



Trade Facilitation in the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program

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SASEC: Project-based Partnership to Promote Regional Prosperity

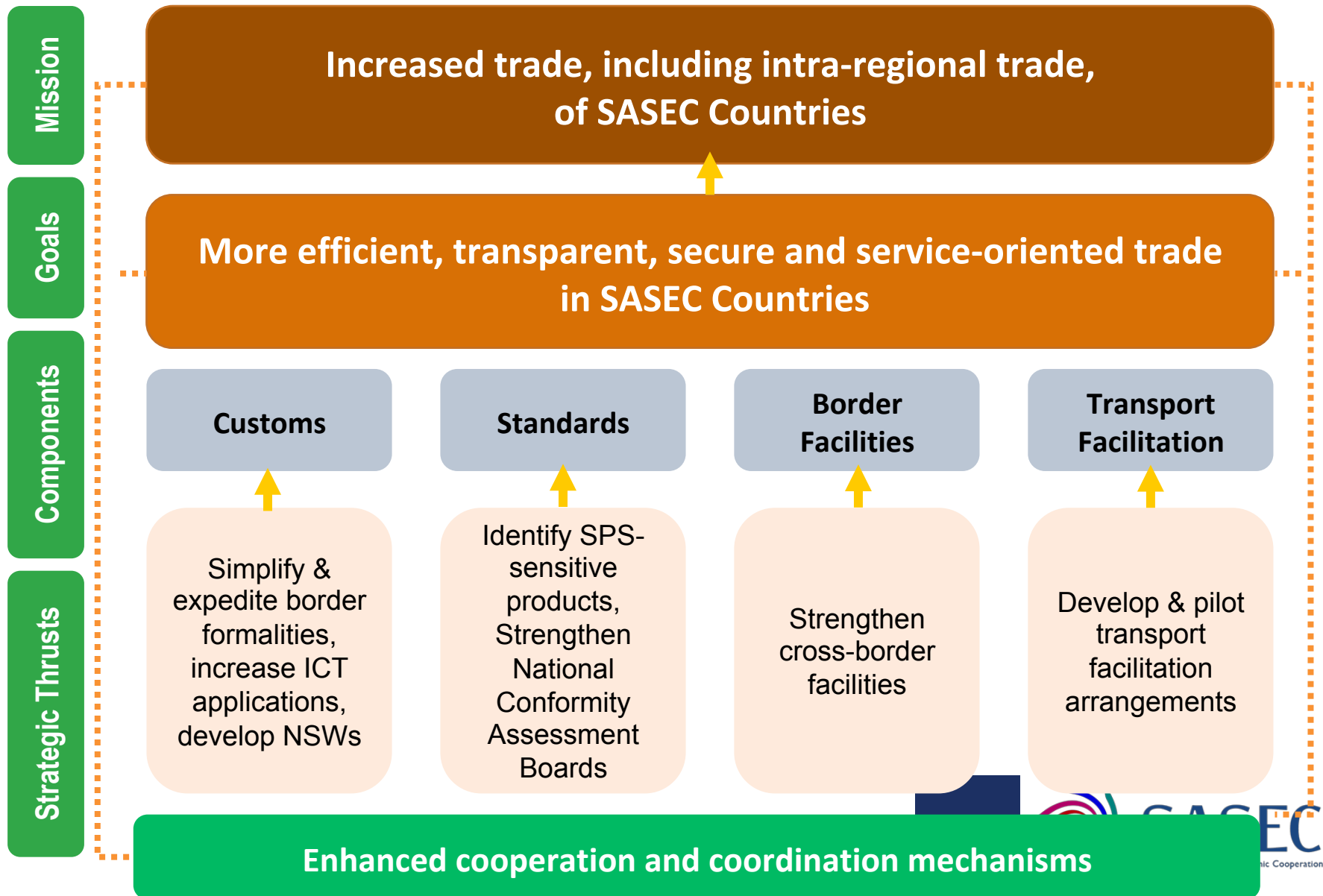
- Established in 2001 with Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal as members; Maldives & Sri Lanka joined in 2014, Myanmar in 2017
- § ADB is the secretariat and lead supporter
- Three sectors- Transport, Trade Facilitation, Energy
- § 2001-2017, 49 projects worth \$10.8 billion have been approved, of which ADB extended \$6.2 billion of financing
- Institution light, projects-heavy: Nodal Officials, Working Groups
- Flexible, Multi-track, Multi-speed, Building Block approach





SASEC Trade Facilitation Strategic Framework

Providing the software to connectivity





Transport Facilitation, Border Facilities, and Standards

- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement
 - Trial run along Kolkata-Agartala road via Dhaka
 - Passenger bus trial run along Dhaka-Siliguri-Kathmandu route and Dhaka to Delhi
- Trade Facilitation Route Initiative Study
 - Kolkata-Dhaka route passing through key border points of Petrapole-Benapole, Ghojadanga-Bhomra; and Gede-Darsana
- Conducted Studies on Coordinated Development of Border Infrastructure
- Modernized 4 border crossing points
- Completed regional and national diagnostic study on SPS/TBT



Customs

ADB Loans and grants

- SASEC Trade Facilitation Program Loans to Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal (completed)
 - Accession to the RKC by the three countries
 - Web-based customs management systems launched and implemented in Bangladesh and Nepal
 - Reduced import and export trade documentation aligned to international standards
 - Trade information portals launched in Bangladesh
- SASEC Customs Reform and Modernization for TF Program in Nepal – 2017 (ongoing policy-based loan)
- SASEC Port Access Elevated Highway in Sri Lanka – 2018 (ongoing)
- SASEC National Single Window in Maldives – 2019 (planned)



Customs

(continued)

ADB Technical assistance support

- Trade Facilitation in South Asia
 - SASEC Customs Subgroup
 - Use of electronic cargo tracking system
 - Risk management in Maldives
 - Road map for National Single Window in Maldives
- Support for Participation in the SASEC Trade Facilitation Program to:
 - Bangladesh
 - Systems-based post clearance audit
 - Risk management system at Chittagong and Benapole
 - Bhutan
 - Customs strategies and action plan for risk management,
 - National Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee
 - Nepal
 - Automated customs management system
 - 4-year Customs Reform and Modernization Strategy and Action Plan



Customs

(continued)

ADB Technical assistance support

Implementing Trade Facilitation Initiatives under the SASEC Program

- Output 1: Developing implementation frameworks, blueprints, & road maps for modern customs administrations
 - trusted traders/authorized economic operators schemes;
 - pre-arrival processing;
 - advanced rulings;
 - post-clearance audit;
 - risk management;
 - automation; and national single windows

Making trade more efficient through better compliance, adoption of international standards and capacity building



Intersubregional Activities

- SASEC ADB-National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotic Memorandum of Intent for Cooperation in Customs Capacity Building
 - Includes Myanmar
 - Authorized Economic Operators' Program – Sept 2018
 - Time Release Study – November 2018
 - Post clearance audit and Risk Management – 2019
- ADB-Korean Customs Multi-year WTO TFA Initiatives
- Negotiation of the India-Myanmar-Thailand Motor Vehicle Agreement
- Development of the SASEC-Myanmar Corridor
- Support for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation Transport Connectivity Masterplan
- Support for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation



Lessons Learned

- Cross-border transport connectivity projects should be complemented by trade facilitation initiatives
- Trade facilitation can deliver quick wins
- Trade facilitation initiatives are not a one-size-fits-all; should be customized to suit the national needs
- Importance of development partners coordination
- Capacity building programs should be developed in a more sustainable way





SASEC
South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation

Thank you.

