

## ***Frequently Asked Question***

Best practices require that a Single Window System is managed centrally by an independent corporate entity, to enable appropriate Government Agencies and Authorities to receive and access information relevant for their purposes. In Kenya, the Government established the **Kenya Trade Network Agency (KENTRADE)** in January 2011 to implement, operationalize and manage the Kenya National Electronic Single Window System (Kenya TradeNet System) and to facilitate international trade. Kenya TradeNet is an online Government to Business (G2B) trading platform for electronic trade that integrates public and private sectors trading transactions. It implements the concept of “one-stop shop”, paperless trade thus positioning Kenya as the leading nation in the East Africa Region (EAC) to embrace comprehensive electronic trade transactions.

The implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System commenced in 2012 and the System went live on October 30, 2013. To date KENTRADE has successfully implemented 18 modules and their functionalities and all key Partner Government Agencies (PGA's) involved in the issuance of import and export trade related documentation have their process automated via the Kenya TradeNet System?

KENTRADE's Acting CEO Mr. **Amos Wangora** responds to some of the Frequently Asked Questions on the implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System

### **Question: What is a Single Window System and is it the same as the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*Answer: Single Window System is basically a trade facilitation tool that enables parties involved in international trade to submit regulatory import and export related documentation to lodge their documents through a Single platform hence the name Single Window System. Kenya TradeNet System is a trade mark name for the Single Window System in Kenya.*

### **Q: How does the Kenya TradeNet System facilitate trade in Kenya?**

*A: The Kenya TradeNet System facilitates trade by expediting and simplifying information flows between traders and the Government Agencies in order to bring meaningful gains to all parties involved in cross border trade. The objective of the System is to facilitate International trade in Kenya by reducing delays and lowering costs associated with clearance of goods at the Kenyan borders, while maintaining the requisite controls and collection of levies, fees, duties and taxes, where applicable, on imports or exports.*

### **Q: Please compare the current scenario with the previous one before the implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: Prior to implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System, the clearing System for cargo at various border points were facing numerous challenges that compromised the country's ability to maximize benefits that are accrued with efficient Systems. For example, the documentation procedures associated with international trade were largely manual, resource intensive and expensive. Secondly, the traders had to deal separately with multiple government agencies which some had no electronic Systems. Thirdly, the usual inefficiency of trade documentation processes created perennial problems of delays in clearance of goods at the Kenyan ports on the Trading community which resulted in high transaction costs.*

*With stakeholders now using the Kenya TradeNet System, the cargo documentation is now transmitted electronically; it is submitted only once and the same is transmitted to the relevant Government Agencies. All key players are integrated/interfaced through the Kenya TradeNet System platform through which they can complete their procedures for the movement of goods in a simplified framework at minimum time and cost without physically going to various Government Agency offices*

**Q: Who is eligible to log into and use the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: All parties involved in the import and export (international trade) are eligible to use the Kenya TradeNet System portal. These include Partner Government Agencies, Customs Agents, Banks, Insurance, Consolidators, Container Freight Station, Ground Handling Agents, Shipping Agent, Exporter/Importer and Courier Service. All the above can apply for registration to use the Kenya TradeNet System and they will get their individual accounts credentials depending on the activities they authorized to perform.*

**Q: How can a trader get access to the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: Trader can get access to the Kenya TradeNet System through the KenTrade's website ([www.KenTrade.go.ke](http://www.KenTrade.go.ke)). There are links provided at the bottom of the Agency's website's homepage, which can be accessed by clicking on the TradeNet portal.*

**Q: As a trader can I register to use the Kenya TradeNet System from my mobile phone or tablet?**

*A: Yes, a trader can register from a smart phone or a tablet as long as there is sufficient internet connectivity.*

**Q: If I do not complete the registration process, can I continue later or do I have to restart from the beginning?**

*A: To register successfully, a trader has to start and complete the registration process; this is because the registration process is short and detailed.*

**Q: How is Personal Identification Number (PIN) activated in the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: There are two important steps in activating PIN in the Kenya TradeNet System. **PIN Activation** and **PIN Opting in**. PIN Activation is done after confirmation of the PINs existence from Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) itax System by KENTRADE Staff. This means that the relevant PIN has been created in Kenya TradeNet System (Exists).*

*However, for one to be able to transact business through the System the PIN has to be opted in. **PIN Opting in** is done by the relevant officers in the various Partner Government Agencies (PGA). This means that the PIN has been authorized by the PGA to transact business with the PGA.*

*Please note that the following PGAs have authorized KenTrade staff to opt in PINs for importers/exporters on their behalf: Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Department of Veterinary Services (DVS) and Kenya Dairy Board (KDB). However, for the Clearing and Forwarding Agents (C&F), PIN opting in is done by KRA staff.*

**Q: Kindly detail the services currently available through the Kenya TradeNet System? Which documents does the System process?**

*A: The services that are available are **Submission, Processing, Payments** and **Approval** of cargo clearance documents electronically. The modules available include:*

- *Unique Consignment Reference(UCR)*
- *Impending Arrival Report (IAR)*
- *Bay Plan (BAPLIE)*
- *Manifest Sea*
- *Air Manifest*
- *Import Declaration Form (IDF)*
- *Dynamic Risk Management*
- *Security Bonds*
- *Exemptions*
- *Payments records*

- Availability of attachments
- Cargo Release dash board
- Reports

The Import and Export Permits are issued by the following Partner Government Agencies (PGAs):

- Kenya Revenue Authority
- Kenya Bureau of Standards
- Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services
- Pharmacy and Poisons Board
- Port Health,
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Authority - Horticultural Crops Directorate
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Authority -Sugar Directorate
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Authority -Coffee Directorate
- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Authority -Tea Directorate
- Department of Veterinary Services
- Kenya Dairy Board
- Radiation Protection Board
- Pest Control and Produce Board
- National Biosafety Authority
- Nursing Council of Kenya
- Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists Board

**Q: Are there challenges experienced by stakeholders since the cut - off and if so, how have they been addressed?**

*A: There has been impressive uptake in the usage of the Kenya TradeNet System since the July 1, 2015 cut – off date. The System has been integrated with several PGAs Systems. While it is not unusual for Information Technology Systems to have challenges, the technical teams are constantly and closely monitoring the System as a mitigation measure but also addressing challenges that may arise.*

**Q: The National Treasury issued a public notice that effective July 1, 2015 all imports and exports related document are to be processed through the Kenya TradeNet System. What does this mean and what are traders doing differently?**

*A: The public notice was to notify Kenya TradeNet System users of the modules that had been completed and were operational. This essentially meant that from July 1, 2015 traders processing documents from Partner Government Agencies (PGAs) were able to;*

- Submit all cargo clearance related documents electronically through the Kenya TradeNet System for processing and approval by various Government Agencies
- Make electronic payments through the Kenya TradeNet System
- Receive approved documents electronically through the Kenya TradeNet System

**Q: What about payments? How are these done through the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: Registered traders/Clearing Agents can log into Kenya TradeNet System portal to lodge application for permits/IDF and generate an e-slip. There are clear steps on how to generate e-slips through the TradeNet System which then allows the trader to make payments over-the-bank counter or via a mobile platform in case of IDFs.*

**Q: Do Traders still need to go through brokers to enable trade related documents to be processed?**

*A: The Kenya TradeNet System allows traders to lodge their own documents (Permits and IDFs). However, the trader may choose to nominate a Clearing and Forwarding Agent to lodge documents on their behalf.*

*Traders are however urged to be cautious only to use Clearing and Forwarding Agents registered by Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) as Customs Agents.*

**Q: In which banks can one pay for e-slips generated via Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: Currently traders can make the payments for e-slips through; National Bank, I &M, Cooperative bank, Kenya Commercial Bank, Standard Chartered bank, Citi bank and Bank of Africa. The rest of the banks are piloting on the System. This service will progressively be available at other banks once they are comfortable in using the Kenya TradeNet System.*

**Q: In terms of revenue collection, how efficient has the System been?**

*A: The System has integrated with the Kenya Revenue Authority i-Tax System to facilitate electronic payments for applications made through the Kenya TradeNet System which has now facilitated a faster and more efficient payment process for the Trade community.*

**Q: Is the Kenya TradeNet System replacing the Systems being used by other Partner Government Agencies (PGAs) e.g. SIMBA System or will it be facilitating their interaction? If facilitating their integration does it mean that the PGAs will still have active independent online systems?**

*A: No. the Kenya TradeNet System will not to replace any of the Partner Government Agencies Systems. The Kenya TradeNet System is an interface between the business community and the Government Systems which will be working at the back end. However, the business community will only interact with Kenya TradeNet System.*

**Q: What type of training is conducted for the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: The Kenya TradeNet System trainings are conducted based on the stakeholders need and modules that are available on the Kenya TradeNet System. The training include: Traders Module (Unique Consignment Reference Number, Import Declaration Form, Consignment Document, Master document, Payments) Port Module; Declaration Submission Module; Partner Government Agency Module.*

**Q: Do you have stop gap measure should the Kenya TradeNet System crash?**

*A: KenTrade has ensured that adequate redundancies have been provided to ensure uptime for the System with increased transaction load. There are multiple infrastructure equipment for each service (Database, Application, Web etc). Our highly skilled and experienced technology implementation partner (CrimsonLogic) was also instrumental in adequately sizing the Infrastructure to ensure that the System does not crash with heavy transaction load. Additionally, the System's performance has been tested and the System has been in use for almost 2 years and has handled increasing load gracefully.*

**Q: How can traders be sure that hackers will not interfere with the System and gain access to confidential information?**

*A: As per ICT Security best practice used to secure key National Information Systems, KenTrade has implemented a host of cutting edge Information Security technologies to provide assurance of System security. KenTrade also has a highly qualified ICT team that works to ensure Information Systems security.*

**Q: Will implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System result in job losses?**

*A: No. We do not expect anyone to lose their job as a result of implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System. The System will instead enable the business environment to trade efficiently. An improved business environment is expected to lead to a reduced cost of doing business and increased efficiency in trade. This will increase Kenya's competitiveness and attract more Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) which will create more jobs.*

**Q: How has the uptake of the Kenya TradeNet System been since its official launch?**

*A: We have recorded impressive uptake since the System 'Go – Live' on October 30, 2013 and the subsequent official launch on May 02, 2014. The implementation was done in a Phased approach and all the stakeholders have been very supportive. We engaged stakeholders throughout the planning and implementation stages to ensure that they are part of the process. More importantly, we continue to conduct sensitization campaigns targeting stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. So far we now have over 5400 registered users of the System across Kenya.*

**Q: What benefits has the System generated for government so far?**

*A: First and foremost the Kenya TradeNet System is part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) efforts to ease trade and enhance compliance as well as simplifying bureaucratic procedures in the movement of goods across borders. The System It has also brought greater harmonization and better sharing of relevant data across the Government departments/System resulting in improved efficiency, transparency and effectiveness of official controls. This enhances revenue collection and reduces cost of doing business for both the Government and the business community.*

**Q: What benefits can you say will be derived from it after one year, mid-term (5yrs), and in the long run?**

*A: Once all the modules are completely implemented and operationalized, the System will eliminate/reduce the cumbersome paperwork. The UCR concept facilitates creation of electronic files and therefore does away with the need for paper based files. The introduction of a Dynamic Risk Management module has introduced objectivity and eradicated/reduced subjectivity associated with static cargo targeting methods. It has also reduced human contact and enhanced transparency.*

*Additionally, the project presents an opportunity for additional online services and information to the business community as well as an opportunity to partner with youths in the provision of trade facilitation services to the business community.*

*The System will also drastically reduce delays and transaction costs and hence improve the doing business environment in Kenya that will lead to increased Foreign Direct Investment leading to creation of new jobs and additional revenue to the Government. The Kenya TradeNet System is one of the Kenya's Vision 2030 Projects under the Economic pillar, and we expect that it will help Kenya to improve on World Bank Doing Business Ranking report.*

**Q: How is the Kenya TradeNet System funded?**

*A: The Kenya TradeNet System is funded by the Government of Kenya with support from development partners mainly the Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF) and International Finance Corporation (IFC). The project has also received support from TradeMark East Africa. We hope that other development partners will also come on board to assist in the financing other initiatives that will enhance successful implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System*

**Q: What is the future of the Kenya TradeNet System?**

*A: The Single Window Concept is not new. It is currently operational in Singapore, Korea, Malaysia, Mauritius, Tunisia and Ghana just to mention a few. Studies from these countries indicate their economies have realized large savings via: Reduced inefficiencies, improved transparency and visibility in trade documentation processing, Reduced manual documentation/paperwork, Reduced cost of capital (JIT Concept); Reduced demurrage, improved space utilization at the Ports – increased capacity utilization for higher volume turnover.*

*International Organizations such as World Trade Organization (WTO), World Customs Organization(WCO), United Nations ;Africa Alliance for Electronic Commerce among others are promoting the Single Window System (SWS) Concept as the future tool for efficient trade facilitation.*

**Q: Where are KenTrade Offices located?**

*A: Our Head office is located in Nairobi and we also have a facilitation office in Mombasa which are located as follows:*

- *Nairobi : Embankment Plaza , Longonot Road,Upper Hill*
- *Mombasa: Jubilee Arcade 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Moi Avenue*

*In addition to the above we also have regional representatives who are based in Malaba, Busia and Namanga border points.*

**Q: What are the opening hours of KenTrade Contact Centre and Customer Service offices?**

*A: Our contact center and customer services offices are open from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, Monday to Friday and 8.00 am to 2.00 pm on Saturday and Sunday. We are also open over public holidays from 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. You can also contact us via email address; [contactcentre@KenTrade.go.ke](mailto:contactcentre@KenTrade.go.ke) and [customercare@KenTrade.go.ke](mailto:customercare@KenTrade.go.ke); phone numbers: 0204965000 or 070995000*