

The EPA Project: Enhancing the capacity of SRC Customs Division in HS and domestic regulations

Seychelles is the beneficiary of “The Long-Term Technical Assistance to Support the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Implementation” Project funded by the European Union. As part of efforts to improve capacity of key government institutions in managing and implementing the EPA, including via better trade policy formulation and trade negotiations; training on the Harmonized System (HS) was provided to the staff of the Seychelles Revenue Commission (SRC)– Customs Division, from 17 to 28 May 2021 in Victoria, Seychelles.

The training was aimed at deepening the SRC Staff’s understanding of HS, a multipurpose international product nomenclature developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO). The training took a practical approach to improve the SRC Staff’s capacity to classify traded goods with the right HS codes and perform their duties better in the respective HS related areas and domestic regulations.

To ensure the sustainability of this capacity building intervention, local trainers have been equipped with skills in the “Training of HS trainers” and are now able to develop, adapt and update contextual HS training material.

The training used a combination of e-learning sessions, covering theoretical aspects, and face-to-face training to deliver the application and implementation of HS. The training methodology included: knowledge transferring to trainees, demonstrations using exercises and case studies, trainee and trainer workshops, interactive trainee / trainer participation, hands-on sessions, trainee assessment and trainer assessment.

The training and analyses were guided by the following: the HS Convention, the structure of the HS, classification principles, detailed analysis of HS Chapters, case studies on classification, HS Committee decisions, classification rulings, possible areas of classification fraud, laboratory analysis, Seychelles national tariffs, the HS Explanatory Notes and other complementary HS publications and other relevant Customs laws and regulations, to the extent possible or availability.

The main constraint on the training was the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. The new health restrictions and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health of Seychelles to curb the recent surge of COVID-19 impacted the delivery of the HS training. Particularly, the limit of persons allowed to gather indoors, and outdoors resulted in a total of only 13 participants being trained in face- to – face session, split in groups of three participants only. To mitigate the COVID impact on training delivery and extend the training to a larger group of participants, e-learning modules for HS have been developed and have been made available to 34 participants that have followed the training on the e-learning platform of the Project, namely <https://e-learning.epa.gopa.de/>.

The participants demonstrated thorough interest in the HS, related tools, instruments and regulations, classification of products and terminology used in tackling Seychellois’s exporters challenges and avoiding (national / international) legal disputes. They actively contributed to the group exercises and effective HS classification of products.

The training provided an opportunity for the SRC to demonstrate its commitment to contributing to the debates on HS, drafting and implementation of legal documents related to HS.



Ministry of Finance, Economic
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HS Trainer with Training Participants, May 2021, Victoria, Seychelles.



HS Training in session May 2021, Victoria, Seychelles