REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
Ministry of Industrialisation,
Trade and SME Development

Workshop to Raise Awareness on Single Window Implementation, September, 11-12, 2018, Safari Hotel, Windhoek, Namibia

DRAFT WORKSHOP REPORT

September 2018

1.0 OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development (MITSMED), and the Namibia Ports Authority (Namport), in collaboration with the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AAEC) with financial support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa- African Trade Policy Centre organized a workshop to raise awareness on Single Window Implementation, held at Safari Hotel in Windhoek, Namibia from 11 – 12 September 2018.

The main objective of the workshop was to raise awareness amongst stakeholders on the National Single Window (NSW) concept and the implementation thereof. Emphasis was put on NSW implementation challenges and how to mitigate these challenges.

1.1 REMARK BY THE HOST COUNTRY

Ms. Patricia Liswaniso, Project Coordinator of Namibia National Single Window Environment welcomed all delegates to the workshop and highlighted the objective of the workshop. She further gave the background of the NSW Project and recalled Cabinet decision of 2013, that approved and mandated MITSMED to establish and spearhead the NSW Environment of a National Single Window (NSW) environment in Namibia. In operationalize Cabinet decision, the Ministry in 2016, engaged a consultant to conduct a feasibility study to determine the business model that Namibia could adopt. She further stated that Cabinet in 2017 approved that NSW be hosted by an existing Agency which is Namibian Ports Authority (Namport) and that MITSMED and Namport work out the modalities to operationalize the NSW Environment.

In the same vain, Mr. Bisey Uirab, Chief Executive Officer of Namport informed the delegates that a subsidiary company was subsequently registered in June 2018 as "Namibia E-Trade Services Pty Ltd" (NETS), to operate the NSW Environment. In addition, he stated that processes are underway to finalize the appointment of board members for NETS. He further emphasized on the need to fast track the implementation of the NSW Environment.

1.2 AAEC SPEECH

Mr. Sam Toyota delivered the speech on behalf of the Chairman of the African Alliance of Electronic Commerce (AACE). He thanked Namibia for her positive response to have agreed

to host the workshop and the logistical support provided. He further thanked the Honorable Deputy Minister for gracing the occasion with her presence.

In addition, he stated that the workshop in Namibia was the fourth in the second phase of series of workshops that the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce has organized in different countries such as Niger, Egypt, Burundi, Uganda and Botswana since 2013.
AAEC intends to organize 6 of such workshops in all the different economic regions of the continent during 2018, whereas the first one was organized from 22-23 May 2018 in Monrovia, Liberia, the second in Malawi from 7-8 June 2018 and the third from 3-4 September 2018 in Chad.

He added that AAEC was initiated during the first edition of the International Single Window Conference held in November 2008 in Dakar, Senegal. With the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) initiative, that held the constituent General Assembly in 2009, in Addis Ababa where the organization was officially launched. He indicated that the main objective of AAEC is to develop high-performing Single Windows in Africa. He stressed that if the continent is to rid itself of aid and benevolence of donors, it will be through trade and investment not by mercy of foreign aid. It is therefore important to have very efficient trading regimes in African countries in order for the continent to gain momentum in global trade.

The workshop was further informed that with financial support of the UNECA through the ATPC, the AAEC has published a guide for single window implementation. Through the development and publication of this Guide, countries willing to establish a Single Window project can have a reference and a knowledge base on the best practices in terms of Single Windows in Africa. The guide is available on www.swguide.org and hard copies is available on the desk.

In addition, he informed the workshop that the AAEC delegation to this workshop has experts with over 10 years' experience in Single Window implementation on the continent, who would share their experience and expertise in the two days of the workshop.

1.3   KEYNOTE STATEMENT

The workshop was officially opened by the Hon. Deputy Minister of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development, Hon. Lucia Iipumbu. In her statement, the Hon. Deputy Minister acknowledged and extended her appreciation to the AAEC for choosing Namibia amongst the Southern Africa countries to host the workshop and sponsoring the event. She further reflected on the history of National Single Window (NSW) project in Namibia and gave a brief on the national single window concept.

She highlighted that Namibia has not been doing well in world rankings such the Global Competitiveness and the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business review. Hence, the country's inherent interest in embarking on the projects such as the National Single Window and the Integrated Client Service Facility in order to address the challenges related to the current non-competitiveness of Namibia in the areas of trade and investment.

In addition, she highlighted that the implementation of a National Single Window environment will be highly beneficial for both Government and traders. For Government it will bring better risk management, improved levels of security and increased revenue yields with enhanced trader compliance while trading communities will benefit from transparent and predictable interpretation and application of rules, and better deployment of human and financial resources, resulting in appreciable gains in productivity and competitiveness.

She indicated that the Project will be implemented in three Phases to allow the smooth implementation of the project and therefore encourage government ministries and agencies involved in international movement of goods to be part of this noble national project. She further reminded the participants that the benefits to be reaped from this has a multiplier effect to the economy of the country, as National Single Window brings to Namibia deeper regional trade and great integration into global trading system.

Participants were also enlightened that despite the reduction in tariffs and improvement in market access many countries and regions in Africa, the region is still lacking regional and global integration. Such a disconnection can have negative consequences for private and public sectors, therefore, it must be understood that the aim for improving the trading environment is not simply to expand trade but also to focus on the broader goal of sustainable and broad based economic growth.

2.0   PRESENTATIONS

Various presentations were made, followed by discussions and interactions from participants as follows:

2.1   INTRODUCTORY SESSION

An introductory session was presented by Mr. Jonathan Ofori from AAEC. This session was aimed to show the interest granted to Single Window development around the world by international institutions such as United Nations and World Customs Organization, and in Africa through AAEC, a framework of cooperation on Single windows on the continent.

Mr. Ofori explained who they are (AAEC), including their vision, goals and organisational set up. He futher highlighted on some of AAEC`s key achievements, as well as itroducing AAEC`s team of Experts for the workshop.

2.2   SESSION 1: OVERVIEW OF SINGLE WINDOW CONCEPT

Mr. Sam Toyota and Mr. Ofori fom AAEC gave an overview of the Single window concept. Several single window definitions were shared with the participants as defined by different international trade facilitation agencies.

The presentation also touched on Technical Conditions, as well as the importance of International Standards.

2.3   PRESENTATION ON NSW IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES & MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Mr. Sam Toyota explained the following nine (9) most critical challenges :

1. Lack of support from government bodies participating in EWS implementation
2. Complicated procedures and document requirements
3. Budget and human resource constraints
4. Organization and human resistance to change
5. Inadequate coordination between Customs, other Regulatory Institutions and the Trade Community
6. Laws and legal challenges, inadequate legal framework
7. Resistance for acceptance of the designated leading agency
8. Lack of information and communication technology (ICT)
9. Security sensitivity issues – trust (Due to centralized information sharing and electronic documents)

2.4   SESSION 2: STOCK-TAKING FOR NAMIBIA NSW ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Donald Lim Fat, the Namibia NSW Consultant presented a general overview of the NSW concept and the status of the project as follows:

a) Current Trade Barriers
b) Key Stakeholders for International Trade
c) Namibia objectives for NSW
d) Ongoing Initiatives

2.5   SESSION 3 : SINGLE WINDOW IMPLEMENTATION: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Mr. Jonathan Ofori Highlighted single window implementation key success factors such as stakeholder coordination, legal framework, business model, technical isues and political will.

2.6   SESSION 4 : ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW

This session was facilitated by Mr. Sam Toyota from AAEC, who stressed that the implementation of the National Single Window requires commitment, resources and coordination amongst a large number of stakeholders. This session covered key issues experienced during preparation and implementation of the NSW. He looked at Integration of multiple systems-considerations.

2.7   SESSION 5: ROUND TABLE ON CHALLENGES TO BE EXPECTED IN LOCAL CONTEXT

Mr. Jonathan Ofori & Mr. Sam Toyota from AAEC explained to the attendees that the objective of the session was to lay the foundation of the national single window model. It unfolded in round table discussions where participants were divided into three (3) groups, each group identified five (5) main challenges and proposed solutions to those challenges as summarized below:

GROUP	CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS
1	**1. Legal Framework** - Inter-agency coordination - Compel compliance of users	• Electronic Transaction Bill • Legislation to establish NSW

	2. **Lack of Financial Resources and dedicated leadership to manage the project**	• Establish a functioning entity dedicated only to the project • Identify a project champion
	3. **Lack of Integrated Systems and limited functionality of systems i.e. Asycuda, Banking Systems etc.**	• Proper integration plan to ensure that all stakeholders` systems are "interoperable"
	4. **Change Management** - No defined process	• Awareness amongst users and continuous engagement of stakeholders - Communication Strategy - Change Management Plan
	5. **No clear visibility for underlying financial flow**	• Actual payment done by the banks should match the invoice submitted into the NSW - Ease and enhance customs control - FIA Compliance - BOP integration
2	**1. Inclusiveness** - SME/Small Operators - Rural area coverage	• Training for small trackers • Involvement of ISPs. • NCCI Network for SMEs • Subsidizing SMEs
	2. Technological Challenges **Reliability (security)** - Data Harmonization	• Contingencies/Continuity plans • Common format for Permit Issuance. • Data Standardization. • Professional Architects (for security features).
	3. Funding Sustainability Model - Fee Structures.	• Collection/Admin fees by CBRAs (To be regulated/gazetted).
	4. Change Management (training awareness).	• Wide national awareness campaigns through • the project. • Inter-Divisional team setup in each organization.
	5. Institutional Framework **Coordination.** - Accountability, Championing	• Office of the President oversight functions. • Detailed MoUs to states accountability/liability for certain events.
3	**1. Lack of legal framework**	• MOU, SLA, Conventions, legislations
	2. Lack of change management	• SLA with CRBA's • Stakeholder engagement • Communication plan • Business process re-engineering • Business case
	3. Mandated project coordinator	• Clear TOR's • SLA between stakeholders
	4. Steering Committee Compilation	• Stakeholder representation • Skills sets, Clear TOR's
	5. Lack of Funding	• Bankable business case

3.0   CONCLUSION

The workshop was well organized and achieved its objectives. The event was attended by about 90 Participants and presenters from the anticipated 100, from Namibia, Senegal,

Rwanda, Mozambique, Lesotho, Ethiopia, South Arica and Singapore. All participated actively during the two days of the workshop.

In his closing remark, Mr. Bisey Uirab, the Chief Executive Officer of Namibia Ports Authority (Namport) thanked all participants for honoring the invitation and actively participating throughout the two days of the workshop. He assured Namport`s commitment to ensure successful implementation of Namibia National Single Window Environment. Special gratitude was extended to AAEC and UNECA for their financial as well as logistical support to ensure that MITSMED and Namport collectively host a successful workshop.

Done in Windhoek, Namibia,
12 September 2018