

ENHANCING UGANDA'S AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH EFFICIENT CROSS-BORDER TRADE



Conducted by PSFU in Partnership
with AGRA

August 2025

EFFICIENT CROSS-BORDER TRADE STUDY

2025 REPORT



Table of Content

Acronyms and Abbreviations	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Foreword	xi
Executive Summary	xiii
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Context	2
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study	4
1.4 Scope and Coverage	4
1.4.1 Geographic Coverage	4
1.4.2 Commodity Focus	4
1.4.3 Thematic Scope	4
1.4.4 Stakeholder Coverage	5
1.5 Study Justification	5
1.6 Structure of the Report	6
2.0 Literature Review	7
2.1 Concept and Importance of Cross-Border Trade Facilitation	8
2.2 Policy and Regulatory Frameworks (National, Regional, and Continental)	9
2.2.1 National Frameworks	9
2.2.2 Regional Frameworks	10
2.2.3 Continental and Multilateral Frameworks	10
2.2.4 Trade Performance and Current Trends	10
2.3 Overview of East African Partner States' Trade Facilitation Initiatives	11
2.4 Overview of Trade Volumes and Values	12
2.5 Key Agricultural Commodities Traded	12
2.6 Uganda's Major Trade Corridors and Border Points	14
2.7 Key Barriers to Agricultural Cross-Border Trade	15
2.7.1 Understanding Non-Tariff Barriers and Institutional Context	15
2.7.2 Specific NTBs Affecting Agricultural Trade	15
2.8 Uganda's Trade with neighbouring Countries	17

2.8.1 Uganda's Trade with the Democratic Republic of Congo	17
2.8.2 Uganda's Trade with Republic of South Sudan	17
2.8.3 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Kenya	18
2.8.4 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Tanzania	18
2.8.5 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Rwanda	19
2.9 Implications for Policy and NDP IV Alignment	19
2.10 Gender Dimensions in Cross-Border Trade	20
2.10.1 Scale and Value of Women's Cross-Border Trade	20
2.10.2 Challenges Faced by Women Traders	20
2.10.3 Strategic Implications	21
3.0 Methodology	22
3.1 Study Design	23
3.2 Data Collection Methods	23
3.3 Data Analysis Approach	24
3.4 Limitations of the Study	25
4.0 Key Findings from Primary and Secondary data	26
4.1 Respondent Socio-Demographic Characteristics	27
4.1.1 Gender Distribution	27
4.1.2 Sector of Service	27
4.1.3 Agricultural Produce Traded	28
4.1.4 Major Cross-Border Points Used	30
4.2 Awareness and Experience in Cross-Border Trade	31
4.2.1 Familiarity with Trade Facilitation Mechanisms	31
4.2.2 Mechanisms in Use	33
4.2.3 Frequency of Cross-Border Trade and Implications for Agricultural Supply Chains	34
4.2.4 The Prevalence and Role of Informal Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	35
4.3 Assessment of Current Trade Facilitation Mechanisms	36
4.3.1 Documentation and Compliance Costs in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	36
4.3.2 Cost Drivers in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	37
4.3.2.1 The Burden of Tariffs in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	37
4.3.2.2 Bribery and Informal Payments as Hidden Costs in Cross-Border Trade	38
4.3.2.3 Storage and Parking Fees: Hidden Costs in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	38
4.3.2.4 Weighbridge and Other Ancillary Costs in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	39
4.3.3 Customs Procedures and Efficiency	39

4.3.3.1 Digitization of Customs Processes	39
4.3.3.2 Perceptions of Customs Efficiency in Agricultural Trade	40
4.3.4 Payment Modes and Systems	41
4.3.5 Fines and Penalties in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade	42
4.3.5.1 Compliance and Enforcement Dynamics	42
4.3.5.2 Enforcement Gaps and Trader Vulnerabilities	43
4.3.6 Regional and Bilateral Frameworks Governing Uganda’s Cross-Border Trade	43
4.3.8 Impact of Trade Facilitation on Spoilage of Agricultural Produce	44
4.3.9 Trader perceptions on trade facilitation efficiency	45
4.4 Trade Facilitation Challenges	46
4.4.1 Case of Trade challenges at Uganda–DRC Borders	46
4.4.2 Procedural Delays in Customs and Documentation: Persistent Barriers to Trade	46
4.4.3 Traders’ Perceptions of Border Delay Impacts	48
4.4.4 Economic Burden: Direct, Indirect, and Intangible Losses	48
4.4.5 Other Structural Barriers to Efficient Trade	49
4.5 Non Tariff Barriers between Uganda and Kenya	49
4.5.1 Discriminatory Excise Duties	49
4.5.2 Administrative Barriers	50
4.5.3 Infrastructure/ Procedural Issues	51
5.0 Recommendations	52
5.1 National- Level Recommendations	53
5.1.1 Infrastructure Investment at Borders	53
5.1.2 Strengthening Cooperatives and Associations	53
5.1.3 Formalization of Informal Trade	54
5.1.4 Digital Trade Facilitation	55
5.1.5 Gender-Sensitive Policies.....	55
5.2 Regional-Level Recommendations (East African Community & COMESA)	56
5.2.1 Harmonization of Standards and SPS Protocols	56
5.2.2 Strengthen NTB Monitoring and Enforcement	57
5.2.3 Corridor Security and Infrastructure	57
5.2.4 Expand Simplified Trade Regimes (STRs)	58
5.2.5 Promote Cooperative-Led Structured Trade	58
5.3 Continental-Level Recommendations (AfCFTA and AU Frameworks)	59
5.3.1 Leverage AfCFTA Mechanisms	59

5.3.2 Continental Digital Customs Integration	59
5.3.3 Continental Food Security Corridors	60
6.0 Conclusion	61
7.0 References	65

List of tables

Table 1: Summary of NTBs in Uganda’s Agricultural Cross-Border Trade	16
Table 2: Impact of trade facilitation mechanisms on business operations implementation.....	32
Table 3: Assessing if trade facilitation mechanisms meet agricultural produce needs.....	33
Table 4: Frequency of cross-border goods transport	35
Table 5: Existence of informal agricultural cross-border trade	35
Table 6: Customs efficiency in processing agricultural goods	41
Table 7: Whether a trader has ever received fines or penalties	43
Table 8: Spoilage of Agricultural Produce.....	44
Table 9: Frequency of delays from customs documentation	48
Table 10: Discriminatory Excise Duties and Trade Losses for Ugandan Exports	50

List of Figures

Figure 1: Category of Respondents Interviewed	28
Figure 2: Agricultural Produce Traded Across the Borders	29
Figure 3: Other Types of Produce Transported or Traded Across the Border	30
Figure 4: Border Points Frequently Used for Agricultural Trade	31
Figure 5: Familiarity with trade facilitation for agricultural produce across Uganda's borders.	31
Figure 6: Trade Facilitation Mechanisms Currently in Use	34
Figure 7: Payment modes at the Border	41
Figure 8: Efficiency of the Mechanisms in Reducing the Time Taken to Cross the Border.....	45
Figure 9: Common Trade Facilitation Challenges	47

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	African Development Bank
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
BoU	Bank of Uganda
CET	Common External Tariff
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DDA	Dairy Development Authority
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EABC	East African Business Council
EAC	East African Community
EASSI	Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICBT	Informal Cross-Border Trade
ITC	International Trade Centre
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
NCTCA	Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NDP IV	National Development Plan IV
NTBs	Non-Tariff Barriers
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
OSBP	One-Stop Border Post
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PSFU	Private Sector Foundation Uganda
REC	Regional Economic Community
RECTS	Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System
SCO	Simplified Certificate of Origin
SCT	Single Customs Territory
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
SSRA	South Sudan Revenue Authority
STR	Simplified Trade Regime
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TMEA	TradeMark East Africa
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UCDA	Uganda Coffee Development Authority
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
USD	United States Dollar
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), I take this opportunity to extend our deepest appreciation to all who contributed to the successful completion of this study on **Enhancing Uganda's Agricultural Competitiveness through Efficient Cross-Border Trade**. This report is the result of collective effort, collaboration, and commitment from a wide range of stakeholders.

We are profoundly grateful to the **Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)** for their generous financial and technical support, without which this work would not have been possible. We particularly acknowledge the leadership of **Mr. David Wozemba, AGRA Country Director**, whose vision and guidance provided strategic direction throughout this process. Special recognition is also extended to **Dr. Liston Njoroge, Dr. Sharon Tusiime, and Ms. Margaret Kizza**, whose technical expertise and encouragement enriched the depth and quality of this report.

At PSFU, we recognize the oversight of our **Board of Directors**, whose strategic guidance has consistently strengthened our role in championing private sector-led agricultural transformation. We equally appreciate the PSFU management and the leadership of **Dr. Julius Byaruhanga, Director of Policy Advocacy and Business Development**, who ensured that this study remained aligned with Uganda's national and regional trade priorities.

Special thanks go to the **lead researchers led by Dr. Juliet Kyayesimira and technical team** for their rigorous analysis, dedication, and professionalism that shaped the credibility of this study. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the **Policy Advocacy and Research Team, including**

Martin Maku (Policy Coordinator), Collins Agaba (Research Coordinator), Margret Kotte (Project Administrator), Ronald Kyagulanyi (Economic Policy and Research Analyst), and Esther Nabeeta (Coordinator for Education, Skills, and Health), whose tireless commitment made this work possible.

We further extend our appreciation to our **partners and collaborators**, including **Kilimo Trust, Stanbic Bank Uganda Limited, The Grain Council of Uganda (TGCU), and Prince Wills Limited**, whose support and partnership reinforced the importance of public-private collaboration in advancing inclusive agribusiness development and regional trade competitiveness.

We are also indebted to the various **Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) of Government, particularly the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), and Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)**. We equally thank the **District Local Governments, border officials, and local leaders** across Uganda's major corridors who provided valuable policy insights, data, and ground-level perspectives that enriched this study.

Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to the **farmer cooperatives, private sector associations, and cross-border traders—both formal and informal—whose experiences and voices gave life to this research**. This report is not only a research product but also a testament to our shared commitment to building a competitive, inclusive, and resilient agricultural trade system that supports Uganda's agro-industrialization and regional integration ambitions.

Foreword

Agriculture remains the backbone of Uganda's economy, employing more than **70% of our labour force** and contributing over **24% to GDP**. Yet, the full potential of this sector hinges on the efficiency with which we move goods across borders. As a land-linked country, Uganda's prosperity is intrinsically tied to trade facilitation, regional integration, and access to markets beyond our borders. It is in this context that the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), in partnership with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), commissioned this study on **Enhancing Uganda's Agricultural Competitiveness through Efficient Cross-Border Trade**.

The findings are both revealing and instructive. Despite reforms and investments in One-Stop Border Posts, customs automation, and regional protocols, Uganda continues to lose significant value due to **non-tariff barriers (NTBs), clearance delays averaging 24–72 hours, high logistics costs, and inadequate infrastructure such as cold-chain facilities**. For example, persistent NTBs along the Uganda–Tanzania corridor cost our exporters **USD 16.7 million annually in direct losses and over USD 95 million in wider trade impacts**. Likewise, spoilage of perishable agricultural products at borders is estimated to cause losses of up to **UGX 3.5 billion every year**. These inefficiencies erode farmer incomes, reduce cooperative



Stephen Asiimwe
Chief Executive Officer

competitiveness, and undermine our national export targets.

This study is timely because it goes beyond highlighting bottlenecks; it offers practical and evidence-based solutions. It underscores the urgency of **harmonizing standards across the EAC, strengthening NTB monitoring, upgrading infrastructure, embracing digital trade facilitation, and expanding gender-sensitive facilities at border points**. It also calls attention to the strategic role of **cooperatives, which currently handle over 60% of Uganda's maize and beans exports**, yet face capacity gaps in governance and finance that require urgent strengthening.

The Private Sector Foundation Uganda views this report not merely as an academic exercise but as a call to action. It provides a roadmap for aligning Uganda's trade facilitation agenda with the **National Development Plan IV, the National Export Development Strategy**, and our commitments under the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**. Above all, it highlights the need for a **whole-of-society approach**, where government, private sector, civil society, and regional partners work collaboratively to eliminate barriers, reduce costs, and unlock Uganda's agricultural competitiveness.

On behalf of PSFU, I extend my sincere appreciation to AGRA for their partnership, to all stakeholders who contributed insights, and to the research team for their diligence. It is my hope that policymakers, development partners, and the private sector will use these findings to champion reforms that make Uganda's cross-border trade not only more efficient but also more inclusive,

resilient, and transformative.

Together, we can position Uganda as a competitive hub for regional agricultural trade and ensure that our farmers, traders, and enterprises fully benefit from the opportunities of integration and globalization.



Stephen Asiimwe

**Chief Executive Officer
Private Sector Foundation Uganda
(PSFU)**

70%

The study revealed that Agriculture is still the backbone of Uganda's economy, employing over 70% of the population and contributed significantly towards rural livelihoods, exports and national food security

Executive Summary

Uganda's agricultural sector remains the backbone of its economy, contributing **24% of GDP** and employing over **70% of the labour force**. Cross-border trade within the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is a vital driver of growth, poverty reduction, and regional integration. In **2024**, Uganda's exports were valued at **USD 5.6 billion**, with nearly half (**USD 2.7 billion**) destined for EAC markets, led by Kenya, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Tanzania. Informal cross-border trade, predominantly agricultural, contributed an additional **USD 575 million**, underscoring its significance to rural livelihoods and regional food security.

The Government of Uganda, in partnership with regional bodies, has implemented trade facilitation mechanisms such as **One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs)** at Busia, Malaba, Mutukula, Elegu, and Mpondwe; the **Electronic Single Window**; and harmonised standards under the EAC Customs Union and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. These efforts have improved clearance times at some borders and aligned Uganda with continental frameworks, including the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**. However, persistent **non-tariff barriers (NTBs)**, discriminatory levies, multiple inspections, inconsistent sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) enforcement, and infrastructural deficits continue to erode competitiveness. For example, NTBs along the Tanzania corridor impose direct annual losses of **USD 16.7 million** and broader economic costs of **USD 95 million**, while average clearance times for

agricultural exports to Kenya remain at **355 hours**, well above the **48-hour EAC benchmark**.

The study applied a **mixed-methods design**, combining **313 trader and transporter surveys**, **28 Key Informant Interviews**, and **12 Focus Group Discussions with border officials and traders**. Findings reveal that **72% of traders experience delays** from multiple inspections, while **65% cite high compliance costs** as a major barrier. Women and youth, who dominate informal trade (women constitute over **70%** of participants), face additional challenges such as harassment, lack of finance, and inadequate storage or sanitation facilities. Annual spoilage losses linked to delays at border points exceed **UGX 3.5 billion**, further undermining profitability.

30%

The study revealed that Agriculture if the NTBs are effectively implemented, it will expand Uganda's market access up to 30% and also accelerate inclusive growth.

Despite these challenges, cross-border trade remains a transformative opportunity. Agricultural commodities—particularly maize, beans, rice, fish, dairy, and fresh produce—dominate Uganda’s exports and hold strong demand in neighbouring markets. Strengthening cooperatives, which already handle over **60% of maize and bean exports**, presents a pathway to formalise trade, improve compliance, and enhance bargaining power.

The study concludes that addressing NTBs, upgrading border infrastructure with **reliable power, ICT systems, and cold-chain facilities**, harmonising SPS protocols, and expanding simplified trade regimes are critical to unlocking Uganda’s competitiveness. Equally important are **gender-sensitive interventions**, including childcare, sanitation, and targeted financing for women traders. Regional and continental frameworks, if effectively implemented, can reduce transaction costs by up to **30%**, expand Uganda’s market access, and accelerate inclusive growth.

Ultimately, the evidence underscores that efficient cross-border trade facilitation is not simply a logistics matter but a **strategic economic imperative**. Streamlined procedures, cooperative strengthening, and gender-responsive reforms will be pivotal in achieving Uganda’s **National Export Development Strategy target of USD 12 billion by 2027** and in aligning with **NDP IV’s vision of agro-industrialisation and regional integration**.

70%

The study revealed that women constitute over 70% of the participants but face challenges such as harassments, lack of finance, inadequate storage and sanitation facilities.



CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In this chapter

- ✓ Background & Context
- ✓ Problem Statement
- ✓ Objectives of the study
- ✓ Scope and Coverage
- ✓ Study Justification
- ✓ Structure of the Report

Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Cross-border trade plays a pivotal role in Uganda's economic growth, poverty reduction, and regional integration. As a land-linked country in the East African Community (EAC) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Uganda relies heavily on efficient trade facilitation mechanisms to access regional and global markets. Agricultural exports, particularly maize, beans, rice, fish, dairy, coffee, and fruits, form the backbone of Uganda's formal and informal cross-border trade (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023).

Uganda's trade with its neighbours is dominated by the EAC region, with **Kenya, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Tanzania** as key partners. In 2024, Uganda's total exports were valued at **USD 5.6 billion**, with the EAC accounting for approximately **USD 2.7 billion (48%)**. Kenya remained the top export destination in the region with exports worth **USD 929 million**, followed by South Sudan (**USD 626 million**), DRC (**USD 419 million**), Rwanda (**USD 295 million**), and Tanzania (**USD 232 million**) (BoU, 2025). Informal cross-border trade, predominantly in agricultural commodities, accounted for **USD 575 million in 2023**, with South Sudan and DRC as the largest destinations (UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Trade facilitation encompasses measures that reduce trade transaction costs by improving border infrastructure, streamlining customs procedures, harmonizing standards, and enhancing logistics efficiency (World Trade Organization [WTO], 2017). Uganda has implemented several trade facilitation mechanisms, including **One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs)** at Busia, Malaba, Mutukula, Elegu, and Mpondwe, the **Electronic Single Window**, and adoption of the **EAC Customs Management Act**. These measures align with obligations under the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**, the **EAC Customs Union**, the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)**, and the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**.

Despite these efforts, Uganda's cross-border trade continues to face significant challenges, including non-tariff barriers (NTBs), multiple inspections, inconsistent application of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, delays in clearance, and high transport costs (EAC Secretariat, 2024; PSFU, 2024). For example, clearance times for agricultural exports to Kenya can average **355 hours**, while NTBs along the Tanzania corridor are estimated to cause direct annual losses of **USD 16.7 million** and overall economic costs of **USD 95 million** (Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority [NCTTCA], 2024).

Addressing these barriers is critical not only for improving Uganda's competitiveness but also for enabling inclusive growth. Women and youth form a large proportion of cross-border traders, yet they face gender-specific constraints such as limited access to finance, harassment, and inadequate facilities (International Trade Centre [ITC], 2023). Furthermore, informal traders, who constitute over **70%** of cross-border actors, often operate outside formal systems due to cumbersome procedures, lack of information, and high compliance costs.

This study on the Effectiveness of Cross-Border Trade Facilitation Mechanisms in Uganda provides an evidence-based assessment of existing mechanisms, identifies operational and policy gaps, and proposes actionable recommendations to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and promote inclusive participation in regional trade. It draws on recent fieldwork, stakeholder consultations, and a review of national, regional, and international frameworks to guide policy reform and private sector advocacy.

1.2 Problem Statement

Uganda's agricultural trade within the East African Community (EAC) plays a critical role in national economic growth, contributing over 24% of GDP and employing more than 70% of the labour force (UBOS, 2024). Despite multiple trade facilitation frameworks—such as the EAC Customs Union, the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)—cross-border agricultural trade continues to face significant procedural and structural bottlenecks (EAC Secretariat, 2023; WTO, 2017).

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) remain the most persistent impediment to the seamless movement of goods. For instance, traders encounter multiple inspections, inconsistent application of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, roadblocks, and unofficial fees, resulting in prolonged clearance times and elevated transaction costs. On the Uganda–Tanzania corridor, NTB-related inefficiencies have been estimated to cause direct losses of USD 16.7 million and overall trade impacts exceeding USD 95 million annually (PSFU, 2025). On the Uganda–Kenya corridor, the average export clearance time for agricultural goods stands at 355 hours, far exceeding the 48-hour benchmark under the EAC Time Bound Programme (NCTTCA, 2024).

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT) further complicates the policy landscape. Although ICBT accounts for approximately 24% of Uganda's total exports to neighbouring countries, over 80% of the traders operate without formal registration, limiting access to financing, market information, and legal protection (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Women constitute more than 70% of informal agricultural traders, yet they face heightened vulnerabilities, including harassment, limited storage facilities, and exclusion from decision-making processes (Tralac, 2023; UN Women, 2024).

In addition, infrastructure deficiencies at One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs)—including inadequate storage, lack of cold chain facilities, and unreliable internet connectivity—undermine the effectiveness of trade facilitation measures (TMEA, 2024). Even where automation exists, recurrent system downtimes and power outages disrupt clearance processes, forcing traders to revert to manual procedures.

These persistent challenges weaken Uganda's competitiveness in regional agricultural markets, erode trader profits, and undermine the intended benefits of regional integration. Without targeted reforms that address both operational and policy-level bottlenecks, Uganda risks losing its comparative advantage in agricultural trade within the EAC and beyond.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The study aimed to:

- i. **Assess** the current cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms for agricultural produce between Uganda and East African partner states.
- ii. **Identify** the key non-tariff barriers, procedural inefficiencies, and costs affecting agricultural trade.
- iii. **Analyse** the economic, social, and gender impacts of existing facilitation gaps.
- iv. **Recommend** actionable measures to improve trade facilitation, enhance competitiveness, and promote inclusive participation.

1.4 Scope and Coverage

This study on the effectiveness of cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms focused on agricultural commodities traded between Uganda and selected East African Community (EAC) and regional partner states. The scope was defined to capture both the policy and operational dimensions of trade facilitation, reflecting the experiences of traders, transporters, clearing agents, and regulatory agencies at key border posts.

1.4.1 Geographic Coverage

The assessment focused on Uganda's major cross-border trade corridors and border points with the highest volumes of both formal and informal agricultural trade. Fieldwork and stakeholder consultations were conducted along the **Uganda–Kenya corridor** (Busia, Malaba, and Lwakhakha), the **Uganda–Tanzania corridor** (Mutukula by road and Port Bell via lake transport), the **Uganda–South Sudan corridor** (Elegu and Oraba), and the **Uganda–Democratic Republic of Congo corridor** (Mpondwe, Goli, and Bunagana). These corridors were strategically selected for their significant contribution to Uganda's export earnings, their critical role in supporting regional food security, and their representation of diverse trade modalities, including road, lake, and informal foot or boat crossings.

1.4.2 Commodity Focus

The study focused on priority agricultural commodities that hold substantial cross-border trade value yet remain highly vulnerable to procedural and non-tariff barriers. These included **cereals** (maize, rice, sorghum, millet), **legumes** (beans, groundnuts, soybeans), **fruits and vegetables** (bananas, tomatoes, onions, avocados), **fish and fish products, livestock and livestock products**, as well as **other high-value crops** such as coffee and tea, particularly where these were relevant to specific trade corridors.

1.4.3 Thematic Scope

The analysis was structured around seven thematic areas: **policy and legal frameworks**, focusing on national, regional, and continental trade facilitation instruments such as the EAC Customs Union, COMESA STR, AfCFTA, and WTO TFA, and their relevance to Uganda's cross-border agricultural trade; **institutional arrangements**, examining the roles, mandates, and coordination of customs authorities, standards bodies, border

agencies, and private sector actors; **trade facilitation mechanisms**, including One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs), customs automation, documentation and permit requirements, standards and SPS controls, as well as transport, logistics, and storage systems; **barriers and inefficiencies**, identifying non-tariff barriers, procedural delays, infrastructure gaps, multiple inspections, unofficial payments, and the lack of harmonized standards; **gender dimensions**, assessing challenges faced by women and youth in cross-border trade such as safety concerns, limited access to finance, and exclusion from decision-making; **economic and social impacts**, quantifying the time and cost implications of current practices and their effects on competitiveness, employment, and export earnings; and finally, **recommendations for reform**, outlining short-, medium-, and long-term measures to improve trade facilitation, reduce costs, and enhance Uganda's overall competitiveness in cross-border trade.

1.4.4 Stakeholder Coverage

The study engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including formal and informal cross-border traders (both men and women), transporters and logistics providers, customs officials and standards agencies such as URA and UNBS, local government authorities in border districts, private sector associations and cooperatives, as well as regional trade bodies and development partners. By drawing on these varied perspectives, the study presents a holistic view of Uganda's cross-border trade facilitation environment, effectively linking policy frameworks with operational realities and stakeholder experiences to generate practical recommendations for government, the private sector, and regional partners.

1.5 Study Justification

Uganda's economic growth and poverty reduction strategies are heavily dependent on agricultural trade, with cross-border trade playing a pivotal role in linking producers to regional and international markets. The country's agricultural sector employs approximately 70% of the labour force and contributes about 24.1% to GDP (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS], 2024). A significant share of this trade is conducted with East African Community (EAC) partners, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and, increasingly, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) members. In 2023, informal cross-border trade alone was valued at USD 597 million, accounting for over 21% of total exports, with agricultural commodities such as maize, beans, rice, fish, and milk dominating flows (Bank of Uganda [BoU] & UBOS, 2024).

Despite Uganda's strategic location and strong trade potential, the competitiveness of its agricultural exports is constrained by persistent non-tariff barriers (NTBs), procedural inefficiencies, and inadequate infrastructure at border points. For instance, NTB monitoring under the EAC framework shows recurrent challenges, including multiple roadblocks, duplicative product testing, and inconsistent application of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, which can delay exports by 3–15 days and increase transaction costs by up to 30% (East African Community Secretariat, 2024). Losses associated with NTBs in trade with Tanzania alone have been estimated at USD 16.7 million annually in direct costs and over USD 95 million in indirect costs to Ugandan exporters (Private Sector Foundation Uganda [PSFU], 2025).

Regional integration frameworks—such as the EAC Customs Union, COMESA Simplified

Trade Regime (STR), AfCFTA, and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement—provide legal and institutional mechanisms to reduce these barriers. However, implementation gaps remain significant. For example, while One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) have reduced clearance times at Busia and Mutukula, traders at smaller posts such as Lwakhakha and Goli continue to experience fragmented processes, limited automation, and lack of coordinated inspections (PSFU, 2025; World Bank, 2023). These disparities hinder Uganda's ability to fully harness trade facilitation benefits, particularly for small-scale and women traders, who comprise over 60% of informal cross-border trade participants (International Trade Centre [ITC], 2023).

Understanding the effectiveness of current cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms is therefore essential for policy advocacy, investment prioritisation, and capacity building. This study responds to the need for evidence-based recommendations that address operational bottlenecks, promote harmonisation of standards, and enhance gender-sensitive approaches in trade facilitation. The findings are expected to inform government agencies, regional bodies, and private sector actors in aligning infrastructure investments, regulatory reforms, and trade facilitation programs with Uganda's Tenfold Growth Strategy, the National Export Development Strategy, and commitments under regional and continental trade agreements.

Given the high contribution of agricultural exports to foreign exchange earnings, improving trade facilitation is not merely a logistical issue—it is a strategic economic imperative. Reducing NTBs and streamlining cross-border procedures could significantly enhance Uganda's export competitiveness, stimulate value addition, and generate more inclusive economic growth. In the context of rising regional demand for food staples and processed agricultural products, the urgency for coordinated action across public and private sectors cannot be overstated.

1.5 Structure of the Report

This report is organised into ten chapters to present the findings in a logical, policy-relevant, and action-oriented manner. Chapter One provides the background, rationale, purpose, objectives, and scope of the study, setting the context for the analysis. It also outlines the methodological approach and limitations, ensuring clarity on how the evidence was generated.

Chapter Two reviews the institutional, legal, and policy frameworks governing cross-border trade facilitation at the national, regional, and continental levels, highlighting their relevance to Uganda's agricultural trade. Chapter Three presents an overview of Uganda's cross-border agricultural trade, including key commodities, trade volumes, and the role of women and youth. Chapter Four examines the current trade facilitation mechanisms, including border infrastructure, customs procedures, SPS measures, and logistics systems.

Chapters Five to Seven present the core analytical findings. Chapter Five identifies major challenges and non-tariff barriers, while Chapter Six analyses these barriers by trade corridor. Chapter Seven assesses the economic and social impacts of the identified gaps. Chapter Eight proposes targeted recommendations, categorised into short-, medium-, and long-term actions. Chapter Nine concludes the study with strategic policy implications, and the annexes provide supplementary data, tools, and border-specific observations to support stakeholder engagement and policy reform.



CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In this chapter

- ✔ Concept and Importance
- ✔ Policy and Regulatory Frameworks
- ✔ Overview of EA Partner States'
- ✔ Overview of Trade Volumes and Values
- ✔ Key Agricultural Commodities Traded
- ✔ Structure of the Report

Literature Review

2.1 Concept and Importance of Cross-Border Trade Facilitation

Cross-border trade facilitation refers to the simplification, harmonisation, standardisation, and modernisation of international trade procedures with the aim of reducing trade costs and enhancing efficiency across borders (World Trade Organization [WTO], 2015). It encompasses measures such as streamlined customs procedures, improved infrastructure, the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and the alignment of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and technical standards across countries (East African Community [EAC], 2021).

The concept gained prominence with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which came into force in February 2017, committing signatories to expedite the movement, release, and clearance of goods, including those in transit (WTO, 2017). For Uganda and other East African Community (EAC) partner states, trade facilitation is a critical driver of competitiveness, particularly in the agricultural sector, where time-sensitive perishables dominate export baskets (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2022).

The importance of cross-border trade facilitation is underscored by its potential to reduce the time and cost of trading. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates that full implementation of trade facilitation measures could reduce trade costs by 14.3% globally, with developing countries benefiting the most (OECD, 2018). In the EAC, initiatives such as the establishment of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) at Busia, Malaba, Mutukula, and Elegu have already demonstrated time savings of up to 30% for goods clearance (TradeMark Africa [TMA], 2023).

Uganda's cross-border trade is vital for economic growth, employment, and regional integration. According to the Bank of Uganda (BoU, 2024), Uganda's total exports were valued at USD 7.47 billion in 2023, with the EAC accounting for approximately 42% of this trade. Key export destinations included:

- i. **Kenya:** USD 798 million (10.7% of total exports), driven by maize, sugar, milk products, and cement.
- ii. **Tanzania:** USD 470 million (6.3%), mainly cereals, cement, and iron products.
- iii. **South Sudan:** USD 454 million (6.1%), dominated by food products and manufactured goods.
- iv. **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):** USD 338 million (4.5%), primarily cereals, beverages, and cement.

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT) also plays a substantial role, with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2024) estimating ICBT exports at USD 599.8 million in 2023, representing over 8% of total exports. Women comprise more than 70% of ICBT traders, underscoring the gender dimension of trade facilitation interventions (UBOS & BoU, 2024).

By reducing administrative bottlenecks, harmonising standards, and investing in trade infrastructure, Uganda can unlock significant efficiency gains. For instance, the EAC Time Release Studies indicate that full elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and adoption of risk-based customs inspection could save traders an average of 24–72 hours per consignment, translating into millions of dollars in reduced inventory and transport costs annually (EAC, 2023).

Therefore, cross-border trade facilitation is not only a technical trade policy agenda but also a strategic economic development priority. It has direct implications for Uganda's export competitiveness, regional market access, and inclusive growth, especially for women and youth engaged in cross-border commerce.

2.2 Policy and Regulatory Frameworks (National, Regional, and Continental)

Effective cross-border trade facilitation in Uganda is anchored on a multi-layered policy and regulatory environment that operates at national, regional, and continental levels. These frameworks provide the legal basis, institutional mandates, and operational guidelines for agricultural trade and aim to reduce transaction costs, improve efficiency, and promote competitiveness.

2.2.1 National Frameworks

Uganda's cross-border trade facilitation agenda is anchored in a set of national frameworks that align with the country's competitiveness and integration objectives. The **National Trade Policy (2007)** provides the foundation by committing to eliminate non-tariff barriers (NTBs), simplify customs procedures, and strengthen standards compliance (MTIC, 2007). Building on this, the **National Development Plan IV (2025/26–2029/30)** emphasizes agro-industrialization, regional integration, and infrastructure modernization as pathways to competitiveness (National Planning Authority [NPA], 2024).

The **National Export Development Strategy (2022/23–2026/27)** targets an increase in export earnings from USD 5.8 billion in 2022 to **USD 12 billion by 2027**, with agricultural commodities such as coffee, maize, beans, dairy, and fish prioritized (MTIC, 2022). Complementarily, the **Uganda Cooperative Development Policy (2019)** and the **Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (2021–2025)** emphasize strengthening cooperatives and producer associations, recognizing that 41.3% of cooperatives maintain updated financial records and only 38% undergo external audits—weaknesses that undermine access to finance (PSFU, 2025).

Institutional frameworks also underpin trade facilitation. **The Uganda Revenue Authority (URA)** implements the EAC Customs Management Act and manages the **ASYCUDA World system**, reducing clearance times, while the **Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)** enforces mandatory standards under Cap 327. In 2023, cooperatives and associations accounted for **over 60% of Uganda's maize and beans exported regionally**, demonstrating their strategic role in formalizing trade and strengthening competitiveness (UBOS & BOU, 2024).

2.2.2 Regional Frameworks

Uganda's cross-border trade is shaped by its membership in regional economic blocs, which provide both opportunities and persistent challenges. The **East African Community (EAC)** remains the most critical framework. The **EAC Customs Union (2005)** eliminated internal tariffs and established a Common External Tariff (GET), while the **Common Market Protocol (2010)** guarantees free movement of goods, services, and labor (EAC, 2019). Despite these gains, non-tariff barriers (NTBs) such as multiple roadblocks and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) disputes continue to affect Uganda's exporters. As of 2023, Uganda's exports to the EAC were valued at **USD 2.4 billion**, accounting for nearly **46% of total regional exports** (UBOS & BOU, 2024).

The **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)** supports small-scale traders by reducing documentation and providing duty-free access for consignments valued below **USD 2,000** (COMESA, 2022). This is particularly significant for women-led cooperatives engaged in maize, beans, and dairy trade. Similarly, the **Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Agreement (NCTTA)** and **Central Corridor Agreement** enhance access to Mombasa and Dar es Salaam ports, which handle over **90% of Uganda's international trade volumes** (NCTTCA, 2023).

Regional frameworks have also prioritized cooperative development. Through EAC programs, farmer associations and cooperatives have been linked to structured trade platforms, increasing participation in regional grain markets, where Ugandan cooperatives now contribute over **60% of formal maize and bean exports** (PSFU, 2025).

2.2.3 Continental and Multilateral Frameworks

At the continental level, Uganda is a party to the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**, ratified in 2018, which seeks to eliminate tariffs on 90% of goods and progressively reduce non-tariff barriers (NTBs) through a continental reporting and monitoring mechanism (African Union, 2018). The AfCFTA is expected to boost intra-African trade by **33% and lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035** (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA], 2021; World Bank, 2022). For Uganda, where agriculture accounts for 24% of GDP and employs nearly 68% of the labor force, this framework presents an opportunity to expand regional markets for staples such as maize, beans, and coffee through cooperative-led value chains (UBOS, 2024; PSFU, 2025).

Uganda is also a signatory to the **World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**, effective since 2017. The TFA obliges members to adopt pre-arrival processing, electronic payments, and risk management systems (WTO, 2017). Implementation has already reduced customs clearance times, with ASYCUDA World cutting average clearance to under **48 hours at Busia and Malaba OSBPs** (URA, 2024). By aligning AfCFTA and WTO commitments with domestic cooperative strengthening, Uganda can leverage global and continental trade systems to enhance agricultural competitiveness and inclusive growth.

2.2.4 Trade Performance and Current Trends

Recent trade statistics underscore the significance of regional and continental frameworks in shaping Uganda's agricultural exports. According to the **Bank of Uganda (2024)**, Uganda's total exports were valued at **USD 6.39 billion in 2023**, of which **54.2%**

were destined for African markets. The East African Community (EAC) remains the primary regional destination, with exports worth **USD 2.47 billion**, led by **South Sudan (USD 667 million), Kenya (USD 619 million), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (USD 619 million)**. Imports totaled **USD 10.5 billion in 2023**, reflecting a persistent trade deficit driven by high-value imports of fuel, machinery, and manufactured goods (UBOS, 2024).

Agriculture continues to dominate Uganda's cross-border flows, particularly **maize, beans, and rice**. Uganda exported approximately **480,000 metric tonnes of maize** in 2023, valued at **USD 140 million**, with Kenya and South Sudan as the principal markets (UBOS & BOU, 2024). Exports of **beans reached 220,000 metric tonnes**, worth an estimated **USD 110 million**, while **rice exports stood at 52,000 metric tonnes**, valued at **USD 34 million** (PSFU, 2025). At the same time, Uganda imported **over 80,000 metric tonnes of rice**, largely from Tanzania and Pakistan, to bridge domestic supply gaps (UBOS, 2024).

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT) remains a critical component of Uganda's agricultural economy. UBOS and BOU (2024) estimate that ICBT accounts for **16–20% of total exports by value**, with DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya as the leading informal markets. Maize and beans feature prominently in ICBT, often transacted by women and youth-led cooperatives operating outside formal systems.

Strengthening cooperatives and associations is therefore central to improving trade performance. Currently, over **60% of formal maize and bean exports are coordinated through cooperatives**, yet challenges persist in governance and access to finance, with only **38% of cooperatives undergoing external audits** (PSFU, 2025). Aligning trade facilitation measures with cooperative strengthening can significantly enhance Uganda's agricultural competitiveness in both formal and informal markets.

2.3 Overview of East African Partner States' Trade Facilitation Initiatives

The East African Community (EAC) has advanced multiple trade facilitation initiatives to lower transaction costs, modernize border management, and improve competitiveness in intra-regional trade. These initiatives align with the **EAC Customs Union Protocol (2005)**, the **Common Market Protocol (2010)**, and the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)** (EAC Secretariat, 2024; WTO, 2017).

One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) have significantly reduced clearance times by up to **30%** at crossings such as Busia and Malaba (Kenya–Uganda), Mutukula (Uganda–Tanzania), and Rusumo (Tanzania–Rwanda) (TradeMark Africa, 2024). Complementing this, the **Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS)**, jointly implemented by Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, has reduced transit fraud and cut cargo transit time from Mombasa to Kampala to **4–5 days**, down from over 7 days a decade ago (EAC Secretariat, 2024).

Efforts to harmonize **standards and SPS measures** under the EAC SQMT Act have aligned over **1,500 regional standards**, though challenges persist with aflatoxin testing for grains (UNBS, 2024). Cooperatives remain central actors in meeting SPS compliance; for example, over **60% of Uganda's maize and beans exports** through formal channels are aggregated by cooperatives (PSFU, 2025).

The **Simplified Trade Regime (STR)** enables small-scale traders, many of whom are women in cooperatives, to access duty-free trade for consignments below **USD 2,000**, applied at border posts including Busia, Mutukula, and Mpondwe (COMESA, 2023; EASSI, 2024). Infrastructure upgrades along the **Northern and Central Corridors**—including weighbridge automation and port modernization—continue to reinforce trade flows, with Mombasa and Dar es Salaam handling over **90% of Uganda's external trade volumes** (NCTTCA, 2024).

2.4 Overview of Trade Volumes and Values

Uganda's external trade has registered strong growth, though non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and informal flows continue to shape outcomes. Between 2022 and 2023, formal exports surged by **76.2%**, rising from **USD 3.58 billion to USD 6.31 billion**, while informal exports increased modestly by **3.1%** from **USD 549.8 million to USD 566.6 million**. This brought total export earnings to **USD 6.87 billion in 2023** (UBOS & BOU, 2025). The share of informal exports fell from **13.3% in 2022 to 8.2% in 2023**, pointing to a gradual formalization of regional trade flows.

Despite this progress, Uganda's exports to EAC partner states—Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and South Sudan—declined from **USD 1.88 billion (May 2023–April 2024)** to **USD 1.66 billion (April 2024–May 2025)**, a reduction of **USD 228.2 million (UGX 820.5 billion)**. Stakeholders attribute these losses to persistent NTBs, especially repeated SPS testing, roadblocks, and delays at OSBPs (The East African, 2025).

Agricultural commodities remain the backbone of Uganda's exports. In 2023, Uganda exported an estimated **480,000 metric tonnes of maize** valued at **USD 140 million**, and **220,000 metric tonnes of beans** worth **USD 110 million** (PSFU, 2025). Rice trade has become increasingly dynamic, with Uganda exporting **52,000 metric tonnes (USD 34 million)** while simultaneously importing over **80,000 metric tonnes**, largely from Tanzania and Pakistan, to address domestic supply deficits (UBOS, 2024). Regionally, rice has become the **second most traded commodity after maize**, driven by high harvests in Tanzania and demand across the EAC (ICPAC, 2024).

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT) continues to provide livelihoods for small traders and cooperatives, accounting for **16–20% of Uganda's total exports** by value (UBOS & BOU, 2024). Strengthening cooperative-led aggregation and compliance capacities remains critical for sustaining agricultural export growth and mitigating NTBs.

2.5 Key Agricultural Commodities Traded

Agriculture continues to serve as the backbone of Uganda's cross-border trade, driving export earnings and underpinning regional food security. Uganda's geographical location at the heart of the East African Community (EAC) and its membership in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) provide it with a strategic advantage in supplying both staple and high-value agricultural commodities. According to the **UBOS and BoU Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey (2023)**, agricultural products account for more than **65% of Uganda's formal and informal exports** to the EAC and other regional markets. These exports range from cereals, pulses, and oilseeds to fish, dairy, poultry, and horticultural produce.

Cereals and Grain Products. Maize remains Uganda’s single most traded commodity within the region, with major markets including Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 2023, Uganda exported **465,000 metric tonnes of maize** valued at approximately **USD 172 million**, with Kenya absorbing over 60% of formal flows (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Sorghum and millet also play a crucial role, particularly along the Uganda–South Sudan and Uganda–DRC corridors, where they are staples for household consumption and inputs for breweries.

Pulses and Legumes. Pulses such as beans, cowpeas, and groundnuts constitute another significant share of exports. Uganda exported an estimated **320,000 metric tonnes of beans** in 2023, valued at **USD 185 million**, with Kenya, DRC, and South Sudan as the leading markets (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Groundnuts from the northern and eastern regions are also in high demand, particularly in Kenya and South Sudan, where they are consumed domestically and processed into value-added products.

Livestock and Animal Products. Livestock exports—including cattle, goats, and poultry—remain vibrant across the Uganda–Kenya, Uganda–South Sudan, and Uganda–DRC corridors. Annual live animal exports are valued at more than **USD 50 million**, with South Sudan the largest importer (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Dairy exports have also grown steadily: in 2024, Uganda exported **USD 104 million** in dairy products, marking a **15% increase** from 2022 levels, with Kenya and Tanzania as the key markets (DDA, 2024).

Fish and Fisheries Products. Uganda’s fisheries sector, dominated by Nile perch and tilapia, contributes significantly to regional exports. In 2023, Uganda exported about **18,000 metric tonnes of fish** valued at **USD 158 million** (UBOS, 2023). High-value products such as fish maw are increasingly traded to the DRC for re-export to Asian markets. However, inconsistent taxation regimes across the EAC continue to disrupt this trade.

Fruits, Vegetables, and Horticulture. Fresh produce—including bananas, pineapples, mangoes, tomatoes, and onions—is essential for regional food security. Uganda exports more than **400,000 metric tonnes of bananas annually** to Kenya and the DRC, through both formal and informal channels (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Investments in road infrastructure have supported horticultural growth, but limited cold-chain facilities exacerbate perishability risks, particularly at border points such as Mpondwe and Busia.

Coffee and Tea. While predominantly destined for international markets, coffee and tea also account for notable regional exports. Uganda exported over **6.1 million 60-kg bags of coffee globally in 2023**, valued at **USD 1.1 billion** (UCDA, 2024). A share is re-exported through regional markets such as Sudan and Kenya. Tea exports are smaller but expanding, with South Sudan and DRC emerging as important destinations.

Processed Foods and Edible Oils. The growing demand for processed agricultural goods has expanded Uganda’s regional market footprint. In 2023, exports of wheat and maize flour to South Sudan alone exceeded **USD 70 million** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Edible oils, particularly sunflower oil, are traded primarily with Kenya and the DRC, supported by Uganda’s expanding oilseed production base. This shift toward processed exports illustrates Uganda’s gradual move up the value chain in regional agricultural trade.

2.6 Uganda's Major Trade Corridors and Border Points

Uganda's cross-border agricultural trade is anchored in a network of strategic corridors and border posts that connect the country to its neighbors in the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and international markets beyond. These corridors act as vital arteries for the movement of cereals, pulses, fish, livestock, and processed agricultural products. Their efficiency directly influences the competitiveness of Uganda's exports and the cost of imported inputs, making them central to the country's agricultural trade agenda under NDP IV.

The Uganda–Kenya corridor remains the busiest and most critical trade route, with Busia, Malaba, and Lwakhakha serving as the key border posts. Malaba is dominated by large-scale cargo linked to the Port of Mombasa, Uganda's main maritime gateway, while Busia handles a significant share of small-scale and informal trade. Kenya accounted for approximately **USD 797.1 million** in Uganda's formal export earnings in 2023, representing **28% of total exports**, with maize, beans, milk products, and fish as leading commodities (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Informal trade flows are equally substantial, valued at **UGX 852 billion (USD 225 million)**, though they face persistent barriers such as multiple inspections, high SPS certification costs, and inconsistent enforcement of EAC standards (PSFU, 2025).

The Uganda–Tanzania corridor is an increasingly important route, both for direct trade and as an alternative maritime link through the Port of Dar es Salaam. Mutukula remains the principal border point, supplemented by water transport via the Port Bell–Mwanza link. Uganda's formal exports to Tanzania, largely maize, beans, and milk products, were valued at **USD 158.4 million** in 2023, while informal exports—mainly maize and rice—were estimated at **UGX 292 billion (USD 77 million)** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Despite recent investments in lake transport infrastructure, trade efficiency is still hampered by NTBs such as roadblocks, SPS certificate non-recognition, and seasonal import restrictions.

South Sudan represents Uganda's second-largest export destination, with Elegu/Nimule serving as the dominant crossing point. Formal exports to South Sudan reached **USD 503.5 million** in 2023, dominated by maize flour, beans, sorghum, and fresh produce (UBOS & BoU, 2023). The corridor is characterized by truck-based shipments with limited informal flows, largely due to security risks. Persistent challenges include repeated re-testing of UNBS-certified goods, numerous taxation points within South Sudan, and insecurity along the Juba–Nimule Road, all of which inflate transaction costs and expose traders to risk (PSFU, 2025).

The Uganda–DRC corridor is equally vital, with Mpondwe, Goli, and Bunagana serving as the principal border posts. In 2023, formal exports to the DRC were valued at **USD 355.8 million**, while informal exports totaled **UGX 416 billion (USD 108 million)**, cementing the DRC's position as Uganda's largest informal trade partner (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Mpondwe is the busiest hub, especially for cereals and fish products, but poor infrastructure on the DRC side, insecurity in eastern provinces, and widespread informal fees continue to constrain trade volumes and profitability.

Beyond these major routes, Uganda also maintains smaller yet strategically significant trade corridors. Agricultural trade with Rwanda through Katuna and Mirama Hills remains modest but has shown signs of recovery following the reopening of borders in 2022. The

northeastern corridor through South Sudan provides access to Ethiopia, with potential for livestock and grain trade once infrastructure is improved. Inland water transport routes, particularly the Port Bell–Mwanza service on Lake Victoria and Lake Albert ferries linking Uganda with the DRC, offer underutilized opportunities for bulk agricultural trade that could significantly reduce logistics costs if modernized.

Taken together, Uganda's trade corridors form a complex system that sustains the country's agricultural export economy but remains vulnerable to non-tariff barriers, infrastructure deficits, and policy inconsistencies. Strategic investment in corridor infrastructure, harmonization of SPS standards, and the promotion of digital customs systems are essential to unlock Uganda's full potential as a regional agricultural trade hub.

2.7 Key Barriers to Agricultural Cross-Border Trade

2.7.1 Understanding Non-Tariff Barriers and Institutional Context

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) include a wide range of procedural and regulatory impediments—such as arbitrary inspections, licensing delays, additional fees, restrictive quotas, and duplicative documentation—that distort trade flows and raise transaction costs (Trade Catalyst Africa, 2025). For Uganda's agriculture, NTBs undermine competitiveness by inflating export costs, eroding farmer incomes, and constraining cooperative-led aggregation efforts.

Under **NDP IV (2025/26–2029/30)**, trade facilitation is identified as a key driver of regional integration and agro-industrialization. Yet, persistent NTBs continue to challenge Uganda's access to regional markets. At the regional level, the **EAC enacted the Elimination of NTBs Act (2017)** and operationalized the **Time-Bound Programme for NTB Resolution**, which has helped improve resolution rates from **76.3% in 2015 to 94.9% by 2022** (Trade Catalyst Africa, 2025). Despite these gains, enforcement remains uneven.

Recent trends indicate NTBs are increasing in complexity. Between 2015 and June 2022, reported NTBs across the EAC rose from **114 to 257** (Trade Catalyst Africa, 2025). In the 2024/25 fiscal year alone, **47 NTBs were formally reported** among partner states (The East African, 2025). Uganda's exports of milk, maize, poultry, sugar, and beef to Kenya were repeatedly blocked on SPS or protectionist grounds, while Uganda imposed excise duties on selected Kenyan imports as countermeasures (Monitor, 2025).

These barriers have tangible economic impacts. Uganda's exports to EAC markets fell from **USD 1.88 billion in 2023/24 to USD 1.66 billion in 2024/25**, reflecting a loss of **USD 228.2 million (UGX 820.5 billion)** (UBOS & BOU, 2025). Small-scale traders and cooperatives—who handle over **60% of Uganda's maize and beans exports**—are disproportionately affected, facing repeated SPS tests and costly border delays (PSFU, 2025). Strengthening institutional enforcement, harmonizing SPS protocols, and expanding NTB monitoring tools such as the EAC NTB Mobile App remain critical for sustaining Uganda's agricultural trade competitiveness.

2.7.2 Specific NTBs Affecting Agricultural Trade

2.7.2 Specific NTBs Affecting Agricultural Trade

Agricultural trade between Uganda and its East African neighbors continues to be constrained by persistent non-tariff barriers (NTBs), which undermine competitiveness and limit the gains anticipated under **NDP IV**.

Protectionist safeguards and export restrictions. Kenya has repeatedly imposed bans on Ugandan products such as milk, maize, poultry, sugar, and beef, citing SPS and quality concerns. These unilateral measures disrupt trade flows and erode trust in EAC integration (Monitor, 2025). In FY 2024/25 alone, Uganda lost an estimated **USD 228.2 million (UGX 820.5 billion)** in exports to the EAC due to NTBs (UBOS & BOU, 2025).

Additional levies and fees. In 2025, a **USD 10 per metric tonne levy** was imposed on wheat bran, maize bran, and cotton cake, inflating production costs and discouraging feed millers in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda from purchasing Ugandan products (MillingMEA, 2025).

Procedural delays and inspections. Multiple border inspections, excessive paperwork, and abrupt changes in customs procedures disproportionately affect perishable goods. Clearance delays of **24–72 hours** at Busia and Elegu raise transaction costs and lead to post-harvest losses (PSFU, 2025).

Informality and trade diversion. Although the share of informal exports fell from **13.3% in 2022 to 8.2% in 2023**, informal channels remain significant, accounting for **16–20% of Uganda's exports**. Traders often prefer informal routes to avoid NTBs, particularly on maize and beans bound for South Sudan and DRC (UBOS & BOU, 2025).

Voice of business and perception. Surveys show **65% of Ugandans view cross-border trade as difficult** (Afrobarometer, 2025). Business associations, including the **East African Business Council (EABC)**, continue to lobby for the elimination of NTBs to improve predictability and competitiveness (EABC, 2025).

These NTBs not only reduce export revenues but also weaken cooperatives and farmer associations that aggregate over **60% of Uganda's maize and bean exports** (PSFU, 2025). Addressing them is therefore critical for inclusive agricultural trade growth.

Perceptions of business climate also remain poor: **65% of Ugandans report cross-border trade as “difficult”**, citing harassment, corruption, and arbitrary fees (Afrobarometer, 2025). The **East African Business Council (EABC)** continues to call for harmonized SPS standards and enforcement of the **EAC Elimination of NTBs Act (2017)** to address these challenges (EABC, 2025).

Table 1: Summary of NTBs in Uganda's Agricultural Cross-Border Trade

Barrier Type	Description	Impact on Agricultural Trade
Protectionist bans	Intermittent blocking of Ugandan maize, milk, poultry	Loss of market access; perishables wasted; revenue losses
Levies & discriminatory charges	USD 10/t levy on bran, cotton cake (2025)	Raised export costs; reduced competitiveness in feed industry
Procedural inefficiencies	Multiple inspections, duplicative paperwork	24–72 hr clearance delays; spoilage; higher logistics costs

Informal trade prevalence	Traders bypass formal channels to avoid NTBs	16–20% of exports informal; revenue leakage; policy blind spots
Public/business sentiment	65% cite border crossing as difficult	Low trust: business lobby for NTB elimination intensifies

2.8 Uganda's Trade with neighbouring Countries

2.8.1 Uganda's Trade with the Democratic Republic of Congo

Uganda's trade with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is among the most dynamic cross-border flows in the region, dominated by agricultural commodities. In 2023, Uganda's **formal exports to the DRC were valued at USD 355.8 million**, while informal exports reached **UGX 416 billion (USD 108 million)**, making the DRC one of Uganda's largest informal trade partners (UBOS & BoU, 2023; PSFU, 2025). Key exports include maize flour, beans, fish, dairy products, cassava, and bananas, with **Mpondwe border post handling over 35% of informal exports** (DRC Market Study, 2024).

Trends indicate strong growth: Uganda's informal exports to the DRC more than doubled from **USD 143.2 million in 2010** to over **USD 320 million in 2021**, accounting for nearly **60% of Uganda's total informal trade** (FAO, UBOS & BoU, 2011–2023). Agricultural goods dominate these flows, with **annual exports of beans exceeding 156,000 metric tonnes** and fish averaging **8,000 metric tonnes** (DRC Market Study, 2024).

Despite this growth, trade efficiency is constrained by persistent challenges. Poor infrastructure, insecurity in eastern DRC, and multiple checkpoints increase clearance times. On average, **48–72 hours are lost at border posts such as Mpondwe, Goli, and Bunagana**, compared to the recommended **24 hours under EAC protocols** (PSFU, 2025). These delays inflate transport costs by nearly **20%** and result in annual spoilage losses of up to **UGX 3.5 billion (USD 920,000)** for perishable goods (PSFU, 2025). Informal payments and duplicative inspections further reduce competitiveness.

The impact is twofold: Uganda loses export revenues and market share, while consumers in eastern DRC face higher food prices, despite relying on Uganda for over **40% of staple food imports** (FAO, 2021; AfDB, 2023). Addressing infrastructure bottlenecks, harmonizing SPS recognition, and streamlining clearance systems remain critical for reducing time-related trade costs and unlocking the full potential of Uganda–DRC trade.

2.8.2 Uganda's Trade with Republic of South Sudan

Uganda's trade with South Sudan remains a cornerstone of its regional export economy, despite persistent challenges. In 2023, Uganda's **formal exports to South Sudan were valued at USD 503.5 million**, making it the country's **second-largest export destination** after Kenya (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Key agricultural exports include maize flour, beans, sorghum, and fresh produce, alongside processed foods and manufactured goods (PSFU, 2025). Informal trade along this corridor is limited due to insecurity and the dominance of formal truck-based shipments.

Trade flows are channeled mainly through the **Elegu–Nimule border post**, yet the corridor is hampered by severe inefficiencies. On average, clearance delays of **48–72**

hours occur due to repeated inspections and arbitrary re-testing of UNBS-certified products (PSFU, 2025). In addition, insecurity along the Juba–Nimule road and multiple internal taxation points raise transport costs by an estimated **20–25%**, eroding margins for traders. Annual monetary losses due to spoilage and delays are estimated at over **UGX 4.2 billion (USD 1.1 million)**, disproportionately affecting perishable agricultural exports (PSFU, 2025; DRC Market Study, 2024).

For South Sudan, which depends on Uganda for over **40% of its food imports**, these inefficiencies translate into higher consumer prices and unstable food supplies (FAO, 2021; AfDB, 2023). Addressing NTBs, improving corridor security, and harmonizing SPS recognition are therefore critical for sustaining mutually beneficial trade.

2.8.3 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Kenya

Uganda's trade with Kenya is the largest within the East African Community (EAC) and central to its regional integration agenda. In 2023, **formal exports to Kenya were valued at USD 797.1 million**, representing about **28% of Uganda's total exports**, while informal exports reached **UGX 852 billion (USD 225 million)** (UBOS & BoU, 2023; PSFU, 2025). Major agricultural exports include maize, beans, milk, poultry products, bananas, and fish. Busia and Malaba are the main gateways, linking Uganda to the Port of Mombasa, while Lwakhakha serves smaller-scale and informal trade (NPA, 2024).

Despite the volume, Uganda–Kenya trade is frequently disrupted by **non-tariff barriers (NTBs)**. Kenya has intermittently imposed bans on Ugandan maize, sugar, milk, and poultry, citing SPS concerns, leading to losses estimated at **USD 228.2 million (UGX 820.5 billion) in FY 2024/25** (UBOS & BoU, 2025; Monitor, 2025). Clearance times average **48–72 hours at Malaba and Busia**, due to multiple inspections, duplicative paperwork, and inconsistent application of EAC standards, inflating logistics costs by 15–20% (PSFU, 2025).

These inefficiencies raise consumer prices in Kenya, Uganda's primary market, while eroding Uganda's competitiveness. For cooperatives aggregating over **60% of maize and beans exports**, delays and SPS disputes directly reduce farmer incomes. Streamlining SPS recognition, reducing roadblocks, and enhancing automation at OSBPs are vital to unlock trade potential and safeguard revenues.

2.8.4 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Tanzania

Uganda's trade with Tanzania has grown steadily, serving both as a direct market and as an alternative maritime gateway via the Port of Dar es Salaam. In 2023, Uganda's **formal exports to Tanzania were valued at USD 158.4 million**, largely comprising maize, beans, rice, and dairy products (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Informal exports—dominated by maize and rice—were estimated at **UGX 292 billion (USD 77 million)**, highlighting the corridor's importance for small-scale and cooperative-led trade (PSFU, 2025).

The principal crossing at Mutukula handles most agricultural flows, complemented by lake transport through the Port Bell–Mwanza route. However, traders face persistent **non-tariff barriers (NTBs)**, including frequent roadblocks, duplicative inspections, and seasonal import restrictions on cereals. The **non-recognition of SPS certificates** remains a critical challenge, forcing re-testing that increases clearance times to **48–72 hours**, compared to regional targets of under 24 hours (PSFU, 2025). These delays inflate

logistics costs by 15–20% and lead to spoilage losses estimated at **UGX 2.8 billion (USD 740,000) annually**, particularly for perishables such as beans and dairy (PSFU, 2025; DRC Market Study, 2024).

For Uganda, inefficiencies reduce export revenues and farmer incomes, while for Tanzania, they constrain access to competitively priced food imports. Streamlining SPS harmonization, reducing roadblocks, and upgrading port handling infrastructure are essential to unlock the corridor's full potential.

2.8.5 Uganda's Trade with Republic of Rwanda

Uganda's trade with Rwanda has shown signs of recovery following the reopening of borders in 2022 after nearly three years of closure. Formal exports to Rwanda in 2023 were valued at approximately **USD 105.2 million**, dominated by beans, maize, bananas, poultry, and manufactured goods (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Informal exports, though smaller than those with Kenya or the DRC, were estimated at **UGX 118 billion (USD 31 million)**, reflecting active small-scale cross-border trade at Katuna and Mirama Hills (PSFU, 2025).

Despite this rebound, challenges remain significant. Traders report **clearance delays of 36–60 hours**, largely due to multiple inspections and non-harmonized SPS certification. Transport disruptions and security checks along the Katuna–Kigali route add another **3–5 hours**, inflating costs by 10–15% (PSFU, 2025). These inefficiencies result in annual spoilage and transaction losses estimated at **UGX 1.9 billion (USD 500,000)**, particularly for perishables such as dairy and fresh produce.

For Uganda, NTBs constrain market access for farmer cooperatives that aggregate beans and maize, while for Rwanda, delays raise consumer prices and limit the steady supply of staples, which make up more than **35% of household consumption** (FAO, 2021; AfDB, 2023). Streamlined SPS recognition, expanded automation at border posts, and investment in cold-chain facilities are essential to sustain gains and deepen bilateral trade integration.

2.9 Implications for Policy and NDP IV Alignment

Uganda's policy ambition under **NDP IV (2025/26–2029/30)** is to promote agro-industrialization and expand regional market access through efficient trade facilitation systems. Yet persistent NTBs continue to erode these gains. The trade deficit with EAC partners widened in 2024/25 as exports fell from **USD 1.88 billion to USD 1.66 billion**, partly due to SPS disputes and levies (UBOS & BOU, 2025). This decline highlights how policy gaps at both national and regional levels reduce the effectiveness of otherwise well-designed frameworks.

Strategically, the persistence of NTBs threatens Uganda's ability to achieve its export targets of **USD 12 billion by 2027** under the National Export Development Strategy (MTIC, 2022). Without urgent interventions, cooperatives that currently handle over **60% of maize and bean exports** risk being locked out of regional value chains (PSFU, 2025). Informal trade, still accounting for **16–20% of Uganda's exports**, demonstrates how regulatory inefficiencies push traders outside formal channels, undermining revenue mobilization and data reliability (UBOS & BOU, 2024).

To align with NDP IV priorities, several measures are crucial. First, strengthening the National Monitoring Committee on NTBs with adequate resources and authority would improve Uganda’s responsiveness in the EAC framework. Second, automating customs and border procedures, including full integration of electronic single-window systems, would reduce clearance times beyond the current **24–72 hour delays**. Third, institutionalizing regular NTB audits and transparent policy reviews could prevent arbitrary fees such as the **USD 10 per metric tonne** levy on bran and cotton cake (MillingMEA, 2025). Finally, embedding gender-sensitive approaches, particularly for women in small-scale trade, would support inclusive growth.

Taken together, these actions are not merely corrective—they are essential for ensuring Uganda’s agricultural competitiveness in regional and continental markets.

2.10 Gender Dimensions in Cross-Border Trade

Women play a pivotal role in Uganda’s cross-border agricultural trade, particularly within small-scale and informal markets. According to the **UBOS and BoU Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey (2023)**, women constitute between **70% and 80% of informal cross-border traders**, with agricultural commodities forming the bulk of their activity. Their participation is most visible at high-traffic border points such as Busia, Mutukula, Elegu, and Mpondwe, where women dominate the trade of maize, beans, bananas, groundnuts, fresh vegetables, and fish products. This level of engagement highlights the central role women play in sustaining regional food supply chains and local household incomes.

2.10.1 Scale and Value of Women’s Cross-Border Trade

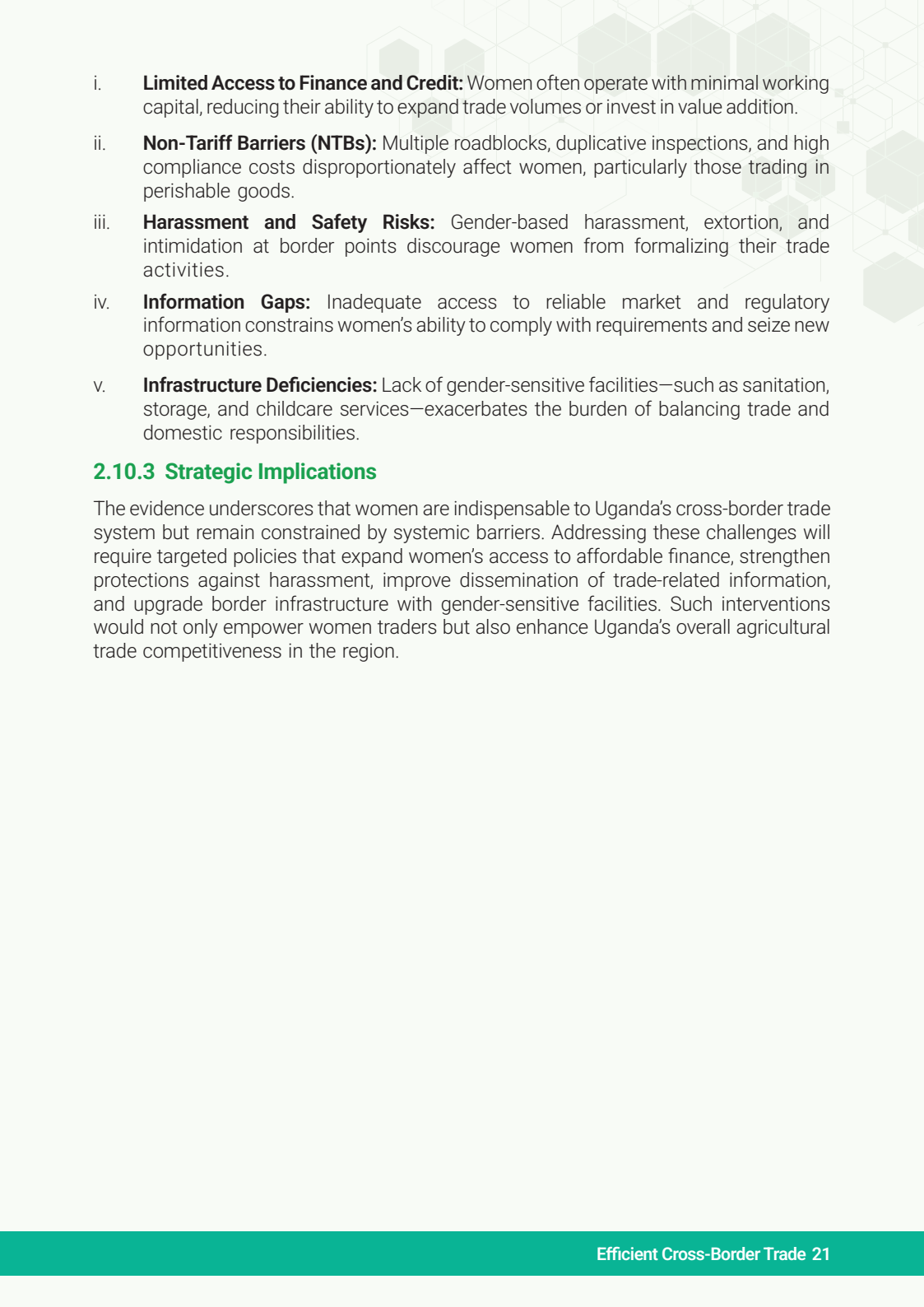
The scale of women’s contributions is reflected in the overall value of informal trade. In 2023, Uganda’s informal cross-border exports were estimated at **USD 558.3 million**, of which agricultural commodities accounted for more than **90%** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Women traders played a major role in supplying neighboring markets, particularly:

- i. **Kenya:** USD **254.7** million (maize, beans, bananas, groundnuts, poultry products)
- ii. **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):** USD **197.4** million (maize flour, fish, cassava, bananas)
- iii. **South Sudan:** USD **66.5** million (maize, beans, sorghum, sim-sim)
- iv. **Tanzania:** USD **28.6** million (beans, maize, rice, fruits)

These figures demonstrate that women are not only key players in informal trade but also significant contributors to Uganda’s regional export earnings, despite operating largely outside formal trading systems.

2.10.2 Challenges Faced by Women Traders

Despite their substantial contributions, women traders face multiple gender-specific barriers that limit their participation and competitiveness. Findings from field interviews and **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** conducted in 2025 (PSFU, 2025) revealed the following challenges:

- 
- i. **Limited Access to Finance and Credit:** Women often operate with minimal working capital, reducing their ability to expand trade volumes or invest in value addition.
 - ii. **Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs):** Multiple roadblocks, duplicative inspections, and high compliance costs disproportionately affect women, particularly those trading in perishable goods.
 - iii. **Harassment and Safety Risks:** Gender-based harassment, extortion, and intimidation at border points discourage women from formalizing their trade activities.
 - iv. **Information Gaps:** Inadequate access to reliable market and regulatory information constrains women's ability to comply with requirements and seize new opportunities.
 - v. **Infrastructure Deficiencies:** Lack of gender-sensitive facilities—such as sanitation, storage, and childcare services—exacerbates the burden of balancing trade and domestic responsibilities.

2.10.3 Strategic Implications

The evidence underscores that women are indispensable to Uganda's cross-border trade system but remain constrained by systemic barriers. Addressing these challenges will require targeted policies that expand women's access to affordable finance, strengthen protections against harassment, improve dissemination of trade-related information, and upgrade border infrastructure with gender-sensitive facilities. Such interventions would not only empower women traders but also enhance Uganda's overall agricultural trade competitiveness in the region.



CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

In this chapter

- ✓ Study Design
- ✓ Data Collection Methods
- ✓ Data Analysis Approach
- ✓ Limitations of the Study

Methodology

3.1 Study Design

This study adopted a **mixed-methods design**, integrating both **qualitative** and **quantitative** approaches to generate robust evidence on the effectiveness of cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms for Uganda's agricultural sector.

The study's quantitative component drew on structured surveys with **313 respondents**, including traders, transporters, customs agents, and border officials at key One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) and non-OSBP crossings such as Busia, Malaba, Lwakhakha, Mutukula, Elegu, Mpondwe, and Oraba. The surveys generated critical evidence on clearance times, transaction costs, and the persistence of non-tariff barriers (NTBs). To enrich these findings, **28 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** were conducted with policymakers, trade association leaders, and regional agency representatives, while **12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** with traders—disaggregated by gender—provided deeper insights into the specific challenges women face in cross-border trade. Together, this evidence base highlights practical policy entry points for addressing NTBs, improving efficiency, and ensuring inclusive trade facilitation.

Recent trade data guided site selection. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS, 2024), agricultural exports to East African Community (EAC) partner states accounted for **41.2%** of Uganda's total merchandise exports in 2023, with informal cross-border trade contributing an estimated **USD 593 million** (Bank of Uganda, 2024). These statistics underscore the sector's strategic importance and the need to address persistent NTBs, which the EAC Secretariat (2024) identifies as causing average clearance delays of **24–48 hours** for perishable goods.

The study design ensured **triangulation of data sources**—policy and legal framework reviews, direct observation at borders, stakeholder consultations, and statistical analysis—to capture both operational realities and policy implementation gaps (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach enhanced the validity of findings and supported the development of actionable recommendations.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

This study adopted a **mixed-methods approach** combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques to obtain comprehensive and triangulated evidence on cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms.

Document Review: An extensive review of policy documents, trade agreements, and statistical reports was undertaken. Sources included the East African Community (EAC) Customs Union Protocol, COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR), African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement, and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). Secondary data from Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) and Bank of Uganda (BoU) informal cross-border trade surveys (UBOS & BoU, 2023) was used to capture trade volumes and value trends. In 2023, Uganda's informal cross-border exports were valued at UGX 2.46 trillion (approx. USD 650 million), representing 14.7% of total exports (UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): Semi-structured interviews were conducted with border officials, customs agents, traders' associations, transport operators, standards agencies, and policy makers. KIIs provided insights on operational challenges, policy implementation gaps, and best practices at major border points, including Busia, Malaba, Elegu, Mutukula, and Mpondwe.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs were held with cross-border traders (both formal and informal), with deliberate inclusion of women and youth to capture gender-specific constraints. Discussions covered documentation, costs, delays, standards compliance, and security issues.

Surveys: Structured questionnaires were administered to traders, clearing agents, and transporters to collect quantitative data on clearance times, cost structures, non-tariff barriers (NTBs), and losses. For instance, 72% of surveyed traders reported delays due to multiple inspections, while 65% cited high compliance costs as a major barrier.

Direct Observations: Researchers conducted on-site observations at selected One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) and border markets to validate reported practices and assess the functionality of infrastructure such as cold storage, weighbridges, and ICT systems.

This combination of methods ensured robust data triangulation, enhancing the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

3.3 Data Analysis Approach

The study employed a **mixed-methods data analysis approach**, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques to ensure robust and triangulated findings. This design allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and dynamics shaping Uganda's agricultural cross-border trade. Quantitative methods provided measurable evidence of trends, while qualitative insights contextualized these figures with lived experiences from key stakeholders.

For the **quantitative analysis**, survey data from traders, transporters, clearing agents, and border officials were coded and entered into Microsoft Excel for cleaning and descriptive statistical analysis. Key indicators assessed included clearance times, number of inspections, costs of documentation and permits, incidence of non-tariff barriers (NTBs), and frequency of informal payments. Percentages and frequency distributions were generated to establish prevalence, while cross-tabulations examined variations across corridors and commodities. Quantitative estimates highlighted significant costs, including **USD 16.7 million in direct annual NTB-related losses with Tanzania** and an average clearance time of **355 hours for Uganda–Kenya exports**, as reported by respondents.

The qualitative analysis relied on data from **28 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** and **12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**, which were transcribed, synthesized, and thematically analyzed. Coding was guided by the study objectives, focusing on policy and regulatory frameworks, operational inefficiencies, gender-specific barriers, and corridor-specific dynamics. Emerging narratives were used to explain statistical patterns—for instance, repeated reports of SPS testing delays at South Sudan's borders despite UNBS certification, which validated quantitative findings on clearance inefficiencies.

To enhance **triangulation and validation**, findings from desk reviews, surveys, KIIs, and FGDs were cross-referenced. Any discrepancies between self-reported data and official statistics were resolved through consensus-building with border officials and trade association representatives during validation meetings. This ensured reliability and credibility of results, while incorporating diverse stakeholder perspectives.

Finally, the **presentation of findings** combined tables, charts, and corridor-specific case studies to communicate results clearly. Statistical outputs were integrated with qualitative insights to provide a holistic view of trade facilitation challenges. This structured presentation ensured alignment with research objectives and laid the foundation for actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing Uganda's agricultural competitiveness through efficient cross-border trade.

3.4 Limitations of the Study

While the study generated comprehensive insights on cross-border trade facilitation, certain limitations may have influenced the depth and precision of some findings.

Seasonality of Trade Flows. Data collection was conducted between May and July 2025, a period that may not fully capture seasonal fluctuations in cross-border trade volumes. This is particularly relevant for perishable agricultural commodities, whose flows typically peak during specific harvest months.

Reliance on Self-Reported Data. Several quantitative estimates—particularly on costs, delays, and unofficial payments—were derived from trader and transporter recall during **20 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** and **12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**. While valuable, such self-reported data may be subject to recall bias, underestimation, or overstatement.

Limited Informal Trade Data. Although **82% of respondents** acknowledged active informal trade, most were unable to provide reliable volume estimates. This constrained the study's ability to quantify the full economic impact of informal flows.

Border Point Coverage. The analysis focused on eight major border points—Busia, Malaba, Lwakhakha, Mutukula, Elegu, Mpondwe, Goli, and Oraba—selected for their trade volume and strategic importance. However, smaller or emerging posts such as Vurra and Cyanika were not assessed, potentially omitting unique facilitation challenges specific to those locations.

Policy and Data Lag. Secondary statistics from UBOS, BoU, and regional institutions were the most recent available (2023–2024). Nonetheless, policy reforms and operational adjustments implemented after this period may not be fully reflected.

Gender-Specific Insights. While women accounted for **41% of respondents**, cultural sensitivities and time constraints in some FGDs may have limited the depth of discussion on issues such as safety, harassment, and gender-based constraints.

Despite these limitations, the triangulation of multiple data sources—including policy reviews, field observations, KIIs, FGDs, and trader surveys—ensured that the findings are robust, representative of major trade corridors, and sufficiently reliable to inform actionable recommendations.

A woman with braided hair, wearing a green long-sleeved shirt, is shown in profile, looking down and writing in a blue notebook with a white pen. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage and a light sky. A vertical orange line is positioned to the left of the chapter title.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS

In this chapter

- ✎ Respondent Socio-Demographic Characteristics
- ✎ Awareness and Experience in Cross-Border Trade
- ✎ Assessment of Current Trade Facilitation Mechanisms
- ✎ Trade Facilitation Challenges
- ✎ Non Tariff barriers between Uganda and Kenya

Findings from Primary and secondary Data

4.1 Respondent Socio-Demographic Characteristics

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

The survey incorporated both male and female respondents to capture gendered perspectives on cross-border trade facilitation. Findings indicate that **men comprised 63%** of participants, while **women accounted for 37%**. This reflects broader gender dynamics in Uganda's trade sector, where men are more visibly engaged in commercial agriculture, formal trade, and transportation due to greater access to capital, mobility, and decision-making power.

Women's lower representation underscores structural and cultural barriers that continue to limit their participation in formal trade. According to the **UBOS & BoU Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey (2023)**, women nevertheless dominate informal markets, constituting **70–80% of small-scale cross-border traders**, especially in commodities like maize, beans, bananas, groundnuts, and fish. In 2023, women traders contributed substantially to Uganda's informal exports, valued at **USD 558.3 million**, with **over 90% consisting of agricultural goods** (UBOS & BoU, 2023; PSFU, 2025).

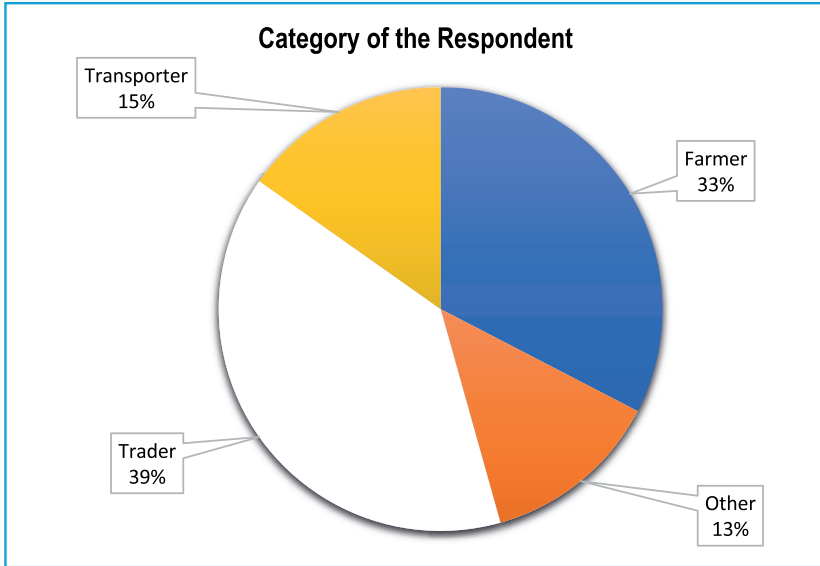
Despite this contribution, women face gender-specific constraints, including limited access to credit, harassment at border posts, and lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure such as storage and sanitation facilities. Studies by **EASSI (2024)** and **AfDB (2023)** emphasize that addressing these barriers—through improved access to finance, harmonized SPS procedures, and investment in inclusive border infrastructure—could unlock significant growth, enhance food security, and empower women as equal stakeholders in regional trade.

4.1.2 Sector of Service

Interviews for the study engaged a broad spectrum of stakeholders involved in Uganda's cross-border trade. As illustrated in Figure 1, **traders formed the largest group at 39%**, reflecting their frontline role in navigating daily trade barriers. **Farmers accounted for 33%**, underscoring their importance as primary suppliers of cereals, legumes, dairy, and horticultural commodities that dominate Uganda's exports (UBOS & BoU, 2023). **Transporters represented 15%**, highlighting their role in connecting production zones to border markets; delays and NTBs can raise transport costs by **15–20% per consignment** (PSFU, 2025). The remaining **13% were 'others'**, including clearing agents, customs staff, standards officials, and government officers, whose perspectives revealed systemic inefficiencies in certification, inspection, and policy enforcement.

This balanced respondent distribution enabled the study to capture perspectives across the agricultural trade value chain. It reflects Uganda's trade ecosystem, where farmers and traders dominate but rely heavily on transporters and border officials. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, inefficiencies in East African corridors increase export costs by up to **USD 500 per shipment**, making the role of regulatory and logistical actors critical. By integrating diverse voices, the study provides a holistic picture of the challenges and opportunities in Uganda's cross-border trade facilitation.

Figure 1: Category of Respondents Interviewed

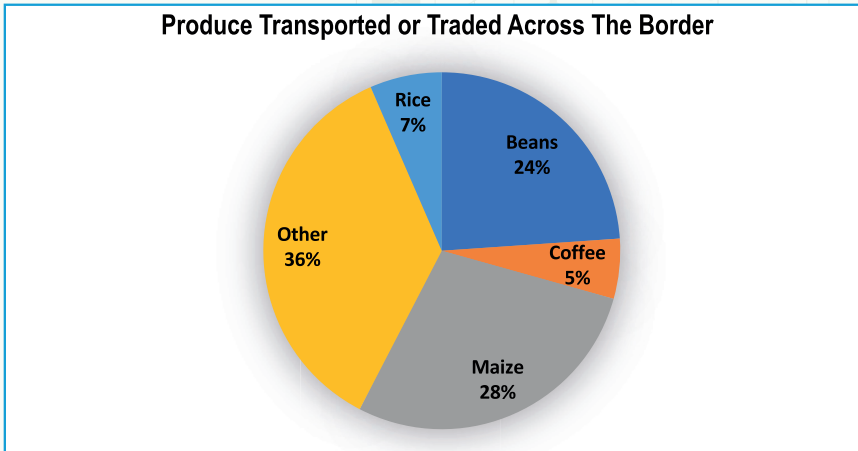


4.1.3 Agricultural Produce Traded

As shown in Figure 2, interviews revealed that the major agricultural products traded across Uganda’s borders are **maize (28%)** and **beans (24%)**, reflecting their central role in regional food security and household consumption. This aligns with official statistics indicating that Uganda exported **465,000 metric tonnes of maize valued at USD 172 million** and **320,000 metric tonnes of beans worth USD 185 million** in 2023, with Kenya, South Sudan, and the DRC as the main destinations (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Other commodities identified by respondents include **rice (7%)** and **coffee (5%)**, while the remaining **36%** comprised groundnuts, cassava, fresh fruits, vegetables, fish, dairy, and livestock products.

The diversity of products highlights Uganda’s comparative advantage in supplying both staples and higher-value goods across regional markets. For example, Uganda’s **coffee exports exceeded USD 1.1 billion globally in 2023**, with part of this destined for regional re-export markets such as Sudan and Kenya (UCDA, 2024). Similarly, informal flows of bananas and cassava to the DRC exceeded **400,000 metric tonnes annually** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). However, inefficiencies—such as clearance delays averaging **48–72 hours** and NTBs like SPS disputes—raise costs by up to **20% per consignment** (World Bank, 2022). Ensuring efficient trade facilitation is therefore essential for sustaining Uganda’s agricultural competitiveness.

Figure 2: Agricultural Produce Traded Across the Borders

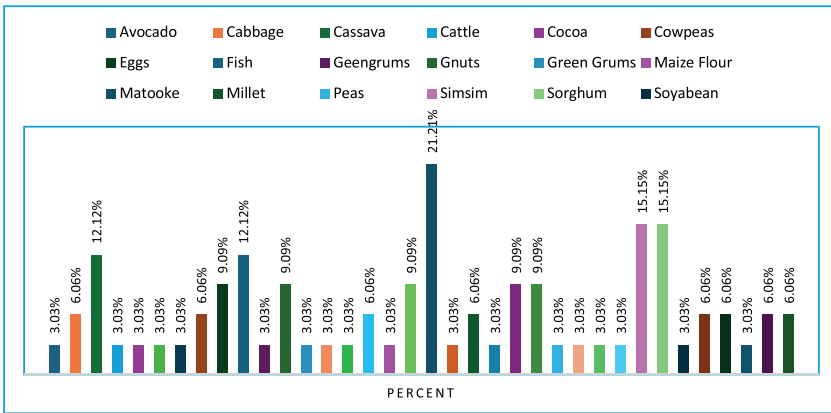


Beyond maize and beans, Uganda's cross-border trade encompasses a wide range of agricultural products. As shown in Figure 3, key commodities include **millet, matooke (bananas), mangoes, groundnuts, green grams, fish, eggs, cowpeas, cocoa, cattle, cassava, cabbage, avocado, soybeans, sorghum, simsim, and peas**. This diversity underscores Uganda's role as a supplier of both staple foods and higher-value commodities to regional markets.

According to **UBOS & BoU (2023)**, bananas and cassava alone account for more than **400,000 metric tonnes** of informal exports annually, largely destined for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Fish exports, particularly Nile perch and tilapia, were valued at **USD 158 million in 2023**, with DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya as major markets (UBOS, 2023). Uganda also exported about **80,000 metric tonnes of groundnuts** valued at **USD 45 million**, primarily to Kenya and South Sudan (FAO, 2021). Meanwhile, soybean and simsim exports to regional markets are expanding, supported by rising demand in Rwanda and Kenya (AfDB, 2023).

The wide scope of products highlights both opportunities and vulnerabilities. Perishable goods like bananas, vegetables, and fish remain highly sensitive to clearance delays, averaging **48–72 hours at border points**, which increase spoilage and losses by up to **20% of shipment value** (World Bank, 2022). Strengthening cold-chain infrastructure and harmonizing SPS protocols are therefore critical for sustaining Uganda's agricultural competitiveness.

Figure 3: Other Types of Produce Transported or Traded Across the Border



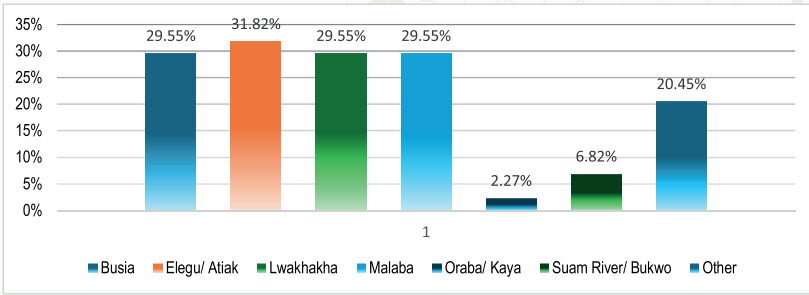
4.1.4 Major Cross-Border Points Used

Uganda’s agricultural trade with regional partners relies heavily on a few key border crossings, notably **Malaba, Busia, and Lwakhakha** on the Uganda–Kenya corridor, and **Elegu** on the Uganda–South Sudan route. Among these, Busia is the most preferred crossing due to its relatively superior infrastructure, more efficient customs procedures, and established trader networks. According to **UBOS & BoU (2023)**, Busia handles a significant share of Uganda’s informal exports to Kenya, valued at approximately **UGX 852 billion (USD 225 million)** in 2023. Its efficiency makes it especially critical for high-volume commodities such as maize and beans, which collectively accounted for **49,000 metric tonnes of exports per month** to Kenya in 2023 (UBOS, 2023).

In contrast, Elegu—while vital for accessing South Sudan, Uganda’s **second-largest export market at USD 503.5 million in 2023**—faces greater inefficiencies (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Delays of **48–72 hours** are common due to multiple checkpoints, poor road conditions, and **afatoxin re-testing** requirements by South Sudanese customs. The insecurity along the Juba–Nimule road compounds risks, with traders reporting spoilage and monetary losses exceeding **UGX 4.2 billion (USD 1.1 million)** annually (AfDB, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

The contrast between Busia’s relative efficiency and Elegu’s systemic constraints illustrates the importance of targeted infrastructure investment and harmonized SPS protocols in sustaining Uganda’s agricultural trade competitiveness.

Figure 4: Border Points Frequently Used for Agricultural Trade



4.2 Awareness and Experience in Cross-Border Trade

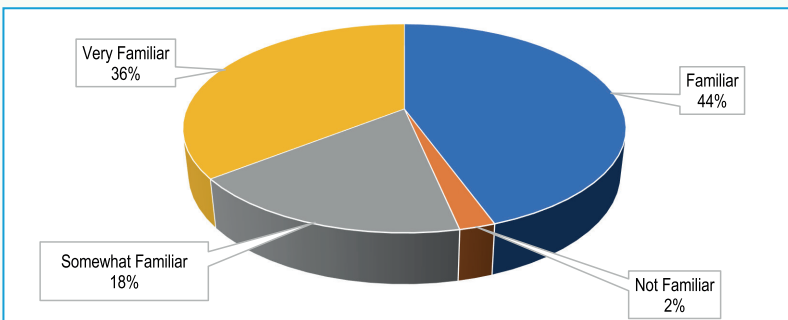
4.2.1 Familiarity with Trade Facilitation Mechanisms

Interviews with respondents revealed varying levels of familiarity with cross-border trade facilitation mechanisms for agricultural produce along the Uganda–Kenya and Uganda–South Sudan corridors. As presented in Figure 5, **36% reported being very familiar, 44% familiar, 18% somewhat familiar, and 2% not familiar.** This distribution suggests that while a majority of traders have some knowledge of trade procedures, a significant proportion still lacks sufficient understanding to effectively navigate regulatory systems.

The Uganda–Kenya corridor, which accounted for **USD 797.1 million in formal exports in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023), has relatively stronger awareness due to the use of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) at Busia and Malaba. Nevertheless, inefficiencies persist, with clearance delays of **48–72 hours** and repeated SPS inspections raising logistics costs by **15–20%** (World Bank, 2022). In contrast, familiarity levels are lower on the Uganda–South Sudan corridor, despite exports totaling **USD 503.5 million in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Security challenges, poor road infrastructure, and arbitrary re-testing of goods at Elegu/Nimule reduce confidence and limit knowledge transfer.

Limited familiarity with facilitation mechanisms contributes to compliance difficulties and increased transaction costs. The World Bank (2022) estimates that inadequate awareness of procedures raises trade costs in East Africa by up to **USD 500 per shipment**, underscoring the need for targeted sensitization and capacity-building for traders.

Figure 5: Familiarity with trade facilitation for agricultural produce across Uganda’s borders.



Findings from key informants indicate that traders generally demonstrate a **moderate level of awareness** regarding trade facilitation mechanisms for agricultural produce, particularly along well-established crossing points such as Busia, Malaba, and Elegu. Survey data revealed that **37.5% of respondents** reported their business operations had slightly improved due to these mechanisms, while **27.5% indicated significant improvements**. The reported benefits are largely linked to streamlined documentation procedures, digitized customs platforms such as **ASYCUDA World**, and the gradual adoption of regional systems like the **Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS)**, which have enhanced transparency and reduced clearance times.

Despite these gains, challenges persist. Border clearance at Uganda–Kenya and Uganda–South Sudan posts still average **48–72 hours**, compared to the EAC target of 24 hours (World Bank, 2022). According to **UBOS & BoU (2023)**, inefficiencies contribute to annual trade losses exceeding **USD 228 million** within the EAC, mainly due to delays, repeated SPS inspections, and informal payments. For small-scale agricultural traders, especially those handling perishable goods, these barriers translate into spoilage losses estimated at **15–20% of shipment value** (AfDB, 2023).

Thus, while reforms have improved predictability and reduced transaction costs for some traders, sustained investment in automation, harmonized SPS recognition, and capacity-building remain essential for maximizing the benefits of trade facilitation mechanisms.

Table 2: Impact of trade facilitation mechanisms on business operations implementation.

Impact on Business	Percentage
No Impact	20.0
Significantly Improved	27.5
Significantly Worsened	5.0
Slightly Improved	37.5
Slightly Worsened	10.0
Total	100

Despite recorded progress in implementing trade facilitation measures, a notable segment of traders continues to encounter significant challenges. Survey results show that **10% of respondents** reported their operations had slightly worsened, while **5% indicated a significant worsening**. These outcomes are linked to stricter formal compliance requirements, persistent unofficial payments, and inconsistencies in applying facilitation mechanisms across different border points. At the same time, **24% of respondents** noted no change in their business operations, a group largely comprising small-scale or informal traders who remain outside the scope of formal systems or have not yet realized tangible benefits.

These findings are consistent with regional assessments. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, inefficiencies and uneven implementation of customs reforms in East Africa add up to **USD 500 in costs per shipment**, eroding the competitiveness of smallholders. Similarly, **UBOS & BoU (2023)** report that informal trade still accounts for **16–20% of Uganda's total exports**, with limited gains from digitized systems such as ASYCUDA

World. For perishable agricultural goods, delays of **48–72 hours** at border points continue to cause losses of **15–20% of shipment value** (AfDB, 2023).

These results underscore the need for inclusive reforms that reduce informal payments, harmonize border procedures, and extend facilitation benefits to small-scale traders.

Table 3: Assessing if trade facilitation mechanisms meet agricultural produce needs.

Adequacy of Current Trade Facilitation Mechanisms	Percentage
No, not at all	23.8
Yes, completely	31.0
Yes, partially	45.2
Total	100

Survey findings reveal that **76.2% of respondents** believe current trade facilitation mechanisms address the needs of agricultural produce trade to some extent. Within this group, **45.2% stated that mechanisms are partially effective**, while **31.0% felt they fully meet sectoral needs**. These positive perceptions reflect improvements in customs documentation, digitization of clearance systems, and the introduction of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs), which have reduced procedural bottlenecks. For example, the adoption of **ASYCUDA World** and the **Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS)** has improved transparency and predictability (World Bank, 2022).

Nonetheless, **23.8% of respondents** expressed dissatisfaction, indicating persistent gaps. Key issues include inadequate cold chain infrastructure, clearance delays for perishables averaging **48–72 hours**, and unofficial charges that raise costs by **15–20% per consignment** (AfDB, 2023; UBOS & BoU, 2023). Informal traders—who still account for **16–20% of Uganda’s exports**—are particularly excluded from these benefits (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Additionally, limited tailored support for women and small-scale agricultural traders perpetuates inequality in accessing regional markets.

These findings suggest that while reforms have delivered noticeable efficiency gains, particularly for larger exporters, further investment in cold storage, harmonized SPS procedures, and inclusive trader support systems is essential to ensure agricultural trade facilitation mechanisms are both effective and equitable.

4.2.2 Mechanisms in Use

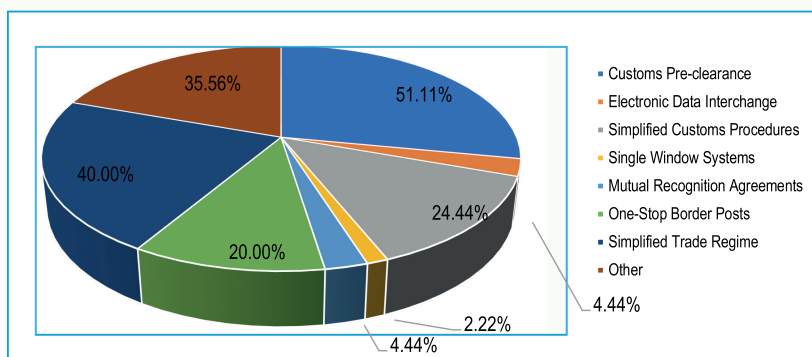
Survey findings show that traders rely heavily on key facilitation mechanisms to move agricultural produce across borders. As illustrated in Figure 6, **customs pre-clearance (51.1%)** and the **Simplified Trade Regime (40.0%)** were identified as the most frequently used mechanisms. Respondents also demonstrated familiarity with complementary processes such as standard customs clearance, **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certification**, and the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)**. These tools are designed to reduce transaction costs and improve efficiency, particularly for small-scale traders whose consignments are valued at less than **USD 2,000** (COMESA, 2022).

“During the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) at the Busia border, participants noted that pre-clearance procedures and the use of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) significantly speed up cross-border trade.”

However, persistent gaps undermine their effectiveness. Along the **Elegu–Nimule corridor**, which facilitated formal exports worth **USD 503.5 million in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023), traders reported ambiguity in the application of SPS measures. For example, maize flour certified by the **Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)** is sometimes rejected by South Sudanese authorities, leading to additional testing and clearance delays of **48–72 hours**. Such inconsistencies inflate logistics costs by up to **20% per shipment** and result in spoilage losses estimated at **UGX 4.2 billion (USD 1.1 million)** annually (AfDB, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

This evidence highlights that while facilitation mechanisms are widely known and used, harmonizing SPS protocols and ensuring uniform application across borders remain critical for improving Uganda’s agricultural trade competitiveness.

Figure 6: Trade Facilitation Mechanisms Currently in Use



4.2.3 Frequency of Cross-Border Trade and Implications for Agricultural Supply Chains

Table 4 illustrates that cross-border transportation of goods is a routine activity for most traders. **66.7% of respondents** reported transporting goods on a **weekly basis**, underscoring the sustained flow of agricultural produce and the reliance on stable supply chains to meet regional food demand. An additional **22.2% indicated daily trade**, reflecting the activities of small-scale and perishable goods traders who depend on frequent, timely deliveries to markets. Conversely, **11.1% reported monthly transport**, likely bulk traders handling commodities such as maize, beans, or rice in larger consignments.

These patterns align with official statistics showing Uganda’s exports to the EAC reached **USD 2.47 billion in 2023**, with staples like maize and beans forming the backbone of weekly and daily flows (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Informal exports, valued at **USD 566.6 million in 2023**, also highlight frequent small-scale movements across borders (UBOS, 2023). However, recurrent clearance delays averaging **48–72 hours** at Busia and Malaba

(World Bank, 2022) undermine these regular trade cycles, raising costs by **15–20% per consignment** and leading to spoilage, particularly for perishables (AfDB, 2023).

The evidence demonstrates that efficient customs processes, supportive infrastructure, and harmonized SPS procedures are critical for sustaining Uganda’s agricultural trade competitiveness and minimizing disruptions to regular cross-border flows.

Table 4: Frequency of cross-border goods transport

Frequency of Transportation of Goods	Percentage
Daily	22.2
Monthly	11.1
Weekly	66.7
Total	100

4.2.4 The Prevalence and Role of Informal Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Findings from the survey reveal a strong perception among respondents regarding the scale of informal cross-border trade in agricultural produce. A significant **81.8% affirmed** that such trade is taking place, underscoring its critical role in facilitating the movement of agricultural goods outside official systems. By contrast, only **18.2% of respondents** believed there is no informal agricultural trade, a view likely shaped by limited exposure or awareness of informal flows.

Official data corroborates these perceptions. According to the **UBOS & BoU Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey (2023)**, informal exports were valued at **USD 566.6 million**, accounting for **8.2% of total exports**, down from 13.3% in 2022—indicating a gradual shift toward formalization. The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** remains the top destination, absorbing over **35% of Uganda’s informal exports**, particularly beans, maize flour, cassava, bananas, and fish (UBOS, 2023). Kenya and South Sudan also register significant informal inflows, often driven by high formal compliance costs, multiple checkpoints, and non-harmonized SPS requirements.

Informal trade plays a vital livelihood role, especially for women, who make up **70–80% of small-scale cross-border traders** (EASSI, 2024). However, reliance on informal channels limits government revenue, undermines data accuracy, and perpetuates vulnerabilities for traders who lack legal protections.

Table 5: Existence of informal agricultural cross-border trade

Is there an Informal Cross-Border Trade	Percentage
No	18.2
Yes	81.8
Total	100

4.3 Assessment of Current Trade Facilitation Mechanisms

4.3.1 Documentation and Compliance Costs in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Efficient participation in cross-border agricultural trade requires compliance with a complex set of documentation requirements, which respondents identified as both essential for market access and a source of operational costs. Foremost among these is the **Certificate of Origin**, which verifies that goods originate within a trading bloc such as the EAC or COMESA. This certificate is key to securing preferential tariffs, with Uganda's exports to regional markets—valued at **USD 2.47 billion in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023)—relying heavily on such documentation for competitiveness.

Equally critical is the **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Certificate**, which assures compliance with health and safety standards for plant and animal products. Rejections remain common, however, particularly for maize flour and dairy, where importers such as Kenya and South Sudan occasionally demand additional testing despite Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) certification (AfDB, 2023). The **Export Permit**, issued by the Ministry of Trade, further legitimizes shipments, while electronic clearance through the **ASYCUDA World system** has streamlined customs declarations. Despite this, respondents noted that internet downtime and frequent system interruptions still cause clearance delays of **48–72 hours** at border points like Busia and Elegu (World Bank, 2022).

For small-scale traders, simplified procedures under the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)** play an important role. The **Simplified Certificate of Origin (SCO)** allows duty-free entry for consignments valued below **USD 2,000**, a measure particularly beneficial to women, who account for **70–80% of informal cross-border traders** (EASSI, 2024). Still, respondents noted that limited awareness, low digital literacy, and minimal access to clearing agents often prevent small-scale operators from fully benefiting.

Specialized permits are also required for specific commodities. For example, Kenya requires a **Plant Importation Permit** (500 KES) for certain inputs, while veterinary and fisheries certificates are mandatory for livestock and fish products. Traders and drivers must often present **Yellow Fever vaccination cards**, medical receipts, and identity documents (National IDs or passports). Larger operators also require **Transit Goods Licenses** (USD 200 annually), **E-permits**, and **Bond Permits** for high-volume transport. Costs vary widely: a **head and trailer permit** can reach **USD 400**, while annual fees such as a **Port Pass (3,000 KES)** and **Truck/Driver Fees (6,000 KES)** add further expenses. At local markets, recurring costs include **trading licenses (15,000 UGX)**, **loading fees (20,000 UGX)**, and **market receipts (100,000 UGX per consignment)**.

Although many documents, such as the SCO, are free, respondents highlighted that reliance on clearing agents inflates costs. Agents often charge service fees or delay processes, particularly for traders lacking literacy or procedural knowledge. At Elegu/Nimule, some traders reported paying as much as **5,000 South Sudanese Pounds (approx. USD 50)** in unofficial charges, compounding formal compliance costs (UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Overall, while trade documentation underpins compliance, traceability, and market access, its associated financial and procedural burdens remain a major barrier, especially

for small-scale agricultural traders. Reducing system inefficiencies, harmonizing SPS protocols, and expanding digital literacy programs are critical for lowering costs, increasing transparency, and ensuring that the benefits of regional trade integration extend to all categories of traders.

4.3.2 Cost Drivers in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Insights from key informant interviews reveal that both formal and informal costs significantly undermine the profitability and efficiency of cross-border agricultural trade. Transportation and logistics remain the largest cost drivers. Fuel, vehicle maintenance, and hired transport services dominate trader expenses, with costs further inflated by delays linked to poor infrastructure and congestion at border posts such as **Malaba and Elegu**. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, clearance times of **48–72 hours** at these posts increase transport costs by **15–20% per shipment**, while the absence of designated truck staging areas leads to fuel wastage during long queues.

Customs and border clearance fees also impose heavy costs. These include charges for documentation, cargo scanning, and multiple permits. Traders handling maize, milk, or vegetables face additional expenses for **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certification**, which may require transporting samples to distant laboratories. Such inefficiencies not only raise financial costs but also increase spoilage risks for perishables.

Informal or unofficial payments further compound the burden. Multiple roadblocks between Uganda's borders and final markets often require "facilitation fees," which are unpredictable and unreceipted. Studies estimate these informal payments account for up to **5–10% of total trade costs** in East Africa, disproportionately affecting small-scale and women traders (AfDB, 2023).

Warehousing and parking are additional recurring costs. Inadequate cold storage forces traders to pay high fees for temporary facilities or risk losing up to **20% of shipment value** in spoilage (FAO, 2021). Parking charges, sometimes exceeding **UGX 100,000 per truck per trip**, further erode profit margins.

Overall, these accumulated costs—formal and informal—pose significant barriers to Uganda's agricultural trade competitiveness. Addressing them will require coordinated investments in infrastructure, SPS harmonization, and stricter enforcement against informal fees.

During the Focus group Discussions, the respondents emphasized that the key costs in cross border trade were mainly taxes and informal payments (bribes).

4.3.2.1 The Burden of Tariffs in Uganda's Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Survey responses indicate that tariffs remain a major cost driver in Uganda's cross-border trade, though the extent of their impact is unevenly understood among traders. **31.8% of respondents** acknowledged paying tariffs but did not provide specific amounts, suggesting limited transparency or difficulties in tracking costs due to inconsistent application at different border points. This reflects broader concerns in East Africa, where tariff and tax structures are often unclear, particularly for small-scale agricultural traders

with limited record-keeping capacity.

Respondents who cited specific estimates reported a wide range of tariff amounts, from **UGX 30,000 (USD 8)** to **UGX 700,000 (USD 185)**, depending on commodity type and crossing point. For instance, one trader highlighted that forwarding a consignment of **matooke (bananas)** cost approximately **UGX 700,000**, while others cited charges of **UGX 90,000** or **USD 100**. These discrepancies suggest a lack of uniform tariff enforcement and possible discretionary charges tied to product categories or border-specific practices.

Beyond standard tariffs, respondents also mentioned taxes such as **withholding tax**, which further inflate the cost of doing business. Official statistics corroborate these challenges. According to the **UBOS & BoU Informal Cross-Border Trade Survey (2023)**, traders often face unpredictable charges that raise transaction costs by **15–20% per consignment**, reducing competitiveness. The **World Bank (2022)** estimates that tariffs and related charges account for up to **30% of trade costs** in Sub-Saharan Africa, disproportionately affecting smallholders.

Inconsistent tariff application erodes trader confidence, limits profitability, and incentivizes reliance on informal trade routes. Addressing these challenges will require greater transparency in tariff administration, harmonization of charges across EAC partner states, and improved dissemination of information to small-scale traders to ensure compliance without exploitation.

4.3.2.2 Bribery and Informal Payments as Hidden Costs in Cross-Border Trade

Survey findings highlight bribery as a persistent and costly challenge in Uganda's cross-border agricultural trade. Nearly **45.5% of respondents** reported that bribes are a regular and expected expense, reflecting systemic governance gaps at border points and along transit corridors. These informal payments are often demanded to speed up clearance, bypass bureaucratic hurdles, or avoid unnecessary delays.

Reported bribe amounts varied widely. Traders cited payments as low as **UGX 10,000 (USD 2.7)** at checkpoints, **UGX 60,000 (USD 16)** at roadblocks, and in extreme cases, as high as **100,000 South Sudanese Pounds (approx. USD 160)** at the Nimule crossing. Others described bribes as "negotiable" or "too many," underscoring their unpredictability. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, such informal charges increase trade costs in Sub-Saharan Africa by **5–10%**, disproportionately affecting small-scale traders.

Regional studies echo these findings. The **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)** noted that corruption and roadblocks are among the top five non-tariff barriers across East Africa, with women traders particularly vulnerable. Interestingly, one respondent observed that "once you are informed, there is no bribe," emphasizing how limited awareness of trade procedures exposes traders to exploitation.

Reducing bribery requires harmonized enforcement, improved accountability, and stronger trader sensitization. Eliminating these hidden costs is essential for lowering trade expenses and enhancing Uganda's agricultural competitiveness.

4.3.2.3 Storage and Parking Fees: Hidden Costs in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Although mentioned by only a few respondents, storage and parking fees remain an important cost component in cross-border trade, particularly for traders handling perishable goods. Of the five respondents addressing this issue, **40% acknowledged these charges** as part of their routine expenses, though most could not quantify exact amounts. One respondent cited a fee of **UGX 15,000 (USD 4)** per transaction, while others broadly referred to “storage or parking fees,” suggesting charges are applied either per trip or based on the length of stay at border posts.

These findings align with broader regional evidence. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, inadequate infrastructure and congestion at East African border posts add **15–20% to logistics costs**, with waiting times at Busia and Malaba averaging **48–72 hours**. Traders incurring storage or parking fees during these delays face compounded costs, while those dealing in perishables risk spoilage losses that can reach **20% of shipment value** (FAO, 2021).

Insufficient cold storage and poorly managed parking facilities further exacerbate inefficiencies. For instance, truck parking fees in some EAC corridors can exceed **UGX 100,000 (USD 27) per day** (AfDB, 2023). Addressing these costs through investment in modern storage, secure truck yards, and transparent fee structures is critical to lowering trade costs and safeguarding agricultural exports.

4.3.2.4 Weighbridge and Other Ancillary Costs in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

Although not the most frequently reported, **weighbridge charges** remain a notable cost for agricultural traders. Of the four respondents, **50% acknowledged such charges**, while **25% noted costs applied only when trucks exceeded weight limits**, and **25% confirmed their presence without further detail**. These findings show that weighbridge costs are conditional and vary with consignment size. For bulk commodities such as maize, cassava, and matooke, traders risk penalties when vehicles surpass axle-load regulations. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, weighbridge delays and penalties can add **USD 50–150 per truck** in East Africa, reducing efficiency in high-volume agricultural trade.

Beyond weighbridge fees, respondents cited a wide range of “**other costs**.” These include scanner fees of **UGX 20,000 (USD 5)**, clearing fees of **UGX 30,000 (USD 8)**, and T1 customs transit forms costing **UGX 80,000 (USD 21)**. Road expenses were also significant, with traders reporting up to **UGX 150,000 (USD 40)** per truck for tolls, emergency repairs, or informal charges. Perishable goods attract higher costs due to refrigerated container fees, while transport—cited by **20% of respondents**—remains the single largest expenditure, fluctuating with fuel prices and distance.

These ancillary costs, though sometimes overlooked, collectively raise cross-border trade expenses by an estimated **15–20%**, reinforcing the need for harmonized charges, improved infrastructure, and reduced discretionary fees (AfDB, 2023; FAO, 2021).

4.3.3 Customs Procedures and Efficiency

4.3.3.1 Digitization of Customs Processes

The digitization of customs processes at Uganda’s border points has been widely recognized as a major advancement in trade facilitation. Respondents noted that

platforms such as **ASYCUDA World** and **Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)** have improved clearance efficiency, particularly at Busia, where under normal conditions, procedures can be completed within **1–2 hours**. This progress reflects Uganda's broader alignment with the **World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO-TFA)**, which encourages automation to reduce red tape.

However, persistent operational challenges undermine the full benefits of digitalization. Frequent internet disruptions and system downtimes cause delays and force manual interventions, which compromise predictability. Congestion at border points such as Busia and Malaba remains significant, with clearance often extending to **48–72 hours** during peak periods (World Bank, 2022). According to **UBOS & BoU (2023)**, such inefficiencies contribute to trade losses exceeding **USD 228 million annually** within the EAC.

Certification delays, especially from agencies like the **Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)**, further hinder trade in perishable goods. Traders report that waiting for SPS certificates can result in spoilage losses of up to **20% of shipment value** for commodities like vegetables, fish, and dairy (FAO, 2021).

Moreover, respondents highlighted governance concerns. Unofficial payments remain pervasive, often used to bypass bureaucratic hurdles. Arbitrary fines imposed in **US dollars**—even when traders operate in Ugandan shillings—exacerbate financial burdens, particularly amid currency fluctuations. The **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)** estimates that such informal costs inflate East Africa's trade expenses by **5–10%**, disproportionately affecting smallholders.

While digitalization has made commendable progress, achieving its full potential requires investment in reliable ICT infrastructure, harmonization of SPS certification processes, and stronger institutional accountability to eliminate unofficial costs and arbitrary penalties.

During the FGD at Malaba border, the participants mentioned that there are a number of roadblocks leading to delays and that the border needs to be digitized.

4.3.3.2 Perceptions of Customs Efficiency in Agricultural Trade

The assessment of customs efficiency in handling agricultural goods reveals broadly positive perceptions among traders. A combined **70% of respondents** rated customs operations as either **"Very Efficient" (35%)** or **"Somewhat Efficient" (35%)**, suggesting that digitization, the adoption of **ASYCUDA World**, and streamlined documentation have improved clearance times. At Busia, for example, clearance under normal conditions can now be completed in **1–2 hours**, compared to several days before automation (World Bank, 2022).

Nevertheless, **27.5% of respondents** offered a neutral rating, highlighting inconsistencies in service delivery across border posts. These perceptions likely reflect challenges such as internet downtimes, procedural ambiguity, and congestion at high-traffic posts like Malaba and Elegu, where clearance can still extend to **48–72 hours during peak periods**.

(UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Only **2.5% of respondents** described customs as “Somewhat Inefficient,” underscoring that while most improvements are recognized, some traders still encounter delays or irregular practices. The persistence of unofficial payments and arbitrary fines—often levied in **US dollars**—further erodes confidence in the system. According to the **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)**, such hidden costs inflate trade expenses in East Africa by **5–10%**, disproportionately affecting small-scale agricultural traders.

These findings suggest that while digital reforms have delivered measurable efficiency gains, sustained investment in ICT infrastructure, harmonized procedures, and institutional integrity are essential to achieve consistent, trader-friendly customs services.

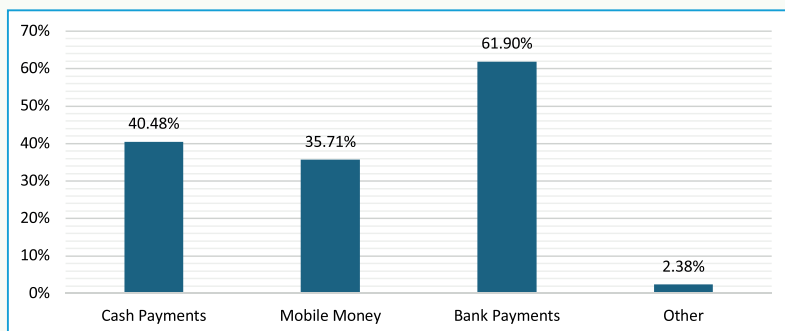
Table 6: Customs efficiency in processing agricultural goods

Efficiency of Customs	Percentage
Neutral	27.5
Somewhat Efficient	35.0
Somewhat Inefficient	2.5
Very Efficient	35.0
Total	100

4.3.4 Payment Modes and Systems

Figure 7 illustrates the diverse methods used by cross-border traders to pay for customs clearance, taxes, and permits. **Bank payments were the most common, reported by 61.9% of respondents**, underscoring a shift toward formal, traceable systems. This reflects efforts to modernize trade transactions, particularly for medium and large traders who require proper documentation for compliance and accounting. The growing use of structured financial channels is consistent with the broader trend of digitization under the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**, which encourages transparency in border transactions.

Figure 7: Payment modes at the Border



Nonetheless, **cash remains widely used, with 40.48% of traders citing it as a preferred option.** Cash continues to dominate among small-scale or informal traders who often lack access to bank accounts or prefer the immediacy of cash settlements. However, reliance on cash increases exposure to unofficial payments and undermines transparency in revenue collection. The **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)** estimates that informal cash transactions contribute to up to **10% of hidden trade costs** across East African corridors.

Mobile money, reported by 35.71% of respondents, highlights a rapidly expanding digital payment option. With Uganda recording **over 42 million mobile money accounts in 2023** and transactions valued at **UGX 195 trillion (approx. USD 52 billion)** (Bank of Uganda, 2023), mobile platforms offer speed, security, and accessibility for traders in remote areas. Importantly, mobile money bridges the gap for smallholders who lack access to formal banking yet wish to avoid carrying large cash amounts.

Finally, **2.38% of respondents** cited “other” forms of payment, including agent-assisted transactions or barter. These findings reveal a hybrid payment landscape where formal bank systems, cash, and digital platforms coexist. Strengthening digital infrastructure, integrating mobile money with customs systems, and discouraging cash-based informal payments are critical to enhancing transparency, efficiency, and security in Uganda’s cross-border trade.

4.3.5 Fines and Penalties in Cross-Border Agricultural Trade

4.3.5.1 Compliance and Enforcement Dynamics

As shown in Table 7, survey findings indicate that **38.1% of respondents** have at some point incurred fines or penalties during cross-border trade. This suggests that more than one in three traders has encountered regulatory or procedural infractions resulting in financial sanctions. Reported causes of penalties include **under-declaration of goods, documentation errors, non-compliance with clearance procedures, and use of unauthorized routes.** Such penalties vary widely, from relatively small amounts of **UGX 50,000 (USD 13)** for minor infractions to larger fines exceeding **UGX 2 million (USD 530)**, particularly in cases involving cargo misdeclaration.

Conversely, **61.9% of respondents** reported never receiving fines, suggesting that a majority of traders are either compliant with existing rules or operate in environments where enforcement is less stringent. However, enforcement disparities are common across East Africa. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, inconsistent application of customs regulations contributes to uncertainty and can inflate trade costs by **5–15%**. Similarly, the **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)** highlights that arbitrary penalties often reflect governance weaknesses and discretionary practices at certain border posts.

The impact of penalties is especially severe for small-scale agricultural traders who typically operate on thin profit margins. When fines are levied in **foreign currency (e.g., US dollars or South Sudanese pounds)**, traders face additional exchange rate risks, further eroding earnings. For perishable goods, delays associated with penalty resolution can result in spoilage losses of up to **20% of shipment value** (FAO, 2021).

Overall, while penalties are a necessary tool for ensuring compliance, their inconsistent enforcement and occasional arbitrariness undermine trader confidence. Transparent,

harmonized procedures and expanded trader awareness programs are essential to reduce infractions, improve compliance, and lower transaction costs across Uganda's trade corridors.

Table 7: Whether a trader has ever received fines or penalties

Fines or Penalties Received	Percentage
No	61.9
Yes	38.1
Total	100

4.3.5.2 Enforcement Gaps and Trader Vulnerabilities

Trader responses on fines and penalties reveal a wide range of infractions and highlight inconsistencies in enforcement across border points. Many penalties were linked to **procedural violations**, such as missing weighbridge checks, incomplete documentation, or customs delays. One trader reported paying **KES 50,000 (USD 330)** for failing to pass a weighbridge, while another was fined **USD 500** after South Sudanese officials altered a T1 transit document. Other respondents cited penalties of **USD 200 or more** for premature declarations or under-declaration of cargo value, underscoring how minor administrative oversights can carry significant financial consequences.

The role of clearing agents emerged as a critical concern. Traders reported fines caused by agent malpractice, such as submitting falsified or incomplete documents. One case involved a **KES 8,000 (USD 53)** fine for a fake COMESA certificate, while another trader lost **UGX 3.3 million (USD 880)** after an agent failed to remit taxes despite filing seemingly compliant paperwork. Such incidents highlight the need for stricter regulation and accountability of intermediaries.

Penalties in Ugandan shillings were also common: **UGX 300,000 (USD 80)** for using porous borders, **UGX 40,000 (USD 11)** for driving without a permit, and **UGX 200,000 (USD 53)** for delaying customs officers. Even small undeclared items—such as a single bag of groundnuts (**UGX 50,000**) or 100 kg of assorted goods (**UGX 40,000**)—attracted sanctions. Some traders noted fines of **USD 100** for misreporting tonnage, while “value uplifting” practices arbitrarily inflated goods’ declared values, leading to penalties as high as **UGX 1.5 million (USD 400)**.

These findings, consistent with **World Bank (2022)** and **AfDB (2023)** reports, reveal that inconsistent enforcement, arbitrary penalties, and malpractice by agents not only erode trust but also impose disproportionate financial burdens on traders, particularly small-scale agricultural exporters operating on thin margins.

4.3.6 Regional and Bilateral Frameworks Governing Uganda's Cross-Border Trade

Key informant interviews revealed that Uganda's cross-border trade is shaped primarily by regional frameworks and bilateral agreements. The **EAC Customs Union**, established in 2005, has reduced internal tariffs and harmonized external tariffs, facilitating intra-regional trade valued at **USD 2.47 billion in 2023**, of which Kenya, South Sudan, and the

DRC were the top markets (UBOS & BoU, 2023). The **EAC Common Market Protocol (2010)** further promotes free movement of goods, services, and labor, although implementation has faced uneven progress across member states.

The **COMESA Trade Facilitation Agreement** has streamlined customs procedures, promoting electronic documentation and faster border clearance. Uganda’s participation has been central to reducing average clearance times, which now range from **1–2 hours at Busia under normal conditions**, though congestion still causes **48–72-hour delays** at Malaba and Elegu (World Bank, 2022).

Bilateral agreements, particularly with Kenya and South Sudan, have customized procedures to address specific trade dynamics, supporting initiatives like the **Single Customs Territory (SCT)**. However, inconsistent enforcement remains a barrier. For example, the **South Sudan Revenue Authority (SSRA)** has been criticized for unpredictable application of customs rules, leading to uncertainty and costly delays.

Thus, while these frameworks have improved predictability and reduced tariff burdens, harmonized enforcement and stronger institutional capacity are essential for Uganda to maximize regional trade benefits.

4.3.8 Impact of Trade Facilitation on Spoilage of Agricultural Produce

As indicated in Table 8, traders expressed mixed views on whether improved trade facilitation mechanisms have reduced spoilage of agricultural produce. A significant **45.2% reported no change**, suggesting that for many traders, challenges such as clearance delays, inadequate cold storage, and poor transport infrastructure continue to undermine product quality. This aligns with findings from the **World Bank (2022)**, which noted that clearance delays of **48–72 hours** at key border posts can result in spoilage losses of up to **20% of shipment value** for perishable goods.

Table 8: Spoilage of Agricultural Produce

Reduction In the Spoilage or Degradation	Percentage
No change	45.2
No, it has worsened	3.2
Yes, significantly	19.4
Yes, slightly	32.3
Total	100

Encouragingly, **51.7% of respondents** observed a reduction in spoilage—**32.3% slightly** and **19.4% significantly**—indicating that digital systems such as **ASYCUDA World** and improved coordination at borders like Busia are beginning to yield positive outcomes. Uganda’s investment in trade facilitation has contributed to shorter clearance times, with some consignments processed in **1–2 hours under normal conditions** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). These improvements benefit traders handling staples such as maize and beans as well as perishables like dairy, fish, and vegetables, which collectively accounted for more than **65% of Uganda’s exports to the EAC in 2023**.

Only **3.2% reported worsening spoilage**, pointing to isolated cases where enforcement

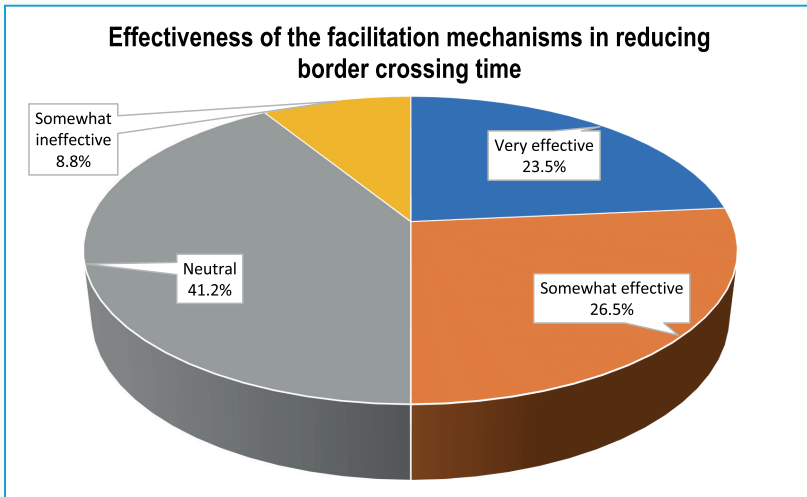
inconsistencies, poor road conditions, or certification delays negatively affected trade flows. Overall, the findings highlight progress but underscore the urgent need for investment in **cold-chain facilities and better road infrastructure** to minimize losses.

4.3.9 Trader perceptions on trade facilitation efficiency

Figure 8 shows that traders hold mixed views on the ability of trade facilitation mechanisms to reduce border crossing times for agricultural produce. A significant **41.2% expressed a neutral stance**, reflecting uncertainty about whether reforms have consistently improved efficiency. This neutrality likely stems from uneven implementation across border points and sporadic improvements that are not yet sustained.

Encouragingly, **50% of respondents reported positive impacts**, with **23.5% rating mechanisms as very effective and 26.5% as somewhat effective**. These perceptions are strongest among traders using better-managed border posts such as **Busia**, where digital platforms like **ASYCUDA World** and pre-clearance procedures have reduced clearance to **1–2 hours under normal conditions** (World Bank, 2022). This progress aligns with Uganda’s compliance with the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement**, which has encouraged automation and efficiency.

Figure 8: Efficiency of the Mechanisms in Reducing the Time Taken to Cross the Border



However, **8.8% of respondents rated the mechanisms as somewhat ineffective**, citing persistent challenges such as long queues, documentation delays, and system downtimes. At posts like **Elegu and Lwakhakha**, clearance often stretches to **48–72 hours**, contributing to annual trade losses exceeding **USD 228 million within the EAC** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). These inefficiencies not only slow trade but also risk spoilage for perishables, which can account for **15–20% of shipment losses** (FAO, 2021).

Overall, while reforms are beginning to deliver results, their uneven application underscores the need for harmonized digital systems, better infrastructure, and targeted investments in high-volume border points.

4.3.10 Restrictions on Uganda's agricultural cross-border trade

Survey results show that traders are nearly split on the issue of restrictions: **51.3% reported no restrictions**, while **48.7% confirmed facing barriers** when moving specific goods across borders. This highlights that almost half of agricultural traders encounter regulatory or political hurdles despite frameworks like the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)**, which allows duty-free trade of goods valued below **USD 2,000** (COMESA, 2022).

Maize emerged as the most frequently restricted product, largely due to **aflatoxin concerns** and inconsistent sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) enforcement. In 2021, Kenya temporarily banned Ugandan maize citing aflatoxin contamination, affecting exports worth over **USD 121 million annually** (East African, 2021). Respondents also cited bans on maize deemed “dirty” or poorly handled, reflecting gaps in harmonized certification systems.

Other restricted products include **milk and eggs**, often limited by Kenyan policies protecting local farmers, as well as **sugarcane, cassava, millet, cowpeas, and cabbage**, which face non-tariff barriers disguised as soil or plant protection measures. High-value commodities such as **coffee** and politically sensitive products like **Mira (khat)** were also mentioned, the latter facing outright bans in some markets.

These restrictions disproportionately affect smallholders and informal traders, who lack capacity to meet stringent SPS standards. Addressing them requires **regional harmonization of testing protocols, investment in food safety systems, and stronger bilateral coordination** to prevent arbitrary market closures.

4.4 Trade Facilitation Challenges

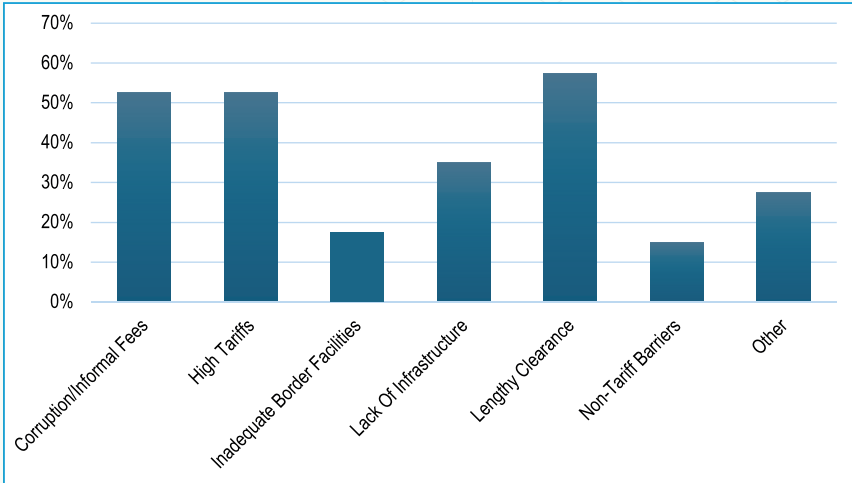
4.4.1 Case of Trade challenges at Uganda–DRC Borders

Key informant interviews, particularly with transporters, highlighted persistent technical and logistical challenges at the **Mpondwe border**, Uganda's busiest crossing with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Respondents reported instances where trucks were used as makeshift storage facilities for fish while awaiting clearance. Such delays were attributed to customs authorities deliberately slowing processing to regulate fish inflows into the DRC in order to stabilize market prices. Although the study did not directly observe which side imposed these controls, both Ugandan and Congolese officials were cited as possible contributors.

Delays in clearance pose significant risks for perishables like fish. Uganda exported approximately **18,000 metric tonnes of fish valued at USD 158 million in 2023** (UBOS, 2023), with the DRC as a key market. Holding consignments in trucks without cold storage increases the likelihood of spoilage, which can lead to losses of **15–20% of shipment value** (FAO, 2021).

Survey findings (Figure 9) revealed broader challenges affecting cross-border trade: **clearance delays, multiple checkpoints, high informal fees, poor road infrastructure, and inadequate storage facilities**. The **World Bank (2022)** estimated that such inefficiencies raise East African trade costs by **15–20%**, eroding competitiveness. Addressing these constraints through harmonized customs systems and investment in cold-chain infrastructure is critical for safeguarding Uganda's regional trade flows.

Figure 9: Common Trade Facilitation Challenges



4.4.2 Procedural Delays in Customs and Documentation: Persistent Barriers to Trade

Findings in Table 9 reveal that documentation and customs-related delays remain a widespread challenge in Uganda’s cross-border trade. A significant **89.7% of respondents** reported experiencing delays: **30.8% occasionally, 7.7% frequently, 7.7% always, and 43.6% rarely**. Only **10.3% stated they never experience delays**, suggesting that while trade facilitation reforms have improved efficiency at some border posts, challenges persist for most traders.

At better-managed posts like Busia, digitized systems such as **ASYCUDA World** and the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR)** have reduced clearance times to **1–2 hours under normal conditions** (World Bank, 2022). Yet, elsewhere—particularly at Malaba and Elegu—procedural inefficiencies still cause clearance times to stretch to **48–72 hours**, contributing to regional trade costs that are **15–20% higher than the global average** (AfDB, 2023).

Uganda’s exports, valued at **USD 6.39 billion in 2023**, with **USD 2.47 billion destined for African markets** (UBOS & BoU, 2023), depend heavily on efficient clearance to maintain competitiveness. Delays in documentation disproportionately affect perishable goods such as fish, milk, and vegetables, where spoilage can result in losses of **15–20% of shipment value** (FAO, 2021).

While digitization has improved predictability for some, the persistence of procedural delays underscores the need for stronger ICT infrastructure, harmonized SPS certification, and greater accountability to ensure efficiency across all border points.

Table 9: Frequency of delays from customs documentation

Delays	Percentage
Always	7.7
Frequently	7.7
Never	10.3
Occasionally	30.8
Rarely	43.6
Total	100

4.4.3 Traders' Perceptions of Border Delay Impacts

Although trade facilitation reforms are in place, many traders still face significant delays. Survey results show that **30.8 % of respondents report occasional delays**, while **15.4 % face frequent or constant delays**, summing to nearly **46.2 %** affected by recurring inefficiencies. These statistics underscore that customs processes remain hampered by slow system responses, manual procedures, staffing weaknesses, and ambiguities around permits and certifications—challenges especially harmful for perishable agricultural goods prone to spoilage.

Half of the respondents (50 %) perceive the mechanisms as effective to some extent: 23.5 % deem them very effective, while 26.5 % describe them as somewhat effective. These respondents likely benefit from operating through more efficient border points (e.g. Busia) where digitized systems and pre-clearance measures are better implemented. Meanwhile, **8.8 % of respondents** rated the mechanisms as somewhat ineffective, reporting continued bottlenecks such as system downtime, long queues, and documentation delays—especially prevalent at crossings like Elegu and Lwakhakha.

4.4.4 Economic Burden: Direct, Indirect, and Intangible Losses

Among those experiencing delays, traders reported direct daily losses ranging from **USD 100 to USD 250** for goods held beyond scheduled clearance. One trader noted a loss of USD 250 per day, while another cited USD 100 per delay—figures that, when aggregated across many traders and days, represent a substantial drag on livelihoods and competitiveness.

Perishable produce such as fish and eggs are particularly vulnerable: spoilage, quality degradation, and outright loss of entire consignments were commonly cited.

Indirect costs amplify the burden. Traders face **demurrage charges**, additional transport costs, and contract penalties due to delivery delays. Some estimated losses in Ugandan Shillings of **UGX 200,000 to 350,000** when trade group clearances are missed or bulk deals fall through. Relationship damage—losing clients or reputation—is also a frequent outcome of repeated delays.

Qualitative losses, though harder to monetize, erode profitability and trust: weight shrinkage (e.g., in beans), damage to goods (cracked eggs), or missed market windows can undermine final sales. Some respondents even cited confiscation of goods (e.g. cooking oil) or denial of access to cleared routes, further weakening trader confidence

and financial stability.

4.4.5 Other Structural Barriers to Efficient Trade

Beyond customs delays, traders report persistent informal charges—especially in South Sudan—and municipal fees (e.g. parking, unloading) on the Ugandan side that are often uncoordinated and burdensome.

Poor network connectivity disrupts digital customs systems like ASYCUDA and iCMS, delaying real-time documentation and clearance—an acute risk for perishable goods. Border congestion, particularly at Busia and Malaba, further compounds delays and increases fuel costs.

Knowledge gaps also feature prominently: lack of awareness among traders and some officials of procedures, rights, or facilitation mechanisms fosters dependence on clearing agents and creates room for exploitative practices.

Security and mobility issues persist. Traders sometimes face denial of movement into neighboring territories due to immigration policies. Insecurity along routes (especially in South Sudan) adds further risk to cross-border operations, disproportionately affecting small traders and women.

4.5 Non Tariff Barriers between Uganda and Kenya

4.5.1 Discriminatory Excise Duties

Kenya's imposition of **discriminatory excise duties** on Ugandan exports—covering products such as ceramic tiles, confectionery, eggs, onions, potatoes, sugar, cement, fish, furniture, and tea—remains a major **non-tariff barrier (NTB)** undermining regional integration commitments. For example, Ugandan eggs have repeatedly faced bans and additional levies, costing exporters **over UGX 30 billion in 2021** alone, while restrictions on milk and sugar disrupted shipments worth **over USD 27 million** (EAC Secretariat, 2023; UBOS, 2024).

These NTBs significantly affect **time and efficiency**. According to the Northern Corridor Transport Observatory (2023), average export clearance from Uganda to Kenya takes **355 hours** (nearly 15 days), compared to the COMESA average of **255 hours**. Delays are compounded when consignments face re-testing or re-taxation, particularly on goods like maize flour or poultry products.

Profitability has also been hit. The Uganda Manufacturers Association estimated in 2023 that discriminatory taxes and bans reduced industrial exports to Kenya by 20–30% annually, cutting into Uganda's **USD 465 million** export earnings from Kenya (BoU, 2023). For small-scale traders, arbitrary excise levies of **KES 20–50 per kilogram** of agricultural goods drastically erode margins, forcing many into informal channels.

The broader **economic impact** is visible in employment and growth. Agro-processing industries linked to export markets—such as poultry, dairy, and sugar—support over **150,000 jobs** in Uganda. Each episode of restricted market access threatens these livelihoods and undermines Uganda's GDP growth target of **6% under NDP III**.

Overall, discriminatory excise duties contradict the **EAC Customs Union Protocol**, distort competition, and weaken Uganda's capacity to leverage regional trade for job creation

and industrialization. Addressing these NTBs requires strict enforcement of EAC dispute settlement mechanisms and reciprocal safeguards.

Table 10: Discriminatory Excise Duties and Trade Losses for Ugandan Exports

Ugandan Export Product	Estimated Excise Charges / Levies	Estimated Trade Losses
Eggs	KES 25–30 per tray	UGX 30 billion (2021 ban)
Milk & Dairy	10% duty + bans	USD 27 million (2021–22 disruptions)
Sugar	10–25% levy / periodic bans	USD 12–15 million annually
Onions & Potatoes	KES 20–50 per kg	UGX 10 billion annually (farmers)
Fish	10–15% excise charges	USD 5–8 million annually
Cement & Tiles	USD 50 per tonne (est.)	USD 20 million annually
Tea	10% excise duty	USD 4–6 million annually
Confectionery & Chocolate	10–15% levy	USD 3–5 million annually
Furniture & Aluminium	10–20% levy	USD 8–10 million annually

These NTBs collectively undermine Uganda’s export earnings to Kenya, which stood at **USD 465 million in 2023** (BoU, 2023). They reduce competitiveness, inflate costs, and disrupt agricultural value chains, threatening over **150,000 jobs** in agro-processing and trade

4.5.2 Administrative Barriers

Kenya’s administrative NTBs continue to inflate cross-border costs and erode Uganda’s competitiveness. First, an **inspection fee of USD 250 per truck** for Ugandan wood products entering Kenya directly raises unit costs; for a modest flow of **100 trucks/week**, this equates to **USD 25,000 weekly (≈USD 1.3 million/year)** before fuel, demurrage, and handling (EAC Secretariat, 2024). Second, **sugar quota permits** issued by Kenya’s Sugar Directorate are frequently delayed, stalling consignments for **3–7 days** and triggering demurrage of **USD 200–300 per truck/day**—a loss that can exceed **USD 600–2,100** per truck per incident (World Bank, 2022; AFA–Kenya Sugar Directorate, 2024). Third, tea trucks transiting to Mombasa face a **UGX 7,000 fee per truck (≈USD ~2)**; while small individually, layered fees across fleets add up and signal fragmented charges that complicate compliance.

Time impacts are material. Average cross-border clearance on the Uganda–Kenya corridor frequently stretches to **48–72 hours** at busy posts, and end-to-end export clearance along the Northern Corridor averages **>300 hours**, well above regional good practice (NCTTCA, 2024; World Bank, 2022). These delays depress margins on thin-spread agricultural and light-manufacturing exports by **15–20%** through fuel burn, driver overtime, and inventory holding costs (AfDB, 2023).

Macroeconomically, Kenya remains Uganda’s top market; **Uganda’s exports to Kenya**

were **≈USD 0.8 billion in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Administrative frictions that shave even **3–5 percentage points** off net margins can translate into **USD 24–40 million** foregone exporter income annually. Employment is affected across logistics and agro-processing value chains (wood, sugar, tea): every **USD 1 million** in processed-goods exports typically supports **80–120 jobs** in East African value chains; sustained NTBs therefore threaten **thousands of jobs** and dampen growth momentum toward Uganda's **~6% GDP** target (AfDB, 2023).

Bottom line: The USD 250 wood-truck inspections, quota-related sugar delays, and cumulative transit fees impede time, profitability, and jobs. Enforcing EAC time-bound NTB resolution, digitizing permit issuance, and rationalizing fees along the Northern Corridor are immediate priorities.

4.5.3 Infrastructure/ Procedural Issues

Severe congestion at **Busia** and **Malaba** One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs)—narrow approach lanes, limited truck parking, and inadequate road capacity—has become a de facto **non-tariff barrier** for Ugandan exports to Kenya. Northern Corridor monitoring shows end-to-end export clearance frequently exceeding **300 hours**, with border-stage queues adding **48–72 hours** during peaks (NCTTCA, 2024; World Bank, 2022). Queueing and stop-start movement inflate costs: typical **demurrage charges of USD 200–300 per truck per day, parking fees that can reach UGX 100,000 per day, and idling fuel burn of 2–3 liters/hour (≈USD 3–5/hour)** (AfDB, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

The time tax erodes margins for thin-spread agricultural shipments and light manufacturing. For Uganda's trade with Kenya—about **USD 0.8 billion in 2023**—a conservative **3–5% margin squeeze** from congestion and procedural frictions implies **USD 24–40 million** foregone exporter income annually (UBOS & BoU, 2023). At the firm level, logistics cost uplifts of **15–20%** are common on delayed consignments, via extra fuel, driver overtime, inventory holding, and spoilage risks for perishables (AfDB, 2023; FAO, 2021). Each **USD 1 million** of processed-goods exports typically supports **80–120 jobs** in East African value chains; prolonged OSBP bottlenecks therefore threaten **thousands of jobs** while dampening progress toward Uganda's **~6% GDP** growth aspiration (AfDB, 2023).

Targeted infrastructure and procedural fixes are well-understood: (i) construct a **15–20 km dual carriageway** to separate local traffic from transit queues; (ii) develop **off-site truck staging/packing yards** with electronic call-up to decongest OSBPs; (iii) **redesign OSBP layouts** for uni-directional flow, more weigh/scan lanes, and 24/7 coordinated staffing; and (iv) **gazette and operationalize Suam–Bukwo** as an alternative corridor to diffuse load from Busia/Malaba (NCTTCA, 2024; EAC Secretariat, 2024; WTO, 2022). Coupled with stricter performance metrics (border time KPIs) and integrated permit e-issuance, these measures would compress clearance toward **<24 hours**, lift profitability, stabilize jobs in agro-processing and logistics, and strengthen Uganda's competitiveness in the Kenyan market.

A photograph of a man and a young boy standing in a green field. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue shirt, and the boy is on the right, wearing a light yellow shirt. They are both looking down at a smartphone held by the boy. The background is a soft-focus green field with trees in the distance. A semi-transparent green overlay covers the bottom half of the image, where the chapter title and list are placed.

CHAPTER FIVE

Recommendations

In this chapter

- ✓ Study Design
- ✓ Data Collection Methods
- ✓ Data Analysis Approach
- ✓ Limitations of the Study

Recommendations

5.1 National- Level Recommendations

5.1.1 Infrastructure Investment at Borders

Uganda's cross-border trade performance is significantly constrained by inadequate infrastructure at major One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs). Current inefficiencies result in clearance delays averaging **24–72 hours**, far above the **EAC target of 24 hours** (World Bank, 2022). These delays are compounded by power outages, unreliable ICT systems, and insufficient storage, especially cold-chain facilities. According to field estimates, spoilage losses for perishable goods such as fish, milk, and vegetables exceed **UGX 3.5 billion annually**, undermining profitability and eroding trader confidence (UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Upgrading OSBPs with **reliable electricity, modern ICT systems, cold-chain storage, and gender-sensitive facilities (sanitation and childcare)** is therefore essential. Investments in ICT, including stable internet and integration of platforms like **ASYCUDA World and the Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS)**, would reduce manual interventions and improve real-time cargo monitoring. Cold-chain infrastructure would drastically cut spoilage losses, with the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2021)** noting that up to **20% of perishable consignments** in East Africa are lost due to poor handling and storage.

Gender-sensitive facilities are equally important, given that women constitute **70–80% of informal cross-border traders** (EASSI, 2024). Providing secure sanitation, childcare, and resting areas would not only improve working conditions but also increase women's participation in formal trade channels.

The economic benefits are substantial. With Uganda's exports to the EAC valued at **USD 2.47 billion in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023), reducing clearance delays and spoilage could unlock hundreds of millions in additional earnings. Enhanced OSBP infrastructure would also stimulate job creation in logistics and agro processing while strengthening Uganda's competitiveness under both the **EAC Common Market Protocol** and the **AfCFTA**.

5.1.2 Strengthening Cooperatives and Associations

A critical barrier to Uganda's agricultural competitiveness lies in the weak institutional capacity of cooperatives and farmer organizations. Evidence from the study shows that **only 38% of cooperatives undergo external audits**, while just **41.3% maintain updated financial records**. This undermines their credibility with financial institutions and restricts access to affordable credit, a constraint also highlighted by the **African Development Bank (AfDB, 2023)** as one of the top impediments to scaling agribusinesses in Africa. Without transparent governance and robust financial systems, cooperatives cannot aggregate sufficient volumes of agricultural produce to consistently meet consumer demand in both quality and quantity.

Supporting **capacity building in governance, financial management, and market compliance** is therefore essential. First, targeted training in financial literacy, bookkeeping, and audit readiness can improve transparency, enabling cooperatives to access

structured finance, including the **Agricultural Credit Facility (ACF), which disbursed over UGX 700 billion by 2023** (Bank of Uganda, 2023). Second, strengthening compliance with **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards** and harmonized **EAC quality protocols** will help cooperatives produce food that meets regional consumer expectations for safety and reliability. With agricultural exports contributing **over USD 6.3 billion in 2023** (UBOS & BoU, 2023), improved compliance would directly enhance Uganda's market share.

Finally, governance reforms—such as mandating routine audits and embedding accountability mechanisms—will reduce elite capture and mismanagement. Stronger cooperatives would not only aggregate volumes more effectively but also secure better prices for members, reduce post-harvest losses, and supply consistent, high-quality produce to both domestic and export markets.

In conclusion, investment in cooperative capacity is not merely an institutional reform—it is a **market competitiveness strategy**. By aligning governance, finance, and compliance with consumer-driven standards, Uganda can transform cooperatives into engines of inclusive growth, job creation, and export diversification.

5.1.3 Formalization of Informal Trade

Incentivize the transition of informal cross-border traders (who handle **16–20% of Uganda's exports**, mostly women) into formal systems by reducing compliance costs and providing simplified documentation

Uganda should **incentivize informal traders to formalize** by cutting compliance costs and simplifying documentation, thereby improving consistent, high-quality supply to consumers. Although historical estimates placed informal exports at **16–20%** of Uganda's total trade—dominated by women—latest data show informal exports were **USD 566.6 million (8.2%)** in 2023, signaling progress but leaving a large opportunity to formalize remaining flows (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Women account for **70–80%** of small-scale cross-border traders; reforms must be gender-responsive (Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative [EASSI], 2024).

Action 1: Reduce compliance costs. Zero-rate or rebate small permits and levy charges for consignments below the **COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR) threshold of USD 2,000**, expand the **Simplified Certificate of Origin (SCO)**, and cap border service fees for micro-shipments (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa [COMESA], 2022). Prioritize **mobile money/e-payments** to reduce cash-based “facilitation” and increase traceability.

Action 2: Make documentation truly simple. Deploy multilingual **one-page e-forms** (SCO, basic SPS declarations) via USSD/smartphone apps; co-locate **“last-mile helpdesks”** at OSBPs for on-the-spot registration, product classification, and risk-based inspection scheduling. Link IDs to digital trader profiles to pre-populate forms and cut repeat paperwork.

Action 3: Target SPS readiness for quality and safety. Offer subsidized **group testing** and **on-site rapid SPS screening** for grains, dairy, fish, and horticulture to meet buyer standards and reduce rejection. Upgraded quality compliance will raise consumer confidence and reduce losses that can reach **15–20%** of perishable shipment value without cold chain and timely clearance (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2021).

Action 4: Reduce time costs that erode margins. Streamlined formal pathways can avoid documentation errors and border queues that add about **USD 500 per shipment** in East Africa (World Bank, 2022). If just **25%** of current informal value (**~USD 140 million**) shifts into formal channels through these measures, Uganda could unlock tax revenue, expand bankable turnover for cooperative finance, and support thousands of jobs in aggregation, logistics, and processing—while delivering **consistent volumes and safer quality** to consumers domestically and across the EAC.

5.1.4 Digital Trade Facilitation

Fully operationalize the National Electronic Single Window (NESW) and risk-based customs inspections to compress border clearance by **up to 72 hours per consignment**, unlocking multi-million-dollar logistics savings and more reliable, higher-quality supply to consumers.

Uganda's border performance is still hampered by paper processes, duplicated data entry, and universal (rather than risk-based) inspections—factors that stretch clearance to **24–72 hours** at busy posts during peak periods (World Bank, 2022). With Uganda's exports to African markets at **USD 2.47 billion (2023)**, every hour saved has measurable value (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Demurrage alone commonly costs **USD 200–300 per truck per day**, with additional fuel burn and driver overtime pushing total delay costs to **15–20%** on affected consignments (African Development Bank [AfDB], 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Policy actions. (1) Make NESW the single front-door for all agencies—URA/ASYCUDA World, UNBS, MAAIF (SPS), immigration, and port/OSBP systems—using API-based interoperability (pre-arrival processing, e-payments, e-certificates). (2) Deploy **risk-based inspection** with data analytics (RECTS movement histories, trader compliance scores) so that high-compliance operators receive green-lane treatment while scarce inspection resources target outliers. (3) Mandate electronic document exchange with Kenya/Tanzania to cut re-keying and re-testing, in line with the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement** (WTO, 2022). (4) Provide low-bandwidth and offline capture to mitigate connectivity outages that currently push transactions back to manual workarounds.

Expected results. A conservative reduction of **24–72 hours** per consignment translates into avoided demurrage of **USD 200–900 per truck**, plus fuel and labor savings—easily **USD 1,000+** on many long-haul shipments. If only **30%** of Uganda's EAC-destined consignments (**~USD 740 million**) realize a **2%** logistics saving via NESW + risk-based inspections, annualized exporter gains exceed **USD 14–15 million**, alongside lower consumer prices and fewer spoilage losses for perishables (FAO, 2021; UBOS & BoU, 2023).

Quality and compliance gains. Digital pre-clearance and e-SPS certificates reduce handling time for temperature-sensitive goods, cutting loss rates that can reach **15–20%** without timely release (FAO, 2021). NESW audit trails also improve predictability and curb informal payments, strengthening trust, credit access, and job creation across logistics and agro-processing value chains (AfDB, 2023).

5.1.5 Gender-Sensitive Policies

Gender-sensitive trade facilitation is central to inclusive growth. Evidence shows that **70–80% of Uganda's informal cross-border traders are women**, mainly dealing in

agricultural produce such as beans, bananas, and fish (Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative [EASSI], 2024). Yet, women face disproportionate barriers: limited access to affordable credit, harassment at borders, and lack of gender-responsive services. These challenges push many into informality, restricting Uganda's ability to maximize benefits from regional markets.

Expanding affordable credit through targeted guarantee schemes and digital microfinance would enable women to scale up volumes and invest in value addition. This is critical given that Uganda's informal exports were valued at **USD 566.6 million in 2023**, much of it driven by women traders (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023).

Harassment-free trading environments are equally urgent. According to the **World Bank (2022)**, informal payments and intimidation increase trade costs in East Africa by **5–10%**, disproportionately impacting women. Establishing **dedicated women's trade desks** at One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) with trained officers can provide safe reporting mechanisms, faster clearance, and tailored support.

When women are empowered with finance, safety, and recognition, the ripple effects extend to **household welfare, food security, and GDP growth**. Ensuring women traders' formal participation will not only improve compliance and reduce informality but also enhance Uganda's competitiveness under the **AfCFTA** and **EAC Common Market Protocol**.

5.2 Regional-Level Recommendations (East African Community & COMESA)

5.2.1 Harmonization of Standards and SPS Protocols

A key barrier to Uganda's agricultural trade is the lack of mutual recognition of **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) certificates** across East African Community (EAC) states. Currently, goods certified by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) or the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) are often subjected to **duplicative inspections and re-testing** in Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This results in clearance delays of **24–72 hours** and export losses estimated at over **USD 228.2 million annually** (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023).

The lack of harmonized SPS protocols undermines Uganda's competitiveness in key commodities. For example, maize and beans worth over **USD 357 million in 2023** were frequently rejected or delayed due to aflatoxin concerns, despite certification from Ugandan authorities (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2021). Similarly, dairy and poultry exports face repeated re-testing in Kenya, inflating costs and eroding profit margins.

Accelerating mutual **recognition agreements (MRAs)** within the EAC framework would streamline compliance, reduce transaction costs, and improve predictability. The **World Bank (2022)** estimates that eliminating duplicative SPS checks could cut regional trade costs by **15–20%**, while boosting Uganda's agricultural export volumes and sustaining jobs in agro-processing and logistics.

By adopting harmonized standards, Uganda can ensure its agricultural products consistently meet consumer needs for both **quality and safety**, while improving delivery

timelines and reducing spoilage. This policy is essential for leveraging opportunities under the AfCFTA and achieving Uganda's **6% GDP growth target** under NDP IV.

5.2.2 Strengthen NTB Monitoring and Enforcement

Uganda should **fully empower the EAC NTB Elimination Committee** and upgrade the **EAC NTB Mobile App** to close persistent enforcement gaps. Cumulatively, the EAC had **~257 reported NTBs by June 2022** with a **94.9% resolution rate**, yet fresh cases keep emerging (Trade Catalyst Africa, 2022). Recent data show **16 NTB complaints (June 2022–June 2023)** and average resolution times improving to **~88 days**, following the app's rollout and NMC capacity building (EAC Secretariat, 2023; 2024). The legal basis exists—the **EAC Elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers Act (2017)** and Time-Bound Programme—but implementation remains uneven (EAC Secretariat, n.d.).

Actionable upgrades: (1) hard-wire **service-level agreements (SLAs)** for line agencies with automatic **escalation** from NMCs to the Regional Monitoring Committee and Council; (2) enhance the app with **API links** to national trade systems, offline/USSD reporting, evidence uploads, and a **public dashboard** showing case status/age; (3) adopt **risk-based triage** so high-impact NTBs (e.g., border closures, duplicative SPS tests) receive 7/14/30-day resolution clocks.

Expected impact: Faster NTB resolution reduces border time by **24–72 hours** on affected consignments and cuts delay costs (demurrage, fuel, spoilage). Regionally, NTBs have been estimated to cost **~USD 16.7 million** in documented cases, with under-reported losses likely higher (TradeMark Africa, 2024). Stronger enforcement directly supports Uganda's exporters in maize, beans, dairy, fish and manufactured goods, protects jobs along logistics/agro-processing chains, and aligns with **AfCFTA** and **WTO-TFA** commitments.

5.2.3 Corridor Security and Infrastructure

Enhancing **security and infrastructure along high-risk trade corridors** is critical to lowering costs and improving Uganda's regional competitiveness. The **Elegu–Nimule (Uganda–South Sudan)** and **Mpondwe–Kasindi (Uganda–DRC)** routes are particularly vulnerable to insecurity, arbitrary checkpoints, and poor road conditions. According to the **Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority (NCTCA, 2024)**, these factors inflate transport costs by **20–25%**, eroding trader profitability and consumer welfare.

South Sudan alone imported **USD 503.5 million** in Ugandan goods in 2023, but insecurity along Nimule road—including armed extortion, theft, and road ambushes—continues to disrupt shipments (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Similarly, DRC-bound exports valued at **USD 355.8 million formally** and **USD 108 million informally** in 2023 face delays at Mpondwe due to both insecurity and multiplicity of local taxes (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Each additional checkpoint adds **USD 50–100** per truck in informal "facilitation fees" (World Bank, 2022).

Policy measures should include: (1) deploying **joint border patrols** and electronic cargo tracking to reduce extortion; (2) rationalizing checkpoints to no more than **three per corridor**, aligned with EAC protocols; and (3) accelerating road rehabilitation and weighbridge automation under the **Northern Corridor Integration Projects**.

Reducing insecurity and checkpoints could save traders **USD 1,000–1,500 per trip**, expand regional export earnings by over **USD 50 million annually**, and safeguard thousands of jobs in logistics and agribusiness. This aligns with **NDP IV** priorities on trade facilitation and infrastructure modernization.

5.2.4 Expand Simplified Trade Regimes (STRs)

Expanding the **Simplified Trade Regime (STR)** is a strategic intervention to unlock inclusive cross-border trade. Under COMESA provisions, consignments worth **below USD 2,000** qualify for duty-free access with simplified documentation (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa [COMESA], 2022). Yet, limited awareness and uneven implementation mean that many small-scale traders—particularly women and youth—remain excluded from its benefits.

Women constitute **70–80% of Uganda's informal cross-border traders**, handling commodities such as beans, maize, bananas, and fish (Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative [EASSI], 2024). In 2023, Uganda's informal exports were valued at **USD 566.6 million**, equivalent to **8.2% of total exports**, much of it managed by women traders (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Effective use of STRs could substantially reduce compliance costs, curb informal payments, and incentivize formalization.

Policy measures should prioritize: (1) **expanding STR coverage** beyond a limited goods list to include more agricultural and processed products; (2) rolling out **awareness campaigns** in local languages to boost uptake; (3) deploying **digital STR forms** accessible via mobile phones to reduce paperwork barriers; and (4) setting up **STR helpdesks at border posts** to guide traders, particularly women and youth with limited literacy.

If just **25% of informal exports (USD 141 million)** transitioned into formal STR channels, Uganda could unlock new tax revenues, enhance trade data accuracy, and improve trader protections. Strengthening STR implementation aligns with the **EAC Customs Union Protocol** and **AfCFTA objectives**, ensuring inclusive participation in regional markets while improving consumer access to safe, affordable, and quality goods.

5.2.5 Promote Cooperative-Led Structured Trade

Strengthening cooperative-led structured trade is critical for improving Uganda's agricultural competitiveness. Currently, **over 60% of maize and beans**—Uganda's leading staples for regional trade—are aggregated through cooperatives (East African Grain Council [EAGC], 2023). This positions cooperatives as pivotal actors in ensuring consistent supply volumes, quality compliance, and bargaining power across the value chain.

In 2023, Uganda exported **465,000 metric tonnes of maize worth USD 172 million and 320,000 metric tonnes of beans valued at USD 185 million**, with Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo as the top destinations (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). However, fragmented marketing systems and weak cooperative governance often undermine farmers' ability to benefit fully from these markets.

Promoting **regional platforms such as the EAC Grain Trade Platform** can address these challenges by linking cooperatives directly with bulk buyers, improving price transparency,

and reducing post-harvest losses through collective storage and certification systems. Policy actions should include capacity building in **governance and financial management**, access to affordable credit, and investment in **warehouse receipt systems** that enable cooperatives to negotiate better terms.

If cooperatives can raise structured trade participation by even **15%**, Uganda could unlock an additional **USD 50–70 million annually** in grain trade revenues, create jobs in storage, logistics, and processing, and ensure that consumers across the EAC have reliable access to safe, high-quality staples.

5.3 Continental-Level Recommendations (AfCFTA and AU Frameworks)

5.3.1 Leverage AfCFTA Mechanisms

Uganda should actively leverage the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** mechanisms—particularly its NTB reporting and monitoring tools—to address persistent **discriminatory tariffs and restrictions** within regional markets. Despite the existence of the EAC framework, Ugandan exports of milk, poultry, maize, and sugar continue to face repeated bans or levies, costing the country over **USD 228 million annually** in lost trade opportunities (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023).

The AfCFTA provides a continental NTB reporting, monitoring, and elimination system that complements EAC efforts, enabling traders and governments to escalate unresolved cases. Projections by the **World Bank (2020)** show that AfCFTA could **boost intra-African trade by 33%** and lift **30 million people out of poverty by 2035**, with agriculture expected to be a major beneficiary. For Uganda, where over **65% of exports are agricultural**, harmonized rules and dispute resolution mechanisms under AfCFTA will reduce barriers, enhance competitiveness, and expand access to continental markets.

Operationalizing these tools requires strengthening Uganda’s NTB National Monitoring Committee, training cooperatives and SMEs to use the online platform, and ensuring timely government response to reported cases. If Uganda captures even **5% of projected AfCFTA trade gains**, this could translate into **USD 300–400 million in additional export revenues annually**, while safeguarding jobs in farming, logistics, and agro-processing.

5.3.2 Continental Digital Customs Integration

Uganda should prioritize **aligning its customs systems with AfCFTA’s emerging digital platforms**, building on commitments under the **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**. Current clearance delays of **24–72 hours per consignment** result from fragmented systems, manual paperwork, and duplicative inspections (World Bank, 2022). Integrating Uganda’s **ASYCUDA World** with AfCFTA’s digital tools for **pre-arrival processing, e-payments, and risk-based inspections** would significantly reduce transaction times and costs.

Uganda’s exports to Africa reached **USD 2.47 billion in 2023**, with agriculture accounting for over **65%** of the total (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Every hour saved in clearance contributes to lower demurrage, fuel, and labor costs—losses that can average **USD 200–300 per truck per day**. Studies estimate that digital integration could cut regional trade costs by **15%**, equivalent to savings of **USD 740 million annually** across the EAC, while boosting Uganda’s competitiveness (African Development Bank [AfDB], 2023).

Continental digital integration also enhances transparency and reduces corruption by limiting face-to-face interactions. For perishable goods, faster release would reduce spoilage, currently responsible for **15–20% of losses** in cereals and horticultural exports (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2021).

By harmonizing Uganda's systems with AfCFTA platforms, the country can lower costs, expand trade volumes, and deliver consistent, high-quality agricultural produce to consumers across Africa.

5.3.3 Continental Food Security Corridors

Uganda has the potential to become a **regional food hub** under the AfCFTA by strategically aligning its surplus production of maize, beans, and dairy with demand in food-deficit African states. In 2023, Uganda exported **465,000 metric tonnes of maize worth USD 172 million** and **320,000 metric tonnes of beans valued at USD 185 million**, mainly to Kenya, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Dairy exports also grew to **USD 104 million in 2024**, marking a **15% increase** from 2022 levels (Dairy Development Authority [DDA], 2024).

Meanwhile, African markets such as Sudan, Somalia, and parts of the Sahel face chronic food deficits. The **World Bank (2020)** projects that the AfCFTA could raise intra-African agricultural trade by **49% by 2035**, creating opportunities for Uganda to expand structured food corridors. Positioning Uganda within continental food security strategies would reduce dependence on extra-African imports and strengthen resilience against global price shocks.

Policy actions should include upgrading storage and cold-chain facilities, investing in grain standardization, and negotiating preferential access through AfCFTA's agricultural protocols. If Uganda captures just **10% of projected continental import substitution demand**, it could unlock **USD 300–400 million annually**, create jobs in processing and logistics, and enhance regional food security.

5.3.4 Gender Mainstreaming in Trade Policy

Mainstreaming gender equity in trade policy is vital for Uganda's competitiveness and inclusive growth. Women dominate informal cross-border trade, contributing over **USD 558.3 million in exports in 2023**, equivalent to **8.2% of Uganda's total exports** (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). Despite this, women remain marginalized in formal policy frameworks, facing barriers such as limited access to credit, harassment, and lack of supportive infrastructure.

Institutionalizing **African Union (AU) protocols on gender and trade**, such as the AU Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment and AfCFTA's gender mainstreaming commitments, would embed equity into Uganda's national trade facilitation agenda. This means establishing **dedicated women's trade desks** at One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs), integrating gender-sensitive indicators into NTB monitoring, and expanding microfinance and guarantee schemes tailored to women-led cooperatives.

Evidence from the **World Bank (2020)** shows that closing gender gaps in trade could raise African GDP by **2–3% annually**. For Uganda, empowering women traders—who constitute **70–80% of informal cross-border traders** (Eastern African Sub-Regional

Support Initiative [EASSI], 2024)—would not only formalize trade flows but also enhance household welfare, food security, and job creation.

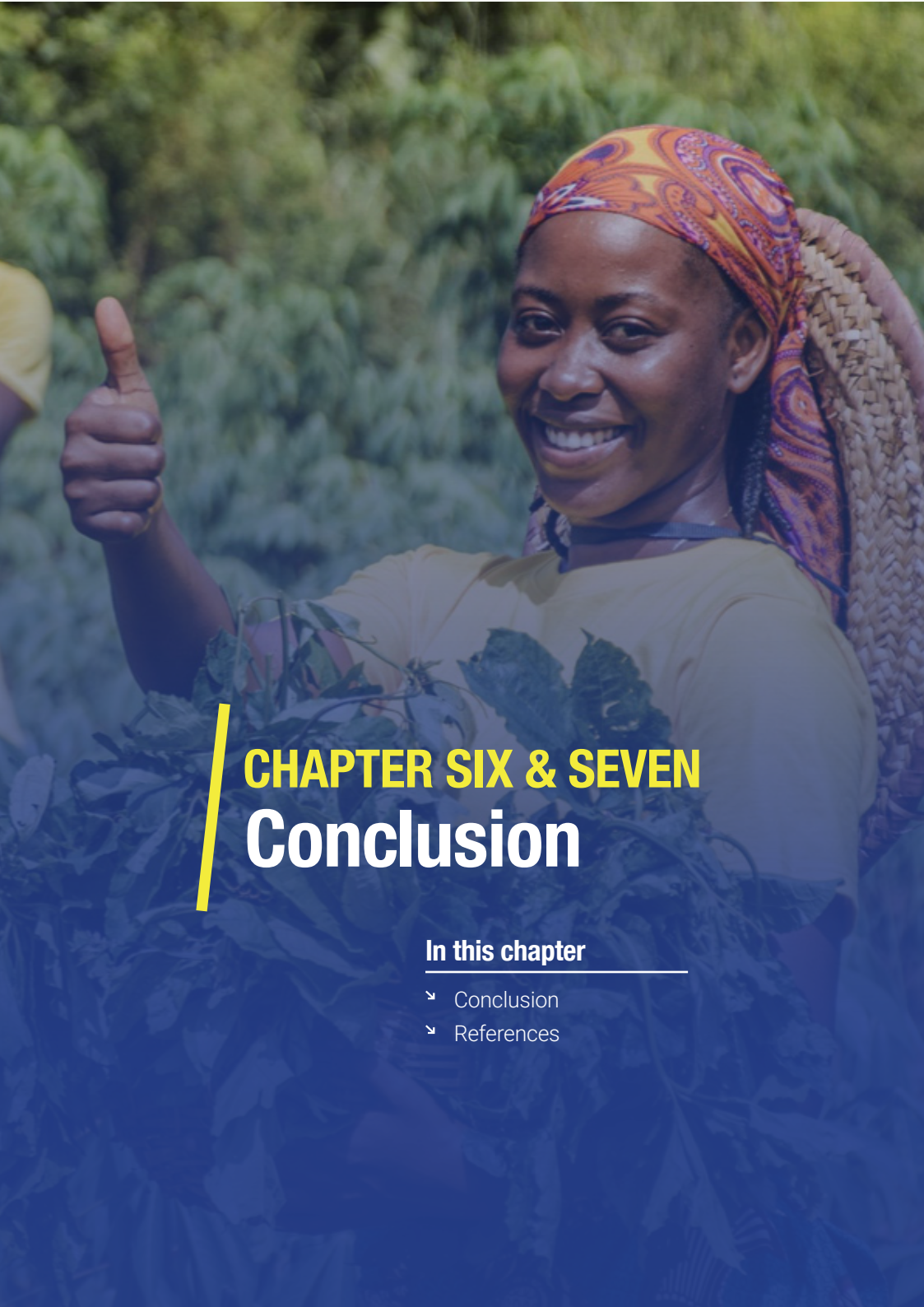
By embedding gender mainstreaming in trade policy, Uganda can ensure that women traders gain visibility, institutional support, and equitable access to the opportunities presented by the **AfCFTA** and **NDP IV**.

5.3.5 Continental Infrastructure Financing

Uganda's competitiveness in regional trade is significantly undermined by high logistics costs tied to overreliance on partner states' ports. Currently, **over 90% of Uganda's imports and exports transit through Mombasa and Dar es Salaam**, exposing traders to congestion, delays, and high port charges (World Bank, 2022). Transport inefficiencies on the Northern and Central Corridors increase costs by **20–30%**, with Ugandan traders paying up to **USD 1,800 per container** more than peers in coastal states (African Development Bank [AfDB], 2023).

Advocating for **African Union (AU)-led financing of regional transport corridors**—including the **Northern Corridor, Central Corridor, and the Port Bell–Mwanza inland waterway**—would diversify access routes, lower costs, and strengthen Uganda's role as a regional food hub. For instance, upgrading the Port Bell–Mwanza ferry link could reduce cargo transit times to **48 hours**, compared to **7–10 days** via Mombasa road transport (Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority [NCTTCA], 2024).

Infrastructure financing under AU and AfCFTA frameworks would also support the movement of Uganda's agricultural exports, which reached **USD 2.47 billion to African markets in 2023** (Uganda Bureau of Statistics [UBOS] & Bank of Uganda [BoU], 2023). By cutting logistics costs even by 15%, Uganda could unlock **USD 370 million annually** in trade savings, boost farmer incomes, and enhance consumer access to affordable food across Africa.



CHAPTER SIX & SEVEN

Conclusion

In this chapter

- Conclusion
- References

Conclusion

Uganda's cross-border agricultural trade stands at the heart of its economic growth, regional integration, and poverty reduction strategies. Agriculture contributes **24.1% to GDP** and employs over **70% of the labour force**, yet persistent inefficiencies undermine the sector's competitiveness (UBOS, 2024). This study demonstrates that while Uganda has made notable progress in implementing trade facilitation mechanisms—including the establishment of **One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs)**, automation through **ASYCUDA World**, and the adoption of regional frameworks such as the **EAC Customs Union** and **COMESA STR**—trade remains hampered by **non-tariff barriers (NTBs)**, **duplicative inspections**, **delays averaging 48–72 hours**, and **high logistics costs**.

At the regional level, Uganda's exports to the **EAC declined from USD 1.88 billion in 2023/24 to USD 1.66 billion in 2024/25**, representing a loss of **USD 228.2 million (UGX 820.5 billion) (UBOS & BoU, 2025)**. These losses are largely attributable to NTBs, including SPS-related disputes, discriminatory levies, and arbitrary restrictions on staples such as maize, milk, and poultry. For instance, Kenya's intermittent bans on Ugandan maize exports—ostensibly due to aflatoxin concerns—have disrupted flows worth over **USD 121 million annually** (The East African, 2021). Similarly, duplicative SPS testing across borders contributes to export losses exceeding **USD 228 million annually** across the EAC (EAC Secretariat, 2024).

The economic impacts of these inefficiencies are profound. Traders report direct financial losses of **USD 100–250 per day per consignment** due to clearance delays, alongside indirect costs such as demurrage, fuel wastage, and customer attrition. Spoilage of perishable goods—including fish, milk, vegetables, and eggs—results in losses of up to **20% of shipment value**, equating to **UGX 3.5–4.2 billion annually** (AfDB, 2023; FAO, 2021). Transport costs across key corridors remain **15–25% higher than global averages**, driven by insecurity (e.g., along the Elegu–Nimule route), poor infrastructure, and multiple checkpoints (World Bank, 2022).

From a social perspective, the burden of inefficiencies disproportionately affects **women and youth**, who dominate informal trade. Women constitute **70–80% of informal cross-border traders**, contributing an estimated **USD 558 million annually**, yet face gender-specific constraints such as harassment, limited credit, and the absence of gender-sensitive facilities (EASSI, 2024). Informality—accounting for **16–20% of Uganda's total exports**—is often a rational response to high compliance costs and complex documentation, but it denies traders legal protections and the government substantial revenue (UBOS & BoU, 2023).

The institutional landscape reflects progress but also persistent governance gaps. Although the EAC NTB elimination mechanism has improved resolution rates to **94.9% by 2022**, unresolved barriers rose from **114 in 2015 to 257 by 2022**, underscoring weak enforcement (Trade Catalyst Africa, 2025). Uganda's **National Monitoring Committee on NTBs** remains under-resourced, limiting its ability to escalate cases effectively. Moreover, while the digitization of customs has cut clearance times at Busia to as little as **1–2 hours under normal conditions**, recurrent internet downtimes, power outages, and arbitrary fines undermine trader confidence.

Despite these constraints, the study underscores Uganda's potential to position itself as a **regional food hub under AfCFTA**. Agriculture already accounts for **over 65% of Uganda's formal and informal exports** to regional markets (UBOS & BoU, 2023). Surplus production of maize, beans, dairy, and fish could be strategically aligned with food-deficit states across Africa, tapping into AfCFTA's projected potential to **boost intra-African trade by 33% and lift 30 million people out of poverty by 2035** (World Bank, 2020).

The findings also confirm that investment in **border infrastructure, harmonized SPS protocols, and digital trade systems** yields measurable efficiency gains. For example, the Regional Electronic Cargo Tracking System (RECTS) has reduced cargo transit time from Mombasa to Kampala from over **7 days to 4–5 days** (EAC Secretariat, 2024). Likewise, the COMESA STR, with its duty-free threshold of **USD 2,000 per consignment**, has provided critical opportunities for small-scale women traders, though awareness and uptake remain limited.

To translate these opportunities into sustained growth, the conclusion highlights four strategic imperatives:

- i. **Deepen institutional accountability** – Strengthen the NTB elimination architecture at national and regional levels, empower the EAC NTB Committee, and enhance transparency through digital reporting platforms.
- ii. **Invest in inclusive infrastructure** – Upgrade OSBPs with reliable power, ICT systems, cold-chain storage, and gender-sensitive facilities. Address congestion at Busia and Malaba by expanding lanes, creating offsite packing yards, and upgrading feeder roads.
- iii. **Promote formalization of informal trade** – Incentivize small-scale traders to transition into formal systems by reducing compliance costs, simplifying documentation, and expanding access to affordable credit.
- iv. **Harness AfCFTA and digital integration** – Fully operationalize Uganda's electronic single window, align with continental customs platforms, and leverage AfCFTA reporting mechanisms to secure fairer access to regional markets.

In conclusion, Uganda's agricultural trade remains a cornerstone of national development and regional integration, but inefficiencies cost the economy **hundreds of millions of dollars annually**, erode farmer incomes, and constrain job creation. By addressing NTBs, investing in infrastructure, and embedding gender-sensitive reforms, Uganda can reduce clearance delays from **72 to under 24 hours**, cut trade costs by up to 30%, and position itself as a competitive supplier of safe, affordable, and high-quality agricultural products to both regional and continental markets. Doing so will not only enhance profitability and resilience for traders but also contribute significantly to Uganda's aspirations under **NDP IV** and the **AfCFTA agenda** of building a more integrated, inclusive, and prosperous Africa.

References

1. African Development Bank. (2023). *African economic outlook*. Abidjan: AfDB.
2. African Union. (2018). *Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*. Addis Ababa: AU.
3. Afrobarometer. (2025). *Ugandans' perceptions of cross-border trade*. Kampala: Afrobarometer.
4. Agriculture and Food Authority–Kenya Sugar Directorate. (2024). *Sugar permit and quota circulars*. Nairobi: Government of Kenya.
5. Bank of Uganda. (2024). *Annual report 2023/24*. Kampala: BoU.
6. Bank of Uganda, & Uganda Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Informal cross-border trade survey*. Kampala: BoU & UBOS.
7. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. (2022). *Simplified Trade Regime guidelines*. Lusaka: COMESA Secretariat.
8. COMESA. (2023). *Simplified Trade Regime handbook*. Lusaka: COMESA Secretariat.
9. Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
10. Dairy Development Authority. (2024). *Annual dairy export report 2024*. Kampala: DDA.
11. Democratic Republic of Congo Market Study. (2024). *Uganda–DRC informal trade report*. Kinshasa: Ministry of Trade.
12. East African Business Council. (2025). *Private sector position paper on NTBs*. Arusha: EABC.
13. East African Community. (2019). *Common Market Protocol*. Arusha: EAC.
14. East African Community Secretariat. (n.d.). *Monitoring the elimination of non-tariff barriers*. <https://www.eac.int>
15. East African Community Secretariat. (2023). *Regional trade and NTB monitoring report*. Arusha: EAC Secretariat.
16. East African Community Secretariat. (2023, December 9). *EAC and TradeMark Africa unveil innovative app to tackle NTBs*. Arusha: EAC.
17. East African Community Secretariat. (2024). *OSBP and NTB monitoring updates*. Arusha: EAC Secretariat.
18. East African Community Secretariat. (2024, February 12). *EAC embarks on use of mobile app to eliminate NTBs*. Arusha: EAC.
19. East African Grain Council. (2023). *Regional grain trade report*. Nairobi: EAGC.
20. Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative. (2024). *Women in cross-border*

trade study. Kampala: EASSI.

21. **Food and Agriculture Organization. (2021).** *Food security and trade in East Africa.* Rome: FAO.
22. **International Trade Centre. (2023).** *Women and youth in cross-border trade.* Geneva: ITC.
23. **Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization. (2023).** *Maize trade flows in East Africa.* Nairobi: KALRO.
24. **MillingMEA. (2025).** *Regional milling industry outlook.* Nairobi: MillingMEA.
25. **Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. (2024).** *Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan 2021–2025.* Kampala: MAAIF.
26. **Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives. (2022).** *National Export Development Strategy 2022/23–2026/27.* Kampala: MTIC.
27. **Monitor. (2025).** *Kenya–Uganda maize and milk ban disputes.* Daily Monitor.
28. **National Planning Authority. (2024).** *National Development Plan IV (2025/26–2029/30).* Kampala: NPA.
29. **Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority. (2024).** *Transport observatory report.* Mombasa: NCTTCA.
30. **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2018).** *Trade facilitation indicators.* Paris: OECD.
31. **Private Sector Foundation Uganda. (2024).** *Policy brief on NTBs.* Kampala: PSFU.
32. **Private Sector Foundation Uganda. (2025).** *Policy and market access study on maize, rice, and beans in Eastern Uganda.* Kampala: PSFU.
33. **The East African. (2021, March 6).** *Kenya bans Ugandan maize over aflatoxin claims.* Nairobi: Nation Media Group.
34. **The East African. (2025).** *NTB disputes in Uganda–EAC trade.* Nairobi: Nation Media Group.
35. **Trade Catalyst Africa. (2022, August 29).** *How non-tariff barriers affect trade in the EAC.* <https://www.tradecatalystafrica.com>
36. **Trade Catalyst Africa. (2025).** *EAC NTB monitoring and resolution report.* Nairobi: Trade Catalyst Africa.
37. **TradeMark Africa. (2024, April 18).** *Burundi cross-border traders tipped on how to report trade barriers.* Nairobi: TMA.
38. **TradeMark Africa. (2023).** *Time release study at Busia and Malaba OSBPs.* Nairobi: TMA.
39. **Tralac. (2023).** *Women in informal cross-border trade.* Stellenbosch: Trade Law Centre.
40. **Uganda Bureau of Statistics. (2023).** *Statistical abstract.* Kampala: UBOS.

41. **Uganda Bureau of Statistics. (2024).** *Annual agricultural module report.* Kampala: UBOS.
42. **Uganda Bureau of Statistics, & Bank of Uganda. (2023).** *Informal cross-border trade survey 2023.* Kampala: UBOS & BoU.
43. **Uganda Coffee Development Authority. (2024).** *Annual coffee report.* Kampala: UCDA.
44. **UN Women. (2024).** *Gender and cross-border trade: Policy brief.* New York: UN Women.
45. **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2022).** *Trade facilitation reforms in Africa.* Geneva: UNCTAD.
46. **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. (2021).** *AfCFTA and intra-African trade.* Addis Ababa: UNECA.
47. **World Bank. (2020).** *The African Continental Free Trade Area: Economic and distributional effects.* Washington, DC: World Bank.
48. **World Bank. (2022).** *Trade facilitation and logistics in East Africa.* Washington, DC: World Bank.
49. **World Bank. (2023).** *Logistics and trade facilitation in Uganda.* Washington, DC: World Bank.
50. **World Trade Organization. (2015).** *Trade facilitation agreement overview.* Geneva: WTO.
51. **World Trade Organization. (2017).** *Trade Facilitation Agreement implementation report.* Geneva: WTO.
52. **World Trade Organization. (2022).** *Trade Facilitation Agreement implementation review.* Geneva: WTO.



Business growth is our business

PSFU
PLOT 43 NAKASERO ROAD KAMPALA
P.O BOX 7683 UGANDA
TEL: +256 312263850
psfu@psfu.org.ug
www.psfuganda.org