

The African Alliance for E-commerce and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism held a workshop in Blantyre to discuss how the Ministry can set up a Single Window facility using the Practical Implementation Guide. The single window is expected to reduce cost and time of formalities for foreign trade.

“With the single window in effect, the cost and time of formalities will be reduced, contributing to improved business climate and corporate competitiveness,” Reads the guide in part.

Single Window system enables a single submission of electronic document by the trader such as a single data preparation and submission of customs declaration and duty payment for customs release and clearance.

“Single Window Project will develop the integrated data link structure for the country & provide the comprehensive single point of contact between the government authorities. This will result into the reduction of the processes for businesses involved by reducing the operational procedures in the public sector by Single Window, Single Submission, Single Processing & Single Decision Making for custom release and clearance,” Reads the guide.

Malawi opted for National Integral single window model which encompasses Single window for Foreign Trade formalities; taking care of all administrative formalities required for foreign trade operations and logistics coordination. Single window, which is often located in a port, is aimed at processing the flow of information related to shipment, logistics and customs.

The guide explains that it is imperative to have a robust base of IT infrastructure for a Single Window as it acts as a data exchange platform that interacts with various systems used by the stakeholders in the foreign Trade.

The private sector has an opportunity to participate in the implementation of the Single Window through Public Private Partnerships, a model that the guide highly recommends.

The Single Window facility has been successfully implemented in other African countries.

