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**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN  
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**REPORT ON THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON HARMONISATION OF SMALL  
SCALE CROSS BORDER (SSCBT) DATA COLLECTION OF THE GREAT LAKES  
TRADE FACILITATION PROJECT**

**Kigali, Rwanda**  
24 – 26 July 2017

2017(cm)

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Regional Workshop on Harmonization of Small Scale Cross Border Trade (SSCBT) data collection under the Great Lakes Trade Facilitation (GLTF) Project was held on 24 - 26 July 2017 in Kigali, Rwanda. The workshop was convened to review and obtain inputs on the GLTFP M&E manual and obtain inputs for its improvements, discuss and agree on the minimum data requirements for SSCBT, showcase the COMESA mobile application for data collection and agree on modalities for piloting the use of the application in Uganda and DR Congo as well as agree on the transmission formats, timelines and modalities for SSCBT data to the COMESA Secretariat for uploading onto the COMSTAT data portal and the GLTFP website.

## **B. ATTENDANCE**

2. The workshop was attended by delegates from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Uganda, Officials from the COMESA Secretariat, a representative of the World Bank and representative from the EU delegation. The detailed list of Participants is attached as ***Annex I***.

### **OPENING REMARKS (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

#### **WELCOME REMARKS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

3. The Meeting was officially opened by Mr. Wilberforce Nuwagira, Manager Balance of Payments Statistics, National Bank of Rwanda who welcomed all delegates to Kigali. He expressed hope that the workshop will be an event for sharing experiences in SSCBT data collection in the region.

4. In concluding, he thanked the COMESA GLTFP for organizing the workshop and the World Bank for funding it and wished all the participants fruitful deliberations.

#### **REMARKS BY THE GLTFP COORDINATOR, COMESA SECRETARIAT, MR. THOMAS BARASA**

5. The GLTFP Coordinator at COMESA Secretariat, Mr. Thomas Barasa welcomed the participants to the workshop. In his remarks, he pointed out that data collection was a key element of the project's monitoring and evaluation system. For this purpose, the workshop targeted a very small number of key agencies that are responsible for data collection required for monitoring and evaluation of the project as well as assisting policy makers in the three project countries to make evidenced-based policy decisions. He stressed the need to continuously track movement toward achieving the project development objective, which is to facilitate cross-border trade by increasing the capacity for commerce and reducing the costs faced by traders, especially small-scale and women traders, at targeted locations in the borderlands. He pointed out regular data capture and analysis would help the project managers make any required adjustments and address some of the emerging issues that may arise in the course of implementing the project. He highlighted the need for delegates to propose changes that are required to improve the project's M & E Manual and to arrive at a common understanding on how to collect, analyze and share data on small

scale cross-border traders.

### **REMARKS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD BANK, MR JOHN KEYSER, SENIOR ECONOMIST**

6. The representative of the WB, Mr John Keyser made some opening remarks in which he also welcomed all participants to the workshop. He reiterated that phase one of the GLTFP only covers DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda but the bank was working on phase two that will cover Zambia, DR Congo, Tanzania and Burundi. He further stressed that the project focused on small scale traders who are important based on the number of people that are involved in this trade hence the importance to measure their trade and promote SSCBT.

### **REMARKS BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EU DELEGATION, MS ANGELIQUE BITAHANINKUNDI, PROGRAMME OFFICER**

7. The representative of the EU delegation in Rwanda, Ms. Angelique Bitahaninkundi, also made some remarks in which she highlighted the three areas the delegation is mainly focusing on i.e. Energy, Agriculture sector and good governance. She also informed the workshop of the cross border trade project worth 20 million Euro that is in the pipeline for DR Congo and Rwanda.

### **ELECTION OF THE BUREAU**

8. The following bureau was elected to preside over the workshop proceedings:

Chairman	–	Rwanda
Rapporteur	-	DR Congo

### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (*AGENDA ITEM 2*)**

9. The meeting adopted the agenda as follows;

- 1) Opening of the workshop
- 2) Election of the Bureau
- 3) Adoption of the Agenda
- 4) Objectives of the Workshop
- 5) Introduction to the GLTFP
- 6) Overview of SSCBT Data Collection in the Region including Trade in Services
- 7) Brainstorming session (Challenges, key issues and opportunities in the collection and dissemination of SSCBT data)
- 8) Presentation of the GLTFP Monitoring and Evaluation Manual
- 9) Presentation of the EAC ICBT Manual
- 10) Uganda ICBT presentation
- 11) Rwanda ICBT presentation
- 12) DR Congo ICBT presentation

- 13) GLTFP SCCBT Minimum Data Requirements
- 14) Demonstration of the COMESA Application and proposals for roll out of tablet/mobile application
- 15) Presentation on Proposals for Data submission to COMSTAT, GLTFP Website and other users
- 16) Workshop main recommendations and plans going forward
- 17) Any Other Business
- 18) Closure of the Workshop

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

10. The COMESA Secretariat made a presentation on the workshop objectives and expected outcomes.

11. The main objectives of the workshop were reported as:

- I. To review the GLTFP Monitoring and Evaluation Manual and identify areas or issues for improvement of the manual as a tool for harmonization, including getting consensus on some of the key terminologies, and
- II. Harmonize data collection and transmission in the three project countries i.e. DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda

12. The specific objectives of the workshop were outlined as:

- I. Present the GLTFP M&E manual and obtain inputs from participants for improvement
- II. Review and share the three project countries' experiences of data collection and plans going forward
- III. Share regional experience using the EAC approach
- IV. Discuss what, how and when the three project countries will feed data into the COMSAT data portal and the GLTFP website, and
- V. Present the COMESA mobile application for SSCBT data collection

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE GLTFP (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

13. The COMESA Secretariat made a presentation which gave an overview of the GLTFP. The presentation highlighted the importance of SSCBT, challenges faced by SSCBT traders, the project objectives, beneficiaries, components, site selection and implementation status at the country level. The presentation also spelled out the regional coordination structure and issues concerning monitoring and evaluation.

14. In the discussion that followed, DR Congo clarified that the country has also been involved in data collection but there is a general perception that they were just starting, which was not true. There was also a concern that the presentation should have included trade in services as well.

## **OVERVIEW OF SSCBT DATA COLLECTION IN THE REGION INCLUDING TRADE IN SERVICES (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

15. The COMESA Secretariat also made a presentation that gave an overview of the on-going SSCBT data collection activities in the region. The presentation outlined COMESA's past initiatives on SSCBT data collection by different projects at the Secretariat i.e. the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) and the Governance for Peace and Security (GPS). It also highlighted other regional initiatives involved in SSCBT that included the East Africa Community (EAC) which had drafted and adopted a harmonized manual on ICBT data collection and the African Union (AUC) that had plans of developing a handbook on the measurement of SSCBT.

16. Apart from Uganda and Rwanda that are well known for SSCBT data collection, there was mention of other stakeholders in the region involved in SSCBT data collection and these were the World Food Program (WFP), the East African Grain Council (EAGC) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) that were collecting SSCBT data along borders in DRC, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

17. The presentation also took note of some Trade in Services (TIS) that take place across borders on a small scale such as hired transportation of goods and people crossing borders to seek for services such as education that needed to be collected.

18. In the discussion that followed, there was appreciation to the team for thinking of including TIS in SSCBT data collection stressing that the issue of residence of the traders should also be taken on board. On the issue of education services sought across borders, there was a suggestion of targeting the schools that offer the services other than the pupils themselves that cross the borders.

### **Recommendation:**

19. ***The workshop recommended that for monitoring purposes, countries should proceed with the collection of TIS as well under SSCBT data collection.***

## **BRAINSTORMING SESSION (CHALLENGES, KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF SSCBT DATA) (AGENDA ITEM 7):**

20. For the brain storming session, there were two break-away groups, one Anglophone and another Francophone. The aim of the exercise was to get a better understanding of different people's data needs and challenges of tracking SSCBT. The two groups discussed the following questions and reported to plenary the interleaved answers:-

### **21. Discussed questions and answers**

#### **a) Why do we need SSCBT data:**

- To supplement the formal data

- To make informed policy decisions
- To know what is traded across borders

**b) Who needs the SSCBT data:**

- Government, Regional organizations, NGOs, policy makers, business community, researchers

**c) Kind of data that needs to be collected:**

- Volume, value, traders, origin/destination country, services trade, gender, citizenship of trader, prices, transport mode, challenges

**d) Why are traders involved in SSCBT:**

- They are the main beneficiaries
- Low capital
- Tax evasion

**e) What are the different forms of SSCBT:**

- Informal Cross Border Trade (ICBT)
- Simplified Trade Regime (STR)
- Small Scale Cross Border Trade (SSCBT)

**f) How can SSCBT data be collected**

- Surveys done in both countries

**g) Approach to use in data collection:**

- Surveys done at borders of both countries

**h) How should SSCBT data be reported**

- Detailed according to clients
- Using M&E systems

22. From the brainstorming session it can be concluded that the project data needs to some extent differ from the data needs of bankers and national statistical offices, NGOs and other users which in a way creates a challenge in deciding what data to collect and how to balance the need for comprehensive data collection without slowing traders or giving them a reason to avoid the formal procedures. The meeting also discussed the need to strike a balance between the cost of data collection against the minimum amount of data required as data collection was an expensive undertaking. Rwanda reported that they had made significant cost savings as a result of adopting the use of tablets. Participants requested Rwanda to share an indication of the cost of data collection using tablets, although this cost is currently shared among the key agencies involved in SSCBT data collection in the country.

**PRESENTATION OF THE GLTFP MONITORING AND EVALUATION MANUAL  
(AGENDA ITEM 8)**

23. Under agenda item 8, the Secretariat made a presentation on the GLTFP M&E operations manual emphasizing the four Project Development Objective (PDO) indicators viz: Average time for traders to cross target border crossings, Incidence of harassment of small scale traders especially women, value of goods handled through border crossings/markets and Direct project beneficiaries including the percentage that are women.

**Discussions:**

24. In the discussions that followed, the workshop observed that there are a number of outstanding issues concerning the M&E manual which include consideration of average time it takes for border agencies to clear traders crossing the borders and calculation of values for trade flows on the questionnaire.

**25. Recommendations:**

- i. ***COMESA Secretariat together with the project implementing countries need to dialogue more in order to iron out the outstanding issues concerning the M&E manual for submission to the World Bank for consideration.***
- ii. ***There is need for a dedicated session to review and update the M&E manual as soon as possible.***
- iii. ***Major outcomes of the workshop should be used as much as possible to improve the M&E manual***

**PRESENTATION OF THE EAC ICBT MANUAL (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

26. Uganda made a presentation on the EAC ICBT harmonization manual that was developed and adopted by the EAC partner states in 2013. The presentation highlighted topics in the manual viz the need for completeness of trade data for purposes of Balance of Payment (BOP) and National Accounts, why the manual was developed, who reviewed the manual and what was involved.

27. The presentation also went through the seven areas that were considered and these were: - Legal and Institutional Framework, Harmonized Survey objectives, Scope and Coverage, Trade System Used, Methodology for data collection, Data processing and Dissemination.

28. In the discussion that followed, the workshop sought to know to what extent the two EAC project countries are adhering to the manual and it was reported that both Rwanda and Uganda were adhering.

**UGANDA ICBT PRESENTATION (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

29. Uganda also made a presentation on their experience in ICBT data collection that was started in 2003 with a baseline survey.

30. The presentation covered topics of Institutional Arrangements, Data Collection/Compilation methods and strategies, Variables collected, Scope of the ICBT, Periodicity, Estimation Methods and Problems/Deficiencies and lessons learnt. Sample statistics of ICBT data collected for the period 2005 – 2016 were also presented.

### **RWANDA ICBT PRESENTATION (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

31. Rwanda also made a presentation on their experience in ICBT data collection that was started in 2009 with a three year renewable MoU with involved stakeholders ie. BNR, NISR, MINEACOM, MINAGRI and RRA.

32. Rwanda's presentation covered topics of Survey Objectives, Methodology, Variables collected, Data Collection techniques, Use of tablets in data collection, ICBT developments, Benefits achieved and Challenges faced.

33. In the discussion that followed, the workshop sought to know how comparable the collected data for ICBT is for both Rwanda and Uganda noting that both countries share some borders and if any attempts were made to carry out mirror analysis on ICBT data for the shared borders. The workshop was informed that no such analysis had been carried out.

#### **Recommendation:**

34. ***The workshop recommended that Rwanda, Uganda and subsequently DR Congo should undertake mirror exercises on their ICBT data for shared borders in order to establish the comparability of collected data sets with the COMESA Secretariat coordinating the process.***

### **DR CONGO ICBT PRESENTATION (AGENDA ITEM 12)**

35. The DR Congo reported that they had not focused on collection of trade flows for ICBT but had taken note of the experiences shared by Rwanda and Uganda whose concepts they had understood. They further reported that they were only collecting data for partner countries and sex of the trader at the borders.

36. In the discussion that followed DR Congo's presentation, the workshop was informed that the GLTFP had funds allocated to support piloting SSCBT data collection which could be used to help DR Congo start with the process.

#### **37. Recommendations:**

- I. DR Congo should start collecting SSCBT data flows leveraging on experiences shared by both Uganda and Rwanda that are already collecting SSCBT data.***
- II. Rwanda and Uganda should assist DR Congo to quickly start the process of collecting SSCBT data by taking on board the good/best practices of these two countries.***

### **GLTFP SSCBT MINIMUM DATA REQUIREMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 13)**

38. The COMESA Secretariat made a presentation on the proposed Minimum Data requirements that should be collected under SSCBT. The workshop was informed that the proposed minimum data requirements were based on a review of the variables recommended in the EAC ICBT harmonization manual and also those that are currently collected by both Rwanda and Uganda.

39. The workshop agreed on the presented minimum data requirements for SSCBT data collection with a caveat that countries can collect more than the presented minimum requirements.

#### **Recommendation:**

**40. *The recommended minimum data requirements for SSCBT shall be:- Date, Form/Serial Number, Name of Enumerator, Border Post, Sex of Trader, Product name/Code, Quantity, Unit of Measure, Value, Origin, Destination, Mode of Transport, Transport Cost (if applicable) and Cost of any other Services.***

### **DEMONSTRATION OF THE COMESA APPLICATION AND PROPOSALS FOR ROLL OUT OF TABLET/MOBILE APPLICATION (AGENDA ITEM 14)**

41. The COMESA Secretariat also made a presentation on the developed COMESA mobile application for SSCBT data collection. The presentation covered the four different modules of the application for Cross Border Traders Data Collection, Trade Information to Cross Border Traders, Complaints by Cross Border traders and one to Update Product Prices.

42. In addition, the workshop was also informed that following the demonstration of the application that was done for TIDOs, a GPS component was to be included on the application and that a French version of the application was also near completion.

43. Further comments from the TIDOs training and also from the project Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) meeting in Kampala were that countries will have a copy of the data for validation before remitting it to COMESA and that TIDOs were not to collect trade flows but will be capturing traders' complaints and perceptions.

44. In the discussions that followed and in line with comments/decisions mentioned above, it was suggested that:-

- a) TIDOs should be replaced by Enumerator in the module for trade flows
- b) The name of the enumerator should automatically be picked from the log-in credentials and not re-captured
- c) With the introduction of the GPS component in the application, the names of countries of origin/destination and those of border posts should be automatically picked by the system and not captured.
- d) The current mobile application is split into two applications. The trade flow capture screen is converted into a stand-alone application to be used by the enumerators while the trade information, complaints and commodity price

- updates be the other applications to be used by TIDOs.
- e) Regarding complaints made by cross border traders, the traders who make such reports should remain anonymous for fear of possible victimization.
  - f) There is no need to ask traders their age

45. **Recommendations:**

- I. COMESA Secretariat to re-design the application in line with the decisions of the project RCC i.e that SSCBT data will be collected by responsible national agencies and not TIDOs.***
- II. The re-design process should take on board recommendations from the workshop like use GPS for determining the location of the enumerator and having automatic entries from the log-in and data entries, etc.***
- III. SSCBT data collected by the countries to be validated by the respective agencies before transmitting it to COMESA for uploading onto the COMSTAT data portal and the GLTFP website.***

**PRESENTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR DATA SUBMISSION TO COMSTAT, GLTFP WEBSITE AND OTHER USERS (AGENDA ITEM 15)**

46. The COMESA Secretariat made a presentation on proposals for data submission to COMSTAT data portal, the GLTFP website and other users. The presentation outlined the proposed format of data to be submitted and also the timelines that should be followed when submitting the SSCBT data.

47. The proposed formats for data submission were CSV Text format, MS Excel and MS Access data formats. Alongside the submission, countries were also to be submitting corresponding data dictionaries that define any coded data.

48. The proposed timelines for submission were quarterly at the end of the reference month emphasizing that this would give enough time for countries to review and validate their data before remitting it to COMESA.

49. **Recommendations:**

- I. Collected SSCBT trade data should be sent on a quarterly basis to COMESA after validation by the respective countries***
- II. Ultimately, implementing countries shall incorporate informal trade data into their formal trade systems/databases and submission should then follow the existing transmission channels and timelines to COMESA.***

**WORKSHOP MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS AND PLANS GOING FORWARD (AGENDA ITEM 16)**

50. Due to time limitations, the full workshop report was not ready for consideration and adoption at the end of the workshop. However, the main workshop conclusions, recommendations and plans going forward were ready and these were presented to the workshop plenary and agreed upon as captured in bold in this report.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS (*AGENDA ITEM 17*)**

51. There was no any other business to discuss under agenda item 17.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

52. The workshop was officially closed by Ms Peace Basemera, Acting Director of Trade and Investment, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, who urged the three project countries to follow-up and implement the recommendations of the workshop. She thanked the COMESA Secretariat for organizing the workshop, and the World Bank for providing financial support and wished all delegates a safe trip as they traveled back home.

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS  
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**Democratic Republic of Congo/Republique Democratique du Congo**

Mrs. Angele Kabatusuile Mamba, Chef de Division aux Accords Bilateraux et Frontaliers, Ministere du Commerce, **Email:** [angemamba3@gmail.com](mailto:angemamba3@gmail.com);

Mr. Clovis Mulum'oderwha Ruhimbasa, Statisticien en charge de la Balance des Paiements, Banque Central du Congo (BCC) BP 2697, Kinshasa 1, Tel: 243 818 131 442, Fax: +243 812 616 004, **Email:** [ruhimbasa02@bcc.cd](mailto:ruhimbasa02@bcc.cd);

Mr. Aimé Masumbuko, National Project Coordinator, Kinshasa, **Email:** [aimemas@hotmail.com](mailto:aimemas@hotmail.com)

Mr. Jean de Dieu Mbey Bosimi, Spécialiste du Suivi-Evaluation des Opérations du PFCGL/RDC, Unité de Gestion du Projet/ Ministère du Commerce Extérieur Kinshasa, Tel: +243 81 38 54 991; +243 97 56 400 63, **E-mail:** [mbeyajean67@yahoo.fr](mailto:mbeyajean67@yahoo.fr); [jeandediewmbey@gmail.com](mailto:jeandediewmbey@gmail.com);

Dr. Célestin Bucekuderhwa, Laboratoire d'Economie Appliquée au Développement Faculté des Sciences Economiques et de Gestion Université Catholique de Bukavu, Tel: +243 99 59 36 585/+243 82 22 78 327/+243 84 06 35 471, **Email:** [bubace2000@yahoo.fr](mailto:bubace2000@yahoo.fr); [bubace2000@hotmail.com](mailto:bubace2000@hotmail.com); [bucekuderhwa.bashige@ucbukavu.ac.cd](mailto:bucekuderhwa.bashige@ucbukavu.ac.cd)

Mr. Blehn Banze Bruce Mbuyu, Cadre Technique, INS, Tel: +243 815 363 043/855 791 850, **Email:** [blhenm@yahoo.fr](mailto:blhenm@yahoo.fr);

Mr. Richard Nsita Nkenku, Sous Directeur, Direction General des Données et Accis, P O Box 8248m Kinshasa 1, Tel: +243 999 990 729/818 145 372, **Email:** [richardnkenku@yahoo.fr](mailto:richardnkenku@yahoo.fr);

Mr. D. Martin Widjilowu Ne Itchend Sam, Coordonnateur Provincial / PFCGI Nord-Kivu, Ministere Du Commerce Extérieur, Goma, Tel: +243 819977771 / +243 992905740, **Email:** [widjilowu@yahoo.fr](mailto:widjilowu@yahoo.fr);

**Rwanda**

Mr. James Tayebwa, Cross Border Trade Policy Specialist, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 788 636406, **Email:** [yebwa@yahoo.com](mailto:yebwa@yahoo.com); [jtayebwa@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:jtayebwa@mineacom.gov.rw);

Ms Doreen Mutumura. Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 78364 2285, **Email:** [dmutumura@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:dmutumura@mineacom.gov.rw);

Mr. Theogene Twahirwa, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 782 466 295, **Email:** [tteo104@gmail.com](mailto:tteo104@gmail.com); [ttwahirwa@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:ttwahirwa@mineacom.gov.rw);

Mr. Baptiste Ukwizagira, Statistician, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 788 666 097, **Email:** [jbukwizagire@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:jbukwizagire@mineacom.gov.rw);

Mr. Christian Twahirwa, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist SPIU, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 886 822 70, **Email:** [Ctwahirwa@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:Ctwahirwa@mineacom.gov.rw);

Ms Peace Basemera, Acting Director of Trade and Investment, Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 788 307 029, **Email:** [basemeraP2002@yahooo.com](mailto:basemeraP2002@yahooo.com);

Ms Doreen Ntawebasa Hategekimana, Junior Economist. Ministry of Trade, Industry, and East African Affairs, P O Box 73, Kigali, Tel: +250 786 976 902, **Email:** [dntwebasa@mineacom.gov.rw](mailto:dntwebasa@mineacom.gov.rw);

Mr. Vital Habinshuti, External Trade Statistician, NISR, P O Box 6139, Kigali, Tel: +250 888 628 30, **Email:** [vital.habinshuti@statistics.gov.rw](mailto:vital.habinshuti@statistics.gov.rw);

Mr. Eliphaz Niyodusenga, Price Statistician, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, P O Box 6139 Kigali, Tel: +250788969103, **Email:** [eliphaz.niyodusenga@statistics.gov.rw](mailto:eliphaz.niyodusenga@statistics.gov.rw);

Emile Nshimiyimana, Financial Account Portfolio Statistician, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, PO Box 6139 Kigali, **Tel:** +250783617353, **Email:** [emile.nshimiyimana@statistics.gov.rw](mailto:emile.nshimiyimana@statistics.gov.rw);

Mr. Tharcise Nzasingizimana, Trade and Services Statistics Team Leader, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, P O Box 6139 Kigali, Tel: +250 788 671 205, **Email:** [tharcisse.nzasingizimana@statistics.gov.rw](mailto:tharcisse.nzasingizimana@statistics.gov.rw);

Mr. Dominique Ntirushwamaboko, Senior Statistician, National Bank of Rwanda, BP 531 Kigali, Tel: +250 788 416 005, **Email:** [dntirushwamaboko@bnr.rw](mailto:dntirushwamaboko@bnr.rw); [dntirushwa@gmail.com](mailto:dntirushwa@gmail.com);

Mr. Wilberforce Nuwagira, Manager Balance of Payments Statistics, National Bank of Rwanda, Tel: +250 788 7373 57, **Email:** [wnuwagira@bnr.rw](mailto:wnuwagira@bnr.rw);

## **Uganda/Ouganda**

Mr. Steven Kamukama, Ministry of Trade, Industry & Cooperatives, P.O. Box 7103Kampala, Tel : +256 77254 846 , **Email :** [kamusteve@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kamusteve@yahoo.co.uk)

Mr. Emmanuel Ssemambo, Statistics Department, Bank Of Uganda, Plot 37/45 Kampala Road, P.O.Box 7120; Kampala, Tel: +256-414-232762, +256-414-258441 EXT: 2121, Mobile: +256-772/753-422193, Fax: +256-414-259336, **Email:** [ESsemambo@bou.or.ug](mailto:ESsemambo@bou.or.ug); [emmanuel.ssemambo@gmail.com](mailto:emmanuel.ssemambo@gmail.com); [emssemas@yahoo.com](mailto:emssemas@yahoo.com);

Mr. Dan Mugabo, Customs Officer, Commissioner Customs' Office, Uganda Revenue Authority, Tel: +;256 417 443 216 Mobile: +256 0713 730 761/0774 489 377, **Email:** [damugabo@ura.go.ug](mailto:damugabo@ura.go.ug);

Ms Aliziki Kauda, Senior Statistician, UBOS, P O Box 7186, Kampala, Tel:+256 772 483 403/711 706 064, **Email:** [aliziki.lubega@ubos.org](mailto:aliziki.lubega@ubos.org); [alizikikaudha@gmail.com](mailto:alizikikaudha@gmail.com);

Ms Emily Nsaba, Statistical Assistant, UBOS, P O Box 7186, Kampala, Tel: +256 755 065 949, Fax: +256 414 2377 553, **Email:** [emily.nsaba@gmail.com](mailto:emily.nsaba@gmail.com);

Mr. Christopher Wabwire, Statistician, UBOS, P O Box 7186, Kampala, 790 560822/772 301611, **Email:** [Christopher.wabwire@yahoo.com](mailto:Christopher.wabwire@yahoo.com); [Christopher.wabwire@ubos.org](mailto:Christopher.wabwire@ubos.org);

## **COMESA**

Mr. Thomas Barasa, Project Coordinator, **Email:** [TBarasa@comesa.int](mailto:TBarasa@comesa.int)

Mr. Anthony Walakira, Consultant, **Email:** [AWalakira@comesa.int](mailto:AWalakira@comesa.int)

Mr. Wilson Chizebuka, ADP Expert (Eurotrace), **Email:** [WChizebuka@comesa.int](mailto:WChizebuka@comesa.int);

Mr. Willis Osemo, Webmaster, **Email:** [WOsemo@comesa.int](mailto:WOsemo@comesa.int);

Mr. Mzee Kalambai, Accountant, **Email:** [MKalambai@comesa.int](mailto:MKalambai@comesa.int);

Ms Catherine Mwanza, Secretary, **Email:** [SCMwanza@comesa.int](mailto:SCMwanza@comesa.int);

## **European Union**

Ms Angelique Bitahaninkundi, Programme Officer, EU Delegation, Rwanda, **Email:** [Angelique.nitahaninkindi@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:Angelique.nitahaninkindi@eeas.europa.eu);

## **World Bank**

Mr. John Keyser, Senior Economist, World Bank, Lusaka, Tel: + 202 766 7079, **Email:** [jkeyser@worldbank.org](mailto:jkeyser@worldbank.org);

## **Interpreters**

Mr. Raymond Lumbu Jean Munyamakombe, Interpreter, Tel: +250 788 511 185, +254 701 524 137, **Email:** [mjray1200@yahoo.com](mailto:mjray1200@yahoo.com);

Mr. Pacific Guillaume Girimana, Interpreter, Tel: +250 788 304 597, **Email:** [Guillaumepacifique12@gmail.com](mailto:Guillaumepacifique12@gmail.com);

Mr. Dieudonne Bagendabanga, Interpreter, Tel: +250 788 540 161, **Email:** [Gensbag@yahoo.fr](mailto:Gensbag@yahoo.fr);

Ms Cleria Dushime, Intern Interpreter, Tel: +250 787 249 244, **Email:** [misscleri@gmail.com](mailto:misscleri@gmail.com);

## **Translator**

Mr. Aime Ndayitaba, Translator, Tel: +250 787 333 333, **Email:** [anavis@gmail.com](mailto:anavis@gmail.com);