



**World Customs Organization  
Organisation mondiale des douanes**

## **CAPACITY BUILDING DIRECTORATE**

### **WCO/JICA JOINT PROJECT**

#### **Assistant Project Manager**

## **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 186 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 endeavors to modernize and build capacity within their national Customs administrations.

## **2. PROJECT BACKGROUND**

In January 2015 the WCO and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC). This MoC aims at deepening the partnership between WCO and JICA by providing their mutual expertise and experience accumulated through their technical cooperation in the field of trade facilitation and the modernization and improvement of the capacity of Customs administration in developing countries. WCO and JICA then signed the Joint Project Agreement for Trade Facilitation in Africa in July 2016 to concretize the collaboration between the two organizations. This Agreement has since then been extended/expanded several times. Then a new agreement was signed in June 2021 to cooperate with more WCO Members not only in Africa but also in the Pacific Islands through the Joint Project.

The flagship initiative of the WCO/JICA Joint Project is the Master Trainer Programme (MTP), whose aim is cooperation with Customs administrations to establish more sustainable training capacity on key Customs topics through the development of a pool of well-experienced trainers, tailor-made training materials, and training programme/course syllabus.

To this end, the MTP trains the same participants through five working-groups and intersectional activities for 2-3 years. Under this Programme, a pool of approximately 150 Master Trainers (MTs) on Harmonized System (HS) Classification, Customs Valuation, Post Clearance Audit and Risk Management/Intelligence Analysis were developed in 16 East, West, and Southern African countries by June 2021. So far, these MTs have delivered training for more than 49,000 professionals from Customs administrations, other government agencies and the private sector in their countries and in other countries in 2018-2023. It is worth noting that some of these MTs are also accredited as WCO Accredited Experts (ACE) and are supporting other countries, particularly in Africa, with their accumulated expertise and knowledge. Hence, MTs are a common asset for participating Customs administrations, their regions, and the entire Customs community.

Since September 2021, 21 WCO Members in total in East, West and Southern Africa have been enjoying this collaborative project, particularly through the MTP on Rules of Origin for the implementation of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which also contributes to the implementation of cooperation based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the WCO and the Secretariat of AfCFTA signed in 2022. In addition, six WCO Members in the Pacific Islands have participated in the MTP on HS classification and Customs Valuation, which composes the implementation of WCO Small Island Economies (SIEs) initiative.

During the period of ongoing cooperation, there are emerging issues to be addressed. Taking into account the need for Customs administrations to better react to the challenges posed by fragile and conflicted situation (FCS), WCO Secretariat organized a Global Conference entitled “Enabling Customs in FCS” in Abuja in 2023, during which a draft of WCO FCS Action Plan was first presented to Members. After subsequent discussions during the sessions of relevant committees, the 88<sup>th</sup> Session of the Policy Commission and the 141<sup>st</sup> /142<sup>nd</sup> Sessions of WCO Council in June 2023 approved the updated draft Action Plan. In addition, the Secretariat contacted international organizations and development partners for future necessary funding to implement the Action Plan. JICA participated actively in the Conference in Abuja, which resulted in the conception of a dedicated capacity building project on Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) which contributes to the implementation of an action called “National and regional training for experts on GEOINT as QGIS” of domain No. 5, “Mobilization of Customs data and intelligence for security in FCS” of the WCO Action Plan. domain No. 5, “Mobilization of Customs data and intelligence for security in FCS” of the WCO Action Plan.

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent large conflicts have highlighted the importance of resilience of international supply chains. G7 Hiroshima Leaders’ Communiqué, issued at G7 Hiroshima summit in May 2023, states: “*We are determined to foster trade and energy links, sustainable connectivity, and transportation, including the “Middle Corridor” and associated projects to enhance regional prosperity and resilience.*” Against this background, JICA conducted a study mission in Central Asia and Caucasus in December 2023 and found the needs for risk management and Time Release Study (TRS) in these sub-regions. Risk management is the basis of trade facilitation on corridors, which materializes the connectivity; and TRS is pertinent to find rooms for better connectivity on corridors.

Against these backdrops, WCO and JICA have agreed to continue their collaboration and enhance their cooperation for Customs administrations mainly in Africa, the Pacific Islands and Central Asia and Caucasus.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of the WCO/JICA Joint Project are:

- Supporting smooth and effective implementation of the WCO Action Plan on Fragile Borders and Conflict-Affected Situations;
- Supporting trade facilitation and Customs modernization in the Pacific Islands through WCO Small Island Economies (SIEs) initiative;
- Supporting further improvement of connectivity in Central Asia and Caucasus; and
- Support activities related to enhancing cooperation between WCO and JICA.

The specific objectives of the WCO/JICA Joint Project include:

- Conducting the MTP on GEOINT in West Africa;
- Conducting the MTP on risk management and post clearance audit in the Pacific Islands;
- Conducting the MTP on risk management and capacity-building activities in Central Asia and Caucasus; and
- Following up on the past MTP.

### **4. MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES**

Under the supervision of the Project Manager and in close collaboration with the other Deputy Project Managers and Assistant Project Manager, the incumbent will be mainly responsible for the implementation of the MTP on risk management and capacity-building activities on TRS in Central Asia and Caucasus. These responsibilities will be executed within the defined parameters of scope, schedule, and budget established for the Joint Project. In this regard, the Assistant Manager will mainly take on the following tasks:

- a) Implement the MTP on risk management in Central Asia and Caucasus;
- b) Design effective capacity-building activities on TRS in Central Asia and Caucasus and implement them;
- c) Discuss with JICA and the counterparts in Central Asia and Caucasus to revise the plan and schedule of the activities if needed;
- d) Act as an expert on risk management and TRS when needed and provide technical advice to the participants;
- e) Coordinate, where appropriate, with the WCO Secretariat and WCO Members to arrange WCO experts for the field missions;
- f) Coordinate with the counterparts and other related organizations in Central Asia and Caucasus to prepare monitoring sheets;
- g) Coordinate actively with other development partners and international/regional organizations in Central Asia and Caucasus to maximize the impact of the Joint Project;
- h) Develop reports such as periodical reports to JICA;
- i) Arrange logistics for field missions, virtual platform, and prepare purchase orders; and
- j) Any other Project-related duties as may be assigned by the supervisor.

## **5. EDUCATION**

- Bachelor's degree in the area of economics, law, public administration, or business administration, preferably project management / administration / environment or related fields. An equivalent combination of education, skills and experience can be considered.

## **6. EXPERIENCE**

Customs background and knowledge are preferable and will be a strong asset:

- At least seven years of Customs experience as an active Customs official or former Customs official with a proven track record in trade facilitation such as transit and/or enforcement-related matters is required.
- Good understanding of risk management and TRS is required.
- Experience in capacity building and training is an asset.
- Experience in project implementation is an asset.
- Experience in working in an international/cross-cultural context is an asset.

## **7. LANGUAGES**

- English and French are the two WCO official languages. For this post, fluency in English and Russian is required. Fluency in French is an asset.

## **8. COMPETENCIES**

- Strong topical expertise in Customs terminologies
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to work in a team, in a multi-cultural environment.
- Good organizer, flexible, enthusiastic, and open-minded, has the ability to handle stress.
- Ability to adhere to tight deadlines.

## **9. CONTRACT AND CONDITIONS**

- Staff member under a short-term contract (until June 2025);
- Probationary period: six (6) months;
- Full-time employment (37.4 Hours weekly), at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium;
- Frequent travel to the beneficiary countries is required based on business needs;
- 30 days of annual paid leave;
- Salary commensurate to experience and starting from EUR 5,500 /month all-inclusive (remuneration exempted from income tax in Belgium); and
- Compulsory WCO health insurance deducted from the salary (around 73 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. If a candidate is related to current WCO staff members (spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister), he/she is required to expressly indicate this in the application.*

## **10. 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 cover letters as well as include professional references.

Interested candidates should submit their application for review no later than 7 June 2024, including a CV and motivation letter by email to: [jointprojectphase3.vacancy@wcoomd.org](mailto:jointprojectphase3.vacancy@wcoomd.org)

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.

## **11. 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. The age limit for employment with the WCO is 65. Please note that the WCO Headquarters is a non-smoking environment.