SADC CUSTOMS
TRAINING OF TRAINERS PROGRAMME
2013-2016

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BACKGROUND

The development of capacity in Customs is critical to promote compliance in a way that facilitates legitimate international trade. Article 8 of Annex II of Protocol on trade provides for Member States to undertake to develop or adopt joint training programmes, exchange staff and share training facilities and resources. Additionally, the SCCC Strategic Plan 2012-2016 states that it is important for Customs administrations in Member States to take full advantage of technical assistance and training activities that happen in the region. It further adds that the region should develop a pool of regional experts in various customs disciplines who can be called upon to enhance skills of Customs officers across the region. A SADC Customs Training of Trainers Programme 2013-2015 was approved by the by the Sub Committee on Customs Cooperation (SCCC) in May 2013.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The SADC Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme 2013-2016 is a response to the challenges of a future integrated operational Customs environment which will include the reform and modernization of SADC Customs administrations. The main objective of the programme is to provide technical and professional support to the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade, particularly in view of the contribution of Customs administrations to the successful implementation and consolidation of the SADC FTA and the SADC Protocol on Trade.

Sub objectives:

• To support the reform and modernization of the SADC Customs administrations with a view to strengthen national and regional strategic institutions concerning trade facilitation through the adoption of “best practices” and agreed regional and international standards;

• To complement existing capacity building effort at a regional and national level with a view to establish a training network among Customs administrations; and

• To facilitate the partnership and regular exchange between Customs and Business, and to support the meeting of capacity and particularly training needs (in customs-relevant areas) of the business players in the trading chain.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The proposed training plan aims at supporting Member States in acquiring the necessary know-how to train national staff/stakeholders on customs related issues. Priority will be given to those customs issues that are relevant to the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade. There are five elements to the training plan, which comprises activities on the regional and on the national level as well as an interactive online exchange and learning platform.

Regional perspective

Priority is given to those issues that are particularly relevant for the implementation of regionally agreed commitments such as the Trade Protocol or which are demanded by a majority of Member States. The priorities will also derive from a systematic and continuous review of training needs, which shall provide a realistic direction in which the training shall be delivered. Resources shall be allocated according to priorities as informed by a regional needs analysis.

Participation

Participation is open to all SADC Member States. Customs Administrations participating in the programme may nominate at least 3 representatives that will take part in the Training-of-Trainee programme for a minimum period of one year with an endeavour to minimize a change of trainers for every training provided.

Expectations from Custom Administrations

Customs administrations are expected to ensure dissemination of the training to relevant stakeholders and cascading of same to other officers at national level.

Collaboration with partners

The Programme is being implemented in collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO), Regional Organization for Capacity Building (ROCB), Regional Training Centres and Institutes, Member States and Deutsches Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

Training Topic

The first training session for the trainees was on Communication and Facilitation Skills and it was conducted in August 2013 at the Regional Training Centre (RTC) in South Africa. The second session on SADC Rules of Origin was conducted in November 2013 at the RTC in Mauritius. The third training of the Customs Training of Trainers Programme 2013-2015 was held from 17th -21st June 2014 on ‘Risk Management’ at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) Learning Academy, Pretoria, South Africa. The objective of the training was to give the trainers the necessary skills and expertise to coach Customs officials and stakeholders in an effective and professional way. The next training course will be held in November 2014 on Tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers.

The SADC Protocol on Trade which was signed in 1996 and came into force in 2000 seeks to further liberalize intra-regional trade by creating mutually beneficial trade arrangements, thereby improving investment and productivity in the region. It advocates that Member States eliminate barriers to trade, ease customs procedures, harmonize trade policies based on international standards, and prohibit unfair business practices. Other topics that will be covered by the programme are:

• WTO Valuation;

• ATA Carnet and Istanbul Convention

• Harmonized System;

• Risk Management

• Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation - Coordinated Border Management - One Stop Border Post Concept - Post Clearance Audit - Single Window Concept

BENEFITS OF THE TRAINING PLAN

The perceived benefits of the training plan are:

At the Regional Level

• Closer co-operation among the Customs Administrations;

• Raised level of integrity in the trading chain;

• Facilitation of effective implementation of the SADC FTA leading to increased trade flows between SADC Member States; and

• Facilitation of Regional readiness to implement the Customs Union.

• Cost effective training and development programmes eliminating duplication

At the National Level

• Improved partnership between Customs and Business;

• An equally professional business sector, in particular the clearing and forwarding sector; and

• Contribution to the lowering of costs of doing business and thus contributing to investment flows and poverty eradication.

• Improved level of skills, staff productivity within SADC Customs administrations

• Improved business environment in each Customs Administration and management of customs as a business