



Regional Infrastructure for Trade Facilitation - Impact on Growth and Poverty Reduction

Side event at the [5th AFT review](#)

1 July 13.30-15.00

Venue: WTO (room tbc), Geneva

This session will discuss the evidence around the impact of regional infrastructure for trade facilitation on growth and poverty reduction based on a DFID-funded research project led by ODI. Preliminary findings suggest that improvements in regional infrastructure for trade facilitation in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are very likely to result in growth and poverty reduction through both direct and indirect routes, although there may be specific negative effects on certain groups without complementary policies. Infrastructure reduces trade costs which increases trade; however, there is a lack of studies that isolate the specific effects of regional infrastructure. Regional infrastructure and regional integration can raise growth and productivity through increased trade, investment and competition. Hard (e.g. roads, ports) and soft infrastructure (e.g. relevant transport services, regional standards) interact in promoting impacts. The project team will be presenting key findings so far including preliminary findings from case studies and research papers. The discussions will feature a range of well-known practical and academic experts in the area of Aid for Trade.

Provisonal programme

Chair: Ganeshan Wignaraja - Advisor, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, Asian Development Bank.

Opening: DFID

Speakers (8-9 minutes each):

Dr Marie- Agnès Jouanjean, Research Fellow at ODI, Overview of the Research Project

Prof Olivier Cadot, FERDI, Professor of Economics at the University of Lausanne, Director of CREA - Institute of Applied Macroeconomics), The impact of regional infrastructure for trade facilitation on market integration and the localisation of economic activity – evidence from night lights

Dr Ben Shepherd, Developing Trade Consultant: Infrastructure, Trade Facilitation, and Network Connectivity in Sub-Saharan Africa

Discussants (4-5 minutes each):

Frank Matsuert, Chief Executive Officer, TMEA

Gerald Makau Masila, Executive Director, Eastern Africa Grain Council

Dr. Jodie Keane, Economic Advisor, Commonwealth Secretariat

Prof. Jaime de Melo, Senior Fellow, FERDI

Followed by Q&A (30 minutes)

Hashtag: #regionalAft

For further information: Marie-Agnès Jouanjean, m.jouanjean@odi.org.uk



Chair: Ganeshan Wignaraja- Advisor, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, Asian Development Bank.

Speakers (10 minutes each):

Dr Marie- Agnès Jouanjean, Research Fellow at ODI: Overview of the Research Project

Prof Olivier Cadot, FERDI, Professor of Economics at the University of Lausanne, Director of CREA - Institute of Applied Macroeconomics), The impact of regional infrastructure for trade facilitation on market integration and the localisation of economic activity – evidence from night lights

Dr Ben Shepherd, Consultant, Developing Trade: Infrastructure, Trade Facilitation, and Network Connectivity in Sub-Saharan Africa

Discussants (7 minutes each):

Frank Matsaert (TMEA)

Gerald Makau Masila, Executive Director, Eastern Africa Grain Council)

Dr. Jodie Keane, Economic Advisor, (Commonwealth Secretariat)

Prof. Jaime de Melo, Senior Fellow, (FERDI)

Followed by Q&A (30 minutes)