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PAGE 4: B.1) YOUR CASE STORY: TITLE AND DESCRIPTION

Q1: TITLE OF CASE STORY

Borderless Alliance: From campaign to network, a demand drive project

Q2: CASE STORY ABSTRACT

The Borderless Alliance is a USAID -supported coalition of private sector organizations working in close collaboration with public sector stakeholders to facilitate the free movement of persons, goods, and vehicles within ECOWAS and increasing trade across West Africa. The Alliance was designed to institutionalize the Borderless campaign launched by the USAID Trade Hub in 2010. It provides a permanent organizational framework to continue the campaign and leverage the influence of its private sector members to advocate for low regional trade barriers. Evidence-based advocacy is the cornerstone of the Borderless Alliance's efforts to increase regional trade through reducing transport costs, operationalizing the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme, and publishing credible transport and trade data.

The Borderless Alliance, officially launched in May 2012 with support from the USAID West Africa Trade Hub and its partners, provides an independent, sub-regional platform for leading producers, traders, transporters and financiers to propose and advocate for systemic and practical improvements to the movement of goods, transport, capital and services across West Africa. Guided by international best practices, sound research and their Code of Ethics, Borderless Alliance members work together to promote change through dialogue and action. - See more at: http://www.borderlesswa.com/history#sthash.i4zaV5xD.dpuf

Q3: LONG DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE STORY

Background
West African producers of food, light manufactured goods and fast-moving consumer goods are not benefiting from Africa's recent economic expansion to the same extent as industries such as telecommunications and finance. This is due in great part to the region's formal and informal barriers to trade in goods. Corruption, delays, inappropriate application of duties and taxes, inefficient procedures, lack of reliable information and poor infrastructure restrict the opportunities for West African producers to service domestic, regional, and international markets. The private sector and some governments in the region are increasingly recognizing and acting on these challenges, with USAID's West Africa Trade Hub serving as a critical e support institution.

Borderless began as a campaign and has become a private sector-led alliance.

In February 2012, the USAID Trade Hub published a study on the impact of expedited trade on private sector investment in West Africa as part of the Borderless advocacy campaign. The study showed that local, regional, and private companies are eager to invest in West Africa, but are often deterred from a regional investment approach due to the high costs and uncertainty of moving goods across borders. These costs decrease competitiveness and dampen returns on investment. Intraregional trade barriers are high, but they are not justified by the small revenue generated from intraregional trade, which accounts, for example, for just 2% of Ghana's total Customs revenues. In the end, the report showed that countries have more to gain developmentally by pursing an efficient trade and investment model rather than a Customs revenue generation

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The Borderless Alliance was officially inaugurated at the first annual Borderless Conference in May 2012 held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The conference brought together over 175 stakeholders to discuss regional transport and trade concerns and engage the private sector to push regional governments for reforms. Participants from across West Africa, the U.S. and Europe attended, representing national governments, international donors, and leading West African businesses from transporters and traders to manufacturers and bankers. The conference strengthened and solidified the fledgling Borderless Alliance, with membership growing from three to 23 paying members.

In 2013, the Alliance held the second annual "Borderless 2013: Connecting Markets." The conference was attended by more than 200 stakeholders from 16 countries, bringing together the private and public sectors to achieve reductions in the delays and costs that impede regional trade. The conference facilitated dialogue on the causes of West Africa's high transport costs, and showed how the Alliance's evidence-based advocacy leads to important improvements.

National Committees
The Borderless Alliance has established national committees in order to drive membership and provide a regional forum for members to address country-specific barriers to trade. To date, the Alliance has launched national committees in Benin, Ghana, Togo, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Senegal and Mali. The committees contribute to the identification of national-specific issues related to trade and transport needing resolution, the provision of logistical support to BA's events in each country and the timely dissemination of information of BA's.

Institutional Capacity Building
As membership has grown, the Borderless Alliance Secretariat has continued to expand its operational capacity. The Alliance engaged a Managing Director and two permanent staff with the help of a grant from the USAID Trade Hub. The Secretariat, with the institutional support of the USAID Trade Hub developed an administrative handbook to govern its operations along with a new code of ethics which was also developed and adopted by Alliance members at the second general assembly meeting. Most importantly, the Secretariat invested in a strategic plan to provide high quality guidance for the Alliance's activities in the short to medium term. The draft strategic plan was subsequently adopted by the Executive Committee, and serves as a guide for the Alliance particularly as donor funding decreases. Membership has grown to over 70 active members, 10 of which are major regional trading companies.

With the Borderless Alliance's Executive Committee and Secretariat in place, the Alliance is beginning the transition away from USAID Trade Hub guidance and assistance toward self-governance and financial viability. The Alliance has the potential to become an influential force in promoting efficient trade policy, but first it must overcome large challenges. While the merits of a private sector alliance advocating for efficient trade policy in West Africa are widely recognized, the concrete value to prospective members must be improved. In order for the Borderless Alliance to continue to grow and maintain a high level of involvement among its members, it must generate results which add value to its members' bottom lines. As such, the Alliance has developed a strategic plan for the short and medium terms to target the most achievable policy reforms, and membership services that will yield the greatest impact.

Border Information Centers
One of the concrete services to its members has been the creation of Border Information Centers (BICs) which provide a number of services to help alleviate the aforementioned problems and expedite the clearance of goods at borders. The BICs also provide periodic training on best practices for both the uniformed services and private sector stakeholders such as traders, freight forwarders, transporters and agents. Finally and most significantly, the BICs help to address border-specific problems and inefficiencies by bringing together various border stakeholders to identify and address the most pressing problems. In the period from November 2011-June 2013, the USAID Trade Hub along with the Alliance supported the rapid expansion of the BIC network as well as the Borderless Alliance member base.

Sustainability
The Borderless Alliance's future is promising, but it still faces funding and governance challenges that will take

time to address. USAID and, more recently, other donors continue to assist the Borderless Alliance in expanding its member base, empowering national committees and improving its service delivery. Within the next few years, the Alliance will hopefully have reached a sufficient membership along with a range of service offering to generate the revenues needed to sustain operations and deliver value to members and continue its advocacy role for improved trade facilitation in West Africa.

Q4: Please add here web links to project/programme materials.

www.borderlesswa.com

PAGE 5: C.2) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q5: YOUR CONTACT DETAILS	
Name:	Paul Fekete
Ministry/Institution/Organization:	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Country:	USA
Email Address:	pfekete@usaid.gov
Q6: FUNCTION	Public sector
Q7: FUNDING PARTNER Tick the appropriate box(es)	Bilateral donor
Q8: Additional information	*Respondent skipped this question*
Q9: START DATE OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME	2011
Q10: STATUS OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME	On-going
Q11: DURATION OR, IF ON-GOING, EXPECTED DURATION OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME	3-5 years
Q12: COST OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME	Between US$200,000 - US$500,000
Q13: Additional information	*Respondent skipped this question*
Q14: TYPE OF FUNDING FOR PROJECT/PROGRAMME	Grant

PAGE 6: C.2) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q15: PROJECT/PROGRAMME TYPE	Regional

PAGE 7: C.2) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q16: SINGLE COUNTRY/CUSTOMS TERRITORY	*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 8: C.2) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q17: REGION(If the region does not appear in the drop down menu, please enter manually.)	West Africa

PAGE 9: C.2) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q18: MULTI-COUNTRY(Enter all countries or customs territories)

ECOWAS Member countries

PAGE 10: C.4) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q19: CASE STORY FOCUSTick the appropriate box(es)	REDUCING TRADE COSTS FOR MERCHANDISE GOODS , Customs reform, Other border agency reforms

PAGE 11: C.5) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q20: HOW SUCCESSFUL WAS THE PROJECT/PROGRAMME Tick the appropriate box(es)	Very successful

PAGE 12: C.6) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q21: WHAT WERE THE OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT/PROGRAMME Tick the appropriate box(es)	Officials trained, New customs procedures, New other border agency procedure
Q22: Additional information(maximum 300 words)	*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 13: C.7) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q23: WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES OF YOUR PROJECT/PROGRAMMETick the appropriate box(es)	Reduction in road haulier waiting times, Reduction in customs clearance time, Reduction in other border agency clearance time , Reduction in requests for informal payments, Reduction in informal payments
Q24: Additional information(maximum 300 words)	*Respondent skipped this question*

PAGE 14: C.8) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q25: WHAT WERE THE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT/PROGRAMMETick the appropriate box(es)	Other (please specify) bottlenecks increasingly resolved, trade flows increase and costs decrease, to the benefit of all stakeholders.

Q26: Additional information(maximum 300 words)

As part of its longer term sustainability plan, the Borderless Alliance hosted a forum for Border Information Centers (BICs) partners to review the accomplishments of the BICs and develop a plan to continue operations after the USAID support diminishes. The forum brought together partner shippers councils and BIC staff from Benin, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Ghana, and Nigeria to share lessons learned and develop best practices for the BICs going forward. The participants concluded that the BICs will continue operations with shippers' councils taking full ownership of the BICs and their staff in the future.
In preparation for the handover, USAID' Trade Hub also developed a BIC Toolkit, which was introduced to stakeholders at the forum. The Toolkit documents the logistical requirements and the lessons learned for implementing and managing BICs, in a format that can be shared with partner organizations ahead of the transfer of ownership. While every border crossing presents its own unique challenges, the BIC Toolkit provides helpful guidelines and recommendations to facilitate and standardize BICs developed by partner organizations and ensure their continued success.
The BICs provide a platform for their sponsor organizations, donors, and multilateral organizations such as ECOWAS and UEMOA to deliver information and outreach services to the trade community. Going forward, the BICs will constitute a viable network of partner institutions for donors delivering information and technical assistance services directly to the trade community, The Borderless Alliance is also concluding MOUs with the BICs to facilitate the dissemination of Borderless advocacy materials and assist with referring members. ECOWAS could utilize the BIC platform in a similar way to disseminate new rules, regulations, forms and guides agreed to by Member States, and provide related training services to the trade community.
An impact evaluation of this undertaking has not yet been conducted.

PAGE 15: C.9) ABOUT THE CASE STORY

Q27: LESSONS LEARNT Tick the appropriate box(es)	Importance of engagement by private sector, Importance of attention to long-term sustainability , Importance of political will and commitment by project partner

Q28: Additional information(maximum 300 words)

In order to effectively focus these activities, it is vital to monitor the impact of the Border Information Centers and their utilization by traders, drivers and agents at the border. The centers will continue to conduct regular studies of border clearance times and meet with key border agents, in order to constantly evaluate and improve the information and services that the centers provide. However, while numerical measurements of customs clearance times are important for evaluating the effectiveness of the BICs, some of the most important impacts of the BIC initiative are less tangible – the BICs provide a mechanism for regional collaboration between national shippers' councils and a forum for direct dialog between the private sector and the uniformed services.

Q29: PROJECT OR PROGRAMME MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK Tick the appropriate box(es)	M&E framework used