ASYCUDA Newsletter

UNCTAD
Division on Technology and Logistics

January 2017

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UNCTAD/WEB/DTL/ASYCUDA/2017/1

Editorial

For all our enthusiastic and devoted readers, this newsletter aims at updating the ASYCUDA community on Programme activities and events with an emphasis on the progress of the system in the countries in 2016.

2016 witnessed the parallel organization of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV) and The World Investment Forum (WIF) in Nairobi, Kenya. The 2016 WIF was the first international meeting on financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ban Ki-moon, former United Nations Secretary-General, defined the World Investment Forum as "a trailblazer, mobilizing the global business community to play a key role by investing in ways that will support the achievement of the SDGs". During UNCTAD XIV, Mukhisa Kituyi, UNCTAD Secretary-General, insisted the consensus reached by 194 member states renewing UNCTAD mandate for four years, is "giving a central role to UNCTAD in delivering the sustainable development goals". Since September 2015 and their inclusion in the United Nations Resolution, the SDGs and their achievement are at the centre of discussions of UNCTAD international events and conferences.

SDGs are a set of 17 global goals covering the period 2015-2030 which are broken down into 197 targets assessed by various indicators. The goals include ending poverty and hunger, combatting climate change, ensure healthy lives and education, achieve gender equality and ensure water availability and affordable energy among other things (more information on SDGs hereafter http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/).

ASYCUDA, UNCTAD's largest technical assistance programme, is actively participating in the delivery of SDGs, in particular the following ones:

- **Goal 8:** Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all;
- **Goal 9:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation;
- **Goal 17:** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Indeed, the automation of customs taxes and duties calculation and collection (Goal 17 - "improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection") contributes directly to economic growth (Goal 8). Development-oriented policies are encouraged and promoted within customs through the possible automation of customs procedures and controls (Goal 8). The ASYCUDA Programme has always combined state-of-the-art advanced technologies with proven on-the-field expertise to ensure an efficient and tailored support to countries thus contributing to ICT infrastructure upgrade, especially in least developed countries and Africa (Goal 9). Moreover, the Programme organizes a multitude of study tours for customs delegations to visit and learn from experiences of implementing a new technology and/or a new infrastructure (Goal 17) in other parts of the world, directly contributing to North-South and South-South international and regional cooperation (Goal 17). Capacity building is also ensured by the organization of technical and functional trainings (Goal 17). In terms of development-oriented partnerships with organizations, agencies and trade associations (Goal 17), the Programme published a summary of its Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) in the 2016 newsletter (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2016d1_en.pdf).

While we travel around the world to detail the 2016 ASYCUDA events, new developments and progress of the system in the countries, the reader will get more information on the activities performed by the Programme on the field and how they contribute to reaching these SDGs.

We will first travel to Fiji where the ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Pacific and the ASYCUDA Sub-Regional Office celebrated 15 years of collaboration. Then, we will go to Lomé, Togo to report the main recommendations shared during the West and Central Africa Regional Seminar on the future of ASYCUDA.
We will stop by Geneva where the Programme is proud to announce the release of its new ASYCUDAWorld module, IATA's Cargo-XML messages for the electronic processing of air cargo information.
Finally, we will finish our travel with a tour of countries that deployed ASYCUDAWorld nationally or through pilot sites.

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

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

A l'attention de nos lecteurs, cette lettre d'information vise à porter à la connaissance de la communauté SYDONIA les activités et évènements du Programme avec une attention particulière sur l'avancée de la mise en place du système sur le terrain en 2016.

L'année 2016 a connu l'organisation parallèle de la quatorzième session de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le Commerce et Développement (UNCTAD XIV) et du Forum Mondial de l'Investissement à Nairobi au Kenya. Ce forum fut le premier évènement international portant sur le financement des Objectifs de Développement Durable (ODD). Ban Ki-Moon, Secrétaire Général sortant des Nations Unies, décrit cette édition du Forum comme "pionnier dans la mobilisation de la communauté internationale des affaires afin de jouer un rôle clé dans les moyens d'investir dans l'atteinte des ODD". Durant UNCTAD XIV, Mukhisa Kituyi, Secrétaire Général de la CNUCED, a insisté sur le consensus parvenu entre les 194 états membres renouvelant le mandat de la CNUCED pour quatre ans et "octroyant un rôle central à la CNUCED dans l'atteinte des Objectifs de Développement Durable". Depuis septembre 2015 et leur inclusion dans la Résolution des Nations Unies, l'atteinte des ODD est au centre des discussions lors de l'organisation d'évènements et conférences internationaux de la CNUCED.

Les ODD sont un ensemble de 17 objectifs couvrant la période 2015-2030 ventilés en 197 cibles évaluées par des indicateurs. Ces objectifs incluent entre autres l'éradication de la faim et de la pauvreté, la lutte contre le réchauffement climatique, l'accès à la santé et à une éducation de qualité, l'égalité des genres et l'accès à l'eau salubre pour tous (plus d'information sur les ODD dans le lien ci-après http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/fr/).

SYDONIA, principal programme d'assistance de la CNUCED, participe activement à l'atteinte des ODD; en particulier les objectifs suivants:

- **Objectif 8:** Promouvoir une croissance économique soutenue, partagée et durable, le plein emploi productif et un travail décent pour tous;
- **Objectif 9:** Bâtir une infrastructure résiliente, promouvoir une industrialisation durable qui profite à tous et encourager l'innovation;
- **Objectif 17:** Partenariats pour la réalisation des objectifs.

En effet, l'automatisation du calcul des taxes et droits ainsi que leur collecte (Objectif 17 - "Renforcement des capacités pour la collecte des taxes et autres recettes") contribuent directement à la croissance économique (Objectif 8). Des politiques axées sur le développement sont encouragées et promues au niveau des douanes par la possible automatisation des procédures et contrôles douaniers (Objectif 8). Le Programme SYDONIA a toujours su combiner les technologies de pointe avec une expertise sur le terrain reconnue afin d'assurer un support efficient et adapté aux pays, contribuant ainsi à une mise à niveau de l'infrastructure des Technologies de l'Information, plus particulièrement dans les pays les moins avancés (PMA) et en Afrique (Objectif 9). De plus, le Programme organise une multitude de voyages d'étude permettant à des délégations de s'inspirer et d'apprendre des expériences de pays ayant mis en œuvre de nouvelles technologies et/ou infrastructures (Objectif 17), contribuant directement à la coopération Nord-Sud et Sud-Sud (Objectif 17). Le renforcement des capacités est aussi assuré par l'organisation de formations techniques et fonctionnelles (Objectif 17). En termes de partenariats avec des organisations, agences et associations professionnelles commerciales (Objectif 17), le Programme a publié une liste de ses protocoles d'accord (MOU) dans son édition de juin 2016 de la lettre d'information (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2016d1_en.pdf).

Durant notre voyage autour du monde décrivant les évènements organisés par le Programme, les nouveaux développements et l'avancée de la mise en œuvre du système sur le terrain, le lecteur trouvera plus d'informations sur les activités entreprises et leur contribution à l'atteinte des ODD.

Nous commencerons par les îles Fidji où l'accord de collaboration entre la sous-région Pacifique et le Programme SYDONIA a fêté ses 15 ans. Nous nous rendrons par la suite à Lomé pour rendre compte des recommandations faites par les pays utilisateurs du système lors du Séminaire Régional Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre sur le futur de SYDONIA.
Nous passerons par Genève où le Programme est fier d'annoncer le développement d'un nouveau module du système SYDONIAWorld pour le traitement électronique des informations envoyées par IATA sur les frets aériens.
Nous finirons notre voyage par un tour des pays ayant déployé SYDONIAWorld en 2016.

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

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

Para todos nuestros entusiastas seguidores, este boletín tiene como objetivo informar a la comunidad de ASYCUDA sobre los últimos eventos y actividades del Programa con énfasis en la implementación del sistema en los distintos países.

El año 2016 fue testigo de la organización paralela del 14º período de sesiones de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo (UNCTAD XIV) y el Foro Mundial de Inversiones (FMI) en Nairobi, Kenya. El FMI 2016 fue el primer encuentro internacional sobre la financiación de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). Ban Ki-moon, ex Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas, definió el Foro Mundial de Inversiones como "un pionero en la movilización de la comunidad empresarial mundial para desempeñar un papel clave en los medios para invertir en la consecución de los ODS". Durante UNCTAD XIV, Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretario General de la UNCTAD, destacó el consenso alcanzado entre los 194 Estados miembros de la renovación del mandato de la UNCTAD durante cuatro años, "dando un papel central a la UNCTAD en la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible". Desde septiembre de 2015 y su inclusión en la Resolución de las Naciones Unidas, los ODS y sus logros están en el centro de los debates de los eventos internacionales de la UNCTAD.

Los ODS son un conjunto de 17 objetivos globales para el período 2015-2030 desglosados en 197 metas evaluados por varios indicadores e incluyen la erradicación de la pobreza y el hambre, la lucha contra el cambio climático, el acceso a la sanidad y la educación, la igualdad de género y la disponibilidad de agua, entre otras cosas (más información sobre los ODS lo pueden encontrar en el siguiente enlace: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/).

ASYCUDA, el mayor programa de asistencia técnica de la UNCTAD, está participando activamente en la prestación de los ODS, en particular los siguientes objetivos:

• **Objetivo 8:** Estimular el crecimiento económico sostenible logrando empleo pleno y productivo y un trabajo decente para todos;
• **Objetivo 9:** Invertir en infraestructura, promoción de industrias sostenibles y la inversión en investigación e innovación científicas
• **Objetivo 17:** Fortalecer los medios de ejecución y revitalizar la Alianza Mundial para el Desarrollo Sostenible.

De hecho, la automatización de la recaudación y cálculo de impuestos y aranceles aduaneros (Objetivo 17 - "mejorar la capacidad nacional para recaudar ingresos fiscales y de otra índole") contribuye directamente al crecimiento económico (Objetivo 8). Las políticas orientadas al desarrollo se fomentan y promueven dentro de las aduanas mediante la posible automatización de los procedimientos y controles aduaneros (Objetivo 8). El Programa ASYCUDA siempre ha combinado tecnologías avanzadas de última generación experimentadas directamente sobre el terreno para asegurar un apoyo eficiente y adaptado a los países, contribuyendo así a la mejora de las infraestructuras TIC, especialmente en los países menos desarrollados y África (Objetivo 9). Además, el Programa organiza múltiples viajes de estudio para que delegaciones aduaneras visiten y aprendan de las experiencias de otros países (Objetivo 17), contribuyendo directamente a la cooperación Norte-Sur y Sur-Sur (Objetivo 17). El fomento de capacidad también se garantiza mediante la organización de capacitaciones técnicas y funcionales (Objetivo 17). En cuanto al desarrollo de vínculos con organizaciones, agencias y asociaciones comerciales (Objetivo 17), el Programa publicó un resumen de sus Memorandos de Entendimiento (MOU) en el boletín de junio 2016 (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycud a2016d1_en.pdf).

A continuación viajaremos por todo el mundo para detallar los eventos de ASYCUDA en 2016, los nuevos desarrollos y progresos del sistema en los diferentes países, el lector obtendrá más información sobre las actividades realizadas por el Programa sobre el terreno y la forma en que contribuyen a alcanzar los ODS.

Primero viajaremos a Fiyi donde el Mecanismo de Apoyo de ASYCUDA para el Pacífico celebró 15 años de colaboración. Posteriormente iremos a Lomé, Togo, para dar parte de las principales recomendaciones compartidas durante el Seminario Regional de África Occidental y Central sobre el futuro de ASYCUDA.
Nos detendremos en Ginebra donde el Programa se enorgullece en anunciar el lanzamiento de un nuevo módulo del sistema ASYCUDAWorld, los mensajes Cargo-XML de IATA para el procesamiento electrónico de la información de carga aérea.
Por último, terminaremos nuestro recorrido con una gira por países que implementaron ASYCUDAWorld.

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, enero de 2017.

ASYCUDA International Events

This year, two international events involved the ASYCUDA Programme as a catalyst and an intermediate to encourage and facilitate South-South international cooperation. Indeed, the first event was the celebration of the fifteenth birthday of the ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Pacific (ASMP) and the ASYCUDA Sub-Regional Office in Fiji. The second was the organization of a WCA (West and Central Africa) regional seminar involving customs authorities from all the countries of the region.

Celebrating 15 years of cooperation between customs of the Pacific Region and UNCTAD

Meeting with other customs officials in a UN meeting room on a frosty European winter's day, Ben Malas is a long way from his home in Vanuatu, a tropical archipelago of 83 Pacific Ocean islands strung out across an area the size of France.

He and his colleagues — from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands (Figure 1) — have come far in another sense too. Fifteen years ago, they introduced UNCTAD's automated customs system, ASYCUDA, shifting customs procedures from paper to computer.
The computer software simplified customs clearance from an average 35 steps to less than 10. It also standardized procedures and eased trade within the Pacific Ocean region, including with Australia and New Zealand.

"ASYCUDA has actually facilitated trade — it has helped us in the region to connect," says Mr. Malas, director of Vanuatu's Customs and Inland Revenue Service (Figure 2), noting that tax collection has risen too.
"When we shifted from manual to automated, the revenue increased and it has continued to increase since then," he adds, saying that the extra revenue has helped the island states to finance ASYCUDA themselves.

Receiving ASYCUDA as foreign aid, the Pacific nations took charge of the programme in 2001, keen to make it more sustainable. Building knowledge and experience since then, they are open to help smaller islands join the programme too.
One of the larger Pacific island nations with a population of 250,000 people, Vanuatu's main exports are copra (a coconut product for making coconut oil), cocoa beans, and beef. And for Mr. Malas, trade is central to his country's survival.

"We are remote, isolated islands, so we must import all the items we need to survive," he says.

Survival may include humanitarian items too. Sitting on the so-called rim of fire, a 40,000 kilometre chain of volcanoes, Vanuatu and the other Pacific islands are vulnerable to volcanic activity, earthquakes, and tsunamis, as well as the occasional seasonal cyclone.

Designed with the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, a separate module — ASYREC — will ease imports of humanitarian aid, in case of need, while keeping unwanted objects out. For all this, though, Mr. Malas seems most impressed by the impact on corruption.

"It is a system, an automatic system, and you can't corrupt the system," he says.

Figure 1 - Standing from left to right: Mr. Anare Filipe, Representative of Fiji Revenue & Customs Authority (FRCI); Ms. Alison Boso, Representative of Solomon Islands Customs and Excise Division (SICED); Mr. Peter James Vuti, Representative of FRCI; Ms. Faitau Tony Sione, ASMP Centre Coordinator; Ms. Sina Meredith, Representative of Ministry for Revenue of Samoa - Seated from left to right: Mr. John Nakiria, Representative of Papua New Guinea Customs Service; Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, DTL Director; Mr. Benjamin Malas, Director of Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue

Figure 2: Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, DTL Director, delivering ASMP Birthday Souvenir to Mr. Benjamin Malas, Director of Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue

WCA Regional Seminar on the future of ASYCUDA

The Seminar took place on 29 and 30 November 2016 in Lomé, Togo. It was organized in cooperation with the Togolese Government and the WCO (World Customs Organization). It gathered customs administrations delegations from the WCA (West and Central Africa) Region (20 countries represented out of 23 composing the region - Figure 3) and regional entities like ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) and CEMAC (Central African Economic and Monetary Community). Furthermore, the event included the participation of Directors of Customs from Burkina Faso, Gabon and Liberia (Figures 4 & 5).

Figure 3: Map of countries composing the WCA Region

Figure 4: From left to right, Director of Customs of Burkina Faso, Representative of WCO, Commissioner of General Services of Togo Revenue Authority, Representative of General Commissioner of Togo Revenue Authority, Representative of General Commissioner of Togo Revenue Authority, Chief of ASYCUDA Programme, Representative of Commissioner of Customs of Togo Revenue Authority and Director of Customs of Gabon

The purpose of the seminar was to share experiences using the ASYCUDA system, to discuss the possible evolutions of the system from the users' point of view and to make recommendations to the Programme in order to optimize its support. Indeed, 21 out of 23 countries use ASYCUDA: 12 are already using ASYCUDAWorld, 8 are using ASYCUDA++ (third version of ASYCUDA system) and one is currently migrating from the third version to the latest one. Figure 5 shows the WCA delegations attending the seminar. It was also the opportunity to present ASYPM, the ASYCUDA module for performance measurement developed in collaboration with WCO, to the WCA Region delegations (please refer to the link hereafter for more information on

ASYPM Module in 2014 ASYCUDA newsletter - http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2014d2_en.pdf); and to summarize some activities performed in the region besides the proper installation and launch of the system like the migration of customs data from a database server to another one, the exchange of information with Single Window and Other Governmental Agencies (OGAs) systems, the tailoring and improvement of some ASYCUDAWorld documents and/or modules, exploring and considering the use of alternate Information and Communication Technology (e.g., using PostGreSQL instead of Oracle as a relational database management system), the complete dematerialization of procedures (manifests, declarations, attached documents…) and the compliance with existing reforms.

In terms of recommendations, most delegations intervened to show their satisfaction in terms of quality and availability of support. They also emphasized the benefits from implementing the system (better control, more effective collection of taxes, important increase of revenue, increase of personnel's capacity…). However, they suggested more promotion on the use of the ASYCUDA forums, the development of an integrated archiving solution to ensure the sustainable performance of the database server, the implementation of a monitoring module to audit the database and the use of the system, the possible integration of tariff data provided by WCO, pursuing ASYCUDA's effort in improving technical and functional documentations and finally adapting some modules to mobile devices (e.g., a mobile version of the inspection act). Delegations also recommended ECOWAS, CEMAC and UNCTAD, the prioritization of deployment of the regional transit module and the creation of a WCA-ASYCUDA Regional Centre for support, training and events hosting; the former starting during the first trimester of 2017, the latter being currently discussed.

Figure 5: WCA Delegations participating in the seminar

RELEASE OF A NEW ASYCUDA MODULE

IATA's Cargo-XML messages for the electronic processing of air cargo information

The description of the new module below developed in cooperation with IATA is taken from IATA's January 2017 press release (http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2017-01-25-01.aspx). You will find more detailed information on this module in the 2016 ASYCUDA newsletter (http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/webdtlasycuda2016d1_en.pdf - Page 23).

IATA, UNCTAD Collaborate to Boost Global Adoption of Cargo Messaging Standards

Translations: Spanish (pdf) and Portuguese (pdf)

Geneva – The International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) announced that IATA's Cargo-XML messaging standard has now been fully integrated into ASYCUDA World, the UNCTAD automated customs management system used by 90 countries worldwide for their customs procedures.

The integration of Cargo-XML in ASYCUDA World standardizes the electronic communications between airlines and customs authorities using the program. The new data standard reduces message duplication and simplifies communication across the supply chain facilitating trade growth, improving cargo security, modernizing customs operations and fostering participation in global commerce through advance electronic data submission for air cargo shipments.

Cargo-XML makes it easier for airlines, freight forwarders and shippers to ensure that the information being provided to the customs authorities is technically correct and in line with the standards of industry bodies such as the World Customs Organization (WCO) and regulators. It also facilitates custom risk assessments for air cargo shipments and improves compliance with security regulations.

"Having a standard air cargo digital messaging system between customs authorities, airlines and other air cargo stakeholders is fundamental to enhancing efficiency, driving trade growth and maximizing safety and security across the industry. IATA's successful partnership with UNCTAD means that airlines, freight-forwarders, shippers and border agencies in over 90 countries can now talk the same digital language. It takes the industry one step closer to achieving the global adoption of a standard air cargo messaging system," said Glyn Hughes, IATA Global Head, Cargo.

"Considering the complexity of trade flows, increasing demands on advance risk assessments and operational efficiency, electronic data interchange is an integral component of customs modernization programs," said Shamika N. Sirimanne, Director of UNCTAD's Division on Technology and Logistics.

"We're delighted to support IATA Cargo-XML standards in the ASYCUDA system, which ultimately will help trade efficiency, improve custom clearance and enhance security through risk assessment procedures," she added.

COUNTRIES HAVING LAUNCHED ASYCUDA IN 2016

Every year, customs authorities implement the ASYCUDAWorld system whether it is nationally or through pilot sites (as a start), migrating from the third version of ASYCUDA system based on an obsolete technology or from a fully paper based system. The following paragraphs detail the implementation phases as well as some activities organized and/or supported by the Programme.

National ASYCUDAWorld Launch in Cape Verde

Cape Verde was one of the first countries to implement ASYCUDA in 1985. Second and third versions were installed in customs offices respectively in the early 1990s and 2003.
On January 12th 2016, the official ASYCUDAWorld launch ceremony was held in Praia, Cape Verde. It included the high level participation of the Minister of Finance and Planning, Ms. Cristina Duarte (Figure 6), who highlighted the benefits of the implementation of an advanced system for the automation of customs procedures like reducing the goods release delay, on-line consulting of procedures by economic operators for more transparency, less vulnerability towards corruption and consistent collect of revenues through the application of new customs reforms.
ASYCUDAWorld was nationally implemented in September 2015. Indeed, all 12 customs offices of the 10 islands of the Archipelago launched the system at the same time (Figure 7 shows cargos at the port of Praia).

Cape Verde is the first country to use PostgreSQL as a relational database management system for their live system thanks to the participation and involvement of the National Customs Team and the technical support of an ASYCUDA expert (Figure 8). The installation of the system has permitted the complete dematerialization of manifests, declarations and their attached documents. Moreover, interfaces have been developed for the management of exemptions, licenses and single payment as well as the exchange of information (including the exit note) with the JUP (Janela Unica Portuaria - Port Single Window) system. Capacity building, an essential component of the project, was achieved through the organization of ASYCUDAWorld technical and functional trainings for IT and customs officers.

Figure 6: ASYCUDAWorld Official Launch Speech by Minister of Finance and Planning of Cape Verde

Figure 7: Port of Praia, Cape Verde

Figure 8: Cape Verde National Customs Team accompanied by an ASYCUDA on-the-field Expert

ASYCUDAWorld Launch of Pilot Sites in Niger

Niger has been using the ASYCUDA system since its second version in the late 1980s; the third version was implemented in 2004.

ASYCUDAWorld was launched on 11 April 2016 in six customs offices, four located in Niamey, one in Gaya (near to Benin borders) and one in Torodi (near to Burkina Faso borders). The launch included the high level participation of the Minister of Finance, M. Saidou Sidibe, who emphasized the successful partnership between Niger Customs, the World Bank (funder of the project) and UNCTAD's ASYCUDA Programme for the implementation of the system. ASYCUDAWorld was deployed in six other customs offices (Niamey Poste, Maradi, Zinder, Konni, Tahoua & Dosso) during the second semester of 2016 for a total of 12 customs offices where the system is operational (Figure 9).

Apart from the implementation and deployment of the system, Niger Customs and the ASYCUDA Programme collaborated for the development and integration of specific modules within the system like the management of exonerations, the management of tax calculations' offences, the integration of vehicles' evaluations results and the integration of the Price Value Certificate. A series of ASYCUDA trainings, both technical and functional, were also delivered in Niamey (Figure 10) and Geneva to ensure knowledge transfer to the National Customs Team (Figure 11) and system sustainability. The implementation also permitted the elaboration of customs reforms like the generalization of the use of the T1 and a new automated procedure for goods clearance.

Figure 9: Functional Assistance of the National Customs Team to the Economic Operators during the launch of ASYCUDAWorld

Figure 10: ASYCUDAWorld Technical Training in Niamey, Niger

Figure 11: National Customs Team of Niger

Progress of the ASYCUDA Project in the Republic of Guinea after the Ebola crisis

The Republic of Guinea has been using the ASYCUDA system since its second version. The third version was deployed nationally in 2008.

The ASYCUDA Project in the Republic of Guinea started in January 2013 and is financed by the African Development Bank (ADB). The support on the field was interrupted for almost two years because of the Ebola crisis; however, the ASYCUDA Programme has never interrupted the remote support from Geneva. Due to this interruption, the project has been extended until June 2017 in order to ensure a continuous on-the-field support of Guinean Customs during the implementation and national deployment of ASYCUDAWorld.

Since the Programme resumed its on-the-field support in 2016, the system has been deployed in two customs offices, both in Conakry for a total of 3 customs offices where the system is operational.

Indeed, the Conakry Airport customs office migrated to ASYCUDAWorld in 2015 with the remote support of the Programme. After the various trainings of trainers conducted by the ASYCUDA Programme in Conakry and Aqaba, Jordan in 2013, more than 300 economic operators and customs officers were trained on the use of the system in 2016. Some specific modules have been developed and deployed in 2016 like a tailored inspection act, a price value certificate e-document linked to declarations and a module for exonerations management. A delegation from Guinea Customs went on a study tour in Cape Verde in May 2016 to learn from the experience of the implementation of a new relational database management system for ASYCUDAWorld. Finally, a division responsible for risk management and selectivity was created within the customs administration to ensure efficient use of the risk management and selectivity module of ASYCUDAWorld.

ASYCUDAWorld National Launch in Jamaica

The ASYCUDAWorld Implementation Project development objective is to assist the Government of Jamaica to improve the country's economic competitiveness and public finances through the strengthening of the capacity of the Jamaica Customs Agency, by the introduction of ASYCUDAWorld, a modern fully integrated customs management system. The project started in April 2014. The core of the ASYCUDAWorld system has been fully implemented at all ports of entry and exit in Jamaica for import and export Customs related formalities to facilitate paperless processing and subsequent release of cargo to the importer or designated declarant. In 2016, the transition from a dual processing system consisting of a partially electronic system running in parallel with a fully paper based system being streamlined into a fully automated paperless environment has been completed and is showing positive results in the reduction of associated costs and time required to clear goods. Indeed, from the moment declarants pay duties and taxes until Customs grants release for delivery, the Jamaica Customs Agency is clearing shipments in less than 24 hours for at least 55% of commercial imports (figure 12 below). Although the measurement represents only the time spent by Customs in examining, it shows a positive sign that there are improvements.

AW CUSTOMS RELEASE TIMES
(Hours from Payment to Release)

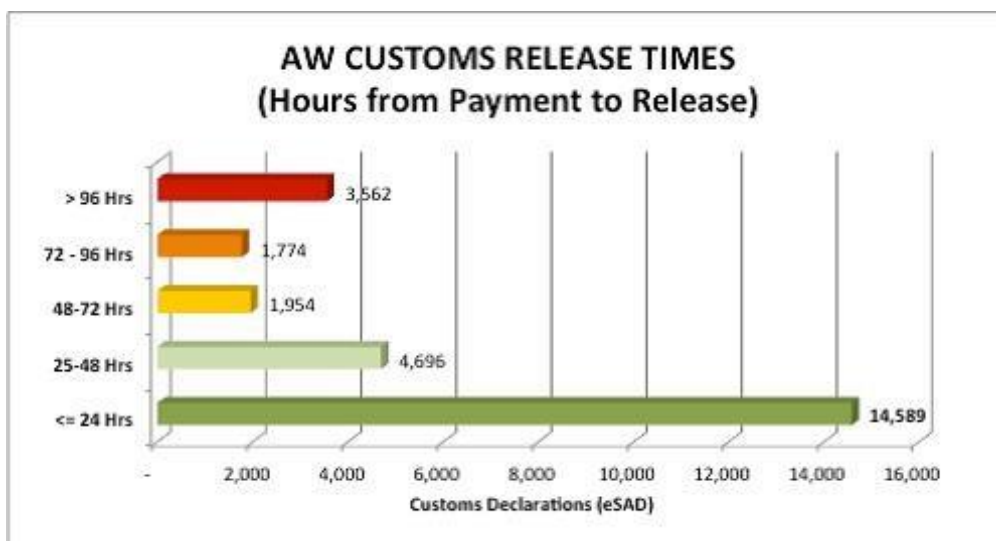|	Customs Declarations (eSAD)
> 96 Hrs	3,562
72 - 96 Hrs	1,774
48-72 Hrs	1,954
25-48 Hrs	4,696
<= 24 Hrs	14,589

Figure 12: ASYCUDAWorld Customs Release Times from Payment to Release

In terms of specific developments and interfaces, the Manifest module has been tailored to Jamaica Customs Agency's needs and requirements. The implementation included the integration of IATA-EDI interface to allow airlines to submit their cargo manifest through this additional format. Vessel sharing arrangements and co-loading are facilitated through functionalities available in the system. The ASYCUDAWorld system started with the declaration processing module in a pilot stage back in December 2014 targeting only direct exports of goods locally produced. After a gradual implementation of all kinds of exports and imports in 2015, the cargo movement in transit from ports of entry to other customs offices, additional suspense procedures for importation of goods, as well as postal consignments have been rolled-out in 2016. Risk Management is ensured through the ASYCUDAWorld Selectivity module that provides necessary tools to assess risk and determine the appropriate level of intervention. UNCTAD has provided expertise on several occasions to assist the Risk Management Unit in carrying out their risk analysis and evaluation, as well as in preparing risk criteria in the system. The levels of interventions are higher than expected. As figure 13 shows, low intervention is only granted to companies that are Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) or have been identified to be trustworthy under the Trusted Trader pilot exercise, the rest which are neither and represent a large set of transactions continue with high levels of intervention. Finally, the ASYCUDA World system has been configured to interface with other government systems, whether it is to validate information or for purposes of receiving and sending data while processing declarations or other type of customs transactions. These interfaces have simplified the processing and verification of such transactions making it seamless for importers and exporters. The interfaces developed include Tax Administration of Jamaica for tax registration number and tax compliance certificate, Bank of Jamaica for foreign exchange rates, eGov-Jamaica for online payment gateway and Port Community System for manifest forwarding and transshipment.
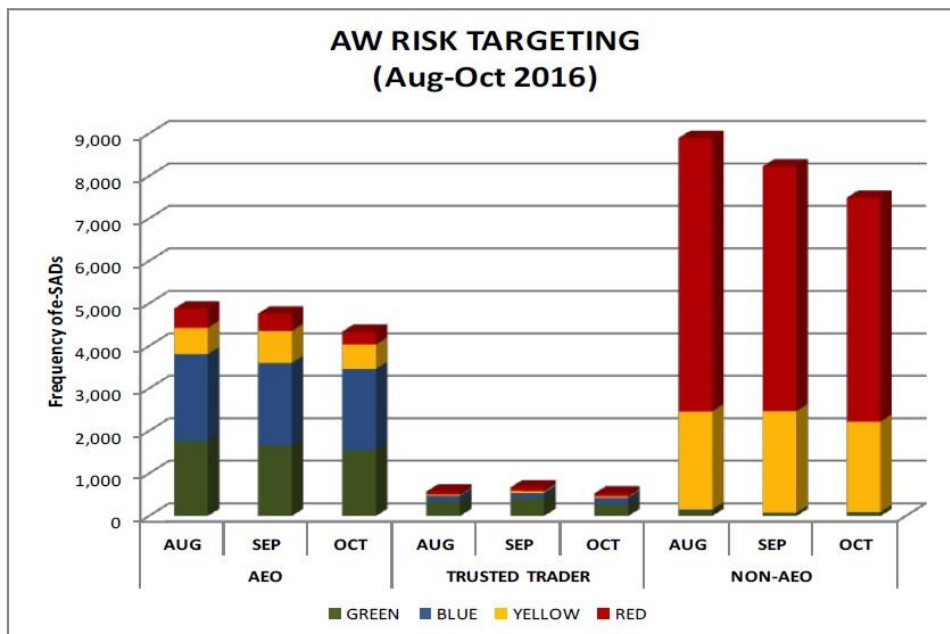

Figure 13: Assignment of lanes for Declarations from August to October 2016

Figure 14: National Customs Team with an ASYCUDA on-the-field Expert and the Regional Coordinator for Caribbean Islands

Figure 15: Customs Officers at the Port of Kingston

ASYCUDAWorld Launch in Bangladesh

The Automation of Bangladesh Customs Administration in the National Board of Revenue (NBR - Figure 16) began in the early 90s. It started with the ETAC (Excise, Tax and Customs) Data Computerization Project in December 1991 through computerization of the Research and Statistics wing of National Board of Revenue. This consisted mainly of capturing manually Bills of Entry details into the computer and using the data for Research and Statistics. The benefits were limited and later in 1993, NBR proceeded with automation of its customs clearance with ASYCUDA (Version 2.6)

system, developed by UNCTAD. The ASYCUDA system was introduced in Dhaka and Chittagong Customs Houses, and for the first time NBR was able to establish an operative tariff and manage system generated trade statistics. Under the Customs Administration Modernization Project (CAM-1) from 1 August 1999, ASYCUDA++ was successfully introduced in four custom houses (Chittagong, Chittagong EPZ, Dhaka, Kamalapur ICD and Benapole). The system was deployed under the "closed loop" concept and this played an important and positive role in the process of creating a transparent and accountable environment in customs. DTI (Direct Traders Input) was introduced at Chittagong, Dhaka and Kamalapur ICD, allowing C&F Agents to input the Bill of Entry/Export into the system from their own office on behalf of importers/exporters. Other offices like EPB, Statistic Department and Bangladesh Bank started using trade statistics stored into the ASYCUDA++ system.

With the advent of internet and its rapid adoption in Bangladesh the decision was taken to upgrade ASYCUDA++ but after mixed results of a project involving a local software company and the Chittagong Chambers and Commerce (CCCI), and after the National Board of Revenue held consultations with all stakeholders it decided to proceed with the deployment of the latest web-based ASYCUDAWorld version in a centralised environment.

The system is now deployed throughout the country and NBR, in partnership with UNCTAD (Figure 17 shows the ASYCUDA support team), is currently strengthening the customs clearance process by adding new functionalities and establishing linkages and interfaces with a number of other government departments, including the Bangladesh Bank. Of note is the fact that NBR processes on average well over 10,000 customs declarations and 6,000 Bill of Ladings every day. A recent upgrade to the latest release of ASYCUDAWorld and fine tunning of the Hardware and associated software infrastructure resulted in marked overall performance improvements.

Figure 16: National Board Revenue Headquarter in Dhaka

Figure 17: ASYCUDA Support Team in Bangladesh

ASYCUDAWorld Launch in Puerto Rico

The Project started in May 2014 and finished in May 2016. It aims at deploying the ASYCUDAWorld system nationally in seven districts (Figure 19 shows the homepage of the system installed in Puerto Rico). The implementation was established using a centralized architecture for managing all districts offices for the processing of Declarations for Excise and Manifest using 100% Direct Trader Input (DTI). The system is housed at the Headquarters in San Juan with outsourced hosting services, distributed on four servers, with the database separate from the operating system. In 2016, 23'000 manifests, 165'000 import declarations and 3'000 export declarations were processed using the system. Since the project started, 150 international revenue agents and 4'500 economic operators were trained on the use of the system. ASYCUDAWorld is now fully implemented at all districts sites. All excise declarations are processed using the system, DTI and the risk management module are operational, prepayment and credit are in effect, trade statistics are distributed to other government and regional agencies in real-time and updates to reference data (tariff, exchange rates…) are replicated to all clients in real-time.

In July 2016, a new project was signed with the Ministry of Finance mandating the Programme to deliver further assistance in the implementation of interfaces for data exchange between ASYCUDAWorld and Other Governmental Agencies (OGAs), automated statistical reports and capacity building among other things.