

ASYCUDA Newsletter

UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics



Autumn 2017

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Editorial

The autumn publication of the ASYCUDA Newsletter coincides with the 64th UNCTAD Trade and Development Board annual session. It was held in Geneva from 11 to 22 September 2017. The Trade and Development Board oversees the activities of UNCTAD every year in-between the quadrennial Conferences. Some key discussions addressed during this year's meeting are the contribution of UNCTAD in building capacities in the least developed countries (LDC) and UNCTAD's activities in support of small islands developing states (SIDS) and landlocked developing countries (LLDC).

ASYCUDA, UNCTAD's largest technical assistance programme, strongly contributes to building capacity in least developed countries. Indeed, the capacity building domain is a very important component of all ASYCUDA projects, ensuring sustainability of the system. Over the years, the Programme has provided technical assistance to LDCs and has liaised with donors in order to raise funds for projects. Furthermore, ASYCUDA-related training projects were signed with Burkina Faso and Togo, showing the Programme's involvement and reputation in the delivery and organization of training events and workshops.

In relation to SIDS and LLDC, the ASYCUDA Programme has always followed UNCTAD's commitment in addressing their challenges. The ASMP (ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for Pacific), which celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2017 (please refer to January 2017 ASYCUDA's newsletter - http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtl_asycuda2017d1_en.pdf), and the setup of an ASYCUDA Sub-Regional office in Fiji are the best examples of this. SIDS are particularly subject and vulnerable to natural disasters. ASYCUDA projects catalyze reform of customs procedures but also the necessary renewal of the technical environment to have state of the art equipment and disaster recovery sites which caters for natural disasters.

Support and assistance to LLDCs is now even more important as regional transit implementation projects were signed in 2016 and are currently being implemented. It is the case in West Africa where three transit

implementation projects involve the landlocked country of Burkina Faso.

Our travel around the world to detail some of the ASYCUDA events, system launches and specific developments in 2017, will give the reader a better understanding of the activities and interventions of the Programme in general but also its involvement in LDC, SIDS and LLDC.

We will first travel to Lusaka, Zambia where the DTL Director, Ms. Shamika Sirimanne met the COMESA Secretary General, Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, to discuss reinforcement of the cooperation between UNCTAD and COMESA on trade facilitation. Our travel in Africa will continue with a description of the new ASYCUDA transit implementation projects in West African countries, the launch of the system in Angola and the implementation of the export manifest module in Mauritania. Remaining on the subject of the manifest, we will visit the Caribbean to outline the new CARICOM IMPACS Project for the implementation of the Electronic Manifest Management ASYCUDA System (EMMAS). Then, we will go to Vanuatu and Nepal where the system was launched successfully this year. Our travel ends with a quick overview on the exchange of customs data between Afghanistan and Tajikistan using ASYCUDAWorld and the ASYCUDA participation in the WCO IT Conference and Exhibition held in Tbilisi, Georgia.

We invite you to send any comments you might have to asycuda@unctad.org.

For our followers, the next ASYCUDA travel around the world will be published in spring 2018.

ASYCUDA Programme,
Division on Technology and Logistics,
Geneva, October 2017.



La publication d'automne de la Newsletter du Programme SYDONIA coïncide avec la 64^{ème} réunion annuelle du Conseil du Transport et Développement de la CNUCED qui a lieu à Genève du 11 au 22 septembre. Ce Conseil supervise les activités de la CNUCED chaque année entre les Conférences quadriennales. Les sujets clés abordés concernaient la contribution de la CNUCED au renforcement des compétences dans les pays les moins développés (PMA) et les activités d'assistance de la CNUCED pour les petits états insulaires en développement (PEID) et les pays en développement sans littoral (PDSL).

SYDONIA, programme principal d'assistance technique de la CNUCED, contribue fortement au renforcement des capacités des PMA. En effet, la composante renforcement des capacités est primordiale pour tous les projets SYDONIA, assurant ainsi la pérennité du système. Au fil des années, le Programme a fourni une assistance technique aux PMA et a été en liaison avec les donateurs afin de lever des fonds pour des projets. De plus, des projets de formations SYDONIA ont été signés dernièrement avec le Burkina Faso et le Togo, montrant ainsi l'implication et la réputation du Programme dans l'organisation et la dispense de formations et de séminaires.

Concernant les PEID et les PDSL, le Programme SYDONIA a toujours suivi l'engagement de la CNUCED à relever ses défis. L'ASMP (Mécanisme de Support SYDONIA pour le Pacifique), qui a célébré son 15^{ème} anniversaire en 2017 (veuillez vous référer à la newsletter de Janvier 2017 en cliquant sur le lien ci-après http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2017d1_en.pdf) et la mise en place d'un bureau SYDONIA dans la sous-région aux Fidji en sont les meilleurs exemples. Les PEID sont particulièrement sujets et vulnérables aux catastrophes naturelles. Les projets SYDONIA catalysent les réformes des procédures douanières mais aussi le renouvellement nécessaire de l'environnement technique pour disposer d'un équipement de pointe et de sites de reprise d'activités suite à un sinistre.

Le support et l'assistance du Programme aux PDSL est encore plus important aujourd'hui après la

signature en 2016 de projets de mise en place du transit. C'est le cas par exemple en Afrique de l'Ouest où trois projets de mise en place du transit impliquent le Burkina Faso.

Notre voyage autour du monde, détaillant les activités et mise en place du système SYDONIAWorld en 2017, permettront au lecteur de mieux comprendre les interventions du Programme en général mais aussi son implication dans les PMA, PEID et PDSL.

Nous commencerons par nous rendre à Lusaka en Zambie où la Directrice de la DTL, Mme Shamika Sirimanne a rencontré le Secrétaire Général de la COMESA (Marché commun de l'Afrique orientale et australe), M. Sindiso Ngwenya, afin de discuter un renforcement de la coopération entre la CNUCED et la COMESA dans la facilitation du commerce. Notre voyage en Afrique continue avec une description des projets SYDONIA de mise en place du transit en Afrique de l'Ouest, le lancement de SYDONIAWorld en Angola et la mise en place du manifeste d'export en Mauritanie. En restant sur le thème du manifeste, nous visiterons par la suite les Caraïbes afin de présenter le projet CARICOM IMPACS de mise en place du système de gestion du manifeste électronique. Nous irons ensuite à Vanuatu et au Nepal où le système a été lancé avec succès. Notre voyage finira par une vue d'ensemble sur l'échange d'informations douanières entre l'Afghanistan et le Tadjikistan, tout en utilisant SYDONIAWorld et la participation du Programme à la conférence et exhibition sur les technologies de l'information organisée par l'OMD (Organisation Mondiale des Douanes) à Tbilissi en Géorgie.

Nous vous invitons à adresser vos commentaires à l'adresse suivante: asycuda@unctad.org.

A tous nos lecteurs, nous annonçons que notre prochain voyage autour du monde aura lieu au printemps 2018.

Programme SYDONIA,
Division de la Technologie et de la Logistique,
Genève, Octobre 2017.



La publicación de otoño del Boletín Informativo del Programa SIDUNEA coincide con el 64º período de sesiones de la Junta de Comercio y Desarrollo de la UNCTAD que se celebró en Ginebra del 11 al 22 de septiembre de 2017. La Junta de Comercio y Desarrollo supervisa una vez al año las actividades de la organización entre las conferencias cuatrienales. Entre las principales discusiones abordadas durante la reunión de este año figura la contribución de la UNCTAD en el fomento de las capacidades productivas en los Países Menos Adelantados (PMAs) y las actividades de la UNCTAD en apoyo de los pequeños Estados insulares en desarrollo (PEIDs) y en favor de los países en desarrollo sin litoral (PDSLs).

ASYCUDA, el programa de asistencia técnica más grande de la UNCTAD, contribuye en gran medida a la creación de capacidad productiva en los PMAs. Justamente, el componente de creación de capacidad es esencial en todos los proyectos de SIDUNEA, asegurando la sostenibilidad del sistema. A lo largo de los años, el Programa ha proporcionado asistencia técnica a los PMAs estableciendo contactos con entidades o países donantes con el fin de recaudar fondos para proyectos. Al mismo tiempo, SIDUNEA ha firmado proyectos de capacitación con Burkina Faso y Togo, mostrando la implicación y renombre del Programa en materia de organización de eventos y talleres de formación.

Con respecto a los PEIDs, PDSLs y PMAs, el programa SIDUNEA ha hecho frente siempre a sus desafíos adoptando así el compromiso de la UNCTAD. El ASMP (Mecanismo de Apoyo de SIDUNEA para el Pacífico), que celebró su 15 aniversario en 2017 (consulte el boletín informativo de SIDUNEA de enero 2017 - http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtla_sycuda2017d1_en.pdf), y el establecimiento de una oficina SIDUNEA en Fiji son los mejores ejemplos. Los PEIDs son particularmente vulnerables a los desastres naturales, consecuentemente los proyectos de SIDUNEA promueven reformas en los procedimientos aduaneros, además de la necesaria renovación del entorno técnico para disponer de equipos de

última generación y emplazamientos de recuperación en casos de desastres.

El apoyo y la asistencia del Programa a los PDSLs son hoy aún más importantes después de la firma en 2016 de proyectos para la aplicación del tránsito regional. Es el caso en África occidental donde tres proyectos de implementación de tránsito incluyen entre otros países a Burkina Faso.

Nuestro recorrido para detallar algunos de los eventos de SIDUNEA, lanzamientos de sistemas y desarrollos específicos en 2017, dará al lector una mejor comprensión de las actividades e intervenciones del Programa en general, pero también su participación en los PMAs, PDSLs y PEIDs. Empezamos en Lusaka, Zambia, donde la Directora de la División de Tecnología y Logística, Sra. Shamika Sirimanne, se reunió con el Secretario General de COMESA, Sr. Sindiso Ngwenya, para discutir el refuerzo de la cooperación entre la UNCTAD y COMESA en materia de facilitación del comercio. A continuación daremos una descripción de los nuevos proyectos de implementación de tránsito de SIDUNEA en los países de África Occidental, el lanzamiento del sistema en Angola y la implementación del módulo de manifiesto de exportación en Mauritania. Con respecto al tema del manifiesto, visitaremos el Caribe para presentar el nuevo proyecto CARICOM IMPACS para la realización del Sistema de Gestión del Manifiesto Electrónico. Seguidamente, nos trasladaremos a Vanuatu y Nepal donde el sistema fue lanzado con éxito este año. Por último daremos una visión general sobre el intercambio de datos aduaneros entre Afganistán y Tayikistán usando SIDUNEAWorld y la participación de SIDUNEA en la Conferencia de la OMA sobre la tecnología de la información celebrada en Tiflis, Georgia.

Esperamos que disfrute de la lectura de este boletín y le invitamos a enviarnos sus comentarios sobre asycuda@unctad.org.

Programa ASYCUDA,
División de Tecnología y Logística,
Ginebra, octubre de 2017



Осенняя публикация Информационного бюллетеня ASYCUDA приурочена 64-й ежегодной сессии Совета по Торговле и Развитию ЮНКТАД, которая проходила в Женеве с 11 по 22 сентября 2017 года. Совет по торговле и развитию ежегодно курирует деятельность ЮНКТАД в промежутке между министерскими конференциями. В числе ключевых моментов, обсуждавшийся на сессии в этом году, - это вклад ЮНКТАД в наращивание потенциала в наименее развитых странах (НРС) и деятельность ЮНКТАД в поддержку малых островных развивающихся стран (МОРС) и развивающихся стран, не имеющих выхода к морю (НВМРС).

АСИКУДА, крупнейшая программа технической помощи ЮНКТАД, в значительной степени способствует укреплению потенциала наименее развитых стран. Действительно, область укрепления потенциала является очень важным компонентом всех проектов ASYCUDA, обеспечивая устойчивость системы. На протяжении многих лет Программа оказывала техническую помощь НРС и поддерживала связь с донорами в целях привлечения средств для осуществления проектов. Кроме того, с Буркина-Фасо и Того были подписаны учебные проекты, связанные с ASYCUDA, что указывает на участие и репутацию Программы в организации учебных мероприятий и семинаров.

В отношении МОРС и НВМРС Программа АСИКУДА всегда выполняла обязательства ЮНКТАД по содействию в решении их проблем. МПТО (Механизм поддержки ASYCUDA для Тихого океана), который отметил свое 15-летие в 2017 году (см. Информационный бюллетень ASYCUDA за январь 2017 года - http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2017d1_en.pdf), а также учреждение ASYCUDA суб-регионального офиса Asycuda на Фиджи являются лучшими примерами этого. МОРС особенно подвержены стихийным бедствиям и весьма уязвимы. Проекты ASYCUDA катализируют реформу таможенных процедур, а также необходимое обновление технической базы, чтобы иметь современное оборудование и места для аварийного восстановления, которые обслуживают стихийные бедствия.

Поддержка и помощь НВМРС в настоящее время еще более важны, поскольку проекты регионального транзита были подписаны в 2016 году и в настоящее время до сих пор осуществляются. Речь идет о Западной Африке, где три проекта реализации транзита связаны Буркина-Фасо, страной, не имеющей выхода к морю.

Наши миссии по странам мира, для презентации событий ASYCUDA, запусков систем и новых разработок в 2017 году, предоставят читателю лучшее представление о деятельности и мероприятиях Программы в целом, а также о ее участии в содействии в НРС, СИДС и НВМРС.

Сначала мы отправимся в Лусаку, Замбия, где директор DTL г-жа Шамика Сиримани встретила с Генеральным секретарем КОМЕСА г-ном Синдисо Нгвеней, чтобы обсудить вопрос об укреплении сотрудничества между ЮНКТАД и КОМЕСА в области упрощения процедур торговли. Наши поездки в Африку будут продолжены с описанием новых проектов реализации транзита АСИКУДА в западноафриканских странах, запуска системы в Анголе и осуществления модуля экспортного манифеста в Мавритании. Основываясь на теме манифеста, мы посетим Карибский бассейн, чтобы отметить новый проект КАРИКОМ ИМПАСТ для внедрения системы ASYCUDA электронного управления манифестами (EMMAS). Затем мы отправимся в Вануату и Непал, где система была успешно запущена в этом году. Наше путешествие заканчивается кратким обзором обмена таможенными данными между Афганистаном и Таджикистаном посредством ASYCUDA World, а также участия представителей ASYCUDA в конференции и выставке ВТО, проводимой в Тбилиси, Грузия.

Для наших читателей, следующая поездка ASYCUDA по всему миру будет опубликована весной 2018 года.

Мы просим выслать нам любые комментарии, которые могут возникнуть у вас на адрес asycuda@unctad.org.

UNCTAD-COMESA cooperation in strengthening concepts of Trade Facilitation

Our January 2016 newsletter dealt with MoUs involving the ASYCUDA Programme. One of the ASYCUDA Programme partnerships is with COMESA. Indeed, an MoU was signed in November 2014 for the establishment of a COMESA ASYCUDA Regional Support Centre. UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme, together with COMESA Secretariat, provide technical assistance and related capacity building in relation to modernization and support of ASYCUDA as well as other areas of trade and transport facilitation

(Information and data exchange, harmonization of coding and trade related nomenclature system, risk management...).

On 9 June 2017, Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director of UNCTAD's Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL), paid a courtesy call on Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, Secretary General of COMESA (Figure 1), to strengthen the cooperation on Trade Facilitation between both organizations, especially after the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement entered into force in February 2017.



Figure 1: Courtesy Visit of UNCTAD's DTL Director, Ms. Shamika Sirimanne to the COMESA Secretary General, Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya

This courtesy visit, which took place in Lusaka, Zambia, also enjoyed the participation of the ASYCUDA Programme Chief, Mr. Fabrice Millet,

and the ASYCUDA Regional Coordinator for Eastern and Southern Africa, Mr. Miguel Fernando Siles-Bustos (Figure 2).



Figure 2: ASYCUDA-COMESA Meeting in COMESA's Headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia

Mr. Ngwenya said the importance of automation of Trade and customs processes and procedures towards customs reforms and modernization cannot be over emphasized as they play a major role in facilitating trade in the region. An important objective of the ASYCUDA Programme supported by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD is to efficiently implement the system, with a full transfer of technical and functional know-how to national customs

administrations at the lowest possible cost for countries and donors.

Ms. Sirimanne insisted on the fact that the ASYCUDA Programme has extended its support to other areas of the trade environment, providing new modules and applications enhancing the capacity of Customs Administrations to use technology to speed-up collection of information, to improve performance, and to sustain trade facilitation initiatives and agreements.

Implementation of Regional Transit in West African Countries

Since 2016, the ASYCUDA Programme has been requested by West African countries and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) for assistance in the implementation of the regional transit. They aim at reducing cost, time and reporting requirements for all stakeholders and automating regulations and procedures.

A first project, signed in July 2016 and funded by World Bank, consists of the interconnection of ASYCUDAWorld transit modules of Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso for the trade corridor Abidjan-Ouagadougou (Figure 3). The activities undertaken until now are the implementation of the information

exchange platform in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire and the test of exchanging transit information between both systems. During a workshop organized by the World Bank on the 20th of September 2017, it has been decided to extend the scope of this project. Now, ASYCUDA Programme will assist Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso in the updating of ASYCUDAWorld to be compliant with PACIR (standard defined by WCO for transit interconnection in ECOWAS region). After that, the transit interconnection will be tested and launched in production for the corridor Abidjan-Ouagadougou.

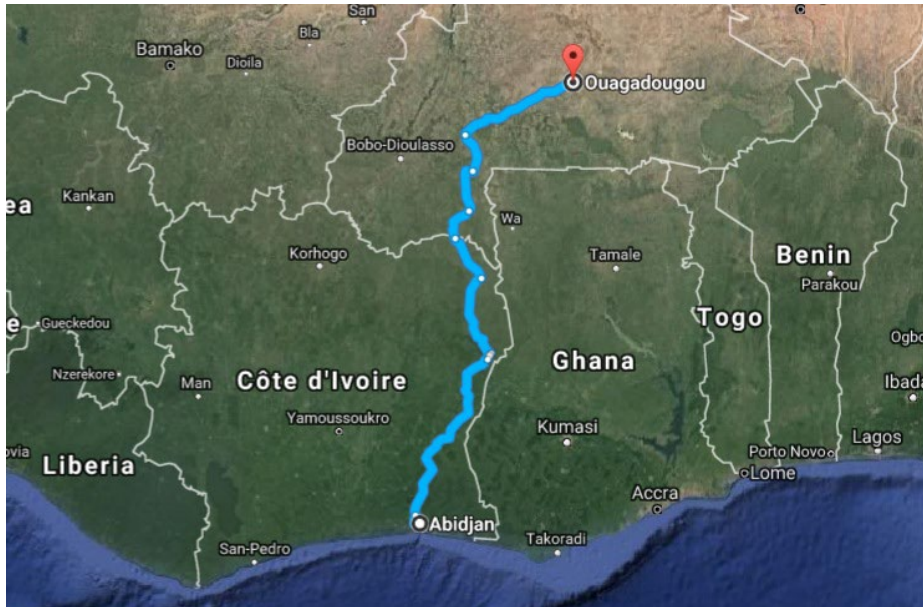


Figure 3: Trade Corridor Abidjan-Ouagadougou

The second project is the interconnection of ASYCUDAWorld transit modules between Burkina Faso and Togo for the trade corridor Ouagadougou-Lomé (Figure 4). It was signed in September 2016 and is funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The activities undertaken to this day is the analysis of the

equipment required for this implementation. The report was submitted and approved by both customs administrations. The proper implementation of the solution (interconnection, testing, training...) is the upcoming phase and will be done after the delivery and the installation of all equipment.

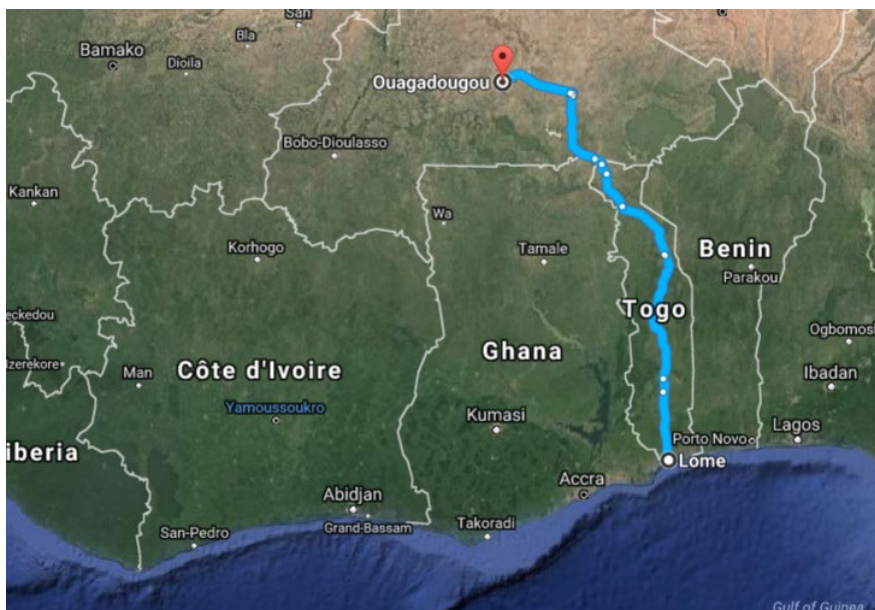


Figure 4: Trade Corridor Ouagadougou-Lomé

Whereas the 2 projects described above involved 3 countries willing to exchange transit data, the third one involves all ECOWAS' countries (Figure 5). It was signed in May 2017 and is funded by ECOWAS. It aims to train ECOWAS IT experts on

the development and how to update ASYCUDAWorld to be compliant with PACIR. The project will be piloted by the interconnection in 2 countries which will be identified by ECOWAS.



Figure 5: ECOWAS Member States

ASYCUDAWorld in Mauritania

Within the framework of modernization and automation of customs procedures, a technical cooperation project was signed between UNCTAD and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for the

implementation of the latest version of ASYCUDAWorld. The system was launched nationally in all customs offices in 2016.



Figure 6: Mauritanian Customs Agent using ASYCUDAWorld for declarations clearance

After a precise analysis of the system modules and features, improvements and national developments were identified and requested following the national requirements in terms of customs, automation of procedures and trade facilitation. Among the new developments, the Export Manifest Module allows the automatic generation of manifests and waybills from export declarations. Not only it automates the boarding operations, it also allows customs to keep track of containers and

goods which exited the territory. Statistics are generated from the export declarations so the Central Bank of Mauritania can control these operations and monitor currency repatriation. Another new development is the Offence Module. The module automates the procedure of generating the official offence document and keeps a database of all the identified customs offences. As a result, Mauritanian Customs are now evaluating and monitoring performances of customs agents and

offices and are improving their risk management component by updating selectivity parameters and creating new selectivity criteria. Other modules were improved like the stock management of warehouses. To ensure effective use of these modules, trainings were delivered and e-manuals were provided to the users through the Internet. Today, Mauritanian Customs have become a source

of information to other authorities like the Port Authority, the Transport Authority, the Central Bank of Mauritania and the National Committee of Hydrocarbons. Furthermore, since 2016 and the national launch of ASYCUDAWorld, Mauritania has experienced an important increase of revenues and has gained 8 places in the World Bank Doing Business Ranking.

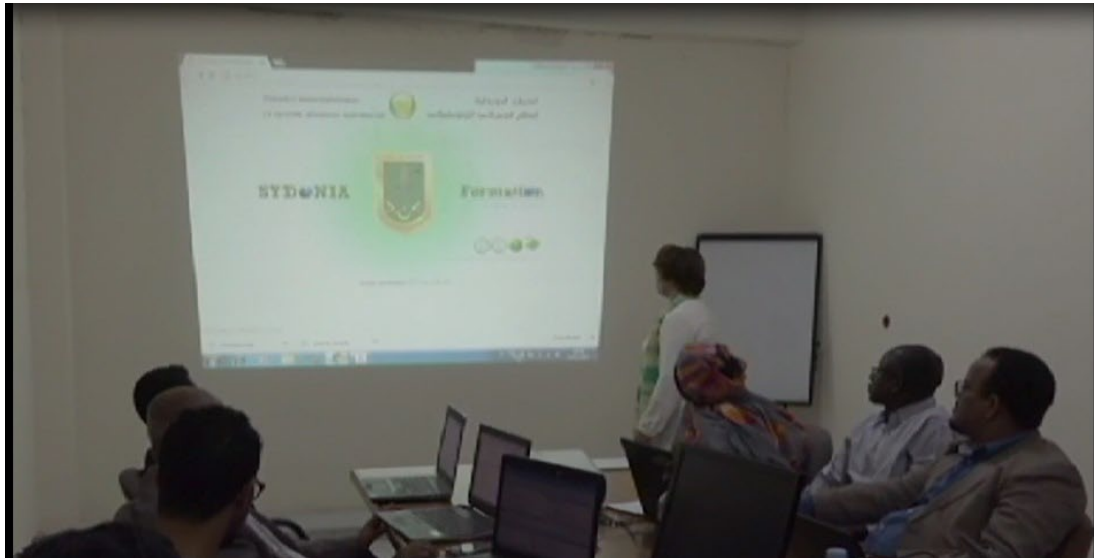


Figure 7: ASYCUDAWorld Training Session delivered by an UNCTAD expert in Nouakchott

ASYCUDAWorld in Angola

The second phase of implementation of ASYCUDAWorld was launched on 5 June in the municipality of Lobito with the implementation of the new Customs Declaration module. The launch ceremony (Figures 8 and 9) was presided by Ms. Maria Da Conceição Dos Santos Matos, administrator of the Revenue Administration, and Mr. Hermenegildo Gaspar, administrator in charge

of customs services. During the ceremony, the new "Customs Declaration" Module was presented to the audience and results of the pilot launch of the Cargo Manifest Management Module in April 2017 were analyzed and discussed. It enjoyed the attendance of representatives of the Provincial Government and the public sector as well as representatives of the economic operators.



Figure 8: Customs Declaration Module Launch Ceremony in Lobito, Angola

According to the Angolan Cabinet of Institutional Communication, "ASYCUDAWorld is a system that automates all customs procedures, from the submission of the manifest until the post-clearance audit and control, including tax management, payment, reimbursement and other accounting

operation". Moreover, "ASYCUDAWorld represents an evolution of customs procedures in force because it improved the work environment of all agents involved in the import and export logistic chain, reducing significantly the clearance delay and the use of paper documents".



Figure 9: Attendance of the Customs Declaration Module Launch Ceremony in Lobito, Angola

ASYCUDAWorld in Lebanon

The Ministry of Finance and Customs started a new cooperation program with UNCTAD for implementing ASYCUDAWorld; under this cooperation and to keep with the state-of-art technology for automating customs clearance operations, many ASYCUDA experts undertook missions in Lebanon.

In 2017, the objectives are to install and train the Lebanese IT team (NAJM team) on mastering the implementation of data exchange between authorities and the in-depth utilization of the e-Manifest according to the latest Cargo-XML format which was recently published by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The e-Manifest, for the electronic conveyance of freight information to Customs officials prior to a shipment arrival, is of high importance to Lebanese customs. It allows order to expedite the Customs

clearance process by allowing pertinent information about shipments to be assessed and approved by Customs officials in advance of any shipment's physical arrival. Moreover, it allows more intricate screening procedures to be carried out by Customs officials in advance of all shipments. UNCTAD played a crucial role in streamlining the adoption of the IATA Cargo-XML structure in order that the Lebanese version of ASYCUDAWorld is in line with the latest international standard.

The NAJM team succeeded in enriching the Lebanese ASYCUDAWorld application by removing all the paperwork related to the containers gate in the Port of Beirut by solely relying on ASYCUDAWorld, adding more data transfer with the Port of Beirut authority and finalizing the IATA C-XML e-Manifest development for the carriers.

ASYCUDA CARICOM IMPACS Project

UNCTAD has recently signed an Agreement with the CARICOM (Caribbean Community) Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) for the implementation of the Electronic Manifest Management ASYCUDA System (EMMAS) through funding by the European Union. The purpose of the project is to enable CARICOM Member States to receive Advance Cargo Information in electronic format through a centralized portal. Collecting cargo information in advance will enable Customs authorities to identify high-risk shipments that could threaten the safety and security of the Region.

Once EMMAS is fully implemented, it is anticipated that cargo reporting will become a virtually paperless process that starts before shipments reach the border. Data gathering and risk assessment of advance cargo reports, sent

electronically to the EMMAS, will facilitate low-risk consignments to be identified prior to arrival and processed in a more efficient manner upon arriving to their final destination.

A centralized portal will be established to allow electronic submission of cargo information when shipments are intended for any of the fifteen participating Member States. Taking advantage of the existing experience and infrastructure in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, the servers of the new EMMAS will be installed at the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC) in Barbados as primary portal host at the first stage of the project. Trinidad and Tobago will host the secondary portal at CARICOM IMPACS in order to ensure the operation of the service occurs at the primary portal (Figure 10).

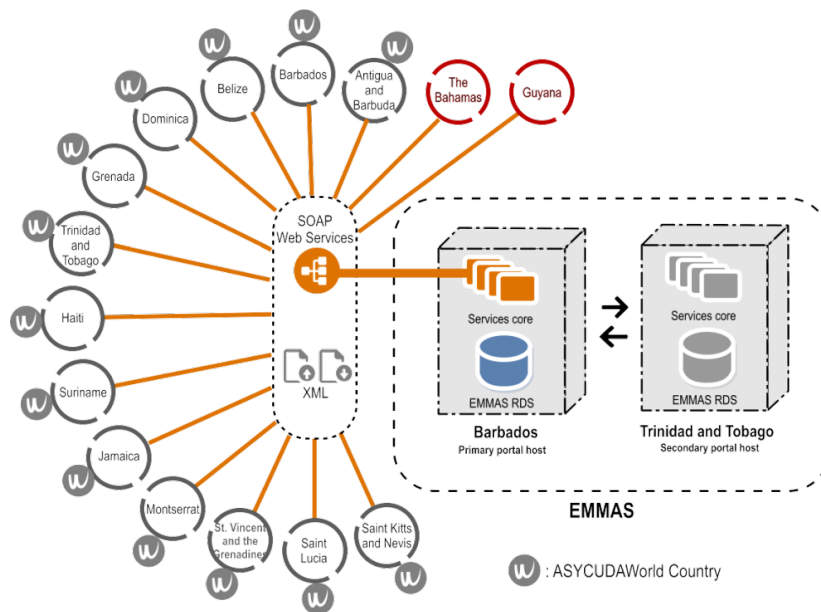


Figure 10: Architecture and Infrastructure for implementation of EMMAS

Implementing EMMAS will benefit those Customs Administrations of participating States in executing better risk analysis and for quicker process and release upon arrival, resulting in a benefit for traders that should be equal to any cost or disadvantage of providing information earlier than at present. The automated environment will facilitate co-operative relationships between and among participating States, other Government agencies, and relevant international bodies. It will

provide means to maintain and further develop co-operation by way of sharing and exchanging data on security and trade facilitation. The EMMAS system will foster greater opportunities to have Customs Administrations systematically exchange information and intelligence, and use risk assessment and targeting techniques to identify high-risk consignments for law enforcement scrutiny without hindering the free flow of legitimate trade.

VANUATU launches ASYCUDAWorld

The Vanuatu Customs & Inland revenue (VCIR) has been using the ASYCUDA++ software since 1999 to support its customs clearance operations. It sought the assistance of UNCTAD for the deployment of the latest, web-based, ASYCUDAWorld version. The project

documentation was signed in Port Vila in October 2015 and project activities commenced early 2016 with the Mobilization Seminar held in March 2016. The event was marked by the presence of the acting Minister for Finance and Economic Management, Honorable Jean-Pierre Nirua.



Figure 11: ASYCUDAWorld Launch in Port Vila

As activities got under way, engaging all stakeholders in Trade, the project was showcased at the 2016 edition of the ICT Days on 17-18 May 2016. The commitment of government, the VCIR management, and the National Project Team led by its Director, together with the relevant project management framework involving all stakeholders,

contributed to a smooth project execution and successful deployment of ASYCUDAWorld in Port Vila and Luganville on 11 July 2017 (Figure 11) and 1st August 2017 (Figure 12) respectively. As for all ASYCUDA projects, the system is accessible through an ASYCUDA web portal implemented on site (Figure 13).



Figure 12: ASYCUDAWorld Launch in Luganville

The screenshot displays the ASYCUDAWorld Vanuatu web portal. At the top, the browser address bar shows the URL <https://asyworld.gov.vu/index.jsf>. The page header includes navigation links for 'Reports', 'DCIR Website', 'DCIR Facebook', and 'Contact Us', along with a 'Login' button. A search bar and a language selector set to 'ENGLISH' are also present. The main banner features the ASYCUDAWorld logo and a background image of shipping containers. Below the banner, a navigation menu highlights 'CUSTOMS TARIFF', 'DOCUMENTATIONS', and 'FORMS'. A large image shows four men in blue uniforms, one of whom is holding a document. To the right, the 'ASYCUDAWorld Connections' section lists 'Minimum PC Requirements' such as RAM (4GB), Operating System (Windows 7 (64-bit)), CPU (2.6 – 3.0 GHz), Hard Disk (320 GB), Additional Software (Adobe Reader, Java 1.8 & above), and Internet Speed (512 kbps). Below this is a 'Download Java' section with instructions. The 'Recent Declarations' section shows a table of transactions:

Transaction Type	Reference	Status	Date/Time
Paid	594 A 530	Green	26-Sep 16:48
Assessed	2215 A 2112	Green	26-Sep 16:48
Paid	1666 A 1585	Green	26-Sep 16:46
Paid	1667 A 1586	Green	26-Sep 16:44

The 'Recent Manifests' section shows:

Transaction Type	Reference	Date/Time
Stored	V PX0082	26/09/2017 26-Sep 16:32
Registered	V NF011	22/09/2017 26-Sep 14:39
Registered	V C12V120	20/09/2017 26-Sep 13:26

The 'News' section features an article titled 'Customs Cashier hours extended' dated September 20, 2017. The article text states: 'The Cashiers facility in ASYCUDA World for Customs offices at the Port Vila wharf and airport is now configured to operate 24/7. This means that the Cashiers at these offices are now able to receive payments up to 5pm during workdays. The Cashiers may also operate after working hours, weekends and public holidays, if required. Service fees may apply during these periods. Furthermore, sea freight and airfreight consignments that use prepaid accounts can now be cleared 24/7 at these office. Customs anticipates that this new'.

Figure 13: ASYCUDAWorld Web Portal of Vanuatu

Nepal Department of Customs exceeds ASYCUDA World project objectives

The Nepal Department of Customs (DOC - Figure 14) embarked on the migration of their Customs IT System in 2015 to deploy ASYCUDAWorld in three selected customs offices. By the project end in June 2017, DOC had successfully rolled out

ASYCUDAWorld in 8 offices and now extended the coverage to include 10 customs offices processing approximately 98% of the customs business transactions.



Figure 14: DOC Senior Management from Nepal attending coordination meetings in Geneva -

From left to right: Mr. Krishna Bahadur Basnet, Mr. Kularaj Jnawali, Mr. Sushil Prasad Poudel Sharma, Mr. Fabrice Millet, ASYCUDA Programme Chief, Mr. Sebantak Pokharel, Mr. Harihar Poudyal, Mr. Erik Willems, ASYCUDA Regional Coordinator and customs expert, Mr. Bhupal Raj Shakya, Mr. John David, ASYCUDA Technical Coordinator and Mr. Surya Prasad Sedai

Not only has DOC management and its National Project Team upgraded the customs software but they now have a start-of-the-art data centre with brand new servers and networking equipment. This data centre is connected to the disaster recovery site for automatic replication of data. DOC also introduced new streamlined processes in their work flow including automatic assignment of sections

and examiners and scanned attached documents on the Single Administrative Documents. Additional specific developments such as management of non-cash payments and a gate-entry module to improve the control of trucks entering and exiting the customs yards have added to the ongoing success of the ASYCUDAWorld implementation in Nepal.

Afghanistan and Tajikistan launch real time customs data exchange

From 28 to 30 June 2017, Dushanbe, Tajikistan, hosted the official launching ceremony of customs data exchange between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The Director General of Customs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Mr. Ahmad Reshad Popal and the Chairman of the Customs Service under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Abdulfattokh Goib signed a bilateral agreement for starting the rollout of transit data exchange between

both countries (Figure 15). After the official signing event (Figure 16), the participants visited customs offices at the Afghan-Tajik border and the bridge spanning the Panj River between Panji Poyon, Tajikistan and Sher Khan Bandar, Afghanistan in order to overview the electronic data interchange mechanism in the real operational environment. The parties also discussed new priority areas of cooperation (Figure 17).



Figure 15: Bilateral agreement on data exchange is signed by DG of Afghan Customs Mr. A.R. Popal (left) and the Chairman of the Tajikistan Customs Service Mr. A. Goib (right)



Figure 16: Signing ceremony at the Tajikistan Customs Service Headquarter in Dushanbe



Figure 17: Group photo of Afghan Customs Department and the Customs Service of Tajikistan

The implementation of customs data exchange promises to benefit these countries through promoting the regional trade and stability, applying more effective tools of customs intelligence, reduction of smuggling and drug trafficking. UNCTAD's ASYCUDA team provided the integrated assistance at both sides, which included facilitation of preliminary negotiations, drafting the protocol, elaboration of technical specifications, design of the solution, piloting and training. The rollout of the system started after its successful and effective trial implementation and after capacity

building for IT and customs staff was provided by ASYCUDA experts.

The implementation of customs data exchange between Afghanistan and its neighboring countries is an important component of the Second Customs Reform and Trade Facilitation Project in Afghanistan, funded by the World Bank. UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme as the implementing partner is working closely with Afghan Customs Department to promote similar electronic data interchange with Iran and Pakistan.



Figure 18: Real-time data exchange mechanism tested by experts

WCO IT 2017 Conference & Exhibition

From 7 to 9 June 2017, an UNCTAD ASYCUDA delegation took part in the international WCO IT Conference in Tbilisi, Georgia. The event was hosted and perfectly organized by the Georgia Revenue Service (GRS), a long-term partner of UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme. The title of the conference “The Power of Data: Advancing Border Management” and the discussions during the forum proved the relevance of the ongoing ASYCUDA Programme’s work on development of new products, including on integrated border management, performance measurement (ASYPM), interoperability with international database (UNESCO, OCHA), etc.

The WCO Secretary General, Mr. Kunio Mikuria (Figure 19), speaker at the conference, outlined the importance of strengthening the Customs role in facilitation of e-commerce. Following his recommendation, in July 2017, UNCTAD signed an extended MoU and cooperation agreement with UPU (Universal Postal Union), aiming at integrating UPU standard electronic XML-messages into ASYCUDAWorld to facilitate trade and express delivery. On the margins of the event, the ASYCUDA team had several productive bilateral meetings followed by blueprints of technical assistance and support projects.



Figure 19: Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, during the Conference Inauguration Speech

Georgia is one of the most successful ASYCUDAWorld implementations, widely recognized by international community. During the meeting with the GRS leadership, the ASYCUDA

team underlined the importance of this long-term collaboration. Throughout the recent years, GRS serves as a model of excellence for countries of the region.