



A One Stop Border Post is a shared space located at a border crossing between two adjoining countries, or in its proximity, where the border agencies of the two States with inspection responsibilities on goods, persons and vehicles (e.g. Customs, Immigration, Police, health authorities, veterinary authorities, etc.) carry out their functions in a combined and coordinated manner.

Traditional border crossing posts are characterised by the “double stop” concept, where two separate sets of activities are performed in the country of exit first and in that of entry after. Once the exit procedures are completed in the country of exit, similar procedures and inspection processes need to be fulfilled in the country of entry.

The main disadvantage of this approach is that travellers, drivers and traders have to submit redundant information and data to the administrations of both the adjoining countries, with each one of them usually adopting different formalities, forms and procedures for the completion of the relevant paperwork. The more agencies are present at the border, the more bureaucracy traders face.

The advantage of OSBPs is that they eliminate the need for vehicles, travelers and goods to stop twice to undertake duplicated border-crossing formalities. This is possible thanks to combined (joint) controls that reduce the clearance time at border crossing points via an optimisation of both the intra-agency (at national level) and inter-agency (at bi-national level) collaboration. Vehicles bypass the facility in the exit country and go directly to the entry country where both the exit and the entry procedures are simultaneously carried out. Clearance formalities for goods, people and means of transport exiting one country and entering another one, are usually conducted in a shared space which is referred to as the “Common Control Zone” (CCZ) or “Common Control Area” (CCA), where border officers of adjoining countries are entitled to apply their respective national laws.

Apart from the reduction of time loss at borders because of the reduced waiting time due to the

execution of joint/combined controls by the border agencies of the adjoining countries, OSBPs generate economic spin-offs for the States involved in their development, as they ease the congestion on the corridors to which they are connected (as traffic moves faster and more efficiently along such corridors due to the reduced bureaucracy at the border, OSBPs play a role of attraction of trade), and help in achieving optimum utilisation of often limited resources at borders (like cargo scanners and weigh bridges). In many cases, OSBPs have also proven to be useful in strengthening relations between the adjoining countries involved in OSBP operations.

OSBPs are often established according to three models:

- “juxtaposed”: each side of the common border line has its own border facilities on national territory that are jointly used by the adjoining countries;
- “single country”: where a common facility is entirely located in the territory of only one of the two adjoining countries, or in a “neutral zone” placed under the control of a third party organisation (in the ECOWAS and UEMOA Regions, for instance, OSBPs are built on portions of lands that are donated by the adjoining States (or by one of them) to these two Regional Economic Communities);
- “straddling”: in which OSBP facilities straddle the border (ex. a common building established at the center of the Common Control Zone, which is shared equally by the border agencies of both countries).

Most of OSBPs in Africa have embraced the “juxtaposed” model, where equivalent facilities are built on both sides of the border in each adjoining country, with travellers, goods and the means of transport only stopping in the country of entry where both controls for export and import are conducted. This model, which is particularly suitable in situations where a river or other natural barrier forms the boundary, has become popular because it allows countries to retain their pre-existing facilities at the borders, just upgrading and modifying them so that they can be used for OSBP purposes. Moreover, this model is deemed particularly useful for promoting cooperation between countries (due to the shared hosting arrangements) and particularly suitable in all those cases where the level of traffic/integration between two countries is low or still at a nascent stage.

OSBPs can operate only if specific legislation regulating their functioning is adopted, with specific provisions for dispute resolution of border conflicts between the adjoining States. In particular, bilateral agreements must be concluded for the establishment and implementation of these facilities, giving border control agencies the power to enforce the laws of their country in a designated control zone beyond the state's physical borders.

The first OSBPs which has been built in Africa was the Chirundu Border Post, between Zambia and Zimbabwe, launched as a pilot OSBP within the COMESA region in 2009. The establishment of the Chirundu OSBP is a great attainment in the African Continent, from which lessons should be learned in view of the future implementation of similar projects. In Chirundu, a Bilateral Agreement was adopted by the governments of Zimbabwe and Zambia on 5 December 2009. Other Agreements for the implementation/operation of OSBPs developed by sub-Saharan African Countries (with the only exception of the Malaba OSBP Bilateral Agreement, between Kenya and Uganda, which was drafted in April 2006), are essentially modelled on its provisions.

Today a number of OSBPs are active in Africa and many more are on the waiting list to be implemented. So far, 76 OSBP sites have been identified by the main Regional Economic Communities in Africa, while the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) considers OSBPs central to the implementation of transport projects and essential for enhancing interconnectivity of markets as well as regional integration on the Continent.

In September 2001, an "OSBP source book" was developed as a collaborative effort by many organisations, technical assistance agencies and Regional Economic Communities in Africa, to consolidate in a single text the experiences of all countries that have implemented such kind of facilities, followed by a [second edition](#) , published on May 2016.

In May 2010 the East Africa Community (EAC) developed a Regional regulation on OSBPs, culminated into the adoption of the [One Stop Border Posts Act 2013](#) , and followed by the [EA C One Stop Border Posts Regulations, 2013](#) and an EAC OSBP Procedures Manual (2018) which set out, respectively, the legal framework, the implementing provisions and guidelines for establishing OSBPs in the EAC Region.

Similar regional regulations have been adopted by ECOWAS ([ECOWAS Supplementary Act/SA.1/07/13](#)) and the Union Economique et Monetaire Ouest Africaine/UEMOA (

[Regulation N°15/2009 of 17 November 2009](#)

). During the Tripartite (COMESA, EAC and SADC) OSBP Workshop held from 26 to 27 October 2011 in Johannesburg, also the SADC (Southern African Development Community), launched a project of development of a SADC Regional OSBP Strategy aimed at defining an harmonised and standardized process for establishing OSBPs in the region, which however has not yet been elaborated.

More information on OSBPs [here](#)