

WCO ESA Project

Financially supported by the Finnish Government

3rd Steering Committee Meeting

Port Louis, 7-8 May 2013

Resolutions

1. Welcome and Opening Session

The 3rd Steering Committee meeting was chaired by Mr James Lenaghan, Mauritius Revenue Authority's Director of Customs, who welcomed all SC participants to Mauritius. Ms Heike Barczyk, WCO Deputy Director Capacity Building, welcomed participants on behalf of the WCO.

2. Project Progress Report

Ms Riitta Passi, Project Manager at the ROCB for the ESA Region, provided the SC with a summary of her Project Activity and Progress Report which is annexed to these Resolutions. The SC approved the Report.

2a. The Steering Committee Members presented their experiences with activities funded by the Project so far. It was agreed that these and similar "success stories" should be shared with the Region and the wider public. Thus all SC Members and ESA Members who had so far benefitted from activities within the Project were/were to be invited to provide the Project Manager Riitta Passi with written case studies by 31 May 2013.

The SC very much welcomed the MRA presentations on nCEN implementation and their Single Window initiative, both supported by the Project.

3. Project Financial Report and other Budgetary Issues

Ms Heike Barczyk, WCO Deputy Director Capacity Building, presented an overview of the current financial situation of the Project in year 2. The SC noted the October 2012-March 2013 expenditures, as annexed to these Resolutions, and approved the Report.

It was once again confirmed that, based on the work plan and experience gained during the Project, the WCO and the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs could shift funding within components and between annual accounting periods, as required for delivery, provided the overall contents and objectives of the Project remained unchanged.

The SC was informed of the funds that had been shifted within Component 2, Support to nCEN: the SC agreed that funding within this component could be shifted as required as the cost variations in the purchase of the equipment might generate surpluses and deficits for certain countries during the implementation period.

The SC stressed the importance of continued delivery and implementation of activities in all 5 components, based on the budget agreed for the Project.

4. Project Action Plan 1.5.2013 - 30.9.2013

The Committee approved the Action Plan with the following recommendations:

On Component 1, Leadership and Management Development: the SC agreed that funding should be made available from the LMD component to fund attendance by 6 to 8 participants/speakers from the ESA region (available funding: EUR 25,000) at the upcoming WCO Women in Leadership Conference and Workshop on 1 July 2013 and 2 to 5 July 2013 respectively in Brussels, Belgium.

The SC stressed that the Conference should set the agenda for continuing discussions at all levels of WCO meetings and co-operation, as well as the importance of this initiative as regards sustainability.

A proposal for the selection of participants would be provided as soon as possible by the WCO and the Project Manager.

The SC acknowledged the good co-operation between the WCO ESA Project funded by the Finnish Government and the WCO World Bank project on Leadership and Management Development Activities.

The SC welcomed the initiative to establish the Regional Pool of Experts on LMD funded by the World Bank and supported by the Project Manager of the ESA Project.

Component 3 – The SC welcomed the envisaged site visits by Kenya and Namibia to Finland in the CBM area. Delegations would consist of participants from Customs and other agencies/stakeholders involved in border management, including port management.

Component 4 – The SC acknowledged the fact that the translation funds were being utilized to support the Project components, and that they would be used to translate future training material and material related to the nCEN tool.

Component 5 – The Steering Committee approved the preliminary Implementation Plan presented by the Finnish and Namibian colleagues and recommended that, as a next step, experts on the respective sub-components jointly draft a detailed work plan based on advisory visits from Finnish Customs technical experts to Namibian Customs.

5. Results-Based Management: Indicators to monitor the progress, results, outcomes and impact of the Project

The SC welcomed the Questionnaire that had been jointly developed, and agreed that the Project Manager would send it out to all ESA Members immediately after the SC meeting with a deadline for reply by 5 July 2013.

It was agreed that, in order to show progress within the Project, towards the end of the current Project cycle this questionnaire would again be sent to all Members.

The SC also again stressed the importance of using existing WCO evaluation means and methods to support monitoring and evaluation within this Project also:

- Columbus Phase III missions (Kenya had received a Phase III mission, missions pending for Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola)
- use of WCO mission templates and workshop/seminar evaluation questionnaires
- ongoing co-operation with the AU on assessing the rate and level of implementation of the Revised Arusha Declaration in the area of integrity.

6. Incorporation of cross-cutting objectives of Finland's development policy in the Project

Throughout the SC meeting, delegates stressed the importance of the cross-cutting objectives, such as gender equity, integrity, environmental sustainability (CITES, hazardous waste), non-discrimination, etc. as prerequisites for any reform and modernization and thus also for the success of the Project. They recommended the continued emphasis on these aspects in the relevant context of delivery within the Project and in Project reports and documentation.

Participants stressed the importance of the inclusion of these aspects in the Project evaluation questionnaire (see agenda item 5).

The SC welcomed the new module on Gender Equality and Diversity within the WCO LMD Programme (the module was approved by the WCO Capacity Building Committee in February 2013).

7. Project Midterm Review

The SC took note of information provided by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MinFor) of their intention to carry out a midterm review of the Project. Regarding possible dates, the Ministry would consider taking into account the deadline for replies to the evaluation questionnaire (see agenda item 5), and the work 'on the ground' would most probably start in around September 2013. SC participants welcomed the offer by MinFor to share the ToR for the review in advance with them for information and potential hints and comments as well as the final report of the review afterwards. The review itself would probably include site visits to the ROCB and to a few ESA Members.

MinFor noted that this kind of review was a standard process within projects, and was mandatory particularly when considering the continuation of any projects.

The regional GC would be informed of the envisaged review during the upcoming meeting in May 2013.

8. AOB

As regards the composition of the SC, the SC agreed to continue to include the current SC members despite a potential change of ESA Members for WCO PC and FC, and in addition to invite those ESA Member(s) who were new PC/FC Members.

The next Steering Committee would take place on the fringes of the WCO Council Session in June, most probably in the afternoon of 25 June 2013.