Customs Reform and Modernisation: The role of leadership

I.V. Mazorodze, Customs Adviser, Sierra Leone National Revenue Authority
Effective automation within customs can generate the following positive outcomes:

• Internal and external governance and oversight
• Modern and efficient operations compliant with international standards
• Equitable and transparent revenue collection that supports investment and economic growth
• Technology-led, customer oriented service-delivery

However……..
The effective use of IT as part of customs modernisation requires strong leadership:

- Ensuring sufficient **political commitment** and ownership of reforms.
- Managing internal resistance to change and developing **change management** strategies are important.
- Dealing with weak **national IT infrastructures**.
- Coping with inadequate **system design** with respect to local tailoring.
- Tackling **staff retention** issues that effect many countries.
- **Procurement** of IT takes time and costs money.

Governments risk getting left behind and/or losing control of modernisation goals and budgets if they do not show strong leadership.
Once upon a time there lived a contented fisherman ...
He lived his life like a frog in the pot ...
Poor Risk Management

Good Risk Management

He did not understand the importance of Risk Management!
One of the biggest risks of our time is the risk of being LEFT BEHIND
Keeping up requires LEADERSHIP MENTALITY
Leadership requires
“Anablep Capability”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGEMENT is about:</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP is about:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td>INNOVATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with CURRENT RISKS</td>
<td>Dealing also with RISKS NOT YET IN EXISTENCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>SURVIVING the future</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLANNING for the future</td>
<td>PREPARING for the future</td>
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NB: Management & Leadership mentalities can co-exist in one head
LEADERSHIP IS A STATE OF MIND

5 − 3 = !!!
A momentous decision...
How Can “Little Customs” Influence Other Government Agencies (OGAs) on modernisation?
Don’t Re-invent the Wheel!
Emulate the WCO

1. **Evangelize** about modernization at every opportunity
2. Acquire a system with **capability for IT connectivity**
3. Procure **technical assistance for OGAs** to connect to system
4. **TAKE THE LEAD** in establishing national committees. **Hijack** chairmanship or settle for the Secretariat
5. **TAKE THE LEAD** in the creation of **integrated border management system** and **seek sponsorship for workshops and joint training** to **SPREAD THE LEADERSHIP MENTALITY**
“When all you have is a hummer, everything tends to look like a nail”
• Our Customs projects in Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Somaliland, Burundi and Afghanistan contain major IT components (such as supporting the implementation and rollout of ASYCUDA and its integration with other systems).

• These are always as part of larger modernisation programmes which look at policy, legislation, procedures and the development of One-Stop Border Posts.
To avoid being rendered IRRELEVANT adopt a LEADERSHIP MENTALITY

Thank You