
Joint United Nations Regional Commissions
Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade
Implementation Survey 2015

*Note on Asia-Pacific
Least Developed Countries¹*

Prepared by



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Disclaimers:

This note is a complement to the more elaborate Regional (Asia-Pacific) Report. It should best be read in conjunction with it, as well as the associated Country Notes, which can be found at: <http://unnex.unescap.org/UNTFSurvey2015.asp>

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1. Introduction

It is well understood that reducing trade costs is essential in enabling economies to effectively participate in regional and global value chains and continue to use trade as a main engine of growth and sustainable development. Recent studies suggest that much of the trade cost reductions achieved over the past decade have been through elimination or lowering of tariffs.² Further trade cost reduction therefore, will have to come from tackling non-tariff sources of trade costs, such as inefficient transport and logistics infrastructure and services, but also cumbersome regulatory procedures and documentation. Indeed, trade facilitation – the simplification and harmonization of import, export and transit procedures –, including paperless trade – the use and exchange of electronic data and documents to support the trade transaction process –, has taken increasing importance, as evidenced by the successful conclusion of the negotiations on a WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in December 2013, and the progress made at ESCAP on developing a complementary regional arrangement for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade since 2012.

This note is part of a new global effort by all United Nations Regional Commissions (UNRCs), in cooperation with other interested international organizations³, to provide reliable and sufficiently detailed data on the implementation of trade facilitation in general - and single window and paperless trade in particular at the global level. It features the results of the 2015 UNRCs Joint Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade implementation for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), covering Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. **This note is a complement to the more elaborate Regional (Asia-Pacific) Report. It should best be read in conjunction with it, as well as the associated Country Notes.**⁴

The survey was prepared taking into account the final list of provisions included in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) as well as the content of the draft text of the regional UN treaty on cross-border paperless trade facilitation under negotiation at ESCAP. It covers 38 trade facilitation measures divided into four groups, namely, *General trade facilitation measures*, *Paperless trade*, *Cross-border paperless trade* and *Transit facilitation*.⁵ The *General trade facilitation measures* – as well as *Transit facilitation* measures – are essentially measures featured in the WTO TFA. In contrast, most paperless trade and, in particular, cross-border paperless trade measures, are not specifically featured in the WTO TFA, although their implementation in many cases would support the better implementation of many of the *General trade facilitation measures*. Survey results for Least Developed Countries are presented below.

² For example, see ESCAP (2011), Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2011, United Nations.

³ The survey has been conducted in close collaboration with OECD, ITC and UNCTAD, as well as several sub-regional organizations, such as SELA in Latin America, and OCO in the South Pacific.

⁴ More information is available in the regional, other sub-regional and national reports at:

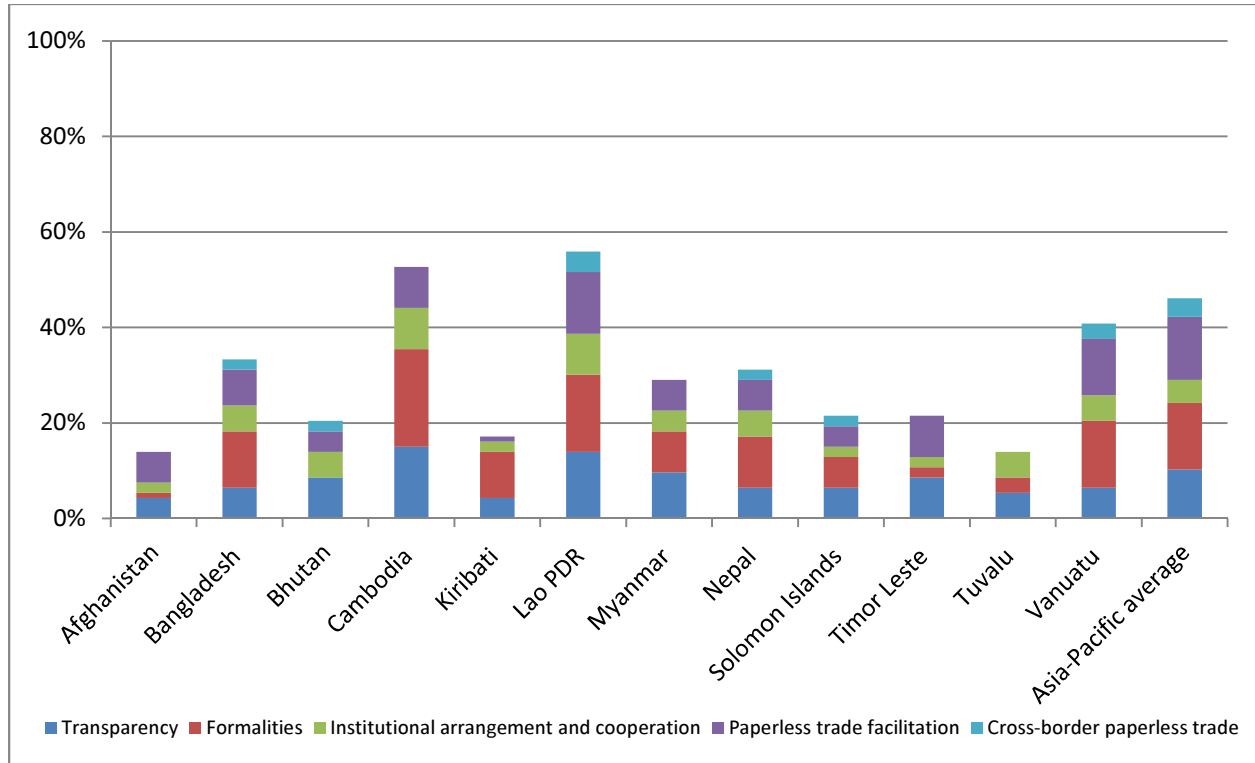
<http://unnex.unescap.org/UNTFSurvey2015.asp>

⁵ The survey questionnaire is available in full at: <http://unnex.unescap.org/tfforum14-survey.asp>

2. Trade facilitation implementation in LDCs: Overview

Figure 1 shows the overall implementation levels of 12 Least Developed Countries based on a common set of 31 trade facilitation and paperless trade measures included in the survey⁶. The average implementation of this comprehensive set of trade facilitation measures stands at 29.1% in LDCs, which is below the Asia-Pacific regional average (46.5%).

Figure 1: Overall implementation of trade facilitation measures in LDCs



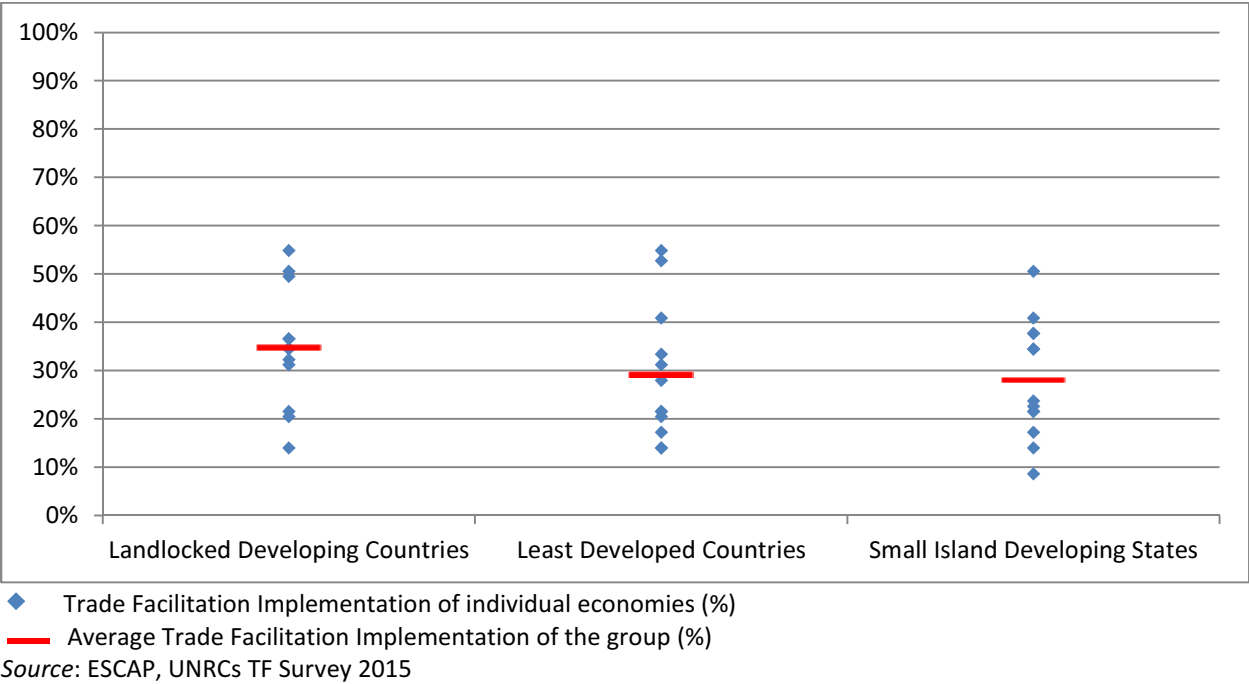
Source: ESCAP, UNRCs TF Survey 2015

Interestingly, regional integration processes appear to have played a significant and positive role in trade facilitation implementation. Cambodia and Lao PDR, which are both LDCs in South-East Asia and part of ASEAN – where regional cooperation on trade facilitation has long been promoted – achieve higher average implementation rates than LDCs in other sub-regions. Meanwhile, Vanuatu also stands out as having the highest implementation rate among LDCs from Pacific Island Developing Economies.

⁶ Among 38 trade facilitation measures surveyed, three measures including 20. *Electronic Submission of Sea Cargo Manifests*, 33. *Alignment of working days and hours with neighbouring countries at border crossings*, and 34. *Alignment of formalities and procedures with neighbouring countries at border crossings* are excluded for calculating the overall score as they are not relevant to all countries surveyed. Similarly, four transit facilitation measures are also excluded. The overall score of each country is simply a summation of the scores of implementation (3,2,1 or 0) it receives for each trade facilitation measure. The maximum possible (full) score of a country is 93 and the average score across all 44 countries is 43.3 (or 46.5% in percentage term).

Figure 2 presents an overview of the implementation of trade facilitation measures (measured by percentage) in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the average level of implementation of countries within each group. LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are all Countries with Special Needs, and face particular challenges in the implementation of trade facilitation, especially paperless trade and cross-border paperless trade measures. This is reflected in the average implementation level of these countries, which varies between 25% and 35% and are all notably relatively lower than the regional Asia-Pacific average (46.5%). LDCs are in the middle between LLDCs and SIDS, with an average implementation rate of 29.1%.

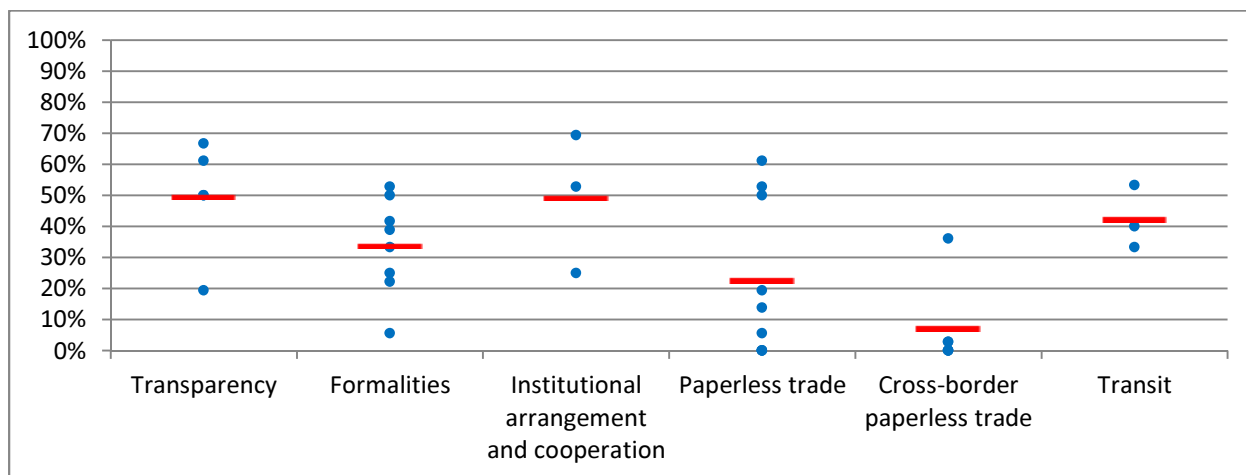
Figure 2: Trade facilitation implementation in Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs



2.1 Most and least implemented trade facilitation measures

In Least Developed Countries, *Transparency, Formalities, Institutional arrangement and cooperation* and *Transit* are the most implemented, while *Paperless trade* and *Cross-border paperless trade* are the least implemented. Specific measures under each category are discussed in Table 2.

Figure 3: Implementation of different groups of trade facilitation measures: LDCs average



Notes: Blue dots show regional average implementation level of individual measures within each group.
 — Average LDC implementation level by groups of measures.

Source: ESCAP, UNRCs TF Survey 2015

Table 1: Most and least implemented measures in LDCS (within each group of trade facilitation measures)

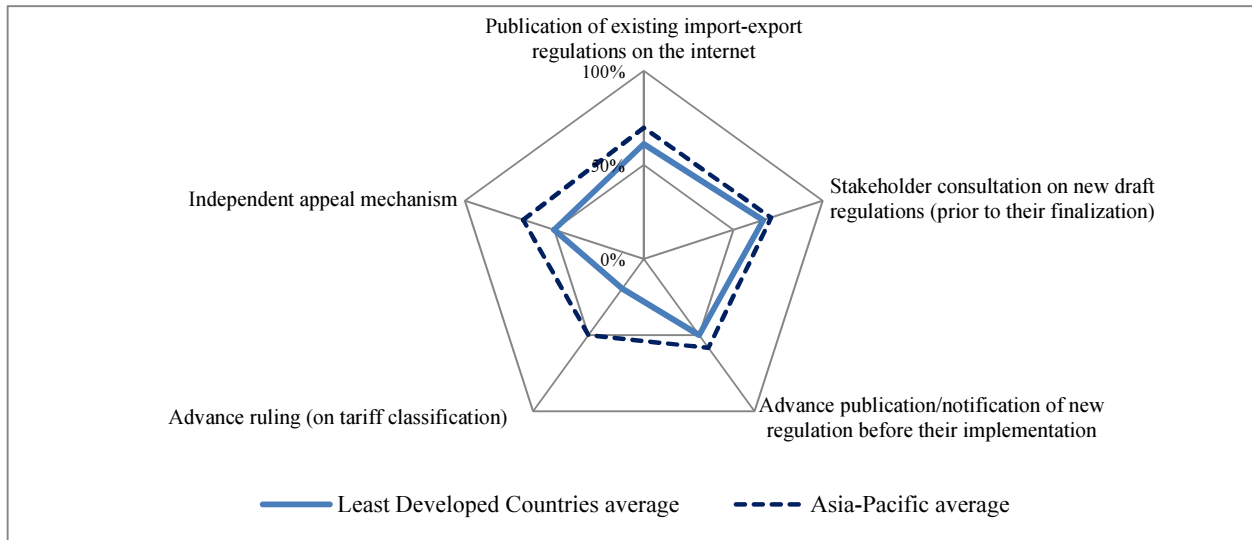
	Most implemented	Least implemented
Transparency	Stakeholder consultation on new draft regulations (prior to their finalization)	Advance ruling (on tariff classification)
Formalities	1. Pre-arrival processing 2. Risk management	Trade facilitation measures for authorized operators
Institutional arrangement and cooperation	Cooperation between agencies on the ground at the national level	Government agencies delegating controls to Customs authorities
Paperless trade	Internet connection available to Customs and other trade control agencies at border-crossings	1. Electronic Single Window System 2. Electronic Application and Issuance of Trade Licenses 3. Electronic Application and Issuance of Preferential Certificate of Origin
Cross-border paperless trade	Laws and regulations for electronic transactions	1. Engagement in trade-related cross-border electronic data exchange 2. Electronic exchange of Sanitary & Phyto-Sanitary Certificate 3. Banks and insurers retrieving letters of credit electronically 4. Recognised certification authority 5. Electronic exchange of Certificate of Origin

3. Implementation of trade facilitation measures: A closer look

3.1 “Transparency” measures

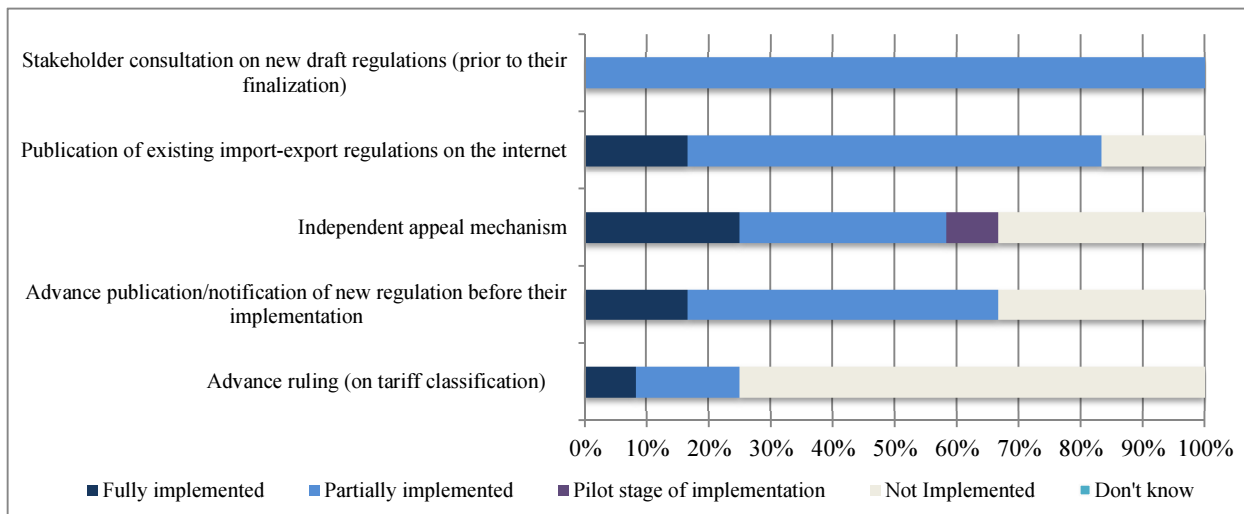
Five trade facilitation measures included in the survey can be categorized as “Transparency” measures. They relate to Articles 1-5 of the WTO TFA and GATT Article X on Publication and Administration of Trade Regulations.

Figure 4: Implementation of “transparency” measures: LDCs average



Source: ESCAP, UNRCs TF Survey 2015

Figure 5: State of implementation of “transparency” measures for trade facilitation in LDCs (in %)



Source: ESCAP, UNRCs TF Survey 2015

Figure 4 shows that the average level of implementation of all five “transparency” measures in Least Developed Countries is almost 50%, which is lower than the Asia Pacific regional average. Similarly, Figure 5 shows that *Stakeholder consultation on new draft regulations* is the most implemented “transparency” measure in LDCs, having been at least partially implemented in all countries. Meanwhile, *Advance ruling (on tariff classification)* is the least implemented of the “transparency” measures, having been at least partially implemented in only around 25% of all countries.

3.2 “Formalities” facilitation measures

Eight of the general trade facilitation measures included in the survey are categorized as “formalities” facilitation measures, aimed at streamlining and/or expediting regulatory trade procedures. They relate to Articles 6-10 of the WTO TFA and GATT Article VIII on “Fees and Formalities connected with Importation and Exportation”.

Figure 6 shows that the average weighted implementation score of “formalities” facilitation measures in this sub-region is around 30%, which is lower than the Asia-Pacific regional average. The implementation rates of “formalities” measures in LDCs are presented in Figure 7. *Pre-arrival processing* is the most implemented measure, having been at least partially implemented in more than 70% of all countries. *Risk management* also shows good progress, having been at least partially implemented in almost 60% of all countries, and being in the pilot stage of implementation in two countries (Afghanistan and Bangladesh). The least implemented measure is *Trade facilitation measures for authorized operators*, which has only been partially implemented in less than 10% of all countries.

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/报告?reportId=5_2858

