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Q1: Respondent details

Name	Elizabeth Mwangi
Organization	Trade Mark East Africa
Email Address	elizabeth.mwangi@trademarkea.com
Phone Number	+254731

Q2: Country or Customs territory

KENYA

Q3: Organization

NGO

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Q4: Title of case story

Trade Certificates at a Press of a Button: Automation of the Application and Issuance of Certificates of Origin in Kenya by the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI)

Q5: Case story focus

E-commerce development and efforts to bridge the "digital divide".

Q6: Case story abstract

The Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KNCCI) manages the application and issuance of Ordinary Certificates of Origin in Kenya. Kenya is mainly an agricultural country and most of the applicants are exporters from the agricultural sector. Before automation users were subjected to a manual process which had to be completed either at the country's capital Nairobi and or the port city of Mombasa since the process was centralised. Thus, gaining a certificate of origin required travel (as most users undertake business away from the two locations) which meant additional trade costs, loop holes for corruption and essentially increasing barrier to trade. The process and procedure brought with it additional costs that was hitting hard the already dwindling margins of the exporters in the agricultural sector mainly. Automated systems allow users to apply and complete the procedure, from the comfort of their offices in any part of the world. This has resulted in significant reductions in time and costs associated with the process. The process has reduced the application and issuance time by up to 86% and reduced direct trade cost by up to 75%. The system is online, linked to commercial banks for automated payment services and with facilities for mobile payment services.

Q7: Who provided funding?

Bilateral donor

Q8: Project/Programme type

Single country

Q9: Your text case story

Respondent skipped this question

Q10: Lessons learnt

- a. The KNCCI project was inclusive and consultative with every milestone in the delivery of the project being stakeholder-driven rather than donor-driven. Implementing a project that is inclusive and consultative with all stakeholders takes a lot of planning but when effectively done, the impact on the project is eased in change management – i.e. managing resistance to change, increase in ownership and buy-in, guarantee of the required support to make the project successful and above all, implementation of the project within the stipulate time and budgets, and attaining of the targeted results within specific timelines.
- b. The KNCCI project used a system's approach in its implementation i.e. the entire institution was considered in its entirety in terms of the service they offer to their stakeholder, the vision and mission and how they carry out their operations. This makes the system that was delivered for KNCCI fit within the organizational structure and therefore not detached and perceived as alien to the organization operations. This will guarantee sustainability of the system.
- c. The implementation of the system was a steep learning curve for KNCCI. The organization was transitioning from a manual environment to an automated environment and at the same time learning how to manage an ICT project of this magnitude. During automation of systems like in this case, an organization quickly learns how to adapt to its changing environment through a technology culture where the organization becomes customer-centric and focuses on how to improve service delivery to stakeholders.
- d. Reengineering the process and procedures with ICT is not only a matter of system development and commissioning of systems. In essence it is influencing organizational change by making the organization relook and re-think who they are from the perspective of their stakeholders (members and customers). Through this project and from the vision it created within the organization, the KNCCI for the first time held a national consultative forum where all regional membership associations and branches met jointly with the national executives and secretariat to understand the operations of the new mode of operating. This experience plus the use of the new system has created confidence within the organization and in government. Such confidence has now made KNCCI be bold to start requesting that they be given rights to manage other preferential certificates of origin.
- e. Systems can transform organization from inward looking to outward looking; this is the essence of a learning organization. TMEA's experience in the implementation of the KNCCI solution has been seeing it transform itself to a learning organization; this is where continuous improvement becomes a pillar on the organization i.e. it being driven by results and focus to achieve goals and targets. The impact of the TMEA funded project has been through inculcating a culture of monitoring and evaluating project implementation, results and impact of activities and projects.
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