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Trade Facilitation for Export Diversification in Small or Medium South Asian Countries: E-Learning course

Global course delivered via Internet

9 - 13 June, 2008

Objective

This Internet-based course aims at providing trade policy makers, advisors, researchers, private sector operators (representatives of agriculture, industry, and services), and export support institutions in small or medium South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka, Pakistan, and Maldives) with useful insights and better understanding of trade facilitation, transit, and logistics constraints preventing optimal export diversification in small or medium South Asian Countries.

The course focuses on trade facilitation, transit, and logistics constraints and their implication for export performance of small or medium South Asian countries. These constraints are particularly onerous for landlocked countries. It has been suggested that transport costs for landlocked countries are 50% higher than for coastal countries, with a large share of these extra costs resulting from poor transit procedures. To the extent that these procedures are excessively costly, they render imports more expensive than they should be and increase costs for exports. More expensive imports lower a country's external competitiveness as it makes production for the internal market more rewarding to the producer. Its anti export bias acts in a way similar to import duties. In addition, complex and costly border procedures –amongst which transit procedures– increase the cost of imports that are incorporated in exports, thus making exports less competitive.

Audience

The course is specifically targeted at:

- Trade policy makers and advisors (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry, Foreign Affairs Ministry, and other Government officials involved in shaping the trade and export policy strategy).
- Researchers in academia, think tanks and regional research networks concerned with export promotion, trade and regulatory policies.
- Private sector operators (Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Agriculture), and representatives from professional associations (e.g. in banking, insurance, shipping, telecom

users, migration policy), and from trade groups interested in export development and diversification.

- Export support institutions (export promotion and investment promotion agencies) in client countries.
- World Bank and other bilateral or international organizations staff involved in analytical, advisory and technical assistance work related to trade, as well as NGO/CSOs who are or will be engaged in analytical and advisory work on trade and export promotion issues.

Course structure

The course, which will be delivered via Internet in one week, will provide a comprehensive coverage of issues related to trade facilitation, transit, and logistics and their implication for export performance of South Asian countries.

After an introduction to the main issues, **section two** of this course will discuss the key elements that make up a transit transaction. **Section three** will sketch out transit practices mostly in the developing world and illustrate how these can undermine external competitiveness. **Section four** will discuss international transit agreements and guiding principles. **Section five** will present best practices in transit management –the TIR system and the Ghana initiatives. **Section six** will highlight the often ignored fact that transit countries, not only the destination or landlocked countries, do benefit from the transit trade, and thus their support can be mobilized to supporting good transit procedures. The **last section** of the course will suggest a coherent strategy to improve transit practices in the South Asia Region.

Participants will be expected to read the course materials at the beginning of the week. Later in the week there will be an online discussion (not in real time) among participants, guided by the course moderator, Luc de Wulf, who is also the author of the main paper used in the course.

To successfully complete the course and receive a certificate of participation from WBI, each participant is required to read the mandatory materials and to participate actively in the online discussion. Participants are also required to complete an end-of-course evaluation (not a test of learning). Total time commitment for participants is expected to range from 10 - 12 hours.

Requirements

The main criteria for selection of participants will be active involvement in export development and trade-related advocacy or policy analysis, monitoring and advising, in one of the small or medium South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka, Pakistan, and Maldives). Participants from other countries will be accepted if there are available spots after participants from those seven countries have registered.

The course will be conducted in English over the Internet, so access to Internet, fluency in English and the ability to participate in the online discussion are key pre-requisites for participants. The

certificate of participation will be sent via postal mail, so all participants must provide a reliable postal address when filling-in the application.

Details on how to access the e-learning platform that will be used for the course will be sent via email to participants.

In order to be accepted to this course, applicants must have already taken the **five-week comprehensive Export Development and Diversification Course** which focuses on the understanding of: (i) factors, institutions, processes, policies and principles necessary for accelerated and diversified exports in developing countries; and (ii) lessons of experience of successful export development countries. This course will be offered again online from May 5 to June 6, 2008. If you haven't taken it in the past, you can register online with the following link:
http://info.worldbank.org/etools/wbi_learning/sec/app_form.cfm?sch_id=TRA08-01-096

If you already took this longer course in the past there is no need to take it again, but please let us know when filling-in the application for the course on Trade Facilitation for Export Diversification in Small or Medium South Asian Countries.

Application

To apply for this course, please click on the link below or copy and paste it in your browser:

http://info.worldbank.org/etools/wbi_learning/sec/app_form.cfm?sch_id=TRA08-01-081

- 1) Complete the application form
- 2) Click on "Submit"
- 3) A notification with the results of the selection process will be sent within seven days after the deadline to submit applications.

Last day to submit registration: April 18th, 2008

Maximum number of participants will be 120

For any questions regarding this course, please contact:

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