

**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND
SOUTHERN AFRICA**

MARCHE COMMUN



السوق المشتركة للشرق والجنوب
الأفريقي

M&E MEETING REPORT 20 -21 NOVEMBER 2017, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

I. Background

The Great Lakes Trade Facilitation Project (GLTFP) M&E Operations Manual provides a foundation upon which to promote cross-team and cross-country collaboration and coordination on project M&E. It is a common resource to guide project teams and establish standards in conducting M&E.

COMESA secretariat in collaboration with the three project countries organised a two days workshop to review the GLTFP monitoring and Evaluation Operations Manual held in Lusaka, Zambia from 20-21 March 2018.

The main objectives of the workshops were to review and update the current GLTFP M&E operations manual as well as update project development objectives (PDO) result indicators.

II. The workshop

The workshop was attended by experts from the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) consisting of M&E Experts, the national Coordinator, experts from the Ministry of Trade of the three project countries as well as TIDOs from some borders of the GLTFP implementation borders of Rubavu, Rusizi and Mpondwe.

The GLTFP Coordinator facilitated the opening session of the workshop which included self-introductions. He then welcomed the participants to the two days meeting and open the training officially. In his opening remarks, the Project Coordinator stressed the important role of the M&E operations manual which is to facilitate consistency in project implementation and data collection across project countries.

III. Workshop session

The two days workshop was facilitated by the regional TIDO - Serge Musana.

The agenda, objectives and expected outcomes from the workshop were highlighted by the project coordinator.

After the introduction, the following presentations were made during the workshop:

1. Presentation of the GLTFP M & E Manual and Role of COMESA Secretariat in Implementation of the Manual, by Project Coordinator, Mr. Thomas Barasa.

2. Field Experiences and discussions on Implementation of the M & E Manual-What has worked well, what needs adjustment, by PIU project countries
3. Plenary Discussion to share experiences
4. Recommendations/proposals for inclusion or deletion in Revised M & E Operations Manual

III.1 Presentation and discussion

1. Presentation of the GLTFP M & E Manual and Role of COMESA Secretariat in Implementation of the Manual.

In his presentation, the Project Coordinator stressed that the GLTFP M&E manual is a common resource to guide project teams and establish standards in conducting M&E. The presenter clarified that the manual will be periodically reviewed and updated to take account of learning gained from use in the field, and to ensure it continues to conform to the GLTFP expectation. The manual is to be a living document to allow the flexibility to make adjustments as needed or as dictated by circumstances on the ground over the life of the project. Thus, the purpose of the workshop is to promote a common understanding and reliable practice of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for the GLTFP.

Participants observed that there is need to improve data collection so as it helps monitor how we are achieving the objectives and update result framework. It was indicated the project countries should be able to report on result basis. The participants elaborated the concept of gender in regard to cross border trade especially due to the changing roles of men and women in society. The need for focusing on women as well as on men was stressed by participants as a requirement for tailor-made interventions to assist both men and women cross border traders.

2. Field Experiences and discussions on Implementation of the M & E Manual-What has worked well, what needs adjustment, By PIU project countries

i. DRC

The presentation was made by Mr. Martin Widjilowu, Coordinator of GLTFP North Kivu.

The presenter emphasized on GLTFP Project Development Objectives (PDO) indicators. These are the principle indicators upon which overall progress and eventual success of the GLTFP will be assessed:

- Average time for traders to cross target border crossings
- Incidence of harassment of small scale traders - among female traders
- Value of goods handled through core trade infrastructure (border crossings, border markets, and airport)
- Direct project beneficiaries (required PDO indicator)

The presenter indicated that the time to cross does not improve much because we need to have interventions put in place before starting to monitor the improvement. The expected significant changes will be experienced through operationalization of the border infrastructures which are still under construction on DRC side. Nevertheless, since September 2017, the survey has been conducted every 2 months. The data collected is still considered as baseline data. The effective monitoring of changes and improvement on time to cross will start being measured upon the completion of the temporary border facilities at Goma and Ruzizi¹ borders by end of April 2018.

The data on incidence of harassment of small scale trader is collected semiannually through the perception survey. The presenter stressed that this indicator needs to be reinforced by data collection on Cross Border Trade (CBT). However, this would require COMESA support (as agreed during the Kigali workshop in 2017) in terms of:

- Harmonization of data collection questionnaires among project countries (Rwanda, Uganda and DRC)
- Training of enumerators for the CBT data collection
- Design of the methodology approach relevant to DRC.

The presenter identified some key challenges that need to be addressed as the following, among others:

- Operationalization of Joint Border Committees (JBCs)
- Involvement of the Project coordinator in the JBC activities
- Involvement of the DRC Central Government in the ownership of CBT data collection as is the case of Rwanda and Uganda.

The presenter finally intimated that there is a need to extend the data collection to the level of focus group discussions targeting some traders as well as organizing interviews with the border officers in order to get a compressive perception of the incidence of harassment of small scale traders and perceptions about the provision of services at the border.

ii. Uganda

The presentation was made by Mr. John Mayende, expert from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

The presenter indicated that Uganda Bureau of Statistics is the leading institution and works with other agencies in capturing data related to the GLTFP PDO Indicators.

Uganda has conducted its first time to cross and perception survey. It was observed that certain challenges that are affecting directly the performance of the key indicators. In sum, the challenges consist of:

- Language barriers: enumerators face problems to communicate with traders who do not understand the language spoken at the border and hence fail to capture relevant data
- Scattered offices: time consuming by traders when moving from one office to another
- Lack of awareness by border authorities about the time of survey occurrence: difficulties for enumerators to conduct survey on Congo side given the lack of support in term of facilitation by the border authorities.

The presenter also identified the need to conduct focus group discussions to enhance understanding of quantitative data being captured as the numbers

had “stories” behind them. It was also observed that the survey would need to focus on two types of data:

- Formal: what time people spend taking into account the intervention. What is the real time for formal processing and crossing?
- Informal: time to cross when someone is not going through the formal offices.

It was also observed that there is a need to harmonize the process and formality at border for instance, improve and provide the border agencies on DRC side with adequate ICT equipment that can contribute to provision of a rapid service to cross border traders. Having all the process for crossing border harmonized, the performance would be measured given the same level of process/facilities on both sides of the border crossing.

The discussion on field experiences on Implementation of the M & E Manual-revealed that the monitoring exercise has appeared to be difficult at the moment as no infrastructure has been put in place and all data collected are considered as baseline data until the facilities will be completed and operationalized in order to perceive what changes taken place. Many indicators are related to improvement of infrastructure facilities at the borders.

iii. Rwanda

The presentation was made by Mr. Edouard, TIDO of Rusizi1.

The presenter indicated that data collection for time to cross the border and perception survey at Rusizi I and Rubavu is conducted regularly after two months. Happy or not devices will be installed at Rubavu and Rusizi1. This has been approved by the development partners. The procurement process is ongoing.

In Rwanda, given the existing facilities, it would be possible to monitor the performance after improving services delivery at the border through capacity building, awareness campaign on COMESA charter and full implementation of STR at the project borders.

The discussion identified key areas that need to be captured in the M&E operation manual. The key areas identified were:

- Time to cross survey changed to be every two months. Necessity to increase the number of days to 4 days

- Include the implementation of STR in the operations manual. The discussion pointed out that there is need to fast track the implementation of STR at the Uganda- D.R. Congo border and Rwanda – DR Congo. Data need to be collected on STR so that the impact of STR implementation can be monitored.

3. Plenary Discussion to share experiences

During the plenary discussion, the experts identified areas for improvement as follows:

- i. The M & E Survey should provide information on level of implementation
- ii. There is need to repopulate the baselines and targets
- iii. The surveys should target separately both formal and informal traders on the number of traders, the volume of trade and perception
- iv. Perception surveys should also target operators
- v. Time to cross the border should be a total of the different time taken through the formal processes. This will tell where there are delays in the process of crossing
- vi. Include focus group discussions to cross check quantitative data collection
- vii. Consider exchange of survey teams
- viii. Consider joint surveys

<p>implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ RUSIZI 1 RWANDA: The necessary infrastructures are in progress. ❖ RUBAVU: no infrastructure activities, but involvement of other donors, TMEA (TradeMark East Africa). 			
2nd: UPDATE OF METHODS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase by 2 days the fortnightly and even semi-annual survey, • For data collection, it is necessary to innovate instruments to facilitate this exercise, such as the use of smartphones and tablets • Improve follow-up in the reporting, • Set the timing for the transmission of reports and for publication on the website. 	COMESA	Governments World Bank COMESA	Start data collection as soon as possible.
SUSTAINABILITY			
<p>It should be noted that sustainability involves certain preconditions, namely :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involvement of Governments as beneficiaries, ○ Request the extension of the project, ○ Incitement and involvement of the Government and border officials, ○ Absence of some Member Countries in activities or meetings. 	Sustainability must be achieved as soon as possible	Governments COMESA the WB	Continuous monitoring by the Government, COMESA and the WB

IV. AOB

Country delegates noted that the DSA revision from \$ 250 to \$ 40 is not acceptable. They clarified that when a delegate is on duty outside his country, the DSA that his country pays him is \$ 300. The DSA received by country delegates takes into account several aspects including:

- The contribution of expertise in the meeting,
- The risk incurred during the trip
- The dignity of the person.

As a result, delegates from countries participating in the M & E workshop unanimously indicated that the next time COMESA Secretariat convenes a meeting that requires country participation, the DSA issue should be resolved in advance, otherwise the delegates of the countries will decline their participation altogether.

Alternatively, if COMESA is not able to pay delegates the full DSA, they proposed that COMESA should specify in the letter of invitation that each country pays for the participation costs of its delegates.

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