

# U.S. Perspectives and Experience on Digitization: Sequencing Implementation Towards Achieving a Single-Window System

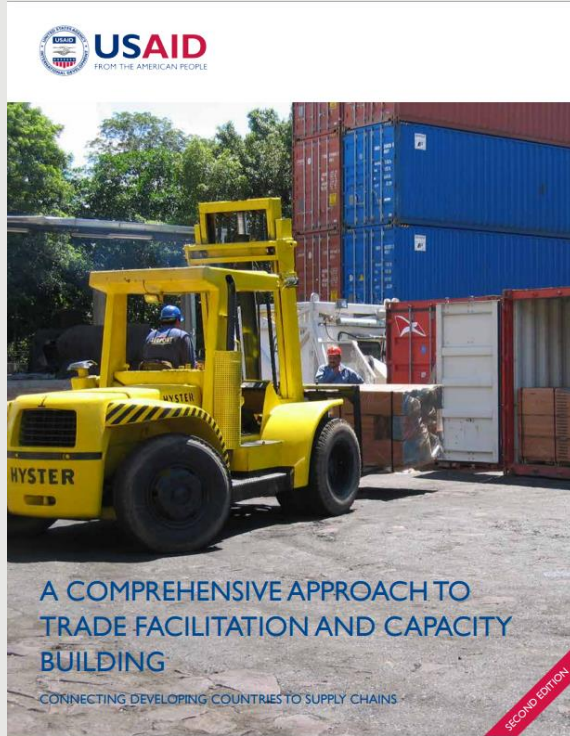
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# USAID's Approach to TFA Implementation



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# A sequenced approach to technical assistance



– The **13 articles** of the text contain a total of **37 specific** requirement for border control agencies.

1. Political will and implementation of fundamental principles
2. Procedural simplification
3. Compliance management
4. Border agency cooperation

# **Political Will and Adoption of Fundamental Principles**

## **Sequence Group I**

<b>Article 1</b>	<b>Publication and Availability of Information</b>
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<b>Article 2</b>	<b>Opportunity to Comment, Information Before Entry into Force, and Consultations</b>
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<b>Article 23, Paragraph 2</b>	<b>National Committee on Trade Facilitation</b>
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## Procedural Simplification - Sequence Group 2

*Requirements highlighted in bold text either specifically mention other agencies or logically require collaboration.*

Article 5,	<b>Other Measures to Enhance Impartiality, Non-discrimination and Transparency</b>
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Article 6, Section 1	<b>Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed</b>
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Article 7, Section 1	<b>Pre-Arrival Processing</b>
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Article 7, Section 2	<b>Electronic Payment</b>
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Article 7, Section 3	Separation of Release from Final Determination of Customs Duties, Taxes, Fees and Charges
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Article 7, Section 8	Expedited shipments
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Article 7, Section 9	<b>Perishable goods</b>
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Article 9	Movement of Goods under Customs Control Intended for Import
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## Procedural Simplification - continued

*Requirements highlighted in bold text either specifically mention other agencies or logically require collaboration.*

<b>Article 10, Section 1</b>	<b>Formalities and Documentation Requirements</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 2</b>	<b>Acceptance of Copies</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 3</b>	<b>Use of International Standards</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 5</b>	<b>Pre-shipment Inspections</b>
Article 10, Section 6	Use of Customs Brokers
<b>Article 10, Section 7</b>	<b>Common Border Procedures and Uniform Documentation Requirements</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 8</b>	<b>Rejected Goods</b>
Article 10, Section 9	Temporary Admission of Goods/Inward and Outward Processing
Article 11	Freedom of Transit

## Compliance Management – Sequence Group 3

*Requirements highlighted in bold text either specifically mention other agencies or logically require collaboration.*

Article 3

Advance Rulings

**Article 4**

**Appeal or Review Procedures**

Article 6, Section 3

Penalty Disciplines

**Article 7, Section 4**

**Risk Management**

Article 7, section 5

Post Clearance Audit

**Article 7, Section 7**

**Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators**

## **Border Agency Cooperation – Sequence Group 4**

<b>Article 7, Section 6</b>	<b>Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times</b>
<b>Article 8</b>	<b>Border Agency Cooperation</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 4</b>	<b>Single Window</b>
<b>Article 10, Section 7</b>	<b>Common Border Procedures and Uniform Documentation Requirements</b>
Article 12	Customs Cooperation





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## WTO TFA Sequence Groups

### SEQUENCE GROUP 1

#### Article 1

Publication and Availability of Information

#### Article 2

Opportunity to Comment, Information Before Entry  
Into Force and Consultation

#### Article 23, Paragraph 2

National Committee on Trade Facilitation

### SEQUENCE GROUP 2

#### Article 5

Other Measures to Enhance Impartiality, Non  
Discrimination, and Transparency [including detentions]

#### Article 6

Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in  
Connection with Importation and Exportation and  
Penalties

#### Article 7, Paragraph 1

Pre-Arrival Processing

#### Article 7, Paragraph 2

Electronic Payment

#### Article 7, Paragraph 3

Separation of Release from Final Determination of  
Customs Duties, Taxes, Fees, and Charges

#### Article 7, Paragraph 8

Expedited Shipments

#### Article 7, Paragraph 9

Perishable Goods

#### Article 9

Movement of Goods Intended for Import under  
Customs Control

#### Article 10, Paragraph 1

Formalities and Documentation Requirements

#### Article 10, Paragraph 2

Acceptance of Copies

#### Article 10, Paragraph 3

Use of International Standards

#### Article 10, Paragraph 5

Pre-shipment Inspections

#### Article 10, Paragraph 6

Use of Customs Brokers

#### Article 10, Paragraph 8

Rejected Goods

#### Article 10, Paragraph 9

Temporary Admission of Goods and Inward and Outward  
Processing

#### Article 11

Freedom of Transit

### SEQUENCE GROUP 3

#### Article 3

Advance Rulings

#### Article 4

Procedures for Appeal or Review Procedures

#### Article 6, Paragraph 3

Penalty Disciplines

#### Article 7, Paragraph 4

Risk Management

#### Article 7, Paragraph 5

Post Clearance Audit

#### Article 7, Paragraph 7

Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators

### SEQUENCE GROUP 4

#### Article 7, Paragraph 6

Establishment and Publication  
of Average Release Times

#### Article 8

Border Agency Cooperation

#### Article 10, Paragraph 4

Single Window

#### Article 10, Paragraph 7

Common Border Procedures and Uniform  
Documentation Requirements

#### Article 12

Customs Cooperation

# Tools, Methodology, and Core Fundamentals

- Tools are the concrete instruments used to do the work. In SW implementation, these would include software platform (ASYCUDA), IT hardware, and other soft and hard infrastructure. (What will we use to do the work?)
- Methodology is the systematic approach that guides how implementation is planned and executed, including principles, logic, and justification for chosen methods and tools. USAID sequencing guide is one example) (How will we work)
- Core fundamentals are the essential concepts and capabilities that must be in place for implementation to succeed, regardless of the tools of methodology. (What must be true?)

# Political Will

- An meaningful acknowledgement by government that trade matters and that private sector-led trade is an integral component of economic development and growth.
- Acknowledgement that while there may be significant benefits for government such as higher revenue collection, better compliance, improved risk management, better trade statistics, and more efficient use of staff and infrastructure, the primary goal of SW implementation is a commitment to improve the “customer experience” of the private sector as it interacts with government institutions.
- A recognition that SW implementation constitutes a strategic reform that goes beyond IT, requiring legal change, institutional/interagency collaboration and cooperation, and process simplification

# Sequencing and Digitization and Single Window Implementation

- Sequencing of implementation is a methodology. USAID's paper on this topic is only one of a number of suggested approaches and experiences for sequencing TFA implementation.
- The use of technology (digitization) is only a tool for implementation.
- What we need to spend more time and energy on is the core fundamentals.

## Examples of USAID's past work

- 1) **ASEAN Single Window (ASW)**
- 2) **Philippines — National Single Window (NSW)**
- 3) **Pakistan Single Window (PSW)** — via PREIA (Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity)
- 4) **East African Community (EAC)** — move toward an **EAC Single-Window System (SWS)**
- 5) **Jordan — One-Window / single-procedures at customs (Fiscal Reform & Trade Support)**
- 6) **Rwanda — Electronic Single Window improvements**
- 7) **Bangladesh — Trade Capacity / Single-Window feasibility & advisory support**
- 8) **Other USAID “One-Stop” / Single Window-adjacent efforts (Latin America, Central America, Caribbean)**

## Nature of USAID's assistance

- Across the examples above USAID typically provided one or more of the following:
- **Technical design and IT advisory** for NSW/SWS architecture;
- **Legal & regulatory drafting** for e-transactions and single-submission legal frameworks;
- **Institutional reform & capacity building** to align multiple agencies;
- **Stakeholder engagement** to ensure private-sector needs are reflected; and
- **Regional interoperability support** so national Single Windows can exchange documents across borders.

# Observations from implementation efforts

- **Comprehensive and successful SW implementations are few in number....**most are still works in progress
- **Too many SW implementation efforts do not meet the UNCEFACT Rec 33's** definition of a single window as a "facility that allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a **single** entry point to fulfill **all** import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements." (emphasis added)
- **Interagency collaboration and cooperation is significantly lacking.** Trust among agencies is in short supply. Effective implementation requires an overwhelming amount of involvement, buy-in, and coordination/communication between key border agencies, their leadership, and a few key officials that are passionate, communicative, self-less, and are driven almost solely by the bigger picture.
- **Lack of transparency in government procurement.** Decisions about SW implementation and related procurement are too often not based on objective factors that are in the best interest of the country and achieving a SW.

# Final Takeaways

- **Political Will** High-level political commitment is the single most critical success factor, overriding technical and financial hurdles.
- **SW is Policy, Not Just IT:** The project is primarily one of institutional reform and business process re-engineering (BPR), not a simple technology deployment. Automating inefficient, paper-based processes results in an expensive, fast paper system.
- **Inter-Agency Collaboration must be mandated:** The biggest challenge is breaking down "silo mentalities" among government agencies (customs, health, agriculture). Success requires a clear, legal mandate for inter-agency data sharing and coordination.
- **Design for the User:** Effective implementation must be stakeholder-driven. Continuous engagement with the private sector (traders, freight forwarders) is essential to ensure the system meets practical trade needs.



## Additional key guidance

- **Adopt a phased approach**, focusing on "quick wins" (e.g., a few key documents or agencies) to demonstrate value and build trust before attempting full integration.
- **A robust legal and regulatory framework is required** to recognize electronic documents and signatures as legally equivalent to their paper counterparts.
- **Agree on a common data model and standards** (like the WCO Data Model) before connecting systems to ensure seamless and meaningful data exchange between agencies.
- **A Single Window is an ongoing effort**, not a discrete project with a specific end date. Dedicate reliable, long-term operational budgets and capacity for maintenance, upgrades, and continuous process improvement.
- **Secure a sustainable financing model**—whether through government appropriation, user fees, or public-private partnerships—to avoid relying solely on initial development partner funding.

# Thank you

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