1. INTRODUCTION

The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an independent intergovernmental body, established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs services across the globe. The WCO represents 183 Customs administrations that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters.

As a forum for dialogue and exchange of experiences between national Customs delegates, the WCO offers its Members a range of Conventions and other international instruments, as well as technical assistance and training services provided either directly by the Secretariat, or with its participation. The Secretariat also actively supports its Members in their endeavours to modernize and build capacity within their national Customs administrations.

2. OVERVIEW

This project is aimed at improving the capacity of Customs administrations in the field of business continuity and incident response to deal with the impact of various urgent and unpredictable disruptive scenarios, such as infectious disease pandemics, including COVID-19.

The overall purpose of the project is to ensure the security, stability and continuity of global supply chains, and to facilitate and expedite the global supply of emergency relief goods.

The spread of the COVID-19 is a non-synchronized crisis with different paces and impacts on different countries. That is leading to unpredictable situations in Customs administrations maintaining operations and increases the need for assistance and expertise from the WCO and Customs administrations, sharing best practices to increase coordination in the global response.
The Procedures and Facilitation Sub-Directorate of the WCO has developed instruments and tools relating to the movement of consignments containing goods for humanitarian assistance, and compiled information on initiatives taken by WCO Members.

In 2011, the WCO Council adopted the “Resolution on the role of Customs in natural disaster relief”, calling upon the Customs community to provide an appropriate response in case of natural disasters and to facilitate the entry, exit and transit of disaster relief personnel, their possessions as well as of relief consignments, in order to ensure that aid reaches those in need in a timely manner.

The Resolution particularly advocates for the implementation of the measures set out in Chapter 5 of Specific Annex J to the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) and, where applicable, urges countries to sign the Model Agreement to expedite the import of relief consignments and possessions of relief personnel in the event of disasters and emergencies – a document drawn up jointly by the WCO and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which lists all the measures set out in various international instruments.

3. PROJECT BACKGROUND


The pandemic brings with it the third and greatest economic, financial and social shock of the 21st Century, after 9/11 and the Global Financial Crisis of 2008. The WHO also pleaded for making every effort to end and relieve the impact of COVID-19 on the transborder movement of goods. In this context, swift action is required by all stakeholders. Urging policymakers to find ways to foster resilient infrastructures to ensure economic stability and cohesion and address structural vulnerabilities is of vital importance.

As a key player in global supply chain, Customs administrations are strongly urged to facilitate and expedite the movements of relief and essential goods and to ensure the stability and continuity of global supply chain, in order to help minimize the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our economies and societies.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project are as follows:

- To build the capacity of Customs administrations, the project will develop WCO Guidelines for Customs administrations on business continuity and incident response in dealing with various disruptive scenarios represented by COVID-19 and other similar emergency to ensure the stability of global supply chains with improved protection capabilities and measures for their Customs officers to reduce the risk of infection, and to facilitate and expedite emergency relief goods.
The Guidelines will be developed on the basis of a collection of best practices from Member Customs administrations, other government agencies and the private sector in addressing emergencies and business continuity under an infectious disease crisis, in particular COVID-19.

To this purpose, surveys will be developed and delivered in the framework of regional and inter-regional workshops, which will be conducted virtually or physically depending on the situation and needs.

This project will also promote relevant WCO instruments and tools, in particular to WCO developing Members including the Least Developing Countries (LDCs), through various assistance measures including national and regional training (virtually/physically), considering each country’s individual situation and particular needs, which will be analyzed and evaluated based on the information collected through the survey and regional workshops.

Through the project, the WCO will also cooperate with other relevant international organizations to enhance interagency cooperation among border authorities, via establishing the Terms of Reference for a business continuity task force composed of the WCO Secretariat and Member Customs administrations for ensuring stable global supply chains, in partnership with other international organizations, academia and other stakeholders.

The WCO has developed a dedicated website, which is designed to compile information about WCO instruments, tools, initiatives and databases that can be utilized in the effort to address the various COVID-19-related challenges faced by our Members and their stakeholders worldwide. The project will contribute to further upgrading this website as well, ensuring the timely dissemination of information.

IT solutions will be provided in order to ensure adequate and effective online training, sharing of information and communication to and among Members with the aim of improving the capacity of WCO Members’ response to emergency situations, such as COVID-19.

5. MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES

The Assistant Project Manager will work as part of a team led by – and under the supervision of – the Project Manager for COVID-19 Project and assist the Project Manager mainly with procurement and administrative tasks relating to the Project. The Assistant Project Manager will therefore focus on the following key activities:

i. Procurement work:

   (a) Designing deployment schemes for IT solutions and/or other equipment and purchase of IT solutions/equipment from the selected providers including drafting of contracts and related documents; and

   (b) Arranging deployment of IT solutions/equipment to Customs administrations and conducting related work including drafting necessary documents to be exchanged between the WCO and Customs administrations.
ii. **Administrative work:**
   
   (a) Assisting in organizing, managing and conducting workshops (virtually or physically) for capacity building on COVID-19 in the target countries, including arranging travel and accommodations;
   
   (b) Assisting in opening and maintaining user accounts in WCO CLiKC platform to organize virtual workshops and other related activities;
   
   (c) Assisting the production and update of training materials and an e-learning module;
   
   (d) Preparing official letters and sending them out to recipients, as advised; and
   
   (e) Liaising effectively with project participants, partners and key stakeholders.

iii. **Any other related duties as may be assigned by the supervisor.**

6. **EDUCATION**

- Bachelor’s level qualification in the area of economics, law, public administration or business administration; or equivalent professional qualifications.
- A complementary qualification related to ICT or equivalent experience is desirable.

7. **EXPERIENCE**

- At least three (3) years of experience in Customs area particularly related to implementation of the RKC and other WCO tools. Preference may be given to candidates with complementary experience in international events organization;
- Experience in procurement in relation to this type of project;
- Exposure to the work of other public and private stakeholders, including other relevant international organizations;
- Experience in assisting project management in the Customs area;
- Knowledge of IT solutions and/or equipment for Customs control especially those related to the work of Customs administrations in a context similar to the COVID-19 situation would be a good asset;
- Experience in or with business travel would be an advantage; and
- Experience in an international/cross-cultural context is desirable.

8. **LANGUAGES**

- Fluency in English or French, with good knowledge of the other;
- Fluency in both languages would be an asset.

9. **COMPETENCIES**

- Strong written and oral communication skills;
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work in a team, in a multi-cultural environment;
- Being a good organizer, flexible, enthusiastic and open-minded, has the ability to handle stress;
Knowledge of main Customs procedures and practices, including warehousing, transit, advance cargo information, passenger control etc., and facilitative measures, such as authorized operators, control with non-intrusive equipment (NII) and risk management; and

Knowledge of computerized Customs management systems.

10. CONTRACT AND CONDITIONS

- Staff member under short-term contract of fifteen (15) months;
- Probationary period: six (6) months;
- Full-time employment (37 hours and 40 minutes weekly) at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium;
- 30 days of annual paid leave;
- Salary commensurate to experience and up to 5,500.00 EUR/month all-inclusive (remuneration exempted from income tax in Belgium); and
- Compulsory WCO health insurance deducted from the salary (around 65 EUR/month).

This position is subject to the Manual for Short-Term Contractors. The successful applicant shall not acquire the right subsequently to occupy a permanent post within the WCO. The successful applicant will not be affiliated to any retirement fund or pension scheme taken by the WCO.

11. APPLICATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate how he/she meets each of the essential qualifications and requirements. Applicants are encouraged to detail concrete achievements in their CVs and/or in their cover letters as well as include references.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an assessment which may include a written test and/or an interview. All short-listed candidates may be requested to provide copies of their original diploma, certificates and proof of relevant experience. Pre-selected candidates may also be subject to reference checks to confirm the information provided in the application.

Interested candidates should submit their application for review no later than 9 September 2020, including a CV and cover letter in English by e-mail to:

COVID19BCproject@wcoomd.org

World Customs Organization
Procedures and Facilitation Sub-Directorate
Rue du Marché, 30
B-1210 Brussels
Belgium
Interested candidates may submit a request for additional information via e-mail, providing full name and contact details.

_The evaluation of applicants will be conducted on the basis of the information submitted in the application according to criteria of the position and the WCO applicable rules._

**12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The WCO values commitment to the principles of integrity, transparency and accountability as well as values diversity among its staff members. Applications from qualified women and men will receive equal treatment and due regard will be paid to the importance of recruiting nationals from WCO Members on as wide a geographical basis as possible. Please note that the WCO Headquarters is a non-smoking environment.

***