

# Addressing the Challenges Facing One-Stop Border Posts in Africa: Lessons from Chirundu

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# Introduction

- African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) & expected gains
  - *Single continent-wide market*
- Success dependent on border integration measures
  - *Efficient movement across national boundaries*
  - *Border delays increase trade costs*
- Current situation –
  - *Traditional two-stop border posts*
  - *Long queues, delays along transport corridors*
- Improving Africa's interconnectedness through One Stop Border Posts (OSBP)

## Focus

- Using Chirundu OSBP as case study – draw out lessons to inform implementation of OSBPs

# Chirundu OSBP: Implementation & Initial Success

- Chirundu opened juxtaposed OSBP in 2009
- Heavy delays experienced prior to construction of OSBP
  - *Average border crossing time for trucks: 2 – 9 days*
- Improvements in periods immediately after OSBP
  - *Average border crossing time for trucks < 24hrs*
  - *Fast-track preclearance <5hrs*
- Resulting improvement in traffic along route
  - *Average daily no. of trucks increase: 100 trucks in 2004, 260 trucks in 2010, & 470 trucks in 2011*
- Exposed overlooked border management & infrastructural issues
- Heavy congestion & traffic since 2013
  - *Long cues up to 5km*
  - *Complaints lodged through Tripartite NTBs reporting mechanism*
  - *Waiting times >36hrs (2019)*

# Chirundu OSBP: Challenges Affecting Operations

Two main challenges affecting success of Chirundu OSBP:

- ❖ Border management challenges
- ❖ Infrastructure challenges

# Chirundu OSBP: Border Management Challenges

## ***I. Lack of Alignment of Procedures and Formalities at the National Level***

- Inadequate coordination & cooperation among national border agencies
- Clearance involving multiple national agencies
  - *ZRA & ZIMRA designated as lead agencies but enforcement still split across other national agencies*
  - *ZRA introduced Integrated Border Declaration Form (IBDF), but doesn't cover trucks, imports & exports*
- Lack of shared ICT infrastructure
  - *Both ZRA & ZIMRA use ASYCUDA World but not integrated with other national agencies*

## ***II. Lack of Interoperability of Systems Across Partner Countries***

- Lack of connectivity & data sharing between Zambia & Zimbabwe authorities
- Lack of data sharing has allowed for fraudulent activity

# Chirundu OSBP: Infrastructure Challenges

- Juxtaposed OSBP intended to expedite movement through combined Common Control Zone (CCZ)
- Chirundu's physical infrastructure not optimally designed to maximise operations as OSBP
  - *The two CCZ are not structurally identical*
  - *Insufficient parking bays on Zambian side*
  - *Few inspection bays on both sides*
  - *Poor lighting & inadequate signage*
- Poor connectivity & communication setup
  - *Poor & inconsistent internet connectivity*
  - *Frequent power cuts – officials reverting to manual operations*

# Way Forward in Implementing OSBPs

## *I. Comprehensive Approach to OSBP Infrastructure Funding*

- Both countries opted to upgrade existing structures rather than incur cost of constructing new purposefully designed facilities
- Financial constraints faced by many African countries
- Reliance on donor funding poses challenges
  - *Insufficient funding force countries to work with restricted budget*
  - *Covid-19 shifted donor priorities to the health sector*
- Viable option to finance through BOT model
  - *Cost burden of supplying new infrastructure shifted to private sector*
  - *Successful in implementing Cinkansé OSBP*
  - *2018 Zimborders Consortium won concession to modernise Beitbridge border post*

# Way Forward in Implementing OSBPs

## ***II. Harmonizing Border Clearance through Single Window (SW) Systems***

- Making greater use of national SW systems
- Zambia & Zimbabwe committed to implement SW under WTO TFA
  - Zimbabwe by 2029 & Zambia by 2030
- SW implementation can be achieved in a much shorter period
  - *RRA began implementing ReSW in 2011 and launched by 2013*
- Further effort to allow for cross-jurisdictional integration of systems
  - *To allow for sharing of information between the two national authorities*
  - *Achievable through regional SW – integrating national SWs into single multi-country portal*
  - *E.g. ASEAN SW allows for exchange of mutual ASEAN Customs Declaration Document*



# Conclusion

- Inefficient cross-border processes restrict intra-African trade
- Implementation of OSBPs would contribute to achieving the projected benefits under the AfCFTA
- African countries need to draw lessons from Chirundu's OSBP experience
  - *Ensure they address border management challenges & infrastructure challenges as part of OSBP implementation*