# **Our Performance**

For our Three-Year Plan (2017-2019), we are diligently executing our key themes of speed, innovation and digitalization to create the supply chain of the future.



## **Our Performance**

We remain on track to deliver a fully-integrated digital platform that connects suppliers, customers and other partners with end-to-end visibility and data analytics which will enable us to provide better and faster supply chain services.

#### **Results Overview**

## Mid-point of Three-Year Plan (2017 - 2019)

Our Three-Year Plan (2017-2019) got off a strong start in its first year. In 2017, we met our financial targets despite a tough operating environment. The strong start created a higher comparative base for this year, both in terms of core operating profits and margin trends. Pressure on turnover from destocking and deflation remained throughout the first half of 2018. Beginning last year, we spearheaded a comprehensive productivity drive for the entire business

operations, and our productivity initiatives continued in 2018. Since the majority of productivity gains were realized last year, the incremental efficiency is having a smaller impact this year. Furthermore, in order to maintain our leadership position in several of our digitalization efforts, we have accelerated our investments in digitalization, which will add to our operating expenses for the year.

While the retail industry and its supply chain continue to undergo profound fundamental shifts, we remain focused on executing our vision to create the supply chain of the future.

## Multi-year Destocking Trend

All retailers - online and offline - are focused on carrying the right merchandise at the right time to satisfy today's fast changing consumer trends. In order to achieve this, they are looking for solutions to speed up their design-to-production cycle, causing a transitional inventory destocking until optimized inventory levels are reached. Our company has been offering a speed model and digitalization modules to help customers win in the marketplace. Early adopters of the speed model and digitalization modules have already witnessed better operational results in terms of increased sell-through, reduced mark-down and improved inventory levels. Their success has in turn generated additional interest from other customers. While the adoption of our speed model and digitalization modules is positive for the retail industry and our company in the long run, it creates a transitional headwind for our turnover as customers destock their inventory level to a new normal.

At the same time, traditional retailers, who were under pressure from e-commerce a few years ago, have been fighting back with new technologies and innovative solutions. Their investment in e-commerce has allowed them to recapture retail sales and become competitive with pure online competitors. However, this led to an unprecedented number of store closures in 2017 and the pace of store closure is poised to be even higher in 2018. Also, as retailers rationalize their retail footprints, a recalibration of inventory is required. Physical stores typically carry more inventory to create an attractive visual to attract shoppers to the store. As

retailers move retail sales to online channels, they are reducing their retail footprints; thus, destocking their store inventory to lower levels. This destocking transition has had a negative impact to our turnover.

We expect the destocking trend to continue until the industry settles into a new inventory equilibrium. We also believe the destocking is a transient phenomenon through which our customers will achieve better operations and financial strength. Destocking can be a multi-year process depending on the pace of adoption of each customer, who are at different stages in this journey. This means the impact on our business might be spread out. Some retailers will encounter more challenges in adapting to new landscape, resulting in distress and, in some cases, bankruptcies.

#### **Increased Global Competition** in Retail

The competition in retail has increased dramatically due to global e-commerce and logistics. Pure e-commerce brands have been gaining scale and market share as they ship globally. Technology giants have also expanded into brick-and-mortar format in addition to their e-commerce platforms to host brands and facilitate global retail sales. Borderless sales are becoming more of a commonplace as e-commerce platforms around the world sell directly to endconsumers globally. This has led to increased price transparency across the markets and channels. As a response, retailers are permanently promotional in order to capture sales, requiring our customers to source ever more cost-effectively.

## Select Economies Recovering but **Trade Uncertainty Looms**

While the economic recovery, especially in the US, remained solid, uncertainties loomed and posed potential disruptions to the supply chain. Tension between China and the US over trade further escalated in 2018 with potential implications on alternatives for sourcing countries. Separately, China is also tightening environmental regulations, adding to inflationary pressure on manufacturers. With a vast global network of factories spanning more than 50 economies, we are prepared to take advantage of any disruption in the global trade flow and help our customers source the right merchandise at the right time. This remains a core competitive advantage of the Company and a key differentiator during uncertain times.

## Strategic Initiatives

On the strategy front, we have been making strides in transforming the business. The global business development team, a dedicated resource on a global basis set up in early 2017, has successfully developed a strong customer pipeline by adopting a solution-based approach. From this pipeline, we aim to convert new key customers that are critical in meeting our current Three-Year Plan. For existing customers, our account management teams continued to assist our customers in adopting changing business needs and upsell our new value-added services.

Efforts by the corporate development team, set up to bring together diverse partners in the ecosystem, have begun to bear fruits. The team has entered into multiple cooperation arrangements with various technology start-ups and supply chain ecosystem partners to develop and offer new supply chain services to our brands and retailer customers, as well as factories. Our data universe continued to grow organically, providing an ever-more fertile ground for our data analytics team to generate new insights and develop differentiated data analytics products such as the trend engine, helping our customers make better-informed design and buying decisions.

## Speed Model and Digitalization

Our Group remains focused on speed to increase the velocity of our customers' supply chains to meet growing consumer expectations driven by e-commerce. We have created a speed model along with a series of digitalization modules to facilitate the faster supply chain. Early adopters of our supply chain solutions with emphasis on speed and digitalization have achieved better operational results in terms of increased sellthrough, reduced mark-down and improved inventory levels. Their success has generated additional interest from other customers. Furthermore, we have made significant effort and investment in developing and rolling out our digital offerings such as the virtual sampling, materials marketplace, trend engine, production tracking tool, and dynamic costing portal. These digitalization modules can further shorten the design-to-productioncycle and have gained significant traction along various parts of the supply chain.

While we earmarked US\$150 million for spending on digitalization over the Three-Year Plan, the scale of investment in 2017 was relatively conservative since we were in the early exploration stage. With our leadership position in digitalized supply chain established, we have accelerated the investments in digitalization to maintain the momentum and further entrench our lead. Some of this spending will be classified as operating expenses instead of capital expenditures. This will have a negative impact on our operating profit but it will also reduce expected capital expenditure.

Overall, we are pleased with our progress in digitalization and we remain on track to deliver a fully-integrated digital platform that connects suppliers, customers and other partners with end-to-end visibility and data analytics. This will serve as the nucleus of our future service offerings enabling Li & Fung to provide better, faster supply chain services beyond the traditional sourcing services.

#### IPO of Logistics business

Our Logistics business ("LF Logistics") has grown double digit on an annualized basis top and bottom line since it became a part of Li & Fung at the end of 2010. It continues to benefit from the tailwind of the rising middleclass consumption in Asia, e-commerce logistics, geographic and vertical expansions. In order to further accelerate LF Logistics business' growth momentum, we have decided to seek a separate listing of our Logistics business on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. We have engaged professional third parties as advisers to advise on the potential spin-off and separate listing of LF Logistics. Post spin-off, we expect to remain the controlling shareholder of LF Logistics and continue to consolidate the results of LF Logistics in our financial statements. We expect the timing of the listing would be as early as first half 2019 depending on market conditions and other factors. We believe the proposed spin-off will allow us to unlock the value of LF Logistics and accelerate its growth, and further enhance the capital structure and financial flexibility for the Group.

## Strategic Divestment of Product Verticals

In December 2017, we announced the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals, furniture, beauty and sweaters for US\$1.1 billion to further simplify our business. The divestment received approval from our Independent Shareholders in January 2018. The transaction was subsequently approved by the regulators and completed in April 2018. Our financial results and management discussion and analysis will mainly focus on our Continuing Operations, which consist of Supply Chain Solutions, Logistics and Onshore Wholesale businesses. The three Product Verticals are classified as Discontinued Operations and presented separately in the consolidated profit and loss account as a single line item.



## Special Dividend and Redemption of US\$500 Million Perpetual **Capital Securities**

The divestment of the three Product Verticals brought in US\$1.1 billion in cash. In May 2018, we returned US\$520 million to our shareholders in the form of special dividends. In the same month, we also redeemed US\$500 million in perpetual capital securities. The redemption further strengthened our capital structure and it will also reduce our distribution to perpetual capital securities holders by US\$30 million on an annual basis.

#### Results

The following financial results summary mainly focuses on our Continuing Operations, which includes Supply Chain Solutions, Logistics and Onshore Wholesale businesses. The three Product Verticals are classified as Discontinued Operations and are presented separately as a single line item.

	Group Results <sup>1</sup>		
(US\$ million)	1H 2018	1H 2017	Change
		(Restated) <sup>2</sup>	%
Turnover	5,850	6,471	(9.6%)
Total Margin	614	642	(4.4%)
As % of Turnover	10.5%	9.9%	
Operating Costs	489	491	(0.2%)
As % of Turnover	8.4%	7.6%	
Core Operating Profit	124	151	(18.0%)
As % of Turnover	2.1%	2.3%	
Gain on Remeasurement of Contingent Consideration Payable  Profit for the Period	-	30	
- Continuing Operations	79	123	
- Discontinued Operations	(138)	10	
- Total	(59)	133	
Profit Attributable to Shareholders <sup>3</sup>			
- Continuing Operations	50	91	
- Discontinued Operations <sup>1</sup>	(135)	10	
- Total	(85)	101	
Adjusted Profit Attributable to Shareholders <sup>4</sup>	50	62	(19.2%)

- 1. Group results with Discontinued Operations separately presented given the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals in April 2018. The loss attributable to Shareholders of US\$135 million is the result of an operating loss of the discontinued business of the three Product Verticals of US\$21 million during primarily the first three months of 2018 and final disposal losses resulting from discontinued business of US\$114 million.
- 2. Restated historical financials to reflect the three Product Verticals presented as Discontinued Operations
- 3. Excluding profit attributable to holders of perpetual capital securities and non-controlling interests
- Profit attributable to shareholders for Continuing Operations excluding gain on remeasurement of contingent consideration payable.

#### **TURNOVER**

Group turnover, on a like-for-like basis, excluding the impact of the divestment of the three Product Verticals, decreased by 9.6% to US\$5.9 billion. This was mainly due to customers' ongoing destocking trend and retail store closures. Turnover was also negatively impacted by customers who went through bankruptcy situations in prior year.

These developments presented both opportunities and challenges. While in the short run conservative procurement by our customers led to smaller orders with shorter lead times and hence lowered our turnover, it also provided growth opportunities for our digitalization modules. Customers who adopted these digitalization modules to increase speed have been achieving better sell-through and reduced mark-down rates. This in turn has improved our customers' inventory turns with lower inventory level. Despite the short-term pressure on our turnover, our ability to provide a faster and more flexible supply chain to shorten the supply chain production cycle is helping us cultivate stickier, longer-lasting customer relationships in the medium term.



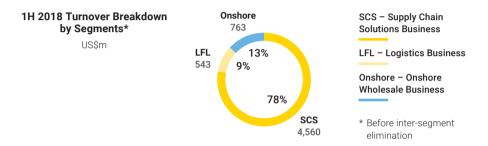
Our Supply Chain Solutions business, Logistics business and Onshore Wholesale business, accounted for 78%, 9% and 13% of Group turnover respectively.

Turnover of Supply Chain Solutions business decreased by 14.4% primarily due to customers' on-going destocking trend, retail store closures and deflationary pressure on input prices as well as the change in business operating model with one of our key customers from a services contract to a joint venture arrangement to facilitate upselling of digital supply chain services.

Logistics business turnover increased by 10.9% driven by strong demand for in-country logistics services. The growth momentum of the Logistics business continued to be largely driven by an increase in domestic consumption in China, e-logistics growth, deeper penetration of our core customers and entry into new markets.

The turnover of our Onshore Wholesale business in the Americas, Europe and Asia increased by 13.1% due to the expansion of our Asia direct onshore wholesale business, as well as our global promotional theme business. We continued to experience pressure on our top line through anemic consumer sentiment and an unstable economic environment particularly in the UK.

The Products segment has been restated since the Annual Report 2017 to include only the Onshore Wholesale business in the Americas, Europe and Asia reflecting the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals.



Excluding the Logistics business, the Group derived 76% and 24% of 2018 first half turnover from soft goods and hard goods respectively. This remained unchanged compared to last year on a like-for-like basis.

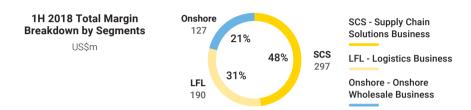


### **TOTAL MARGIN**

On a like-for-like basis, excluding the impact of the divestment of the three Product Verticals on 2017 and 2018 results, total margin decreased by 4.4% to US\$614 million. The decrease was mainly due to lower turnover in the Supply Chain Solutions business, offset by the business growth in Logistics and Onshore Wholesale. Total margin percentage improved by 0.6 percentage point on a like-for-like basis to 10.5% due to the increased contribution from the higher-margin Logistics and Onshore Wholesale businesses.

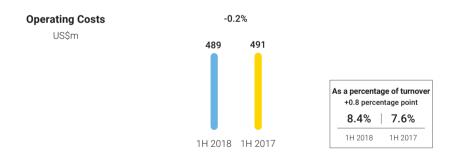


Supply Chain Solutions business, Logistics business and Onshore Wholesale business accounted for 48%, 31% and 21% of the Group's total margin respectively. Total margin increased year on year in Logistics business by 14.2% and Onshore Wholesale business by 2.0%, offset by the reduction in total margin in Supply Chain Solutions business of 15.5%, which primarily was due to the reduction in turnover.

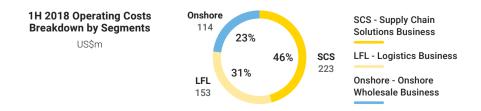


#### **OPERATING COSTS**

On a like-for-like basis, excluding the impact of the divestment of the three Product Verticals in 2017 and 2018 results, operating costs decreased by 0.2% to US\$489 million. The decrease resulted primarily from our sustained efforts to enhance operating efficiency and productivity through the use of technology and process improvement. It was offset by the increase in operating costs in our Logistics business to support its business expansion and organic growth.



Supply Chain Solutions business, Logistics business and Onshore Wholesale business accounted for 46%, 31% and 23% of operating costs respectively. The operating costs of the Supply Chain Solutions business decreased by 9.8% driven by on-going productivity improvement and process streamlining. Operating costs for the Logistics business increased by 14.0% as a result of continued business expansion. The operating costs of the Onshore Wholesale business increased by 3.9% to support the Asia business.



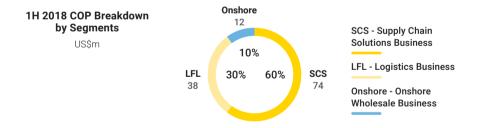
#### CORE OPERATING PROFIT

On a like-for-like basis, excluding the impact of the divestment of the three Product Verticals in 2017 and 2018 results, core operating profit ("COP") decreased by 18.0% to US\$124 million. The decrease in COP was largely due to a decrease in turnover and total margin in the Supply Chain Solutions business, as well as the continued investment in digitalization which is in line with our long-term plan. As a result of the increase in operating cost percentage to turnover, COP margin decreased by 0.2 percentage point to 2.1%.



In the first half of 2018, the Supply Chain Solutions business, Logistics business and Onshore Wholesale business accounted for 60%, 30% and 10% of the COP of the Continuing Operations respectively.

While the Supply Chain Solutions and Onshore Wholesale businesses' COP decreased by 29.1% and 12.9% respectively, the Logistics business' COP increased by 15.1%.

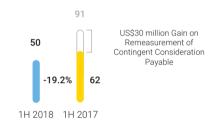


#### NET PROFIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO SHAREHOLDERS

2018 adjusted net profit attributable to shareholders for Continuing Operations decreased by 19.2% to US\$50 million, taking into account that 2017 was impacted by the US\$30 million gain on remeasurement of contingent consideration payable. On a reported basis, net profit attributable to shareholders for Continuing Operations decreased by 45.4%.

The Group recorded a net loss of US\$85 million attributable to shareholders for the first half of 2018 as compared to a net profit of US\$101 million in the first half of 2017, as a result of an operating loss of the discontinued business of the three Product Verticals of US\$21 million during primarily the first three months of 2018 and final disposal losses resulting from discontinued business of US\$114 million. The losses were primarily triggered by the realization of prior period foreign exchange non-cash translation losses of the discontinued business in the Group equity account at the time of closing in 2018.

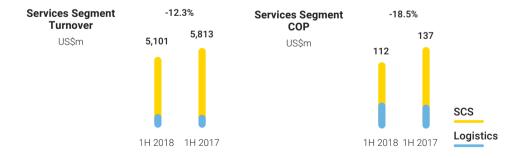
#### **Net Profit Attributable** to Shareholders (Continuing Operations) US\$m



The Services segment is composed of the Supply Chain Solutions business and Logistics business. We provide end-to-end supply chain solutions, from product design, raw materials procurement, production and quality control, to warehouse management and last-mile delivery to retail stores or end-consumers.



Cross-selling between Supply Chain Solutions and Logistics businesses has enhanced business opportunities and further solidified our relationships with customers. In 2018, the Logistics business continued to perform in line with the growth strategy, while the Supply Chain Solutions business has experienced a challenging environment due to destocking and the slower than expected customer adoption of our digital supply chain services. In total, the core operating profit of our Services segment decreased by 18.5%.



## Services - Supply Chain Solutions Business

Supply Chain Solutions business, which accounted for 78% of turnover, is the largest revenue generator for the Group. It offers strategic supply chain services, from product design and development to raw material and factory sourcing as well as manufacturing control for our brands and retail customers. The business has a diversified customer base that includes brands, specialty stores, department stores, big box retailers, e-commerce players, hypermarkets, off-price retailers and clubs. We have also converted our vendor base to a new customer base for services that can improve the factories' operational efficiencies and compliance levels.

Furthermore, we have been making significant strides in our journey of transformation. We have been investing in a new digital strategy to transform the business. It includes four platforms covering raw materials, 3D design, production and vendor management. The raw materials online marketplace connects factories with a global catalogue of available fabric from textile mills. The dedicated digital team in the 3D design platform simplifies the product development process by creating 3D digital designs across various digital tools and aggregating the digital assets in the content library for easy e-commerce, virtual showroom and runway display. The production platform optimizes production with an integrated digital tracking tool, which alert merchandisers to defects and problem issues. The vendor platform is the central point of entry for our vendors in processing orders and transactions, and also gives them access to the digital materials, design and production platforms. Our overall digital platform connects suppliers, customers and other partners with end-to-end visibility and data analytics. This will serve as the nucleus of our future service offerings enabling Li & Fung to provide better, faster supply chain services beyond the traditional sourcing services.

#### Supply Chain Solutions Business Results

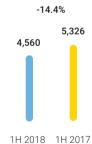
	1H 2018	1H 2017	Change
	US\$m	US\$m	%
Turnover	4,560	5,326	(14.4%)
Total Margin	297	351	(15.5%)
As % of Turnover	6.5%	6.6%	
Operating Costs	223	247	(9.8%)
As % of Turnover	4.9%	4.6%	
Core Operating Profit	74	104	(29.1%)
As % of Turnover	1.6%	2.0%	

In 2018, the destocking trend that we saw at the end of 2017 continued and has impacted the turnover of the Supply Chain Solutions business. Retailers continue to face headwind in the form of pressure on sales and margins. Soft goods remained the largest contributor, accounting for 78% of turnover. Deflationary pressure on input prices remained at a low-singledigit percentage year on year. We continued our efforts to expand our customer base, especially in the off-price segments and in the hard goods product categories. This largely offset pressure from retail store closures and the ongoing destocking trend in the US. Many of our customers have started to embrace our new value proposition: a speed and digital supply chain model, realizing tangible improvements in increased sell-through, reduced mark-down and improved inventory levels. This trend will continue to drive growth with existing customers and attract new ones. We continued to implement effective cost control and focus on enhanced productivity.

#### **TURNOVER**

Turnover of our Supply Chain Solutions business decreased by 14.4% to US\$4.6 billion, Faced with a weak consumer market and a volatile retail environment, retailers continued destocking and reduced their buying programs. In the US, the situation was exacerbated by a high number of store closures, which required less store inventory and led to even more cautious buying patterns. Given the strong sales performance of retailers in the off-price channel and hard goods categories and our increased business development efforts, we have grown our business in these areas. However, the destocking by our customers had a larger negative impact on our turnover in the first half. Given retailers are shipping closer to the major sale seasons, which are all in the second half of the year, this has exacerbated the decrease in turnover in the first half of the year. In addition, we changed the business operating model with one of our key customers from a services contract to joint venture arrangement to facilitate upselling of digital supply chain services, which further impact our recognition of total turnover.





The US, Europe, Asia and Rest of World accounted for 79%, 11%, 2% and 8% of Supply Chain Solutions business turnover in first half of 2018, respectively.

Turnover of the business in the US, Europe, Asia and Rest of World decreased by 11.7%, 30.5%, 32.9% and 4.7%, respectively. Sales in Europe were impacted by changing the operating model with one of our key customers from a service contract to the joint venture arrangement.



#### CORE OPERATING PROFIT

Core operating profit (COP) decreased by 29.1% to US\$74 million while core operating profit margin decreased by 0.4 percentage point to 1.6%. This was driven by an 15.5% decrease in total margin on reduced turnover and decreased total margin of 0.1 percentage points, as offset by an 9.8% decrease in operating costs to US\$223 million. The reduction in total margin was due to the mix shift from the decrease in higher margin accounts across our portfolio and a reduction in business from customers affected by store closure and bankruptcies. Cost savings resulted from productivity enhancement initiatives such as greater use of technology, process reengineering and digitalization. We continued our operational excellence program to re-allocate merchandiser roles closer to production and reorganized the merchandizing structure to accommodate the new digital models. Savings in operating costs were slightly offset by spending on our digitalization, in particular in the areas of 3D design and product development, as well as data analytics and raw materials platform.



## Services - Logistics Business

Logistics business continues its profitable growth momentum. Despite challenging and highly competitive market conditions, in-country logistics services have achieved another stellar first-half performance, with strong top-line and bottom-line growth. As with years past, China continued to lead the way as it benefitted from upsurge of domestic consumption, especially via e-commerce. Our early investment in e-logistics has paid handsome dividends and allowed us to enjoy first-mover advantage. ASEAN advanced aggressively, notching up high growth rates across all its economies where we operate. Our new markets of Korea, Japan and India also recorded impressive results well ahead of plan.

We currently operate nearly 26 million square feet of warehouse space serving customers across the four core verticals of footwear & apparel, fast-moving consumer goods, food & beverage and healthcare. Apart from providing storage and pick/pack service for the domestic market, we have progressively moved up the value chain by offering regional and global hub management, reverse logistics and other value-added services. Following the full implementation of the new Oracle transport management system as well as our digital control tower, transport grew by leaps and bounds. Over the six-month period, we have increased our transport market share by cross-selling to our existing warehousing customers as well as winning new standalone transport customers.

Global freight management was negatively impacted by global trade slowdown. Nevertheless, we continued to build our bench strength, expand our network and invest in state-of-the-art information technology platforms to aggressively grow the base, improve service level and enhance productivity.

By cultivating strong partnership with an extraordinary list of strategic customers, we have retained and grown with our existing customers. By continuing our investment in our overall value proposition, we have wooed and won new customers across the four verticals.

#### **Logistics Business Results**

	1H 2018	1H 2017	Change
	US\$m	US\$m	%
Turnover	543	490	+10.9%
Total Margin	190	166	+14.2%
As % of Turnover	35.0%	34.0%	
Operating Costs	153	134	+14.0%
As % of Turnover	28.1%	27.3%	
Care Operating Duefit	20	22	11E 10/
Core Operating Profit	38	33	+15.1%
As % of Turnover	6.9%	6.7%	

#### **TURNOVER**

Turnover of our Logistics business increased by 10.9% to US\$543 million driven entirely by organic growth. Our new business wins together with the robust growth of consumption in Asia across all channels, in particular e-commerce, have provided strong impetus to in-country logistics business. Furthermore, we have made significant inroads into new markets like Japan, Korea, and India and have newly expanded into the electronics vertical. Weakening global trade and depressed freight rates have impacted our global freight management business.



In-country logistics and global freight management accounted for 65% and 35% of the turnover of the Logistics business.



China is our key market for the Logistics business accounting for 57% of turnover. Rest of Asia, including Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, India, Japan and Korea accounted for 33% of turnover, while Rest of World accounted for 10%.

China turnover increased by 10.8% due to strong growth momentum in the in-country logistics business partially offset by drop in freight rates which affected the global freight management business. Rest of Asia showed strong growth, registering 18.5% in first half 2018 as we ramp up new markets like Japan and Korea. Rest of World turnover decreased by 9.3% as it is purely a freight management business and was impacted by market weakness.

#### CORE OPERATING PROFIT

Core operating profit (COP) increased by 15.1% to US\$38 million, tracking our double digit growth trend of the past seven years. This was mainly driven by new customer wins, geographical expansion and our continued focus on productivity improvement.

Core operating profit margin expanded by 0.2 percentage point to 6.9%. This was largely due to customer mix optimization, productivity gain and increased penetration of the higher-margin value-added services.



## **Products Segment**

The Products segment consisted of our Onshore Wholesale business in three markets – the Americas, Europe, and Asia. The three Product Verticals that were part of this segment exited our Group in the first half 2018. We announced the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals on 14 December 2017, obtained our Shareholders' approval on 31 January 2018 with 99.94% of Independent Shareholder votes in favor of the transaction and completed the transaction in April 2018. The strategic divestment will allow the Company to set the foundation for a more simplified organization with greater agility and focus on its core competencies, and enable our senior management team to focus resources on executing the Three-Year Plan.



#### **Onshore Wholesale Business**

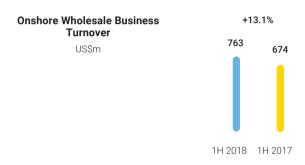
Going forward, the Products segment will consist of the Onshore Wholesale business operating as an onshore supplier in the Americas, Europe and Asia, primarily supplying apparel to largely the same customer base as our Supply Chain Solutions business. The Onshore Wholesale business acts as an onshore importer for customers, and while the terms of each order are agreed on a per-program basis, its relationships with customers are typically long-term and strategic in nature. The business accounted for 13% of the Group's turnover in the first half of 2018. In the first half we have been able to make progress on the strategic development and repositioning of our Onshore Wholesale business to adopt a leaner and more agile structure. Turnover increased 13.1%, however, the business continued to face challenges with a lower total margin percentage due to customers' promotional activities and on-going margin pressure especially in the UK and US markets.

#### **Onshore Wholesale Business Results**

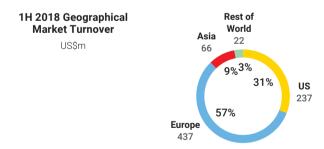
	1H 2018	1H 2017	Change
	US\$m	US\$m	%
Turnover	763	674	+13.1%
Total Margin	127	124	+2.0%
As % of Turnover	16.6%	18.4%	
Operating Costs	114	110	+3.9%
As % of Turnover	15.0%	16.3%	
Core Operating Profit	12	14	(12.9%)
As % of Turnover	1.6%	2.1%	

#### **TURNOVER**

Turnover of the Onshore Wholesale business increased by 13.1% year on year to US\$763 million. We have seen a recovery through turnover increase with some of our customers and turnover increase with our Asia direct business. Our sales to the Asian markets and our business with e-commerce platforms have shown signs of growth. However, short-term customer challenges and margin pressure remain, which would impact our onshore wholesale business.



The US, Europe and Asia accounted for 31%, 57%, and 9% of segment turnover, respectively. Turnover in the US increased by 15.3%, mainly driven by a recovery of some of our major customers. Turnover in Europe remained relatively flat with an increase of 2.2%. Turnover in Asia, while starting off at a low base, tripled from last year as we continue to build up our wholesale business for our Asia customers.



#### CORE OPERATING PROFIT

Core operating profit (COP) for Onshore Wholesale business decreased from US\$14 million to US\$12 million as the turnover growth was offset by the reduction in total margin percentage from 18.4% to 16.6%.

Core operating profit margin decreased by 0.5 percentage point to 1.6%, which was largely driven by a 1.8 percentage point reduction in total margin percentage due to a highly promotional retail environment globally and anemic consumer sentiment in the UK, while our operating costs as a percentage of turnover improved by 1.3 percentage point. We have continued to invest in restructuring the business after the three Product Verticals divestment to adopt a leaner and more agile structure.



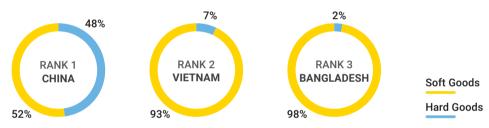
#### **Product Verticals - Discontinued Operations**

With the completion of the strategic divestment following Shareholders' approval in January 2018 and in line with our Annual Report 2017, the three Product Verticals have been classified as Discontinued Operations, similar to the spin-off of Global Brands Group in 2014. For the Product Verticals divestment, we have received a consideration of US\$1.1 billion. The proceeds have been used to pay a special dividend of US\$520 million (47.6 HK cents per share) and to redeem perpetual capital securities of US\$500 million. We have recognized an operating loss attributable to Shareholders of the discontinued business of the three Product Verticals of US\$21 million and a disposal loss of US\$114 million from discontinued business. The losses were mainly triggered by the realization of prior period foreign exchange non-cash translation losses in the Group equity account at the time of closing in 2018.

## **Top Sourcing Countries**

Our global network of factories spanning over 50 economies, allows for flexibility when moving orders from one production country to another to better manage manufacturing constraints and optimize customers' margins. In 2018, our top three sourcing countries were China, Vietnam and Bangladesh. We also have sizeable sourcing operations in other countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia and India. We are among the largest exporters in our product categories in our major sourcing countries. This comprehensive global network, combined with strong local presence, long operating history and critical mass, is one of Li & Fung's unique competitive strengths. As the sourcing landscape continues to evolve with changes in trade policies and sourcing requirements, we are very well positioned to scale our existing operations to source in the most efficient way possible for our customers.

#### **Top Sourcing Countries**



#### People

Our people are our most valuable assets. As at 30 June 2018, we had a total workforce of 17,374. The 17,374 workforce includes 7,320 warehouse-related employees primarily for our Logistics business. Total manpower costs of Continuing Operations for the first half of 2018 were US\$355 million compared with US\$376 million in 2017. We continue to enhance the productivity of our workforce and equip our people for the new digital world. We are grateful for our colleagues' commitment to build the supply chain of the future.

#### **Balance Sheet and Capital Structure**

#### **Strong Cash Position**

After taking into account the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals, Li & Fung continues to have solid recurring cash flow and cash position from Continuing Operations, which comprises Supply Chain Solutions, Logistics and Onshore Wholesale businesses. Our operating cashflow, together with US\$349 million cash on hand carried forward from 31 December 2017, more than adequately funded our working capital, interest expenses, capital expenditure, distribution, and our normal dividends. To summarize key cashflow statement items, other than the use of proceeds relating to the divestment of the three Product Verticals:

- · Operating profit adjusted for non-cash items before working capital changes: US\$158 million
- Working capital outflow of US\$160 million, primary due to a 32% increase in accounts receivable from Global Brands Group as compared to same period last year in June 2017
- Capital expenditures of US\$40 million, and tax paid of US\$20 million
- Net interest expenses of US\$18 million
- Distribution to perpetual capital securities holders of US\$32 million
- 2017 final dividend payments of US\$22 million

In terms of future commitments, the remaining balance of total purchase consideration payable for acquisitions was reduced to US\$55 million by the end of June 2018, of which US\$44 million is earn-out payments to be substantially paid over the course of the remaining of the current year, as well as next year. We continue to be asset-light, and our on-going total capital expenditures mainly include digitalization investments, logistics business expansion, as well as capital expenditures for continuing maintenance.

#### **Strong Balance Sheet**

As at 30 June 2018, our cash position was US\$319 million after the redemption of US\$500 million in perpetual capital securities and payments of the 2017 final and special dividend using the proceeds from the strategic divestment of the three Product Verticals. We have also reduced our acquisition tail payments in form of remaining consideration payable further improving our balance sheet. Our total borrowings remained stable at US\$781 million and net debt (total borrowings minus cash) was US\$462 million as at 30 June 2018. Our weighted average tenure of total borrowing is around two years. The majority of our debt is at a fixed rate and denominated in US dollars.

Given the uncertainties in the global macroeconomic and geopolitical environments, we remain prudent and conservative in managing our balance sheet in order to maintain maximum financial flexibility. During first half of 2018, we have renewed and extended our long-term committed bank loan facilities totaling US\$827 million with an average tenure of three years until 2021. The ample liquidity would allow us to have maximum flexibility in managing our near-term debt maturity profile.

#### **Cash and Gross Debt**

US\$m





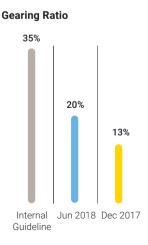
## **Gearing Ratio and Current Ratio**

Our gearing ratio and current ratio of Continuing Operations were 20% and 1.0 respectively as at 30 June 2018 (13% and 1.4 respectively for the Group as at 31 December 2017). The gearing ratio is calculated as net debt divided by total capital. Net debt is calculated as total borrowings (including short-term bank loans, long-term bank loans and long-term notes) less cash and cash equivalents. Total capital is calculated as total equity, as shown in the consolidated balance sheet, plus net debt.

We continued to take a conservative approach in managing our balance sheet and capital structure. As at 30 June 2018, our credit rating was Baa1 according to Moody's and BBB+ according to Standard & Poor's. We are committed to maintaining a strong balance sheet, healthy cash flow and strong credit ratios, with the long-term target of retaining an investmentgrade rating.

#### **Credit Rating**





<sup>\*</sup> On 24 August 2018, Moody's Investors Service has downgraded the Company's credit rating from Baa1 to Baa2, maintaining investment grade.

## **Banking Facilities**

#### **Bank Loans and Overdrafts**

As at 30 June 2018, we had available bank loans and overdraft facilities of US\$1,586 million, of which US\$827 million were committed facilities. The majority of the committed facilities totaling US\$727 million have a tenor of three years with maturities in 2021 or after. Only US\$29 million of the Group's bank loans and overdraft facilities was utilized. Unused limits for bank loans and overdraft facilities amounted to US\$1,557 million, with US\$825 million being unused committed facilities.

#### **Trade Finance**

The Group's normal trading operations are well supported by US\$2 billion in bank trading facilities that mainly include letters of credit issued to suppliers and bills discounting. A letter of credit is a common means of payment to suppliers to support cross-border trades. The Group's payment obligations on letters of credit issued to suppliers will only be crystallized when our suppliers have shipped the merchandise to our customers or to the Group in accordance with all the terms and conditions specified in the related contractual documents. As at 30 June 2018, only approximately 13% of the trade finance facilities was used.

#### **Bank Loans and Overdraft Facilities**

US\$m



## **Contingent Liabilities and** Goodwill

## Adjustments to Purchase **Consideration Payables**

Given the unique nature of our acquired businesses, which are private enterprises that rely on their respective entrepreneurs' commercial skills to drive their success, we generally structure our acquisitions with incentive schemes and contingent payments on purchase consideration payables linked to the future performance of the acquired businesses. We follow a stringent internal financial and accounting policy in evaluating potential adjustment to the estimated fair value of purchase consideration payable in accordance with the accounting standard HKFRS 3 (Revised), Business Combinations.

Our contingent consideration payables are performance-based payments in the form of "earn-out" and "earn-up" payments, which depend on a set of predetermined performance targets mutually agreed upon with entrepreneurs in accordance with sale and purchase agreements.

Earn-out payments are generally payable within three to four years upon completion of a transaction.

Earn-up payments have a high performance target threshold and, if earned, are typically payable over a period of up to five to six years upon completion of a transaction.

While many of our acquired businesses remain profitable and are growing, we may still be required to make a downward fair value adjustment to certain purchase consideration payables should the acquired businesses be unable to achieve the predetermined performance threshold within the specific timeframe as stipulated in the sale and purchase agreement. Given that the contingent consideration entitlement is usually contractual in nature and based on a specific formula linking to a particular threshold, the underlying performance of the acquired businesses could continue to grow, yet we may still be required to adjust the purchase consideration payable, especially if the high performance thresholds of earn-ups are not reached.

## **Goodwill Impairment Tests**

We perform goodwill impairment tests based on the cash-generating units (CGU) that manage acquired businesses in accordance with HKAS 36, Impairment of Assets. Based on our assessment of all of the CGUs under the current operating structure of the Group. we have determined that there was no goodwill impairment as at 30 June 2018, as the recoverable amount of each CGU was in excess of its respective carrying value of the goodwill. We will continue to perform goodwill impairment tests on an on-going basis.

## Risk Management

We have strict policies governing accounting control, credit and foreign exchange risk, and treasury management.

## **Credit Risk Management**

Credit risk mainly arises from trade and other receivables. Our principal trading business carries a higher credit risk profile given that we are acting as a supplier and therefore take full counterparty risk for our customers in terms of accounts receivable and inventory.

In addition, as we provide working capital solutions to our suppliers via LF Credit by selectively settling accounts payable earlier at a discount, we also assume direct counterparty risk for our customers for such receivables. With the increased insolvency risk among global brands and retail customers, we have deployed a global credit risk management framework with a tightened risk profile, and applied prudent policies to manage our credit risk with such receivables that include, but are not limited to, the measures set out below:

· We select customers in a cautious manner. Our credit control team uses a risk assessment system to evaluate the financial strength of individual customers prior to agreeing on trade terms. It is not uncommon for us to require securities (such as standby or commercial letters of credit, or bank guarantees) from customers who fall short of the required minimum score under our risk assessment system

- · A significant portion of trade receivable balances is covered by trade credit insurance or factored to external financial institutions on a non-recourse basis
- We have established a credit risk system with a dedicated team, and tightened policies to ensure on-time recoveries from trade debtors
- We have put in place rigid internal policies that govern provisions made for both inventories and receivables to motivate business managers to step up their efforts in these two areas, and to avoid any significant impact on their financial performance

## Foreign Exchange Risk Management

Most of our cash balances are HK dollar and US dollar deposits with major global financial institutions, and most of our borrowings are denominated in US dollars.

Our revenues and payments are predominantly transacted in US dollars. Therefore, we do not believe there is significant risk exposure in relation to foreign exchange rate fluctuations. There are small portions of sales and purchases transacted in different currencies, for which we arrange hedging through foreign exchange forward contracts.

For transactions that are subject to foreign exchange risk, we hedge our foreign currency exposure once we receive confirmed orders or enter into customer transactions. To mitigate the impact from changes in foreign exchange rates, we regularly review our operations in these countries and make necessary hedging arrangements in certain currencies against the US dollar.

However, we do not enter into foreign currency hedges with respect to the local financial results and long-term equity investments of our non-US dollar foreign operations for either our income statements or balance sheet reporting purposes. Since our functional currency is the US dollar, we are subject to exchange rate exposure from the translation of foreign operations'

local results to US dollars at the average rate for the period of group consolidation. Our net equity investments in non-US dollardenominated businesses are also subject to unrealized translation gain or loss on consolidation. Fluctuation of relevant currencies against the US dollar will result in unrealized gain or loss from time to time, which is reflected as movement in exchange reserve in the consolidated statement of changes in equity.

From a medium-to long-term perspective, we manage our operations in the most cost-effective way possible within our global network. We strictly prohibit any financial derivative arrangement merely for speculation.

#### Outlook

We had a strong start in the first year of our current Three-Year Plan. However, we are cautious of the rapidly changing retail environment around the globe and trade war uncertainties. We remain committed to investing in our digital future and enforcing our competitive advantage, which will help us achieve our long-term strategic and financial goals.

Our Supply Chain Solutions business will continue to face headwinds from destocking for the rest of the year and potentially the upcoming year. Nevertheless, our business development team remains focused on converting the customer pipeline, which is key to achieving the financial targets of the current Three-Year Plan. Given that retailers are shipping closer to the major sale seasons, we believe the majority of the shipment decisions will be made in the second half of the year. With uncertainties of global trade due to recent announced increase in tariffs, we expect brands and retailers will be more cautious in placing orders during the second half of the year, which in turn will impact our business. At the same time, in light of the global trade uncertainty, we see tremendous opportunities for brands and retailers to leverage our global network in mitigating the risk of their global supply chain. Our Three-Year Plan turnover target is contingent upon us winning a few large accounts as new customers. Our business development efforts on digital supply chain solutions continues although we anticipate full customer adoption will take time to materialize. Improving operating efficiencies will always be part of our key tenets. The savings from our productivity drive will be offset by our digitalization investment as we accelerate our digital investment efforts in the second half of the year.

Our in-country logistics business continues to benefit from our expanded geographical coverage, strong demand for global hubbing and e-logistics services as well as our aggressive push on transportation. With the

continuing robust performance of the existing markets and with the successful penetration into new markets such as India and Vietnam, we are poised to ride on the trend of rapidly rising middle-class consumption in Asia for years to come. On the other hand, our global freight management business is expected to be negatively affected by the global trade tariffs situation, as well as the reduction in freight rate. In the meantime, we continue to improve our competitiveness in global freight management business with the recently implemented IT platform, enhanced leadership team and expanded agent network. After multiple years of purposeful expansion, we started to leverage our size to achieve economies of scale. We are confident that this unique competitive advantage together with our selective investment in technology and automation will create a new virtuous cycle of profitable growth.

Our Onshore Wholesale business had a difficult year in 2017 and has refocused its efforts in its turnaround for the rest of the year. While turnaround trend in topline of the business will continue, the retail environment remains promotional, which will be a headwind to the business' total margin. The business plans to leverage its momentum in promotional themes, expand its Asia-to-Asia business, and incorporate productivity initiatives.

Finally, our investment in our digitalization effort is starting to bear fruit with our customers. Overall, we are very pleased with our progress in digitalization and we remain on track to deliver a fully-integrated digital platform that connects suppliers, customers and other partners with end-to-end visibility and data analytics. This will serve as the nucleus of our future service offerings enabling Li & Fung to provide better, faster supply chain services beyond the traditional sourcing services.