

## **HUZA to “boost efficiency and minimize commercial losses” at REG**



**REG’s Staff during HUZA Training**

The Government of Rwanda reforms in the energy supply industry have progressed to an advanced stage. This is exemplified by the recent investments in developing an integrated business management system driven by modern information and communications technologies (ICT) in the Rwanda Energy Group Limited.

The restructuring of the energy supply industry from the former EWSA in 2014 resulted in the creation of Rwanda Energy Group Limited (REG) and its two subsidiaries; The Energy Utility Corporation Limited (EUCL) is devoted to producing and distributing electricity country-wide while The Energy Development Corporation Limited (EDCL) is entrusted with energy infrastructure planning and development.

REG took-over a problematic system environment typified by diverse partial solutions, based on varied technological platforms and often operating in isolation. The effect of this was clearly evident from the difficulty the Company had in delivering reliable customer service and a failure to comply with reporting requirements. In order to have a lasting solution, REG is developing a comprehensive Integrated Business Management System named “HUZA”.

According to Mr. Patrick Mwesige, the Project Manager of the Rwanda Electricity Sector Strengthening Project, HUZA is aimed at streamlining systems in REG and ensure that the needs of Customers and other stakeholders interacting with the Company are fully met and in a timely manner. This standard of service will not be lost regardless of the medium through which they approach the Company be it by telephone, social media, online, or physical at any of the 33 branches.

“In the past EWSA could not prepare and present proper financial statements to the Auditor General, Postpaid (large power users) could hardly get timely information regarding their consumption and bills, and branch operations were detached from the head office. This is a typical sign of disjointed systems and lack of system integration.

HUZA is part of the Reform Action Plan undertaken by REG to “boost operational efficiency and help minimize commercial losses, increase revenue collection and bridge gaps for timely information for managerial decision making.

“This Integrated Business Management System “HUZA” is a packaged solution that includes specialized software and hardware, modern management tools and processes to inform decision-making and enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in electricity service delivery” he said.

HUZA consists of three components namely, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Management System (CMS), and Incident Recording Management System (IRMS) all working together in an integrated manner.

The CMS will answer to customer related issues where by if a customer’s service is interrupted (a power cut) and calls the EUCL Contact Center for assistance, the Center will relay the complaint to one the many field based technical teams in the area for urgent attention aided by the integration of the Customer focused system (CMS) and the technical (IRMS).

“Such field team shall be fully fledged with their equipment and on receiving such information with details about the location will respond to the needs of our customer in record time and seamlessly report the results back to the contact center” Mwesige explained

Another component of HUZA is the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), which will address finance, procurement, stores, logistics, payroll, human resource and projects related operations. So being that these three systems would need to work together, this called for the need to develop a shared system platform for efficient coordination of services.

HUZA is being developed with funding support from the World Bank by a Consortium of two companies, Application Software IFS Pty of South Africa which has a global track record in developing ERP systems and Fluentgrid Limited of India with proven competence in utility

operations systems. This development is to take 18 months to be completed but REG will start using the system in its operations by July 01, 2017.

A dedicated HUZA office and staff training facility have been set up at CHIC House close to REG headquarters and a coordination office in REG building. These will be used by staff working with system implementers through the various stages of development.

“We are expecting that by the end of January 2017, we will have a blue-print ready and it will be reviewed by our technical team and once cleared will be approved by the Managing Director to move into the configuration and testing phase” Mwesige explained

“User acceptance testing, final user training and data migration will be the final stages of this process in April to June 2017 and finally the ERP will go live by July 2017 and thereafter progressively the other two components will be released into operation following the same procedures”. Mwesige added

According to the Managing Director, Maj. Eng. Jean Claude Kalisa, speaking at the official Kick-off of November 08, 2016, REG is looking for a modern business management solution that can enhance organization control and aid timely decision-making to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability throughout the organization. He added that the IFS applications suit the firm’s requirements in terms of functional breadth, scalability, and user-friendliness.

On the same occasion, Mr. Gawie van der Merwe, the IFS South Africa Managing Director, said “the software is cost-effective, adding that it can be used to manage new infrastructure developments, monitor programmes and project progress, as well as leave an asset management legacy for on-going plant and facility maintenance”.

“We are, therefore, looking forward to supporting REG to improve efficiency across the entire Company value-chain,” he noted.