

# ESA Newsletter

October - December 2018

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World Customs Organization East & Southern Africa Regional Office for Capacity Building

## 29<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Group

The 29<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Group (RSG) was held from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at Monomotapa Hotel in Harare, Zimbabwe. The meeting was hosted by Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) and attended by representatives of Member administrations, the African Union Commission, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Regional Training Centres, WCO ESA Project II and the ROCB.

Mr. Happhas Kuzvinzwa, Commissioner of Customs ZIMRA, welcomed the delegates to Zimbabwe and highlighted the technical expertise of

**Focused on the implementation of the newly approved Regional Strategy.**

the RSG and their role in providing guidance to the implementation of the Strategy. He stressed the importance of implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement and African Continental Free Trade Area and informed the meeting that Zimbabwe is in the process of setting up the RILO and

requested the Members and other development partners to support the establishment of a vibrant RILO office. Mr. Stephen Magera, Assistant Commissioner, Uganda Revenue Authority and RSG Chair, appreciated Zimbabwe for hosting the ESA meetings and thanked the team for the support and warm welcome extended to all delegates. He recognized and acknowledged all delegates for attending the meeting and highlighted the important role played by the RSG in the execution of

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Delegates at the 29th RSG.

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# EDITORIAL



**H**appy New Year 2019! We are geared up for a greater and prosperous year and hopes you will join us, again, in this journey. Thank you for making our efforts in 2018 worthwhile, for we received positive reviews on this Newsletter from all over the world. We are thankful to the ESA Vice Chair Dicksons Kateshumbwa (Uganda) for his leadership and guidance in our duties. In the year gone by, we received articles from most of our Members, the WCO Regional Training Centres, the Regional Economic Communities, as well as our stakeholders and partners, notably JICA and the African Union. Through your articles, we have continued to showcase various capacity building activities taking place in the Region and within our national administrations.

In this issue, we highlight developments of the last quarter of 2018 and are happy to share developments in our administrations and beyond, including partnerships between South Africa and Zimbabwe, East Africa Community's progress on One Stops Border Posts (OSBP), Seychelles' advancement in compliance and highlights from our development partners, among others.

Once again, we take this opportunity to appreciate all Members, WCO, Regional Training Centres, the African Union Commission, RECs, JICA, WCO ESA Project II and all other development partners for continually supporting the growth of the WCO ESA ROCB Newsletter through regular contribution of articles, we look forward to receiving more articles from you in the new year 2019.

Enjoy the reading.

And have a Glorious 2019.

*Larry Liza*

Director and Editor-in-Chief

## Acknowledgements

JICA

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Mauritius Revenue Authority

Seychelles Revenue Commission

South Africa Revenue Service

South Sudan Customs Service

Tanzania Revenue Authority

World Customs Organization

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# Office Burundais des Recettes

*"Je suis fier de contribuer à la construction du Burundi"*

## Official launching of the Electronic Payment Platform of Customs Duties and Taxes.

**With the introduction of the Electronic Payment of Customs Duties and Taxes, the OBR has just taken a step towards performance and business facilitation.**

It is a satisfactory feeling that all the partners of OBR (Burundi Revenue Authority) showed after the launching of a platform which will allow the electronic payment of customs duties and taxes. The event took place in Bujumbura, Burundi, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2018, at the Hotel Club du Lac Tanganyika.

*"No More movements between Customs offices and Banks to pay customs duties and clear goods; a gain in time and costs,"* said Mr. Joe Dassin RUKUNDO, the Managing Director of FINBANK, a local bank that collaborated with OBR in setting up this electronic platform.

According to the Commissioner General of OBR, Honorable Audace Niyonzima, *"the optimization of revenue for the State cannot be achieved without a strategy to secure the collected cash, moreover, without the use of new technologies"*.

The online declaration of customs duties and taxes has been a reality for some years but yet incomplete! Customs agencies still have move to go to the banks to pay duties and get back to OBR's offices to get the payment receipts. *"The electronic payment platform launched today will therefore complete the online declaration in the customs procedure"*, said again the Commissioner General of OBR.

He thanked all the stakeholders who were involved in this project, particularly UNCTAD, who contributed by bringing in their experts.

The bank professionals, the representatives of customs agencies and the freight forwarders followed the demonstration with interest and appreciated the fact that the operations will no longer be manual. *"The manual payment system has been taking a lot of time, and time*



*is money. Through this new online platform, we are celebrating a new era of paying duties with facility "*, said Mr. Philippe NDIKUMANA, president of the Burundian Association of Customs Agencies and Freight Forwarders.

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, who launched this event, Congratulated the OBR for this step taken in the facilitation of doing business in Burundi. Marie-Salomé Ndabahariye was delighted that *"the service provided to the taxpayers will be improved, the revenue flow will increase and the Government of Burundi will be able*

*to accomplish more development projects for the benefit of the citizens and their country's"*.

From now on, a taxpayer will no longer have to waste his time looking for a receipt from the tax administration since his payment will be seen in real time by the tax collector and thus allowing the customs clearance procedure to go faster.

As a component of Asycuda World Functionality, the electronic payment has been made possible thanks to financial support of the European Union through the COMESA

## 29<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Group

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the regional Strategy. *Mr. Patrick Gyan, Regional Development Manager, WCO*, highlighted the dynamics in the global customs environment and the challenges that they pose. He informed the meeting that the WCO established various Technical Working Groups to work on

these emerging challenges. The WCO has also developed various tools and instruments to support Members in the delivery of their mandate. *Mr. Larry Liza, ROCB Director* thanked Zimbabwe for offering to host the RILO and explained that the processes that would lead to the handover had commenced. He informed

the meeting that the Strategy had been operationalized and looked forward to its successful execution.

The RSG explored the status of the Decisions of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Governing Council held during the month of May 2018 in Rwanda. It also focused on the implementation of the newly approved Regional Strategy among other key issues. The report and action points of the meeting was shared with the region.

## WCO ESA Regional Structures enhanced their capacities in the area of Project Management

The WCO organized a specific training in project management with a specific focus on Monitoring and Evaluation, which took place from 3 to 11 December in Mombasa, Kenya, at the Regional Training Centre. At this occasion, the WCO had the opportunity to deliver its project management training

capacities in project management - to design, implement, monitor and evaluate modernization and reform projects within their administration and across the region. The workshop focused on core project management issues, including the project cycle, problem definition, project governance,

conducted in groups on -specific projects extracted from the ESA Regional Strategy. The participants presented their projects to a mock donor board. This required each group to present and justify the relevance of a project based on a prepared Project Initiation Document.



WCO- Project Management Training at the WCO RTC Mombasa, Kenya

package, which was developed under the WCO-WACAM Project. The training enabled 22 participants from the WCO ESA Regional Structures including 8 female participants and 14 male participants, to enhance their

logic modeling, risk management, stakeholder mapping, project reporting and monitoring. The workshop was highly interactive and was based on a mixed learning method, through the use of presentations alongside case studies

The WCO East and Southern Africa region adopted its 2018-2021 Regional Strategy in May 2018. The Strategy includes 4 Strategic Areas, namely Intra-Regional Regional Trade, Fair and Efficient Revenue

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# Historic meeting between **SARS** and **ZIMRA**

**T**he Acting Commissioner of SARS, Mark Kingon, and newly appointed Commissioner of the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra), Faith Mazani, met for the first time recently to discuss burning issues between the two organisations.

The meeting on 14 September was the culmination of a three-day engagement between the two revenue authorities at Beitbridge border post.

On the first day of the engagement, technical discussions were held between representatives of the two organisations, focusing on burning issues relevant to both sides of the border. These included border efficiency management, issues around tobacco/cigarettes, fuel, second hand vehicles, mineral products, ghost exports, and clothing and textiles. They also discussed strategic priorities going forward, such as a joint anti-corruption strategy, IT connectivity, single window, cargo tracking and

Beitbridge border developments.

On the second day, the Acting Chief Officer, Customs and Excise, Beyers Theron, met with the Customs Commissioner of Zimra, Haplias Kuzvinzwa, to agree on the work programme developed by the Technical Team. They also signed a Terms of Reference for a

**We are looking forward to seeing real action on this work plan, which will fundamentally change the way we do business in the region."**

Beitbridge Working Group, which will ensure that the approved work plan is operationalised by both administrations.

On the final day, Beyers gave feedback to the two Commissioners on the Customs issues discussed in the first two days, and the way

forward. It was also decided that the two Commissioners would meet again to focus on tax-related issues.

"It was a fruitful time of discussions," said Beyers. "We have a good relationship with Zimra and particularly with the new Zimra Commissioner, who used to work at SARS some years ago. She said she was happy to see some familiar faces and having come from a SARS environment, she seems committed to a close working relationship with us going forward.

"We are looking forward to seeing real action on this work plan, which will fundamentally change the way we do business in the region."



## WCO ESA Regional Structures enhanced their capacities in the area of Project Management

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Mobilization, Intra-Regional Compliance and Enforcement; and Professionalism through human capital development. In the spirit of regional development, the ESA Commissioner-Customs have indicated that the regional structures (Regional Office for Capacity Building, Regional Training Centres) of the region are expected to support the operationalization of the ESA Regional Strategy. As a result, the ESA region had requested the WCO Secretariat to build the capacities of the regional structures

in the area of Project Management in the framework of the WCO-ESA Project, funded by Finland.

In his closing remarks, the Director of the ESA Regional Office for Capacity-Building, Mr. Liza, expressed satisfaction with the level of commitment the regional structures had demonstrated and thanked them for making the training successful. He said "This workshop can be considered as the catalyst and foundational workshop for the operationalization of priority initiatives of the ESA

Regional Strategy. He expressed the ESA Region desire for further WCO assistance in project management and other areas of organizational development. The regional structures have agreed to finalize the ESA Regional Strategy Implementation plans in the next few months for submission to the ESA Governing Council in May 2019. For further information about this activity, please contact

[capacity.building@wcoomd.org](mailto:capacity.building@wcoomd.org)

**T**welve participants from the ESA region attended the second phase of the TOT - as one of the prerequisites of becoming Mercator Programme Advisors at the Regional Training Centre Kenya. The course was facilitated by World Customs Organization Experts Jonathan Fellows and Ms. Ozlem Soysanli. According to the World Customs Organization, Mercator Programme Advisors are experts who have the capability to help organizations plan and implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. The course was opened by the Chief Manager Customs Regional Headquarters on behalf of the Regional Coordinator for the Kenya Revenue Authority Southern Region. In his remarks he reported that volumes of cargo at Mombasa Port have been increasing exponentially while on the other hand Customs is being faced by many challenges and key among them was the diminishing qualified human resource capacity. This means that for the Customs Administrations to work effectively they must optimize their resources and adopt apt risk



*Finnish WCO-ESA 2nd Project, TOT 2nd phase at KESRA, Mombasa.*

skills. A final assessment for pre-accreditation as a WCO Mercator Programme Advisors (MPA) is scheduled for February 2019. We wish all the participants all the best. The World Customs Organization Regional Training Centre Kenya held its fifteenth graduation ceremony at

by chief guest and other dignitaries, followed by the faculty and then the graduands whilst being entertained by the Administration Police band. The colourful ceremony was also attended by parents, guardians, friends and well-wishers of the students. Various continuing students showcased their

## RTC KENYA HOSTS TOT PHASE TWO ON THE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS PACKAGE SPONSORED BY THE WCO FINNISH ESA PROJECT II BETWEEN 19<sup>TH</sup> TO 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2018

management practices. He said that such kind of trainings have a direct impact on the way Customs conducts its business and thanked the World Customs Organization and the sponsors for always having confidence in Kenya. During the workshop, participants were required to demonstrate the skills acquired in the first phase of the Training of Trainers course also held at Regional Training Centre Kenya. The participants were assessed and given feedback on their delivery methods and presentation

the Bomas of Kenya in Nairobi on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Three hundred and thirty eight graduands now graduates were awarded with Certificates and Diplomas in Customs, Tax and Freight Forwarding. The ceremony was graced by the Commissioner General Kenya Revenue Administration – John Njiraini, the Director for the WCO ESA Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) - Mr. Larry Liza, among other dignitaries from the Ministry of Education and Universities. The academic procession was led

talents through music and poems, the Kenya Revenue Authority choir also entertained the crowds with their sweet melodies. The event culminated with the launch of the School's strategic plan for the period 2018-2021. The launch was presided over by the Commissioner General. In his address to the congregation, the CG commended the RTC for a job well done and also committed his support for the RTC en route to achieving university status.



*The Commissioner General with members of the Faculty during the graduation ceremony*



# Seychelles launches its first Customs Compliance Program



In a short ceremony held in Seychelles at the Guy Morel Institute on Monday 26th November, the Seychelles Revenue Commission (SRC) in partnership with The Guy Morel Institute (TGMi) and The Global Maritime Legal Solutions (Pty) Ltd (GMLS), had the pleasure launching Seychelles very first "Customs Compliance Program". This is a program aimed at strengthening Customs and its partners through proper education and capacity building in the field of Customs.

Present for the launch ceremony was the Chairman of TACAB and SRC Board Member– Mr. Charles Morin. Representatives of the SRC Management –Mr. Ronald Cafrine– Commissioner General of SRC, Mr. Fred Morel – Deputy Commissioner General, Mr. Paul Barrack – Commissioner of Customs, and other SRC and TGMi staff including participants.

During his speech, the Commissioner General of SRC – Mr. Ronald Cafrine

made mention that this program is a long awaited one that is tailored for SRC officers and traders dealing with Customs procedure on a daily basis. Mr. Cafrine also mentioned "the true purpose of the program is to facilitate trade and contribute towards the sustainable economic development of Seychelles". Mr. Cafrine said that, "in order to support trade facilitation and promote compliance, there is a need for stakeholders to have access to formal training and development opportunities associated with international trade and meeting Customs requirements. The Customs Compliance Program concept has been developed to address the deficiency that currently exists in Seychelles for professional development in international trade and Customs."

During his address, Mr. Cafrine also mentioned that over the past few years, Customs has recorded significant levels of mistakes, made by brokers and

importers/exporters in the ASYCUDA system and that research has shown an error rate of 55% on Bills Of Entry registered with customs with the sources of those errors being:

- **Inaccurate application of the Harmonised System Code;**
- **Suspected document fraud, including fraudulent commercial invoices;**
- **Lack of understanding or awareness of Customs of documentary requirements**
- **Non-compliance with local Customs laws, other domestic policies and procedures,**
- **Incomplete bills of entry**
- **Lack of attention to important detail**

It is from this backdrop of trade knowledge deficiencies that SRC and its partners are making it a priority to provide the necessary training, aiming at bringing up and maintaining high the level of compliance at customs level. Mr. Cafrine also affirmed that with this program, SRC should be able to:

- **Greatly improve and sustain a high level of compliance by customs brokers and others;**
- **Enhance effectiveness of our customs administration;**
- **Bring in new efficiencies,**
- **Boost staff morale and achieve higher productivity.**

In terms of the beneficiaries of the program, over 40 Customs clearing agents and close to 400 importers &

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# SARS CRUSHES 26 ILLEGAL VEHICLES IN WAR ON NON-COMPLIANCE

On 23 November 2018, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) destroyed a number of illegal vehicles as part of a clampdown on non-compliance in various Customs sectors.

## Seychelles launches its first Customs Compliance Program

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exporters would potentially benefit from this formal training opportunity in the coming months and years. Additionally, new customs applicants would also be better equipped professionally from day one. Mr. Cafrine also mentioned that with this programme SRC's own Customs officers will also benefit, as some would be trained alongside agents. Hence another addition to currently existing training opportunities for customs staff. On another strategic note, Mr. Cafrine mentioned that this program is expected to complement other Customs initiatives, again aimed at improving trade facilitation. This includes the recently acquired cargo scanner at the seaport and the upcoming Cargo Targeting System (CTS). Looking ahead, with this programme in full operation, it would facilitate the implementation of other best practice requirement, such as the "Authorized Economic Operators (AEO)", and the Single Window concept – which are all requirements of World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Customs Organization (WCO), both of which Seychelles is proud a member of.

Following completion of the first training sessions, the partnership between TGMI, GMLS and SRC is expected to see about 45 participants complete the first training session in Customs Compliance.

This followed a two-day inter-governmental operation in Durban and surrounding areas to tackle illicit trade. Over the past financial year, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Customs officials have confiscated 26 vehicles for various contraventions and these have now been forfeited to the state after following proper legal processes. They have a collective estimated market value of almost R4 million.

The importation of second-hand imported vehicles is restricted into South Africa. Before the vehicles can be imported into South Africa, the client needs to obtain an import permit from the International Trade Administration Commission and also a Letter of Authority from the National Regulator of Compulsory Specification.

Previously, the seized second hand imported vehicles were sold at Customs auction for export, but these vehicles invariably found their way back into South Africa. This has an impact on the local vehicle manufacturing industry, which contributes about 7.5% to the country's gross domestic product. This

important industry is hugely impacted by the unfair competition imposed by the influx of second hand vehicles.

Of the 26 vehicles forfeited to the state in this financial year in KZN, four were crushed on 23 November with 15 crushed in recent weeks. The remaining ones were expected to be destroyed under Customs supervision in coming weeks.

The same approach will be followed throughout the country, with Gauteng planned next and then Limpopo. There are currently 317 vehicles which have been forfeited to the state nationally this financial year.

The high-visibility two-day operation (20 and 21 November) in the Durban area involved Other Government Departments (OGAs) such as SAPS, Immigration, Cross Border Road Traffic Agency and eThekweni Metro Police.

The main focus of the operation was to clamp down on non-compliance relating to importation/exportation of goods, smuggling of illegal substances and the illegal storage/movement of second hand goods.

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Some of the dagga found in a roadblock near Tongaat



# SARS CRUSHES 26 ILLEGAL VEHICLES IN WAR ON NON-COMPLIANCE

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It included roadblocks at high-risk areas, physical inspections of containers, cargo, bonded warehouses, patrols, vehicle check points, gate checks and vessel rummages.

Some of the successes of the operation included:

- **Detention of 304 second-hand imported vehicles for further investigation into the validity of their importation. Valued at about R21 million, the cars were detected during inspections at several Customs bonded warehouses and States Warehouses over the two days. These cars are allowed to be in bonded warehouses for two years without having to pay duties. However, the time had expired which means they were contravening their licensing conditions**
- **Bust of suspected counterfeit clothing and textiles valued at approximately R6 million at King Shaka International Airport (KSIA) on 20 and 21 November. The goods were detected during random inspections in the cargo section at KSIA.**
- **Discovery of 13.2kg of compressed dagga in a car stopped at a roadblock in Tongaat on 21 November. The dagga, which was packed in suitcases in the boot of the car, was positively identified by Customs detector dogs. It is valued at about R1.7 million.**

Working closely with other Government departments, Customs will continue to roll out operations country-wide to address illicit trade along the entire Customs value chain in order to protect the economy and society.



*Suspected second hand clothing detected in the cargo section at KSIA*



*Customs Executive: Enforcement, Patrick Moeng and Acting Chief Officer: Customs and Excise, Beyers Theron at the vehicle crushing in Durban*



*The scene of the vehicle crushing in Phoenix, Durban*



## KEY MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING LAUNCHING OF NAMANGA OSBP - 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2018

The Namanga OSBP has been implemented under the framework of Arusha-Athi River road project financed by JICA and AFDB. Namanga OSBP is the biggest OSBP in the EAC region. The facility was completed and started operation as fully OSBP on 02 of October 2017. In the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2018 the Namanga OSBP was officially launched by the two presidents His Excellency John Pombe Magufuli the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and his excellency Uhuru Kenyatta the President of Republic of Kenya. During their remarks the two presidents stressed the importance of the Namanga OSBP in accelerating EAC economic integration through increasing revenue collection, increasing border security and control while facilitating legitimate EAC intra-regional trade and trade with the rest of the world. The presidents specifically directed all border agencies in the Namanga OSBP to support and facilitate small traders cross border movement through established Simplified Trade Regime and warned officers who will be involved in corruption practices.





## JICA SUCCESSFULLY HELD A SERIES OF TRAININGS FOR HS CODE IMPLEMENTATION IN JUBA



The JICA expert team and HS task teams from National Revenue Authority (NRA)-Customs Division (CD) have successfully held a series of trainings in Juba on the Harmonized System (HS) code for customs officers and clearing agents. The HS task team members have been fostered by the project. The training objective was to advance customs procedures using HS code.

South Sudan has to apply the East African Community (EAC) Common External Tariff (EAC-CET) codes to the current customs tariffs. P.I.H.S. developed, printed and issued out to trainees the HS guide training handbooks and a South Sudan tariffs 2018 version. The South Sudan tariffs are used to harmonize customs duty rates with EAC-CET and file appropriate declarations using the HS code. The project team also held an EAC-CET seminar supported by URA to learn the steps of ratifying

EAC-CET with customs officers and other stakeholders.

The Financial Act clearly provides for HS codes and customs duty rates. A taxation training according to HS convention was implemented for 32 customs officers from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November. After the training, South Sudan customs can impose tariffs by HS codes. The HS day seminar was held on 14<sup>th</sup> November with approximately 30 clearing agents in Juba. The HS task team enhanced clearing agent's ability to file appropriate customs declarations using the HS code.

The HS code was officially launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 by the Commissioner General of NRA. The HS week trial was also launched by HS and statistics task teams to file HS code to the new customs declaration form. This brings the NRA-CD a step nearer to standing abreast with its EAC partner states in classification of goods and

collection of foreign trade statistics in accordance with international standards.

**HS task team enhanced clearing agent's ability to file appropriate customs declarations using the HS code.**

# JICA GUIDES SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL REVENUE AUTHORITY CUSTOMS DIVISION

JICA GUIDES SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL REVENUE AUTHORITY CUSTOMS DIVISION WITH CREATING THE SINGLE ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENT (SAD) TO MATCH THE EAC SAD.

Japanese ODA project under JICA named “The project for Capacity Development of South Sudan Customs Services for Introduction of Harmonized System (HS) code (P.I.H.S.)” has supported the National Revenue Authority (NRA) South Sudan-Customs Division in creating a Single Administrative Document (SAD). This official document is used in international trade, it lists and gives details of goods that are being imported in and exported out of the country. South Sudan became a member of the East African Community (EAC) and has to apply the HS codes to the current customs tariff and the SAD. It will contain what goods are, the movement of goods and the commodity code (HS). The P.I.H.S. referred to the EAC-SAD format while developing the SAD for NRA-Customs Division and it will be used by customs to assist with declaring import, export, re-export and transit goods to harmonize and standardize customs data and revenue collection.

The SAD was officially launched on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 by the Commissioner General NRA, this brings the NRA-Customs Division a step nearer to standing abreast with its EAC partner states in classification of goods / commodities and collection of foreign trade statistics in accordance with international standards.

The expert team from JICA and Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) also developed a trade statistics database system known as the ARBAAS to ease and improve work efficiency in relation to compiling the country's trade statistics which is currently manual and has made it difficult to generate credible statistics. This will enable them to efficiently monitor and manage customs while compiling international trade statistics and control international economic activities for the good and development of the country.



Director of Customs, Commissioner General of NRA and JICA South Sudan Chief Representative



## WCO-Finland ESA Project II Activities (May – October 2018)

The main objective of the WCO - Finland ESA Project II is to strengthen the capacities of the ESA regional members and entities in their modernization efforts to implement RKC and TFA/TF measurers. The project has continued implementing the outlined programme in line with the requests made by member administrations in the ESA region.

In this quarter (October - December 2018) the project has conducted a number of activities. The project has been able to contribute immensely

to the set objectives by holding a Leadership and Management Development Workshop in Comoros, Project Management training for the RTCs and the ROCB office in Mombasa Kenya, TRS Regional Pre-accreditation workshop in Namibia, TOT Phase II Competitive Package training for English speaking countries, Phase II TOT for French speaking countries and a Diagnostic environment scanning mission in Botswana. The outstanding achievements for the region

in this quarter have been the TRS pre- accreditation which took place in Namibia, and at least 4 participants were pre-accredited. TOT Phase II on Competitive Package was successful and assessments of participants will follow in the form of pre-accreditation Workshop. The Project Management and Monitoring workshop managed to train participants from all the 4 RTCs and the ROCB who have now acquired skills that will enable them implement the newly developed strategy for the ESA Region.

## Supporting efforts to improve Risk Management in East Africa

Thirty (30) officials of Office Burundi des Recettes (OBR) participated in the national workshop on risk management on 16-18 October 2018 in Bujumbura, Burundi, while six (6) officials from Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) and

Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) visited Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) on 23-26 October 2018 for the benchmarking study on Customs Risk Management (RM). This is a part of the efforts made by OBR, RRA and URA to further

enhance their RM functions under the Trade Facilitation and Border Control Project in East Africa, with the support jointly extended by the WCO and JICA. Earlier this year, the WCO and JICA conducted joint risk management fact-finding



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# Supporting efforts to improve Risk Management in East Africa

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missions to Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda where the team of experts had intensive discussions with each Revenue Authority with a view to further enhancing RM approaches and functions to ensure revenue collection, trade facilitation and customs control. The national workshop on risk management for OBR staff aimed at improving the knowledge on risk management as well as to share and review the current practice, issues and challenges relating to RM for further improvements. Considering the importance of ownership and the need of localized training on the customs key function, trainers for this workshop was invited from the pool of what they call “Master Trainers” of OBR. (NB: “Master Trainers” refers to the expert trainers developed locally under the Project supported by

JICA and the WCO to deliver more sustainable and self-contained training.). WCO technical experts provided additional inputs and the latest information such as WCO instruments and tools related to risk management. The workshop was very timely as OBR has just adopted their first RM policy and Customs RM strategy.

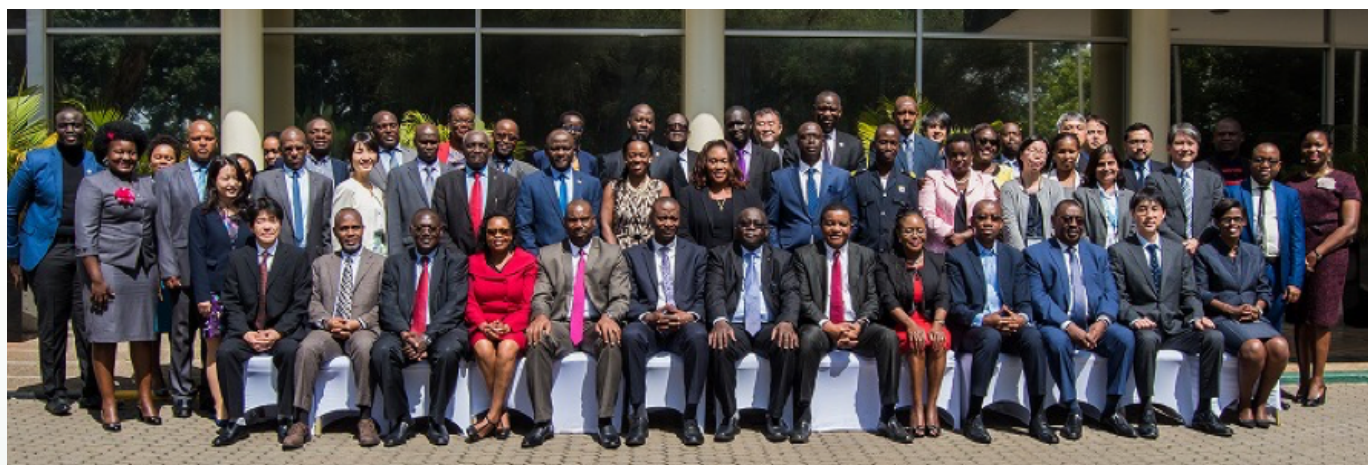
For RRA and URA, following the recommendations and requests for benchmarking to see the effective risk management, in particular effective data use and analysis for targeting as well as post clearance audit (PCA) selectivity in the East and Southern African region, Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) was identified as the benchmarking institution and MRA kindly agreed to host this benchmarking study. During the

4-day visit, officials from RRA and URA and many MRA officials responsible for risk management and PCA shared and discussed on their risk management and PCA framework, practices and challenges, focusing on systematic approach on case selection of PCA and profiling and targeting with effective data analysis. The WCO, JICA as well as the representatives from RRA and URA expressed their appreciation to MRA management and staffs for their kind arrangement and opportunity offered. All participants valued this visit and assured that the findings, ideas and good practices observed during the benchmarking study would be shared with their administrations for possible incorporation and further improvement in their future RM operations.





# Five East African Revenue Authorities and JICA, WCO held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Joint Coordinating Committee (RJCC) on the Project on Capacity Development for Trade Facilitation and Border Control in East Africa.



Five Revenue Authorities of East Africa, namely OBR, KRA, RRA, TRA and URA as well as JICA and WCO had the second Regional Joint Coordinating Committee (RJCC) meeting on the Project for Capacity Development for Trade Facilitation and Border Control in East Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The meeting was attended by the Commissioners General and

Commissioners Customs as well as senior officials in charge of planning, border operation and enforcement from the respective RAs and JICA, WCO and the EAC Secretariat to review and discuss the project progress and the planned activities for the next six months, including the support for One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) in the region, kick-off of the new Master Trainer Programme (MTP) on

post clearance audit (PCA) and support for risk management and border control enhancement. At the end of the meeting, “Most Active Master Trainers 2018” was awarded by the Project to commemorate the excellent contribution made by the active Master Trainers for sustainable capacity building by sharing their knowledge and experience for their fellow colleagues through training and on-the-job training.



# ZIMBABWE AWARDS THE WCO ESA ROCB



The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority's (ZIMRA) commemorated its seventh edition of the ZIMRA Appreciation Awards, held under the theme, *"My Taxes, My Duties – Building my Zimbabwe"*. The commemorations were held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018 in Harare.

These awards are meant to honor, recognize and reward compliant taxpayers who pay their taxes and duties on time and in full. They are also meant to recognize those institutions that have partnered with ZIMRA or contributed immensely under the four strategic pillars of **People, Processes, Partnerships and Projects (4P's)** in pursuit of ZIMRA's strategic objectives and in fulfilling its mandate of collecting sustainable revenue for Government and of facilitating trade and travel.

Under the **People** pillar, the WCO ESA ROCB won the ZIMRA Appreciation Award for having supported Zimbabwe Revenue Authority by training management and staff on trade facilitation, the Harmonized System, Revenue Package, Competitive Package as well as facilitating the Mercator Program. Well, we must admit that inasmuch as we continue to partner with Zimbabwe, the WCO played the key role in offering the technical support.

The award was presented to the ROCB during the 29<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Group (RSG) in Harare, Zimbabwe.



# WCO and EAC celebrate EAC Regional AEO Programme success

Back in 2014, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat and five Customs administrations from the EAC region (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda) embarked on a five-year partnership to support the effective design and roll-out of the EAC Regional AEO Programme. The partnership came to be known as the WCO-EAC CREATE Project and benefitted from the generous financial support of the Government of Sweden.

On 21 and 22 November 2018, the EAC Secretariat played hosted the WCO and the above-mentioned five EAC Customs administrations in Arusha (Tanzania), in order to reflect on the achievements, challenges and lessons learned with respect to the EAC Regional AEO Programme. Over the past five years and through the delivery of nearly 100 activities (including 86 on-site activities), the WCO-EAC CREATE Project has successfully supported the EAC region in establishing a robust and globally recognized Regional AEO Programme aligned with the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards.

To date, 82 companies have joined the EAC Regional AEO Programme and they account for nearly 9% of regional trade, translating into more than 1.5 billion USD per year in volume of trade and a Customs revenue contribution of approximately 10%. The Regional AEO Programme has led to significant time and cost reductions for AEOs which have

contributed to job creation, in some cases, as well as to improved Customs-Business relations. By way of example, Mr. Mugwe, Chief Executive Officer of Farmers Choice Limited in Kenya, has reported that “since joining the Programme, our brand is seen as credible and trustworthy. Priority clearance has also led to a 30% reduction in our costs. These savings have allowed us to open new lines of business and subsidiary companies, with an increase in our staffing numbers from 1,300 to 2,009”. Similarly, Bakhresa, a Tanzanian transport company, has made annual savings of USD 1.8 million since joining the Programme, while Brarudi, a Burundi beverage producer, has saved USD 350,000 per year since becoming part of the Programme.

The Customs Commissioners of the EAC region and the EAC Secretariat commended the WCO Secretariat for this partnership, noting that the achievements recorded during the last five years provide solid foundations for the growth and development of the EAC Regional AEO Programme. In particular, the region will work to further involve all Cross-Border Regulatory Agencies (CBRAs) in the Programme, as well as to provide adequate guidance on and support with the AEO Programme to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

***For more information please contact [capacitybuilding@wcoomd.org](mailto:capacitybuilding@wcoomd.org)***



# WCO and SACU region celebrate **successful** conclusion of the regional Customs Modernization Programme

Back in 2014, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Secretariat and the five Customs administrations of the SACU region (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) embarked on a partnership to support effective implementation of the five-year SACU Customs Modernization Programme. The partnership came to be known as the WCO-SACU Connect Project and benefitted from the generous financial support of the Government of Sweden.

On 15 and 16 November 2018, the SACU Secretariat hosted the WCO and the five SACU Customs administrations in Windhoek (Namibia), in order to reflect on the achievements, challenges and lessons learned and to receive the Project deliverables as the Project comes to an end in December 2018. Over the past five years and through the delivery of 114 activities (including 96 on-site activities), the Project has achieved tangible results in the areas of IT Connectivity, Trade Facilitation, Risk Management and Legislative Reform.

In particular, the SACU region has developed its own regional framework for IT Connectivity, based on the WCO Data Model and Globally Networked Customs (GNC), and South Africa and Swaziland have now entered into live data exchange. The SACU region has also developed a framework for its Regional Preferred Trader Programme (scheme and operating manuals),

covering 76 operators, and has trained a critical mass of Preferred Trader auditors to effectively roll out the programme at regional level.

In terms of Risk Management, the SACU region has developed and effectively implemented a Regional Risk Management Package. This has led to the successful completion of three regional enforcement operations resulting in significant seizures and remarkable levels of revenue recovery. Thanks to the Project's momentum, the SACU Member States were all also able to ratify Annex E to the SACU Treaty during the lifetime of the SACU-Connect Project and to modernize their Customs legislative framework. The SACU Secretariat reported that all the Project structures, such as the Regional Working Groups and the

Steering Committee, will now be mainstreamed into SACU structures, hence ensuring the sustainability and impact of the Project's benefits beyond 2018. In handing over the Project deliverables the WCO reaffirmed its commitment to continued collaborate with the SACU Secretariat under the MoU signed in 2010 while SACU Member States remain entitled to benefit from WCO support by the virtue of their membership to the organization.

***For more information about this activity, please contact capacity.building@wcoomd.org.***





# Corruption Risk Mapping Workshop at the MRA



The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) hosted a four-day workshop on Corruption Risk Mapping at the World Customs Organisation (WCO) Multilingual Regional Training Centre, MRA Custom House, Mer Rouge. The workshop was organised by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the World Customs Organization, East & Southern Africa, Regional Office for Capacity Building (WCO/ ESA/ ROCB), and was facilitated by Mr S. Narrainen, Director, Internal Affairs Division, MRA,

and Mr L. Liza, Director, ROCB. The opening ceremony was held on Tuesday 22 May, 2018 and the Chief Guest was Dr. Navin Beekarry, Director-General of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).

The Workshop is in line with the African Union Theme of the year for 2018: Combating Corruption- A sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation. Forty participants from twenty one African Union Member States pondered over ways and means to bring down

corruption, which involved the sharing of best practices on various issues regarding the implementation of effective Integrity Programmes. Participants learned the concept of Corruption Risk Mapping and discussed its implementation in their revenue administration. They also finalised a list of recommendations for submission to the AU Sub Committee of Directors General of Customs for the implementation of Corruption Risk Mapping on a Continental level.

## Seminar on Integrity at the MRA

The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) welcomed the Acting President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Paramasivum Pillay Vyapoory, G.O.S.K and the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms, Hon. Maneesh Gobin, to the Opening Ceremony of a seminar on integrity entitled 'The Role of Leadership in Organisational Integrity'



at the MRA Custom House on Monday 10 September, 2018. The workshop ran over three days. It was held with the assistance of Integrity Expert, Ms. S. Gunnlaugsdóttir, from the World Customs Organisation (WCO).

The aim of the workshop was to further enhance integrity among MRA staff and its stakeholders. In his keynote address, the Acting President of the Republic emphasised that the MRA is

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# Regional Cooperation between **MRA** Customs and French Customs

Under the aegis of Regional Cooperation between MRA Customs and French Customs, a training programme on 'Vessel Search' was prepared and dispensed from Monday 24 to Friday 28 September, 2018 by two resource persons from French Customs, namely Mr. J. Puech and Mr. V. Nowak at the Mauritius

Revenue Authority (MRA) Custom House. The training was the fruit of close regional collaboration between Island States, namely Mauritius and Reunion Island and it aimed at building capacity to combat drug trafficking and smuggling in the region. It comprised theoretical discussions at the MRA Training Academy and

practical sessions on board shipping vessels. Thirty participants from MRA Customs (Customs Anti-Narcotics Section and Port Surveillance and Enforcement Unit) and the National Coast Guard (NCG) were selected to undergo the training.



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## Seminar on Integrity at the **MRA**

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a model in Mauritius and in the region. Prior to declaring the workshop open, His Excellency Mr. Vyapoory reiterated his support to the MRA in its endeavour. The Attorney General, Honourable Maneesh Gobin, highlighted integrity as

a sine qua non value in an organisation and that it was essential to further promote it. In his address, the Director-General of the MRA, Mr. Sudhamo Lal, welcomed the Acting. President of the Republic and the Attorney General at the MRA and thanked them for their continued support. Mr. Lal stressed

upon the determination of the MRA to reform revenue administration and promote integrity. The Director-General of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), Dr. N. Beekarry, and the Executive Director of Transparency Mauritius, Mr. R. Bablee were amongst the speakers during the workshop.



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