

ATAF TOBACCO AND EXCISE TAX TRAINING

Strengthening the technical capacity of African tax administrations



The African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF), in collaboration with the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA), the World Bank and the University of Cape Town, launched a five-day Tobacco and Excise Tax Training on 27 October 2025 at the Integrated Customs Clearance Centre (ICCC) in Plaine Magnien. The program brings together customs officials from 24 African nations to enhance the technical capacity of African tax administrations in designing and implementing effective tobacco excise regimes.

In his keynote address during the launching ceremony, Honourable Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister, Ministry of Finance, highlighted Mauritius as a unique example in Africa, where success is rooted not only in national achievements but also in a strong commitment to regional development, he said. As the only African country with a model of sustained economic growth, Mauritius recognizes that its prosperity is closely linked to the continent, he added. Hon. Damry emphasized that the government will continue working to promote inclusive development across Africa, ensuring that all nations benefit from shared progress. *“By fostering stronger economic partnerships and enhancing regional integration, Mauritius aims to support the continent in realizing its full potential, creating opportunities for growth and job creation,”* concluded Hon Damry.



[Honourable Dhaneshwar Damry, Junior Minister of Finance](#)

Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General of the MRA, emphasized that *“the management and administration of excise taxes remain of paramount importance to any country’s economy and public policy.”* He stressed that these indirect taxes continue to play a vital role globally in achieving a range of economic and social objectives. *“Revenue generation remains a key objective, particularly for many African nations, where such contributions are essential to sustaining social and national development goals,”* he stated.

Mr. Ramnawaz further stated that *“in Mauritius, excise duties account for approximately 14.2% of total MRA collections. By comparison, Personal Income Tax, which has a larger tax base than excise duties, amounts to only 8.2% of overall MRA collections.”* He mentioned that by regulating consumption, excise taxes also play a vital role in achieving health and environmental objectives. On this score, he cited some products that are subject to excise duties including tobacco, alcohol, and sugar-sweetened beverages. Mr. Ramnawaz added that excise duties also aim to promote equity and fairness, influence behavioural incentives, and regulate trade and industry, thereby contributing to broader public policy goals.

Mr. Ramnawaz concluded that *“tobacco control is essential for protecting government revenue, promoting fair trade, and safeguarding public health, as counterfeit cigarettes, often unsuitable for consumption, pose significant risks to consumers.”*



[Mr. Rohit Ramnawaz, Director-General of the MRA](#)

Ms. Caroline Mutayabarwa, Manager, Tax Academy, ATAF, emphasized the organization’s role in building capacity within African tax administrations. She explained that ATAF strengthens the skills of tax officials through training, technical support and customized programs. By promoting regional collaboration and providing advisory services, she highlighted ATAF’s contribution in improving tax collection, compliance and reform efforts, ultimately supporting stronger tax systems and sustainable economic growth across the continent.



[Ms. Caroline Mutayabarwa, Manager, Tax Academy, ATAF](#)