

Capacity Building: the regional approach

The WCO Secretariat has devoted a great deal of attention to improving the quality, relevance and availability of its capacity building activities which led to the development of the WCO Capacity Building Strategy. A core aspect of this Strategy involves the “Regional” approach, the objective of which is to promote the sharing among neighbouring countries of ideas and actions to achieve the same regional objectives, namely, economic growth and social development.

A regional approach to capacity building has various advantages: it ensures efficient and effective allocation of the WCO’s limited capacity building resources and enables the capacity building initiative to focus on those areas where the maximum potential for regional co-operation and synergy lies.

Moreover, it is anticipated that “regionalised” capacity building will contribute to the facilitation of regional co-operation and ensure enhanced coherence and synergy of capacity building activities pursued by different donors in each region, which would bring about a significant increase in the quantum of funding and technical support currently available.

During its 2003 session the WCO Policy Commission concluded that the regional approach should be treated as a general framework of principles with possible regional variations, and should be further developed taking into account the experience derived from pilot projects. Thus far, the two main illustrations of the regional approach are the Regional Offices for Capacity Building (ROCB) and the Regional Training Centres (RTCs). See relevant articles below.