

**PROJECT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF A REGIONAL
PROGRAMME OF APPROVED
ECONOMIC OPERATORS
(AEO) FOR ECOWAS COUNTRIES**

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Abbreviations

MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreement
RILO	Regional Intelligence Liaison Office
ROCB	Regional Office for Capacity Building
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
RKC	Revised Kyoto Convention
RTC	Regional Training Centre
RSG	Regional Steering Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
AEO	Approved Economic Operator
WCO	World Customs Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WCO-WCA	World Customs Organisation Region for West and Central Africa
BM	World Bank
GIZ	German International Cooperation Agency
WATIP/TFWA/PROGRAMME	WATIP/TRADE FACILITATION FOR WEST AFRICA/PROGRAMME
COMMISSION	ECOWAS Commission
DCU/T	Directorate of Customs Union and Taxation
WTO/TFA	WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

1. Background

The ECOWAS Member States have adopted, according to the Supplementary Act A/SA.2/12/17 of 16 December 2017, a Customs Code which sets out the general rules and procedures applicable to goods entering or leaving the customs territory of the Community.

This Customs Code incorporates the provisions of the WCO's Revised Kyoto Convention and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement measures that many Member States have signed and ratified and which relate to the promotion of partnership and trust between Customs Administrations and private sector operators. It also takes into account certain provisions of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards promoting a series of measures for the movement of goods in order to secure trade, including the establishment of a partnership with legitimate and secure trade, which benefits from counterparties in terms of OEA formalities and controls.

The Code also reflects the new central role of Customs administrations in the international supply chain and their emerging trade monitoring and management tasks in the context of the burgeoning Customs union, characterised by the reduction of barriers to trade and the increased need to ensure security and safety at the borders of the Community.

Thus, Article 39 of the Customs Code states that economic operators established on the territory, who comply with the rules and are trustworthy, may apply for the status of either an "Approved Operator for Customs Simplification (OEA-CS)" or "Approved Economic Operator for Customs Simplification, Safety and Security (OEA-CSSS)".

As part of their reform programme and modernization inspired by the Columbus Programme of the WCO, Customs administrations of the Region have already embarked on strategic planning, spurring reforms in line with the Regional Strategic Plan 2018-2022 developed by ROCB/WCA. The development of the partnership with the private sector is one of the priority areas of these reforms, which is also aimed at setting up OA-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes, with the addition of mutual recognition component.

While many Customs Administrations in the Region are implementing various forms of partnership with the private sector, it is clear that the implementation of the AEO concept is lagging behind. In any case, the development of a regional framework of OA-CS and AEO-CSSS will facilitate the implementation of this tool in the Customs administrations of the Member States, thereby contributing to the reduction of the costs and delays at border crossings, the competitiveness of enterprises, increase in intra-regional trade and in particular, spurring the economic development of the States of the Region.

In addition, in the context of insecurity, characterised by the upsurge in transnational organised crime, the implementation of a regional AEO-CSSS programme will allow customs administrations to support the development of a pool of operators that trustworthy and compliant with respect to the rules that will benefit from the lighter customs controls, so that administrations can concentrate their efforts and resources on operators and high risk users, thus contributing to their quota to the fight against insecurity in the Region.

Finally, the increased trade that will result from these facilitation measures will enable the ECOWAS customs administrations to improve their performance in collecting revenue on behalf of their countries.

2. Constraints and Opportunities

2.1. Constraints

The implementation of the AEO programme requires financial resources that Customs administrations are not always able to raise internally.

Other major constraints in the implementation of the programme are:

- Predominance of informal trade
- Low level of voluntary compliance with regulations by the operators, which is often due to lack of understanding of the rules and this will require an effort to ensure the upgrading of economic operators;
- Lack of human resources with the necessary skills to implement AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes;
- Poor or lack of political will to support the reforms;
- Inadequate road and logistics infrastructure;
- Low level of ethics and good governance in the public administrations and the private sector of the region;
- Poor use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT);

2.2. OPPORTUNITIES

- Entry into force of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, including special and preferential treatments for developing and Least-Developed Countries, and ratification and notification of measures by some Member States to the WTO Secretariat;
- The existence of Community instruments for cooperation and exchange of information between Customs administrations of ECOWAS Member States;
- The Mercator Programme and the various tools developed by the WCO;
- The progress made in the actualisation of the Customs Union with the effective application since 2015 of a Common External Tariffs (CET/ECOWAS) and the harmonization of customs legislation since 2017 with the adoption of the ECOWAS Customs Code, which establishes the concept of Community customs territory, the principle of the release procedure and the approved economic operators;
- The willingness of the customs authorities of ECOWAS to work together on customs reforms and modernisation;

- The WCO West and Central Africa 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, which devotes an important component to the development of partnerships with the private sector, including the development of AEO programmes;
- The experience of some Customs administrations in the region that already developed successful partnerships with the private sector;
- Support from the West Africa Trade Facilitation Programme (WATP) co-financed by some development partners.

3. BENEFITS OF IMPLEMENTING THE AEO-CSSS PROGRAMME

The implementation of the AEO programme will produce a number of benefits for economic operators, Customs administrations and ECOWAS.

3.1. Benefits for the Businesses

- Recognition as a reliable and transparent partner in the logistics chain and throughout the customs territory of the Community, thus resulting in reduced costs and delays at border crossing points;
- The recognition of a quality "label" on customs processes and/or safety and security validated by customs administrations and implemented.
- Improving and securing processes and internal controls relating to customs matters that allow the lightening of controls during customs clearance through the prior identification and control of customs and/or safety and security risks;
- Strengthening or implementing an internal and external security/safety policy with suppliers, manufacturers and external partners that promotes a decrease in thefts and losses.
- A real strategic competitive advantage, particularly in the call for tenders;
- An Economic Performance Leverage for the companies;
- Investments in proactive/more advanced technology and voluntary compliance with safety standards;
- The formalisation of internal business processes and their improved application, which makes it possible to contain the risks of losses, the demand for information and improvement of synergies;
- Improving relations with Customs authorities and other public authorities;

- Privileged processing and personalised support for the granting of the status of approved consignor or approved consignee;
- Organisational infrastructure awareness and skills development;
- Introduction of mechanisms for partners to comment on proposed modifications and amendments.

3.2. Benefits for Customs and the Government

- Reduction of personnel costs and resource allocation;
- More efficient customs controls;
- Centralisation of functions and key competences;
- Risk reduction and compliance costs;
- Improvement of the international logistics chain while facilitating the procedures for the operators;
- Improvement of the information procedures, risk assessment capacities and targeting of high risk consignments;
- Revenue increases;
- Increased investment climate;
- Increased foreign direct investments;
- Economic growth;
- Real time and timely exchange of information;
- Improved transparency, governance, integrity and relations with the stakeholders;
- Strengthened cooperation with competent authorities and harmonisation of control or intervention programmes.

3.3. Benefits for ECOWAS

- Enhanced economic integration;
- Enhanced regional security;
- Increase in revenues collected in terms of the Community levy at entry points on behalf of ECOWAS;
- Trust and capacity building of the Customs administrations in the region;
- Recognition as a trustworthy trading zone.

4. GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

4.1. Overall goal

Contribute to the strengthening of security in the Region, increase in intra-regional trade and greater integration of ECOWAS countries into the regional and international trading system, thereby boosting the development of the economies of the Region.

4.2. Specific goals

- Contribute to the facilitation of intra-regional trade in order to improve the competitiveness of the regional economy in general and businesses in particular;
- Contribute to the security of the supply chain and the fight against insecurity in the sub-region;
- Strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS Customs Administrations in regional and international trade facilitation by combining their efforts and resources.

Induce a climate of constructive cooperation between public administrations and the private sector within the region.

In order to achieve the overall goal, a phased approach will be adopted. It begins with the implementation of compliance programmes and then incorporates the security aspects according to the requirements of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards and the criteria defined by the Customs Code and its enabling texts.

4.3. Outcomes

1. A regional Framework for the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme and mutual recognition has been developed and approved by ECOWAS.
2. The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme have been strengthened.
3. The Customs Administrations of ECOWAS are implementing the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS and mutual recognition programmes in accordance with a harmonious sub-regional framework that takes into account trade facilitation requirements and supply chain security.

A climate of cooperation is created between the public administrations and the private sector of the region built on shared interests and objectives and on trust and mutual respect.

5. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

5.1. Assumptions

It is assumed in the drafting of this project that all ECOWAS Member States, after the adoption of the Customs Code, shall have a shared vision of the process of integration and promotion of intra-regional trade defined by the Commission in the customs policy framework and the common trade policy of the Community.

Another underlying assumption is that the political will of the community authorities is affirmed and determined to support the implementation of this vision.

5.2. Risks

Risk	Probability	Impact	Observations
Lack of the political will and commitment of the Member States in applying and implementing mutual recognition agreements under the AEO-CSSS arrangements of the ECOWAS Customs Code	High	Key	Develop beforehand and present a strong business case to political policy makers and carry out intensive sensitisation actions
Lack of funding for undertaking the programme	Average	Key	"Sell" the project to development partners and seek the necessary technical assistance and additional funding within the TSD of the TFA
Weak capacity of administrations and economic operators to implement the programme	Average	Key	Organise training and capacity-building activities, including risk management, the ethics promotion programme ... and initiate institutional reforms.
Lack of commitment from economic operators	Average	Key	Early involvement of economic operators and continuous awareness raising
Bottlenecks caused by other border control services	High	Key	Develop coordinated border management and promote cooperation and coordination of controls by the Customs. Strengthen inter-institutional relations within the framework of National Trade

			Facilitation Committees
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6. ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

6.1. Activities

6.1.1. **Outcome 1:** A Regional AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition Framework has been developed and approved by ECOWAS

Some Member States are in the process of developing or implementing their own partnership programme initiatives with the private sector. However, the absence of a regional model of AO-CS and AEO-CSSS will result in a multitude of standards and approval procedures specific to each State, which will make it difficult to recognize each other's AEO-CSSS programmes at the community level and achieving the objectives of increasing intra-regional trade.

It is therefore necessary to develop common accreditation standards and procedures for AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes, to enable Member States to incorporate Community legislation into their domestic legislation, so as to promote a uniform application of both concepts in the Region, as defined by the Customs Code and its various enabling texts.

The key activities to achieve this result will be as follows:

1	Create the project governance structures: A Sub-Regional Steering Group of the programme (including stakeholders from public and private sectors of Member States, the ECOWAS Commission, WCO and development partners) and a project team will be dedicated to the project design, implementation and evaluation.
2	Conduct a baseline review, benchmarking and study visits to RECs and comparative analysis of AEO models and practices and the SAFE Framework of Standards to identify appropriate best practices for the sub-region and in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts.
3	Complete the legal framework with the implementing legislation in accordance with Article 43 of the Customs Code and develop and adopt a Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) for the use of the operator and an auditor's guide for use by Customs Administrations.
4	Develop a Regional Framework for AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition that takes into account the specificities of the sub-region in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts in consultation with the private sector's apex regional organisations.
5	Encourage Member States to send notifications to the WTO Secretariat, TFA measures in the various categories and seek technical assistance in accordance with the TSD provided for in the Agreement.
6	Assist and encourage member states to assess their technical assistance needs in terms of capacity building.

6.1.2. Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme have been strengthened

The implementation of the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme in the region and its use by the Member States' Customs Administrations requires the support of all stakeholders through awareness-raising, hence the need to engage a dialogue with the private sector, to design and implement a communication master plan.

In addition, special emphasis should be placed on training and capacity building of customs officials and economic operators in order to provide them with the necessary skills in the implementation of AO-CS and AEO-CSSS.

In this light, it will be necessary to:

1	Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness and gain buy-in from stakeholders through a dialogue and proactive approach with the private sector.
2	Ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the Customs Code in all Member States.
3	Train customs officers in OA-CS and AEO-CSSS audit, post-audit and risk management techniques based on an appropriate training plan.
4	Organize training sessions for the OA-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes for the economic operators.
5	Create advisory and support structures in the Customs administrations of the Member States.
6	Encourage administrations to implement an ethics promotion programme in collaboration with the private sector.
7	Deploy at Commission level for the information exchange system between the Member States and between the Member States and the Commission relative to AO-CS and AEO-CSSS with an interface with the operators.

6.1.3. Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS are implementing AEO and Mutual Recognition programmes that are in line with a harmonious regional framework which takes into account the requirements of trade facilitation and supply chain security.

The successful implementation of the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS at the regional level must necessarily go through a pilot phase to ensure the viability of the chosen model. The Member States and the companies involved in this pilot phase must be carefully selected and monitored in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme. This choice could be made among the Member States which have already capitalised on a relative experience in promoting partnership with the private sector. This evaluation exercise must allow for necessary adjustments prior to implementation at the regional level.

Given the option in the code to set criteria common to both types of approvals, the rational approach would be to implement in a first step, the AEO status for customs simplification with a pilot phase and then the extension to other Member States that would be ready. This would be a good basis for starting the second stage of effective implementation of AEO status - for customs simplification, safety and security with a pilot phase in Member States already having strong auditing measures and granting AEO approval for customs simplification. The advantage of such an approach is to reduce and avoid significant differences in the implementation of these provisions by the Member States.

As such, it will be crucial to carry out the following activities:

1	Implement a first pilot AEO phase for customs simplification in four Member States, with a maximum of 5 to 10 companies per country;
2	Evaluate the first pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS model
3	Promote and extend to other States the implementation of the AEO approval for customs simplification;
4	Implement a second pilot phase with AEO status for customs simplification, security and safety (with the security aspects) in selected Member States;
5	Evaluate the second pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS, AEO-CSSS model and extend the programme to Member States that have undertaken the necessary reforms;
6	Extend the implementation of AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and reciprocity to all member states;
7	Undertake negotiations and conclude Mutual Recognition Agreements with other countries or regional groupings.

6.1.4 Outcome 4: A climate of cooperation is created between public administrations and the private sector in the region built on shared interests and objectives, trust and mutual respect.

One of the key success factors in implementing the regional AEO programme in establishing an enduring constructive dialogue between Customs administrations and the private sector, based on shared objectives, mutual trust and respect. To this end, it would be necessary to carry out the following activities:

1	Develop a mandate to define objectives, roles and responsibilities, dialogue processes and key activities to be undertaken.
2	Design an action plan and define a dialogue strategy.

6.2. Schedule of Activities

	Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Outcome 1: A Regional AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS Programme and Mutual Recognition Framework has been developed and approved				
	A 1.1			
	A 1.2			

	A 1.3												
	A 1.4												
	A 1.5												
	A 1.6												

Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators of the Member States to implement the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme have been strengthened

	A 2.1												
	A 2.2												
	A 2.3												
	A 2.4												
	A 2.5												
	A 2.6												
	A 2.7												

Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS countries are implementing the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition programmes that are in line with a harmonious regional framework.

	A 3.1												
	A 3.2												
	A 3.3												
	A 3.4												
	A 3.5												
	A 3.6												
	A 3.7												

Outcome 4: A climate of cooperation is created between the public administrations and the private sector of the region built on shared interests and objectives and on trust and mutual respect.

	A 4.1												
	A 4.2												

7. Governance and Reporting Structure

7.1. Governance Structure

The management of the project will be carried out at two levels: The Regional Steering Group of the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS Programme and the Project Management Team (Project Team).

7.2. The Regional Steering Group (RSG) of the AEO Programme

The RSG is responsible for overseeing the design, implementation, evaluation and extension of the programme.

It is composed as follows:

- Two representatives of the ECOWAS Commission;
- Two representatives of the development partners;
- Two representatives of Customs administrations of the ECOWAS Member States;
- Two representatives of the ROCB;
- One representative of the WCO Secretariat;
- Two representatives of the economic operators in the ECOWAS region.

7.3. The Project Team

It shall be the technical structure responsible for carrying out the activities defined in the project framework, in accordance with the established timetable. It is composed as follows:

- A project manager (Directorate of Customs Union and Taxation);
- Two ECOWAS experts;
- Two representatives of the development partners;
- A representative of WCO Secretariat;
- A representative of the ROCB;

7.4. Reports

The Project Team will prepare and submit a quarterly report of activities to the Regional Steering Group of the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS Programme.

The Regional Steering Group of the AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme will submit bi-annual reports to the ECOWAS Commission. It will also report annually to the Conference of Directors General of the WCO-WCA Region.

8. ANNEX1: Logical Framework and Performance Measurement

Logic	Indicator	Sources of verification	Current Situation	Target	Risks and Assumptions
Overall goal: Contribute to the strengthening of security in the Region, increase in intra-regional trade and greater integration of ECOWAS countries in the regional and international trading system, thereby boosting the development of the economies of the Region.	The share of operators participating in the AEO Mutual Recognition Programme in the Region's foreign trade volume Improvement of the position of ECOWAS member states in the Doing Business ranking	The external trade statistics of the ECOWAS Member States The Doing Business Raking of the World Bank	0% The majority of countries in the Region are ranked between 138th and 187th position	50% Improving the position of ECOWAS Member States on the Doing Business rankings	Situation of road infrastructure and the logistics sector Political instability
Specific objectives 1: Contribute to the security of the supply chain and the fight against insecurity in the sub-region.	Number of trusted and trustworthy operators	ECOWAS Annual Report on the AEO programme	None	At least 40 economic operators are trusted and trustworthy at the end of the project; 10% annual increase thereafter.	Low level of political will and lack of commitment by the other border agencies

Logic	Indicator	Sources of verification	Current Situation	Target	Risks and Assumptions
Specific Objectives 2: Contribute to the facilitation of intra-regional trade to improve the competitiveness of the regional economy in general and businesses in particular.	Reduced delays in the crossing of goods	Study on the required time for the release of goods	Basis for comparison to be determined by a study at the inception of the project	Reduction by 25% on average per country in terms of crossing delays	Efforts geared to good governance by the other sectors
Specific Objectives 3: Strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS Customs Administrations in regional and international trade facilitation by combining their efforts and resources.	Reduction of the rate of declarations that are subject of frontline controls	Goods clearance systems	40% of declarations are subject of controls.	20% of declarations are subject of controls	The non compliance with Customs regulations by the economic operators. Deviant practices in the administrations
Specific objectives 4: Induce a climate of constructive cooperation between public administrations and the private sector within the region.					

Outcome 1: A Regional AEO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition Framework for ECOWAS have been developed and approved					
Activity 1.1 Create the project governance structures: a Sub-regional Steering Group of the programme (including stakeholders from public and private sectors, some member countries and the ECOWAS Commission) and a project committee, dedicated to the project design, implementation and evaluation.	The Regional Steering Group has been set up	The instrument creating this group	No such structures exist for this purpose	The Regional Steering Group effectively monitors the implementation of the regional AEO-CSSS programme	The willingness and the commitment of Customs Administrations and the ECOWAS Commission to work in synergy to achieve a regional AEO programme
Activity 1.2 Conduct a baseline review, benchmarking and study visits to RECs and comparative analysis of AEO models and practices and the SAFE Framework of Standards to identify	Benchmarking and study tours to other RECs implementing AEO programmes; perform a comparative analysis of different models and experiences;	Mission reports in the Member States in addition to comparative analysis.	None	At least 2 benchmarking	Commitment of human resources and availability of funding

appropriate best practices for the sub-region and in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts.					
Activity 1.3 Complete the legal framework with the implementing legislation in accordance with Article 43 of the Customs Code and develop and adopt a Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) for the use of the operator and an auditor's guide for the use of Customs Administrations	The conditions of an effective application and implementation of the provisions of the code are met and the available medium of implementation .	Texts focusing on the adoption of the instruments.	The legal framework exists in the absence of the enabling texts	The enabling texts are adopted and implemented.	Timeline of the meetings of ECOWAS governing bodies
Activity 1.4 Develop a Regional Framework for AO-CS, AEO-CCSS and mutual recognition that takes into account the specificities of the region in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts in consultation	A document on the regional framework of AEO and Mutual Recognition was validated by ECOWAS	Framework document.	No regional AEO framework exists.	Availability of an AEO framework, which is adapted to the needs of the Region.	The political will of the Member States.

with private sector regional organisations.					
Activity 1.5 Encourage Member States to make notifications to the WTO Secretariat, TFA measures in the different categories and seek technical assistance in accordance with the TSD stipulated in the Agreement.	% of the notification relating to the TFA measures by ECOWAS Member States	WTO web site		100% of notification measures	
Activity 1.6 Assist and encourage member states to assess their technical assistance needs for capacity building.	List of needs and priorities is established; Level of funding mobilised.	Study on the identification of assistance needs; Financing or technical assistance agreements obtained.		At least 80% of assistance needs are covered	Difficulties in mobilising technical assistance and resources; Lack of interest by technical partners.
Outcome 2: The capacity of customs administrations and economic operators of ECOWAS member states to implement the OA-CS and AEO-CSSS programme is strengthened					
Activity 2.1 Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness and gain buy-in from stakeholders through a dialogue and proactive	A communication master plan is developed with an implementation schedule.	The master plan of communication ; Reports of communication and awareness activities.	No communication plan is available	100% implementation of the communication plan	Availability of dedicated funds and stakeholder engagement: public (political sphere- customs

approach with the private sector.					administration) of the private sector (economic operators)
Activity 2.2 Ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the Customs Code in all Member States.	Number of countries effectively applying the Community Customs Code	ECOWAS surveys		100% effective implementation	Political will
Activity 2.3 Train customs officers in AO-CS and AEO-CSSS audit, post-audit, risk management and AEO legal frameworks based on an appropriate training plan.	The number of customs officers trained per country and per theme	The training workshop reports	There are trained audit, ex-post and risk management staff whose knowledge needs to be enhanced for the purposes of AEO implementation.	-30 (2*15 countries) officers trained in company audits and AEO; -30 officers trained in ex-post controls and AEO; -30 officers trained in risk management and AEO	Availability of dedicated funds
Activity 2.4 Deploy at Commission level the computer system for the exchange of information between the Member States and the latter and the Commission on	All the computer systems of the Customs services of the Member States are interconnected	Real time exchange of information between Customs administrations			

AO-CS and AEO-CSSS with an interface with the operators.					
Activity 2.5 Organise training sessions for the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme for economic operators.	Number of training sessions and extension activities organized and number of people reached by country	Reports of training courses and outreach activities		15 training and outreach workshops for 750 persons reached	Commitment of the economic operators
Activity 2.6 Create counselling and advisory structures in the Customs administrations of the Member States	Number of Customs administrations in ECOWAS countries with advisory and business support structures	ECOWAS surveys	To be verified by ECOWAS	All ECOWAS countries have functional structures for business advice and assistance	
Activity 2.7 Encourage administrations to implement an ethics promotion program in collaboration with the private sector.	The average ranking of Customs Administrations within the ECOWAS region on Transparency International rankings	Transparency International publications	To be verified	25% improvement in terms of average ranking	
Outcome 3: The Customs Administrations of ECOWAS Member States implement AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and mutual recognition programmes, according to a harmonious regional framework					
Activity 3.1 Implement a first pilot AEO phase for customs simplification in four Member States, with a maximum of 5 to 10 companies per country.	Number of approved operators in the AEO-CS regime in the Member States, which are selected for the ECOWAS pilot programmes	The implementation report of the pilot phase	No pilot phase is underway as part of the regional AEO programme. However, some administrations in the region, notably Senegal,	20 approved companies during this phase.	The commitment of customs administrations and economic operators in the countries selected for the pilot phase

			Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo, are implementin g, in their own way, approved operator programmes (customs simplificatio n.) Côte d'Ivoire is going to soon begin its pilot phase of AEO.		
Activity 3.2 Evaluate the first pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS model	The evaluation of the pilot phase was effected	The pilot phase evaluation report	No evaluation	4 pilot phases are completed and results published	
Activity 3.3 Promote and extend to other Member States the implementation of the AEO approval for Customs simplification.	Number of countries effectively implementing the AO-CS model	The Project Team report	4 countries at the end of the 1 st pilot phase	At least 10 countries	
Activity 3.4 Implement a second pilot phase with AEO status for Customs simplification, security and safety (with the security aspects) in selected Member States.	Number of AEO registered operators in the pilot countries.	The pilot phase implementation report	None	20 approved companies during this phase.	The commitment of Customs administrations and economic operators in the countries selected for the pilot phase.

Activity 3.5 Evaluate the second pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS, AEO-CSSS model and extend the programme to Member States that have undertaken the necessary reforms.	The evaluation of the pilot phase was conducted	The evaluation report of the pilot phase	No ongoing pilot phase	4 pilot phases pilots are completed and the outcomes published	
Activity 3.6 Extend the implementation of the AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and reciprocity to all Member States	Number of AEO approved operators and number of States implementing the AEO programme	The implementation reports of the regional AEO programme	The 20 approved companies at the end of the pilot phase	300 approved companies	Political will, peace and stability in the various Member States.
Activity 3.7 Undertake negotiations and conclude Mutual Recognition Agreements with other States or regional groupings.	Number of signed agreements	The agreements	No agreement on mutual recognition	At least 5 MRAs were signed	Entry into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) and partnership development with other continental RECs
Outcome 4: A climate of cooperation is established between the public administrations and the private sector of the region built on shared interests and objectives and on mutual trust and respect.					
Activity 4 .1 Develop a mandate to define objectives, roles and responsibilities, dialogue processes	Number of administration/ private Sector working groups created	Official texts specifying, mandate and responsibilities adopted Periodic meetings	Existence of informal consultation groups	All Member States have established working relations with the private sector	Low representativeness of the private sector Low political commitment

and key activities to be undertaken.					
Activity 4.2 Design an action plan and define a dialogue strategy.	Time benchmarks and key performance indicators are established	Periodic reports	No structured dialogue strategy as such	At least 10 Member States apply a structured dialogue strategy with the private sector	Availability of funds for the activities

9. ANNEX 2: Budget

Attached Document.

Outcome 1: A Regional AEO and Mutual Recognition Framework for ECOWAS has been developed and approved		
Activity code	Description	Cost in Euro
1.1	Create the project governance structures: a Sub-regional Steering Group of the programme (including stakeholders from public and private sectors, some member countries and the ECOWAS Commission) and a project committee, dedicated to the project design, implementation and evaluation.	Operating, travel expenses for meetings and travel
1.2	Conduct a baseline review, benchmarking and study visits to RECs and comparative analysis of AEO models and practices and the SAFE Framework of Standards to identify appropriate best practices for the sub-region and in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts	Travel costs for missions to the RECs; Fees for technical assistance of consultants
1.3	Complete the legal framework with the implementing legislation in accordance with Article 43 of the Customs Code and develop and adopt a Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) for the use of the operator and an auditor's guide for the use of Customs Administrations.	Fees for organising experts' meetings for validation and other relevant Community bodies for adoption
1.4	Develop a Regional Framework for AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition that takes into account the specificities of the sub-region in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its implementing texts in consultation with the organizations regional private sector.	Honorarium for consultants
1.5	Encourage Member States to make notifications to the WTO Secretariat, TFA measures in the different categories and seek	PM

	technical assistance in accordance with the TSD stipulated in the Agreement.	
1.6	Assist and encourage member states to assess their technical assistance needs for capacity building.	
Total Outcome 1		
Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AEO programme have been strengthened		
2.1	Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness and secure the buy-in of the stakeholders through proactive dialogue and engagement with the private sector	Honorarium of the consultants
2.2	Ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the Customs Code in all Member States.	Travel expenses in the Member States and consulting fees
2.3	Train customs officers in AO-CS and AEO-CSSS audit, post-audit and risk management techniques based on an appropriate training plan.	Provide 2 training sessions at the CFR of Ouaga for the French-speaking States and 2 others at the CFR of Nigeria for the English-speaking States for at least 10 customs officials per Member State (transport and per diems) and fees of the

		consultants in charge of the training
2.4	Organize training sessions for the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programs for economic operators.	Sponsorship of programme in each Member States
2.5	Create business support and advisory structures in the Customs administrations of the Member States.	
2.6	Encourage administrations to implement an ethics promotion programme in collaboration with the private sector.	
2.7	Deploy at Commission level the information exchange system between the Member States and between the Member States and the Commission on AO-CS and AEO-CSSS with an interface with the operators.	
Total Outcome 2		
Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS are implementing AEO and Mutual Recognition programmes that are in line with a harmonious regional framework which takes into account the requirements of trade facilitation and supply chain security		
3.1	Implement a first pilot AEO phase for customs simplifications in four Member States, with a maximum of 5 to 10 companies per country;	Travel expenses for monitoring and support
3.2	Evaluate the first pilot phase and make adjustments to the AEO model	Travel expenses in the selected countries
3.3	Promote and extend to other Member States the implementation of the AEO approval for customs simplification;	Travel expenses
3.4	Implement a second pilot phase with AEO status for customs simplification, security and safety (with the security aspects) in selected Member States;	Travel expenses in the countries
3.5	Evaluate the second pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS, AEO-CSSS model and extend the programme to Member States that have undertaken the necessary reforms;	Travel expenses for monitoring
3.6	Extend the implementation of AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and reciprocity to all Member States;	PM

3.7	Undertake negotiations and conclude Mutual Recognition Agreements with other States or regional groupings.	
Total Outcome 3		
Outcome 4: A climate of cooperation is established between the public administrations and the private sector of the region built on shared interests and objectives and on trust and mutual respect.		
4.1	Develop a mandate to define objectives, roles and responsibilities, dialogue processes and key activities to be undertaken.	
4.2	Design an action plan and define a dialogue strategy.	

Outcomes	Activities	Amount
O1	A1.1	380 016
	A1.2	41 280
	A1.3	140 730
	A1.4	4 000
	A1.5	PM
	A1.6	
GRAND TOTAL O1		566 026

Outcome 1: A Regional Framework for OA-CS, AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition is developed and validated by ECOWAS

BUDGET

Description	Style	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
1.1 Create the project's governance structure: a Regional Steering Group of the program (including representatives of public and private sector stakeholders from member states and the ECOWAS Commission, WCO and development partners), a team project, dedicated to the design, implementation and evaluation of the project.				
Operating Cost				
Travel expenses				
Regional Project Steering Group				
Air Fare				
Member States	30	1	\$1 500	\$45 000
ROCB	1	1	\$1 500	\$1 500
WCO	1	1	\$3 800	\$3 800
ECOWAS				
Director	1	1	\$1 500	\$1 500
Professional	4	1	\$1 500	\$6 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$57 800
Per diem				
Member States	30	10	\$262	\$78 600
ROCB	1	10	\$262	\$2 620
WCO	1	10	\$262	\$2 620
ECOWAS				
Director	1	10	\$314	\$3 140

Professional	4	10	\$262	\$10 480
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$97 460
Honorarium				
Interpreters	2	6	\$560	\$6 720
Translators	2	6	\$450	\$5 400
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$12 120
Conference Logistics				
Tea Break	45	6	\$30	\$8 100
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants	2	6	\$50	\$600
Car Hire	2	10	\$120	\$2 400
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$11 100
Total 1				\$178 480
Project Team				
Air Fare				
ITC	1	8	\$3 800	\$30 400
WCO	1	8	\$3 800	\$30 400
Project Team	2	8	\$1 500	\$24 000
GIZ	3	8	\$1 500	\$36 000
ECOWAS	1	8	\$1 500	\$12 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$132 800
Per diem				
ITC	1	32	\$262	\$8 384
WCO	1	32	\$262	\$8 384
Project Team	2	32	\$262	\$16 768
GIZ	3	32	\$262	\$25 152
ECOWAS	1	32	\$314	\$10 048
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$68 736
Honorarium				
Interpreters	0	32	\$560	\$0
Translators	0	32	\$450	\$0
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$0
Conference Logistics				
Tea Break	0	32	\$30	\$0
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants	0	32	\$50	\$0
Car Hire	0	32	\$120	\$0
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$0
Total 2				\$201 536
Grand Total O1_O1.1				\$380 016

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
1.2 Conduct a baseline review, benchmarking and study visits to RECs and conduct comprehensive analysis of AEO models and practices and the SAFE Framework of Standards to identify appropriate best practices for the sub-region and in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its enabling texts.				
Air Fare				

Consultants	4	2	\$2 500	\$20 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$20 000
Per diem				
Consultants	4	10	\$262	\$10 480
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$10 480
Honorarium				
Interpreters	0	3	\$560	\$0
Translators	0	3	\$450	\$0
Consultants	4	6	\$450	\$10 800
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$10 800
Conference Logistics				
Tea Break	0	6	\$30	\$0
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants	0	6	\$50	\$0
Car Hire	0	10	\$120	\$0
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$0
GRAND TOTAL O1_O1.2				\$41 280

Conference Logistics				
Conference Hall	1	3	\$1 000	\$3 000
Secretariat	1	3	\$500	\$1 500
Interpretation Equipment	1	3	\$500	\$1 500
Photocopier	1	3	\$300	\$900
Tea break	45	3	\$30	\$4 050
Media (stipend)			\$1 000	\$0
Computers	1	3	\$150	\$450
Printers	1	3	\$150	\$450
Projectors	1	3	\$150	\$450
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants	2	3	\$50	\$300
Internet Connection			\$200	
Car Hire	2	5	\$120	\$1 200
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$13 800
Grand Total O1_O1.3				\$140 730

Outcome 1: A Regional Framework for AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition is developed and validated by ECOWAS.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
1.4 Develop a Regional Framework for AO-CS, AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition that takes into account the specificities of the sub-region in accordance with the provisions of the Customs Code and its implementing texts in consultation with the organizations regional private sector factories.				
Honorarium				
Consultants	2	5	\$400	\$4 000
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$4 000
GRAND TOTAL O1_O1.4				\$4 000

Outcome	Activities	Amount
O2	A2.1	17 600
	A2.2	131 100
	A2.3	630 684
	A2.4	119 550
GRAND TOTAL O2		898 934

Outcome 2 : The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators in implementing the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS are strengthened.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit cost	Total
2.1 Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness and gain buy-in from stakeholders through a dialogue and proactive approach with the private sector.				
Honorarium				
Consultants	1	44	\$400	\$17 600
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$17 600

Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes are strengthened.

BUDGET

Description	Qty ^e	Duration ^e	Unit cost	Total
2.2 Evaluate the needs and priorities of the Customs Administrations and request the technical assistance provided under the TSD of the TFA				
Ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the Customs Code in all Member States.				
Air Fare				
Anglophone Consultants	2	5	\$1 500	\$15 000
Francophone Consultants	2	8	\$1 500	\$24 000
Lusophone Consultants	2	2	\$1 500	\$6 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$45 000
Per diem				
Anglophone Consultants	2	25	\$262	\$13 100
Francophone Consultants	2	40	\$262	\$20 960
Lusophone Consultants	2	10	\$262	\$5 240
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$39 300
Honorarium				
Anglophones Consultants	2	15	\$400	\$12 000
Francophone Consultants	2	24	\$400	\$19 200
Lusophone Consultants	2	6	\$400	\$4 800
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$36 000
Conference Logistics				
Car Hire				
Anglophone Countries	2	15	\$120	\$3 600
Francophone Countries	2	24	\$120	\$5 760
Lusophone Countries	2	6	\$120	\$1 440
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$10 800
GRAND TOTAL O1_A2.2				\$131 100

Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programmes are strengthened.

BUDGET

Description	Qty ^e	Duration ^e	Unit Cost	Total

2.3 Train customs officers in AO-CS and AEO-CSSS audit, post-audit and risk management techniques based on an appropriate training plan.				
Air Fare				
	Member States			
Anglophones Delegates	25	2	\$1 500	\$75 000
Francophone Delegates	40	2	\$1 500	\$120 000
Lusophone Delegates	20	2	\$1 500	\$60 000
	Resource Person			
Anglophone Trainer	1	2	\$1 500	\$3 000
Francophone Trainer	1	2	\$1 500	\$3 000
Lusophone Trainer	1	2	\$1 500	\$3 000
	Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	\$264 000
Per diem				
	Member States			
Anglophones Delegates	25	14	\$262	\$91 700
Francophone Delegates	40	14	\$262	\$146 720
Lusophone Delegates	20	14	\$262	\$73 360
	Resource Person			
Anglophone Trainer	1	14	\$262	\$3 668
Francophone Trainer	1	14	\$262	\$3 668
Lusophone Trainer	1	14	\$262	\$3 668
	Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	\$322 784
Honorarium				
Anglophone Trainer	1	10	\$400	\$4 000
Francophone Trainer	1	10	\$400	\$4 000
Lusophone Trainer	1	10	\$400	\$4 000
	Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	\$12 000
Conference Logistics				
	Conference Hall	1	\$1 000	\$3 000
	Secretariat	3	\$500	\$0
	Interpretation Equipment	3	\$500	\$0
	Photocopier	3	\$300	\$0
	Tea break			
Anglophone Training	25	10	\$30	\$7 500
Francophone Training	40	10	\$30	\$12 000
Lusophone Training	20	10	\$30	\$6 000
	Media (stipend)		\$1 000	\$0
	Computers	3	\$150	\$0
	Printers	3	\$150	\$0
	Projectors	3	\$150	\$0
	Hostesses/Protocol Assistants	3	\$50	\$0
	Internet Connection		\$200	
	Bus			
Anglophone Training	1	5	\$150	\$750
Francophone Training	2	5	\$150	\$1 500
Lusophone Training	1	5	\$150	\$750
	Fuel			
Anglophone Training	1	5	\$20	\$100

Francophone Training	2	5	\$20	\$200
Lusophone Training	1	5	\$20	\$100
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$31 900
Grand Total O1_O1.3				\$630 684

Outcome 2: The capacities of Customs administrations and economic operators to implement the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme are strengthened.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
2.4 Organise training sessions under the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS programme for economic operators.				
Air Fare				
Resource Person				
Anglophone Trainer	1	5	\$1 500	\$7 500
Francophone Trainer	1	8	\$1 500	\$12 000
Lusophone Trainer	1	2	\$1 500	\$3 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$22 500
Per diem				
Resource Person				
Anglophone Trainer	1	25	\$262	\$6 550
Francophone Trainer	1	40	\$262	\$10 480
Lusophone Trainer	1	10	\$262	\$2 620
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$19 650
Honorarium				
Anglophone Trainer	1	40	\$400	\$16 000
Francophone Trainer	1	64	\$400	\$25 600
Lusophone Trainer	1	16	\$400	\$6 400
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$48 000
Conference Logistics				
Conference Hall	1	15	\$1 000	\$15 000
Secretariat			\$500	\$0
Interpretation Equipment			\$500	\$0
Photocopier			\$300	\$0
Tea break				
Anglophone Training	20	6	\$30	\$3 600
Francophone Training	40	6	\$30	\$7 200
Lusophone Training	20	6	\$30	\$3 600
Media (stipend)			\$1 000	\$0
Computers			\$150	\$0
Printers			\$150	\$0
Projectors			\$150	\$0
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants		5	\$50	\$0
Internet Connection			\$200	

Car rental				
Bus		\$150	\$0	
Fuel		\$20		
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$29 400
Grand Total O1_O1.3				\$119 550

Outcomes	Activities	Amount
O3	O3.1	175 008
	O3.2	134 800
	O3.3	140 960
	O3.4	
	GRAND TOTAL O2	450 768

Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS Member States implement AO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition Programmes, according to a harmonious regional framework that takes into account trade facilitation and security requirements of the supply chain.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
3.1 Implement a first pilot phase of AEO for customs simplification in four Member States, with a maximum of 5 to 10 companies per Member State				
Air Fare				
Resource Person				
Anglophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter over 2 yrs.)	1	8	\$1 500	\$12 000
Francophone Trainer (2 MS - 1 training/quarter/MS)	1	16	\$1 500	\$24 000
Lusophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter)	1	8	\$1 500	\$12 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$48 000
Per diem				
Resource Person				
Anglophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter over 2 yrs.)	1	40	\$262	\$10 480
Francophone Trainer (2 MS - 1 training/quarter/MS)	1	104	\$262	\$27 248
Lusophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter)	1	40	\$262	\$10 480
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$48 208
Honorarium				
Anglophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter over 2 yrs.)	1	31	\$400	\$12 400
Francophone Trainer (2 MS - 1 training/quarter/MS)	1	50	\$400	\$20 000
Lusophone Trainer (1 MS - 1 training/quarter)	1	31	\$400	\$12 400
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$44 800
Conference Logistics				
Conference Hall	1	16	\$1 000	\$16 000
Secretariat			\$500	\$0
Interpretation Equipment			\$500	\$0
Photocopier			\$300	\$0
Tea break				

Anglophone Training	25	4	\$30	\$3 000
Francophone Training	50	8	\$30	\$12 000
Lusophone Training	25	4	\$30	\$3 000
Media (stipend)			\$1 000	\$0
Computers			\$150	\$0
Printers			\$150	\$0
Projectors			\$150	\$0
Hostesses/Protocol Assistants			\$50	\$0
Internet Connection			\$200	
Car rental				
Bus			\$150	\$0
Fuel			\$20	
Sub-total (Conference Logistics)	-	-	-	\$34 000
Grand Total O3_O3.1				\$175 008

Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS Member States implement AO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition Programmes, according to a harmonious regional framework that takes into account trade facilitation and security requirements of the supply chain.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
3.2 Evaluate the first pilot phase and make adjustments to the AO-CS and AEO-CSSS model				
Air Fare				
Resource Person				
Project Team (5 members - 4 MS)	5	4	\$1 500	\$30 000
Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	-	\$30 000
Per diem				
Resource Person				
Project Team (5 members - 2 days/MS - 4 MS)	5	80	\$262	\$104 800
Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	-	\$104 800
Honorarium				
Project Team (5 members)		80	\$400	\$0
Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	-	\$0
Grand Total O3_O3.2				\$134 800

Outcome 3: Customs Administrations of ECOWAS Member States implement AO-CS and AEO-CSSS and Mutual Recognition Programmes, according to a harmonious regional framework that takes into account trade facilitation and security requirements of the supply chain.

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
3.3 Promote and extend to other states the implementation of the AEO approval for customs simplification				

Air Fare				
	Resource Person			
Project Team (5 members - 1 trip/quarter - 4 MS)	5	16	\$1 500	\$120 000
	Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	\$120 000
Per diem				
	Resource Person			
Project Team (5 members - 2 days/quarter/MS - 4 MS)	5	16	\$262	\$20 960
	Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	\$20 960
Honorarium				
Project Team (5 members)		80	\$400	\$0
	Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	\$0
Grand Total O3_A3.3				\$140 960

Outcome 4: A climate of cooperation is established between the public administrations and the private sector of the region built on shared interests and objectives and on trust and mutual respect

BUDGET

Description	Qty	Duration	Unit Cost	Total
4. ..				
Air Fare				
	Resource Person			
Project Team (5 members - 1 travel/quarter - 4 MS)	5	16	\$1 500	\$120 000
	Sub-total (Air fare)	-	-	\$120 000
Per diem				
	Resource Person			
Project Team (5 members - 2 days/quarter/MS- 4 MS)	5	16	\$262	\$20 960
	Sub-total (Per diem)	-	-	\$20 960
Honorarium				
Project Team (5 members)		80	\$400	\$0
	Sub-total (Honorarium)	-	-	\$0
Grand Total O4_A.... .				\$140 960

