



National content developers from 10 COMESA Member States join ASG-P, Amb. Kipyego Cheluget (center, second row) and Gender Division staff for a group photo at Chisamba, Zambia.

National Content Developers Trained on 50 Million Women Project

National content developers from 10 COMESA Member States last week trained on the use of the 50 Million African Women Speak platform in Chisamba, Zambia.

The 8-10 May training workshop was designed to introduce the 50 Million African Women Speak Project and platform to the national content developers and give them a comprehensive understanding of its operations, goals and objectives.

In addition, the workshop sought to explain the features of the 50MAWS platform and train the national content developers on how to use the platform as the primary content managers, guide them on content needs and share content generation and publishing guidelines.

Speaking at the official opening of the workshop, COMESA Assistant Secretary General, Programmes, Amb. Kipyego

Cheluget said existing and potential women entrepreneurs continue to face gender-specific barriers such as limited access to information and networking opportunities, lower levels of education and business training, which the platform would help to address.

He challenged the content developers drawn from Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Malawi, Seychelles, Sudan, Zimbabwe and Zambia to ensure they create useful and up to date content if the platform is to be a success.

“You stand as the vanguards of one of the most critical interventions devised in the last two decades for the empowerment of the African woman,” Amb. Cheluget said. “The success of this platform, however, is heavily tied to the quality of the content it will provide.”

A total of 17 national content developers will support the project at the COMESA Member State level by generating relevant content to meet the information needs of women entrepreneurs.

The 50 MAWS platform is a digital networking initiative which covers 38 countries from three regional economic communities namely; COMESA, East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS).

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COMESA Court Reaches Out to Lawyers in Uganda



“Let us sensitize and educate the people about our trade relationship with COMESA, now that you are part of us.”

From L-R: Hon. Amelia Kyambadde with Lady Justice Lombe Chibesakunda and Nyambura Mbatia launching the User's Manual

COMESA Court of Justice conducted a one day seminar targeting lawyers in Uganda on 9 May 2019, where its User's Manual; a simple guide on how to handle legal matters in the Court was launched.

The seminar was themed: **'Role of COMESA Court of Justice in Promoting, facilitating and Protecting Trade and Investments'**. This was the second publicity seminar to be conducted by the regional Court in Uganda with over 50 lawyers drawn from the public and private sector participating.

Uganda Minister of Trade and Industry Hon. Amelia Kyambadde opened the seminar.

The event was part of the COMESA Court's initiative to raise the awareness of key stakeholders, including the legal fraternity and the business community, to fully understand its operations. Henceforth, the stakeholders are

expected to use the Court as a dispute resolution forum for matters that touch on the application of the Treaty of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

In her statement, Hon Kyambadde noted that even though the Court has been in existence since the inception of COMESA, its services are underutilized, and therefore urged the legal fraternity to publicize it.

“COMESA Court plays a very important role in promoting, facilitating and protecting trade and investments in the COMESA region,” the Minister told the lawyers. “Let us sensitize and educate the people about our trade relationship with COMESA, now that you are part of us.”

She described COMESA as crucial market for Uganda's trade within the region especially in exports which she said keep increasing yearly.

The Judge President of the Court, Lady Justice Lombe Chibesakunda, briefed the participants on the activities that the Court was undertaking aimed at popularizing its operations within all Member States.

These include the new online evidence management system known as CaseLines, which the COMESA Court adopted early this year. CaseLines allows the creation and presentation of a fully digital bundle including multi-media evidence; collaboration tools for enhanced pre-trial preparation and secure role validated videoconferencing for virtual hearings. It enables judges and lawyers to work efficiently in a secure online environment from their offices.

Justice Chibesakunda said: “We realized that most COMESA residents do not know about the existence of the Court and the reason why it exists and that is why we are reaching out to key stakeholders.”



COMESA MASE Trains Financial Intelligence Analysts



Financial Intelligence Units (FIU) analysts at the 2nd Strategic Analysis Course

The COMESA Regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE) conducted a one-week training in Strategic Analysis for Financial Intelligence Units (FIU) analysts from selected Member States on the strategic use of information which is made available to them to solve crimes.

The training was the 2nd Strategic Analysis Course for the region and followed the introduction of Tactic and Strategic Analysis training delivered in 2015 and 2016 under the programme. The first batch of ten analysts were trained in Namibia in 2018 under COMESA MASE support.

Twelve more analysts drawn from six COMESA MASE programme countries participated in the training that took place in Lusaka, Zambia, from 30th April to 3rd May 2019. These included: Comoros, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Somalia and Zambia. This brings the total number of trained analysts to 22 in a space of ten months. Other countries that participated in the previous training were Mauritius, Seychelles and Tanzania.

The comprehensive Strategic Analysis Course is meant to equip its trainees on how they can connect the “missing dots” by using available and obtainable information. This includes

data that may be received from competent authorities and accessible from other databases. This can then be used to develop trends and patterns of activities and thereby aid in anti-money laundering and related policy formulation.

During the training, participants shared experiences on strategic analysis practices available in their various FIUs. The overall Regional MASE programme is funded by the European Union and is implemented by four Regional Organizations, namely Inter-Governmental Authority on Development

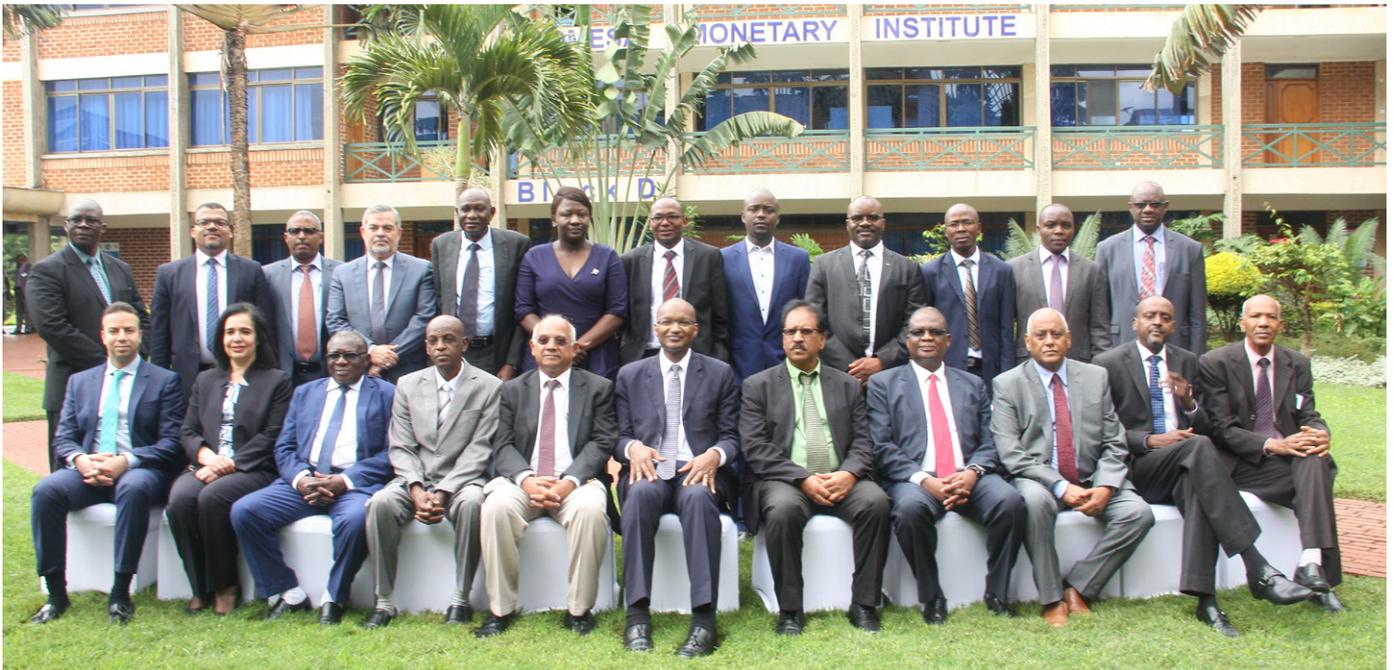
(IGAD), East African Community (EAC), Indian Ocean Community (IOC) and COMESA.

COMESA's main focus is on addressing economic effects of piracy thereby building the capacity to disrupt illicit financial flows through implementation of an anti-money laundering programme, currently covering 12 countries of the ESA-IO region and 11 of which are COMESA members. The MASE programme countries are: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Somalia, Tanzania and Zambia.



Mr Thomas Richard Hansen (training Consultant) interacting with the group

Monetary Institute Introduces Administrative and Budgetary Changes



Financial Intelligence Unit analysts pose for a group photo at the training held in Lusaka, Zambia.

The COMESA Monetary Institute has introduced changes in its administrative and budgetary matters to enhance the efficiency of the Institute in execution of its mandate. This follows the Extra-Ordinary meeting of the Bureau of the COMESA Committee of Governors of Central Banks in Nairobi, Kenya, on 26th April 2019.

The meeting was mainly focused on reviewing the CMI's draft Staff rules and the financial and procurement rules, whose implementation is expected to enhance independence of the Institute and to ensure continued improvement in the quality of its services and products.

The CMI, which is a semi- autonomous institution of COMESA does not have its own administrative and budgetary rules and applies those of the Secretariat. Despite the changes, the institute will continue to receive other necessary support from COMESA on areas which are necessary to enhance efficient flow of work.

The decision to change the rules was made by the Bureau of the Committee of Governors of Central Banks during its 39th Meeting in Djibouti in December 2018.

Speaking at the review meeting, COMESA Assistant Secretary General (Administration and Finance), Dr Dev Haman, described the new rules as a blue print that will enhance the efficiency of the Institute in execution of its mandate. He said they will strengthen monetary integration in the COMESA Regional Integration Agenda.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), Dr. Patrick Njoroge, who was the Chief Guest, underscored the importance of the introduction of flexible but effective rules in all areas to enhance the efficiency of the Institute and to ensure continued improvement in the quality of its services and products.

He commended the CMI for its work in capacity building and research since its inception in 2011 and affirmed his bank's support which includes continued hosting of the institute.

CMI has trained over 1000 staff of COMESA member Central Banks since it was established by conducting more than 50 workshops and trainings in addition to developing User's Guides. It has also published 42 country specific studies related with

macroeconomic management in member countries.

The Extra-Ordinary Bureau Meeting also discussed the sub-themes of the 2019 Governors' Symposium on the 'Role of Central banks in Advancing Continental and tripartite Free Trade Area'.

Speaking at the meeting, the Head of Research Department of Central Bank of Djibouti Mr. Mohammed Robert appreciated the successful conclusion of the work of the Expert Group on the Refinement of the COMESA Macroeconomic Convergence Criteria and the Road Map to Monetary Union. He said this will enhance monetary integration in the region.

The meeting was attended by Governors and experts of the Bureau of the COMESA Committee of Governors of Central Banks from: Burundi, Djibouti, Egypt, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

The COMESA Secretariat, COMESA Monetary Institute, COMESA Clearing House and The Regional Association of Energy Regulators for Eastern and Southern Africa (RAERESA) also attended the meeting. Central Bank of Kenya participated as an observer.



COMESA Benchmarks Estonia For Digital Solutions to Intra regional Trade



According to Rundu, COMESA with its 21 member States is one of the most influential regional organizations in Africa.

“COMESA representatives have learned about e-Estonia’s success story and have demonstrated interest in intensifying cooperation with Estonia on the state level,” he said. “COMESA’s interest in signing a memorandum on digital cooperation with Estonia would create a good platform and opportunities for our entrepreneurs to enter a market of 21 countries, the entering of which one by one is definitely time-consuming and more difficult.”

Rundu expressed Estonia’s interest in continuing cooperation with COMESA and its readiness to negotiate a memorandum on digital cooperation.

“We have demonstrated our solutions on different EU borders to COMESA, and we consider their interest serious,” said Madis Sassiad, a board member of GoSwift, which is a digital forerunner in traffic management for border crossing points.

“We hope to move forward quickly with this agreement on a smart border solution. It is positive that the state strongly supports us in this process and is lending us a helping hand.”

(Source/ERR News, Estonia)

COMESA is benchmarking with European countries in the implementation of its digital free trade area initiative. A team from the Information Technology division at the COMESA Secretariat is visiting European countries among them Estonia to study their digital solutions that can apply in the regional bloc.

COMESA is especially keen on the ‘smart border’ technologies that facilitate trade by eliminating manual processes which has been an impediment to regional trade. Smart border solutions are part of COMESA’s large-scale project for a digital free trade agreement (digital FTA) being carried out through EU

funding.

Undersecretary for Economic and Development Affairs of Estonia Mr. Andres Rundu received the COMESA team led by the Director of Information Technology Ms Lanka Dorby on Friday in Tallinn city.

“There are ample opportunities for cooperation in that field, from which Estonian businesses and African countries alike stand to benefit,” Mr Rundu said noting that with growing economies and populations such as COMESA, there is an increasing desire to start using digital solutions.

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