



## HMRC-WCO-UNCTAD WTO TFA Capacity Building Programme



### Mercator Programme A Navigational Map for Trade Facilitation

The **Mercator Programme**, launched by WCO in 2014 aims at supporting 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.

### Main Programme achievements

*June to September 2017*

- Extensive progress in the implementation of the Mercator Plan for **Sudan** resulting in increased understanding of specific needs and practical solutions for the further roll-out of risk-based clearance and supporting post-clearance audit functions, alongside plans to undertake and publish time-release studies to demonstrate progress from the previous 2015 TRS. [Web-article link](#)
- Advancement in the delivery of the updated Mercator Plan for **Zimbabwe** with a renewal of the administration's e-learning platform, alongside a forward plan to further prioritize systems-based audits and Customs-business partnerships within the post-clearance audit unit, and to better use internal resources to measure performance through the WCO TRS. [Web-article link](#)
- Detailed technical diagnostics of the Post-Clearance Audit function in **Pakistan** providing deeper insight into reform solutions, addressing legal, human resource / training, IT and compliance management perspectives. [Web-article link](#)
- Initiated delivery of Mercator support in **Malawi** resulting in a comprehensive overview of the risk management function with recommendations for more multi-dimensional and integrated risk management, along with improved internal capacities to measure resultant border performance through the WCO TRS. [Web-article link](#)
- Enhanced managerial cohesion and confidence within the **Palestinian** Customs administration's leadership strengthening opportunities for efficient implementation of upcoming reforms to Palestine's unique Customs procedures in line with international standards and best practices. [Web-article link](#)



*'HMRC are pleased with the progress being made in core Customs reforms to help the implementation of TFA provisions, particularly around Post Clearance Audit, Time Release Study and National Trade Facilitation Committees.'*  
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

## Risk management diagnostic in Malawi

Based on the 2017 Mercator Implementation Plan for Malawi, the WCO completed a Risk Management diagnostic to review the MRA's current procedures, identify gaps and develop recommendations for forward reform and modernization activities to support the implementation of Article 7.4 of the WTO TFA, and further risk management activities under the Mercator Plan.

Through informed and collaborative discussions with Senior officials from different departments the WCO team completed a comprehensive review of the MRA's Risk Management policy, strategy and infrastructure. Regional best practices on risk-based analytics were also shared with the different units.

As a result of the mission, a detailed diagnostic report further detailing the proposals from the 2017 Mercator Plan was developed and presented to the MRA.



*"After working as a Mercator Programme Advisor (MPA) in Malawi, I am more convinced than ever that the Mercator programme has a unique and powerful approach to support Customs Administrations. Under the tailor made approach, gaps in the implementation of risk management principles were identified and recommendations were developed on how to improve the work. We were impressed by the level of commitment of MRA officials at all levels, the desire to learn and adopt international best practices including MRA's commitment to the long-term programme of collaboration under the WCO Mercator Programme."*

**Rosine Uwamariya,**  
Head of Field Operations,  
Mercator Programme Advisor,  
Rwanda Revenue Authority

*"The mission delivered in Khartoum significantly enhanced the institutional capacities of Sudan to plan and conduct effective Time Release Study (TRS) involving all cross-border regulatory agencies and private sector stakeholders and thereby contributed to increasing the potential to build consensus for the much needed Coordinated Border Management reforms substantiated by the evidence based solutions contained in the TRS report."*

### Rajendra Meena

Time-Release Study Expert, WCO



## Time Release Study support in Sudan

Based on the 2016 Mercator Implementation Plan for Sudan, the WCO organized a workshop to increase the country's capacities to effectively and independently complete Time Release Studies (TRS), building on the administration's previous effort in 2015. TRS is recognized in the TFA (Article 7.6) as an important methodology in order to identify bottlenecks, increase effectiveness of clearance procedures and ultimately design and monitor trade facilitation measures. The workshop, which counted almost 45 participants including representatives from Customs; other Governmental Agencies and the private sector, allowed participants to strengthen their general knowledge on how to complete a TRS and also how to prepare a strategically targeted TRS communication to build consensus in view of coordinated border management (CBM) reforms. As a result

of the workshop a Business Process Map and a draft Work Plan on how to complete a TRS was established for Sudan Customs.

[Web-article link](#)

## Upcoming activities:

*Valuation support mission to Sierra Leone*

*Single Window seminar in Bangladesh*

*Time-Release Study and Coordinated Border Management support in Ethiopia and Djibouti*

*Launch of e-learning modules on Risk Management and Coordinated Border Management in Arabic*

*Post-Clearance-Audit (PCA) follow-up in Ethiopia*

*Leadership Management Development (LMD) workshop in Sierra Leone*

*Launch of e-learning modules on Risk Management in Amharic*

### More information:

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

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