



WCO Integrity Newsletter

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WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

WCO Integrity Newsletter

SPECIAL ISSUE

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Table of contents

Editorial	2
Snapshot of Members' best practices	3-22
Welfare and social activities from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ger- many, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia and Uru- guay	
Integrity Pilot Projects	23
Integrity activities	24



Dear Readers,

The Revised Arusha Declaration states that “corruption is most likely to occur in organizations where morale or ‘esprit de corps’ is low and where Customs personnel do not have pride in the reputation of their administration.”

In order to illustrate this fact, the WCO Secretariat invited WCO Members to share information about their various socio-economic initiatives during the 10th Session of the Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC).

On that occasion, Nigeria’s Customs Officers Wives Association (COWA) presented its programme, whose activities include teaching Customs officers’ family members to run small businesses such as soap making and handicrafts to supplement their family’s income and thus meet their family’s needs. Following Members’ enthusiastic response to this programme, the WCO Secretariat felt it would be useful to find out what other administrations have done to enhance their organizational culture and a sense of belonging and pride in serving a Customs administration which looks after its officers. This is how the idea for a special issue of the Integrity Newsletter on socio-economic activities came about.

We are pleased to see how many Members have responded to the Secretariat’s request and we also thank the Regional Offices for Capacity Building for their assistance in collating this information. You can learn about the work done by the Customs Administrations, or their respective associations, of Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia and Uruguay in this area, bearing in mind that the aim of such initiatives is to develop professional integrity in the broad sense and, depending on the form they take, to address the financial needs of officers who may, as a result, be less inclined to seek out illicit sources of income. These articles have been drafted by the various WCO Members who responded to the WCO’s invitation.

We hope you enjoy reading this special issue and find these examples inspiring. We encourage you to contact the featured administrations for an intensified exchange of ideas and information. We would also welcome any feedback and/or new examples from other Member administrations that could be published in future issues of the Integrity Newsletter.



ALGERIA



Algeria Customs' Social Services

The Central Structure for Social Services was set up on 18 May 1998 and there are currently some sixty-two (62) Local Structures providing social services.

The Central Structure for Social Services is tasked with :

- Implementing social, cultural and sporting action programmes adopted by the National Commission for Social Services and Services for Orphans of Customs Employees established in 1992 (Body of the National Federation of Customs Employees);
- Managing all the resources, funds and assets assigned by the National Commission for Social Services and Services for Orphans of Customs Employees to cover requirements in terms of social, cultural and sporting activities;
- Periodically centralizing the accounts of local management structures;
- Keeping a national inventory of real estate and movable property held by the social services bodies;
- Carrying out internal management audits on the social services provided by local management structures.

The financial resources are generated through an annual contribution by the Customs Administration, through a 20% share of the proceeds of seizures and forfeitures and through donations to the Structure.

The Central Structure for Social Services has implemented a set of provisions, developed by the National Committee for Social Services and Services for Orphans of Customs Employees, aimed at meeting the social needs of Customs employees.

Assistance schemes*

- ◆ Social loans ranging from 50,000 Algerian dinars up to 500,000 Algerian dinars, with 0% interest, to be repaid over a period of 5 to 7 years;
- ◆ Quarterly allowance of 12,000 Algerian dinars for widows of Customs officers;
- ◆ Annual allowances for widows of Customs officers payable on religious festivals;

*The national guaranteed minimum wage (SNMG) is 15,000 Algerian dinars—
1000 Algerian Dinars = 9,60 euro



- ◆ Quarterly allowance of 9,000 Algerian dinars to orphaned minors
- ◆ Quarterly allowance of 9,000 Algerian dinars to disabled children of Customs officers;
- ◆ Annual education grant of 3,000 Algerian dinars;
- ◆ Bonus of 15,000 Algerian dinars for passing the Baccalaureate exam;
- ◆ Funeral assistance of 30,000 Algerian dinars following the death of a Customs officer (for the spouse or child).

Activities in favour of Customs officers and their families

- Annual restaurant subsidies for Customs employees;
- Organization of summer camps.

Agreements in favour of Customs employees and their beneficiaries

(1) Agreement signed with the Algerian Insurance Company (CAAT)

- Retirement grant : 500,000 Algerian dinars;
- Death benefits : 500,000 Algerian dinars;
- Complementary retirement grant;
- Reduction in comprehensive home insurance policy rates;
- Reduction in vehicle insurance : 60%.

(2) Agreement signed with the National Rail Transport Company

It provides for a 45% reduction in the price of tickets.

(3) Agreement signed with Air Algérie

It provides for a 30% reduction in the price of tickets.

(4) Agreement signed with Algérie Télécom providing for, amongst other things

A 50% reduction on access costs and on calls on the Algérie Télécom network as well as additional reductions on calls to mobile networks.

(5) Agreement signed with the Sea Passenger Transport Company (ENTMV)

It provides for a 50% reduction in the price of tickets.

Social projects

- Construction of a family holiday resort
- Construction of a summer camp

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- Construction of a medical centre
- Construction of new administrative headquarters for social services;
- Construction of a hydrotherapy centre at a hot spring



Ceremony in honour of Algerian youth athletes

Social services in figures :

872 widows and orphans of Customs officers received allowances totalling 100,898,000 Algerian dinars in 2010
110 disabled children of Customs officers received assistance totalling 852,000 Algerian dinars in 2010
12,827 children of Customs officers attending school have received education grants totalling 38,544,000 Algerian dinars
358 children of Customs officers have received bonuses for passing the Baccalaureate exam totalling 5,370,000 Algerian dinars
2,304 female Customs officers received gifts on International Womens Day (8 March) totalling 4,760,000 Algerian dinars for 2010
14 families of Customs officers received death benefits (life insurance / CAAT) totalling 7,000,000 Algerian dinars during the first half of 2011
58 Customs officers received the retirement grant of 500,000 Algerian dinars during the first half of 2011
5,170 Customs officers were granted social loans between 2006 and 2011 totalling 1,606,808.025 Algerian dinars



BURKINA FASO



Social and welfare programme

Burkina Faso, a landlocked country in West Africa, covers an area of 274,200 km², has a population of 16,751,455 people and is led by a democratically elected president.

Although “gift giving” in Africa as a whole, and Burkina Faso in particular, used to be considered a highly symbolic act of allegiance and recognition, this custom, which pervades every society, has evolved over time into insidious practices and actions leading to serious breaches of integrity.

Since Upper Volta, now named Burkina Faso, gained independence in 1960, successive governments have shown strong commitment to establish general oversight bodies. These bodies have developed and merged to form what are now the following regulatory and oversight bodies : the Court of Auditors, the General State Inspectorate, the Inspectorate General of Finance (IGF), the Higher State Control Authority (ASCE), the National Monitoring Committee, the National Poverty Alleviation Committee, the National Integrity Committee (CNE) and the High Authority for Co-ordinating the Fight Against Corruption.

Burkina Faso has independent anti-corruption bodies, such as RENLAC, as well as a range of legislation governing the behaviour of public officials.

To complement this legislation, the Burkina Faso Customs Administration is pursuing a capacity building and awareness-raising programme for both Customs officers and their partners. It also occasionally lends material and/or financial support to officers exposed to corruption as a result of their precarious financial situation.

Emphasis is given to periodic vocational training, refresher training and effective interdepartmental communication especially with regard to administration issuances, notes and circulars to afford everyone equal access to and understanding of the information provided. Awareness-raising meetings are held within the regional structures to sensitize officers to integrity and good conduct, to their duties and obligations and to their behaviour vis-à-vis users. This action also reaches out to Customs’ partners through the International Chamber of Commerce and associations of freight forwarders and Customs declarants.



A social programme has also been developed. It includes :

- the establishment and transparent management of the health insurance scheme. This scheme is financed by the contributions paid by members. It is managed jointly and provides support to patients whose treatments are costly (hospitalization, surgery) and/or lengthy;
- the construction of a Customs nursing station;
- the provision of a doctor twice a week and a regular nurse for consultations by Customs officers and their families;
- the supply of first aid provisions as well as vaccines in the event of an epidemic (meningitis, typhoid, cholera, etc.) ;
- care for officers injured in the line of duty and/or disabled under these same circumstances.

These different support activities were the impetus for a group of Customs widows, whose husbands were killed in the line of duty, to join forces in order to organize themselves and assist each other more effectively. "United we stand", as the saying goes. These wives are mostly young women (under 30) with small children to support and no means of earning a living. A core group of seven widows initially set up the Customs Widows and Orphans Association some 11 years ago with the aim of obtaining, with assistance from the Directorate General of Customs, sponsorship for their children and/or funding enabling them to finance their own income-generating activities so as to be able to live and bring up their children in dignity. The Association is supported by the Directorate General of Customs, the National Union of Customs Employees (SYNATRAD) and the Friendly Society of Female Customs Staff (GABELLE).

CAMEROON

Customs Co-operative Credit Union : New products for the young and for older people

The Customs Co-operative Credit Union (CPCD) is a first-class microfinance establishment of the co-operative type, set up in 1975 by Customs pioneers. One of its aims is to prepare Customs officers for a change of career upon retirement.

It is worth pointing out that Cameroon lacks a social security system for its public service employees. In addition, if Customs officers wish to obtain funding to meet their various financial needs (prepayment of rent, fitting out an apartment, purchasing land or building a house), they have to turn to normal banks which have the

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**SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES**

disadvantage of being impersonal (if the customer is not known to the bank, then he/she has little chance of fulfilling all the requisite conditions).

Pioneers realized that they could pool and capitalize on their savings and consequently set up this structure which currently comprises over 1,600 members, and which mobilized over 4,756,370 euro of savings for a total balance of 6,434,960 euro on 31 May 2011. The CPCD, which was initially restricted to Customs officers, has now been opened up, through referrals, to selected external members. It now brings together 991 men, 518 women and 96 associations or businesses. It is run by a Board of Directors which is elected at the general meeting and which is required to convene at least once a month. An annual general meeting is also held to approve the Board of Directors' management and the various reports by the External Auditor. The CPCD has an Integrity Committee and a Supervisory Committee consisting of elected members whose mission is to monitor aspects relating to good governance. The daily management of the credit union is entrusted to a Director appointed by the Board of Directors. Since its establishment up until now, all the members of the different Boards of Directors have always been Customs officers.

In response to two findings which explain the stagnation in membership numbers, namely a lack of enthusiasm among young people and the departure of longstanding members, the CPCD has held training workshops. These are designed to sensitize Customs officers to the co-operative state of mind, to the savings and debt management culture, to the management of their administrative career which is a prerequisite in order to reintegrate fully into society and to the management of their career change after retirement. As for the credit union's management, it is trained in public asset management, in legal requirements in respect of the Banking Commission of Central Africa (COBAC) prudential ratios, in specific microfinance regulations, in the follow-up of recovery of funds and in standards relating to business governance.

A "project bank" was set up and a decision taken to publish the key aspects of this vital work in the form of a compendium. This compendium will contain procedures to be followed by a Customs officer in all the cases relating to the management of his/her career path, will set out ad hoc regulations and will answer frequently asked questions.

Another of the major resolutions to come out of this initiative has been to introduce two new products, over and above the four conventional products which are :

- the traditional loan of up to four times the amount of the applicant's savings and which can be paid back in up to 48 monthly instalments;



**SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES**

- the express loan which is also dependent on the applicant's savings and which is repayable in three months;
- the productive loan relating to investments, which is secured against guarantees and which is repayable within approximately 24 months;
- the education loan which is also dependent on the applicant's savings and which is aimed at helping members meet costs at the beginning of the school year.

The two new products which are aimed at the young and at older customers are:

- the installation loan provides young Customs officers with the financial resources to resist, given the very limited means at their disposal, any temptations that might put their professional integrity to the test. It is a low cost loan which does not require any guarantor or guarantee, nor is it dependent on the applicant's savings. It is granted on request, upon completion of the application formalities;
- the career change loan also offers a low rate of interest. It is aimed at helping retired officers set up a business, which can be inspired by the CPCD project bank, and should also provide him/her with vital working capital. The size of the loan granted depends on the amount of savings accumulated and the number of years the applicant has been a customer.

These two categories deserve particular attention because they are the most sensitive from an integrity perspective. Younger customers are at risk due to their impecuniousness, their inherent needs and because they have to find a way of paying a 12-month advance on their rent, fit out a house, buy a vehicle, etc. Staff members taking early retirement are at risk because they have often made insufficient provision for retirement and wish to offset their losses and make up for lost time.



Loan activity statistics - Total loans in 2010

	Amount in euro	Number
Traditional loans	1 882 036	608
Productive loans	615 886	18
Express loans	219 915	104
Education loans	41 227	28
Total	2 759 064	758

Total loans in 2011 (over 4 months) *

	Amount in euro	Number
Traditional loans	428 824	178
Productive loans	152 447	5
Express loans	305 195	53
Education loans	4 565	12
Total	891 031	248

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*The new products have been available since January 2011 and will undergo an initial assessment at the end of the first half of the year.



GERMANY



The Welfare Association of the Federal Revenue Administration (Das Sozialwerk der Bundesfinanzverwaltung)

The Welfare Association of the Federal Revenue Administration is a non-profit association with about 24,000 members. Since 27 November 1958 it has helped the Federal Revenue Administration provide for the welfare of its staff.

It offers affordable recreational opportunities at home and abroad. At the time of its establishment it was modelled on comparable institutions in Germany and in other countries. *“The social and cultural needs of our members and their families cannot be met solely by governmental arrangements and grants. Only through mutual assistance can these goals be promoted. To this end members of the administration have founded the Welfare Association of the Federal Revenue Administration”*. The words of Franz Etzel, the Finance Minister at the time, characterize the purpose of the Welfare Association.

Since then, the Administration has been making available to the Welfare Association federal properties which are no longer needed for official purposes and which members of the Association can use for recreational purposes at an affordable price.

Over the years, federal properties have repeatedly been converted into holiday homes, in co-operation between the Administration and the Welfare Association. However, to meet the demand, co-operation agreements have also been signed with other institutions in Germany and abroad, as well as with private providers.

Thus with the Welfare Association officers and families can :



- reside in style in Castle Hohenaschau;
- go to the Island of Sylt;
- visit Berlin;
- enjoy the unique cultural offerings of Dresden;



- get some exercise hiking, bicycling or skiing in Winterberg, Oberau or Birgsau
- take a boat ride on Lake Constance at Wangen or Horn



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES

They can also enjoy the wine cellars and thermal baths in and around the spa of Bad Bellingen, or spend an affordable holiday at the facilities of partners in Italy, France, Sweden, Finland, Norway or Hungary.

In addition, the Welfare Association supports the Administration's efforts to make work compatible with family life. Programmes for children and teenagers are offered during the school holidays. Besides taking care of the young people when schools and kindergartens are closed, they offer entertainment, a chance to socialize and the opportunity to make international acquaintanceships. These programmes are subsidised by the federal budget.

The Administration and the Welfare Association also work towards keeping people healthy. The activities of the Welfare Association are financed by membership fees, the revenue from renting out holiday facilities, parents' contributions to the youth programmes and the fees paid by participants in special events.

The Association's activities are overseen by the committees formed for this purpose. The day-to-day administration and organization is the responsibility of an office with ten full-time employees of the Federal Revenue Administration. In addition, there are many colleagues who voluntarily support the work of the Welfare Association. The Association employs about 50 people who work as managers or cleaners at the recreational facilities.

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JAPAN

Training and Mentor Programme

Japan Customs has been recognized as one of the institutions with the highest levels of integrity in the country throughout its 140 year history. Japan Customs nevertheless continues to make efforts to maintain and guarantee integrity through a series of initiatives. Amongst those initiatives, Japan Customs has developed a comprehensive training system, conducted at the *Customs Training Institute (CTI)*, which is regarded as one of the essential elements in its integrity development programme. All Japan Customs staff begin their professional life with an induction course at the CTI, delivered in April each year.

Trainees benefit from lectures on Customs subjects as well as numerous activities such as sports, the traditional martial arts of Judo/Kendo and social events.





SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES

In addition to the induction course, the CTI also provides more advanced courses, namely an intermediate course (officer level), an advanced course (unit chief level) and a professional course (assistant supervisor level) in response to the needs of staff at each stage of the career ladder. These training courses include integrity-related programmes. Accordingly, trainees learn about subjects related to the National Public Service Act, service disciplines and public service ethics in a more intensive and practical manner. These subjects are aimed at ensuring professional integrity and ethics.

The most striking feature of the Japan Customs' Integrity Development Programme is a *Mentor System* that is part of the induction course. Every year, some senior officers (section chief class with 10 to 15 years' experience) from regional Customs are appointed as mentors. They are assigned to spend 3 to 6 months with the new recruits at the CTI and the Customs dormitory. The mentors are expected to lead new recruits to their goals by demonstrating professionalism in an "elder sister" or "elder brother" capacity throughout the training course.

This system was introduced for the purpose of looking after new officials. The main tasks of mentors are :

- to give guidance to trainees about life in the Customs dormitory and the training course;
- to check on the health and mental condition of trainees;
- to become a liaison between trainees and the CTI or regional Customs; and
- to plan and implement various activities.

The mentor system has contributed to fostering a sense of belonging to the organization and to promoting integrity. At the end of the new recruit course, life-long relationships between the trainees and the mentors may be developed based on mutual trust, which fosters a traditional atmosphere of a "*Customs family*."

MALAYSIA

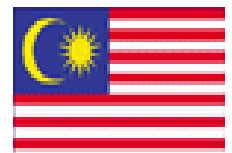
Loan schemes

In an effort to alleviate the financial problems faced by Customs personnel, the Sarawak* Customs Cooperative Limited (SCCL) has created several loan schemes for the benefit of its members. There are general loans, furniture loans, multi-media loans and education loans. Education loans granted to members by the SCCL were initiated by the Cooperative Society to reduce the financial burden on its members at the start of the new school year. Education in

*Sarawak is a state within the Federation of Malaysia and Sarawak Customs is an entity within the Royal Malaysian Customs

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Malaysia is practically free of charge (primary to secondary level), but school uniforms and stationery still need to be bought. This loan is repayable within 12 months and is interest free.

Loans granted by the SCCL are meant to discourage members from obtaining loans from illegal money lenders. Except for education loans, which are interest-free, loans granted by the SCCL have a very low interest rate (4% per annum). Repayment periods range from 12 to 60 months. Loan amounts are between RM 1,000 to RM 10,000. (100 RM = 24,30 euro).

The SCCL hopes that, as pointed out during the Regional Integrity Awareness Workshop (ASEAN Region) held in Brunei, addressing the financial woes faced by Customs personnel will help to instil integrity within the Customs fraternity .

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MEXICO



Team Building, career development and toy collection

It is of fundamental importance that the Federal Public Administration of Mexico has a workforce which is not only committed to the country, but also serves as a model within the community. To this end, the Tax and Customs Administration of Mexico (SAT), as a Federal Government institution, motivates its staff to become more professional and to contribute to a culture which inspires the values of honesty, respect and commitment, thus increasing the wellbeing of citizens.

In order to achieve this aim, SAT implements various programmes and strategic activities, including :

Model of Organizational Culture :

As the defining basis for the day-to-day conduct of SAT employees, this seeks to give staff an identity and sense of belonging, as well as to enhance their distinctiveness vis-à-vis other institutions; to reinforce values and principles, and to create the conditions for focusing work on the taxpayer and on users of international trade; it offers guidance on a results-based approach, on promoting team-building and on achieving personal development.

Professional Career Development : The main aim of this programme is not only to give professional public servants a broad knowledge of fiscal issues, but also to promote human development and strengthen institutional identity, key components of which include ethics and integrity.



In addition to the above, and looking beyond the professionalism of its staff, our institution cares about its members. This is amply demonstrated by the fact that, since 2005 and on the initiative of officials at the General Administration of Revenue Collection, SAT has been collecting toys for distribution to children's homes during the December holiday period.

It is against this backdrop that, in November 2010, SAT officials invited members of the community to join in. As a result, enough toys were collected to bring joy to thousands of children.

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NIGERIA



Customs officers' wives Association (COWA)

The Customs Officers' Wives Association (COWA) was established by the wife of the Comptroller-General of Nigeria Customs. It is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organization with 2,500 members contributing a token fee to the Association. The role played by COWA is complementary to the welfare agenda of the current Customs Service Management in Nigeria.

The wife of the Comptroller-General of Customs began to reach out to Customs Officers' wives, in particular those living in the barracks whose husbands go on long distance patrol and are hardly at home. She realized that a number of Customs officers' wives had been made redundant and that, due to a lack of skills and financial support, they were not able to work. She also was made aware of the fact that some deceased Customs officers wives were not being cared for.

COWA is committed to ensuring sustainable quality of life for the families of Customs officers. Its multifaceted development programmes are aimed at alleviating the financial problems faced by its members and the general public wishing to benefit from it.



COWA's objectives

- Set up schools providing quality education for Customs officers' children and society at large :
- Establish skill acquisition centres.
- Facilitate soft loans from microfinance banks.
- Widows' empowerment
- Engage in health programmes for the benefit of its members and others.

So far, COWA has achieved the following :

- ◆ Provision of fully furnished offices within the Customs House in Garki, Abuja;
- ◆ Donation by a private company of a new 18 seater bus in 2009;
- ◆ Inauguration and launching of Zonal and Command Chapters which provide an opportunity for individuals and organizations from the public to donate material and provide financial support;
- ◆ Collaboration with the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to provide vocational training for 150 COWA members in soap making, bead making, computer skills, catering, fashion design, interior decoration and event management. At the end of the training, the beneficiaries are given some tools and equipment to start putting what they have learnt into practice.
- ◆ Widows have been empowered financially to trade and improve their living standards;
- ◆ A national COWA seminar on women's health and economic empowerment was organized in March 2011.



Soap making workshop

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Due to the continuous highlighting of the Association's activities, COWA enjoys public confidence and trust as an organization whose activities - apart from positively impacting on standards of living of Customs Officers' families - have become a catalyst for the effective service delivery by Customs operatives who now enjoy much needed family support

NORWAY



The Norway Customs Service offers its employees and their families a unique venue for the summer holidays. Fourteen former Customs houses located in the most popular destinations and tourist areas in southern Norway are at their disposal. For the past 50 years, these houses had been closed for official business. Instead of being sold to private owners, the Customs Service kept the houses and allowed them to be used for social and welfare activities. The houses date back to the 17th and 18th Centuries and have been painstakingly renovated according to the rules of the Inspectorate of Historic Buildings. Today, the houses comprise comfortable summer apartments and can accommodate 2 to 4 families at a time.



Customs Officers are offered up to two weeks holiday for a reasonable price in some of Norway's most beautiful fjord scenery. Customs officers from different regions can enjoy each other's company. This system builds up and secures a good

esprit de corps and morale and has also a strong motivating effect on Customs officers.

The apartments are available through an annual application process in which the employees queue up by seniority. The system is administered by the Directorate of Customs and Excise and is very popular.

THAILAND



Donation of school equipment and scholarships

On 28 August 2011, Thai Customs and business partners donated sport equipment and stationery. In addition, a total of 206 scholarships were also awarded to three schools in Phetchaburi Province in Thailand.

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SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES

The students performed some traditional dances during the event. This initiative not only assists in school activities, but also strengthens the relationship between local schools and the Customs-business partnership.



Thai Customs also provides assistance to orphans. For example, in August 2011, an orphanage in the Chiangmai province in the northern part of Thailand giving a home to 150 boys received a

donation and scholarships. Thai Customs officers also provided the boys with a wonderful dinner.

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TOGO

Establishment of the National Health Insurance Institute (INAM)



It will soon be two years since the Government embarked upon a huge social welfare plan for its civil servants, including Customs officers. The decision to provide social security coverage to civil servants was taken in response to a number of findings made by the Government following an analysis of the current social security system :

- lack of a specialized structure to manage health care;



SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES

- the exclusion of certain benefits, including medicines;
- the absence of a list clearly defining the beneficiaries;
- non-coverage by hospitals, etc.

Less than 4% of Togo's population currently enjoys social security coverage. All these findings have led the Government to rethink the entire social protection system for civil servants and the like.

After pre-feasibility studies (March to May 2009) and feasibility studies (December 2009 to June 2010), the process gained pace during 2011 with the review and adoption of the Draft Law on Health Insurance by the Council of Ministers (December 2010) followed by its adoption by the National Assembly in February 2011, then by the adoption of the INAM Decrees between February and March 2011.

The recruitment of INAM staff and the acquisition of premises and equipment rounded off the phase of setting up the Institute.

The process of registering civil servants has begun and will culminate in the distribution of registration cards at focal points.

Law No. 2011-003 of 18 February 2011 on the compulsory health insurance scheme for civil servants and the like includes the beneficiary's immediate family in this insurance (spouse, children aged 21 or under, adopted children and retired persons).

A great many services are covered, ranging from simple nursing care to specialized consultations. These include hospitalization, transport, surgery, various examinations and medical tests, childbirth, medicine costs, etc.

Coverage ranges from 80 to 100%. An annual levy of 3.5% is made on salaries and pensions as a contribution to INAM. This health cover protects civil servants and the like against risks faced in the line of duty.

In July 2010, a Delegation from the Directorate General of Customs travelled the length and breadth of the country to raise Customs officers' awareness about discipline and professional integrity and to inform them about this health insurance project launched by the Government. The news was greeted enthusiastically, although officers asked for the Customs Insurance Service to step up its operations pending the entry into service of the new insurance structure.

Indeed, for some years now there has been an Insurance Service for Customs staff known as "DOUANIÈRE" (Customs Officer), whose activities are similar to those of INAM. It covers 50% of the services enjoyed by Customs officers. Customs managers have lent their expertise to the process of developing the new health insurance system for civil servants .

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Civil servants in general, and Customs officers in particular, are protected against the risks faced in the performance of their duties, especially risks that can affect their well-being.

If they feel protected in this way, officers will redouble their efforts to achieve the professional goals set for them. This measure consequently boosts officers' motivation.



TUNISIA

Customs Medical Centre

Tunisia Customs has endeavoured to generate viable solutions in the fight against corruption by creating an ethical organization culture, inter alia through social initiatives.

An essential element of corporate social responsibility is employees' health and wellbeing. Since the creation of the Customs Medical Centre (CMC) in 1998, employee health and wellbeing have become increasingly important. Making sure that Customs officers are healthy both physically and mentally encourages loyalty and morale, and ultimately reduces the risk of corruption at the workplace .

Among the initiatives taken features the CMC, which is a public establishment placed under the supervision of the Ministry of



Finance and funded by the State budget.

The CMC building consists of 6 floors and one-level underground covering an area of 3,696 m². It comprises 30 offices, 19 outpatient

treatment rooms and 28 medical facilities.

The CMC provides preventive, curative and rehabilitative health care and emergency medical treatment for Customs officers, their spouses, dependent children up to the age of twenty-five and dependent ascendants. The Centre also provides the aforementioned medical services for retired employees, widows and orphans.



The CMC provides :

- Consultations and emergency care;
- Preliminary diagnosis;
- Monitoring of Customs officers' medical records;
- Medical services and accident treatment;
- Medical Examination for Employment and health check;
- Reimbursement of medical expenses;
- Preventive medicine (vaccines, blood donation, etc.)

All medical services are provided free of charge and without hospitalization.

With a budget allocation for fiscal year 2010 estimated at 1 829 850,380 Tunisian dinars*, the CMC aims to deliver medical services to Customs officers and their families in a wide variety of medical disciplines.



The CMC's staff comprises 19 doctors, 3 pharmacists, 24 radiology and laboratory technicians, 11 nurses, 21 medical assistants and 25 administrative support staff.

During 2009, 27,949 medical consultations were offered to Customs officers and their families within the CMC.

*1,000 Tunisian dinars equates to approximately 500 euro

URUGUAY

Social promotion and development service

The aim of the Social Promotion and Development Service is to see to the social development and occupational health of the organization's human resources, with a view to helping improve their quality of life fundamentally in the work environment, the understanding being that this will contribute to the achievement of the administration's objectives as a whole.

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It has two sections: an Occupational Health Section and a Social Development Section.

The Occupational Health Section has the following duties :

- Participate, at the request of the hierarchy, in tasks relating to the recruitment of candidates to the organization, selection via psychometric assessments, and possibly subsequent follow-up of the staff selected.
- Intervene, at the request of the competent departments or head offices (Legal Proceedings, Human Resources, supervisors, administrators, etc.), in any disputes with officials where a diagnostic assessment, intervention and/or technical report is required, whilst aiming at an integrated and contextual approach to the problem.
- Conduct psycho-occupational assessments of officials at the request of the hierarchy.
- Participate, in the sphere of occupational health, in drawing up proposals on subjects which have a major impact because of their scale – for example, addictions, especially alcoholism.
- Design and implement workshops on themes relating to prevention and health promotion.

The Social Development Section has the following duties :

- Propose arrangements and agreements which seek to meet officials' needs, for example, their educational, sporting, economic and recreational needs, with public or private bodies which encourage the socio-cultural development of officials and their family members.
- Offer social assistance to officials and family members who require it.
- Design and monitor the Subsidized Nursery Service allowance for officials who work inland and cannot send their children to the Nursery of Montevideo.
- Contribute the technical work needed for the effective functioning of the institution's nursery.

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Concrete measures which they have carried out :

Agreements and arrangements are in force which offer different benefits to officials and their family members. There is thus an arrangement with the National Blood Service concerning the creation of the Blood Donors' Club which, through a system based on solidarity, provides a solution to the volumes of blood required for surgical interventions, emergencies, etc.; holiday agreements with holiday parks which offer officials and their family members recreational opportunities at a lower cost than to the general public; agreement with savings and loan co-operatives; sports agreement.



INTEGRITY PILOT PROJECTS

Hereunder you will find a short update on integrity pilot projects for which there have been new developments. Further details on the rest of the integrity pilot projects will be provided in Issue No. 6 of the Integrity Newsletter.

Liberia



Following an initial WCO mission funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) in January 2011, a second WCO visit is scheduled to take place from 19 to 23 September in Monrovia as part of a performance measurement project

Togo



The performance contracts project initiated in May 2011 is well under way as the WCO Secretariat and the Togo Customs Administration have continued to work virtually. Reports on findings have been presented to the Board of Customs and discussed. The WCO Secretariat is planning a visit to Togo in the context of this project, funded by the World Bank, in November 2011.

Serbia



The Serbia Customs Administration is currently collecting responses to a questionnaire sent to staff in the framework of the development of a risk atlas. The WCO Secretariat will continue to work with experts in order to assist this Administration with its pilot project. In addition, Serbia Customs has launched an anti-corruption campaign that includes the publication of an advertisement in daily newspapers and at border crossings;

Egypt



The Egypt Customs Administration requested assistance from the WCO to identify an integrity pilot project. The WCO will send a mission to Cairo to assess the situation and discuss the implementation of a potential integrity pilot project.



INTEGRITY NEWS

Workshop in Algiers

On 5 and 6 March 2012, a workshop entitled “Measurement in Customs and Tax Administrations in Developing and Emerging Countries” will be organized in Algiers. This workshop will present the experience of Customs administrations engaged in performance measurement as well as research papers from academia on this issue. Performance measurement can help a Customs or Tax Administration improve its efficiency, identify and fight against bad practices. This event is co-organized by the WCO, the World Bank and Algeria Customs.

(<http://www.wcoomd.org/Algiers2012ResearchWorkshop>)

Please contact the WCO Secretariat should you wish to embark on an integrity pilot project or know more about our Integrity news

Contact

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