

## TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR MSMEs ON AEO, STR AND TRADE FACILITATION TOOLS

**Maseru, Lesotho – 23 April 2026** - Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL), in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Business Development (MTIBD) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Marketing, successfully hosted a follow-up training workshop for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on 21 April 2026.

This workshop builds on the initial session held on 30 September 2025, convened with support from GIZ, and marks a continued commitment by government and its partners to strengthen trade facilitation, improve border efficiency, and position Lesotho's businesses to better participate in regional and global value chains.

MSMEs remain the backbone of Lesotho's economy, playing a critical role in job creation, innovation, and inclusive economic growth, as highlighted in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP II-Extended). However, many MSMEs continue to face challenges in cross-border trade, including complex procedures, high transaction costs, and limited capacity to access and navigate international markets.

The training workshop was designed to move beyond awareness and focus on practical application. While the previous session introduced MSMEs to available markets and support programmes such as the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) scheme aimed at enabling compliant traders to move goods more efficiently across borders, this follow-up session emphasized "how to actually trade."

Participants were equipped with critical knowledge on key trade requirements, including:

- Understanding Rules of Origin
- Meeting Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Standards
- Utilizing essential trade documentation such as Certificates of Origin

The workshop also highlighted simplified trade mechanisms such as the Simplified Trade Regime (STR), which are designed to lower barriers to entry for small-scale traders and improve participation in cross-border trade.

The overarching message was clear: while significant trade opportunities exist, unlocking them requires compliance, knowledge, and the effective use of available trade facilitation tools.



RSL extends its sincere appreciation to all participants, including Customs officials, government representatives, private sector stakeholders, and technical partners, whose collaboration is essential in driving these initiatives forward.

Through continued partnerships and targeted capacity-building initiatives, RSL remains committed to empowering MSMEs to confidently expand beyond borders, enhance their competitiveness, and contribute meaningfully to Lesotho's sustainable economic development.

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For clarification, please contact RSL's PR Desk: 62112502/58839868