

# HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD WTO TFA Capacity Building Programme

## Newsletter November 2016 Issue II

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### Main Programme achievements second quarter 2016

- Launched the tailor-made track of the Mercator Programme in **Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Ethiopia** through the careful assessment of each country's TFA-related capacity building needs.
- Positioned the **Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA)** as a leading source of domestic expertise on the provision of risk management training to other border agencies.
- Supported the senior management of the **Afghan Customs Department** in the establishment of a forward plan to incrementally implement the provisions of the WTO TFA.
- Supported the renewal of the strategic plan of the **National Revenue Authority (NRA) in Sierra Leone**, including a concrete forward plan to phase-out the costly and time-consuming barriers, such as destination inspection.
- In addition to **UNCTAD** the Programme successfully collaborated with other providers of trade facilitation support, including **USAID, the World Bank Group, the International Trade Centre (ITC).**



### Mercator Programme A Navigational Map for Trade Facilitation

The **Mercator Programme** was launched by WCO in 2014 to support expeditious and harmonized implementation of the WTO Agreement for Trade Facilitation (TFA) using core WCO instruments and tools, such as the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC).

It offers tailor-made technical assistance and capacity building over longer periods and is designed to allow for effective coordination between the WCO, the WTO and other key international trade facilitation stakeholders.

The HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD programme, financially supported by the Government of the United Kingdom via Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), operates under the auspices of the Mercator Programme and assists developing countries in the implementation of the TFA.



"HMRC in collaboration with WCO and UNCTAD are making a difference through their TFA programme and are striving to increase the momentum to provide tailor-made capacity building assistance by calling upon the expertise via the WCO's Mercator Programme and UNCTAD's NTFC Empowerment programme 'as we approach 'entry into force'."

(Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)

## Strategic Planning mission in Sierra Leone

The WCO successfully facilitated a strategic planning workshop in Freetown from 7 – 13 September 2016 following an invitation from the National revenue Authority (NRA).

The main objective of the workshop was to review and redraft the NRA's 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan to fully integrate Customs reform, modernization and trade facilitation, including the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA).

The workshop-style dialogue included 31 senior NRA officials along with relevant representatives of other border agencies and the local private sector. Participants were familiarized with methodologies and benefits of strategic management and planning and of effective performance measurement.

*"The Strategic Planning mission in Sierra Leone was not only humbling and fabulous, but the most technical and career enriching encounters. The Ebola crippling fear at the back of my mind was met by a rich country with humble, intelligent and engaging people that made facilitating the workshop seamless and fruitful."*



[Link to news article](#)  
**Mamakoala Pitso,**  
Manager—Trade  
Regimes,  
Lesotho Revenue  
Authority (LRA)

## TFA Scoping mission to Bangladesh,

29 August— 4 September 2016

*An exciting agenda bursting with meetings emphasised the passion and commitment of private and government stakeholders engaged in the Customs modernisation reform of the NBR. A strong collaboration with development partners helped to avoid duplication and identify where the WCO could support WTO-TFA capacity building."*

[Link to news article](#)

**Elliot Gough**  
Higher Officer, Her Majesty's  
Revenue and Customs (HMRC)



## Diagnostic mission for the Afghan Customs in Baku

The WCO completed a working meeting with 25 representatives from different units of the Afghan Customs Department (ACD) at the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) in Baku, Azerbaijan on the 19-30 of September 2016.

The objective of this working meeting was to complete a diagnostic of the Administration, using WCO's core diagnostic tools and to identify practical interventions that could support Afghanistan's implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation given the country's recent accession to the WTO.

The working meeting concluded in a comprehensive forward plan outlining recommendations for future capacity building assistance to be delivered under the framework of the HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD Programme under the auspices of the WCO Mercator Programme.

[Link to news article](#)



## For more information:

Nathan L. TAYLOR  
Programme Manager  
HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD  
TFA Capacity Building  
Programme  
+32 209 9545  
[Nathan.Taylor@wcoomd.org](mailto:Nathan.Taylor@wcoomd.org)

[www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org)



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@unctad

## World Customs Organization

Rue du Marché, 30  
B-1210 Brussels  
BELGIUM



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES

## Upcoming activities:

- Continue the delivery of tailor-made capacity building support in line with the Mercator plans established for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe
- Identifying further opportunities for MPAs to contribute in the delivery of customs-to customs collaboration

## More information:

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/wco-implementing-the-wto-atf.aspx>