CONCEPT NOTE

THE WEST AFRICAN TAX ADMINISTRATION FORUM (WATAF) WITH THE SUPPORT OF HIS MAJESTY REVENUE AND CUSTOMS (HMRC) ORGANISES A 3-DAY TRAINING COURSE FOR TAX OFFICIALS IN ECOWAS MEMBER STATES ON GEOSPATIAL ANALYTICS FOR TAX PURPOSES.

(May 23 – 25, 2023)

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INTRODUCTION

The West African Tax Administration Forum (WATAF) is a regional body consisting of 15 member countries in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). WATAF's mission is to facilitate and promote cooperation and collaboration among tax administrations in West Africa, with the aim of improving tax administration and revenue generation in the region. One of the key challenges facing tax administrations in West Africa is the low level of compliance among taxpayers. This can be attributed, in part, to the lack of accurate and reliable data on taxpayers and their activities.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective is to make participant aware and build knowledge on what is required in order to use geo-spatial analysis to help with tax compliance. The training course will provide tax officials with an understanding of how geospatial analytics can be used to improve tax administration, enhance compliance, and increase revenue collection.

DATE AND VENUE

The training workshop is scheduled for an in-person appearance in Accra, Ghana, from 23nd to 25th May 2023.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

Tax experts will be drawn from various tax administration departments, including Geographic Information System (GIS), audit, and enforcement departments in WATAF Member States. It is envisioned to have a total number of forty-five (45) to sixty (60) participants in attendance. At least three (3) tax officials from each of the fifteen (15) Tax Administrations of WATAF Member States and representatives from relevant parastatals will be expected.

The session will be a mixture of technical and strategic compliance thinking. A mix of participants in these areas will work well. Participants may:
   i.   Be tax officials handling intelligence and data analysis functions;
   ii. Tax Inspectors who are involved in tax policy design and implementation.
   iii. Others, interested in understanding the dynamics of the operation of a modern tax administration system.

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EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Knowing the size and distribution of the tax base will enable revenue officials to understand the amount of revenue that should be collected in particular areas within their jurisdiction. This will allow revenue officials to identify issues of compliance and enable them to ensure the enforcement of tax collection from individuals and businesses alike. The session will cover examples from the UK as well as selected countries in Africa, and discuss with participant what is required in order to use geo-spatial analysis or geographical data to assess tax compliance. Examples will be shared where tax data has been used to identify hidden economy businesses.

In a nutshell, at the end of the training course, participants will:
- o Understand the concept and applications of geospatial analytics for tax purposes.
- o Be able to map taxpayers and their activities, subject to availability of data.
- o Be able to use geospatial analytics to enhance tax compliance and enforcement, if such data are available.
- o Be able to share experiences and best practices with other tax officials in the region.

TRAINING CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

A. Participant will undergo a self-learning session online before the in-person sessions.
- a. Geospatial techniques [HMRC will share some information for participants to learn]
- b. Introduction to Python – links to be provided.
- c. Introduction to Power BI - links to be provided.
- d. Introduction to R (**optional**) - links to be provided.
- e. HMRC will provide further information on software for participant to download and prepare ahead of the in-person session.

B. In-person Sessions/workshop
- • Recap on the self-learning materials.
- • Practical session on geospatial analysis using Python.
- • Power BI and geo-spatial analysis tools.
- • Practical session of geo-spatial analysis using Power BI.
- • Discuss data sources required to apply geo-spatial analysis in the tax administration.
- • Discuss examples of how geo-spatial analysis has helped in tax administration.
- • Discuss how participant will apply the learning in their tax administration.

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CONCLUSION:

The West African Tax Administration Forum (WATAF) Training Course on Geospatial Analytics for Tax Purposes is a timely and necessary initiative that will provide tax officials in ECOWAS member states with the knowledge and skills necessary to improve tax administration and revenue generation in the region. The training course will equip participants with cutting-edge tools and techniques for tax compliance and enforcement, and facilitate cross-border collaboration among tax administrations in the region.

CONTACT

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ANNEX: TIMETABLE

Day 1: Tuesday, May 23, 2023 - Time: 9:00 - 14:00 GMT

Time   /   Activity

8:30 - 10:30 Opening Ceremony

- o *Registration*
- o *Remarks and introductions:*
  1. *ES WATAF*   *- Mr. Babatunde Oladapo*
  2. *Representative of the HMRC*   *- Lead Facilitator*
  3. *CG GRA*   *- Rev. Dr. Ammishaddai Owusu-Amoah*
- o *Group Photograph*

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 - 12:00 Recap on the self-learning materials

12:00 - 1:00 Set up for the practical session

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch Break

2:00 - 3:30 Practical session on geospatial analysis using Python

3:30 - 3:45 Tea Break/Dinner

3:45 - 4:45 Practical session on geospatial analysis using Python – Cont.

Day 2: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 - Time: 9:00 - 14:00 GMT

9:00 - 11:00 Power BI and geo-spatial analysis tools.

11:00 - 11:30 Tea break

11:30 - 1:00 intelligence for revenue administration using geo spatial analysis

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch break

2:00 - 4:00 Practical session of geo-spatial analysis using Power BI

4:00 - 4:15 Tea Break to closing

Day 3: Thursday, May 25, 2023 - Time: 9:00 - 14:00 GMT

9:00 - 11:00 Discuss data sources required to apply geo-spatial analysis in the tax administration

11:00 - 11:30 Tea break

11:30 - 1:00 Discuss examples of how geo-spatial analysis has helped in tax administration.

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch break

2:00 - 4:00 Discuss session on how participant will apply the learning in their tax administration

4:00 - 4:30 Closing Remarks

1. *Participants*   *- Representative*
2. *ES WATAF*   *- Mr. Babatunde Oladapo*
3. *Representative of the HMRC*   *- Lead Facilitator*
4. *CG GRA*   *- Rev. Dr. Ammishaddai Owusu-Amoah*

o *Presentation of Certificate*

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