirements) for team members on how to incorporate communications into specific activities. The Secretariat stepped up communications support to specific projects in the reporting period and will continue this effort going forward to increase visibility of projects and to ensure that the results reach target audiences.

The TFSP leveraged the following communications channels in FY19:

I. PROGRAM WEBSITE

The TFSP website (www.worldbank.org/en/programs/trade-facilitation-support-program) is the main vehicle for program communication. It houses communication products, 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 3,174 at the end of FY19.

II. TRADE POST BLOG

The WBG team has written a number of blog posts about the work and experiences of TFSP-funded activities. The posts have been published on the WBG Trade Post blog, a global platform to bring together observations from the field and reflections on research by the WBG's experts on international trade.

The TFSP website
www.worldbank.org/en/programs/trade-facilitation-support-program



The following blog posts were developed during the reporting period (page views are from the date published up to June 30, 2019):

Leave Your Hammocks at Home: How a Customs Union between Guatemala and Honduras Cut Trade Times from 10 Hours to 15 Minutes (826 views)

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/leave-your-hammocks-home-how-customs-union-between-guatemala-and-honduras-cut-trade-times-10-hours>

Bringing Sri Lanka's Traders One Step Closer to the Global Market (556 views)

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/bringing-local-traders-one-step-closer-global-market-sri-lanka>

What's It Like for Women to Trade across Borders? (368 views)

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/whats-it-women-trade-across-borders>

Jamaica: Pioneering Trade Facilitation Improvements in the Caribbean (306 views)

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/05/16/jamaica-pioneering-trade-facilitation-improvements-in-the-caribbean>

A New Way of Managing Risk for Customs in Montenegro: 80% Reduction in the Inspection of Excise Goods (357 views)

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/06/11/a-new-way-of-managing-risk-for-customs-in-montenegro>

Getting the Balance Right: Minimizing Food Safety Risks and Facilitating Trade in North Macedonia (263 views)

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/getting-balance-right-minimizing-food-safety-risks-and-facilitating-trade-north-macedonia>

Tracking the Performance Of Trade Facilitation Reforms: What Difference Does a Day Make? (126 views)

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/tracking-performance-trade-facilitation-reforms-what-difference-does-day-make>

III. SOCIAL MEDIA

The program shares updates widely on the WBG social media platforms, including on Twitter (@WorldBankPSD*: 30.5K followers) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/worldbank>: 2.6M followers).

**In June 2019, the World Bank Group global management and communications team decided to consolidate accounts, to shut down the @WorldBankPSD account, and to redirect all future Twitter communication through @WorldBank (3.07M followers).*

IV. BROCHURE AND BANNERS

The TFSP brochure (<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/119111561482785120/TFSP-Brochure-2019-web.pdf>) and pop-up banners were updated to increase the visibility of the program and donor support at key events. Over 500 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 team's disposal for use at key events.

V. FACTSHEETS

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

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—with the latest program information—can be readily accessed by the program team and customized accordingly. This ensures that programs, activities, and key messages are communicated consistently, regardless of the location or event.

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 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 information portals in Jamaica, Zambia, and Sri Lanka; a rules of origin database in Serbia; a single window gap analysis in Kosovo; a TFA gap assessment mission in Uzbekistan; and a peer-to-peer event on performance management for border agencies for CEFTA economies in Vienna. Local media engagement at the country level is an effective way to engage the private sector through local press articles.

Trade Facilitation Support Program

Making trade faster and more affordable



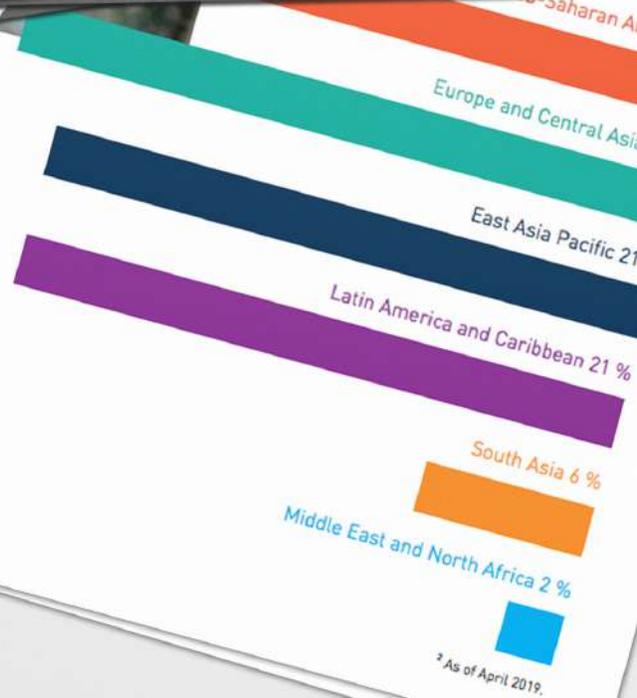
TFSP Metrics

Since inception, the TFSP has provided TFA implementation support to 47 countries, most of which are Least Developed Countries. The largest share of countries receiving support are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Support is also provided to fragile and conflict-affected countries.

TFSP has helped countries significantly improve their alignment with the WTO TFA. As of the end of 2019, the overall WTO TFA alignment scores of supported countries had risen from 45 % to 53 %¹.

The overall WTO TFA alignment score of TFSP supported countries has risen from 45 percent to 53 percent.

¹ Through the development of the TFA Tracking Tool, the TFSP is able to demonstrate improvement of countries' alignment with the WTO TFA. Measurement takes a whole of government approach and covers i) legal/policy, ii) implementation, and iii) operational dimensions.



² As of April 2019.

Here is a selection of articles/media mentions:

August 16, 2018: **Agencies Explore Workable Single Window System Customized for Fiji**

(<https://www.fijitimes.com.fj/agencies-explore-workable-single-window-system-customised-for-fiji/>)

September 2, 2018: **Serbia, Macedonia Leaders Hail 'One-Stop Shop' Border Project**

(<https://www.rferl.org/a/serbia-macedonia-leaders-hail-one-stop-shop-border-project/29466787.html>)

September 2, 2018: **Vucic, Zaev Discuss Implementation of One Stop Shop Project**

(<https://novatv.mk/vuchik-i-zaev-razgovaraa-za-implementatsijata-na-proektot-one-stop-shop/>)

September 2, 2018: **Vucic: Strategically Close, Strategic Disputes Less Important for Serbia and North Macedonia**

(<http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/ci/story/1/politika/3246177/vucic-i-zaev-na-prelazu-presevotabanovce.html>)

September 11, 2018: **IFC Helps Mongolia Government Facilitate Trade by Enhancing Risk Management of Border Agencies**

(<https://www.webwire.com/ViewPressReL.asp?ald=228553>)

October 4, 2018: **Foreign Trade Policy, Portal Launched**

(<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20181004/foreign-trade-policy-portal-launched>)

October 5, 2018: **Gov't to Abolish Some Trade Board Fees**

(<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20181005/govt-abolish-some-trade-board-fees>)

March 26, 2019: **Cargo Will Wait Less than 10 Hours at Romero Airport with Paperless Customs**

(<https://elmundo.sv/carga-esperara-10-horas-menos-en-aeropuerto-romero-con-aduana-sin-papeles/>)

March 29, 2019: **Reducing Costs and Burdens on Trade Transactions, Improving Co-Ordination and Increasing Trust within OSCE Region Discussed at Workshop in Vienna**

(<https://www.osce.org/secretariat/415310>)

April 1, 2019: **Zambia: Donor Partners Witness Trade Improvements**

(<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/256861556201224173/TFSP-Zambia-tradeimprovements.pdf>)

April 8, 2019: **Plan to Cut Imports, Exports Costs by 40%**

(<https://mwnation.com/plan-to-cut-imports-exports-costs-by-40/>)

April 9, 2019: **El Salvador and Honduras Carry Out Pilot Test at El Poy Border Post within the Framework of the Customs Union**

(<http://infotrade.minec.gob.sv/blog/el-salvador-y-honduras-realizan-prueba-piloto-en-puesto-fronterizo-de-el-poy-en-el-marco-de-la-union-aduanera/>)

April 24, 2019: **The Pilot Tests for the Transmission of FYDUCA Continue**
(<https://twitter.com/EconomiaSV/status/1121089107277623297>)

April 24, 2019: **Seven Salvadoran Companies and Customs, Internal Tax and Migration Authorities from Guatemala and El Salvador Participate in FYDUCA Pilot**
(<https://twitter.com/EconomiaSV/status/1121090513472565249>)

April 24, 2019: **Shaw Announces Removal of Some Permits, Licences Issued by Trade Board**
(http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/shaw-announces-removal-of-some-permits-licences-issued-by-trade-board_162992?profile=&template=PrinterVersion)

April 26, 2019: **PM Says Jamaica Trade Information Portal Will Improve Ease of Doing Business**
(http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/PM_says_Jamaica_Trade_Information_Portal_will_improve_ease_of_doing_business)

May 16, 2019: **Shaw Launches New Trade Information Portal**
(<http://micaf.gov.jm/content/shaw-launches-new-trade-information-portal>)

May 17, 2019: **Shaw Launches New Trade Information Portal**
(http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/Shaw_launches_new_trade_information_portal?profile=1228)

May 29, 2019: **Regional Conference Dedicated to Measuring the Performance of Border Authorities in the Context of Trade Facilitation Held in Vienna**
(<http://www.upravacarina.gov.me/vijesti/201813/Saopstenje-Regionalna-konferencija-posvecena-mjerenju-ucinka-u-radu-granicnih-organa-u-kontekstu-trgovinskih-olaksica-odrzana-u.html>)

June 7, 2019: **Trade Information Portal to be Promoted Heavily at Diaspora Conference**
(https://jis.gov.jm/trade-information-portal-to-be-promoted-heavily-at-diaspora-conference/?fbclid=IwAR2S8wwpOpkzcf-QUB1v0z2X66CJ3DcW8ai-0iyEo7pNGtp_XLiYi3DZVt8)

June 25, 2019: **New application and e-services for origin of goods in the Customs Administration**
(http://www.rtv.rs/sr_lat/drustvo/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina_1028241.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+RtvSveVesti+%28RTV+poslednje+vesti%29)

(<https://www.vesti.rs/Novi-Sad/Nova-aplikacija-za-poreklo-robe-u-Upravi-carina.html>)

(<http://www.tanjug.rs/full-view.aspx?izb=489953>)

(<http://rs.n1info.com/Biznis/a494688/Uprava-carina-novom-aplikacijom-unapredila-kontrolu-porekla-robe.html>)

(<https://www.tvmost.info/post/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina>)

(<https://naslovi.net/2019-06-25/rtv/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina/23626976>)

(<https://www.021.rs/story/Info/Srbija/217486/Nova-aplikacija-za-poreklo-robe-u-Upravi-carina.html>)

(<https://www.ekapija.com/news/2550924/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina-do>)

(<http://www.svevesti.net/2019/06/25/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina/>)

(<https://www.krstarica.com/vesti/ekonomija/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina/>)

(http://www.rtv.rs/sr_lat/drustvo/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina_1028241.html)

(<http://www.svevesti.net/2019/06/25/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina/>)

(<https://www.dnevnik.rs/ekonomija/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina-25-06-2019>)

June 25, 2019: ***The Customs Administration Has Introduced a new IT Application through Which It Is Possible to Apply for Two Services***
(<http://ekonomski.net/dokazivanje-porekla-robe-od-sada-elektronski.html>)

June 26, 2019: ***New Application and E-Services for Origin of Goods in the Customs***
(<https://plutonlogistics.com/spedicija/nova-aplikacija-i-e-servisi-za-poreklo-robe-u-upravi-carina/>)

(<http://www.carina.rs/cyr/Stranice/Vest.aspx?ListItemID=2599>)

(<https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevne-vesti/280619/280619-vest11.html>)

(<http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/ekonomija/aktuelno.239.html:802712-Elektronski-dokazuju-poreklo-robe>)

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 and the NTFC) to structure their communication around the reforms through dissemination plans and targeted media engagement.

For example, in Kosovo, the TFSP is providing communications advisory support to the food and veterinary agencies to provide 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.

In Jamaica (<https://jamaicatradeportal.gov.jm>), the TFSP helped the government 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.

Going forward, communications campaigns will also be considered to promote overarching TFSP products and initiatives, such as the TFA Tracking Tool, trade and 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 embarked on a new and innovative approach to reach audiences. The TFSP produced two new 360° virtual reality films aimed at transporting stakeholders to client countries to witness the effect of the program's projects.

The first film (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2019/02/06/360-video-trading-across-borders-in-guatemala-and-honduras>) was produced at the Corinto Border between Guatemala and Honduras. It showcases a recently signed customs union between the two countries, which helped reduce time to trade from 10 hours to just 15 minutes. Customs workers, truck drivers, and businesses were interviewed at the border to find out what trade looks like on the ground. The video was showcased at the World Bank Group's Development Partners Forum and launched via an innovative media campaign on the Bank's social media channels (garnering 800K+ views). A Spanish version of the film was also posted online (<http://blogs.worldbank.org/es/latin-america/uni-n-aduanera-entre-guatemala-y-honduras-de-10-horas-15-minutos>).

The second film developed with support from the TFSP (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2019/06/27/making-trade-faster-cheaper-and-easier-in-sierra-leone>) was produced at the Freetown Port in West Africa—home to 80 percent of Sierra Leone's trade—and highlights the NTFC's five-year trade facilitation action plan to guide the country's modernization efforts. It includes interviews with the Ministry of Trade, customs workers, and businesses like Sierra Agra—the country's only juice processing company—who are already benefiting from trade facilitation improvements. The video was finalized at the end of the reporting period (June 2019), and a media campaign was launched in July 2019. Both films were showcased at the Aid for Trade event in Geneva.



The Trade Facilitation Support Program

VIRTUAL REALITY



Inside the world of trade facilitation

In partnership with



www.worldbank.org/tradefacilitation



Annex D Financial Overview

All amounts are in US\$ thousands and as of end June 2019.

Cash Receipts:

Donor:	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	Total by donor:
Australia		1,745	1,472	1,500	1,559		6,276
Canada	1,821						1,821
EU			4,388		3,554	1,869	9,811
The Netherlands					443	443	886
Norway		5,504			750	1,947	8,201
Sweden					596	1,651	2,247
Switzerland		300	1,000	200	811	410	2,721
UK			754	3,217	1,350	2,539	7,860
US*	950			650	965	190	2,755
Total by year:	2,771	7,549	7,614	5,567	10,028	9,049	42,578
Cumulative		10,320	17,934	23,501	33,529	42,578	

*Includes core and Zambia specific support.

Outstanding Payments:

Donor:	USD
Australia	
Canada	
EU	1,065
The Netherlands	887
Norway	1,139
Sweden	1,568
Switzerland	808
UK	2,433
US	240
Total:	8,140

Cash Receipts as Percentage of Overall Donor Commitments:

Total receipts and outstanding commitments	50,718
Percentage receipts:	84%

Disbursements:

TF:	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	Total
Total	224	2,191	5,307	7,467	6,867	7,367	29,423
Cumulative	224	2,415	7,722	15,189	22,056	29,423	

Disbursements Rates:

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
	8%	23%	43%	63%	66%	69%
Incl. commitments						74%



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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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

