ANNUAL REPORT 2022
Implementation and Application of Rules of Origin to Enhance African Trade
Implementation and Application of Rules of Origin to Enhance African Trade
The EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme aims to facilitating and increasing intra-African trade, trade between Africa and Europe, and between Africa and the rest of the world.
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AfCFTA</td>
<td>African Continental Free Trade Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>African Union Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Customs Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEMAC</td>
<td>Central African Economic and Monetary Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>CET</td>
<td>Common External Tariff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTIG</td>
<td>Committee on Trade in Goods (AfCFTA body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Director General</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECCAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Member State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OGA</td>
<td>Other Government Administrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REC</td>
<td>Regional Economic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>RoO</td>
<td>Rules of Origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACU</td>
<td>Southern African Customs Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRoO</td>
<td>Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin (AfCFTA body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFA</td>
<td>Trade Facilitation Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEMOA</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMA</td>
<td>Arab Maghreb Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCO</td>
<td>World Customs Organization</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Executive Summary

This action, funded by the European Union under the PANAFRICA Programme, contributes to the EU support initiatives to African partners in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The programme is implemented by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and aims to facilitating and increasing intra-African trade, trade between Africa and Europe, and between Africa and the rest of the world.

The AfCFTA is a landmark achievement in fostering regional integration to unify the continent and further its socio-economic development. Under the AfCFTA Agreement, it is the rules of origin – establishing the nationality of products produced in Africa – that will determine whether preferential trade liberalization can be a game changer for Africa’s industrialization.

The main objective of the programme is to support the African continent to improve its capacity to deal with rules of origin and ultimately to support the harmonised and coordinated implementation and application of the rules of origin under Annex 2 of the AfCFTA. The outcome of the programme is that beneficiaries at continental (AfCFTA Secretariat and African Union Commission), regional (African Regional Economic Communities - RECs) and national level (African Customs Administrations, Government Administrations and Private Sector) implement and apply the rules of origin in compliance with Annex 2 of the AfCFTA and in line with international commitments and best practices.

After one year of implementation, the programme has surpassed its planned target of 19 activities for the year, with a total of 37 conducted activities in 2022, at continental, regional and national levels. The programme was set in motion with the engagement of 48 countries, 8 RECs, and partners from the private sector from 8 countries, and delivered targeted activities benefiting 14 national customs administrations and 3 RECs, as well as dedicated support to the AfCFTA Secretariat.
The programme is progressing efficiently, in close co-operation with the Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate of the WCO and the different partners. The first year of implementation has been successful in terms of achievement of deliverables and of engaging with partners. During the subsequent years, the programme will focus on programme implementation, covering capacity building to the AfCFTA Secretariat, RECs, CAs, private sector, as well as publications of key studies and manuals. It will continue adopting a demand-driven and tailored approach, targeted on RECs and CAs that are committed to ensure the sustainability of the origin competencies development, while ensuring complementarities with the AfCFTA secretariat agenda and action plan.
2. About the Programme

The EU-WCO Programme on the implementation and application of Rules of Origin (RoO) to enhance African trade is a multi-stakeholder initiative funded by the European Union and implemented by the World Customs Organization.

The anticipated outcome of the programme is that beneficiaries at continental (AfCFTA Secretariat and AU Commission), regional (African RECs) and national level (African Customs and Government Administrations, Private Sector) implement and apply the RoO in compliance with Annex 2 of the AfCFTA, in line with international commitments and best practices. This will contribute to facilitating and increasing intra-African trade, trade between Africa and Europe, and between Africa and the rest of the world, optimizing the incorporation of the African States’ economies to the regional and global value chains.

This action contributes to the EU’s External Investment Plan and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2007 and refined at the Summits in 2010, 2014 and 2017. It also contributes to the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area formally launched by the Assembly of the African Union at its tenth extraordinary session held on 21 March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda, and operationally launched in the Summit of Heads of States and Governments of the AU on 7 July 2019 in Niamey, Niger. A key objective of the AfCFTA is to facilitate and increase intra-African trade and with the rest of the world, including the European Union. This contributes to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement that entered into force on 22 February 2017.

The programme will benefit selected African Regional Economic Communities, African Customs administrations and relevant stakeholders, including the AfCFTA Secretariat, the African Union Commission, selected national government administrations and the private sector.
VISION
Assist in the successful implementation of the AfCFTA and the WTO-TFA
Contribute to trade facilitation and increasing intra-African trade, trade between Africa and Europe and between Africa and the rest of the world

OUTCOME
Implementation and application of Rules of Origin in compliance with Annex 2 of the AfCFTA, and with international commitments and best practices

OBJECTIVE
3. Strategic Approach

In order to ensure coherence and consistency with the outlined objectives, the programme has been designed around the following four components:

1. **Continental**
   - AfCFTA Secretariat/AUC

2. **Regional**
   - RECs

3. **National**
   - CA and OGA

4. **Private Sector**
During the first year of implementation, the programme pursued its objectives and expected outcomes to identify, sensitize and engage with the identified beneficiaries. The programme’s successful continental kick-off conference organized in July 2022 in Accra, Ghana, has laid the ground for such engagement by promoting the programme among potential beneficiaries. The WCO has used its network and regional and global fora to promote the programme and maximise the engagement.

The inception phase has seen an active delivery of activities to the AfCFTA on a demand-driven approach. This traction has also been witnessed with Customs administrations and RECs; the number of activities conducted, and requests for support received are a manifestation of the importance and relevance of the programme and its added value to trade facilitation and regional and continental integration.

This methodology has contributed to reaching out to 48 countries and achieving concrete results within one year of implementation.
4. 2022 Highlights

During this year of cooperation with the different partners and stakeholders, the programme has conducted 37 activities directly benefiting 8 RECs, private sector representatives from 8 countries, with targeted activities towards 14 national customs administrations and 3 RECs, as well as dedicated support to the AfCFTA Secretariat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries engaged in the programme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Angola</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Benin</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Botswana</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>5. Burundi</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Cabo Verde</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Cameroon</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Central African Republic</td>
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<td>9. Chad</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Comoros</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Congo, Democratic Republic of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Congo, Republic of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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<td>14. Egypt</td>
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<td>15. Equatorial Guinea</td>
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<td>16. Eswatini</td>
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<td>17. Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Gabon</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Gambia</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Guinea</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Guinea-Bissau</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Lesotho</td>
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<td>25. Liberia</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Madagascar</td>
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<td>27. Malawi</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. Mali</td>
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<td>29. Mauritania</td>
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<td>30. Mauritius</td>
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<td>31. Mozambique</td>
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<td>32. Namibia</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. Niger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. Sao Tome and Principe</td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Senegal</td>
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<tr>
<td>38. Seychelles</td>
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<td>39. Sierra Leone</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>42. South Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>43. Tanzania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Togo</td>
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<tr>
<td>45. Tunisia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Uganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>47. Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Zimbabwe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

RECs engaged in the programme

1. Central African Economic and Monetary Community - CEMAC
2. East African Community - EAC
3. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa - COMESA
4. Economic Community of West African States - ECOWAS
5. Southern African Customs Union - SACU
6. West African Economic and Monetary Union - UEMOA
7. Southern African Development Community - SADC
8. Arab Maghreb Union - UMA

48 countries
Main Actions in 2022

5 Technical expertise support actions provided to the AfCFTA at the 6th and 7th Meetings of the Sub-Committee on RoO, at 9th Committee on Trade in Goods, including assistance on review mechanism for RoO for sugar and textiles, and technical explanation on RoO for used clothes.

Programme Launching Continental Conference

Workshop on AfCFTA RoO in support to the Guided Trade Initiative - 8 countries (customs and private sector)

Contribution to the drafting and finalization of the AfCFTA Manual on RoO, complemented by a Quick guide for the private sector on AfCFTA RoO, developed by the Programme.

Technical Workshops with 2 RECs - ECOWAS and 5 of its Member States on E-certification and self-certification and with SADC to update its RoO to HS 2022.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution at the TEAM Europe High level Customs Digitalization Forum</th>
<th>Contribution to the launch of SADC e-Certificate of Origin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gambia Revenue Authority National Training on RoO</td>
<td>Diagnostic mission for the Malawi Revenue Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Mission for Côte d’Ivoire Customs on Advance Rulings</td>
<td>National Consultation with the Egyptian Customs Authority</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activities at Continental and Regional Level

Technical update of the AfCFTA Appendix IV to take into account the HS 2022 amendments
06 May 2022

At the 6th SCROO, AfCFTA State Parties agreed on a recommendation indicating that “the AfCFTA Secretariat should expedite the consideration of the implications of HS 2022 on rules of origin in Appendix IV by 15th May 2022 for the attention of Member States and for consideration by the Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin”.

At the request of the AfCFTA Secretariat, the technical update of Appendix IV – AfCFTA Product Specific Rules of origin – was carried out by the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme and submitted to the AfCFTA Secretariat for further processing. The technical update was included in the list of documents communicated to State Parties ahead of the 7th SCROO.
Funding and Participation at the 7th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin (SCROO) 16 to 27 May 2022

The EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme and the AfCFTA Secretariat jointly convened the 7th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin of the AfCFTA on 16 to 27 May 2022 in Accra, Ghana. The meeting was convened to discuss outstanding issues – finalization of the draft AfCFTA RoO Manual, and the alignment of Rules of Origin legal texts and related trading documents. This meeting was attended by about 80 RoO experts from 40 Member administrations, the East African Community, ECOWAS, and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States. The AfCFTA Secretariat presented the status of outstanding issues in AfCFTA Appendix IV on Rules of Origin and the draft manual on RoO. The participants had in-depth discussions on outstanding Rules of Origin, especially on the textiles and apparel proposals in order to define a way forward. In addition, the meeting finalized the draft AfCFTA RoO Manual for submission to the Committee on Trade in Goods and ultimately to the Council of Ministers.
Funding and Participation at the 9th Committee on Trade in Goods (CTIG), including assistance on review mechanism for rules of origin for sugar and textiles, and technical explanation on rule of origin for used clothes

06 to 10 June 2022

The Committee on Trade in Goods of the AfCFTA met for the ninth time from 06 to 10 June 2022 to discuss the reports from its subcommittees. This included crucial tasks like completing the AfCFTA Rules of Origin Manual final draft and the AfCFTA Regulation on the handling of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in compliance with Decision 70 of the 8th Meeting of the Council of Ministers. About 70 delegates from ECOWAS, UNCTAD, the East African Community, and 40 Member Administrations attended the meeting.

The draft AfCFTA Manual on RoO was approved during the meeting with amendments in preparation for submission to the Committee of Senior Trade Official and ultimately the AfCFTA Council of Ministers in charge of trade. The EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme provided technical interventions and participated in group assignments which saw a successful adoption of the draft AfCFTA Rules of Origin Manual.
Continental Launch Conference
19 to 20 July 2022

The Continental Inaugural Conference was held from 19 to 20 July 2022 in Accra, Ghana, to launch the EU-WCO Programme on the implementation and application of rules of origin for improved intra-African trade.

The conference was attended by over 60 representatives from 46 African member administrations, the AfCFTA Secretariat and African Regional Economic Communities, as well as representatives of international organizations and the private sector. Besides marking the launch of the programme, the conference was a unique opportunity for stakeholders to shed the light on the importance of a harmonized implementation of RoO, enabling CAs to exchange among themselves, with RECs, the AfCFTA Secretariat and the private sector.

The inaugural conference has also given the opportunity to each REC to present the state of play, challenges and lessons learnt in the implementation of RoO at regional and national level as well as with regard to Economic Partnership Agreements.
AfCFTA Ministerial Meeting -
Launch of the AfCFTA Manual on Rules of Origin
25 to 26 July 2022

On 25 July 2022 during the 9th Council of Ministers Meeting, the AfCFTA Secretariat launched two major tools deemed key in accelerating trading under the AfCFTA, namely the AfCFTA E-Tariff Book and the Rules of Origin Manual. Both were developed with the support of the World Customs Organization and the European Union under the EU-WCO RoO Africa and HS Programmes.

The AfCFTA e-Tariff Book contains all the information on the tariff schedules and applicable tariff rates for all of the AfCFTA State Parties structured based on the WCO 6 digits Harmonized System (HS). This tool is a milestone as it will facilitate the publication of information on rates of duty applied by AfCFTA State Parties under their Schedules of Tariff Concessions with several search functionalities, comparison of applicable rates between all state parties and option to download the results, hence making it a practical instrument for trading under the AfCFTA Agreement. This tool will further include key information on AfCFTA RoO and could be further enhanced as one stop platform for all relevant stakeholders.

The AfCFTA Rules of Origin Manual is the dashboard for the operationalization of Annex 2 on Rules of Origin in order to provide tariff preferences to goods that meet the origin rules and are traded between the AfCFTA State Parties. It contributes to a uniform interpretation and application of the AfCFTA Rules of Origin in the State Parties, and shall enable Customs officers and other stakeholders involved in the clearance of goods to understand the mechanisms of according the preferential tariff treatment to goods traded in the AfCFTA.
Participation to the launch of SADC e-Certificate of Origin  
06 to 07 September 2022

Upon the invitation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the programme participated in the launch of the SADC electronic Certificate of Origin held on 06 to 07 September 2022 in Blantyre, Malawi. This meeting was an opportunity for the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme to engage and exchange with SADC Secretariat, experts and development partners to align the programme support in a complementary manner, hence further contributing to effective implementation of the SADC e-certificate of origin in pilot countries and other SADC members.

Capacity building mission and technical workshop to assist the AfCFTA Secretariat in the preparation of the update of AfCFTA Rules of Origin to HS 2022  
12 to 14 September 2022

As a follow-up to the technical update of Appendix IV – AfCFTA Product Specific Rules of origin – carried out by the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme and submitted to the AfCFTA Secretariat for further processing in May 2022, the programme conducted a capacity building mission and technical workshop to assist the AfCFTA Secretariat in the finalization of the update of AfCFTA Rules of Origin to HS 2022 and in the presentation of the update to the SCROO. Another objective of the Workshop was to capacitate the AfCFTA Secretariat to conduct future updates following HS amendments.
Presentation of the EU RoO Programme at Belgian Customs School for selected officials from French speaking African Customs administrations

11 October 2022

The EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme was invited to contribute to the 51st Session of the Belgian Customs School for French-speaking African Customs.

During their 10-month stay at the Belgian Customs School, the 30 selected trainees, from 10 African Customs Administrations (Benin, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Mali, Niger and Rwanda) have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Customs matters and develop specific skills during specialized workshops, particularly in the management and risk management domains. The curriculum also includes lectures by WCO Secretariat experts on internationally recognized practices and methods, WCO standards and tools, and international cooperation mechanisms.

Regional Consultation with ECOWAS

24 to 25 October 2022

The EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme held consultations with ECOWAS and selected Members (Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Ghana, and Nigeria) on cooperation and assistance in relation to rules of origin. The implementation of Advance rulings according to the WTO TFA was discussed among participants.

A detailed work plan for technical assistance activities for ECOWAS and its Members was developed, noting that activities need to be planned in collaboration with each Member State.
Participation at the TEAM Europe High level Customs Digitalization Forum intervening on RoO
03 to 04 November 2022

The programme attended the ESA High Level Customs Digitalization Forum with the overall theme “Accelerating Digitalization in Customs to boost intra-African trade” on 03 to 04 November 2022 in Kigali, Rwanda. Participants discussed trends in digitalization at national, regional and global levels, perspectives and status of digitalization among key stakeholders, including the private sector, Regional Economic Communities, Partner Government Agencies and the African Union Commission as well as the AfCFTA Secretariat.

It explored digitalization in areas of e-Payment and e-Commerce systems, coordinated border management and intelligence driven risk management, certificates of origin, transit tracking solutions, and single window systems, among others. The forum was organized by the WCO ESA Regional Office for Capacity Building in conjunction with the African Union Commission and GIZ.

Regional Consultation with SADC
21 to 25 November 2022

This consultation, held in partnership with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) took place in Gaborone, Botswana, from 21 to 25 November 2022.

The objective of this consultation was to dress the state of play on the application of rules of origin in the region and explore avenues of cooperation between the WCO and SADC, as well as define the support activities to SADC and its members under the EU-WCO Origin Africa Programme. The EU-WCO RoO Africa programme Experts, SADC Secretariat and SADC Regional Experts worked on Appendix I on RoO of the SADC Protocol on Trade. The appendix was considered chapter by chapter, and amendments were made version after version, thus transposing from HS 2002 to HS 2007, followed by HS 2007 to HS 2012, then HS 2012 to HS 2017 and HS 2017 to HS 2022.
Quick Guide to the private sector on the AfCFTA Rules of Origin
December 2022

The programme has developed a Quick Guide for the private sector to assist with the practical implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement Annex 2 on Rules of Origin of the Protocol on Trade and its relevant appendices, especially Appendix IV on the Product Specific Rules of origin.

The Quick Guide provides a short but comprehensive introduction to the AfCFTA origin provisions, including provisions on origin criteria, cumulation and tolerance rules, consignment rules and origin certification. The Quick Guide has been published in English, French, Arabic and Portuguese and is being actively promoted by the programme.

Practical Guide for the implementation of the AfCFTA Rules of Origin

The EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme is developing a very detailed and comprehensive Practical Guide for the implementation of the AfCFTA Rules of Origin to assist Customs Administrations and economic operators with the practical implementation of the AfCFTA Annex 2 on Rules of Origin of the Protocol on Trade and its relevant appendices. The document provides detailed explanations on different origin concepts, explains how these concepts are applied in the framework of the AfCFTA Agreement, Annex 2 on Rules of Origin and Appendix IV, and includes examples to enhance the comprehension of the provision. The first draft of the Practical Guide has been developed. The final version of the Practical Guide is expected in the course of 2023.
Workshop on AfCFTA Rules of Origin in support to the Guided Trade Initiative
12-14 December 2022

The programme, in partnership with Egypt Customs, held a workshop in Cairo, Egypt, from 12 to 14 December 2022 to support the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative. The workshop brought together 50 participants from Customs and private sector from the eight countries involved in the initiative, namely Cameroon, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania and Tunisia as well as representatives of the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and the WCO-JICA Origin Master Trainer Programme.

The objective of this workshop was to ensure a correct understanding of the implementation and application of the AfCFTA rules of origin, which will lead to enhanced intra-African trade, development of regional and continental value chains, sustainable economic development, and an increase in investments. The workshop addressed key AfCFTA origin features, including origin determination, origin certification and other procedural aspects, based on actual cases from the participating private sector representatives.
Activities at National Level

Diagnostic mission for Malawi
19 to 23 September 2022

Upon request from the Malawi Customs administration, the programme conducted a diagnostic mission for the Malawi Revenue Authority in Blantyre from 19 to 23 September 2022. During the mission, MRA officials working in the areas of origin, risk management, post clearance audit, legal affairs, human resources and training carried out an evaluation of the present origin infrastructure and practices in Malawi and discussed how to improve and enhance the origin management.

A series of recommendations and a draft action plan were developed during the mission to be further implemented within the framework of the programme.
National Workshop for Côte d’Ivoire on Advance Rulings - in cooperation with GATF and GIZ
12 to 13 October 2022

The EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme, in partnership with the German Alliance for Trade Facilitation, through GIZ, is offering a comprehensive technical support to the Customs administration of Côte d’Ivoire to implement a national system for Advance Rulings.

The support included a series of virtual working sessions held on 12 to 13 October with the aim to define the legal and procedural framework and develop a digital solution for the Advance Rulings mechanism. The development of an Advance Rulings system for classification, origin determination and possibly customs valuation, will contribute to improving transparency and predictability for economic operators and reduce disputes on tariff classification or rules of origin.

This support is a joint initiative between the RoO Africa Programme and the German Alliance for Trade facilitation and GIZ, enriched on principle of complementarities. The programme will coordinate with GIZ through the whole process of project implementation by supporting the work of GIZ with technical assistance in the draft of legal and procedural mechanisms and provide training to customs officers.
National Training on Rules of Origin for The Gambia
07 to 11 November 2022

The programme, in partnership with the Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA), organized a national training workshop on Rules of Origin in Banjul, The Gambia from 07 to 11 November 2022.

The objective of the workshop was to assist the GRA in enhancing its knowledge and application of preferential rules of origin. During the workshop, participants worked on key concepts for proper origin determination, related operational and procedural issues, and the establishment of efficient origin management.
National Workshop for Botswana on Advance Rulings
28 to 30 November 2022

In response to a request by the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS), the programme held a technical assistance activity on Advance Rulings in Gaborone, Botswana, from 28 to 30 November 2022. The Workshop objective was to assist BURS with reviewing the draft Advance Ruling guidelines document and enhancing knowledge and application of advance rulings. The WCO, under the EU-WCO HS Africa Programmes has been working with BURS experts for over a year through a series of workshops and consultations to fast-track the implementation of advance rulings based on the WCO recommendations and guidelines as well as the WTO-TFA provisions. The assistance under the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme complements the work conducted by the EU-WCO HS Africa Programme and intervenes to provide more substance and comprehensive approach in the implementation of advance rulings also from an origin perspective.

Diagnostic Consultative mission with Egyptian Customs
11 to 15 December 2022

The mission, conducted at the end of the Workshop on AfCFTA Rules of Origin in support to the Guided Trade Initiative aimed at discussing needs and challenges on a national level and the assistance to be provided under the programme. The activity presented the scope of the programme in a detailed manner and set the ground for further engagement and support to be provided for Egyptian Customs in the next reporting period.
5. Vision for 2023

The programme will focus on programme implementation, covering capacity building to the AfCFTA Secretariat, RECs, CAs, private sector, as well as publications of key studies and manuals.

It will continue adopting a demand-driven and tailored approach, focusing on RECs and CAs that are committed to ensure the sustainability of the origin competencies development. The programme shall also engage the private sector stakeholders to ensure a holistic approach in competency development and technical assistance.

For 2023, the programme is engaged as per the established workplan:

- 9 continental activities,
- 11 regional activities,
- 12 national activities and
- 3 private sector activities,

It is also receiving several requests for support that shall be cared for on ad-hoc basis.

The programme remains open to administrations and RECs in Africa.

We invite you to send us your request to EU-WCORoOAfrica.Program@wcoomd.org
6. Overview of Expenditure

The table below is an extract from the financial report for the first year as communicated to the donor and covering the period from 8 December 2021 to 31 December 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Lines</th>
<th>Expenditure (€)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Component 2 - Regional</td>
<td>123,889</td>
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<td>Component 3 - National CAs</td>
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<td>Component 4 - Private Sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme steering and coordination</td>
<td>217,097</td>
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<td>Tools and Publications</td>
<td>00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand total</strong></td>
<td><strong>667,448</strong></td>
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Annex – Testimonies from Programme Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

Mr. Didier Bonyeme, Head of Division - Rules of Origin
AfCFTA Secretariat

It is with great pleasure that I testify to the fruitful collaboration between the Directorate of Trade in Goods of the AfCFTA Secretariat and more particularly the Division of Rules of Origin with the team of the EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme. We have benefited from your participation and financial support for the drafting of the rules of origin manual, as well as numerous meetings in Accra, including the work of the ad hoc committee for the update to HS 2022 of the Appendix IV on rules of origin.

The AfCFTA Secretariat also had the opportunity to participate in the Gambia Customs Officers Training Workshop and the Guided Trade Initiative (GTI) Pilot Country Capacity Building Workshop.

I hope that this collaboration will continue for our mutual enrichment.

Mrs. Aissata KOFFI YAMEOGO, P.O. Rules of Origin & Management of Preferential Treatment - Customs Union and Taxation Directorate
ECOWAS Commission

Thank you to the whole team of the EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme led by WCO experts, who have been assisting us technically and financially at the ECOWAS Commission since its inception. It is an effective working collaboration which makes it possible to consolidate our international and regional experiences which will propel the various works already undertaken in the region to boost the flow of trade in Community products.

The ECOWAS Commission via the Directorate of Customs Union and Taxation congratulates the members of the program for their professionalism.
Mr. Ally Alexander Mwangolombe, Programme Officer, Customs Procedures - Finance Investments and Customs
SADC

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a Regional Economic Community comprising 16 Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme has committed to support the SADC Region on the following areas: alignment of the SADC Rules of Origin on Annex I of the Protocol on Trade to HS 2022, development of the Origin Verification Guidelines with clear defined scope, the implementation of the SADC Electronic Certificate of Origin Framework, the finalisation of the amendments of the remaining parts of Annex I of Rules of Origin of 2022, aligning SADC Rules of Origin on issues of the administration of Rule of Origin with the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the African Continental Free Trade Area and undertaking capacity building on Rules of Origin programmes for public and private stakeholders. All these initiatives aimed at facilitating trade which promotes production of goods and services hence industrialisation and investment in the region.

So far, the workplan to implement the above areas were developed and its implementation started, and the alignment of the SADC Rules of Origin on Annex I of the Protocol on Trade to HS 2022 was finalised and report was presented to SADC Structures for adoption processes. Other activities will soon start their implementation.

Mr. Cordou Loum Jones Ogoh, Manager, Tariff and Classification
Gambia Revenue Authority

Our experience with the EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme was one of the best training we ever had starting from the arrangements, materials and delivery of the training was just perfect and timely. We have all learnt a lot from the team that came. We hope to proceed to the Advance Training in RoO and hope it would even be better than the first since we have got experience of the first training. We once again say thank you for all the support received from the EU-WCO RoO Programme and team of trainers.
Ms. Dikeledi Motlaleng, Principal Customs Officer
Botswana Unified Revenue Service

BURS acknowledges WCO and the European Union (EU) for the support provided to Botswana under the framework of the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme. During the launch of the programme the BURS benefitted from the programme as the launch gave participant opportunity to present and share Botswana’s experience and challenges in implementing the Rules of Origin. This programme created platform for participants to share ideas and learn from other experts. Botswana tapped on the information shared and experiences in implementation of rules of origin. The information acquired from the programme was used to improve the procedures and in finalisation of needs analysis which was submitted to WCO for consideration.

As a follow up of the launch programme BURS also received technical assistance on Advance Ruling covering Classification, Valuation and Origin where WCO experts provided guidance in development of advance ruling guidelines during a workshop held in Botswana where the BURS technical team were trained on the advance ruling on the three area. The workshop assisted the team to finalise the draft guidelines on Advance Ruling. The guide included advance on Origin where officers needed clarification on several issues. The vast knowledge learnt from this engagement was used in finalisation of the advance ruling on Origin. WCO experts continued the assistance on the document with quality assurance process of the guidelines on advance ruling and the application form.

Still under the hospices of the EU-WCO RoO Programme, BURS RoO experts participated in the alignment of the SADC Rules of Origin to HS 2022. The experts gained skills on how to carry out a technical update of the Rules of Origin. This knowledge may be used in other regional blocks. The knowledge acquired is particularly important for implementation of rules of origin as BURS is the national body responsible for administration of the rules of origin under all the agreements that Botswana is party to. The knowledge acquired from the technical assistance has contributed towards enhanced technical knowledge on rules of origin and increased number of our technical officers’ pool in BURS.
Ms. Thandi Hambira, Manager, Customs Rules of Origin
Namibia Revenue Authority

NamRA requested the WCO for Rules of Origin training of its Customs Officers. The quick response and subsequent delivery of the trainings are indicative of the WCO’s quest to assist and ensure that member states apply the requirements of Annex K of the Revised Kyoto Convention, WTO Agreement on RoO as well as the RoO requirements and provisions of the various trade agreements correctly.

A total number of 25 Customs Officers were trained, the training was enlightening, informative and very engaging, and that motivated the staff members to actively participate throughout the workshop. Apart from gaining an overall insight and understanding of ROO, we particularly found the practical exercises very useful for application in future origin determinations.

Due to the high number of origin verification queries NamRA received from particularly, Italy, Germany, and Spain, NamRA once again extended a request to WCO to train the Namibian business fraternity and other government ministries and agencies involved in the exportation of Namibian products. This time 19 stakeholders were trained together with 4 Customs Officers.

This training was necessary because not only did the stakeholders acquire new knowledge, but we as Customs Officers also had the opportunity to look at ourselves and our RoO operational processes through the eyes of our stakeholders because the training also created a platform to discuss operational issues openly and honestly without prejudice.

Importantly, the training will ensure that the objectives of the AfCFTA and other EPA’s will be met because the companies that were trained expressed their gratitude and equally their readiness and willingness to trade across the African continent and equally, globally.

Mette, as the Lead Origin Expert not only have the knowledge and expertise of RoO, but she carries out her work with so much dedication, compassion, energy and patience, and these positive elements are what made the outcome of both workshops a resounding success.

NamRA would be forever grateful to the WCO and the sponsors of the EU-WCO RoO for Africa programme for the technical support received for the reason that, the training paved the way for the effective implementation and application of the provisions of RoO as per the AfCFTA, various trade agreements, and economic partnership agreements. We therefore thank the WCO and respective sponsors for their dedication and commitment towards capacity building.
Mr. Getu Legesse Almaw, Director, Tariff Classification and Rules of Origin
Ethiopian Customs Commission

On March 6–10, 2023, the EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Program delivered to the Ethiopian Customs Commission a valuable and engaging rule of origin workshop in Addis Ababa. The presenters were well-experienced, the practical exercises were very helpful, and the overall environment was friendly and interactive. It was one of the best workshops I had and was successful in enhancing our understanding of the subject matter and building our confidence to implement the AfCFTA’s rules of origin. I would like to thank the WCO and the European Union for arranging and funding such a wonderful workshop. I hope the program’s valuable assistance will be continued in the future.

Ms. Faith Mosongo, Programme Officer
WCO, East & Southern Africa, Regional Office for Capacity Building

The ESA Region, through its Governing Council, has saluted the programme for supporting our members to enhance their capacities to deal with rules of origin and the harmonized and coordinated implementation and application of the rules of origin within the AfCFTA framework and other regional and international commitments. We further applaud the efforts towards electronic Certificate of Origin. The programme continues to anchor our regional integration and economic development efforts, alongside its sister programme, HS Programme for Africa. In achieving this, it has recognised the critical role played by all players, complementing their efforts and integrating the WCO regional entities and regional economic communities in the implementation of this regional priority.

Mr. Motohiro Fujimitsu, Fund Manager
WCO-JICA Origin Master Trainer Programme

Complemental relationship among WCO Capacity Building programmes is quite important for the benefit of participating Customs administrations as well as the WCO Secretariat in terms of the best use of respective resources. I can testify that the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme pays great attention to this point. The EU Programme and the Master Trainer Programme (MTP) on RoO in Africa by the WCO/JICA Joint Project have the same objective to support the implementation of AfCFTA, and therefore highly recognize the importance of cooperation between the programmes. Thanks to wide range of activities and very kind and first class experts/staff of the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme, the WCO/JICA Joint Project can work with the EU funded Programme in complementary manner, leading for the WCO to be able to assure WCO Members of the best use of its resources.
Ms. Aude Lanois, Head of component, Programme Support to the AfCFTA
GIZ African Union

Germany has been supporting the AfCFTA negotiations and the African Union framework programme “Boosting Intra-African Trade” since 2015 through the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Support to the AfCFTA is a priority of the German development cooperation.

To enhance synergies, the German support is designed as a multilevel approach addressing at the continental level the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the AfCFTA Secretariat in Accra, Ghana; at the regional level three Regional Economic Communities (EAC, ECOWAS and SADC); and at national level ten partner countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda, Tunisia and Zambia).

The support covers the different technical areas such as Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, Competition Policy, Investment, E-Commerce etc. On the area of Trade in Goods, key activities are realised with strategic partners with strong technical expertise as the World Customs Organization (WCO) and with the support of the European Union (EU). The EU-WCO RoO Africa and the GIZ Support Programme to the AfCFTA are committed to collaborate to implement customs and rules of origin capacity building programmes. An area of successful cooperation is starting.
EU-WCO RULES OF ORIGIN
AFRICA PROGRAMME

World Customs Organization

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Visit our website:
wcoomd.org