

September 2015



AFRITAC WEST 2 NEWS



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HIGHLIGHTS

Outreach missions to Sierra Leone and Nigeria

The Center Coordinator and the Advisors for Revenue and PFM visited Sierra Leone and Nigeria respectively in September to engage with the authorities.

Peer-to-Peer Seminar on Program Based Budgeting for Nigeria and Ghana

AFW2 facilitated a seminar on PBB for officials from the Ministry of Finance, Ghana and the Budget Office of the Federation, Nigeria from July 2- 3.

RTACs retreat in Washington D.C.

AFW2 staff participated in a retreat for RTACs organized by the Fund's Institute for Capacity Development (ICD) in Washington D.C. from September 14-16.



RTAC Coordinators with the Director of ICD, Ms. Sharmini Coorey (Center)

FREE online courses

The following courses offered by ICD will be commencing in October: Financial Programming 2, Debt Sustainability Analysis and Macroeconomic Forecasting.

AFW2 Missions

Revenue Administration

Ghana: *August 3-14*

An AFW2 TA mission visited the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) with the purpose of strengthening tax compliance through the development of excise procedures manual. A follow up mission will be held in the third quarter of the fiscal year.

August 24-28

AFW2 provided TA to strengthen project governance and management for the implementation of the new GRA strategic plan for 2015-2017.

August 31-11

Another TA mission reviewed progress against the GRA Strategic Plan 2015-2017 and assisted the GRA to prepare operational plans for 2016.

Liberia: *July 27-August*

An AFW2 mission was carried out remotely to review the customs operational manual, update standard operating procedures and fact sheets for traders and prepare job profiles for custom officers.

Nigeria: *July 20-31*

An FAD led mission reviewed both tax and customs operations for the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Nigeria Customs Service (NCS). The mission also provided an opportunity for AFW2 to establish contacts with the two administrations who presented TA needs in a number of areas.

July 27- August 7

Another mission provided training to FIRS and NCS on compliance risk management and data analytics.

Sierra Leone: *August 30-September 2*

The Revenue Advisor participated in an outreach mission to Sierra Leone. The objective of the mission was to re-assess the capacity building needs of the country in a post-Ebola environment.

The Gambia: *August 11-21*

An AFW2 mission reviewed the Gambian Revenue Authority's (GRA) first half year performance against their Strategic Plan 2015-2019 and also helped to strengthen performance monitoring and evaluation.

August 17-28

AFW2 trained GRA tax auditors from the Gambia Revenue Authority (GRA) on Computer Assisted Audit Techniques (CAAT) to improve efficiency and audit yield.



The CAAT training in Banjul, August 2015

The Revenue Administration and Fiscal Information Toolkit (RA-FIT): The advisor assisted some of the member countries in finalizing their RA-FIT reports and to start using RA-FIT information for their performance measurement and reporting.

Public Finance Management

Ghana and Nigeria: July 2-3

AFW2 facilitated a peer-to-peer exchange between Ghana and Nigeria on Program-Based Budgeting (PBB) to provide training as well as to allow the countries share their experiences. Please see the Workshops section of this newsletter for more.

Ghana: July 6-17

AFW2 undertook the second and final part of the TA for the completion of the Ghana's PFM reform strategy. The mission worked with the authorities to transform the Result Framework matrix of the Strategy into a credible action plan with defined priorities and timelines as well to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation framework.

August 10-21

AFW2 provided TA on strengthening the macro-fiscal planning process. Among other things, the mission reviewed the existing process of formulating the medium term fiscal framework and proposed a template for the introduction of a Fiscal Policy Document to guide the budget preparation process.

Nigeria: September 7-10



AFW2 Experts with officials of Kaduna State, Nigeria

In response to a request from the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), an AFW2 technical assistance mission visited Kaduna, to assist the State authorities with reviewing and updating the reform

strategy and work plan for the implementation of a TSA and cash management framework; and to provide initial guidance on the introduction of a new budget methodology based on Zero-Based-Budgeting.

August 31-September 7

AFW2 provided TA to the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation to complete the design of an effective cash management framework, develop capacity for cash flow forecasting, and prepare a technical assistance (TA) plan to provide further support to reform implementation, including extension of the TSA coverage.

Financial Supervision

Ghana: July 6-17

AFW2 undertook a TA mission to help the Bank of Ghana (BoG) understand the requirements of a risk-focused offsite monitoring framework; and guide authorities through its practical implementation. A follow-up mission was conducted remotely in September.

The Gambia: July 27- August 15

A technical assistance (TA) mission visited to assist the authorities in developing an understanding of the requirements of the IFRS accounting standards. This was the first of two missions with the second mission currently in progress.



Participants from the Central Bank of The Gambia at the IFRS training in Banjul.

Real Sector Statistics

Liberia: *June 1-September 30*

There has been an ongoing remote mission during this period to improve the quality of the GDP estimates for the years 2009-2012

June 22 -July 3 & July 27-August 31

Two AFW2 TA missions visited the Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) to assist the authorities to improve the quality of the national accounts for both production and expenditure

June 22- July 3

AFW2 provided TA on Consumer Price Index (CPI) to the LISGIS. This TA mission focused on assessing the current situation, reviewing the Household Expenditure and Income Survey (HIES) data, and developing a work plan to guide the authorities.

Sierra Leone: *July 13-17*

The AFW2 Statistics Advisor undertook an introductory mission to Sierra Leone to assess the status of the annual national accounts (ANA) sources and methods and identify areas of improvement based on previous mission recommendations. The mission also determined the status of the development of the quarterly national accounts (QNA).

The Gambia: *August 26- September 23*

An AFW2 mission was undertaken to review the data processing procedures for the Economic Survey which will be used to rebase the annual national accounts.

Outreach Missions

Sierra Leone: *August 30-September 2*

The Center Coordinator of AFW2, and the Resident Advisor for Revenue, visited Freetown, Sierra Leone to reengage the authorities post Ebola. The mission met with key officials from the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, the National Revenue Authority and the Statistics Office and discussed the emerging capacity development needs of the country.

Nigeria: *September 3-8*



The AFW2 mission with Kaduna State Officials

The Center Coordinator (CC) joined a PFM mission to Nigeria which met with officials from the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation, Abuja and the Kaduna State Government. The CC used the opportunity to interact with the officials on the operations of the Center.

AFW2 SEMINARS

Peer-to-Peer Seminar on Program Based Budgeting (PBB) for Ghana and Nigeria, July 2-3

In response to a request from the Director of the Budget Office of Nigeria, the PFM Advisor for AFW2 facilitated a training and peer-to-peer seminar on Program Based Budgeting for Ghana and Nigeria. The Seminar was attended by seventeen participants drawn from the Budget Division of the Ministry of Finance, Ghana and the Budget Office of the Federation, Nigeria.

The main aim of the Seminar was to facilitate an exchange of experience between the Ministry of Finance of Ghana and the Budget Office of Nigeria on the implementation of PBB. It was also expected that this first meeting will be the start of a closer cooperation between the two agencies. While Nigeria is just in the process of introducing PBB, Ghana has already acquired some experience in program design and the transition from Activity-Based Budgeting to PBB. Ghana has also introduced a budget preparation system that will support PBB.

The seminar also reviewed the parameters affecting the choice of a PBB model as well as the related issues and challenges. The integration of performance management with PBB was studied along with issues related to the sequencing of the reform implementation. The main objectives of the seminar were met through an intensive discussion of issues by both countries.

Overall, the participants were very satisfied with the seminar. Here is a sample of the feedback received:

“The seminar was well packaged, the sessions were informative and the lessons learnt could not be missed. I subscribe to the concept of Peer-to-Peer learning. It is a rather effective way of transferring knowledge and sharing experiences”

“The workshop is a very good one and more of such meetings should be encouraged, and if possible, enlarged in terms of the number of countries. However the duration should be extended.”

2015 RTACS Retreat



AFW2 Staff with Ms. Katarzyna Kardas (far right), the TA officer for AFW2 at ICD

The Center Coordinator, the Special Projects Officer and the Office Manager of AFW2 participated in a retreat for all Regional Technical Assistance Centers (RTACs) organized by the IMF's Institute for Capacity Development (ICD) in Washington D.C. from September 14-16. The retreat, which launched the RTACs Handbook, also discussed various issues including the upcoming Fund-wide Results Based Management (RBM) framework, innovations to enhance the effectiveness of TA delivery, as well as other administrative and operational procedures for RTACs.

As a relatively new Center, this was the first ICD retreat that AFW2 attended and it was a very useful platform to share and learn from the experiences of the older RTACs.

AFW2 Upcoming TA Missions

Revenue Administration

Ghana: *October 16-24*

There will be a follow-up mission to develop a project management framework for GRA.

Liberia: *September 28-October 6*

The Advisor will participate in an FAD-led TTF VAT Implementation, Planning and Revenue Diagnostic mission.

November 25-December 5

An FAD-led Customs Diagnostics mission will review the Customs reforms.

Sierra Leone: *September 28-October 8*

AFW2 will facilitate the attachment of officials from the National Revenue Authority (NRA) to the Tanzania Revenue Authority on developing an effective monitoring research and planning framework.

October 12-23

An AFW2 mission will train tax auditors from the NRA of Sierra Leone on Computer Assisted Audit Techniques (CAAT) to improve efficiency and audit yield. During the same period another mission will assist the authorities with improving taxpayer services.

Regional Workshop: *November 16 -20*

A regional workshop on improving VAT compliance management for AFW2 countries will be hosted in Accra.

Public Financial Management

Cabo Verde: *dates to be confirmed*

A mission will take place for the finalization of the PBB Manual.

Financial Supervision

Ghana: *November 30 –December 11*

There will be a follow-up TA mission on risk-focused offsite monitoring framework for BoG.

Nigeria: *December 3-14*

In preparation for a mission to guide the authorities on building an Early Warning System (EWS) for Systemic Risks in the financial sector, there will be a two-week desk review/remote guidance to the Central Bank of Nigeria.

The Gambia: *September 28 – October 7*

A follow up mission on the IFRS accounting standards will take place.

Real Sector Statistics

Missions on national accounts have been scheduled for:

Ghana: *November 30-December 11*

Liberia: *November 16-20*

Nigeria: *October 19 -23*

The Gambia: *October 14-28*

Free online courses

The IMF's Institute for Capacity Development (ICD) is pleased to announce the offering of the following courses online for government officials:

Financial Programming and Policies Part 2 Program Design (FPP.2x) *October 2-November 25:*
<http://imf.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Catalog/Courses/OL/FPP2x/1504/OLFPP-2x15-04>

Register by October 2.

Debt Sustainability Analysis *October 7-November 18*

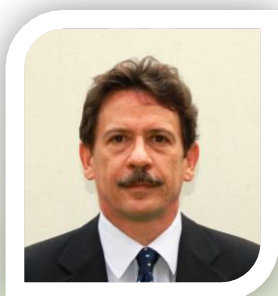
<http://imf.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Catalog/Courses/OL/DSAx/15103/OLDSAx15-103>

Register by October 2.

Macroeconomic Forecasting *October 21- December 15*
<http://imf.smartcatalogiq.com/en/current/Catalog/Courses/OL/MFx/15104/OLMFx15-104>

Register by October 9.

AFW2 welcomes Mr. Ersek



Mr. Zsolt Ersek assumed duty at the Center on September 14 as the MONOPS Adviser. He succeeds Mr. Marko Skreb who left the Center in June 2015. For more on Mr. Ersek, please visit: <http://www.afritacwest2.org/>

AFRITAC West 2 Staff

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Revenue Administration	Faith Mazani
Public Financial Management	Jean-Marc Lepain
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Financial Supervision and Regulation	Cheryl Bruce
Real Sector Statistics	Donna Grerman
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Admin/IT Officer	Selase Kofi Dusi
Administrative Assistant	Maria Adam
Receptionist/Admin Assistant	Araba M. Blankson
Driver	Peter Nii Laryea

AFW2 Member countries



Cabo Verde



Ghana



Liberia



Nigeria



Sierra Leone



The Gambia

Donors



Recently Completed Technical Assistance (TA) reports

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION		
Title of Report	Country	Date sent to Authorities
LTO Training on Telecommunication Audit	Ghana	February 2015
Developing management reports for LRA	Liberia	February 2015
Developing a Tax Payers Assistance Program and Reviewing the Strategic Plan for GRA	Gambia	March 2015
Developing Compliance Enforcement Strategy and Risk Management Framework	Gambia	March 2015
Selected Issues in Revenue Administration: Implementation of the 2015–2017 Strategic Plan and VAT and Excise Compliance and Administration	Ghana	March 2015
LTO Training on Telecommunication Audits 2	Ghana	June 2015
Post Clearance Audit (PCA) Training for GRA	Ghana	June 2015
Post Clearance Audit (PCA) Training for The Gambia	Gambia	August 2015
Operational Planning and Performance Management	Ghana	In progress
Remote Mission on Customs Operational Manuals	Liberia	In progress
PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT		
Title of Report	Country	Date sent to Authorities
Review of Hyperion Systems set up and Configuration	Ghana	April 2015
MONETARY POLICY AND PAYMENT SYSTEMS		
Title of Report	Country	Date sent to Authorities
Next steps in the implementation of Monetary Policy	Gambia	July 2015
FINANCIAL SUPERVISION		
Title of Report	Country	Date sent to Authorities
Enhancing Banking Supervision III	Gambia	June 2015
Enhancing off-site Supervision	Ghana	September 2015
REAL SECTOR STATISTICS		
Title of Report	Country	Date sent to Authorities
Report on Consumer Price Inflation mission	Ghana	March 2015
Report on National Accounts mission	Nigeria	April 2015
Report on National Accounts mission	Gambia	April 2015
Report on Quarterly National Annual Missions	Ghana	July 2015
Report on National Accounts Mission	Sierra Leone	August 2015
Report on Consumer Price Inflation Mission	Liberia	August 2015
Report on National Accounts Mission	Cabo Verde	September 2015