WCO instruments, tools and initiatives on NDR

Natural Disasters and Trade Symposium
29 November 2019, Geneva
Introduction to the WCO

- Independent intergovernmental organization exclusively focused on Customs matters
- Established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council
- 183 Members
- Mission - The WCO develops international standards, fosters cooperation and builds capacity to facilitate legitimate trade, to secure a fair revenue collection and to protect society, providing leadership, guidance and support to Customs administrations
Broadening the scope of Customs functions

- Revenue Collection of Import Taxes (duties & excise)
- Protection of Economic Interests (domestic industry)
- Protection of Society (drug trafficking, firearms, environment, etc.)
- Economic Development (trade facilitation)
- Security (focus on the entire supply chain)
Key functions of the WCO

- Capability and responsibility for global standard setting for Customs
- Cooperation with other international organizations and other agencies
- Capacity Building / Technical Assistance delivery
- Network of accredited experts from Customs Administrations
- Donor engagement
NDR - State of Play

- Natural disasters are increasing due to climate change
- Great pressure put on government agencies of affected countries, including Customs, to ensure that aid reaches victims in a timely manner
- Customs is usually the first administration/agency to deal with international relief goods
Challenges for Customs

- Increasing number of responders
- Vast amount of in-kind relief
- Unsolicited items
- Lack of knowledge on the part of humanitarian operators
- Poor documentation
- Abuse of relaxed/simplified procedures
- But also...
Challenges for Customs

- Lack of overview to support prioritisation, processing and planning
- Need to enforce legislation on behalf of other government agencies
- Lack of adequate system to facilitate and regulate relief consignments
WCO instruments, tools and initiatives on NDR

to ensure preparedness, predictability, coordination, communication and awareness

- 1970 Recommendation to expedite the forwarding of relief consignments in the event of disasters
- RKC (International Convention on the simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures)
- Istanbul Convention (Convention on Temporary Admission)
- 2011 Resolution on the Role of Customs in Natural Disaster Relief
- Cooperation with OCHA, IFRC and other partners
- C-RED Project
WCO instruments, tools and initiatives on NDR

- Tools and initiatives on Coordinated Border Management
- The SAFE Package, including the Trade Recovery Guidelines
- Tools on business continuity planning
- etc.