Regional: Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program

Project Name: Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program

Project Number: 52123-001

Country: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka

Project Status: Active

Project Type / Modality of Assistance: Technical Assistance

Source of Funding / Amount:
- TA 9578-REG: Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program
  - Technical Assistance Special Fund: US$ 500,000.00
- TA 9578-REG: Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation Program (Supplementary)
  - Technical Assistance Special Fund: US$ 1.00 million

Strategic Agendas:
- Inclusive economic growth
- Regional integration

Drivers of Change:
- Governance and capacity development
- Knowledge solutions

Sector / Subsector:
- Industry and trade sector development - Trade and services

Gender Equity and Mainstreaming:
- No gender elements

Description:
The TA will support the momentum and realization of SASEC countries trade facilitation initiatives by bringing policy reform actions closer to the implementation stage. The TA will have three major outputs (i) Implementation frameworks, blueprints, and road maps in modern customs administration complete; (ii) Tools to enhance transparency of standards in SPS and TBT developed; and (iii) Cross-border transport facilitation studies along key SASEC routes and border crossing points completed.

Project Rationale and Linkage to Country/Regional Strategy:
The SASEC program fully recognizes the important role of transport and trade facilitation for regional economic integration and competitiveness. Although the subregion is one of the least integrated regions in the world for trade, studies have shown that intra-regional trade in South Asia could rise by as much as 60%, and the region's trade with the rest of the world could grow by 30% if trade facilitation systems could be elevated to international standards. Trade facilitation could enhance SASEC countries' competitiveness by allowing goods and services to be traded on time and with low transaction costs. It could facilitate increased participation by South Asian business and trade in regional and global value chains through quick and less costly movement of goods over borders and greater outsourcing potential for cost competitiveness. Trade facilitation in South Asia, however, faces enormous challenges with major bottlenecks including cumbersome customs procedures, inadequate trade-related infrastructure, weak capacity to implement standards and technical regulations, poor border-related infrastructure, and inadequate cross-border transport arrangements to support the seamless movement of goods and services in the subregion. In line with efforts to improve their economies' competitiveness and ease of doing business, Government agencies related to trade facilitation in the seven participating SASEC countries recognize the value of working together in jointly addressing the key bottlenecks to cross-border trade under the SASEC framework.

Impact:
International trade and transport for SASEC countries made faster, cheaper, and more predictable, while maintaining the security of the supply chain and ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the institutions involved.
Involuntary Resettlement
Indigenous Peoples
Stakeholder Communication, Participation, and Consultation
During Project Design
During Project Implementation

Business Opportunities
Consulting Services: The TA will engage a total of 52 person-months of individual consultants, composing of 27 person-months of international experts and 25 person-months of national experts
Procurement: not applicable

Responsible ADB Officer: Alleen H. Pangilinan
Responsible ADB Department: South Asia Department
Responsible ADB Division: Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Div, SARD
Executing Agencies: Asian Development Bank
6 ADB Avenue,
Mandaluyong City 1550, Philippines

Timetable
Concept Clearance: 08 Aug 2018
Fact Finding: 30 Jul 2018 to 30 Jul 2018
MRM:
Approval: 03 Sep 2018
Last Review Mission:
Last PDS Update: 30 Apr 2019

TA 9578-REG

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| ADB | Cofinancing | Counterpart
Gov | Beneficiaries | Project Sponsor | Others | Total | Date | Amount |
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Project Page: https://www.adb.org/projects/52123-001/main
Request for Information: http://www.adb.org/forms/request-information-form?subject=52123-001
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