

WOMEN'S NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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THE TRAINING ISSUE

Trainings delivered to the Container Control Programme's (CCP) Port Control Units (PCUs) are a cornerstone of the Programme and, along with mentoring, one of the key points for Programme staff to connect with PCU officers on a range of topics.



During these trainings, including basic and advanced segments, CCP staff deliver specialized modules to increase awareness of gender issues and ensure that all PCUs are committed to gender equality. The Programme also implements gender training at regional workshops involving both multiple PCUs and other participating agencies. This allows for the introduction of gender sensitization training to outside law enforcement officers and the reinforcement of gender training among PCU officers.

This edition of the Women's Network Newsletter will focus on training in order to inform readers about the CCP's efforts to equip its officers with the knowledge and skills that will facilitate gender equality in the CCP and in the law enforcement profession at large.

To sign up for the newsletter or to contact the CCP Women's Network staff, please send an email to: ccp.womensnetwork@un.org

GENDER TRAINING DELIVERED IN SURINAME

In order to bring gender equality to the CCP global network, it is crucial to introduce gender sensitization training to all PCUs, even those made up exclusively of men officers.

In May, gender training was delivered to the PCU in Paramaribo, Suriname. The group of six men officers (pictured below with a CCP trainer) discussed sexual harassment in the workplace and focused on the identification of unacceptable behaviors. At the end of the session, all officers agreed on the advantages of including women in Customs and voiced support for including women professionals in the PCU.



The mission of the UNODC-WCO [Container Control Programme](#) is to build capacity in countries seeking to improve risk management, supply chain security and trade facilitation in sea, land, and airports in order to prevent the cross-border movement of illicit goods.

WOMEN OFFICERS TRAINED IN CCP-AIR CAMBODIA

One of the objectives of the Women's Network is to increase the number of women officers attending training. National authorities are systematically encouraged to nominate women officers for training in order to provide them with the same opportunities as men counterparts. In Cambodia, CCP efforts have resulted in women accounting for approximately one quarter of Customs participants in most trainings.



CCP WOMEN'S NETWORK PANEL AT THE CCPCJ



Under the framework of the 2018 Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), the CCP brought together women Customs officers from several regions to speak about gender issues. The officers, from Cambodia, Portugal, and Uganda (pictured above with Mr. John Brandolino, Director, Division for Treaty Affairs, UNODC), discussed their experiences and the challenges women face in the law enforcement profession. The panelists offered an assortment of perspectives, pointing out that negative stereotypes, confidence gaps, and lack of access to equal opportunities hamper career development. Several areas of need were identified, such as providing women officers with opportunities for technical skills training and countering unbiased recruitment practices.





MEET THE WOMEN OF CCP - JUDITE COUTO

Judite Couto serves as the head of the Intelligence Division at the Portuguese Directorate of Customs Fraud Services and has been working on trainings with the CCP for many years.

CCP: What made you want to become a Customs officer?

JC: I come from a family of Customs officers--my father and my two brothers are Customs officers, too. When I completed my university degree, I took a competitive exam to join the Customs administration.

Now I have been with Portuguese Customs since 1986, including in risk management in the Anti-fraud Unit, using special techniques for selecting containers. It was a change from controlling all containers to using intelligence to select the containers. I've worked in the Operations Unit, the Criminal Investigation Unit, and have now been leading the Intelligence Division for nine years.

CCP: Why is it important to promote and empower women officers?

JC: In a context where women are discriminated against, it is important to have an active strategy to empower them. Women can be discriminated against at a junior level by not being invited to meetings or specialized trainings. But I think things are improving. Some years ago, there would be 50 men during a training and no women, which meant there was no opportunity for women to grow, to improve their skills, and then to compete on equal footing with men—we should fight against that kind of discrimination. It is important to have a gender balance at the high-level of management. Men and women are different, it is important to have the two perspectives. In the context of many years of discrimination, there is a need to implement quotas, to push for a balanced distribution between men and women, because women do not have the same level of opportunity as men. To have more women is a win for any Customs administration.

CCP: Have you encountered any prejudice based on your gender in your career?

JC: I remember many years ago, when I had to visit a company as a Customs Control Officer. I went to the site with a male driver. When we arrived, the Financial Director of the company who received us mistook the driver for the Customs officer and me for his assistant who came to take notes. With a bit of humor, I explained that I was the Customs officer in charge of checking the Customs declaration! The Financial Director was very embarrassed! 15 years ago, in international meetings, 80% of the participants would be men. Now, the audience is much more gender balanced. I can see that things are changing slowly.

CCP: Do you have any advice for junior women officers?

JC: First, you have to believe in yourself! Women are different in a positive way. We see things differently, we have to maximize that! Women have to make extra effort to prepare themselves, to build their capacity. They need to be very well prepared, to pay attention to everything they see and use those observations. It is extremely important to have young women entering Customs, they bring new ideas--it is very refreshing for the administration.

LINKS FOR FURTHER READING

Interested in learning more about the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women? Follow this link to read the UN Women 2017-2018 Annual Report.

<http://annualreport.unwomen.org/en/2018>

This UN Women Training Center document details ten examples of good practices that may be employed during training for gender equality both within and outside of the United Nations system.

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/5/compendium-of-good-practices-in-training-for-gender-equality>



PCU officers during a training in Havana, Cuba