
Q1: Respondent details

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Q2: Country or customs territory: Togo

Q3: Organization: Public sector

Q4: Title of case story:

Trade facilitation: a case study of Togo's first one-stop border post.

Q5: Case story focus:

Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and/or trade facilitation measures more generally (e.g. trade and transport facilitation).

Q6: Case story abstract:

The aim of this case story is to briefly present the concept behind Togo's first one-stop border post, which seeks to be a model for trade facilitation in the West African subregion.

Q7: Funding partner: Bilateral donor, multilateral organization

Q8: Project/programme type: Single country

Q9: Your text case story:

The Togolese Republic – Trade facilitation: a case study of Togo's first one-stop border post, presented as part of the Sixth Global Review of Aid for Trade.

THE ONE-STOP BORDER POST CONCEPT: THE CASE OF THE KODJOVIKOPÉ BORDER POST BETWEEN TOGO AND GHANA

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Kojoviakopé border post is located on the border between Togo and Ghana, on the outskirts of the city of Lomé and around 200 km from Accra, the capital of Ghana.

The growing mining industry (cement) and rise in other business activities between Togo and Ghana led to an increase in traffic and congestion at the border between the two countries. This in turn resulted in higher transportation costs because of the time taken to clear consignments at the border. To reduce these costs and speed up the traffic, Togo undertook trade-facilitation reforms. One such reform was the introduction of a single window for foreign trade, and establishing one-stop border posts was part of this process. Togo's first one-stop border post was opened at Kojoviakopé on 9 July 2015.

2. OVERVIEW

Operating company

Togo's single window for foreign trade is run by SEGUCE TOGO (*Société d'Exploitation du Guichet Unique pour le Commerce Extérieur au Togo*). After an international bidding process, the Togolese Republic (Ministry of Trade and Private Sector Promotion, and Ministry of Transport) issued Decree No. 2013-083/PR of 12 December 2013 commissioning SEGUCE TOGO to implement and operate Togo's single window for foreign trade under a public-private partnership.

Structure

SEGUCE TOGO is the Togo-registered company tasked with operating Togo's single window for foreign trade. Its shareholders include the Bureau Veritas BIVAC BV-SOGET SA consortium. Bureau Veritas BIVAC BV is a subsidiary of the Bureau Veritas Group, which engages in trade-facilitation inspection work.

BUREAU VERITAS

BUREAU VERITAS is the world's second-largest conformity-assessment and certification group. It was created in 1828 and now has a staff of around 65,000 working in more than 1,000 offices and 330 laboratories across 140 countries. BUREAU VERITAS helps clients to enhance their performance by offering innovative services and solutions to ensure that their assets, products, infrastructure and processes meet standards and regulations regarding quality, health and safety, environmental protection and social responsibility.

The Government Services & International Trade Division of BUREAU VERITAS, which includes the subsidiary BIVAC, provides services to facilitate international trade, secure governments' revenue from imports and check that imported products meet quality standards. Over the last 30 years, more than 90 trade facilitation programmes have been conducted for governments. This Division is also in charge of the integration and local operation of the single window system.

Investment in Togo's single window and its running costs are funded by the BUREAU VERITAS Group.

SOGET SA

SOGET supports the fluidity of port operations, by coordinating intelligent, instant and shared management of logistics information between public and private stakeholders. As partner and facilitator of port communities, SOGET offers innovative turnkey solutions, by combining its expertise in business processes and technological excellence with its close ties to clients and partners. Created in Le Havre in 1983, SOGET is the leading operator in France and Africa and aims to become the world leader and reference in single window systems. SOGET is a founding member of the European Port Community System Association (EPCSA) and the SEFACIL Foundation, and provides its expertise to numerous international organizations.

SOGET designed Togo's single window.

Definition and objectives

Definition

According to the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business:

A single window for foreign trade is defined as a facility that allows parties engaged in foreign trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single entry point to fulfil all import-, export-, transit- and transshipment-related regulatory requirements.

It is a tool for managing all the data concerning international trade transactions, thereby simplifying all the related processes. It is an automated information system that optimizes and secures the procedures of both public and private stakeholders.

The main objectives of SEGUCE TOGO are to:

1. Enhance the efficiency of the foreign trade supply chain.
2. Reduce risks and processing times by providing a one-stop system that brings together all the entities involved in foreign trade.
3. Increase transparency between companies and the authorities.

4. Streamline and speed up procedures and formalities for incoming and outgoing goods, including those in transit or transshipment, thereby giving priority to document processing, making the flow of goods smoother and the clearance process faster.
5. Reduce costs.
6. Create an environment in which economic operators can become more competitive and work on a just-in-time basis.
7. Increase Togo's administrative competitiveness (international trade and investment) in handling cross-border trade.
8. Enhance the authorities' visibility through statistics and reports.
9. Connect landlocked countries with their main unloading and transit ports, leading to shorter delivery times and more free-flowing customs traffic.

3. OPERATING THE KODJOVIAKOPÉ ONE-STOP BORDER POST

The Kodjoviakopé one-stop border post aims to reduce clearance times, especially for commercial cargo, and to speed up traffic turnaround times by making people, trucks and vehicles stop only on one side of the border, where all formalities for the two countries are performed by officials from the two countries or by officials from one country empowered to perform the functions of the other country as well. At the Kodjoviakopé post, officials from Togo and Ghana are present on both sides of the border to carry out their respective duties. This one-stop system streamlines the various procedures, prevents duplication and is connected with other related interfaces, such as ASYCUDA. The main objective is to drastically simplify and shorten the goods clearance process.

In concrete terms:

For every consignment, users enter the requisite contractual and regulatory information into the single window for foreign trade.

The single window selects, sorts and filters this information and forwards it to the recipients concerned (public and private operators) in a given order and following a specific process, with feedback on decisions provided to the applicant.

The decisions issued by the various users are forwarded to the applicant. The final decision is made in real time, and if it is 100% affirmative, the goods can be released from the logistics area (the border in this case).

4. FUNDING

In addition to the operating company, several project donors and the World Bank helped finance the facilities needed to put the Kodjoviakopé one-stop border post into operation.

5. CONCLUSION

The one-stop border post has transformed the way in which business is conducted at the Kodjoviakopé border. The single window concept has delivered the targeted level of operational efficiency and will therefore be extended to the Cinkassé border post between Togo and Burkina Faso. Additional contributions from international donors would make it possible to introduce a similar system at the Savee-Kondji post between Togo and Benin.

Q10: Lessons learnt:

The introduction of the one-stop border post at Kodjoviakopé has benefited trade and the two countries concerned in several ways:

(a) There has been a reduction in fraud (i.e. forged documents) by importers and their representatives, ensuring the correct revenue yield for the governments, since drivers do not allow formalities to be delayed without seeking recourse from government officials.

(b) Clearance of goods is quicker, as trucks stop only once for all formalities, which reduces the cost of doing business. In the past, it would take trucks at least four days from their arrival at the Kodjoviakopé border until they were able to leave. Now it takes them one day, if all documents are in order and the client is able to pay the taxes as soon as the assessment is issued.

(c) As both exit and entry formalities are performed in the country of entry, passenger traffic is cleared more rapidly and efficiently, thus reducing the time spent at the border.
